

# **SPECTACLES OF DISPLACEMENT**

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## **INSTITUTIONAL AND VERNACULAR PHOTOGRAPHY ON REFUGEES IN DADAAB, NORTH-EASTERN KENYA**

By

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**Declaration**

I hereby affirm that I have produced the thesis at hand without any inadmissible help from a third party or the use of resources other than those cited; ideas incorporated directly or indirectly from other sources are clearly marked as such. In addition, I affirm that I have neither used the services of commercial consultants or intermediaries in the past nor will I use such services in the future. The thesis in the same or similar form has hitherto not been presented to another examining authority in Germany or abroad, nor has it been published.

Signature ..... Place, Date .....

PAMELA CHEPNGETICH

**Dedication**

*For Dan, Travis and Tamira, for your sacrifice of geographical separation. In all, God's  
grace was sufficient.*

*To Dad and Mum, for your passion for quality education.*

*I so treasure you all!*

## **Acknowledgments**

Ebenezer! This far the Lord, God almighty has brought me. He has seen me through the entire process of drafting this dissertation. Through the good moments, I sang praises to him, and these refreshed me for the next steps I took. Through the tough times, he was there with me. He encouraged me, moulded me, and blessed me with his perspective, which made the moment not so difficult after all. I came to see these moments as seasons for Him to work good in me. He blessed me with time and a critical, always refreshed mind. I owe it all to you lord, my father and my God. May your name be praised, now and forevermore, Amen.

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As it is said, the body has many parts and all of them are important for the full functioning of it. This acknowledges the fact that I could not have made it all alone. May the lord bless you all!

## **Abstract**

Crises lead to the displacement of people across different regions at different moments in time. Wars, famine, earthquakes, floods, among other ecological factors, have repeatedly displaced people in the past. While some of these refugee crises attract wide national and international attention, others pass unnoticed, depending on the intensity of media coverage they receive (Susan D. Moeller, 1999). In Kenya, refugee camps in Dadaab are a refuge for thousands fleeing war and strife in their homelands, mainly Somalia and South Sudan. Among several agents, the mass media has been the most dominant site through which news on displacement is conveyed. Humanitarian organizations also play a key role, while vernacular photography in the form of personal photographs is largely restricted to the private realm.

Photography on refugees in Dadaab is therefore a result of displacement. The mass media and humanitarian organizations through institutional photography, as well as refugees themselves engaging in vernacular photography, have captured different moments of photography in the camp, and these have yielded different themes of portraying displacement. This dissertation studied the photographic representations of displacement in the just mentioned photography genres, that is, institutional and vernacular photography. In acknowledging the expected differences in photographic content as regards different genres of photographic representation, the study adopted Giorgio Agamben's (1993) concept of singularity to view these genres as offering different aspects of displacement, which when viewed in combination, contributed towards a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

The study therefore explored specific genres of photography concerning refugees in Dadaab, in order to illuminate what they revealed concerning displacement. It viewed displacement as a spectacle expressed through the medium of photography. And apart from studying photographic content, the study went further to interrogate the contexts in which these photographs were produced and consumed using Deborah Poole's (1997) theory of Visual economy. It utilized critical discourse analysis (CDA) linked to Norman Fairclough (1988, 1992) as a method for analysing data, which has its roots in Michel Foucault's theory of discourse. In this way, it adopted a critical media perspective to interrogate photographic content as products of underlying rules that structure their production (Michel Foucault 1970). W. j. t. Mitchell's (2005) contributions on visual culture theory were also adopted in analysing photographs. It is hoped that the study's findings will contribute towards academic discussions that engender a comprehensive approach to analysing varied representational genres.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction and Background to the Study

#### 1.0 Introduction

The plight of refugees the world over has attracted enormous attention from varied interest groups including humanitarian organizations, government institutions and the general public. Linking all these interests is the media which acts as the central tool through which information on crises of displacement is transmitted, debated and understood. Apart from the mass media, humanitarian organizations in collaboration with mainstream media have also taken part in representing displacement for the purposes of influencing particular interest groups. Furthermore, refugees engage in vernacular photography<sup>1</sup> for their own private audience of close family and friends. All these engagements have culminated into different frames of representation characterized by different aspects, and these are the focus of this dissertation.

Locating its focus to refugee camps in Dadaab, an area in Northern Kenya bordering Somalia, this study interrogates the institutional and vernacular photographic representations of displacement. Institutional representation comprises the coverage of displacement by the media and NGOs in Kenya. Media representation is restricted to a focus on two newspapers in Kenya, *The Standard* and the *Daily Nation*, sampled around the years 1991 and 2011 when initially conflict, and later famine, caused refugees from Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Congo to flee into Kenya. NGO representation is focused on a photography project conducted by two NGOs among refugees in Dadaab. Vernacular photography comprises studio photography in refugee camps in Dadaab. A focus on the photo studios enabled an understanding of photographic practice among refugees through an observation of ongoing photography, a sampling of photographs, and the interviews undertaken with informants. In-depth discussions on methodology are carried out in chapter three. Being a research in media studies, the study is informed by the theories and methodology of this field. This will be evident as the study progresses.

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<sup>1</sup> Vernacular photography has been defined to mean ordinary photographs, the ones in the possession of everyday folk, “the photographs that preoccupy the home and the heart but rarely the museum or the academy” Batchen (2001, p. 57). In this study, the terms personal, private, or vernacular photography are used interchangeably. At other times self-representation is also adopted.

Kenya has for the past two decades been host to the Dadaab refugee complex<sup>2</sup>, an area in North-eastern Kenya designated to the settlement of refugees, and is comprised of six refugee camps (UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency, 2012). Since war broke out in Somalia in the early 1990s to date, the Dadaab complex has become home to thousands of mostly Somali refugees. The camps have become the acme of human suffering as year after year, a series of unfortunate events visit the camp. Sometimes, it is the annual severe drought sweeping through Northern Kenya, or a new outbreak of infectious diseases, or the daily routine of a continuous flow of refugees into the camp as the long time war continues in Somalia. Another such facility in the country is the Kakuma refugee camp in north western Kenya which hosts refugees from mainly South Sudanese origin.

As the study begun in early 2011, South Sudan and Somalia had just emerged from an extended period of conflict and uncertainty which had caused their citizens to flee into neighboring countries such as Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania. As the study progressed however, major occurrences took place in these countries that had an impact on media coverage of displacement at the time. First was the creation of an independent South Sudan on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011, which seemingly marked the beginning of transition of the country from decades of violence into an independent, hopefully peaceful and stable state (Rice, 2011; UN: United Nations Mission in the Sudan, 2011). This new found freedom was however put to the test in December 2013 when tensions between supporters of the then president Salva Kiir, and his vice president Riek Machar, exploded into fighting and another displacement of many of its citizens (Freccia, 2014). Secondly, escalating famine in mid-2011 that struck Somalia and other neighboring countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya saw thousands of Somali refugees flee into Kenya. They arrived in desperate conditions and it seemed as though things were getting worse. This was not to suggest that Kenya was not so much affected by famine, but rather revealed the complexities of famine in a country under conflict whose famine impact was not only caused by nature, but complicated by the many decades of war (Campbell, 2007, p. 368).

Moreover, in October 2011, the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) invaded Somalia citing the need for self-defense after the Somalia based Al shabaab militia captured foreign nationals from the

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<sup>2</sup> The terms Dadaab 'complex', 'camps', or 'camp' have been used interchangeably in various writings to refer to the refugee camps situated in Dadaab. As mentioned and will be seen as the study progresses, there are six refugee camps in this region, and all of them have different names. In this study, the term 'complex' or the phrase, 'refugee camps in Dadaab' will be adopted.

Kenyan-Somalia border (AFP, 2011). As stated by the Kenyan government then as their reasons for this invasion, the actions by the militia were not only a threat to Kenya's security, but also to its tourism sector (The New York Times, October 2011). One year later, calm was beckoning in Somalia when major cities that were initially under the Al shabaab militia were recaptured, and repatriation programmes for Somali refugees in Kenya were underway (Amisom Daily Media Monitoring, 2013). On March 12, 2015, al shabaab leader Adan Garar was killed by a US drone strike, with his death being described as a "significant blow to the Al shabaab terrorist organization in Somalia (U.S. Department of Defense, 2015). As much as the 'war on terror' has been ongoing and seemed successful according to official reports, Kenya has borne numerous retaliatory attacks from the Al Shabaab militia in the recent past, causing the government to call for the closure of refugee camps in Dadaab in its new fight against terrorism (Greg Botelho & Lillian Leposo, CNN, April 11, 2015; BBC News, April 11, 2015). With this uncertainty of peace, especially in South Sudan and Somalia, the refugee camps in Kakuma and Dadaab are still in existence, and refugees can go back to their countries only on voluntary basis.

The above overview of the occurrences that took place in these two countries (Somalia and South Sudan) as the study progressed is important in understanding the context that characterized this research, and also the past, current and future possible influences on the representation of these people. For the moment however, this study is based on the periods of crises when conflicts or famine engulfed Somalia and Sudan, causing its citizens to seek refuge in Kenya. Furthermore, it was not certain whether and when peace and stability would ultimately be attained in these two countries. A yearning for a future of peace in their countries back home was therefore prevalent in representation works of many refugees. Additionally, the series of mostly unfortunate events that refugees underwent provided the most congenial moment for particular interest groups to freeze these moments in photography for either humanitarian or journalistic imperatives. While acknowledging the marked differences characterizing the two photography genres<sup>3</sup> under study, this research studies all of them inclusively as portraying different aspects of displacement. This inclusive approach shuns normative arguments on the binarisms of good/evil, right/wrong, positive/negative descriptions characterizing scholarly debates on the representation of crises.

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<sup>3</sup> Genre is specific to photography, and refers to the varied ways of portraying displacement. In this study, there are two broad genres of institutional and vernacular photography.

## 1.1 Background to the Study

Being a crisis that affects people, displacement attracts enormous attention and is often reported as news, which in the long run garners support for those affected by it. In most cases, institutions<sup>4</sup> such as the media and humanitarian organizations lend themselves available for this course. Refugees are the subjects of this unfolding crisis. As much as these three parties, that is, the Kenyan media, NGOs working in Dadaab, or refugees, engage in any photographic production therefore, their outcomes in photographic content largely differ. Indeed a continuous scan through photographs of refugees sourced from the media, which is then interrupted by photos portraying the same subjects but produced by humanitarian organizations or refugees themselves, grab one's attention by their congruity and contradictions. It is like an abrupt end to one thing and the beginning of another. Furthermore, if one is exposed to photographs of refugees published in the media only, their conception of refugees would inevitably be constructed by the media, highlighting what Chimamanda Adichie has termed, "the danger of a single story" (Adichie, 2009). This one-sided conception of refugees would therefore be shaken if that person were then presented with photographs from other representational genres such as vernacular photography. The representational themes in these different categories vary sharply, that one would wonder whether they portray the same subjects. Lisa Taylor & Andrew Willis note that representations from different genres, when set alongside one another, are different, even contradicting each other (Taylor & Willis, 1999, p. 40).

With this huge differences in the themes concerning refugees and displacement, debates among scholars vary depending on the genre under focus. Critics of media representation for example have noted that the image of refugees in the media betrays suffering and despondency, whereby the image of the woman and child is exploited to portray humanity at its worst (Malkki, 1995; Moeller, 1999; Wright, 2002). These scholars have concluded that such representations have led to the creation or enhancement of stereotypes of refugees in particular, and of Africa in general, as a place full of hunger and starvation (David Campbell, 2003).

On this note, Bleiker and Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007), focusing on self-representation, offer an alternative to this criticism. They adopt the concept 'plurality' to illustrate the manner in which people who in day-to-day representations would-be subjects of representation, in this case

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<sup>4</sup> Institutional photography in this study comprises photography by the mass media as well as humanitarian organizations.

children living with HIV/AIDs, utilized photography themselves (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 140). In their analyses of participatory photographs produced by these children, Bleiker & Kay (2007) commended the possibility of this photography genre to yield 'positive' images capable of countering established stereotypes. On an almost similar note, scholars focusing on humanitarian organization and personal photography of refugees and immigrants have noted that as much as such representations transgress mass media representational themes, they cannot be termed as only 'positive', since 'negative' images could emerge as well, due to the complexities that play out at the time of production (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2009; Harris, 2003; Kihato, 2007, 2010; Utas, 2005). In her study on refugee and immigrant women in South Africa for example, Kihato (2007) observes that the photographs produced by women in her study varied in representational themes ranging from portrayals of victimhood to those of agency. One participant for example photographed a bloody scene in which her sister was physically attacked, and in another photograph, her business (2007, p. 104). Kihato concludes that self-representational content cannot be termed as only 'positive' or 'negative', but that their themes vary, depending on the context and interests of its subjects at the time of representation.

Due to the marked difference in representational themes between these varied representational genres therefore, scholarly debates on the representation of displacement have largely focused on comparing these representational genres with one another, thus leading to the preference of one over the other. This is the reason why a logic of binarism of good/evil right/wrong positive/negative embeds these descriptions. In this case, photojournalism for example has been accused of being 'negative' or 'evil' in creating or reinforcing stereotypes of Africa when it portrays its subjects as desperate and hopeless victims of displacement (Bleiker & Kay, 2007; Malkki, 1995; Moeller, 1999).

With this accusation, vernacular photography has been embraced as a means capable of countering enhanced stereotypes due to its possibility to portray the 'positive' aspects of displacement. In this regard, self-representation is embraced as an alternative 'good' medium which yields 'positive' images capable of countering the stereotypical dominant representations to which subjects have been rendered (Bleiker & Kay, 2007; Lamers, 2005; Rajaram, 2002).

These discussions have therefore focused on only one genre of refugees' photographic representation respectively. Scholars focusing on photojournalism for example, have not

explored vernacular photography, yet these offer different perspectives of displacement. It is clear that studies are limited by their scope of focus, and this argument is not therefore a criticism of the afore mentioned scholarly debates, but rather points to the problem that exists in discussions of varied representational genres of portraying crises which approach them in isolation. This problem therefore paves way for the broader perspective that I adopt, an inclusive appreciation of all genres of refugees' photographic representations. This means that representation is not studied from one perspective only, but an acknowledgement of other existing representational genres is made, and all are seen as important in the comprehensive understanding of the particular phenomenon under study.

For this reason, instead of approaching varied photography genres of a group or phenomenon in isolation, focus should shift towards an inclusive approach in order to attain a comprehensive understanding. Such an approach will shift discussions from a preference of one genre of photographic representation over another, towards appreciating the different contexts in which they are produced, the varied perspectives they offer, and therefore their role in contributing towards a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study. This therefore enables the interrogation of photographic content in relation to production considerations which are determined by among other factors, the consumption and circulation aspects of those particular photographs. Debora Poole's (1997) theory of visual economy is important for such an analysis. Poole views visual representation as an economic process in which the images under consideration are seen to be products of their respective production and circulation considerations (1997, pp. 9-10). With such an approach, David Campbell notes that photographic interpretation does not therefore rest fully in the picture itself, but is constituted around forces that influence photo content such as the organizational structure and other more implicit ideological forces (2007, p. 361). In this regard, photographic representations are not analysed for what they are, but in consideration of the ends to which photographs are produced (David Levi Strauss 2003, p. 74). This is discussed in more detail in chapter three as part of the study's theoretical framework. In this regard, none of the photography genres under study are preferred over the other, but all are viewed as contributing towards a comprehensive understanding of displacement. This is because one form of representation cannot and should not be substituted for another as Debrix argues, nor should one form be vilified at the expense of a commended other, but all should be studied inclusively, so that representation can be seen as a site in which "meaning is reopened" (Debrix & Weber, 2003, pp. xxxvi).



Such a comprehensive approach to varied representational genres is made possible through the adoption of the concept of singularity in Giorgio Agamben's (Agamben, 1993) 'Coming Community', which enables the viewing of all existing representational genres as singularities that contribute to a comprehensive whole. This concept of singularity is relevant to discussions on identity which are characterised by struggles between mainstream and alternative representations. As will be seen in chapter two, subaltern struggles have been characterised by the production of alternative representation in attempts, by the concerned groups, to offer 'right' or 'correct' forms of the way in which they would like to be represented. In proposing a shift in approaches that inform such struggles which are typified by binary oppositions of 'right/wrong', 'negative/positive' arguments in discussions of identity, Lawrence Grossberg observes that initial models of oppression (referring to the isolated approach to mainstream and alternative representations), "cannot tell us how to interpret various fractions of the population" (Grossberg, 2008, p. 88). For example, a criticism of mainstream representation that does not regard the way in which both mainstream and alternative representation can mutually exist as portrayals of different aspects of the same phenomenon. In this regard, such initial models enable a focus on only one genre of representation at a time, but are silent on the existence of other representations, or of how they can be interpreted. Such an isolated approach has therefore reproduced incomprehensive analyses of varied representational genres by scholars (ibid). In this shift therefore, Grossberg recommends Agamben's singularity as a fruitful research tool (Grossberg, 2008, p. 103). In-depth discussions on the application of this concept of singularity in this study will be undertaken in chapter three.

On the other hand, in noting that representations are specific to the interests they represent, Moyo Okediji highlights the adoption of a "cultural scale" which attempts to offer a "symmetrically balanced concept of humanity" (Okediji, 2003, pp. viii). This cultural scale was utilised by Okediji & Harris (2003) in discussions of race. Harris (2003) utilized this tool to highlight the biases that arose from the two extremes of either "good" or "bad" representations, in attempts to develop a balanced concept of humanity (Okediji, 2003, pp. xi). Although I do not intend to offer a normative way of representing displacement or crises in general, Harris' and Okediji's (2003) arguments are discussed in more detail in chapter three as important contributions to the discussions of representation and identity.

## 1.2 Research Problem

In moving away from the isolated approach in the analyses of varied representational genres, this study adopts an inclusive approach. As already noted, initial research has studied varied representational genres in isolation. This has led to the criticism of the representation by institutions, in this case the media and humanitarian organizations, for portraying suffering in ways that objectify their subjects of representation (Bleiker & Kay, 2007; Burman, 1994; Malkki, 1995; Moeller, 1999). Focusing on the media representation of crises in Africa, these scholars further argue that such representations that uphold despair and suffering lead to the creation and enhancement of stereotypes. On the contrary, self-representation through modes such as vernacular or pluralist photography have been embraced as alternative means capable of overhauling established stereotypes due to their possibility to portray “positive” aspects of the subjects concerned (Wallis, 2005; Bleiker & Kay, 2007).

In this shift towards an inclusive approach to varied representational genres therefore, this research studies institutional and vernacular photography inclusively as portraying different aspects of displacement. The study argues that on their own, these genres portray only isolated aspects of displacement, which are specific to the contexts in which they are produced and consumed. In this case, neither genre should be preferred over the other, nor comparisons with each other made, but all are embraced as important in the comprehensive understanding of displacement.

Photojournalism is therefore not criticized for portraying ‘despair and hopelessness’, but interpreted in regards to the news context in which it is produced, mostly characterised by human suffering and despair. On the other hand, as much as vernacular photography’s themes appear to transgress those of dominant media, this genre is not embraced as an alternative to institutional representation, but rather interpreted as a means which broadens knowledge concerning the particular group under study. In this case, persons engaged in self-representation are seen to relay other kinds of information about them which we do not know about, or cannot get access to through the mainstream media. It should be noted though that in their photographic engagements, refugees might not place their practices in the conceptual framework of representations of displacement that this study adopts. However, since these photographic engagements are undertaken within the context of displacement, the study argues that every picture taken by refugees reflects back on their displacement. In this regard, this genre (of vernacular photography) functions to broaden already existing knowledge about the

particular group or event under study in general, and of refugees in particular to this research (Grossberg, 2008, p. 94; Horrigan, 1993, p. 166). In taking institutional and vernacular photography as overall representations of displacement therefore, the study shuns normative arguments, while giving more emphasis to their individuality as specific to the contexts in which they are produced.

This way, the study makes a contribution to the understanding of displacement in two ways. First, in studying the varied genres of representing displacement under one umbrella as spectacles of displacement, the study makes a theoretical contribution towards an inclusive approach to such varied genres. Secondly, in moving away from normative categorizations in discussing varied representational content towards embracing all as portraying different aspects of displacement, and therefore taking them as building blocks towards a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon, the study makes a methodological contribution.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The main research question is: *what are the multiple ways through which displacement is photographically portrayed and how do these contribute towards a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon?* Specific questions are:

1. In what ways is displacement portrayed through Institutional photography? How was it portrayed in the 1991/2011 crises periods and did this temporal aspect yield any new themes in the representation of displacement in the Kenyan newspapers?
2. How is displacement portrayed through Vernacular photography?
3. What are the representational codes through which displacement is photographically portrayed?
4. What kinds of power relations characterize photographic representations of displacement in the case under study?

### **1.4 A Rationale for the Study**

Much scholarly debate has been undertaken around the concept and process of representation (Malkki 1995, Moeller 1999; Okediji & Harris 2003; Grossberg 2008; Stuart Hall 2007). This dissertation makes a contribution to these debates in arguing for a comprehensive approach to the study of varied representational genres. I have attempted an inclusive study of institutional

and vernacular photography, that is, mainstream and alternative modes of representation. This approach acknowledges the existence of alternative modes of representation and determines how to study both the mainstream and alternative modes inclusively in order to attain a comprehensive understanding of displacement. In this way, subjects of representation are not just what dominant media portray about them, or what alternative modes represent, but are both at the same time. The study therefore establishes that refugees, who are subjects of most institutional representations of displacement, are not just desperate, poor and hopeless, but are also family members, students, happy, engaging in marriage, and so on, as their vernacular pictures portray. In this regard, they can be seen as not just victims *or* active agents of their own lives, but victims *and* active agents of their lives (Adichie, 2009).

This approach is therefore important to debates on scholarship and how future studies can be undertaken. Discussions on identity need to move beyond binary categorizations towards inclusive approaches of varied genres of representation. Furthermore, audiences, that is, the general public, are made aware of the one-sided media coverage of news which, according to its nature, reports only one side of a story, that is, the harrowing side. Other alternative information, no matter how important, may therefore not find their way through mainstream media of news coverage, or NGO reports. The general public should therefore take a conscious step to understand a phenomenon through other alternative modes, for example visiting other cultures to get a different perspective other than that offered by the media. On the other hand, media institutions can find ways of offering such alternative information through documentaries or feature stories as Bill Horrigan (Horrigan, 1993) suggests.

The findings of this research can also be used by policy makers to improve school curricular. Children are vulnerable to what they are taught in schools. And if only one side of a story is given, then they might not get to know of other existing knowledge. It is therefore important for education curricular to find ways of offering alternative information pertaining to different areas of knowledge such as of Africa. On the contrary, countries and subordinate groups should actively engage in offering alternative information about themselves. This does not mean a denial of mainstream representation -unless it is false-, but an attempt to offer the alternative information as well.

## 1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Research

This study analyses photographic representations of displacement by institutions as well as by would-be subjects of representation through vernacular photography. Institutions comprise media and humanitarian organisations which represent displacement in different ways since they target different audiences and are guided by principles specific to those institutions. The media mostly report crises of displacement as news, while seldom awarding feature and editorial coverage to these crises. Furthermore, crises of displacement do not occur regularly. In this case, the media coverage of news on displacement is specific to the moments when the crises occurred. Sampling of the media coverage of displacement was therefore limited to the years 1991 and 2011 when the crises were of high magnitude and regular coverage was done by the media. This sampling was limited to the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard*, which are the two newspapers with a wider readership in Kenya. These newspapers portray refugees from a newsworthy perspective just like most international media coverage would do. However, since the refugee camps are in Kenya and the crises of displacement under study were felt at a more local perspective as a Kenyan problem, the media targeted a more national audience as opposed to international media, with ongoing Kenyan issues such as government discourses at the time largely informing the attitudes towards refugees. These will be analysed in more detail in chapter four. In the news articles sampled, photographs, captions, news articles, editorials, and editorial cartoons that dealt with famine and displacement of refugees were sampled.

Sampling of the coverage by NGOs has two strands. First, considering the symbiotic relation that exists between the media and humanitarian organizations, NGOs act as official sources for news in times of crises. In this regard, humanitarian organizations offered news updates and in other cases, photographs to be used by the media in the sampling periods under study. These photographs and other surrounding information such as captions and news articles were collected through the sampling of newspaper coverage elaborated above. In the second sampling category, there exist continuous NGO activity in refugee camps after crises periods, such as trainings in tailoring, hair dressing, business management, electronics, among other capacity building programmes. These projects are meant to equip refugees with various skills which they in turn use as sources of income in order to reduce total dependency on aid. Sampling in this category of capacity building programmes was limited to a photography project carried out by two NGOs among refugees in Dadaab. After the 2011 crisis, FilmAid International and American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) conducted a photography

training project among selected refugees in Dadaab. These photographs were sampled and interviews were conducted with the specific project coordinators.

Vernacular photography sampling was undertaken in refugee camps in Dadaab. In narrowing down the research, sampling was limited to studio photography located at the various market centres in Dadaab. I sampled photographs and conducted interviews with studio proprietors. More details on the sampling procedure are undertaken in chapter three.

## 1.6 Conceptual and Operational Definition of Concepts

**Displacement** encompasses the moments in which refugees fled into Kenya due to different reasons, mostly triggered by conflict, war and starvation. As much as refugees were directly affected by these crises and were the focus of representation in most cases, representation during these moments, specifically through the media, did not focus on victims only, but also on aid, aid personnel, reasons for the refugees' flight, approaches undertaken to curb the situation, among other coverage themes that surrounded this crisis. These therefore informed the choice of the broader concept 'displacement' and not 'refugees' as the topic of research. Moeller (1999) also adopts this broader term 'displacement' in her study on the coverage of crises of famine by the US media. As mentioned earlier, photographic engagements by refugees in the camps are also taken as representations of displacement since they portray the experiences of refugees after their resettlement in Kenya.

**Genre** is understood in the sense of Norman Fairclough who defines genres as different ways of representing social life (1997). In this study, genre is used to designate the two broad varied ways of photographically portraying displacement. In this regard, institutional and vernacular photography genres of representing displacement yield different aspects of this phenomenon.

**Institutional photography** is one of the two genres under study. It comprises the media coverage of news on displacement, as well as NGO representation through development aid reports. In the first instance, the analysis of media coverage dwelt on the representation of displacement by both the media and humanitarian organizations. In this regard, while the media reported on crises of displacement, aid and aid personnel were also part the coverage in being news themselves, and in being news sources. In this regard, NGO coverage of crises of displacement could be studied through an analysis of media coverage. Media coverage was limited to the 1991 and 2011 crises periods. In this section, sampling did not focus on

newspaper photographs only, but also news articles, headlines, captions, other imagery such as cartoons and maps, editorials, and opinion editorials, in order to preserve the context to which the photographs belonged. In the second instance, NGO activity which is not news but focuses on development aid after the crisis of displacement was studied directly through an interrogation of NGO activity. This dwelt on a photography project undertaken by two NGOs among refugees in Dadaab. These two strands therefore meant that institutional photography was studied in two phases, with the first focusing on the media and included NGOs, and the second focused on NGOs only.

**Vernacular photography** is the second genre under study. In general, vernacular photography is broad to include mobile phone photography, photographs in homes, albums, shared through social media, and so forth. But as a way of narrowing down the research, the study focused on refugees' personal photographs studied through studio photography.

**Institutional / Mainstream media** is used to refer to representations of displacement by institutions. Institutions portray these crises through the mass media as news, or as fundraising tools through development aid projects and reports. Institutional photography / spectacles of displacement fall within this category.

**Alternative / Self-representation** is used to refer to representational content produced by people who in usual circumstances, would-be subjects of representation, for example people living with HIV/AIDs, or in this research, refugees (Roland Bleiker & Amy Kay, 2007). In the study, it refers to the genre of vernacular photography whose themes, without the intention of doing so, transgressed those of the mainstream media. It is clear in the study though that as much as this is the case, the representations in this genre are not embraced as 'good' or 'positive', but interpreted in regards to this particular context of belonging.

**Victimhood** is a term used widely in the study to refer to representations of refugees that uphold human suffering, despair, and a lack of agency.

## 1.7 Organization of Study

After going through the general introduction to the study in chapter one, chapter two reviews relevant literature in regards to representation. In this section, mainstream and alternative representational modes are discussed, and the need for them to be studied inclusively is

problematized. The theoretical approach and methodology of how this inclusive approach will be undertaken is the focus for chapter three.

A discussion of the study's findings begins from chapter four. This chapter discusses institutional representation, focusing on media and NGO coverage of displacement. Here, the analysis of how displacement was portrayed as news and as development aid is undertaken. Chapter five explores refugees' vernacular photographs as contributing another aspect of displacement. Here, the reasons for refugees' engagement in photography and factors influencing photographic practice in Dadaab, a largely Islamic community, are discussed. The visual codes characterizing the representation of displacement, both in institutional and vernacular photography are analysed in chapter six. The last chapter of data analysis, that is chapter seven, discusses the notion of representation and power, which largely embeds most photographic representations. The study's summary, conclusions and recommendations are made in chapter eight.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Representation and Displacement: A General Perspective**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This section reviews literature on representation and displacement. The concept of representation has received enormous attention in diverse fields of study due to its very nature to lean towards the representation of ‘others’ vis-a-vis representation by the mainstream media. This can be summed as a focus on the representation of identity. The chapter therefore begins by discussing the representation of identity in general. It then focuses on the representation of crises by institutions, dwelling on both media and NGO representation, before finally discussing alternative forms of representation. This literature review therefore acts as a background to the study’s theoretical framework in discussing the various approaches adopted in discussions of identity. In this regard, the chapter problematizes the need for a comprehensive approach to varied representational genres that this study develops.

#### **2.1 Representation and Identity: A Broad Overview**

Representation has received enormous engagement throughout history in terms of content, people engaged in the representation of others, those represented, and the views surrounding all these engagements. In most cases, subordinate groups including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disease, disability, and class, have felt inadequately represented by dominant media. These groups have engaged in struggles over these representations in ways such as producing their own self-representations, forming activist groups, scholarly publications demanding positive representation, among other active struggles over representation. The main purpose that drives these struggles is a feeling of inadequate representations from among those represented, and therefore the need for them and other outside interventions to offer adequate representations of these groups. This subject of self or alternative representation will be covered in later sections of this chapter. Meanwhile, this section discusses representation of subordinate groups in general, together with scholarly engagements around this topic.

As mentioned, most subordinate groups have felt inadequately represented by dominant media. This inadequacy emerges from a feeling that in such representations, the individual, that is, the person, is not represented, but the marker of “difference” is (Hall, 2007). Hall, who made

enormous contributions to the field of cultural studies, largely focusing on race and ethnicity observed that (Hall, 2007, p. 230)

We can't help reading images of this kind as 'saying something', not just about the people or the occasion, but about their 'otherness', their 'difference'. *'Difference' has been marked.* How it is then interpreted is a constant and recurring preoccupation in the representation of people who are racially and ethnically different from the majority of the population. Difference signifies. It 'speaks'.

In this regard, when it comes to the representation of disease, such as people suffering from HIV/AIDs, the person is not represented, but the disease itself and its effects. In such cases, subjects of representation engage in self-representation so as to bring out an aspect of themselves, something missing in dominant media.

Dominant representations are based on stereotypes, which have their origin from the period after slavery for race related representations, the industrial age for gender, or the early 1980s when HIV/AIDS was first reported, respectively. One important relationship with these origins is that there was so much unfamiliarity with the subject of representation, and 'difference' was available as the themes for representations. Brian Wallis for example in talking about the "derogatory" and "denigrating" representation of blacks observes that "African Americans lived and worked in a society dominated by a white population that generally regarded them as subservient" (Wallis, 2005, p. 2). Such feelings of inadequate representations by the mainstream media therefore fuelled the struggles for positive representations by these groups identified, and in most cases, a change in policy regarding their representations was realised.

These opposing representations, one by the mainstream media and the other by struggles from subordinate groups yield varied photographic representational themes similar to those identified by Bleiker & Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007). According to Bleiker and Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 140), there are three kinds of approaches in photography that embody different ways of understanding subjects of representation; these are the naturalist method, the humanist approach, and pluralist photography. The naturalist approach is perceived as neutral and value free, assumed to be reflecting an objective reality covered through the lens. Bleiker & Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007) dismiss the existence of such photographic patterns in their pure form and instead focus on the other two approaches. The humanist approach is the one most common in the mass media especially with regard to representation of victims of crises, and emphasizes

the gory and the dramatic. It is meant to evoke strong emotions on the viewer such as sympathy or compassion in the hope that such representations may be a ‘catalyst for positive change,’ (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 141).

The pluralist approach on the other hand follows the tradition of citizen or rather participatory journalism where the supposed subjects are empowered to tell their own story by using tools and structures, such as video or still cameras which are not usually available to them, but are a reserve for journalists in such representations of crises. Bleiker & Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 141) argue that although this approach differs from both the naturalist and humanist approaches, it shares with the latter the belief that photographs are indeed key catalysts for social change, but avoids the blunt stereotyping common in the media. Such alternative representations are seen as “good”, and therefore an antidote to existing “negative” and “stereotypical” (mostly media) representations (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 151; Grossberg, 2008, p. 90). This is a focus of discussion in the last section of this chapter that focuses on alternative approaches to the coverage of crises. The initial section that follows below focuses on the institutional coverage of crises; and as Bleiker & Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007) point out, the humanist photographic approach largely embeds such representations.

## **2.2 Visualising Displacement: A Focus on Institutions**

Institutions here refer to both media institutions and humanitarian organizations. The manner in which these institutions portray displacement is the focus of discussion in this section. Crises of displacement are made known through representation, and in most cases visual representation is utilised. Ranging from simple disasters such as earthquakes and floods to complex disasters<sup>5</sup> such as wars, conflict, and famine, all of which lead to displacement, these have been made visible to distant audiences through visual representation. The mass media has been quite instrumental in covering such crises, information which has yielded an outpouring of humanitarian support from audiences depending on the need (Moeller, 1999, p. 99).

As much as the mass media represent unfolding crises, humanitarian organisations also play a key role in representing displacement. Being the key organisations that receive and settle

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<sup>5</sup> Susan D. Moeller (1999) has defined Simple disasters as tragic natural occurrences, such as earthquakes. Complex disasters are those which were initially classified as natural or man-made such as famine but have since been termed complex due to their underlying causes, for example, famine that arises due to extended periods of conflict.

refugees in the camps, these organisations also visually represent refugees not only in times of crises of arrival into the camps, but also as a continuous practice even when refugees have fully settled. In most cases, these representation engagements are not undertaken by the NGOs alone, but in collaboration with professional photographers or the refugees themselves. These have culminated into different sets of photographic representation similar to those identified by Roland Bleiker and Amy Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007) above, with media coverage being largely limited to the humanist approach, while NGO coverage adopting either the humanist or the pluralist approaches depending on the ends to which the pictures serve. Despite being categorized under institutional spectacles of displacement therefore, media and NGO coverage of crises differ sharply due to the different photographic approaches adopted, being largely informed by targeted audiences, and the ends to which those photographs serve. The initial part of this section on institutional coverage discusses media representation, and this will be followed by a discussion of the representation by development organizations.

### **2.2.1 Media Coverage: General Overview**

“The media actually construct disasters”, noted Jonathan Benthall in referring to the fact that we may never get to know about certain disasters unless if reported by the media (Benthall, 1995, p. 27). Indeed through the media we come to learn of happenings in different parts of the world. Wherever we are, events of human interest are selected and published by different media in our proximity, through which we come to learn of those occurrences. When it comes to happenings further away from our locality, selection of news using the journalists’ news values criteria define what we come to know and what we end up not knowing in different parts of the world. Some stories are given more time and emphasis, such as politics and technological discoveries, thereby becoming common knowledge, while information deemed to be relevant only within certain localities are published within those areas.

News values guide journalists<sup>6</sup> in selecting from the many events, those which to publish as news. What is defined as news worthy therefore is not only the editor’s decision, but a product of news values, and other factors such as what is covered by leading international media agencies and the newspapers. Susan D. Moeller observes that what is given more emphasis by CNN or BBC becomes widely known and is likely to be covered by national media in other

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<sup>6</sup> Journalists is used here in a broader sense to include both news editors and journalists.

parts of the world (Moeller, 1999, p. 126). On the other hand, newspapers as print media define news for the Television (TV) and also for news magazines (Moeller, 1999, p. 98).

Davison et al (1982, p. 101) in discussing news values note that although these are seen as guiding principles for news selection processes, they also justify subjective choices by journalists. These subjective choices are not only personal, but also organizational, ideological, or connotative measures that events have to meet before being published as news. Above all, *formal* (Galtung & Ruge, 1982) and *ideological* news values (Hall, 1981, p. 231) have been identified as the yardsticks guiding news selection processes, and these are crucial in understanding the media representation of disasters.

Formal news values have been discussed variously in introduction books to journalism and media studies. They were identified by Galtung & Ruge (1982), and have been developed differently by different scholars, for example Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese (1996, p. 111) and Davison et al (1982, p. 101). In general, these do not differ between scholars, only that their explanations may differ slightly. They include threshold/impact, referring to the number of people who have been affected by an event. The higher the number, the more likely an event will receive media coverage. Secondly, unexpected/unusual occurrences make news as opposed to normal occurrences. Thirdly, unambiguity, meaning that only one interpretation of an event should be achieved, guides the manner in which news is covered. Fourthly, stories with a human element and negative information are more newsworthy as compared with other occurrences which do not involve human beings, for example. Sixth, consonance, meaning that information and the manner in which it is relayed should resonate with the audiences' world view is of greater significance. Moreover, frequency, to refer to length of time an event takes to reach its climax, so that opening ceremonies of buildings for example are more important than the construction processes, guides media coverage. Others include, continuity, to mean that news that continue to feed into already relayed information until its saturation are preferred. Apart from these, meaningfulness, to stand for the fact that the information relayed should be important to its audience; and also reference to elite nations or people or rather reference to a known principal also guide media coverage criteria. These latter two values are geographically bound since what is meaningful to a particular country may not be of importance in another. Lastly, composition, to refer to the particular medium's content requirements and the frequency with which that information is relayed, so that the requirements for a magazine will differ from those of a newspaper, is also important.

Ideological news values on the other hand are largely a factor of connotative codes. Hall defines connotative codes as “the configurations of meanings which permit a sign to signify, in addition to its denotative reference, other, additional implied meanings” (Hall, 1981, p. 226). In this sense, apart from the denotative meanings which formal news values enable a selected story or photograph to signify, connotative, or ideological news values enable the selected story to relay even deeper information. Deeper in the sense that it has been selected and inflected by the journalists to suit a particular reading which they prefer. Therefore, in the selection of news, it is not only the formal news values that matter, but also the ideological.

As Zelizer notes in the selection of news photographs,

It is not the photograph’s referentiality -its ability to present the world as is- that endures in journalism’s turn to the visual. Despite the fact that photographers and journalists have long stipulated that the referential force matters in news photographs, it is the photograph’s symbolic or connotative force -its ability to contextualize the discrete details of a setting in a broader frame- that facilitates the durability and memorability of a news image. (Zelizer, 2004, p. 130)

Ideological news values cannot be counted or pointed out, since they are mostly hidden. A news story or photograph for example can have varied ideological themes as Hall terms them. The use of different ideological themes by different news rooms will therefore “inflect” a story differently, causing one to be sensational, and another informative (Hall, 1981, p. 231). In pointing to the adoption of formal, as well as ideological news values in the selection of news images therefore, Hall concludes that “it appears, then, that the news-photo must lend itself to exploitation at the level of ... ‘formal news values’ first, before –secondly- it can signify an ideological theme” (Hall, 1981, p. 232).

In this regard, the manner in which refugees, or rather displacement is portrayed by the media, can be understood. While war reporting inclines journalists to report in a manner that suits the “surrounding mandates” on how the war should be reported (Zelizer, 2004, p. 131), there are no direct interests to media actors and governments on the manner in which news on displacement should be framed. Instead, Moeller observes that,

When covering famines, the media rarely prioritize the establishing of their objectivity –as they attempt to do when covering international diplomacy. The media take what

they believe is an unassailable position: that it is bad to let people to starve to death. Their coverage, their use of language, their choice of images all flow from that assertion. (Moeller, 1999, p. 109)

In this regard, however much images of crises seem to be objective and specific to the contexts in which they were produced, the ones selected for publication have to meet certain journalism standards. Yet in his observation, Wright argues that media representations of refugees “create a sense of the picture makers not offering an unbiased representation by photographing what is there” (Wright, 2002, p. 57). This points to the referentiality of the news image to the crisis portrayed. Most media representations of refugees are therefore informed by compassion as David Levi Strauss observes (1991:99). In justifying the use of such harrowing images, *Times Magazine* in the coverage of the 1992 Somalia crisis noted that “... if such kind of images are what capture the world’s attention ... so be it” (Moeller, 1999, p. 98).

Furthermore, Moeller highlights a one-crisis-at-a-time news selection criteria that guides international news coverage which demands that only one crisis is portrayed at a time; so that of the 1991 Somalia and Sudan crises for example, only the Somalia crisis was covered by the US media (Moeller, 1999, p. 109). Political considerations at this stage played out. Moeller observes that the reason why the Somalia crisis and not the Sudan was the focus of media coverage in the US was because the Sudan government had previously supported Iraq in the early 1980s (Moeller, 1999, p. 126). This is further discussed in detail below in regards to crises that do not receive media coverage. The selected country of focus when international media has settled on one is therefore covered without any ideological inclinations since the news concerns a humanitarian crisis. With the humanitarian angle of focus therefore, the choice of language and images are influenced by the intention to garner support for victims under crises (Moeller, 1999, p. 109). In this case, while some disasters achieve media coverage, we may never get to learn about other disasters happening in different parts of the world far beyond our proximity, meaning that starvation, death and displacement may be witnessed in those countries, but not to our knowledge. This points to Moeller’s “out of sight, out of mind” assertion (Moeller, 1999, p. 98). This section has focused on media coverage of events in general, the following dwells specifically on the coverage of famine.

### **2.2.1.1 Media Coverage of Crises of Displacement**

In reporting crises, events with a higher impact top the list of selection. These are events in which many people are affected, and therefore, the higher the number of people affected by starvation or displacement, the higher the chances that that particular occurrence will receive international recognition. Crises of famine and starvation are tragic, that in most cases, outside intervention by other countries is important. For this reason, the media becomes highly important in publicizing the crisis and justifying the need for external intervention. Since there can be widespread starvation across different parts of the horn of Africa at one moment, the media decides on the one that deserves attention as already mentioned. In this case therefore, there are certain criteria that have to be fulfilled before the famine story breaks out to international recognition (Moeller, 1999, p. 104).

Firstly, people must be starving to death (Moeller, 1999). It is unfortunate that it sometimes takes more than a year for this limit to be reached. Meanwhile, as the dry season progresses, people begin to reach into stored food reserves for sustainability, but the challenge is that there are no new harvests to replace this consumption due to the ongoing drought. At this stage, early warning signs of an impending famine are made by humanitarian organizations such as UNHCR and World Food Programme (WFP) and published as news in the media. This is however not a headline story, but appears in the world round up section as a fill-in. In most cases however, these warning signs are not acted upon since concerned governments are expected to deal with them (Moeller, 1999, p. 113). Unfortunately, this non-intervention sometimes progresses to widespread starvation and death. The irony however is that if due to government intervention or changes in the weather conditions death and starvation are not witnessed, meaning that the warning signs did not come to pass, those who announced it are accused of “crying wolf” (Moeller, 1999, pp. 101, 133). It seems therefore that even in sending out warning signs, considerations have to be made to ensure that such a call is by all means accurate so that these warning signs should be somewhat prophetic, with the hope that no one intervenes for the sake of the good name of the humanitarian organization which made it.

Secondly, causes of and solutions to the crisis must be simplified (Moeller, 1999, p. 105). This is after the warning signs were not acted upon and therefore starvation to death come to pass. In this simplification, if the crisis is about famine and starvation, then what is suggested is that food donations are needed. This crisis-solution formula in covering famine is characteristic of the media whereby a crisis is presented and the manner in which to solve it is indicated



(Campbell, 2007, p. 368). Yet a ‘simplified’ solution is not always the case. The 1992 crisis in Somalia for example was replete with conflict between different clans (Moeller, 1999, p. 109). And the reason why people suffered famine was not due to a lack of food, but an unstable political state in which nothing productive could be undertaken<sup>7</sup>. Militia groups were fighting against the government making it even difficult for aid to reach the intended people (Francis M. Deng & Larry Minear 1992, p. 84; (Moeller, 1999, p. 109). In this case, when famine struck, it was not due to drought only, but the unstable political situation in the country. Yet the media did not bring these complexities to the fore, and the US intervention was later cut short when its military was attacked by Somalia based militia at the time. Moreover, in Darfur in Southern Sudan, Campbell notes that the crises too had a political and a humanitarian strand (Campbell, 2007, p. 368). But due to the complexity of the genocide which demanded a political intervention, the media gave emphasis to the humanitarian angle which was easier to handle, by indicating that all that was needed to solve the crisis was food. Yet indeed the food donations rescued many from starvation and death, but did not solve the political crisis which is still ongoing to date. And when this humanitarian crisis recurs due to unresolved political issues, the ‘simplified’ media coverage criteria ends up reproducing crises in the future for the simple reason that the root cause of famine, which is conflict, was never dealt with in the first place. In this case, the stereotype of “Africa as a place full of hunger and starvation” is established (Campbell, 2003).

Thirdly, the crisis should take the form of a morality play, with Good and Evil framing the scenario (Moeller, 1999, p. 105). In this case, there has to be a victim, a rescuer and a villain characterizing the famine story (Moeller, 1999). As Moeller further notes, victims must appear as so, they are miserable yet innocent, thus confronting viewers with a morality call. They are also not directly quoted, although frequently photographed, and their images reveal the desperateness of the situation they are in (Moeller, 1999, p. 107; Rajaram, 2002, p. 256). They should also be credible for external intervention by the concerned countries. In this case, they should be allies of the intervening country, or at least not engaged in any terrorist activities in relation to an American intervention (Moeller, 1999, p. 105). Rescuers on the other hand comprising of relief organizations, decode the whole scenario and are the agents through which contributions reach the intended victims (ibid). They in most cases than not speak on behalf

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<sup>7</sup> As mentioned in chapter one of this dissertation, famine is sometimes complicated by a country’s instability so that its impact is not only a product of nature, but also war and conflict.

of the victims, deciding the type and amount of aid required by them; and in this way, become the heroes of the whole famine story (Rajaram, 2002, p. 248)(Moeller, 1999, p. 108). Villains are identified at later stages of intervention when efforts to curb the famine seem to be slow (Moeller, 1999, p. 109). Sometimes they are made up of militia groups frustrating the services of relief organizations, or bureaucracy within larger relief organizations such as the UN (Moeller, 1999).

Fourthly, there must be images. Photographs or moving images are key in driving the point home. They are important in not only capturing but also seizing the reader's attention (Campbell, 2003, p. 71). The trend in the print media since the "turn to the visual" is the demand for "good" and "many" pictures in reporting crises (Campbell, 2003, p. 71; Moeller, 1999, p. 37). Moeller notes that in order for a story to sail through the editorial process, there must be a continuous flow of pictures throughout the event of media attention so that "any cut off of pictures risks severing the entire story" (Moeller, 1999, p. 105). Furthermore, pictures from the disaster zone are highly regarded as compared to "stock pictures" (Moeller, 1999, p. 127). However, due to tight budgets, Campbell notes that already existing pictures are utilized and only substituted for context, so that the emergent story is not a report from the crisis zone, but a compilation at the agency (Campbell, 2003, p. 71). However, when the story picks up, then media organizations begin sending reporters to the ground, and this sometimes costs millions of dollars (Moeller, 1999, p. 126).

When these conditions have been fulfilled, the crisis receives coverage and thereby international attention and intervention. This means that after the warning signs were initially published, which marked the first stage of a famine story, the famine and starvation unfortunately progressed, translating into a second stage of reporting. At this stage, widespread death and starvation have not been experienced, although the situation seems to be worsening. The news report therefore comes as a progressive story to feed onto what has already been covered, but still appears, not as a headline, but a fill-in at the world round up section. It focuses on other issues such as government corruption and political instability in the affected region, and its impact is compared it with the 1984-85 Ethiopian famine which as Moeller points out, is still the point of reference in the media coverage of famine (1999, p. 132). Numbers of people at risk of starvation are cited at this stage based on credible sources, and photographs of not only the starving but also the military or aid transportation, will be seen (Moeller, 1999, p. 106).

If the coverage proceeds to the third stage, it is due to the presence of key government or external personnel, or celebrities signalling a moral call to action (Moeller, 1999). Meanwhile starvation is ongoing but the presence of these external people boosts the story's coverage, possibly appearing as a news headline or on the front pages of newspapers. Exaggerations are applied by reporters in speculating the impact of the crisis, and photographs of suffering and death are extensively utilized (Moeller, 1999, p. 106). The climaxing of stage three reporting coupled with gruesome images of the impacts of famine makes the event a widely published crisis. It becomes the focus of every news item and policy discussions at top government or international levels, and donations begin to pour in (Moeller, 1999, p. 107). What we come to see in the media as news on crises of displacement is therefore a culmination of all these stages of reporting.

On the contrary, in regards to the above criteria that famine stories have to meet before being published in the media, there are crises that do not meet these criteria and are therefore not published. Sometimes it is due to the failure of the early warning signs to come to pass as already mentioned, in which case concerned relief organizations are accused of crying wolf (Moeller, 1999, p. 133). In other cases however, dire crises are experienced by victims, but since their nature do not meet one or all of the criteria discussed, then they are either covered too late or not covered at all. An example is the 1984-85 Ethiopian famine. It took too long for the media to cover the crisis and therefore external intervention to be attained because the victims in Ethiopia were not considered "credible" for US intervention (Moeller, 1999, p. 105). In the first place, the then president Mengistu Haile Mariam had made it difficult for any local or international media to cover the crisis (Moeller, 1999, p. 113). He was later identified as the villain for using starvation as a weapon of war against its civilians in the North (Moeller, 1999, p. 119). On the other, Ethiopia was aligned to the Soviet Union and therefore US intervention was not an option. By the time of intervention, approximately two years after the crisis, it was "a little too late" for many (Moeller, 1999, p. 111).

In the case of the 1992 Sudan crisis, intervention was not an option since their government supported Iraq in the 80s, despite the fact that the extent of famine and starvation experienced was not any different from that of Somalia which occurred during the same period (Moeller, 1999, p. 126). Another reason to explain this is the media principle of one crisis at a time or one African story at a time. And therefore when the Somalia story had already been taken up, there was no more room for another African story (ibid, p. 127). Other reasons that a crisis is

given a media black-out is when it is out rightly difficult for the media or relief organizations to get in, either due to government constrictions as in the case of the 1984 Ethiopia crisis, or guerrilla warfare as in the case of Sudan (Moeller, 1999). In this case, the media principle of simplified problem-solution criteria does not apply, since it is difficult to offer a solution in this case. The problem with no media coverage therefore is that suffering is experienced by victims at a greater magnitude. And since many more people suffer when there are no external interventions and the vice versa is true that many more lives are saved due to this, then external intervention is important in saving lives, and the media plays a significant role.

### **2.2.1.2 Interrogating media coverage**

Studies on the mass media representation of displacement have generally concluded that the image of refugees betrays helplessness and despondency, and conjures up strong images of the ‘other’ (Clark-Kazak, 2009, p. 387; Malkki, 1995, p. 12; Wright, 2002, p. 53). These studies have equally argued that refugees have as a result become objectified and constructed as an object for our collective sympathy, if not apathy. These scholars have further argued that the visual representations of refugees and their portrayals we receive through media narratives only cause us to develop a particular picture of refugees in our minds by solidifying already existing stereotypes; which almost always comprise of a starving child, a mother staring helplessly at her dying child, men sitting idly in the camps, or sometimes, thousands of people scrambling for food portions.

The media coverage of displacement largely focuses on people in transit or in refugee camps. Campbell (Campbell, 2007) and Moeller (Moeller, 1999) observe that coverage of such crises is not normally undertaken at the localities where the famine occurred, or at least the countries, but in camps where its victims have come to seek refuge (Campbell, 2007, p. 368; Moeller, 1999, p. 103). Such a situation in itself renders horrific images on the impacts of famine which are not mere exaggerations by reporters, but real happenings. The magnitude of the crisis is in most cases so high that it in itself creates an impact. And coupled with the media’s duty to inform basing on certain principles, the coverage becomes overwhelming, and images are key in capturing the desired attention from the public (Moeller, 1999, pp. 104,117). In this regard, images of death, grave yards, starving children and women, the very old who have lost strength, just to mention a few, begin to occupy all media around us, be it newspapers, TV, or news magazines. And while this is the case, it should be noted that the media coverage of displacement is however an “occasional” event, based on occurrence and magnitude of

disasters, a coverage similar to what Bill Horrigan observes in regards to HIV/AIDS (Horrigan, 1993, p. 166).

The way in which the media represent crises can at the moment of enormous coverage be seen. Malkki observes that dominant discourses present refugees as ‘waves of humanity’ and/or ‘bare humanity’ stripped of culture and identity (Malkki, 1995, pp. 11–12). She notes that this is particularly apparent in the use of an ‘innocent’ figure, often a woman and/or a child, as the ‘conventionalized’ image of refugees

This sentimentalized, composite figure—at once feminine and maternal, childlike and innocent—is an image that we use to cut across cultural and political difference, when our intent is to address the very heart of our humanity. (Malkki, 1996, p. 388)

These images seek to express a commonality among all human beings with the aim of garnering aid. In this sense, such images universalise. This universality points to a “bare humanity” and emerges when refugees, especially in times of displacement, are rendered “citizens of nowhere”, but of the universe (Malkki, 1995, p. 11). Representations along this template depict refugees engaging in deeds “understood to be universally human”, for example tilling land (Malkki, 1995, p. 10). Malkki observes that.

Such photographs –even while displaying differences and “cultural diversity” among refugees- tend toward documenting experiences and activities that are understood to be universally human. (Malkki, 1995, p. 10)

In this regard, the featured refugees have their own individual experience or life to live, they have their own story to tell concerning their flight into the refugee camp, their own culture, yet in order to formulate the event in a manner that applies to many who went through it, and also to be able to make sense to a wider audience, such patterns that are universal and applicable to wider contexts become the option for most practitioners engaged in representation. For the sake of lowering production costs, Campbell observes that media institutions prefer images that can be used in more contexts than one (Campbell, 2007, p. 369). This yields images that are largely similar despite the crisis being portrayed.

Furthermore, the use of children or other infantilizing terms such as “tabula rasa” in describing refugees universalise the refugee experience (Malkki, 1995, p. 11). Malkki observes that “children have come to embody, more easily than adults, the universalism of a bare humanity”

(Malkki, 1995, p. 11). On the other hand, Moeller notes that “starving children” are a famine icon (Moeller, 1999). She observes that children indeed suffer most in times of crises such as starvation, but their vulnerability is even heightened when they lose their caretakers (Moeller, 1999, p. 98). Indeed even in times of calm, statistics indicate that child mortality rates and that of the old people are still higher in most African countries (Moeller, 1999, p. 104). And this is therefore only heightened in times of crises, and the media exploits this reality which has so effortlessly rendered itself, by making children the face of calamity (Malkki, 1995, p. 11).

Malkki further notes that “the refugee as a bare humanity stands, we imagine, for all of us at our most naked and basic level” (Malkki, 1995, p. 12) In this case, these universalizing terms and images remind us as viewers of what lays beneath our class, skin colour, gender, or nationality differences, which is bare humanity, and that we are not any different from those undergoing crises. In this regard, differences in terms of countries of origin, race, gender, culture, and so on, are downplayed, and the underlying concept – humanity- is embraced. Malkki observes that (Malkki, 1995, p. 12)

“The refugee” –apparently stripped of the specificity of culture, place, and history- is human in the most basic, elementary sense. The refugee as bare humanity stands, we imagine, for all of us at our most naked and basic level.

This reference to a common humanity also informed Sebastiao Salgado’s photography of the Sahel, who noted that “when an English or French or German person sees that he or she sees part of themselves, that we are all part of the human species”, then we “can save ourselves, the human species” (Campbell, 2003, p. 78).

The adoption of such representations that point to a common humanity in the media are highly effective in mobilizing action for those undergoing crises. In this regard, in identifying with a common humanity, the public offer contributions through humanitarian organizations, thereby curbing further suffering. The effect of such a mode of representation however, as Malkki observes, is that they depoliticize causes of displacement, and dehistoricize those affected (Malkki, 1995, p. 13). The factors surrounding the decision to flee are therefore not reported, but rather, refugees in camps are the focus of reporting. Causes of displacement such as extended drought that leads to famine due to political instability are therefore not reported due to their complexity, but instead refugees with a humanitarian problem whose solution is aid donation are (Campbell, 2007, p. 368; Moeller, 1999, p. 154). Yet in exploiting suffering to

point to a universal human nature, media representations appear so objective and specific to the contexts in which they were produced, eliminating the active role of journalists in making news (Wright, 2000, p. 3).

The use of such images by the media is meant to inform of escalating famine with the aim of garnering support for its victims. They are therefore used for fund raising purposes with the hope that such “images that injure” will prompt audiences to donate in support of the distressed (Ross & Lester, 2011). On the contrary, Bleiker and Kay observe that while popular representations of refugees that greatly uphold the concept of victimhood, could invoke feelings of compassion which in turn could be catalysts for positive change and trigger donor support, such images can be counterproductive (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 141). As Claire Short, the former British Secretary of State for International Support quoted by (Campbell, 2003) remarked, such pictures hurt and upset, and the more they keep coming, the more (the donors, public) flinch and turn away’ forming a perception of the issue at hand as unending ‘and confirming the position of Africa as a place of hunger and misery’ in which no solutions to the crisis could be found, and may be one of the causes of what (Moeller, 1999) calls compassion fatigue. Even the most horrific image becomes banal when it is repeated ad infinitum since it may end up normalizing suffering and thus rendering the viewer numb and indifferent (Dean, 2003, p. 88; Sontag, 1977, pp. 19–20). Terrence Wright further argues that media images of victims of conflict situations are mostly stereotyped; which only denies the subject of focus an opportunity to define themselves and construct their own identities (2000, p. 2). Such images have also been accused of continuing to feed into the colonial power-subject relationship whereby the developed west offers support to the underdeveloped or developing south (Burman, 1994, p. 241).

It should however be noted that the media utilization of horrific images to portray crises is not an exaggeration since these images represent true happenings. In this regard therefore, when news photographs we see in the media directly resemble their referents thus calling to mind the fact that they have been selected with the aid of formal news values, this in many ways subdues the fact that conscious choices that lean towards the connotative elements of the photograph have also been applied in their selection.

So far, it is clear that people experiencing famine and starvation need assistance. The media, humanitarian organizations, and other concerned parties do their part in soliciting support for

those starving. But does it have to be like that? Do we have to be compelled so far to give support? Moeller notes that the public is so responsive that after the 1992 Somalia starvation stories were reported, the US public called in to give their contributions (Moeller, 1999, p. 111) and funds for different organizations tripled (Moeller, 1999, p. 117). But it seems that when the campaign goes on for too long, or is used every year as a fundraising strategy, then media representation becomes a matter of concern, since it builds a visual tradition of representing crises, what Wright calls “an iconography of predicament”, which renders stereotypes (Wright, 2000, p. 13). This will be dealt with in the section of displacement’s visual codes. Meanwhile, scholars have identified alternative ways of representing crises. Ways that dignify subjects of representation while at the same time relaying information (Campbell, 2003, p. 77). These are discussed in the section that follows, but first a quick glimpse through representation by humanitarian organizations is next.

### **2.2.2 Representation by Development Organizations**

Apart from media institutions, development organizations are also involved in the representation of displacement. The term ‘development organizations’ here is used generally to refer to all humanitarian organizations that work with victims of crises to transfer aid from donors to its recipients. In highlighting the crises at hand and offering emergency humanitarian aid, these organizations through time shift from such engagements to empowering victims in an endeavour to assist them in moving from a state of total dependency on aid, to being independent, a process which ensures the continuity of the organization even when the crises is well past.

Whether at the time of emergency or in times of sustainability when the crisis is no longer looming but people are still in the camps, development organizations’ principles and areas of focus keep shifting to allow for the adoption of different strategies to suit new demands. Examples as already mentioned include a shift from offering emergency aid to sustainability aid in camps, after which this moves on towards empowering the displaced to gain skills which will enable them earn an income in order to become independent, whether in the camp or elsewhere. The aim of this shift is to alter relationships between the displaced and development organizations from a state of total dependency to that of independence no matter the degree, and this relieves organizations of the burden of totally providing for the displaced while enabling the victims to get on their feet again. Different countries have different models for sustaining refugees. In Uganda for example, refugees are given emergency aid, after which



they are supposed to farm in order to cater for their needs (Clark, 2007, p. 288). In Kenya on the other hand, small-scale farming is allowed, and refugees receive food rations together with other items from UNHCR in different proportions depending on, among other factors, their date of arrival in the camps, and amount of income of each family unit.

Clearly such situations of displacement call for a mediator, the development organizations, to not only offer assistance to the displaced, but also act as a link between them and the viewing public. When media organizations have done the work of informing the public of the particular crisis, these audiences, together with other funding institutions especially based in the west, may begin to offer donations. It is through humanitarian organizations based at the countries experiencing the crisis that the displaced receive assistance. What is more, the work of representation is key in not only determining the amount of attention awarded to a crisis as already seen, but also in putting to record the organization's achievements.

Representations of displacement by development organizations occur through both text and images, and are not only restricted to the organization's report outlets, but are largely utilised by the media as well as mentioned in the introduction to this section. These representations however begin with images. When displacement occurs, representations of refugees as a mass characterises most initial coverage. Malkki observes that such representation present refugees as a "sea of humanity", a whole mass of people either fleeing, or making their ways into refugee camps, or sometimes queuing for registration, while at the same time concealing their individuality (1996, p. 388). In this regard, refugees have thinking minds, individual stories to tell, or reasons as to why they are where they are at that particular moment as Malkki notes, even if on a sick bed in one of the emergency medical centres in the camp, but these facts are concealed. But the photographs do not tell us anything more than this, they are blunt. Even in attempts to quarry their basic underlying meaning through connotative analyses of the photographs, it seems such personal ingrained elements cannot be grabbed. It appears then, as Roland Barthes observes, that the photograph "evades us" (Barthes, 1984, 1981, p. 4).

Apart from fundraising strategies through news reports on crises, development organizations adopt diverse strategies in assuming their mandate to garner aid for those distressed. Malkki notes how images of crises which initially "defaced" refugees in portraying them as a mass are then converted into art objects (Malkki 1996, p. 388) or to gift cards with "matching envelopes" as Rajaram (2002, p. 253) observes. These strategies however end up "commodifying"

refugees, reducing them to aesthetic objects in art galleries, or commodities to be sold for fundraising purposes (ibid). Adverse experiences of displacement, it seems, yield objects, photographs to be consumed, which are “a slice in time”, stripped of the history of its subjects, and life after the photograph. They are like words quoted out of their contexts. They can accomplish much in terms of fundraising purposes, which could aid the particular individuals portrayed, or others in similar situations in the campaign undertaken, but in the real sense they do injustice to the persons photographed, in generalising experiences and in being used in exchange for other items<sup>8</sup>.

Development organizations work within certain parameters with particular visions and missions, which guide their engagements and ensure their sustainability. These parameters dictate their areas of focus in terms of location, so that some are mandated to work in refugee camps while others are not; or in terms of the activities they can offer, so that even in the camps, some focus on educational programmes only, while others on medical, food, and other programmes as demanded in these camps<sup>9</sup>. Such stratification ensures productive focus on an area by an organization, yet at the same time tells of the numerous development organizations existing not only in various parts of the third world, but particularly in refugee camps.

While acting within certain parameters as development agencies, these organizations limit the active engagements of the individuals they are helping, so that even while purporting to engage the displaced in self-representation programmes, these programmes are undertaken within certain boundaries. As Rajaram observes, these organizations, although they claim to speak for the displaced, bring out their (the displaced’) voices within their set parameters as aid agencies (2002, p. 246). In so doing, these organizations “read” refugees into their programmes (ibid, p. 256). This connotes the fact that the voices of the displaced are filtered to suit fundraising purposes and to ensure the continuity, without a lack of funds, for these organizations.

Another factor that conceals the identity of subjects of representations of displacement just like the photographic representations discussed above therefore is their appearance as mute or speechless victims. Even in attempts to give voice to the displaced as Rajaram (2002) notes,

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<sup>8</sup> For a similar argument see Machiel Lamers (2005, p. 48) *Representing Poverty, Impoverishing Representation? A Discursive Analysis of a NGOs Fundraising Posters*. *Graduate Journal of Social Sciences* Vol. 2, Issue 1.

<sup>9</sup> See involvements by different aid agencies in Dadaab. Some websites include <https://s3.amazonaws.com/nethope/DadaadNET-casestudy-final.pdf>, [http://www.ing.unibs.it/~cetamb/images/stories/Sito\\_CeTAMb/corsi/Corso\\_11/22\\_giugno/Management\\_of\\_construction\\_project\\_Dadaab\\_Refugee\\_Camps.pdf](http://www.ing.unibs.it/~cetamb/images/stories/Sito_CeTAMb/corsi/Corso_11/22_giugno/Management_of_construction_project_Dadaab_Refugee_Camps.pdf), <http://www.care.org/emergencies/dadaab-refugee-camp-kenya>, and <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c2.html>.

these voices are confined within certain strictures so that only particular information is raised by subjects, or in other words recorded by development organizations. This works to enhance the muting of refugee voices in the name of giving them voice.

Such muting also occurs when refugees' statements are quoted out of context, ignoring the particular circumstances and moments in which these statements were made. In the organization's working paper that Rajaram analyses, a guideline is given on how to listen to the displaced, for example, "let the participant's own words on these issues be heard" (2002, p. 256). Victim's direct quotations on whatever remarks are therefore included in organizational reports. But as Rajaram argues, such quotations, as much as they constrain participants to speak of their physical deprivations, are also stripped of the whole history and context in which they were uttered.

Apart from this, in the attempt to directly quote subjects of representation, development organizations then build an impression of themselves as objective officers without any influence on the displaced' utterances. They appear as objective researchers when indeed their subjective influence of acting within certain parameters, and allowing for information that flows in certain discourses, such as restricting talk to physical deprivations as Rajaram points out, works to mute subjects in many ways. Rajaram notes that this creates an objective distance where the voice of the refugee is lost in the process, and the "subjective influence" of the officers is down played (2002, p. 248).

There are no clear cut guidelines on how development organizations represent refugees, although these decisions are largely guided by the parameters within which these organizations operate. Rajaram points that such representations are restricted by the agendas and priorities of the agency as an aid organization (2002, p. 250, 255), so that only events of focus and populations of particular interests are largely covered. For example, if their focus is on displaced children, then displaced adults will not be part of their areas of focus even in representation. Furthermore, as Lamers points out, in the move by NGOs to appeal for refugees' needs, it is inherently the needs of the NGOs that are being appealed for, so that the organization's sustainability is ensured as earlier mentioned (2005, p. 68).

It has been argued that development organizations stratify the displaced into categories of largely gender and the vulnerable (Rajaram 2002, Clark 2007). These stratifications as Rajaram (2002, p. 258) and Clark (2007, p. 287) argue end up generalising, or rather lumping individuals

with diverse characteristics, even when possessing different characteristics at different times, into one large group of for example female, vulnerable, traumatised, children, and so forth. In other words, they overlook unique traits among these individual women for example, and the diverse traits a person can possess at different times, so that they could be vulnerable at one moment when they are ill and not vulnerable at a different time when they are in good health. Diversity is therefore marginalised in such NGO representations.

On the other hand, in their stratifications of gender, Rajaram argues that Oxfam as a development organization goes ahead to focus on women's physical needs, while ignoring more crucial factors such as religion and culture which deserve greater emphasis especially when dealing with issues of gender in situations of displacement (2002, p. 258). Furthermore, categorisation in terms of vulnerability as Clark observes coax the displaced to engage in victimcy –playing the game of vulnerable as the category demands for example acting powerless or orphaned when they are not- and this may end up exaggerating figures (2007, p. 292). No matter how well intentioned these categorisations may be in terms of easing access to focus groups, such categorizations end up representational tropes prevalent in the mainstream media. Yet representation and not the virtuous act to offer aid to victims of crises is our main focus. In this regard, victims of crises desire external intervention, but the manner in which institutions carry out their work of representation is at times problematic. It is therefore worthwhile to examine alternative ways of representation that have been undertaken in an attempt to correct, or offer alternative ways of representing crises. These are discussed below.

### **2.3 Self-representation: An Alternative Approach**

With so much ongoing debate concerning the representation of crises in dominant ways that are thought to objectify subjects of representation, scholars have explored alternative ways of representation. These scholars have attempted to figure out alternative ways of picturing crises, ways that do not fall back into portraying suffering and despair, thereby reproducing stereotypes of Africa as a place full of hunger and starvation. These alternatives range from pluralist photography, responsible documentary photography / photojournalism, a focus on the crisis itself and not people, and lastly, vernacular photography. These are the focus of discussion in this section. Vernacular photography will be discussed in more detail in the section that follows.

To begin with, Bleiker & Kay identify pluralist photography as an alternative mode of representation (Bleiker & Kay, 2007). Apart from the “naturalist” and “humanist” modes of photography discussed earlier on, Bleiker & Kay applauded pluralist photography for its possibility to produce content which transgresses representation by mainstream media, thereby overcoming established stereotypes (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 141). This photographic approach involves the production of photography content by people who would otherwise be subjects of mass media representation. Having its roots from Debrix’s (Debrix & Weber, 2003) ritual of pluralization, this approach involves handing cameras to the people identified, and asking them to photograph what best describes their situation (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 151). Bleiker & Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007) analysed photographs which were taken by children living with HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia. Away from subjects being portrayed as only “sufferers” which is the staple for dominant media, other realities, for example, of being “a child, a christian, a member of a family, part of a social community”, and so forth, are highlighted (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 156). In this regard, as Bleiker & Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007) observe, this mode of photography yields information we may never get to learn of through the mainstream media. For this reason, this type of approach offers voice to subjects of representation, and has the possibility to overhaul stereotypes by offering other realities largely marginalized by dominant media (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 152).

Another photography approach that yields alternative content emerges from photographer’s responsive coverage of crises. David Campbell observes this in regards to Sebastiao Salgado’s coverage of Ethiopia’s 1982-4 famine crisis. Campbell, observes that

These images disclose more than the standardized images of famine. People are shown in “more active and clear-cut situations: caring, fleeing, hiding, grieving, and burying their dead”. Ethiopians are not just helpless; although in need of assistance, they are seen working for one another in the provision of aid, and the observed rituals surrounding the deceased demonstrate that life is not regarded as cheap, or that the severity of the circumstances has curtailed culture. (Campbell, 2003, p. 74)

In essence, this type of photography dignifies the subject of representation in highlighting the difficulty of the situation they are going through, yet at the same time pointing out their active role throughout the process of suffering. This is unlike media representations that only portray suffering and despair, coupled with passivity of the subjects represented. David Levi Strauss

quoted in Campbell notes, in regards to media representation that “those other images end at pity or compassion”, while “Salgado’s images begin at compassion and lead from there to other recognitions” (Campbell, 2003, p. 77). These other realities, just like Bleiker & Kay observe, would include family relations, religious beliefs, rituals, in essence, things that people still hold on to despite the difficulty of their situation. In his interview quoted in Campbell, Salgado observes in regards to his arrival in an Ethiopian camp and his difficulty to begin photographing due to the desperateness of the situation until he adjusted, that

So you start to photograph and after a few more days you start to see the human qualities of the people, not just their pain. You see that they have hope. That is the most human quality for me – hope. And maybe after three weeks in the camp you even begin to smile, like the old people in the camp who smile through their desperation. They have hope to go ahead and fight for their lives. Hope becomes your way of life. (Campbell, 2003, p. 77)

This analogy offers a description largely marginalized by dominant media, yet similar to what Bleiker & Kay identify, that victims are not just “sufferers”, but possessors of other realities already mentioned, and virtues such as hope as well (2007, p. 156). Photography that brings out these other realities is indeed an alternative, and quite beneficial in overcoming already established stereotypes.

In an extensive study of Gideon Mendel’s work, Campbell observes that a long term focus on a subject by photographers produces pictures different from that of the mainstream media. Mendel began his project of photographing HIV/AIDS in a hospital in Malawi by portraying the patient’s “wait for medical attention, the sparse conditions for treatment, the impact of the disease on their bodies, and the funerals that inevitably followed” (Campbell, 2008, p. 76). In essence, representations that replicated established stereotypes of the disease, and of Africa in general. Mendel’s work however metamorphosed through time, towards portraying his subjects in a more “positive” light. Mendel observed that after

Working on this issue over the years, I have found I have really had to challenge myself and my way of approaching the subject. I’m much more concerned about portraying people in a more positive, individualized way... (by) turning the camera not just on the sick, the dying and grieving, - the harrowing images with which we have all become familiar- but on the positive steps being taken to tackle the crisis and the people fighting

for a healthier future ...photographing people living and working with HIV/AIDS in a less documentary, more conceptual manner. (Campbell, 2008, pp. 79–80)

Such reflexive photojournalism, just like pluralist photography and Salgado's work, dignify their subject. They acknowledge that life moves on no matter what a person is going through, and is therefore focused on highlighting this other reality, unlike the work of the mainstream media.

In his probe towards identifying a form of visualization that still visualizes the crisis without yielding stereotypes, Campbell observes that a photojournalism that focuses on the crisis itself, rather than the people affected by it, would be the best form of representation (Campbell, 2007, p. 379). In times of war or famine, such a focus would be on burning houses or empty food stores for example, and not on the people fleeing into refugee camps.

Bill Horrigan on the other hand identifies a need for media institutions to also offer feature stories in the coverage of an otherwise stereotyped issue, so as not to dwell on news only. Horrigan observes that

Typically absent from mainstream media's attention to AIDS is what is journalistically understood as feature coverage: reporting and explanation of issues, individuals and occasions not linked to breaking "hard" news, thus relatively free of all the overdeterminations of partisanship and sensation attached by nature to that which has been qualified for presentation precisely as news (Horrigan, 1993, p. 171).

This shifts our focus towards media coverage and the selection of newsworthy events. In this case, following news selection criteria discussed above, much of what has been discussed in this section as alternative ways of representation would not find their publication as news. News demands the coverage of a timely breaking news event, in the shortest time possible.

As Horrigan (Horrigan, 1993) observes therefore, feature stories would offer more space and time, and thus a possibility for in depth interviews that would yield stories and images contrary to the mainstream news. This acknowledgement of news selection criteria and the limited space and time available for news coverage therefore shuns the discussion outright from vilifying mainstream representations of events, or extolling alternative modes of representation, towards appreciating the varied contexts in which they are produced and embracing all as offering different aspects of the same event. As Campbell observes, photographic analysis should move

beyond positive/negative, or right/wrong towards appreciating the possibility of alternative representation to overhaul established stereotypes (Campbell, 2008, p. 112). Another photography approach that yields alternative content is vernacular photography. This is the basis for discussion below.

### **2.3.1 Vernacular Photography**

A lot has been done concerning vernacular photography especially in the last two decades. Being a sort of genre that was largely ignored due to its amateurish nature (Chalfen, 1998, p. 215), scholars have identified the vast amount of knowledge that can be gained out of it. In speaking of previous anthropological research that largely ignored visual media, Murdock & Pink argue that “by capturing emotional expression, facial and body language, and emotional relations, they foreground dimensions of representation that have escaped from the prison house of language and are missing from accounts constructed solely on the basis of interview transcriptions” (Murdock & Pink, 2005, p. 153). This expression dwelt on the visual in general, to include other forms such as film and video. But as Chalfen observes, scholars have been drawn towards studying “professionally produced renditions of life” (Chalfen, 1998, p. 215). In media studies, this means a focus on photojournalism and other forms of “mass media” such as newspapers, television, radio, and so forth, and a great leap towards social media such as twitter and facebook, while neglecting this form. While social media are also produced by the people, meaning ‘unprofessional’ just like vernacular photography, it seems that its focus was made possible due to the ‘digital turn’. For this reason, there is nothing really outstanding that ignited the study of vernacular photography previously. This has therefore changed in the recent past, with scholars developing it as an area of research in visual anthropology, communication studies, feminist studies, art history, among others fields. As scholars have observed, it is for the very reason of amateurism, perceived minimal intellectual knowledge, and relevance to a smaller audience that interest should be given to them as objects of research (Geoffrey Batchen, 2001; Patricia Holland, 2006; Richard Chalfen, 1998).

Vernacular photography has been defined to mean “ordinary photographs, the ones made or bought (or sometimes bought and then made over) by everyday folk, the photographs that preoccupy the home and the heart but rarely the museum or the academy” (Batchen, 2001, p. 57). These also refer to those pictures of our family and friends that we possess. Batchen’s definition is broad in the sense that it comprises all other forms of photography that fall under this definition such as private, personal, or family photographs. These have also been termed



snapshots (Chalfen, 1998), but all these fall under the vernacular due to their ‘unprofessional’ nature.

Apart from institutional representation, this study focuses on vernacular photography as well. Indeed much attention has been awarded these types of photographs in the recent past, with Geoffrey Batchen focusing on rewriting the history of photography to include these largely marginalized pictures (Batchen, 1997, 2001). Patricia Holland (Holland, 2006) centres her argument on studying these photos for what they are, rather than as examples of technological improvements in the history of photography. Richard Chalfen (Chalfen, 1998) on the other hand focuses on home photography, offering methodological and theoretical guidelines on how this can be studied. In regards to identity, much has been undertaken concerning African Americans’ vernacular photography, for example by Brian Wallis (Wallis, 2005) and Deborah Willis (2005). Wallis and Willis (2005) explored the manner in which African Americans utilized this genre in a conscious endeavour to offer a “true” or “positive” representation of themselves. Further away from the West, studies have been undertaken concerning Yoruba photography in Nigeria (Sprague, 2003) and studio photography in Kenya (Behrend, 2003). With the ‘digital turn’, much attention has been undertaken on production and sharing (Radley, 2010; Sun, 2012; Wagner, 2011). This is not a complete list of vernacular photography studies, but offers an overview of the manner in which the focus has been undertaken.

Vernacular photography yield photographs that portray the manner in which people wish to see themselves, in mostly more positive ways. Chalfen observes that

Makers of snapshots and family albums seem to be devoted to producing a special kind of truth about life, a particular biased view of human experience. This use of cameras develops one of our photographic versions of life ... a preferred version of life that will outlive us all” (Chalfen, 1998, pp. 228, 230)

On the other hand, Gillian Rose observes that family photographs portray their subjects as happy (Rose, 2003, p. 6), while Wallis observes that when African Americans increasingly gained access to photography, they “began to reproduce aspects of social life that, while never free from oppression, at least began to rise above it” (Wallis, 2005, p. 9). This characteristic of vernacular photography to portray subjects in their best moments in time, in comparison to dominant images of displacement, yield themes that largely transgress that of dominant media.

In this regard, subjects are portrayed to the private realm of close family and friends, in ways that do not match mainstream media portrayals of crises to the public, but transgress them.

In her study of the ‘Walnut’ collection, photographs of Estonian refugees who flew to Sweden then to Canada, Lynda Mannik observes the striking difference of their themes to those of mainstream media which are largely stereotypical (Mannik, 2012). Mannik recounts reactions from her audiences who argued that the people in the photos “did not look like refugees” due to the “men’s clean shaven faces and women who looked like they were wearing a hint of lipstick” (Mannik, 2012, p. 263). Mannik notes how in her presentations, she belaboured trying to defend their ‘refugee-ness’. Other reactions from her audiences included, “they don’t look like they are suffering at all”, or “they look normal and rich” (Mannik, 2012), observations that insinuate audience’s expectations of how refugees should look like.

This is because of the very nature of vernacular photographs to transgress dominant themes. They are produced in a very different context from that of mainstream media, for very different reasons, and to a very different audience. Yet for the very same reasons, these representations should not be treated as “unproblematic representations of social reality” (Murdock & Pink, 2005, p. 153). They should not be studied in opposition to that of the mainstream media, but as specific to the contexts in which they were produced. As discussed earlier on, most media representations of displacement are produced as news, and therefore portray horrific images of humans in despair. On the other hand, vernacular photographs are produced in moments of calm, for a very different type of audience. These two contexts vary sharply, and their images should not be compared with one another. Rather, vernacular photographs should be interpreted for what they are, as offering another aspect of displacement largely marginalised. Historian Robin D.G. quoted in Brian Wallis observes in regards to photographs of African Americans that

Study these photographs, and you’ll discover in the gaze and gestures of ordinary African-Americans a complex and diverse community too busy loving, marrying, dancing, worshipping, dreaming, laughing, arguing, playing, working, dressing up, looking cool, raising children, organizing, performing magic, making poetry, to be worried about what white folks thought about them. (Wallis, 2005, p. 9)

These are themes that characterise most of the pictures we possess. They are mostly taken not in consideration of what the mainstream media does, but for the simple need of images of

oneself and those of close family and friends. In regards to what Robin describes, they transgress dominant representations people have been rendered without the intention of doing so. Scholars have observed the striking similarity of these pictures across families (Chalfen, 1987, p. 142; Halle, 1993, p. 104; Stewart, 1984, p. 49), meaning that beyond culture, race, class, and so on, the pictures taken are largely similar. Refugees in Dadaab possess such photographs too, and these are a focus of analyses in this dissertation. In essence, vernacular photographs portray daily life, and though not with a conscious aim to transgress dominant representations, do so, due to their very nature.

As much as this is the case, their themes should not be compared with those of the mainstream media. The reason why this is so, as already noted, is due to the clear varied contexts in which they are produced and consumed. Yet unfortunately, most scholarly arguments have tended to do so. They have largely been analysed in the logic of binary oppositions of good/evil, right/wrong. But what if they are taken for what they are? For example, viewing representations of crises by the media as portrayals of unfortunate events, while at the same time analysing vernacular photography as offering a different aspect of displacement? What if a comprehensive approach towards varied genres of photographic portrayals of displacement is adopted? This is what this study aims to investigate.

The review in this section has offered an understanding of representation in both the mainstream and alternative media, stressing their specificity to the contexts in which they are produced. In this regard, as much as their themes differ, even contradicting one another, the argument of the need to view these representations as portraying different aspects of displacement which combine to offer a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon has been developed. For this reason, using Agamben's (1997) singularity, it is possible to study these representations inclusively, and to interpret them individually as specific to those particular contexts to which they belong, thus avoiding binary comparisons. The theoretical foundation for such a comprehensive approach is further undertaken in the chapter that follows.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Theoretical Framework

#### 3.0 Introduction

This study investigated varied photography genres and contexts through which displacement was photographically portrayed. The aim was to analyse the representation of displacement as multiple in acknowledging the existence of varied photographic representations of this phenomenon. Focus was however not only that of description, but also of attempting to find a way of studying institutional and alternative media content inclusively, while at the same time analysing the discourses that characterised these representations at different moments in time. Furthermore, the study analysed the visual codes that informed the representation of displacement in general, as well as highlighting issues of power relations that embedded these photographic representations. Analysis was limited to two photography genres, that is, institutional and vernacular photography. Institutional photography comprised the news coverage on crises of displacement in two of Kenya's leading newspapers, *The Daily Nation* and *The Standard* newspapers, whose sampling was restricted to the 1991 and 2011 crises periods. Apart from these, photography by humanitarian organizations also falls within this genre. This comprises a photography project by American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in collaboration with Film-Aid International among refugees in Dadaab, North-Eastern Kenya. In this project, participants produced photographs as part of the project assignment which in this study, exhibits the manner in which displacement through development aid was photographically portrayed. Vernacular photography comprised personal photographs of refugees sampled through studio photography in Dadaab.

Institutional and Vernacular photography belong to different genres, even academic disciplines, in the study of photography. In most cases, these two have been studied separately, with a thriving sub field of vernacular photography, while media studies largely focuses on institutional photography, mostly photojournalism. In focusing on displacement as subject of representation therefore, this study investigated the manner in which this phenomenon was portrayed through both institutional and vernacular photography. In this regard, it moved beyond the study of institutional and vernacular photography in isolation, towards an inclusive approach that analyses both genres without a bias to any of them.

For this reason, I anchored this study to scholarly debates that call for the comprehensive understanding of events by treating representations from diverse genres as “fragments of a whole to which they represent” (Shapiro, 1988, p. 5). This way, normative categorizations in discussing varied representational genres are shunned, while emphasis is given to the differing contexts in which they are produced as a way of appreciating the specific genres to which they belong (Campbell, 2008; Grossberg, 2008, p. 102; Mitchell, 2005; Okediji, 2003; Shapiro, 1988). These debates have however not been aligned to one particular theoretical foundation. Rather, scholars have approached the subject from diverse points of view. I therefore review these various approaches in this section, and adopt Giorgio Agamben’s Singularity as a framework that allows the inclusive study of these varied representational genres. Apart from this, Deborah Poole’s *Visual Economy* (1997) and Norman Fairclough’s (2001) critical discourse analysis are useful theoretical and methodological frameworks for this research.

As the title of this study suggests, the term ‘spectacle’ forms a basis for anchoring these diverse genres as comprising spectacles of displacement. This term, the ‘spectacle’, is therefore adopted more as a technical term, rather than an evaluative tool. Since the spectacle constitutes the varied genres of photography, Agamben’s (Agamben, 1993) concept of singularity is important in appreciating the context specificity of these genres, while avoiding comparisons and normative arguments. This chapter therefore focuses on discussing the study’s theoretical foundations. In order to arrive at these theoretical choices, the initial phase of grounded theory in undertaking research was adopted. This section begins by discussing the use of grounded theory in this research. It then interrogates the place of the subaltern in scholarly research, explores different approaches adopted in the study of varied representational genres, before moving on to the theory of singularity. The theory of the spectacle as a technical tool is then reviewed briefly, before dwelling on the theory of *Visual Economy* (Deborah Poole, 1997) and the theory of discourse (CDA linked to Norman Fairclough, 2001) as the study’s main theoretical and methodological frameworks. These discussions in the end lead to the study’s methodology which is outlined in the final section.

### **3.1 Grounded Theory**

The study began with a few photographs produced by refugees which I fortuitously got to work with during my internship at the NGO in Kenya mentioned above, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). These photographs were produced by refugees in a youth capacity building project undertaken by AFSC in collaboration with Film-Aid International among

refugees in Dadaab. The pictures portrayed refugees as clean, not hungry, and engaging in various activities such as children playing and men and women engaged in business. They immediately challenged and disrupted my knowledge of refugees then. My knowledge of refugees, which was a product of media representation, was informed by images of despair and hopelessness, portraying refugees in moments of crises when they were in need of help. This prior knowledge of refugees was immediately disrupted when I stumbled upon the pictures they produced of their experiences in the camps. With this contradiction, I began my dissertation journey of studying these contradictory pictorial representations of refugees. The initial literature I read on identity compared these contradicting pictures with one another thereby criticizing media representation for portraying refugees as desperate and hopeless, while at the same time embracing self-representation as ‘good’ alternative modes capable of transgressing dominant representations, which in the long run would be effective tools for overhauling stereotypes of misrepresented groups (Roland Bleiker & Amy Kay, 2007).

Some scholars have however pointed to the context specificity of varied representational genres, and called for the need to shun such comparison, and instead appreciate the varied contexts in which these contradictory representations are produced (Moyo Okediji, 2003; Caroline Wanjiku Kihato, 2007, 2010; Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2003). These arguments made sense to me since I understood, having come from Kenya and witnessed refugees in moments of displacement, that indeed the media in such moments reported facts, which were news, in which case they did not lie about people in crises (David Campbell, 2007). Furthermore, as journalistic texts, it was important to note that the news articles were not made up in a bid to portray refugees ‘negatively’, but were largely accurate happenings which were newsworthy at the time they occurred. However, these remarkable contributions which I could so readily apply in my study seldom offered theoretical or methodological directions of how such an appreciation of context could be undertaken. In this regard, while the studies argued for an appreciation of context, their arguments ended there, without a word on how this could be undertaken. I therefore adopted grounded theory in finding my way forward.

For this reason, after the broad literature review had been undertaken, I conducted prior fieldwork, comprising of interviews with the above mentioned NGO personnel, photography editors in the two newspaper organizations under study, and photo studio proprietors. I also sampled news articles on displacement and photographs produced by refugees both under the project initiative mentioned above and among photo studios in Dadaab. With these, I

categorized photographic representations of displacement into four categories of media (by journalists), commissioned (by journalists for NGOs), NGO (by refugees for NGOs), and self (by refugees for themselves), representations. I later on merged these into two broad categories of institutional and vernacular photography.

With the initial arguments on the need to appreciate photographic contexts, I adopted grounded theory in determining the theoretical framework under which I could study these varied representational genres. I utilized Agamben's (1993) concept of singularity which enabled the inclusive study of varied representational genres, and therefore the formulation of research questions. Grounded theory could still have been useful to the end of the study especially following the contributions of Adele E. Clarke (Clarke, 2003) on situational analysis and her adoption of discourse analysis to grounded theory, a useful endeavor as well. However, this could have been workable in undertaking an in-depth analysis of only one photography genre considering the limited PhD time-frame I had. The much qualitative work undertaken in grounded theory would have been relevant in focusing on only one genre and thereby asking research questions in regards to that particular genre. This would in the end only have been useful in studying institutional representation which is largely laced with ideologies and power relations. Yet my aim was to study these varied genres inclusively. For this reason, singularity was the more adoptable point of view in offering a way of approaching these varied genres as important singularities in the comprehensive representation of displacement. Deborah Poole's (Poole, 1997) theory of visual economy and discourse analysis (linked to Norman (Fairclough, 2012) also proved as important theoretical and methodological frameworks that I adopted in undertaking data analyses. These are discussed in more detail in the sections that follow.

### **3.2 Approaches in studying Mainstream and Alternative Representations**

As mentioned earlier, mainstream and alternative photographic representation are generally restricted to independent investigations in media studies. In this case, most studies have focused either on mainstream or alternative representation in isolation, and not both of them inclusively. Some studies that have attempted to study both of these representations have separated their discussions into two independent sections which focus on each genre separately (Cartner, 2009). In photography, institutional and vernacular photography belong to separate fields of study, with institutional photography, mostly photojournalism, being a focus of media studies, while vernacular photography is an emerging field, with its roots in art history and communication studies. Geoffrey Batchen (Batchen, 1997, 2001) and Richard Chalfen

(Chalfen, 1979)(Chalfen, 1987) have largely pioneered research in this field, a move which has received support mostly in communication studies, visual anthropology, and art history. What is actually evident is that the investigation of the alternative, in this case vernacular photography is still a new field, dating to the early 1980s. It is not the case that the alternative did not exist, but as Richard Chalfen indicates, was largely ignored, due to its characteristic as largely amateurish (Chalfen, 1998, p. 215).

The possible reason for this isolated approach to the analysis of varied representational genres is that most research frameworks such as media studies' research tools and theoretical approaches are largely limited to one genre of investigation at a time, although largely restricted to the mainstream. Most photographic genres as dealt with by media studies are therefore restrictive to anyone interested in studying alternative representation, or both of these fields inclusively. There exists however emerging studies that have argued for inclusive approaches to varied representational genres. These are reviewed later below after first tracing the way in which the subaltern has been theorised in different theoretical contributions.

### **3.2.1 Charting the Place of the Subaltern in Scholarly Debates**

Active scholarly debates have been undertaken in the field of representation and specifically with regards to 'alternative' voice, or the discussions of the 'other'. As observed in chapter two, subordinate groups often located through gender, race, class, disability, disease, have engaged in active struggles over their representation by the mainstream media being motivated by different factors, among which are to offer an alternative "true" version of themselves (Harris, 2003, p. 9). The foundation of these struggles should be understood, not in terms of representational content, but rather the theoretical inclinations that inform them and their analyses. This is in acknowledgement of the fact that in regards to representational genres, certain considerations, such as targeted audience or underlying interests inform representational content. The problematic is therefore with theoretical foundations that inform discussions of subaltern struggles. For example, how can alternative forms of representation, whose themes largely differ from those of dominant media, be analysed without vilifying representation by institutions? And to which theoretical positions can subaltern struggles be aligned?

These questions have characterised scholarly investigations that sought to question and later on embrace the heterogeneity and discontinuity of history, as opposed to a homogeneous,



continuous, and totalising perception that characterized ‘western Marxism’ as is widely termed. These investigations therefore began from the point of view that original Marxism was inadequate in offering heterogeneous accounts to history, and therefore to other segments of society apart from class. As Young observes, history, and not Marxism’s class struggles, or the concept of economics, or the state, among other concepts which were more characteristic of Marxism, was the focus around which scholarly attention was paid (Young, 2004, p. 55). This focus on history opened up Marxism so as to cater for struggles from other oppressed groups in society such as women and race, and to include struggles from outside of Europe and North America. In essence, it enabled subaltern voice to be brought into the limelight and theorised for what it was. This began after Georg Lukács stressed that history, and not economics, was more important in the methodology of Marxism (Lukács, 1971). In this view, Lukács defined Marxism as a historical method, and emphasized the importance of dialectics and totality in Marxist science.

This conception of Marxism as a historical method is therefore what preoccupied debates from this time henceforth. It is not really the case that the scholars who sought to modify Marxism, some of who are briefly discussed below, had a problem with the entire Marxism, or with history as such, but rather how it was conceptualised, as a continuous totality, that was largely Eurocentric (Young, 2004, p. 3). Young observes that Marxism was criticized for offering a totalizing, Eurocentric account of history which could not “accommodate other forms of exploitation” such as oppressed segments of society within the developed west, or struggles outside of Europe and North America (Young, 2004, p. 5). This totalising account therefore divided society into the bourgeoisie and the working class, neglecting other marginalised categories such as gender, race, sexuality, disease, or the third world, that could not simply be lumped into the category of the working class. The scholars who modified Marxism therefore sought to understand how history could be re-theorised as multiple, as opposed to a single, universalised, largely Eurocentric approach (Young, 2004, p. 2).

Mao Zedong’s resistance against communist rule in China led him to reformulate the revolutionary agent from Marx’s industrial workers to the peasantry (Young, 2004, p. 14). Communist rule, even across Europe, was Marxist, and its revolutionary agent was the industrial workers. Zedong’s reworking of the revolutionary agent as the peasantry and not industrial workers therefore opened up Western Marxism to include, not only struggles in countries outside of Europe and North America (because China was here the focus of Zedong),

but also struggles by oppressed groups, even within the industrialised west (Young, 2004). Young observes that

The shift of the third-world radical left, following Mao, towards peasant struggle, towards a politics of the subaltern, that is, all constituencies of the oppressed ... not simply one specific economic class of the industrialized countries, represents the major innovation of Marxist tricontinental thinking in the second half of the twentieth century, one which continues to inspire peasant movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America today, as well as providing the basis for much postcolonial politics. (Young, 2004, p. 15)

This new tricontinental view to Marxism therefore liberated it from its Eurocentric focus. The anticipated revolution was now to be realised, not from the industrial workers of the west, but anti-imperialist struggles across the world (Young, 2004, p. 15). While contradicting this view of the revolutionary agent being the peasantry and not the industrial worker, Althusser reformulated the view of history as a pluralistic one. Althusser noted that society was composed of “a plurality of instances that were different from each other since each was composed of peculiar time” (Althusser & Balibar, 1971, ©1970, pp.99–100). This gave rise to the understanding of history as heterogeneous, as compared to its Hegelian understanding as homogeneous (Young, 2004, p. 91). While remaining within the Hegelian Marxism, Satre developed his politics beyond eurocentricism (Satre, 1965). Later on Fanon developed Satre in “the wretched of the earth”, arguing that in Marxism, the oppressed people in society, such as women, sexuality, race, and so on, were largely invisible (Fanon, 1967). This argument was highly influential to the development of alternative voice.

Following this background of largely Mao Zedong and Althusser, a heterogeneous understanding of history was developed further through postcolonial theory (Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha) and Poststructuralism (Jacques Derrida & Michel Foucault). Postcolonial theory has its roots in anti-colonial struggles, and the aim is to broaden Marxist perspective to include struggles in the third world countries, and other oppressed segments of society. Poststructuralists on the other hand shun homogeneous accounts of history, developing rather a heterogeneous perspective. Jacques Derrida for instance develops the notion of differential histories, meaning multiple rather than a single narrative, different in type and rhythm and the mode of inscriptions (Derrida, 1981, pp. 57–58). Derrida sees history as a text,

noting that it is in writing, namely, inscription, that history is realised. Foucault on the other hand is concerned in developing a discontinuous account of history, which is also general (Foucault, 1970, 1972). According to him, there are discrete temporalities characterising different histories as opposed to a unity of time characterising a grand historical narrative, neither of which are subordinate or reducible to the other. In this perspective, Foucault develops the notion of same versus the other, and adopts Canguillem's contribution that historical method is heterogeneous, in that there is no single method applicable to the whole range of different histories. In his notion of a "total" versus "general" history, Foucault observes that general history "opens up a field in which one could describe a singularity of practices" (Foucault, 1978, p. 19). This means a definition of the other without reducing it into the same. This notion of singularity is what Agamben further develops, and is discussed a little later as part of the study's theoretical foundation.

The theoretical discussions above have therefore sought to understand how history could be re-theorised as multiple as opposed to a single, universalised, largely Eurocentric approach. These developments have enabled subaltern voice in two ways; firstly, this is in enabling subaltern struggles from other oppressed segments of the society even within the West, such as gender, sexuality, race, disease, as opposed to a focus on industrial worker's struggles only. Secondly, it is in moving beyond a Eurocentric focus, to account for struggles outside of Europe and North-America, such as struggles for independence in Africa. These academic endeavours were therefore fruitful in enabling subaltern voice as Paul Gilroy in his writings on race observes (Gilroy, 1987). In alluding to the benefits of the feminist movement, Gilroy notes that subaltern voice was initially marginalised by a "sex and race blind Marxist science, which had either ignored or provided reductionist accounts of racial and gender conflict" (Gilroy, 1987, p. 281). Gilroy here uses the term "reductionist" to denote resistance by some scholars over the criticism of Marxism as gender and race blind. Callinicos in his criticism writes that

Feminists and black nationalists often complain that the concepts of Marxist class theory are 'gender-blind' and 'race-blind'. This is indeed true. Agents' class position derives from their place in production relations, not their gender or supposed race. But of itself, this does not provide grounds of rejecting Marxism, since its theoretical claim is precisely to explain power relations and forms of conflict such as those denoted by the terms 'nation', 'gender' and 'race' in terms of the forces and relations of production. (Callinicos, 1987, p. 177)

This criticism highlights the resistance on modifications to Marxism by scholars who remain in the rather traditional form of Marxism, using it to analyse society. This tradition is actually useful in discussing mainstream forms of representation, such as institutional representation in this study. One of the foci in such analyses is to understand how power and ideology inform media content, and the way in which hegemony functions to maintain the status quo. The media is actually quite useful in our lives today, and as has been mentioned already, portrays issues in certain ways guided by certain principles. Representation of crises as news is therefore specific to this news context, and in many cases than not, news on crises portrays victimhood, and should be interpreted as such. These approaches are however restrictive in that they enable the study of only one representational genre at a time, giving preference to institutional representation.

The contributions that led to the modification of Marxism to include subaltern voice are therefore useful to this study. They pave the way to the study of alternative representation, a largely marginalised genre in academic research. And apart from bringing in alternative voice, the study interrogates institutional representation as well, meaning that it gives focus to both institutional and alternative representation inclusively. Agamben's (1993) theory of singularity, as Lawrence Grossberg (2008) suggests, is quite useful for such an endeavour. The above section, in charting the place of the subaltern in academic research, has at the same time traced the origin of Agamben's singularity. As Young observes, the project of modifying Marxism by theorists was "an attempt to isolate and foreground singularity as opposed to universality ... a form of knowledge that respects the other without turning it into the same" (Young, 2004, p. 41). This theory of singularity therefore, apart from accommodating alternative voice, enables the study of both genres for what they are, and therefore shunning comparisons. It is a focus of discussion a little later. First we examine recent approaches to the analyses of representational content.

### **3.2.2 Mainstream versus Alternative in Representation: Approaches**

The assumption of this study is that different genres of photography portray different aspects of displacement. The aim of this study therefore is to attempt to study these varied genres inclusively so as to obtain a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon, without bias to any of the genres. Important research on the representation of displacement have been undertaken by different scholars. However, most of these works have studied these genres in isolation. Media representation critiques for example have noted that the image of refugees in

the media has betrayed suffering and despondency, whereby the image of the woman and child has been exploited to portray humanity at its worst (Clark-Kazak, 2009, p. 387; Malkki, 1995, p. 12; Sontag, 1977; Wright, 2002). On the other hand, Bleiker and Kay (Bleiker & Kay, 2007) in studying alternative representation adopted the term pluralist photography to illustrate the manner in which people who in day-to-day representations would be subjects of representation utilized photography themselves. They embraced this method as capable of yielding themes which transgressed mainstream institutional representations, and commended it as a powerful tool, capable of countering established stereotypes of concerned subjects in the mass media. Other scholars however, mostly influenced by social dynamics theories, have noted that self-representation cannot be termed as only positive as Bleiker & Kay argue, since these representations could yield negative images as well, depending on the contexts and interests that play out at the time of production (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2009; Kihato, 2007, 2010; Utas, 2005). These conclusions have however been made with isolated approaches to varied representational genres, characterised by different, even opposing representational themes. An approach from one angle therefore extols or vilifies the genre under study, while being silent on the other genres. In acknowledging the adoption of opposing themes in the representation of “others”, Stuart Hall notes that difference is represented in terms of binary oppositions. Hall observes that

They (blacks) seem to be represented through sharply opposed, polarized, binary extremes – good/bad, civilized/primitive, ugly/excessively attractive, repelling-because – different/compelling-because-strange-and-exotic. And they are often required to be both things at the same time! (Hall, 2007, p. 229)

The reason therefore, an inclusive investigation is important is because then, a comprehensive picture is attained. Hall’s comments were in the context of the representation of others in the media, where the “other” is represented through the binary oppositions of either “good” or “bad”. When we examine another genre such as vernacular photography therefore, a different representational space is met, where the individual represents themselves to the private audience addressed, even sometimes the individual himself, a space in which ‘professional’ arguments on representation do not matter, where the binary opposites, for example, do not operate. This space yields photographs that should not therefore be compared with, or contrasted from those done by institutions, whose audiences differ sharply. It is on this light that an inclusive approach is preferred. This is because one form of representation cannot and

should not be substituted for another as Debrix argues, nor should one form be criticized at the expense of an exalted other, but all these genres should be examined inclusively, so that representation can be seen as a site in which “meaning is reopened” (Debrix & Weber, 2003, pp. xxxvi). When mass media representations especially those accompanied by still images have been thought to be crucial in decision making processes that would influence policy frameworks, yet at other times accused of being stereotypical and only aimed at objectifying its subjects (Bleiker & Kay, 2007, p. 140; Campbell, 2003, p. 70), how can we comprehend representation? When photographic representations have been termed “neat slices of time” (Sontag, 1977, p. 17), what practical and theoretical sense can be made out of merging these different “slices of time” together? What have other scholars said concerning these questions, that is, how to approach varied representational genres, and the aspect of positivity/negativity characterising discussions of identity?

Moyo Okediji in a foreword to Michael D. Harris (Okediji, 2003) proposes a move beyond binarism in discussing representational content. In this regard, he proposes a move beyond the theory of representation, noting that this theory is incapable of analysing varied representational genres inclusively (Okediji, 2003, pp. ix). Okediji therefore proposes a new paradigm, which as he puts, is beyond the theory of representation as it gives voice to all the varied representational genres in order to arrive at theoretical understandings of all of them (Okediji, 2003). Okediji observes that:

There has emerged a new paradigm beyond representation, beyond the indeterminacy and practical playfulness of postmodernism. That paradigm, based on equation and not representation, balances the views on both sides of the color line and presents an algebra of healing, particularly along the fractures of the color line. (Okediji, 2003, pp. xi)

This new paradigm departs from the idea of binarism underlying the theory of representation. Okediji argues that the reason why such an established feature in this theory of representation should be left behind and a new approach pursued is because it is asymmetrical. It is typified by two opposing sides of either good or bad, or of right and wrong descriptions when talking about representation, so that when one representational pattern is seen as ‘right’, the other one automatically becomes ‘wrong’, or ‘bad’ for that matter. Okediji also sees such descriptions as unjust since they do not give chance to the views of the opposing side to be taken into consideration. He relates such evaluations in the ‘old’ paradigm to a typical election process

whereby the majority rule, and hence the votes of the minority do not count. In this sense, when media representation is categorized as 'bad' or 'wrong', alternative representation is privileged as the 'right' or 'correct' form of representation; a shortcoming that has plagued most discussions of representation that view varied genres in isolation.

Okediji's approach is therefore keen on the various themes and modes of representation, and embraces all as important in the comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. It emerges from a racial background whereby Harris (Harris, 2003) studies the representation of blackness by both white and African American artists. Such studies on representations of race, also similar to those of gender, sexuality, and other subordinate groups, are characterized by active struggles which contest pre-existing representational patterns, hence working towards a 'positive', or 'good' or 'right' representation. Harris notes that African Americans' involvement in the practice of self-representation were meant to "resist" and "frustrate" the established representations they received which to them were "untrue", and which denied their individuality (Harris, 2003, p. 9). This is why Harris uses a tool, a "cultural scale" based on a "symmetrically balanced concept of humanity" to confront representational patterns arising from the two extremes of either 'good' or 'bad' representations, in order to portray their biases and therefore develop a balanced view (Okediji, 2003, pp. ix).

The self-representation of crises of displacement, in this regard by refugees, is however not characterized by such active contests against themes of institutional photography. Having been through war and conflict, and the dire conditions under which they live in refugee camps, any representation of refugees that emerges from these contexts and which on the face value may appear 'negative' in portraying victimhood, is actually true. It presents one aspect of displacement. When refugees therefore engage in vernacular photography, they do so, not with an intention to contest already established representations they have been rendered, but to record their day-to-day experiences to the private audience of close family and friends. The images that emerge out of this genre of vernacular photography should therefore be viewed as presenting another aspect of displacement, which should be studied for what it is, and not in opposition to institutional representation.

Since these photographs of refugees are not influenced by struggles over the representation of identity therefore, they definitely differ from the kind of struggle Harris & Okediji (2003) tried to decipher. I therefore argue in line with these scholars on the need to study all categories of

representation that exist of a particular group or phenomenon without a bias to any of them. However, I will not adopt Okediji's proposition on the need to balance the views arising from these categories since I do not intend to offer a normative symmetrically balanced concept of representing crises. In this manner, I discuss institutional and vernacular photography fully in an attempt towards obtaining a comprehensive understanding of displacement. I argue therefore that the themes arising from varied photography genres offer information in isolation which when analysed inclusively yield a comprehensive understanding of displacement. The need for such an inclusive approach, as Okediji observes, is that representations are specific to the contexts to which they belong. He notes that,

A representation presents or stands for the views of that which it represents – that is, it represents the “right” side, at the expense of the interests of the “wrong” side. In other words, a representation is only true to that which it represents, but it is not impartial to both sides. The bias of representation is that it only includes the interests of one party and excludes those of the other party. It therefore reduces reality to a partisan struggle between two forces, one good, the other bad. (Okediji, 2003, pp. viii)

Okediji's important contribution is its possibility to bring together varied representational genres, in this regard institutional and alternative representation, their resultant representational themes which are highly dissimilar, together with the ongoing varied discussions in these two fields, in order to make theoretical and practical assessments without a bias to anyone of them. Okediji's approach therefore permits explanations to the different themes emerging from the representation of displacement without the need to compare or offer normative discussions. It also enables an interrogation of the way particular actors working with or on refugees, working in particular situations, with particular objectives, limit or impede photographic scope in representing displacement without the need to give a normative paradigm of representing this phenomenon.

David Campbell (2010) has also made a contribution in the discussion of varied representational themes. In appreciating photographer's and publisher's choices on the subject of representation, Campbell (2010) recommends a move beyond normative arguments. He notes that photographers and institutions that select which photographs to publish have choices, some of which tap into a history of visual representation. For this reason, discussing whether images are “negative” or “positive” should not be the focus of analyses (Campbell, 2010). This



call to shun normative categorisations in discussions of representational content is an important contribution by Campbell, although it is silent on how this can be undertaken at a theoretical level. That is, Campbell fails to offer a theoretical contribution to this important argument.

Lawrence Grossberg (2008), on the other hand, gives important suggestions in his reconceptualising of identity in *Cultural Studies*. Grossberg notes that

Cultural studies needs to move beyond models of oppression, both the ‘colonial model’ of the oppressor and oppressed, and the ‘transgression model’ of oppression and resistance. Cultural studies needs to move towards a model of articulation as ‘transformative practice’, as a singular becoming of a community. (Grossberg, 2008, p. 88)

What Grossberg is suggesting here is that struggles over identity, between mainstream and alternative representation, between ‘good/bad’, ‘right/wrong’ binary opposites indeed exist, and have characterised discussions on identity in the past, yet this should not be the only preoccupation of cultural studies. His reason for this proposed move is that:

Both models of oppression are not only inappropriate to contemporary relations of power, they are also incapable of creating alliances, they cannot tell us how to interpret various fractions of the population in different relations of power into the struggle for change. (Grossberg, 2008, p. 88)

Like Moyo Okediji (2003), Grossberg argues that when we examine varied representational genres in isolation, we are not able to comprehend the other genres. What results therefore are normative arguments that view these genres as existing in binary oppositions. Instead, the move should be towards embracing all varied genres as contributing towards “a singular becoming of a community” (Grossberg 2008, p. 88). As Grossberg asks, “what are the conditions through which people can belong to a common collective (in this case the concept of displacement) without becoming representatives of a single definition (in this regard institutional or vernacular photography in isolation), (ibid)?” The move should therefore be a struggle towards forming a common or singular identity into which various representational genres can fall into, and be taken for what they are, without any preferences. In this move, varied representational genres can be discussed fully without comparison, and with no room for normative categorisations. Grossberg proposes Giorgio Agamben’s (1993) concept of singularity as

productive in such a comprehensive approach to varied representational genres. This is our focus in the section that follows.

### **3.2.3 Singularity: Towards a Comprehensive Approach to Representation**

This concept of singularity was used by Agamben to theorise the relationship between the part and the whole, the individual and the community, particularity versus universality. Agamben develops this concept (singularity) in his book, “the Coming Community” (1993). Indeed this offers a way to study the varied photography genres in this research. They are all different representations of displacement, none of which is compared to the other, but all are important in the comprehensive understanding of displacement. How Agamben conceives of the community is therefore a productive theoretical tool for this study.

In his conceptualising of community, Agamben begins this intriguing piece by alluding to “whatever being”. He observes that “the coming being is whatever being”, noting that “whatever” prequalifies our understanding of the term “being” (Agamben, 1993, p. 1). And “whatever”, in his description, refers to “being such” as opposed to “indifferent” (Agamben, 1993). Singularity then comes in here, to be understood as ‘being as such’, and not in comparison to something else.

In his example of the “example”, Agamben observes that the example belongs to the class it exemplifies; it is part of the whole.

In any context where it exerts its force, the example is characterised by the fact that it holds for all cases of the same type, and, at the same time, it is included among these. It is one singularity among others, which, however, stands for each of them, and serves for all (Agamben, 1993, p. 10).

This relation between the particular and the whole cannot therefore be fully separated, but can only be visualised when one sees the particular, with all its properties, as forming part of a whole, a whole which it cannot however displace. That is, the particular is under the umbrella of the whole, but it is not the only one, there are many more particulars, or examples, that fall under that category. This is what Agamben expounds when he further notes that

On one hand, every example is treated in effect as a real particular case; but on the other hand, it remains understood that it cannot serve in its particularity. Neither particular

nor universal, the example is a singular object that presents itself as such, that shows its *singularity*. (Agamben, 1993)

When a singularity is understood for what it is, then the dialectical relationship of the particular versus the universal is surpassed, in which case Agamben introduces a non-dialectical relation between the two (De la Durantaye, Leland, 2009, p. 163). In this understanding of singularity therefore, Agamben notes that

Singularity is thus freed from the false dilemma that obliges knowledge to choose between the ineffability of the individual and the intelligibility of the universal. The intelligible ... is “singularity in so far as it is whatever singularity” (Agamben, 1993, p. 1).

Ineffability and intelligibility are here referring to the relation between the particular and the whole, so that as noted earlier, the particular is a part of the whole, in this case, it can neither be taken as a particular only, nor a whole, and therefore, as a singularity. Agamben brings this out clearly when he uses the example of the writing process (Agamben, 1993, p. 19). He notes that

In a line of writing the *ductus* of the hand passes continually from the common form of the letters to the particular marks that identify its singular presence, and no one, even using the scrupulous rigor of graphology, could ever trace the real division between these two spheres (Agamben, 1993).

When the relation between the particular and the whole is one of singularity, then a thing is to be understood for what it is. Comparisons are shunned because the things are taken to be different from each other, and all are taken as part of the whole, the community to which they belong.

In this conception, such-and-such being is reclaimed, from its having this or that property, which identifies it as belonging to this or that set, to this or that class (the reds, the French, the Muslims) - and it is reclaimed not for another class nor for the simple generic absence of any belonging, but for its being such, for belonging itself (Agamben, 1993, pp. 1–2).

This conception of singularity solves the shortcoming that has long plagued the analyses of varied representational genres in discussions of representation. As noted earlier, most conclusions in the past have been reached using isolated approaches to varied representational genres. I therefore utilize this concept of singularity to approach the varied photography genres under study, noting that neither is a representative of the whole, nor any inferior to the other, but that all are exemplars of displacement. It is like the biblical verse that envisions the church and the relation in Christ as one body comprised of many parts. It states that

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptised by one spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free ... Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body”, it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body ... If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be ... As it is, there are many parts but one body. (1 Corinthians 12:12-20).

In this regard, the hand is different from the foot, for example, but it is in this difference that their usefulness lies. We cannot therefore say that ‘the foot doesn’t see and is therefore less useful or bad’ for example, because the foot belongs to the body for what it is, same as the hand, eye, and all other parts of the body. This conception of the relation between the particular and the whole therefore guides my view of the varied photography genres that I study. They are different and belong to different genres, but normative judgements between them are shunned. This is because these photographs portray varied aspects of displacement which are important in the comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. Lawrence Grossberg (Grossberg, 2008) adopts this concept of singularity in conceptualising political identity. In arguing that cultural studies needs to move beyond binary categorisations and normative judgements in discussions of identity, Grossberg sees singularity as a productive concept. He notes that

Identity can become a marker of people’s abiding in such a singular community, where the community defines an abode marking people’s ways of belonging within the structured mobilities of contemporary life. (Grossberg, 2008, p. 105)

Grossberg’s contribution offers a methodological guideline of how this concept can be used in research. Grossberg notes that “a politics of singularity would need to define places people can

belong, even more fundamentally, places people can find their way to” (Grossberg, 2008, p. 104). This is the aim of this study, to define exemplars of representing displacement. The varied photography genres are singularities portraying displacement. These are not viewed in comparison to each other, but in taking them for what they are, combine to offer a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. In this regard, I analyse the varied representational genres separately; that is, institutional and vernacular photography, without preference to any of the genres.

### **3.2.4 The Spectacle**

As the title of this dissertation reveals, the concept of the spectacle is also useful in this research. This theory was developed by the Situationist International (SI) revolutionary group, and culminated into the publication of the book, “the Society of the Spectacle”, by Guy Debord (Debord, 1972). This theory is however adopted more as a technical than an investigative tool. The concept of the spectacle in its scholarly application has been used to connote the manner in which the media represent a situation in a sensationalist way (Ott & Mack, 2014; Watney, 1987). Originally, Debord and the SI used this concept in their critique of modern capitalist society to illustrate the manner in which through the media, people had increasingly been rendered passive and depoliticized. In this study, I use the concept of the spectacle first as a broader term, that is, the spectacle of displacement, to illustrate the sensationalism of news on crises of displacement. This concept then categorises the varied photography genres under study into institutional and interactive spectacles. Institutional spectacles stand for the way in which institutions represent crises of displacement. These are analysed in one chapter which includes both media and NGO representation.

(Best & Kellner, 2012) coined the term Interactive spectacles to refer to media content produced by active audiences. In this regard, audiences are seen to be active producers of media content, thereby overcoming the media spectacle that Debord argued against. This has widely been utilized in the discussion of cyberspace participation in which people produce and publish media content that most often transgresses the mainstream. Through ownership of websites, publication of YouTube material, social sites such as facebook, flickr, among others, internet users produce and publish content, an activity which denotes an active audience, similar to what the SI movement fought for. For this reason, Kellner and Best note that this new era of the interactive spectacle is inspired by the arguments of the SI movement (ibid).

I use this concept of the interactive spectacle to refer to refugees' vernacular photographs. As exemplars of the spectacle of displacement, these photographs offer insights into another realm of representing displacement, those produced by the refugees themselves. The concept of the spectacle therefore categorises representations of displacement under study as institutional and interactive spectacles. This concept is therefore adopted to categorise and term the varied genres of portraying displacement. It therefore functions less as a theoretical tool since it still approaches these varied genres in isolation, and is therefore not quite productive in the inclusive approach I undertake.

As already mentioned, the use of the concept spectacle has two functions; first in denoting the way in which crises of displacement are themselves spectacles when they occur, especially when the media take them up and are the focus of attention in all media around us. As mentioned earlier, such media coverage is important for the victims undergoing the crises, but media coverage criteria at times sensationalise, causing the crises to become spectacles in their magnitude and nature of coverage. Secondly, this concept offers a broader way to classify the whole and the particular; that is, the spectacle of displacement and the institutional and interactive spectacles that fall within it. In this way, this concept can be applied to broader contexts far beyond this study.

In conclusion, these two theories fit differently within this study. The theory of the spectacle functions as a technical tool, to pool these varied genres together. Under the spectacle of displacement therefore, there are institutional and interactive spectacles that exemplify how this phenomenon is portrayed. Singularity on the other hand is useful in studying both mainstream and alternative representations inclusively. As mentioned earlier, the tradition has been to study these varied genres in isolation, leading to normative judgements of varied representational genres. This theory therefore offers a way of studying varied representational genres of a particular phenomenon so that in embracing all as representations of different aspects of a phenomenon, a comprehensive analysis is attained. These two theories are therefore useful in the sense that as much as the theory of the spectacle pools the two different photography genres together, singularity offers a framework that enables their inclusive study.

The theory of singularity therefore informs data analyses and runs through all arguments which are in essence geared towards shunning comparisons. As the study sets off, the theory of the spectacle serves its technical function and singularity then informs the inclusive approach. The

varied genres are therefore analysed separately, as singularities in two different chapters, so that detailed analyses on the representation of displacement in these varied fields is undertaken. In this way, singularity and the spectacle function as theoretical backgrounds informing a view of the varied representational genres under study as separate singularities that are studied inclusively, and thereby shunning comparisons. Data analyses throughout are informed by Debora Poole's (1997) visual economy and critical discourse analyses (CDA) linked to Norman Fairclough (2001). These two approaches function more as methodological frameworks for analysing data and are discussed in more detail below. After the analyses of the representation of displacement is undertaken in two separate chapters, the analyses of the visual codes that characterised the representation of displacement and the notion of representation and power is also undertaken. These last two chapters pick out themes for discussion from the two varied genres under study. In this regard, while the first two chapters of data analyses discuss the different genres separately, the two last chapters involve a cross-cutting approach to the varied genres. The study's methodology is further discussed later below. First is a discussion of Debora Poole's (1997) visual economy which is followed by a review of the theory of discourse.

### **3.3 Visual Economy**

While Agamben's (1993) concept of Singularity and Debord's (1997) Spectacle enable the inclusive study of the two varied genres of photographic representation under study, Deborah Poole's (1997) theory of visual economy enables the unravelling the factors underlying the process of representation in general. The dynamics that make up each of the categories of representation so that they are true to the genres they represent ought to be extricated in order for a comprehensive understanding of the processes of representation to be attained. Poole developed this approach to the study of visual representation in an attempt to understand the Andean image world.

The concept of visual economy entails putting into consideration the fact that the power of an image does not rest fully in the picture itself, but is constituted around forces of the organizational structure and other more implicit ideological forces (David Campbell 2007, p. 361). At the organizational level, forces of production, consumption, and interpretation of the images under consideration largely influence the final content, so that they are not merely documents of facts as most journalists would claim, but are tools weaved in particular ways, to meet particular ends. When taken this way, the thoughts on whether an image relays facts or

not, or of the basic interpretations of the iconography of the image in terms of its surface and underlying meanings, become limiting, so that these surrounding forces offer broader insights into understanding the representation of displacement more comprehensively as has been carried out by different actors in the two photography genres under study.

These forces pre-determine photographic content, so that in the mass media, guidelines such as news values pre-determine what events will receive media coverage and which ones will not. Further, ideological news values determine the manner in which the selected story is covered so that it appeals to a wider public and is interpreted in particular ways as intended by the institution. In humanitarian organizations, the type and mission objectives of the organization determine photo content, so that they are effective tools for fundraising purposes, for example. Any photographic interpretation should therefore put into consideration “who is using the photograph and to what end” as David Levi Strauss (Strauss, 2005, p. 74) has noted.

David Campbell (2007) has applied this theoretical approach in his study of the Darfur crisis in the former Sudan. Campbell identifies two coverage angles that media coverage adopts, the humanitarian angle versus a focus on the root causes of crises. In arguing that media coverage is carried out in refugee camps where refugees come to seek refuge and not their countries of origin, Campbell observes that the humanitarian angle of news coverage is upheld, with reports on the effects of crises on people rather than their causes being the point of focus (*ibid*, p. 368). Campbell observes that this approach simplifies crises by focusing on its effects which can easily be solved by offering humanitarian aid, as opposed to a focus on its causes such as conflict in which donor countries are reluctant to send their military (*ibid*). Whether taking the humanitarian angle, conflict, or any other angle therefore, the visual economy pre-determines which angle media coverage takes. This argument is applied in analysing the institutional representation of displacement in the sampling periods under study. This concept of visual economy which connotes selective representation of an event is also applied in discussing vernacular photography to interrogate the extent to which representations that emerge are also consciously influenced by its actors. In this regard, both institutional and vernacular photography in isolation offer single sided representations whose inclusive analyses yield a comprehensive understanding of displacement.

In general, this theory views visual representation as an economic process in which the images under consideration are seen to have undergone three main stages of production, circulation



and valuation (Poole 1997, pp. 9-10). The last two stages are not exclusive but overlap each other. At the production stage, a discussion of the individuals, technologies and institutions that make, circulate and publicize the images under study is undertaken. In relation to this research, an analysis of the discourses characterising representation in the two genres studied is undertaken.

The circulation stage involves a discussion not only of the particular technologies used in representation for example photography as compared to paintings, but also a consideration of the various media through which these photographs have received a wider access by members of the public such as through newspapers, NGO reports, and the digital platforms such as NGO and other media websites. Poole for example noted that with paintings and lithographs, there was minimal access to and possession of the images of the Andes as compared to the introduction of photography whereby the possession and circulation of these images was enlarged (1997, p. 10). Institutional and vernacular photography differ in terms of their spectrum of circulation *vis a vis* their target audiences, a consideration to be analysed by the study.

The last stage involves a consideration of the way images accrue value focusing on the systems through which photographs are appraised, interpreted, and assigned scientific, informational, and aesthetic worth. Poole identifies two types of value systems, the use value and the exchange value (ibid, pp. 10-12). The use value focuses on the photograph's representational content, gaining its worth based on the manner in which they are closer to representing reality. The exchange value deals with the photograph's social use, focusing on their possession, storage, and circulation by both private (such as family) and public (media and NGOs) users. In this study, value is determined by the decision making processes that guide photographers, media, and non-governmental organizations on the selection and use of refugees' photographs. Photographs accrue value in the mass media for example due to, among others, their informational content. In this regard, considerations of the selection processes of the images published in newspapers and how the entire context of representation such as news headlines and caption choice combine to direct our understanding of representation, will be undertaken. Furthermore, factors guiding NGO photography projects and the manner in which these photographs are utilised will be analysed. Vernacular photography is interrogated in terms of decisions by refugees to engage in photography, and the entire circulation of these pictures. The theory of discourse and especially the more advanced critical discourse analyses enables

the interrogation of all these underlying influences on representational content. These are discussed in more detail below.

### **3.4 Theory of Discourse**

The theory of discourse was stipulated by Michel Foucault in his works, 'the Archaeology of Knowledge' and 'the Order of Things' (1970/2002). Being influenced by Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes, Foucault takes a constructivist approach to representation. These scholars believed that language is not just a reflection of reality, but a means through which meaning is produced. However, while de Saussure and Barthes focused their attention on the analysis of language itself, Foucault's approach is based on the analysis of the rules and structures of discourses. This conception of discourse is broad in the sense that it does not refer to language itself, but to the rules and systems that determine how a topic or phenomenon is represented (Nixon, 2007, p. 302).

In this regard, Foucault developed a new understanding of history, "not as a matter of what subjects do, but as a matter of almost subject-independent discourses" (Dominik (Finkelde, 2013, p. 1247). As mentioned initially, Foucault's view of history transgresses traditional Marxist understanding in that it is heterogeneous and allows for "rule directed processes" (Foucault 1978, p. 19; Finkelde 2003, p. 1247). In this case, historical content is not examined as content in themselves, but as products of rules that determine their production. This is a methodological consideration which analyses representational content as products of underlying rules. As Pieter Fourie (Fourie, 2001) suggests, "in order to understand a statement, go beyond the statement and understand the conditions that made that statement possible". That is, analyses focus on ongoing conditions such as government politics and their influences on discourses, and therefore what we come to know about a particular occurrence (ibid). These conditions are what Foucault terms discursive practices, referring to the underlying rules that structure meaning production in different fields of study.

Furthermore, Foucault conceptualises power in a manner different from that of earlier theorists such as Karl Marx in two ways (Hall 2007, p. 48). First was on the relation between power and knowledge. Foucault noted that power was constituted within knowledge so that privileged knowledge constructed certain world views while delegitimizing others. In this case, what we come to know about a phenomenon is specific to a particular historical period and context. Foucault notes that such knowledge that is linked to power "not only assumes the authority of

truth, but has the power to make itself true” (Hall 2007, p. 49). The key here is to establish where power lies, and to see the manner in which whatever is stated by this powerful institution comes to be seen as truth concerning a particular phenomenon. In this regard, the representation of displacement will be interrogated at two levels. First, a focus on the spectrum of representation of the two genres under study in terms of their circulation and their influence on our understanding of displacement is undertaken. The next point is related to what Foucault establishes further that “knowledge, once used to regulate the conduct of others, entails constraint, regulation, and the disciplining of practices” (ibid). This second point is adopted in the study to analyse the manner in which context and social cultural issues such as religion regulates photographic practice in Dadaab. Punishment is in this case not immediate or direct, but similar to Foucault’s analysis of surveillance and the panopticon. Foucault identifies surveillance as a form of control towards individuals (Foucault, 1995). Foucault illustrates the manner in which Jeremy Bentham’s design of the “panopticon” which was meant to be an ultimate prison in which prisoners were under maximum surveillance, caused prisoners to behave in a manner as though they were being observed even when the watchtower was unmanned (ibid, p. 200). In this case, the panopticon regulated practice.

Foucault’s second proposition that differs from that of Marx is that power does not function in the form of a chain, for example from top to bottom, and that it is oppressive. Rather, for him, power is not monopolized by a certain group, but circulates, and both the oppressed and oppressors are caught up in it. In this regard, and as Hall notes, “without denying the existence of power in the hands of the ruling power, Foucault shifts our attention from focusing on this grand power to the many localized circuits, tactics, mechanisms and effects through which power circulates”, in this case, among the refugees themselves (Foucault, 1995). Furthermore, Foucault notes that “power is not repressive in seeking to control, but is productive in that even new discourses are developed. It will be interesting to note therefore, especially in regards to vernacular photography in Dadaab, the extent to which the power of refugees to represent themselves is productive. Such an analysis would therefore explore the manner in which power in the hands of refugees produces new knowledge about displacement.

In this study, such an approach to discourse is important in that it enables analysis of underlying rules that inform photography in different genres of photographic representation. Such an approach views content, not as the main focus under which meaning lies, but appreciates the underlying codes of representation that yield specific content in the specific photographic

genres under study. Discourse theory therefore brings out the main intent of the study, which is to highlight production considerations which informing the representation of displacement. These considerations yield certain specific content, which in this regard, are limited in terms of how much they reveal or conceal concerning displacement. For this reason, they should neither be studied in isolation nor taken as existing in binary opposition to one another, but interpreted as tools that portray different aspects of displacement which when combined, produce a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

### 3.4.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

In view of the theoretical foundation outlined above which attempts to view varied representational genres of portraying displacement as singularities contributing to a whole, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) becomes a useful methodology. In pointing out the focus of critical media and communication analysis, Christian Fuchs (Fuchs, 2009) observes that despite varied definitions of critical media that exist, the focus of research in this area is to analyze media content in the context of power. Fuchs notes that the focus is “on the analysis of media, communication, and culture in the context of domination, asymmetrical power relations, exploitation, oppression and control as object of research” (ibid, p. 7). Indeed the relation between language and power is the main focus in CDA (Wodak & Busch, 2004, p. 108), and scholars adopt different ways of undertaking analyses. Some of these are outlined briefly below, and in the process, the manner in which this approach is applied in the study is discussed.

Wodak & Busch observe that in defining CDA, the terms *critical* and *discourse* should also be defined (ibid, p. 108). To “critique”, according to Fairclough, is to unravel the “interconnectedness of things” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 747). These interconnections are caused by the dialectical relation that exists between discourse (such as language, pictures and so on), and other forms of social practice (such as news articles). Fairclough observes that “in human matters, interconnections and chains of cause-and-effect may be distorted out of vision. Hence “critique” is essentially making visible the interconnectedness of things” (ibid). In this case, media content (discourse) is not only analyzed for what it is, but as a product of certain government discourses for example, with their potential to influence audiences’ world views in certain ways. Critique therefore illuminates these interconnections between media content and government discourse, for example. Discourse on the other hand can be understood in two ways. First as a social practice in the sense of discourses being tools for power and control; and

secondly, in the Foucauldian sense through which social reality is constructed (van Leeuwen, 1993, p. 193). According to Foucault, discourses function to make certain ideas present while excluding others (1989). Discourse analysis therefore unravels these processes.

Apart from *critical* and *discourse*, the notions of *power* and *ideology* are also important in understanding CDA. The notion of power is closely linked to Foucault (Foucault, 1989). Dan Laughey notes that “discourse is an exclusionary mechanism that allocates power and knowledge to those whose ideas are included and made present at a given moment in time, but at the same time exerts power and knowledge over the excluded/absent” (Laughey, 2007, p. 74). When power is exerted over something in this case the excluded ideas, then that particular idea becomes oppressed, or marginalized for that matter. This inclusion of certain ideas at the expense of excluded others can have certain ideological effects in that they contribute towards the creation or establishment of unequal power relations, for example in discussions of gender, identity, race and so on (Wodak & Busch 2004, p. 109). CDA therefore attempts to highlight these biases using various methodologies in order to contribute towards a more inclusive democratic society (Fuchs, 2009 p. 7).

In undertaking discourse analysis, Paul Hodgkinson observes that focus should be given to various elements of language structure such as vocabulary, grammar and syntax, and questions on the manner in which their conscious choices position the speaker and the audience, include or exclude certain ideas, or how through them, intended worldviews are created, are asked (Hodgkinson, 2011, p. 73). This focus on the language structure reveals the manner in which certain discourses are produced through language and therefore, the way in which meaning making is also influenced in this process. Stuart Hall and actually much work of the Birmingham school of cultural studies has focused on identity. Hall examines the way in which media discourses on ethnic minority, race and gender are constructed through language (1997, 2000). Van Dijk (Van Dijk, 1998) on the other hand focuses on news headlines, examining the manner in which minorities are portrayed. Other research agenda that adopt CDA include the analyses of “the representation of the other” (under which much research on cultural studies and identity have been undertaken), “hate speech and war”, and “feminist research” (Wodak & Busch 2004, p. 112-115).

I adopt CDA linked to Norman Fairclough (2001, 1992, 1995). Fairclough developed an approach to discourse analysis based on Althusser’s concept of ideology and Antonio

Gramsci's Hegemony, and links these two concepts with Foucault's discourse theory (Fairclough, 2001). According to Reiner Kellner (2013), the two concepts of ideology and hegemony form part of the theoretical background for CDA. Teun Van Dijk, on the other hand, focuses on the basic concepts of macro versus micro levels of analyses, and the notion of power as CDA's theoretical framework (Van Dijk, 2008, p. 354). The micro level of analysis interrogates language use (such as vocabulary or nominalization) and discourses (such as media discourses on a topic such as gender), while the macro level of analysis focuses on issues of dominance, power and inequality (*ibid.*). Power is analysed in terms of control and how much power a group has is analysed in terms of their amount of control over the actions and thoughts of other groups (*ibid.*). Van Dijk's approach to CDA is more concerned with cognitive research (Kellner, 2013, p. 22). For this reason, I adopt Fairclough's approach which is more relevant to this study. Such a dialectical approach to discourse analysis proposed by Fairclough enables the viewing of representations of displacement in different genres as social practices that yield varied discourses due to the variedness of social actors engaged in the process of representation (2001, p. 2). In this regard, while representations would vary across genres, they also vary within the genres themselves due to different interests that play out at the time of representation. This approach is therefore adopted to analyze the varied representational genres in this study.

The methods of analyses applied in such research include investigating linguistic features such as headlines, word choice, and so forth, to determine how they portray the subject of research, for example how they represent minorities and the themes they highlight. In this study, analyses of media representation will focus on news headlines, word choice, photographs used, and captions, in order to understand the manner in which the crisis of displacement was covered. In analysis therefore, Hall (1991) proposes the interrogation of the manner in which discourses and power relations direct our understanding of phenomena in certain ways, and how this can be traced historically. In regards to this particular understanding of the relation between discourse, power and history, the study analyses how the combination of discourse and power privileged a particular understanding of displacement in the two genres studied, and more so how the discourses on displacement especially in the media, changed through time.

Reisigl & Wodak (Reisigl, M. & Wodak, R., 2001) studied the effect of tighter immigration laws in the European Union and the constructed fear of immigrants that begun around 1989-99. Reisigl & Wodak identify three phases of reporting beginning from a paternalistic outlook towards countries that had not embraced democracy as a form of governance by then, followed

by a “discourse of pity” when the plight of those suffering in some of these countries was highlighted, and lastly, rampant racist discourses when migrants began crossing borders into Europe (ibid). This approach of analyzing different stages of reporting is also adopted in this study. It investigates changes in media discourses and attitudes towards refugees in the crises periods under study.

Furthermore, the idea of panopticism, Foucault elaborates, extends to other facets of life apart from the prison cell to what Foucault terms as “the disciplinary society” (ibid, p. 216). The media for example has the power to cover certain ideas while excluding others, and at the same time classifying certain ideas as true while others false (Laughhey, 2007 p. 75). This idea also builds understanding of varied photography genres in this study, so that the two genres of institutional and vernacular are analysed in terms of their influence on our understanding of displacement. Furthermore, the manner in which *power* plays out in both representational genres respectively is also analysed.

In summary, this study adopts CDA in analysing the various photography genres under study. In this regard, representational rules are seen to be specific to the different photography genres, and define the manner in which representation is portrayed in each genre. The visual economy that informs institutional representation, for example, is quite different from that of vernacular photography. In this regard, without the need to compare representations emerging from these varied genres, their outcomes are analysed through CDA. I interrogate the manner in which their underlying rules and structures condition the portrayal of displacement. In this case, it is not vernacular photography in itself for example that portrays displacement in a certain manner, but the underlying rules of vernacular photographic production that determine their content. Apart from underlying rules, an exploration of photographic content in these genres, and the analysis of historical aspects specifically in institutional representation to determine changes in the discourses on representation, will be undertaken. Such an analysis thus involves going beyond normative comparisons in the analysis of representational content towards an interrogation of these variations in regards to the visual economies that inform their production. A step further therefore involves a proposition of the inclusive approach to varied representational genres that this study undertakes in order to attain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study, in this case displacement. In interrogating representational content in regards to underlying influences which is a focus that cuts across the study, CDA is adopted as a methodological tool informed by the theoretical strands

stipulated earlier. In this regard, the theories of singularity, the spectacle, and visual economy inform data analysis which is undertaken through discourse analysis.

### **3.5 Photographic Analysis**

While discourse analysis is adopted for the major part of data analyses, there are sections in which photographs are analysed. These sections adopt William j. t. Mitchell's (Mitchell, 2005) approach to photographic analysis. This involves going beyond the simple interpretation of the denotative and connotative meaning of photographic content, to analyzing the images' histories and contexts of production. Furthermore, what these photographs reveal or conceal is also analyzed. In this regard, what is included in one photography genre is analyzed in terms of what is excluded in that photography genre, and therefore revealed in the other. This way, the varied photography genres are seen to portray varied aspects of displacement that when analyzed inclusively, offer a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. This approach therefore enables the inclusive study of varied photography genres that this study undertakes.

### **3.6 Research Methodology**

Having outlined the theoretical foundation for this study, this section discusses the study's methodology. It begins by discussing the research scope in detail, giving focus to the sampling procedures in regards to institutional and vernacular photography. In the last section, the data analyses procedures are discussed.

#### **3.6.1 Research Area and Sampling Procedures**

The study was carried out in Kenya based on the analysis of institutional and vernacular photographic representations of displacement.

##### **3.6.1.1 Institutional Representation**

This focused on the mass media and humanitarian organization's coverage of crises of displacement. Media coverage was sampled from two daily newspapers in Kenya, the Daily Nation and The Standard published in two periods of crises. These were the 1991/1992, as well as 2011/2012 crises periods. The media coverage of displacement was high during these periods and progressed as the sampling period moved on, stretching to a period when coverage diminished and marked the end of sampling. The two periods are therefore termed the 1991 and the 2011 crises periods.



The two newspapers, that is, the Daily Nation and The Standard, were selected due to their wider readership and circulation, and therefore their higher possibility to publish news on the crises of displacement, as opposed to other dailies in Kenya. The indicated period (1999-2011) have been selected since this was the time when initially war (1991) and later escalating famine (2011) struck parts of Africa, and the impact was felt in Kenya when many refugees from neighbouring countries came to Kenya. These crises periods witnessed regular broad media coverage of refugees' stories worth studying. In these newspapers, news articles, features, editorials, opinion editorials, letters to the editor, photographs and accompanying captions, advertisements, and any other articles concerning the crisis of displacement, were sampled.

As was observed, there was a symbiotic relation that existed between newspapers and humanitarian organizations in which newspaper coverage was not totally independent of NGO activity during the crises periods. As institutional spectacles therefore, newspapers were one way through which NGO representation could be studied.

On the other hand, NGO representation was also studied in terms of development aid. This involved NGO activity in the camps not limited to the crisis period as news, but continuous projects in the camps even after the crisis period. NGO photography in this corpus was therefore undertaken on photographs produced by refugees in a photography project undertaken by two NGOs (AFSC & FilmAid International-Kenya) in refugee camps in Dadaab. In this project, refugees engaged in a form of participatory photography through a training that was geared towards equipping them with photography skills. As part of an assignment to test their skills acquired, they produced photographs of their own topics of choice which were later printed and stored at the AFSC offices. These photographs were sampled, and comprised another component of the photographic representations of displacement in this research. Interviews with AFSC and Film Aid officials were also conducted in order to understand the context of the project, sponsorship and how the photos produced by refugees were used.

### **3.6.1.2 Vernacular Photography**

The research on vernacular photography was carried out in photo studios in Dadaab. This sampling was limited to studio photography because this yielded data on photographic practice in this community. The study was therefore limited to analysing photographic practice and a focus on studio photography offered a broader point of view on the photographers and their

clients. There are six refugee camps in Dadaab, these are Dagahaley, Hagadera, Ifo1, 2 & 3, and Kambios. These camps increased in number since 1991 due to new arrivals of refugees at different moments in time. Until 2011, there were only three refugee camps. Ifo2 & 3, together with Kambios refugee camps, were opened after the famine crisis of the year 2011 in which many refugees fled into Kenya and the initial camps were too full to capacity.

In Dadaab, there are designated shopping centres and markets for business engagements among mostly refugee communities. Photo studios were located within these market centres, and this is where the research was conducted. In the photo studios, interviews with studio proprietors were conducted in order to understand the manner and context of photography. Apart from these, photographs were sampled and ongoing photography was observed. As the study progressed, the influence on photography by the kind of Islam practiced in this community was noted. This aspect was followed up and the discourses that characterized this view were also interrogated.

Accessing the camps as an individual was however not easy, and this was only made possible through NGO collaboration. I therefore undertook voluntary work at an NGO in Nairobi which enabled my visit to Dadaab. In Dadaab, NGO residential premises are situated near Dadaab shopping centre, while the camps are located at varying radius away from the shopping centre. Collaboration with the NGO was therefore helpful in that apart from getting accommodation within the NGO premises, I got transportation to the refugee camps under police security. This need to ensure security was highly regarded not only in Dadaab but also in most parts of Kenya at the time of research due to rising terrorist attacks that had been experienced, and whose perpetrators were thought to be camouflaging as refugees in Dadaab. NGOs worked in designated areas within the camps which were located outside of the refugees' residential areas and their market centres. Police security was also offered in these areas where NGOs operated. However, the photo studios were located in the market centres and in which police security was not assured. I therefore worked with the help of translators who, on the one hand, aided in the translation process and on the other, were a source of security since they were widely known in the markets. I also veiled my head during the research in Dadaab for two reasons. One was a sign of respect to my respondents who were largely Muslim men and secondly, as a security strategy so as not to be easily identifiable as an outsider in regards to the already mentioned security threats.

### **3.6.1.3 Discourses on Representation**

Discourses that characterised the representation of displacement were extracted. Discourses on institutional representation focusing on media coverage were identified through coding of the news articles sampled in the 1991 and 2011 crises periods. The news articles, headlines, the use of imagery, and captions, were coded in terms of their number and their specific coverage topics. When this was undertaken, a change of attitude towards refugees as their stay in Kenya progressed was observed. Discourses that characterised this change in attitude were also identified. NGO photography was analysed in terms of underlying influences on photo content.

In regards to vernacular photography, two fieldworks were conducted. In these, interviews with photo-studio operators were undertaken, and photographs together with digital backgrounds used for photo-shop were sampled. The interviews conducted in the first fieldwork revealed the influence of Islam on photographic practice in Dadaab. This was followed up in the second fieldwork in order to establish the extent of this influence. These interviews also revealed the discourses of power that informed photographic practice among this community.

### **3.6.1.4 Representational Codes**

Literature review identified the visual codes of representing displacement as analysed by different scholars. Coding of data identified the extent to which the themes identified through literature were reproduced in the data under study. Furthermore, emerging representational codes from the data which have not been identified by previous research were also coded. As analysis progressed, it emerged that the institutional representation of displacement through media coverage was largely characterised by representational codes as opposed to NGO or vernacular photography.

## **3.6.2 Data Analyses Procedures**

CDA informed the study's analysis of data. Study findings were analysed in four chapters, beginning from chapter four to seven. In chapter four, the institutional representation of displacement was analysed, beginning with media representation. This section analysed discourses that characterised the representation of displacement in the two crises periods under study. This was followed by an analysis of the 1991/2011 crises periods to explore any influence the change in time had on the media discourses on displacement and especially

changing attitudes towards refugees. In the final section, the NGO representation of displacement, focusing on development aid in Dadaab, was analysed.

In chapter five, the practice of vernacular photography in Dadaab was analysed. This focused on studio photography in the already stated refugee markets in Dadaab, in which interviews with studio proprietors, and photographs of refugees were analysed. In this chapter, an analysis of the photographs and the entire discourses that characterised the practice of photography in Dadaab was undertaken. As already mentioned, the influence on photography by Islam was noted as the research progressed, and this is also a focus of discussion. For this reason, the different 'types' of photographic practice in this community were analysed.

Chapter six discusses the visual codes that informed the coverage of displacement in the two varied genres under study. Some of these codes were identified through literature review, while others were identified through data. Although the chapter sought to analyse the visual codes of representing displacement in general, that is, in the two genres of institutional and vernacular photography under study, it emerged that media representation was the more characterised by representational codes, as compared to vernacular or NGO photography. The section therefore begins by analysing photojournalism's representational codes, before dwelling briefly on the codes that characterised vernacular and NGO photography.

The question of representation and power is analysed in chapter seven. Power relations characterised visual representation in different ways in the two photography genres under study. For this reason, power relations between institutional and vernacular photography are analysed in the first section of this chapter. This is followed by an analysis of power relations within the respective genres, in order to understand the manner in which power plays out within these genres. The established influence of religion on photographic practice in Dadaab is analysed in the final section of this chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Institutional Spectacles of Displacement

#### 4.0 Introduction

Having explored literature on the representation of displacement and grounded the study's theoretical and methodological foundations, this chapter begins analyses of the findings of this study. It analyses the representation of displacement through institutional photography. These comprise photojournalism and representation by humanitarian organizations. These two institutions target different types of audiences at different moments in time. To the mass media audience, displacement is portrayed as news. Both the media and NGOs target this mass audience, most often symbiotically. On the other hand, to funding institutions, displacement is portrayed through development aid report projects. These different audiences yield varied representational themes as will be observed.

Critical discourse analysis is used to interrogate the discourses that characterized the media coverage of displacement in the two crises periods under study, that is, 1991 and 2011. This is also adopted in establishing any effects of the 1991/2011 historical period on the discourses of displacement. Analyses does not focus on photographs only, but also on other factors that contextualized the photographs such as news headlines, articles, and captions in the media representation, together with interviews that sought to understand photographic practice in the representation of displacement through development aid. This approach to CDA is informed by Agamben's (1993) concept of singularity and Deborah Poole's (1997) visual economy. Photographic analysis is undertaken in some sections.

In undertaking these analyses, the chapter begins by offering a general overview on the media representation of displacement. This includes an analysis of the representation of displacement as news, highlighting the varied reporting stages undertaken by the media in covering this phenomenon. This is followed by an analysis of the 1992/2011 crises periods. The chapter closes by discussing the aspect of displacement as portrayed by humanitarian institutions, a strand that is specific to development aid and whose audience is typically funding institutions and their sympathisers. The aim of the chapter is therefore to explore the manner in which displacement was portrayed through different periods of crises of displacement, and in different institutional contexts.

#### 4.1 Media Coverage of Displacement: General Overview

Crises of displacement in their very nature when displacement has occurred, are in the most cases newsworthy. Different reasons cause people to flee their homes in search of basic needs and security in neighbouring countries. In the case of displacement studied in this research, conflict, and later on starvation and famine, were the major causes of refugees fleeing into Kenya. News of arrival of refugees at different moments in time, the dire conditions they experienced in the camps, pleas for humanitarian aid, varied adjustments that had to be undertaken in the resettlement of refugees in Kenya, among other issues that will be discussed, were the main themes through which this event was covered. As data was coded, key themes were noted and these are the focus of discussion in this section. The table below summarises the media coverage of displacement; discussions are made thereafter.

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Total no. of Articles</b>	<b>Total no. of photos</b>	<b>Photos of refugees (crises)</b>	<b>Photos of aid</b>	<b>Photos of dignitaries</b>	<b>Cartoons / Maps</b>
<b>The Standard 1992</b>	69	42	20 in Despair = 12 (8 of them accompanied a two page feature on Feb 19) Broad/Active = 8	9	8	5
<b>Daily Nation 1992</b>	61	35	22 13 of starvation and despair 9 = Broad/active	6	6	1
<b>The Standard 2011</b>	14	24	11 (3 of starvation and despair; 8 = broad / active)	5	5	3
<b>Daily Nation 2011</b>	26	28	21 (12 of despair; 9 = Broad)	0	5	2

Table 1: The media coverage of displacement in the 1991/2011 crises periods<sup>10</sup>

This table summarises the media coverage of crises of displacement in the 1991/2011 crises periods. It indicates the number of news articles that were available in the different dailies

<sup>10</sup> Dignitaries, as will be discussed in more detail below, refer to Kenyan leaders such as the then president and other government leaders, as well as ambassadors to other countries in Kenya.

under study, the number of photographs utilised and their types, and lastly, other imagery such as cartoons and maps that were also utilised. In this way, it offers detailed information on the coverage of crises of displacement by the media in the crises periods under study.

In the 1991/2011 crises periods, various parts of the horn of Africa, mainly Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan, experienced conflict which later on led to starvation and famine. In the 1991 crisis period, Ethiopia and Somalia experienced conflict which led to the overthrow of the then ruling governments, while Sudan, mainly the Southern part, was at war with the North. Many people were displaced, seeking refuge in neighbouring countries such as Kenya. The reason for this initial displacement was escalating war. Somalia and Sudan however failed to completely attain stability and has experienced continuous conflict leading to numerous displacements of its citizens at different moments. The 2011 crisis period was therefore one of the many displacements experienced by the Somali and Sudanese people since 1991, although this time, it was greater in magnitude. The main reason for the 2011 displacement was not purely conflict, but escalating famine which had been heightened by the countries' instability. In this regard, as much as drought was experienced in various parts of the Horn, Kenya included, a stable government and peaceful working environment are required in order to act upon early warning signs and therefore curb food shortage from culminating into famine and starvation (Moeller, 1999, p. 109). This was however not the case with Somalia and Sudan where militia groups had also banned food distribution programmes in the regions under their control (Daily Nation, July 27, 2011). This led to widespread starvation and another phase of displacement was experienced. Due to these complexities of famine and conflict therefore, media coverage was undertaken in refugee camps in Kenya and not in the home countries of refugees<sup>11</sup>.

This media coverage however did not utilise images of despair and hopelessness only, but also those of aid, aid workers, and other dignitaries such as the then Kenya's presidents and other Kenyan leaders. In this regard, as much as most scholarly attention has focused on the media's use of horrific images of refugees in despair in covering displacement (such as Malkki, 1995; Campbell, 2007 and Moeller, 1999), actually not many pictures of refugees were used. However, what emerged from the data is imagery that could be summarised in three ways as will be discussed below.

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<sup>11</sup> David Campbell Campbell (2007, p. 368); Moeller (1999, p. 103) make a similar argument. They note that crises of displacement are mostly reported from relief centres where displaced people go to seek refuge.

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>No. of articles</b>	<b>No. of Articles without pictures</b>	<b>No. of articles with pictures</b>	<b>No. of pictures used</b>	<b>Pictures of refugees</b>	<b>Pictures on aid</b>	<b>Pictures of place</b>
The Standard 1991	69	43	26	42	20	17	5
Daily Nation 1991	61	46	15	35	22	12	1
The Standard 2011	14	3	11	24	11	10	3
Daily Nation 2011	26	6	20	28	21	5	2

Table 2: Table showing the media coverage of displacement in relation to the number and type of photos used

First is the media coverage of displacement that does not utilize pictures. Of the 69 articles the standard utilised to cover the 1991 crisis period, 26 articles had pictures, while 43 did not. The Daily Nation on the other hand with a total of 61 had 15 articles with photographs, while 46 articles did not have accompanying photos. There were therefore more articles without pictures in this crisis period as compared to those with pictures. During the 2011 crisis period however, there were more articles with pictures than those without. The difference in regards to this point, since more will be discussed later on, is the starvation crisis that was also experienced in some parts of Kenya during the 2011 crisis period as compared to the 1991. More media attention was therefore focused on the Kenyan crisis with the use of images of starving Kenyans, while the refugees' crisis was largely covered without the use of photographs. These news articles without photographs therefore dwelt on new arrival of refugees, aid donations by different institutions, pleas for humanitarian aid, calls from different leaders for refugees to abide by the Kenyan law, repatriation, dire living conditions in the camps, rising insecurity due to the influx of refugees in the country some of whom had firearms, and in the latter stages of coverage, emerging resentment from leaders and the general public on the high number of refugees in the country. These articles were brief, not necessarily appearing as headlines but more as news in different pages of the newspapers, and sometimes, as page fillers. They offered progressive updates on the refugee crisis in Kenya without utilising photographs.

The second instance is media coverage that utilised horrific images of refugees, but as mentioned earlier, this is not the norm. In the Standard 1991 crisis period for example, there were 42 photographs utilised. Of these, 20 were of refugees, meaning that the other 22 were of other themes as categorised in the table above. Of these 20 photographs however, 12 of them were of refugees in despair, while 8 covered general information such as repatriation, refugees as part of an aid project, a rising resentment towards refugees, or anonymous pictures of



refugees in the camps. The 12 photographs of despair used, which is our focus here, were therefore spread out through the 1991 crisis period. It should be noted however that 8 of these 12 photographs were utilised on one day as part of a two-page feature article that lamented the dire living conditions that the refugees experienced in the camps. The remaining 4 photographs therefore depicted refugees in despair at different moments in time across the 1991 crisis period. The photographs below offer a slight preview of the various types of photographs as explained above. More will be analysed as the discussion progresses.

### Photos on Aid

These photographs accompanied news on aid donations. They sometimes portrayed the aid itself as seen below, and in other cases, photographs of ambassadors or representatives of countries that offered aid were used.

THE STANDARD, Wednesday, June 26, 1991. 3

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**NATIONAL NEWS**

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# US gives food to Sudan refugees

**By Francis Muroki**

**"Operation Lifeline"**

According to the US embassy in Nairobi, the food was donated by the US military through the department of state. It was bought for use during the Operation Desert Storm and has now been made available for humanitarian purposes.

The huge C-5 Galaxy transport aircraft that brought in the meals had flown from Dehran in Saudi Arabia where the American forces have been operating from following the end of the Gulf war. The plane is the largest in America's fleet: It has a wingspan of 67.88 metres, fuselage of 70.29 metres and a height of 19.85 metres. The plane can carry a payload of up to 116,388 kg.

To receive the consignment in Nairobi on behalf of the American embassy was the press attache, Mr Stromme Craig.

Yesterday's delivery was 96,000 meals worth US\$ 392,800 (Shs 11,194,800) out of the 300,000 meals expected in total.

THE United States has donated food worth more than Shs 33.5 million to starving Sudanese refugees returning home from Ethiopia.

The first batch of 96,000 meals to be distributed to the returnees, arrived in Nairobi yesterday morning aboard a US Airforce C-5 Galaxy transport plane.

The remaining consignment of "meals-ready-to-eat" will arrive in Nairobi within the next seven days for onward transport to Kenya's north-western town of Lokichogio from where it will be air-dropped near Nasir in southern Sudan.

According to the US Aid for International Development chief of food for peace division, Mr Lynch Lowell, who was at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport yesterday to receive the meals, some 113,000 Sudanese refugees have been waiting for the food for two weeks.

The meals were requested by the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme will be responsible for distribution code-named



**The food for Sudanese refugees being offloaded at the airport yesterday.**

*Picture by Charles Maisha.*

Article 1: The food for Sudanese refugees being offloaded at the airport yesterday, The Standard, June 26, 1991.

### Photos of Kenyan leaders

These photographs portrayed different Kenyan leaders in meetings and other forums soliciting for aid or planning on how to tackle the starvation and refugees' crisis in the country.

Looming famine: There is fear a third or more of the country's 40 million-plus population will require relief



### Country staring at a food crisis as stocks decline

BY ANNA KIBET

As the date of succession grows closer, the government's food security strategy is being tested. It is a major national emergency that has been the subject of the week's...

Although various initiatives are being undertaken to address the problem, the number of people in need of help is still rising...

Conservation, who must shoulder heavy financial costs, the country's food security strategy is being tested...

The government itself is in a bind, with the number of people in need of help rising...

It is a grim picture for the country, with a third or more of the population in need of relief...

The situation is made worse by the fact that the government's food security strategy is being tested...

It is a grim picture for the country, with a third or more of the population in need of relief...

“The situation is man-made as it is a strong connection to politics. Nobody seems to understand how we arrived here...”

Historical Issues  
Farmers' Secretary  
General Spector's letter

and withholding subsidies from what is a household industry. A...  
It is a grim picture for the country, with a third or more of the population in need of relief...  
The situation is made worse by the fact that the government's food security strategy is being tested...  
It is a grim picture for the country, with a third or more of the population in need of relief...

Article 2: President Kibaki chairs a past food security meeting, The Standard, June 4, 2011

The photograph above was used in the 2011 crisis period. It portrays the then president Mwai Kibaki on the far right and cabinet ministers in a meeting. How to tackle starvation in the country was the topic of focus, together with the incoming refugees whose burden, the government maintained, it was not ready to shoulder. This will be discussed in more detail later. The 1991 crisis however occurred during president Moi's leadership and one of his photographs utilised is shown below. As will be discussed later, this initial period of the 1991 crisis was met with sympathy towards refugees and the government offered basic services such as medical aid, food and shelter to refugees. President Moi was the driving force of this sympathetic attitude.

## President appeals for food

From Page 1  
A Minister in the President's Office said on Tuesday one million tons of cereals, oil, pulses, beans, lentils, oilseeds, pulses, oil, and other foodstuffs are needed to meet the country's needs...



The President said the OAU had failed to assist in its objective since its formation in 1963. He said it was up to the OAU to change for the better...

President Moi expressing a point to Prof Saitoti and the Chief of General Staff, Gen. Mahmoud (left) on his arrival at the airport yesterday.

He told the police to ensure that Kenya lived in peace, especially now that there was a large number of aliens not only in the urban areas...

Joseph Leino, Cabinet Minister, said that there was a large number of aliens not only in the urban areas...

Meanwhile, President Moi said a message of congratulations to King Carl XVI of Sweden on the occasion of that country's national day...

Article 3: President Moi expressing a point to Prof. Saitoti and the Chief of General Staff, Gen. Mahmoud (left) on his arrival at the airport yesterday, The Standard, June 6, 1991

## Photos of refugees in the broader category

The photographs of displacement portraying refugees broadly did not portray them in despair, but in broader ways that did not necessarily focus on the crisis of displacement. The photograph below accompanied an article that focused on the deficiency in nutrients in the food offered to refugees. The photo of these women was used.

VIII FEATURES STANDARD ON SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 1992

# The refugees' other problem

## Food, even when it is available, lacks nutrients

Refugees are often faced with many problems. Top of the list is lack of food, shelter and clothing and the uncertainty of the future. Four nutritionists say that even when food is available, the refugees' problems are far from over. ELIJAH KINYANJUJI reports.

AN unprecedented number of outbreaks of nutritional deficiency diseases have been documented in refugee camps all over the world over the last decade.

The conditions under which the refugees live can contribute to the development of nutritional deficiency disorders which, if not treated, can cause permanent damage and, even death.

Press reports in mid-May indicated that at least 140 Somali and Ethiopian refugees were dying daily in refugee camps in north-eastern Kenya.

At the time, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said despite emergency measures, the refugees continued to die mostly due to diseases related to malnutrition and sanitation.

Geneva-based nutritionists and researchers on refugees: Arjeh, Berry-Koch, Regina Moench, Peter Hakewill and Muhammed Dualeh say hundreds of thousands of refugees, particularly in arid zones of Africa, have been affected by these diseases.

The most affected are the vulnerable groups consisting of children, pregnant or lactating women and the elderly, the four say in a paper titled, *Nutritional Deficiency in Refugees*.

**Distributed**

The conditions under which refugees live, their dependence on external food aid, their limited purchasing power, lack of access to local markets, limited land and water for agricultural or livestock maintenance and overcrowding contribute to the development of the diseases, they said.

The diseases affecting refugees are scurvy, beriberi, xerophthalmia, pellagra and anaemia.

The nutritionists say in the paper that the food rations distributed to the majority of refugees in Africa are currently not balanced in energy, protein and micronutrient content.

"This food contains almost no vitamin 'C', vitamin 'A' of iron among other nutrients," they say.

Scurvy, xerophthalmia and anaemia which is caused by deficiency in iron are of the greatest concern among refugees as they can maim or kill if not treated.

Scurvy develops when vitamin 'C' levels in the body are not sufficient leading to swollen joints, reducing mobility, painful bleeding on the nose, surface and swollen and bleeding gums leading to loss of teeth.

Lack of vitamin 'C' causes the risk of death for the pregnant.

The researchers say the outbreaks of scurvy had not been documented since the Irish potato famine in 1847 except among polar explorers and soldiers in isolated locations. This demonstrates the current phenomenon occurring in refugee camps.

"Scurvy has been endemic of 30 per cent of the camps in Somalia over the past five years and appears to be becoming so in Ethiopian camps. An average of 25 per cent of the populations in Sudan and Somalia have been affected," they say.

Irreversible blindness and death are inevitable for people not treated for vitamin 'A' deficiency which causes xerophthalmia and poses the biggest risk to growing children.

**Documented**

"Refugees most often arrive in camps with low levels of vitamin 'A' stored in the body after subsisting on a deficient diet prior to and during their exodus as well as during their initial periods of seeking asylum."

Anaemia has the highest frequency documented among refugees. It is caused by iron deficiency, say the nutritionists.

"Refugees are especially prone to anaemia because the food rations often lack vitamin 'C' and is high in plant fibre which both reduce iron absorption," they stated, adding iron was found mainly in meat, poultry and fish.

Anaemia, caused by low consumption of animal products and fresh vegetables, increases in women during pregnancy and lactation.

The food experts say folic acid deficiency leads to another type of anaemia. They added that whatever the cause, anaemia carries serious health risks.

Between 1988 and 1989, cases and outbreaks of pellagra were reported in refugee camps in Malawi, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and other African countries. Pellagra, noted the researchers, occurs in areas where maize is the primary staple food with little complementary foods rich in protein.

"Even though the distributed general ration has included beans as a protein source, the quality has been so poor that excessive cooking has been necessary, (up to eight hours), to make the beans edible. This has often been ignored because of fuel shortages to cook for so long," they note. Prolonged cooking destroys nutrients, they add.

Beriberi occurs where the diet comprises mainly of milled cereal, polished rice and starches like cassava and other tubers.

Beriberi, which occurs in three types: dry, wet and infantile) induces peripheral nerve paralysis causing heart problems.

The disease can lead rapidly to heart failure in infants and can develop within 12 weeks of food consumption. Outbreaks of all three types of beriberi have been reported in camps in south east Asia, although no formal surveys have been carried out except in Thailand.

— UNHCR picture.

Berry-Koch, Moench, Hakewill and Dualeh note that nearly eight million refugees in camps and settlements in 1988 depended almost entirely on distributed food rations.

"In the last decade, such populations have depended on external food aid which mainly consists of cereals, beans and oil vegetable gardens in places which did not have groceries and green markets."



Refugees in a camp . . . relief food often lacks important nutrients.

Article 4: Refugee in camp ... relief food often lacks important nutrients, The Standard, June 14, 1992

## Photos of refugees in despair

These photographs portrayed refugees in despair and were a preserve for articles whose aim was to solicit sympathy for those undergoing crises, or of journalists questioning malpractice in the handling of refugees. This category of photographs is a continuation of the discussion of the use of photographs of despair by the media that was begun above. The photograph below is one of the examples.

SCIENCE | In the past chemical was used in war against lice

## Progress made in the fight against malaria

Disease carriers die before they can hit the next victim

BY TAMBA JEAN-MATTHEW  
NATION Correspondent in Dakar

Senegalese and American scientists have discovered a chemical that targets and kills anopheles mosquitoes, thereby reducing cases of malaria.

The chemical, *ivermectin*, is said to have been in use for

a long time but only to fight head lice and heartworm as well as flies that cause river blindness. Senegalese health ministry officials reported on Saturday that they collaborated with a group of scientists from the United States in discovering and testing the chemical.

Following weeks of testing at different locations in Senegal, *ivermectin* was discovered to be effective in killing mosquitoes that carry the malaria plasmodium.

The scientists explained that the anopheles mosquitoes that carry the malaria parasite have an innate tendency of quickly detecting people through the carbon dioxide human beings exhale.

In the environments treated by the chemical, surviving mosquitoes that may have sucked blood from a human being could die before they infect their next victim, the report said.

The new discovery has also been confirmed by the *American Journal of Tropical*

CRISIS | UN agency delivers food to Somali town



A doctor prepares four-year-old Fatuma Ibrahim for a check-up. Drought-hit Somalia is stretching relief workers to their limits and is now facing a full-fledged humanitarian catastrophe. The United Nations made its first aid delivery to a rebel-held Somalia region after the insurgents lifted a ban on the operations of foreign aid agencies, a spokeswoman said yesterday. Five tonnes of food and medicines for malnourished children were delivered to Baidoa, a town in central Somalia.

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DRIVELINE WARRANTY**

**MAN TGS 400 HP**

**IRREVOCABLE  
CONFIRMED EURO  
FITTABLE FOR**

Article 5: a doctor prepares four-year old Fatuma Ibrahim for check-up, Daily Nation, July 18, 2011

This photograph was utilised in the 2011 crisis period to accompany news on drought and starvation in various parts of the Horn of Africa. As will be discussed later on, many photographs of malnourished children were used during this period as compared to the 1991 crisis period.

It is true that photographs of despair hurt, but as discussed above, the media does not quickly utilise such images, but offers updates on the refugee crisis without necessarily using images that upset. This highlights the need for further thought on the arguments raised by different scholars on the rampant use of images of despair by the media (Moeller 1999; Malkki 1995). A point to note however is that if the 12 images under discussion are analysed in isolation without a broad consideration of the media coverage of displacement that considers the use of other types of imagery as well, then conclusions that vilify how the media covers news on crises of displacement are made. In this regard, if the 12 photographs of refugees discussed above are examined in isolation without a consideration of the total 42 number of photos outlined, then indeed an outcry on the media's use of horrific images is justified. There was however a slight difference in the use of such photographs by the Daily Nation in this period. While The Standard utilised 12 images of refugees in despair across the 1991 crisis period, the Daily Nation had 13 photographs. These photographs were also spread broadly as compared to the Standard whose coverage was largely done through feature articles and whose images of crises accompanied 5 news articles.

The third set of photo use is that of donations and dignitaries. Examples have already been seen in the first three articles above. There were 9 photographs of Aid and 8 of dignitaries in The Standard 1991 crisis period. This use of imagery has been classified together in this discussion

since photographs of dignitaries accompanied their plea for aid, or donations they or their institutions and governments offered. In total therefore, there were 17 photographs on aid donations and dignitaries utilised. These were used at different moments across the 1991 crisis period, pointing to the broadly-spread use of these images as compared to those of refugees in despair across this period. In this regard, while 17 photographs on aid were used across this period to accompany different news articles, it can be observed that 12 of refugees in despair were utilised across the same period, but as indicated, to accompany only five news articles on displacement since 8 of them were utilised once. In this case therefore, there were more photographs on aid used, as compared to those of refugees in desperate situations. This further highlights the need for deeper thoughts on scholarly arguments criticizing the ‘adverse’ use of images of despair in covering displacement since this is not exactly the case.

This third use of imagery - aid and dignitaries - highlights the symbiotic relation that exists between the media and NGOs that Moeller (1999) talks about. In the first instance, the NGOs act as official sources for news for the media. The table below illustrates the sources of information in the news articles covered.

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Total news articles</b>	<b>Aid institutions</b>	<b>Kenya's leaders</b>	<b>Refugees</b>	<b>Media institutions</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Other governments</b>
The Standard 1991	69	16	27	2	13	2	9
Daily Nation 1991	61	10	20	3	23	1	4
The Standard 2011	14	4	-	-	9	1	-
Daily Nation 2011	26	8	7	-	10	-	1

Table 3: Table showing the news coverage of displacement as per the news sources

The 1991 crisis period was the first time Kenya hosted refugees. This initial stage was therefore marked by Kenya's responsibility to provide basic needs for refugees, a responsibility that was later on shouldered by UNHCR as the crisis progressed, and this has been the case to date. This initial responsibility therefore saw the Kenya government and its leaders as the main news sources. In the Standard 1991 crisis period for example, of the total 69 news articles utilized, 16 were updates on the refugee crisis in which UNHCR was the official news source, while 27

had various Kenyan leaders as news sources. The rest were of refugees expressing their gratitude to the Kenyan government, of humanitarian pleas and donations from different countries, or of the general updates on the refugee crisis in the country by the media. For the articles that cited NGOs therefore, these NGOs were the actual sources of news and in most cases, of what the news was all about. In this case, refugees were a third referent in terms of engagements towards their aid, when the real actors were the media and NGOs working in refugee camps. Apart from being official sources for news therefore, this news-form publicized NGO activity in the camps, thereby being a forum through which aid was solicited. In some cases, NGOs and the Kenyan government directly appealed for aid from Kenyans as well as other countries<sup>12</sup>, and in many cases, the response was tremendous<sup>13</sup>.

Yet in referring back to the symbiotic relation that exists between NGOs and the media, most of the progressive news reports in their very nature without direct pleas for funds functioned to solicit the funds needed. The 2011 crisis as mentioned earlier was complicated by numerous national problems in which many Kenyans also experienced starvation. As much as humanitarian organizations were working to feed Kenyans as well, media institutions focused its attention on the failures of the government in ensuring the availability of basic needs to its citizens (Daily Nation, July 4<sup>th</sup> & July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011). This yielded numerous feature articles and special reports in the newspapers with media institutions being the main news sources. These differences will also be discussed in more detail later in the next section which interrogates the 1991/2011 media coverage.

Moreover, the pictures of refugees utilised differed in relation to their nationality and the story covered. The table below summarises the photographs of refugees utilised in relation to their countries of origin, and the subjects therein, whether male or female.

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<sup>12</sup> The Standard, June 6, 1991; The Standard, June 11, 1991; Daily Nation June 6, 1991; The Standard, June 26, 1991; The Standard, June 21, 1992; The Standard, July 30, 1992.

<sup>13</sup> Daily Nation, June 25, 1991, July 2, August 26, 1992; The Standard, March 7, April 9, July 30, 1992

Newspaper	Total no. of articles with pictures of refugees	Country of origin	Total no. of pictures used	Women & children	Men & children	children	women	men	Families
The Standard 1991	17	Som:14, Eth:4, Sud:1, Unknown:3	22	11	1	5	-	5	-
Daily Nation 1991	9	Somalia: 17, Ethiopia: 1	18	2	1	6	4	4	1
The Standard 2011	4	Somalia: 4	4	1	-	1	2	-	-
Daily Nation 2011	14	Somalia: 20	20	4	1	5	1	3	6

Table 4: Table on the news articles with pictures of refugees, their countries of origin and the subjects therein

It was observed that as much as Ethiopian, Sudanese and Somali refugees were in the country, focus in the coverage of despair had Somali refugees as their subjects. As seen in the table above, of the 22 pictures of refugees utilised in the Standard 1991 crisis period, 14 of these were of Somali nationality, while 4 of Ethiopian and 1 of Sudanese nationalities respectively. The identities of the remaining 3 were not given. The Daily Nation on the other hand which utilised 18 photographs of refugees had 17 subjects as Somali, while 1 was an Ethiopian. What however emerged is that the media coverage of the 1991 crisis period for both newspapers was focused on camps in Mombasa and Northern Kenya which hosted refugees of Somali and Ethiopian origins, and this may have yielded photographs along this template. On the contrary, there was one photograph of Sudanese refugees utilised by the Standard newspaper, and none by the Daily Nation. In this regard, continuous news updates without pictures that focused on the arrival of Sudanese refugees in the country and their plight in camps in the Lokichoggio border town in Turkana bordering Kenya and Sudan were made without the use of pictures. One photograph of repatriation, which was the only one on repatriation utilised during the 1991 crisis period is shown below.

**NATIONAL NEWS**

## Police find foetuses in

**Police reports**

SIX foetuses were found dumped in a dustbin near Inama Building along Sheikh Khasse Road, Nairobi, on Wednesday night, police headquarters reported yesterday.

Investigators to establish the women involved in the incident have been handed.

A former Nairobi Provincial Commissioner, Mr. Stephen Mwakitha, once described lodging houses around the area as "Seddon and Gomrah."

Mr. Mwakitha, who is now the chairman of the Kenya Ports Authority, had made the remarks after asking an extensive tour of the houses in the city. Police said the foetuses were removed to the city mortuary for a post-mortem examination.

The body of a five-year-old girl was found dumped in a men's communal toilet at Ziwaya Estate in Nakuru district on Wednesday morning. Police said the body of the young girl, Minam Nafala Wangui, was found at 11 a.m. with blood oozing from the mouth and stomach.

The body was removed to Nakuru Municipal mortuary for a post-mortem examination.

**Approaching**

A businessman lost Shs 100,470 to a thief along Moi Avenue on Tuesday morning. Mr. Kiri Jumar Patel was said to have been walking along the street at 11 a.m. when a man approached from behind and snatched the money which was in a paper bag.

Meanwhile, Mombasa's Kiembani estate was on Wednesday struck by a tragedy when a man assigned to dig a water borehole was overwhelmed by poisonous gas.

## Plane to ferry refugees delays

**By Enock Anjili**

COMMUNICATION problems and late arrival of an Ethiopian Airlines chartered plane almost snuffed a scheduled departure of 372 Ethiopian refugees who were to be repatriated back to their country.

Airport officials had to seek assistance from the Ethiopian Airlines stewards as the refugees could not communicate in Amharic. This greatly slowed down the clearance process.

However, an explanation was given for the late arrival of the plane, which was scheduled to take off with 186 refugees on board at 10 a.m. but was rescheduled for 1.30 p.m.

According to information available, the plane was expected to make a return journey and pick-up another 186 refugees before clearing another 186 today.

A public information officer with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Mr. Michael Kestel said they expected to ferry 258 refugees by the end of today.

He said already, 3,200 volunteers had asked for repatriation to their country and added that the airlift, exercise, would continue until all the remaining refugees had been returned to their country.

Mr. Kestel, who was monitoring the exercise, said his organization was also entrusted with the task of ensuring that those returning led a normal life as soon as possible.

He pointed out that the refugees were victims of the continued fighting and drought in their country, adding that the drought and the general scarcity had, however, improved.



**HAPPY TO GO HOME ...** This woman was among the hundreds of Ethiopian refugees who were at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi, preparing to return home.

Article 6: HAPPY TO GO HOME ... This woman was among the hundreds of Ethiopian refugees who were at the Jomo Kenyatta International airport, Nairobi, preparing to return home. (The Standard, May1, 1992)

As seen, it is the first time that a refugee is portrayed smiling. Initially portrayed as evidence of horrific crises, this time a refugee is the epitome of a happy ending, finally going back home. This woman represented the more than three hundred refugees who were voluntarily going back to Ethiopia after calm began to set in (The Standard, May 1, 1992). The woman is well groomed and looks directly to the camera. This is in comparison to the many pictures of refugees in which most of the models look down or far off and away from the camera, communicating a sort of genuine pain in which subjects cannot afford a smile, let alone looking directly into the camera. This photograph reminds us of the specificity of pictures to the context and stories they represent. In this regard, despite this being a news report, it does not relay despair, but joy, which is another aspect of displacement when refugees finally return to their countries. One cannot immediately think that the photograph is of a refugee because the subject does not 'look like' one, unless the person reads the accompanying caption and news article (Malkki 1991, p. 11). It is therefore evident that even within this genre of photojournalism, photographs of smiling refugees can be seen, although this is specific to its context of production in complementing the news article covered. On the other hand however, this should not be seen as a 'happy ending' to all crises of displacement. On the same day that this and many more Ethiopian refugees were going back to their country, the arrival of about 1500 Somali refugees into Kenya was also reported (The Standard, May 2, 1992). These comprised



mostly the then overthrown former president Siad Barre's loyalists after he surrendered to General Mohamed Farah Aidid who replaced him. Questions of where and why Barre was hiding in Kenya characterised the next stage of reporting (ibid).

Back to our point on the use of pictures of certain nationalities to cover certain news events, it was also noted that as much as Somali refugees were repatriated at different moments, there were no photographs of Somalis utilized. In this regard, while a photograph of repatriation showed an Ethiopian woman smiling, those of Somali refugees were mostly epitomes of suffering, highlighting the media's construction of icons of varied representational themes in the coverage of displacement.

Furthermore, scholars have identified the use of certain types of images of refugees. Campbell (2007) and Moeller (1999) identify the use of photographs that are applicable to more contexts than one, which leads to the re-use of pictures in certain cases. Campbell notes that such photographs that are applicable to many contexts are used by the media as economic strategies to avoid sending reporters to the field more often (2007, p. 369). This repeated use of certain photographs was also observed in the data under study. Five photographs were utilised more than once in the data analysed. Of these, four of them were utilised by the same newspapers on different dates, while one was utilised by both the Standard and the 'Daily Nation newspapers. The first example is a photograph of a malnourished child used by the Daily Nation's 2011 crisis period reproduced below.

NATIONAL NEWS  
Tuesday July 12, 2011

imes this number and the conditions are pathetic

## to ease congestion at Dadaab

JNHCR chief shocked by the deplorable conditions at world's largest settlement

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The United Nations agency wants Kenya to open up a new settlement to accommodate refugees who have flocked to the sabbab camp.

The head of the UN refugee agency Antonio Guterres was taken aback by the pathetic state of affairs at the camp, one of the world's largest, when he visited at the weekend.

"I have visited refugee camps around the world, but I must admit I have never seen people living under such conditions," he said.

According to UNHCR, the camp initially set up to cater for only 2,000 refugees, has now exceeded its number by nearly five times.

**poorest of the poor**

Mr Guterres described the refugees fleeing to Dadaab as "the poorest of the poor and the most vulnerable and the most vulnerable."

The UN refugee agency is still pressing the Kenyan government to accept the completion of IPO II up to admit another group of at least 50,000 people. The other camps are Dagahaley, Ifo and Hagadera.

The situation has been worsened by the current drought in the Horn of Africa region, which is estimated to have affected at least 10 million people across Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somalia.

International aid firm Oxfam pressed support for the UNHCR appeal, saying that opening up of

**Doctors can only save the strong**

"They come here in worse conditions. We try to feed them through any possible means," said Sereine Aïr of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF).

MSF is one of the agencies that is providing medical aid to the refugees. But the officers admit that they can only save a few — the strongest.

"One of the women told us she left her children behind because they were too weak they could not walk. She only saved the one on her back," a doctor with MSF told the Nation.

**THE SITUATION**

A malnourished Somali child in hospital at the Dadaab refugee camp yesterday. Thousands of Somalis are fleeing the war and drought in their country.

If it would enable relief agencies to reach the refugees.

"It is tragic that vulnerable families are trapped in limbo, forced to endure appalling conditions while there are fully functioning services right next door. Their basic needs are being ignored," said Joost van de Laar, head of Oxfam in Kenya.

The number of refugees at the camp continues to increase every day even as it emerges that it is not just the war in Somalia that is pushing them into Kenya — many are escaping the hunger and famine back home.

They arrive in droves, with most of the women and children too weak to walk or even stand.

At the camp's hospital are malnourished children with spindly limbs, wrinkled skin and pale eyes on beds beside their sad mothers.

Mis Isha Abubakar from Jubaland and a mother of twin boys is at the hospital. One of the boys is clinging to her breasts as she cuddles the other in her arms — the one who is recovering from near-starvation.

Mis Abubakar said she travelled from Sagu in the middle of Jubaland in Somalia where she had been a farmer. "A harsh drought wiped away all our crops," she told the Nation through a translator.

She arrived here three weeks ago.

By the time she arrived here, the weaker of her twins was almost succumbing to hunger.

**National News II**

## Orengo to seek Supreme Court verdict on fake titles

Ready to tackle

Speaking at a constitutional conference in a Nairobi hotel, the minister said he was ready to tackle land reforms.

He disclosed that the National Land Commission Bill, the Lands Bill and the Land Registration Bill had been shelved as the ministry sought views on how to deal with land issues. He pledged to have the Lands Bill enacted in February next year.

"Imagine a situation where a person has grabbed land belonging to the law courts and the Chief Justice comes to me saying that I should help recover that land. Then the grabber goes to court and obtains orders saying that his title deed (obviously obtained fraudulently) is valid. How do you deal with that?" Mr Orengo posed.

BY NATION REPORTER

Lands ministry will go to the Supreme Court to seek clarification on how to handle fraudulently obtained title deeds.

Minister James Orengo said that, despite a High Court ruling invalidating fake land titles to grabbed government land, some judges and magistrates recognised such titles.

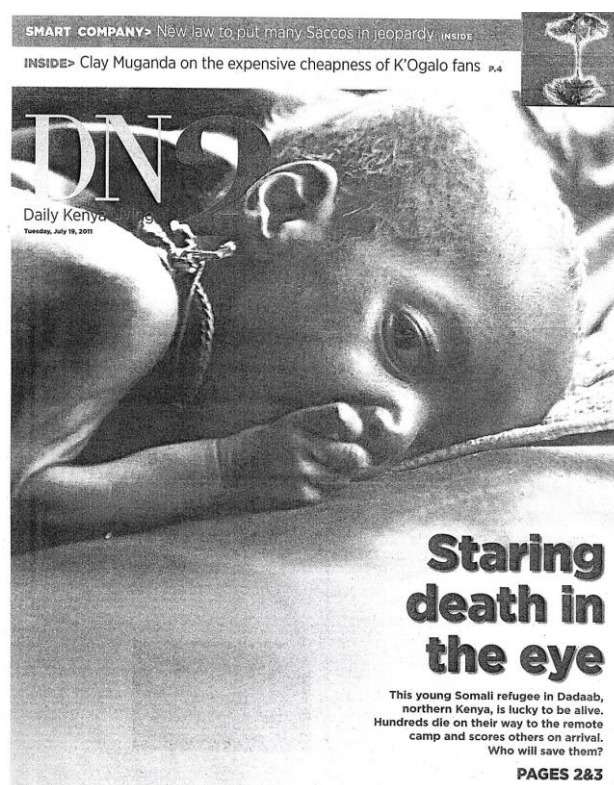
Mr Orengo, however, said he supports the war against corruption.

"I have no problem with him (the KACC Director).

"All I said was that he has the powers and the money to act on corruption, therefore he should act," Mr Orengo said.

Article 7: A malnourished Somali child in hospital at the Dadaab refugee camp yesterday. Thousands of Somalis are fleeing war and drought in their country, Daily Nation, July 12, 2011.

It shows a weak malnourished child receiving medication at a hospital in Dadaab. This photograph was utilised on July 12<sup>th</sup> 2011 to represent new arrivals of refugees from Somalia during the 2011 crisis period. The refugees arrived in dire conditions due to the long distance covered from their homes to the refugee camps without food and water. At the same time, the three camps that existed then were full to capacity and Kenya was under pressure to open two more camps to host the newly arrived refugees. As the Kenyan government dragged its feet in opening the two more camps requested therefore, the newly arrived had to seek shelter from friends and relatives in the camps, or at worst live in make-shift camps within the vicinity of Dadaab. This overpopulation led to the breakout of diseases, and the stretching of humanitarian resources at the time. The sad reality however is that many more deaths, even after arrival in Dadaab, continued to be experienced; and photographs of despair froze these sad moments. On the other hand however, this use of photographs of despair worked to garner aid for the victims of this crisis, who were not only refugees, but also Kenyans from the dry areas which were also affected by drought. The crisis was therefore not only a refugees', but also a Kenyan crisis publicized throughout the world because of the nature of its magnitude, and much aid for the victims was garnered. The photograph appeared again on July 19<sup>th</sup>, this time, as a cover photo accompanying a feature article.



Article 8: cover photo, Daily Nation, July19, 2011.

This feature article conveyed the horrors refugees experienced on their way to Dadaab such as the many days of walking under harsh weather conditions and thorny terrains. As much as the trek from the Liboi border to Dagahaley which is a distance of 100km took approximately four days, many refugees had come from as far away as Kismayu in Jubbada, a town in Somalia which was nearly 400km away (Daily Nation, July 19, 2011). Decisions to flee or not were therefore the beginning point of their flight, with some members of the family opting to take the risk while others did not (ibid). This marked the first division of families whereby old people mostly above the age of seventy, and parents, in most cases mothers, chose to flee with their younger children, mostly under the age of ten, while older children made their choice on whether to flee or not (ibid). In many cases, therefore, very old people and mothers with their children decided to flee into Kenya, while their middle aged children remained to battle it out in Somalia. These reveal the underlying influences on refugee populations in the camps, which can also be said to yield certain tropes in the media representation of displacement, namely, that of the use of images of the very old and mothers with their children (Moeller, 1999).

Apart from family separations caused by decisions to flee, families were also separated on their way to Dadaab. Many people succumbed to death due to starvation and general body weakness caused by the harsh situations of the journey (Daily Nation, July 19, 2011). Moreover, banditry was another danger which those fleeing had to shield themselves from. In the end, those who made the journey were few, with mothers in some cases too weak to carry their weaker children, therefore deciding to abandon them to fate in the arid terrain (ibid). This abandoning of children, as will be discussed further below, brings to mind the late Kevin Carter's 1993 photo discussed in chapter four, of the very weak child being stalked by a vulture. The child had been left alone by its parent as they attempted to access food at a nearby relief centre. In contextualising their journey, this relaying of the experiences of refugees on their way to Dadaab worked to garner sympathy for them and in many cases, to restore their dignity. Refugees were therefore not portrayed as weak and lazy in this instance, but a people who risked their lives in the hope of a better one in Dadaab. The opposite of this attitude will be evident in proceeding analyses.

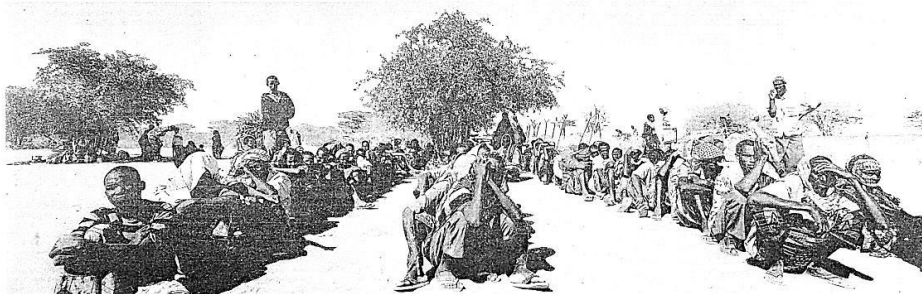
Another example of the repeated use of photographs is one that portrays refugees as a mass. It appeared on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011, again in the Daily Nation as an article on the new arrival of refugees. This article did not only report news on the refugees' arrival but also pointed to the

outstretched resources that accompanied their arrival, something that the Kenya government was figuring out at the time.

DAILY NATION  
Thursday July 14, 2011

Special Report 19

IMMIGRATION | About 1,300 refugees arrive in Kenya every day



## Security crisis as refugees burst camps

Fear of outbreak of disease at temporary camps where 60,000 are being sheltered with limited access to water or toilets

BY AGGREY MUTAMBO  
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AND OUMA WANZALA

A standoff between the local provincial administration and the central government in Nairobi could worsen the humanitarian crisis in Dadaab, an aid agency has warned.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees said the two sides are giving conflicting information on whether the Ifo II Camp shall be opened or not.

Fafa Attidzah, the UNHCR Dadaab sub-office head told the *Nation* yesterday that while the North Eastern provincial commissioner James Ole Sereni and the Garissa council agreed on land to expand refugee camps, the government sees a security threat.

"The number we are receiving is too big and we don't have where to take them; now they are settling anywhere," he said.

One of the pieces of land he said had been granted is that of Ifo II in Dadaab while the other is in Fafi in Bura, the two of which would take in a further 80,000 people. He added that the local community had no problem with refugees as they had already been accommodating them. Houses had been set up at Ifo II before the government stopped the project.

"The host community here is not aggressive. However, it is not happy with the way shelters are being put up outside designated places," he added. Those who can't access the camps are cutting down vegetation to put up houses; their influx could become an environmental hazard.

On Tuesday, Internal Security assistant minister Orwa Ojodeh said that expanding the refugee site would interfere with the security of Kenyans living near the camp because "it is a very heavy burden which we did not budget for". The minister did not clarify but there have been rumours from locals that some refugees are trying to obtain ID cards under false names. However, Immigration minister Otieno

Kajwang absolved himself of blame saying he was not the one frustrating the expansion. "Our security agencies are of the view that the numbers coming here are a threat to our security. So, I think this question should not be directed to me."

But aid agencies such as Oxfam and UNHCR have been pressing the government to relax this position, claiming that the crowding inside and outside camps could spell a catastrophe. "The camp is not just congested, it is almost exploding. It will be a big disaster if we don't organise refugees," argued Mr Attidzah.

While UNHCR said it had no powers to oppose the government, the UN agency said it were better if further space was provided. Three of the camps that make up Dadaab Complex are too full, by as much as five times. Dagahaley, Hagadera and Ifo. But now, each is hosting over 120,000. Some 10,000 new refugees are expected here from Somalia, further complicating the situation.

### Female staff

Elsewhere, it emerged that the crisis facing refugees at Dadaab is unlikely to end soon after a humanitarian agency ruled out a return to Somalia.

World Food Programme said in statement it was aware of calls by rebel group al Shabaab for humanitarian agencies to resume help to vulnerable groups.

"WFP withdrew from areas under al Shabaab control in southern Somalia at the beginning of 2010 because of threats to staff and unacceptable working conditions, including imposition of informal taxes and a demand that no female staff work there," the statement said.

The agency said it continued working in Mogadishu, central and northern Somalia, providing food to 1.5 million people.

A spokesman for the UN refugee agency in Kenya, Mr Emmanuel Nyabera said conditions at Dabaab were harsh, with more than 1,400 refugees were arriving daily.

### Oxfam appeals to Kenya to take care of Somali refugees

An international relief agency yesterday urged the government to allow fleeing Somali refugees enter the country and occupy an abandoned camp.

Oxfam's head in Kenya, Mr Joost van de Lest, said tens of thousands of Somali refugees fleeing the worsening food crisis and ongoing conflict in the Horn of Africa were being barred from a new aid camp in North Eastern Province that stands empty and unused while refugee families live in shocking conditions, kilometres away.

Mr Van de Lest said a steady stream of Somali refugees is turning into a mass exodus, with severe drought and ongoing conflict forcing 1,400 people a day to seek refuge at the Dadaab complex. Another 70,000 Somali refugees have also arrived at Dolo Ado camps in Ethiopia.

The Kenyan government granted permission for expansion of the refugee camp and Oxfam installed water systems, latrines and health facilities but Ifo II Complex remains empty as the government has refused to allow people to move in.

"Women and children have made the most incredible journeys, walking for weeks through the desert and braving hunger and attacks by armed robbers and wild animals. They arrive extremely weak and malnourished, and the least that we can do is ensure there is water, food and care for them when they get here," added de Lest.

Oxfam expressed fear of an outbreak of diseases at the temporary unequipped camps where 60,000 new arrivals are being sheltered in basic tents outside the camp boundaries, with limited access to clean water or toilets.

"It is tragic that vulnerable families are trapped in limbo, forced to endure appalling conditions while there are fully functioning services right next door. Their basic needs are being ignored," he lamented.

— JAMES KARIUKI



From top, newly arrived Somali refugees wait to be registered at Dadaab's Dagahaley Refugee Camp yesterday following a devastating drought and fighting in Somalia; Somali child refugees take stock of their new "home"; and a newly arrived Somali refugee carries food supplies from a World Food Programme warehouse after being registered.



“Refugees who can't access the camps are cutting down vegetation to put up houses; their influx could become an environmental hazard!”  
Fafa Attidzah, the UNHCR Dadaab sub-office head


Article 9: Newly arrived Somali refugees wait to be registered at Dadaab's Dagahaley Refugee Camp following a devastating drought and fighting in Somalia Daily Nation, July14, 2011.

During this time and as earlier mentioned, the three camps in Dadaab (Ifo, Dagahaley & Hagadera), were full to capacity, and Kenya was under pressure to open two more camps to accommodate these new arrivals, something it resisted for some time before later giving in with conditions. On top of this, some parts of Kenya also experienced drought and starvation and the government felt that the refugees' problem was another burden it was not prepared to shoulder. For this reason, as refugees arrived, the government declined to open three more


necessary camps, calling for their repatriation and resettling in Somalia or other willing countries, but not in Kenya, and this was the focus of reporting during this period. In this regard, while the refugees had undergone difficulties in their journey to Dadaab, it was unfortunate that what they confronted at their arrival was not open arms with promises of a good life, but a reality of long queues and days of waiting in make-shift camps for their turn to be registered as refugees, something that led to further deterioration of their health. This matter will be discussed in more detail later. The same photograph also appeared on July 19<sup>th</sup> 2011 as shown below.

2 **DN2** COVER STORY DAILY NATION  
Tuesday  
July 19, 2011

## 'I was forced to leave my twin




**80,000**  
Number of refugees the new Ifo II camp, opened last week by Prime Minister Rilla Odinga, will accommodate.



**380,000**  
Number of those currently living in the cluster camps that make up Dadaab. The facility was designed to host about 30,000.



**100km**  
The distance from Dadaab to the Kenya-Somalia border. Because of the tough terrain, those trekking in from the ravaged north walk for four days.



TOM MARKKO | NATION

Newly arrived refugees line up for registration in Dadaab last week. On getting there — some after trekking for over 400 kilometres — they are separated into groups of men, women and children for easy registration, then assigned numbers that become their identities henceforth. The current situation on the ground has been described variously as “the worst humanitarian disaster ever”.

**From frying pan to the fire:** The situation in Dadaab is getting worse; numbers have swollen fivefold, sanitation has gone to the dogs, crime is rising and the locals are starting to get fed up. What can the world do to avert this humanitarian disaster?

**BY AGGREY MUTAMBO**  
amutambo@kenyanationmedia.com

It is 10 o'clock in the morning and the punishing sun of Kenya's northeast is already at it, baking the vast expanse that is this semi-arid frontier in a heat wave that saps energy from every living thing in sight. Gusts of warm wind sweep through the hostile landscape, leaving in their wake mushroom-shaped clouds of dust and, as a result, tearing eyes.

Standing forlorn, almost forgotten, in this remote part of the world is the biggest refugee camp on earth, Dadaab, home to hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing even more hostile climes back home.

If this disaster of an existence is a refuge to them, nothing can even begin to describe the magnitude of the suffering they ran away from in Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and other countries to the north of Kenya.

Life in Dadaab has been described variously as evidence of the worst humanitarian disaster ever. Last week, a UN agency chief touring the camp admitted that he had never, in his many visits to different disaster zones, “seen people in this kind of desperate situation.”

But United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees' Antonio Guterres probably lacked better words — harsher adjectives — to describe the cruelty of life here.

And he was not alone in that dilemma. Oxfam goodwill ambassador Kristin Davis, she of the Sex and the City fame, only managed to say she felt “shocked” to see what these people have gone through during an earlier visit.

But ‘shocked’ was not enough a word to express the emotions burning inside her chest on seeing the vagaries of Dadaab, and so she broke down.

Prime Minister Rilla Odinga, one of the most steely men in Kenya's political landscape, did a good job to keep the tears away during his visit to the camp last Thursday, but his eyes welled with emotion nonetheless at the sight of emaciated men, women and children who, after walking hundreds of kilometres through the harshest of terrain, arrived in Dadaab only to join a long queue of exiles, seated or half-asleep under the scorching sun because they are too weak to stand, waiting to be admitted as refugees.

Mr Odinga immediately ordered the re-opening of Kenya's border with Somalia and that of the Ifo II camp, but, although that could be a respite to many here, it is likely to turn into a small stop-gap measure as thousands trickle in fleeing the war and hunger in Somalia. Dadaab to them is the Promised Land, a remote city complete with sandy tracks for streets and bush vines for houses.

And this never-ending influx is pushing locals to the limit. “They have settled as far away as Kumahamato Division (outside the camp area). Now we don't know where our goats will browse,” laments Ali Mohammed, a resident at Dughaley, one of Dadaab's encampments.

All Mohammed's concerns, however, may sound petty to Hassan Nur, a 57-year-old who arrived here 10 days ago with his wife Khadijah. It is easy to spot Nur among the surging crowd of hungry mothers suckling malnourished children, lost children, widows and widowers because of the calmness with which he approaches issues.

We carried along our only remaining portion of sorghum and set off on foot. We knew we would die if we didn't get up.”

— Nur Mohammed, a refugee in Dadaab who walked 450 kilometres from Somalia.

Article 10: newly arrived refugees line up for registration in Dadaab last week, Daily Nation, July 19, 2011.

This time, the photo accompanied the feature article narrating the gruesome experiences refugees faced on their way to Kenya. It was a continuation of the feature article discussed in article 8. As opposed to its use in article 9 which is the first time it was utilised therefore, there is more context given and sympathy awarded to refugees. A completion of the title which is

the next page of the feature that will be discussed below read, “I was forced to leave my twin sons in the jungle” (Daily Nation June 19, 2011, pp. 2-3). This is a tough decision a mother of three made in deciding on how to proceed with the journey. A part of the article read,

With no one to help her, she was faced with the option of dying of exhaustion together with her three children, leaving the infant in the bush and carrying the heavier twins, or leaving the twins and soldiering on with the infant. She opted to leave the twins, both too weak to walk, in the bush (ibid, p. 3).

On the one hand, the narration of these hardships call to attention not only the two newspapers’ choice, but also many more international coverage, to relay the refugees’ experiences in a manner that portrayed their suffering, and this in turn may have worked to garner support for the victims of this crisis. On the other, the notion of visual traditions that Wright (2002) talks about is challenged. Indeed images of despair may be easily related to the established visual tradition of say Christian iconography or western art discussed in chapter four. But the reality of pain and suffering also exists, a thought that would detach such representations off the visual traditions that try to explain them, while rather attaching them to Hannah Arendt’s suggestion in her discussion of pictures of the holocaust that there might have been nothing else to photograph, other than despair (Arendt, 1968, pp. 446–447).

Another example of repeated photographs occurred during the same period of new arrival of refugees from Somalia. This time however, the photograph was utilised by both the Daily Nation and the Standard newspapers.

## Immigration

# Looming crisis as refugee camps burst at the seams

Resources meant to cater for less than 100,000 people now stretched to the limit

By JOHN OYWA in DADAAB

International aid organisations are racing against time to help address a worsening humanitarian crisis in northern Kenya, where thousands of Somali refugees have pitched camp to escape war and drought in their lawless country.

Humanitarian workers at Dadaab, currently the world's biggest refugee complex, described the situation as 'hell on earth' and warned that hundreds of malnourished children could die in the coming weeks.

Aid workers said about 21 children are died of malnutrition and other diseases at the camp since June this year. On Sunday, a Somali refugee who had just given birth died together with her baby as workers from the medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) pre-

## WHY CAMPS NO LONGER OFFER SAFE REFUGE

World's largest refugee camps - Dadaab, Ifo and Hagadera - originally built for 90,000 people now host 360,000 refugees.

Aid workers estimate that more than 1,000 new refugees arrive at the Dadaab camp each day.

Out of these, 800 are children, many of whom are rushed to the MSF hospital and put on an emergency feeding programme and medication.

pared to rush her to Nairobi for specialised treatment after she developed post-natal complication.

Officials at the MSF-run hospital said they were overwhelmed by the high number of children suffering from severe malnutrition and other diseases. The NGO runs health outposts in Dadaab and one main referral hospital, complete with a theatre.

On Monday, the hospital was teeming with children and adults as

more refugees who had walked for several weeks through the bandit-infested Somali hinterland queued for admission into the camps.

## DYING ON THE WAY

Many told spine-chilling tales of children and relatives collapsing and dying on the way as they braved scorching sun and hunger to reach Dadaab, some 150km from Garissa town, which has hosted Somali refugees for the past 20 years.

The MSF Research Coordinator, Caroline Abu-Sada, described the situation in the Dadaab camp as pathetic. Staff at the organisation's hospital have been forced to work long hours as admission of newly enrolled refugees rose steadily.

"It is an international crisis and the camps are full. The situation is really bad and it appears the influx of more refugees will not decrease soon because the drought is worsening," said Abu-Sada.

She added: "Between 30-35 per cent of the 122,000 refugees already registered at the Dadaab camp are children and many of them are suffering severe malnutrition."



Prime Minister Raila Odinga (right) and Deputy House Speaker Farah Maalim listen to a refugee's account of her family's tribulations at the Dadaab camp, yesterday. (PHOTO: FILE/STANDARD)

Article 11: Prime minister Raila Odinga (right) and the Deputy House Speaker Farah Maalim listen to a refugee's account of her family's tribulations at the Dadaab camp, yesterday, The Standard, July 15, 2011.

It portrays a Somali woman with her children at the Dadaab refugee camp. The two young boys are sleeping, while the third one faces the direction of this woman, who could be their mother. The then Kenya's prime minister Raila Odinga and Deputy house speaker Farah Maalim are listening to her narrate her difficulties in the camp as the caption indicates. The article is however not about this woman, but the worsening conditions in the camps due to high influx of refugees and limited resources available. This photograph was therefore used to portray the difficulties experienced by refugees after their arrival in refugee camps. The photograph appeared once again in the Daily Nation to accompany the feature story of article 8 above. As mentioned, the feature covered the difficulties experienced by Somali refugees on their journey to the refugee camps. By the time they arrived; they were very weak and in poor conditions and the doctors could only save those who were still strong.

# sons in the jungle'



The old man, now walking with the posture of an 80-year-old, says he trekked the 450 kilometres from Dinsur in the Bay region of Baldoon, Somalia, because he valued his life and family more than anything else.

He was a rich man back in Somalia, the proud owner of a herd of camels that he abandoned for peace. Now all he owns is a sooty kettie, two pairs of old bathroom slippers, a stainless steel mug, a sack that is his mattress, a donkey and a couple of yellow water cans.

Nur has worn the same *moonsu* — a type of khang cloth wrapped around the waist by Somali men — for a month now, and it is beginning to look more like a rag than a piece of clothing.

His wife Khadija no longer complains about chest pains because "I have grown used to that." She wheezed throughout the journey to Kenya, and now she feels relieved that they made it, dirt-poor though they are now.

"We carried along our only remaining portion of sorghum and set off on foot. We knew we would die if we didn't get up," says her husband Nur.

Joining them on the flight of faith were two of their six children. The other four, Nur says, were old enough to weigh the situation for themselves. They opted to stick it out in Somalia, and Nur says he doesn't know whether they are still alive or dead.

Being a refugee demands that one subscribes to the rule of the jungle, and for Muslims, that means becoming an infidel of sorts. Nurjo Aden, a 40-year-old mother of five, fled with

her two children; Mahid Aden, 7, and Asha Mohid, 3. Asha, her eyes receding into tiny, malnourished sockets, is no longer veiled as most Somali girls would, and her mother, though disapproving of that, says there is nothing she can do to honour her religious duty.

She doesn't remember where her husband is. "Perhaps he died," she says, then, after a long silence during which she stares into nothingness, adds: "But I don't know."

Dadaab lies only 100 kilometres from the Kenya-Somalia border at Libol, but the jungle is unforgiving and painfully thorny. With old gully tracks serving as uncertain routes to freedom, the journey from the border takes four days on foot.

Some of the refugees here have come from as far away as Kisumu in Jubba, trekking nearly 400 kilometres across Somalia, skirting bandits along the way, enduring blisters and massive headaches under the hot sun, and dodging bullets and death from exhaustion.

"We begged for food from those we met on the way, and at times other refugees gave us part of what they had," explains Nurjo on how they survived.

Some lose direction once on Kenyan territory and wander aimlessly until they die of starvation or exhaustion, says Nur Mohammed, a representative of Kenyans living around Dadaab.

Only the strong live to tell their stories, and mothers have been known to abandon their dying children rather

than bear the burden of carrying them in this pilgrimage of hope.

Zemoum Farah is one of those motherers. After carrying her four-year-old twin sons and an infant for hundreds of kilometres, she became so exhausted that she could not bear it any more.

With no one to help her, she was faced with the option of dying of exhaustion together with her three children, leaving the infant in the bush and carrying the heavier twins, or leaving the twins and soldiering on with the infant. She opted to leave the twins, both too weak to walk, in the bush.

On arrival at Dadaab and with the horror of having abandoned her two children in the forest still tormenting her, she was forced to join a queue at the refugee reception centre in Dagahaley, where she was issued with an identification number before joining the growing number of people the world is doing too little too late to recognise.

But there is hope for them. Where the global community cannot help, Haasan Ahmed Khalil steps in. He is in charge of donations sent in from a mosque in Garissa and spends his days handing out food, soap, khat, and foodstuffs... name it... to the refugees. Deep in the sea of eager hands jostling for the handouts is Nur, who is lucky enough to get a change of clothes.

**Hardened silence**

But nothing, not even a change of his waist cloth, could bring joy to Burchi Ali. His only surviving child after the long walk, from Somalia is too malnourished that doctors advise admission to hospital. Burchi watches in hardened silence as his son fights for dear life. But the boy is too weak and it does not take long before doctors announce the battle lost.

The boy is no more. Burchi has lost the last of his family. Sitting there next to him, father cannot believe that son is dead, that he will never wake up in the morning to walk the little boy back out a polythene bag, or help him pluck out a greying shaft of beard. Burchi is alone. A loner in a foreign land.

There are five health posts within the camp and every one of them is full of skinny children with writhed skins and pale eyes. At the main hospital, even more children lie on rickety beds as nurses feed them with therapeutic milk.

"The milk provides them with the nutrients they need to recover their strength," says Alexandre Izart, a Hospital Field Coordinator with MSF. But some cannot even stomach it. As soon as they swallow it, the little ones spew it out. Their systems are too malnourished, too weak to take the milk, and so nurses resort to administering the milk nasally.

**Leave for home**

As one leaves the camp, one wonders whether Nur and wife will one day leave Kenya for home, or whether they will spend their sunset days in this horrid environment.

That question, however, is unanswered by Mahmood Gulleed, the refugee representative for Block N in Ifo. "We have had challenges here," he says, "but at least we get constant supply of food rations and our children get medical attention. This place is better than Gulleed is in charge of about 400 families, and does not plan to return to Somalia any time soon."

## BARELY SCRATCHING BY Survival: Life soon becomes 'normal'

**DADAAB** Refugee Camp is located in Garissa County and comprises three different smaller camps: Dagahaley, Hagadera and Ifo. It was established in 1991 to cater for refugees fleeing the Somali Civil War and covers an area of about 50 square kilometres.

The camps were initially supposed to host only 50,000 people, but that number has since risen fivefold.

Although 95 per cent of the 380,000 that live here are Somalis, figures from the United Nations show that refugees from Ethiopia and South Sudan are also hosted here.

Despite the official closure of the Somalia-Kenya border in 2007, thousands of refugees have continued to flock into the camp, running away from the terror that is in Somalia, and harsh environmental conditions.

Although most new arrivals get tents in bad shape, they soon transform into 'normal' citizens. Inside Ifo, for instance, refugees have schools, a hospital (run by GIZ) and several health posts managed by MSF. These give free medical

services to all refugees staying here.

Within the camp is a market where you can buy some beef, take a beer or two and even lodge for the night.

Abdullah Hassan, a Kenyan taxi driver here, claimed that Hagadera camp is generally home to tycoons from Somalia. "Luxurious cars drive in and out of the camp all day, and most of those who stay there fly in and out frequently. I believe most of those who live here have everything a person needs to live in comfort."

This suspicion is one of the reasons some locals want the influx of refugees tamed. The camp has existed for the last 20 years and natives are getting wary of the increasing numbers.

But a refugee, says some of the people housed here are bandits, even though he says he cannot confirm the claims. Residents also allege that some refugees are stealing their livestock, although Dagahaley Location Chief Hussein Khalif says it is hard to ascertain whether some refugees cross the border while armed.

## Overwhelmed: Ifo II to house 80,000

**EARLIER** this year, Kenya announced that Dadaab was full beyond capacity, but refugees continued trickling in. Since Nairobi is a signatory to the International Convention on Refugees, the government cannot turn away refugees, and this means some of them are housed outside the official camp precincts.

Last year UNHCR constructed a fourth camp, Ifo II, to supplement Dadaab's entire capacity. But the government refused to allow further settlement of refugees there, arguing that would threaten local security. It took immense pressure from local and international aid agencies for the government to rescind that stand.

And last week, Prime Minister Raila Odinga announced the opening of Ifo II, paving the way for at least 80,000 refugees to live within the confines of the new camp.

Despite the murmurs of disapproval from the local community, the World Food Programme says natives also benefit from food rations meant for refugees, meaning the camp is a blessing to every soul in the neighbourhood.

"We have a separate programme to cater for residents who are not refugees but who are in need of food," says WFP Kenya communications officer Rose Goga.

But, food or no food, natives say enough is enough. "Many people know that our land is already half-dead, and we shouldn't kill it by hosting a whole country in one district in Kenya."

Some of the proposals to avoid this influx getting into the nerve of Nur include one for aid agencies to operate from within Somalia, which has been supported by none other than UNHCR chief, Antonio Guterres. But agencies cite insecurity as a stumbling block to doing that.



Article 12: Prime minister Raila Odinga (right) and Deputy Speaker Farah Maalim console a refugee in Dadaab last week, Daily Nation, July 19, 2011.

What is important to note here is the presence of the then prime minister in these two photos. Moeller highlights the use of photos of important people as a news strategy to capture readers' attention (1999 p. 106). In this case, while the refugees' crisis was itself news, the presence of a key government leader, in this case, the then prime minister and in lesser cases the deputy house speaker, worked to capture audience attention in attempts to garner more aid for the refugees. The outcome was that the news grew in significance, attracting further donations for the victims of this crisis. Moreover, the article noted that with the prime minister witnessing the difficult situations the refugees were in, he ordered the opening of Ifo II refugee camp, one of the three that were later opened. In his eloquent description of the prime minister's emotions, journalist Aggrey Mutambo noted that



Prime Minister Raila Odinga, one of the most steely men in Kenya's political landscape, did a good job to keep the tears away during his visit to the camp last Thursday, but his eyes welled with emotion nonetheless at the sight of emaciated men, women and children who, after walking hundreds of kilometres through the harshest of terrain, arrived in Dadaab only to join a long queue of exiles, seated or half-asleep ... Mr. Odinga immediately ordered the re-opening of Kenya's border with Somalia and the Ifo II camp (Daily Nation July 19, 2011, p. 2).

Other dignitaries who were mentioned in the article such as the then Oxfam goodwill Ambassador Kristin Davis were said to have burst into tears in witnessing the refugees' conditions. Moreover, the opening of Ifo II was a positive move since the influx of refugees and their settling in make-shift camps could be quickly dealt with. However, even before refugees could be resettled in the camp, it was already seen to be too small with a capacity of 80,000 people when the numbers of those arriving was much higher (ibid). The calls for the opening of another fourth camp therefore began almost immediately after this opening. Yet as much as the opening of Ifo II was attributed to the prime minister's emotions, Mr. Odinga had gone to Dadaab in order to officiate the official opening of the Ifo II refugee camp. A political strand therefore came into play when the opening was attributed to his emotions at the sight of the refugees' despair and not the government's initial plans to open it. This denotes the use of the camp as a political tool, more of which will be discussed later on. For this section however, it is worthwhile to note the power plays that played out at the opening of Ifo II refugee camp.

A last example of the repeated use of photographs is one of men which when repeated, emphasised the construction of the 'threatening asylum seeker' imagery which Pupavac observes, is a preserve for male refugees (Pupavac, 2008). It was used differently in the Standard newspaper of 1992. It appeared three different times accompanying three different news articles. Ironically, the first time the photograph appeared was on May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1992, and the subjects were constructed as facing the threat of starvation and were therefore waiting for relief food donations from the World Food Programme (WFP).

Friday, May 23, 1992.

## NATIONAL NEWS

# WFP donates food for starving Somalis

IN an attempt to stave off large-scale famine among some one million people in drought-stricken northern and eastern Kenya, the World Food Programme yesterday announced it will shortly start distributing 25,000 metric tons of emergency food aid to the victims.

The food aid, in the form of wheat, will meet the partial requirements of the drought victims, who are largely pastoralists, for a period of six months, at an estimated value of US\$8.4 million (about Shs 260.4 million) including transportation.

The affected areas face serious food shortages for months to come, warned the WFP, the food aid organisation of the United Nations. Unless further assistance was forthcoming quickly, there was a distinct possibility of widespread famine.

The drought that had hit Southern Africa hard this year has also badly affected northern and eastern Kenya, withering maize and rice crops on the stalk and causing extensive crop failure.

Severe food shortages were rampant and cases of malnutrition had risen alarmingly, especially among children. Food shortages were forcing people to migrate to urban centres in search of food.

The lack of vegetation and water resources, and widespread animal diseases, had decimated livestock populations on which the majority of the people depended for their livelihood.

Compounding the drought stress was poor security, particularly near the Somali and Ethiopian borders, which had limited the access of pastoralists to traditional dry-season pasture.

The failure of the current rainy season has not only reduced the amount of locally produced food but also cut the revenues of subsistence farmers, thus affecting their ability to buy essential food commodities.

Last year, much of northern and eastern Kenya suffered from drought which devastated



WELCOME RELIEF . . . Somali refugees facing the threat of starvation.

the maize crop and increased the death rate of livestock. This year's drought is more severe and is being described as the worst in years.

The WFP is providing just about one-third of the estimated 84,000 tonnes of the total food aid needs for drought-stricken people in Kenya and expects that the remaining requirement of cereals, pulses, vegetable oil, sugar, salt and supplementary food will be met by bilateral donors.

The provision of this emergency food aid, in response to a request to the WFP, was jointly approved by Mr

Edouard Saouma, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organisation, and Ms Catherine Bertini, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme.

This marks the first time in years that the WFP will be providing relief assistance to drought victims in Kenya. Until now, food aid in Kenya has been supplied to some 200,000 Somali and Ethiopian refugees, who fled their countries because of civil strife.

Meanwhile, an emergency relief operation in the area has just been completed by the Kenya Red Cross Society in collaboration with the Interna-

tional Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), reports RNA.

According to a Press release from the ICRC, 500 metric tonnes of food have already been distributed to the most needy in Garissa, Wajir, and Mandera districts by the Red Cross. The food consisted of 60 per cent maize, 30 per cent beans and 10 per cent oil.

Several Non-Governmental Organisations were working in Wajir, the hardest hit district.

The ICRC still has four trucks in the district to support the work of the NGOs which are trying to reach the people in the remotest areas, the release said. — KNA

Article 13: WELCOME RELIEF . . . Somali refugees facing the threat of starvation, The Standard, May23, 1992.

It shows men seated as if in a queue waiting for something. The caption indicates that they are facing the threat of starvation. With this direction on how to interpret the photograph, we are made to assume that these men are indeed waiting for relief food. As the story proceeds however, the photo is not directly related to the news article. The article talks about looming drought in most parts on Northern Kenya and donations from the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as the main source of aid.

On June 14<sup>th</sup> 1992 the photograph appeared once again. This time, the opposition alleged that refugees were registering as voters for the then upcoming general elections in Kenya, and the photograph below summed up the allegation.

## Voters' registration: Something's cooking

ARE deliberate errors being made in the compilation of voters' registers and voting cards in the current exercise of registration of voters in the country? This is a question Father Roan wants addressed seriously.

"The allegation that anomalies continue to be detected on voters' cards is so serious that it needs urgent answers," said Father Roan when we met the other day at Uhuru Park.

"Are you not convinced the Electoral Commission is doing something to rectify the mess?" I asked as we sipped our tea in our favourite cafe in the centre of the city.

"If these anomalies have been detected, it means there is something wrong somewhere," he said.

"Of course it cannot be deliberate. The Government does not stand to gain by falsifying voters' cards," I said.

"It is likely that those who are charged with the exercise were not properly trained to handle this mammoth exercise. Otherwise why is it that these anomalies are being detected?" said the old priest.

"That is very strange," I said.

"It is stranger than fiction. How can some registration officials do the opposite of what others are doing? Why leave out details that are essential on the voter's card?" asked he.

"You are suggesting that there was not enough preparation for this exercise, then?" I

### IN THE LIMELIGHT

By Raphael Kahaso



"It looks like no adequate preparation was done to train the registration clerks to ensure they include all details both on the voters' roll and on the voter's card," said Father Roan.

"It is late now to correct this anomaly," I said.

"It is not late. Even at this hour, the Electoral Commission can order the suspension of the registration exercise to make the necessary preparations to ensure the exercise takes off smoothly without any complaints. Why should the exercise be conducted smoothly in certain areas and less smoothly in others?" he asked.

"But the opposition has said they have no confidence in the Electoral Commission. They want it replaced with a more independent commission," I pointed out to Father Roan.

"The opposition is worried about the anomalies. If the

exercise had not been detected probably the whole opposition would have registered as voters by now," said Father Roan.

"But some members of the opposition called for the boycott of voters registration long before the exercise started," I said.

"They were convinced that KANU had made preparations to rig the coming elections. Now if the registration of voters was not faced with the anomalies that have been discovered at certain registration stations, they would have changed their minds by now," said Father Roan.

"Look at what is happening in Narok. Three people were killed. Does this not suggest that the opposition has a point in opposing the present registration exercise?" I asked.

"That incident was uncalled for. Why should Kenyans be told where they should register and vote during the elections and yet they know their rights? If a Kenyan, any Kenyan, has been living in Narok and wants to register and vote in Narok, no one should stand in his way," said Father Roan.

"Of course the *Majimbo* issue has reared its ugly head again," I reminded the priest.

"Yes. Just imagining going to the voting station on election day only to find out that your name is not in the voters' roll.



Some of the refugees in a Mombasa camp. Opposition alleges they are registering as voters in Kenya. *File Pic*

the election day that your identity card number does not tie with the one entered in the register of voters. Again imagine going to your voting station only to be told your name appears on another voting station 20 kilometres away. Now these are some of the anomalies that should be corrected now," he said.

"And the issue of refugee registering as voters," I reminded Father Roan.

"Allegation that the re-

fugees are registering as voters are so serious that they need to be investigated immediately," said Father Roan touching on the Somali refugees in Mombasa said to be registering as voters.

"It looks like politicians can stop at nothing in their effort to win the coming elections," I said.

"If it is true that some Mombasa politicians are taking refugees to register as voters, these politicians should be ex-

posed. For one to register as a voter, one needs a national identity card. It would then seem that the refugees were first issued with identity cards. This again is against the law," he said.

"We are praying that it is not true," I said.

"If it is true, then some Kenyan politicians will stop at nothing in their attempt to see that their party wins the coming elections even if it means selling the rights of Kenyans to foreigners," he said.

Article 14: some of the refugees in a Mombasa camp. Opposition alleges they are registering as voters in Kenya, *The Standard*, June 14, 1992.

The subjects were constructed as "culprits" waiting to register as voters for the upcoming general election (*The Standard*, June 14<sup>th</sup> 1992). The posture they take however almost matches the allegation. As mentioned earlier, the men are seated in a manner to suggest that they are waiting for something. The man in the centre is frowning, almost matching the allegation as a culprit, although when one looks at the other subjects as well, there seems to be a strong overhead sun striking on them. This photograph appeared at a time when there were complaints and evidence of irregularities on voter registration across the country in the upcoming elections from the opposition. In this particular case, Somali refugees in Mombasa were accused of registering as voters. With an indexical relation of this photograph to the allegation therefore, a passing reader may think that it is these particular refugees who were registering as voters. Being a strong allegation at this crucial moment of upcoming national elections, the photograph chosen fed onto the allegation, thus fueling further animosity on the possibility of the then ruling government to be involved in the registration of "foreigners" as voters in their desperate bid to win the elections. As the then whistle blower Father Roan stated, "... if it is true that some Mombasa politicians are taking refugees to register as voters, it looks like politicians can stop at nothing in their effort to win the coming election ... even if it means selling the rights of Kenyans to foreigners" (*The Standard* June 14, 1992, p. 16). The indexical photograph chosen on the other hand highlights the media's active role in supporting the opposition in its allegation. On the other hand, while the accusations and fears were real, it may

not have been true that the people in this particular photograph were the actual ones registering as voters. In any case, the photo had appeared much earlier as already discussed in May 1992 before this allegation. But apart from serving in different contexts, the photograph offers the reality of male refugees being used in representations of negative news on refugees, in this case, as foreigners illegally registering as voters in the upcoming general elections.

In the last instance of its appearance, the photo accompanied a letter to the editor titled, "Somali refugees exploit and misuse facilities provided" (September 5<sup>th</sup> 1992).

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Men gold solution**

Recent price increase of gold in East and West and the fact that it is East and West is the two will never

Majority of wananchi in Kenya have shown disgust and expressed frustration with the Government's economic policy. The out of control prices are not due to recession but look over attempt at economy by the West and Africa are the only nations blessed by the sky with food and oil and are suffering from ignorance and disease which are enemies of man.

Kenya has tried to put this economy right in unplanned hurry, supply a barbaric invasion of gold from her country did not only lose the gold but have mortgaged the country as a penalty. The price the Mid-East is paying today is also a result of not realising who the brothers are. It is an able face of history that the Arabs and Africans are the sons of yesterday and are the sons of Adam and followers of prophets sent to Arabia by the Holy Spirit.

*Akbar Khan, Nairobi.*

**Justing fences**

After your recent regarding the British Embassy, I with disgust that private telephone lines were being used to listen to. For a man to live in a gold fish bowl is not the last thing I want.

Also expect nothing from the manager to the effect the story to the effect that the bank does not say much for the banking world, it says everything!

*S. A. More, Mombasa.*

**THE EDITOR  
THE STANDARD  
P.O. BOX 30080  
NAIROBI.**



**Unfortunate statement by Kilonzo**

THE story appeared in the Standard of Wednesday, September 2, 1992, in which the Commissioner of Police, Mr Philip Kilonzo, was quoted as saying:

While everyone is concerned about the security of the Kitui District, no such outbursts come from the person of Mr Kilonzo. Standing in the queue, Mr Kilonzo should be the last person to make wild allegations against an ethnic community in the wake of ethnicity in various parts of the country, which have left thousands dead and the rest yet to be healed. He therefore be the last to incite the brotherly community against the brothers in Garissa.

Racidity is a very serious problem in NEP, East Coast provinces and is now confined to Kitui and Garissa districts. Mr Kilonzo, who is a very well known and respected person in Garissa, should not be the one to work in Garissa, if and mental anguish of the residents of Garissa, I have undergone and to undergo in the hands of these bandits. Why did Mr Kilonzo seem to be quite his protection? Did he blame the residents of Garissa District when three months over 15,000 cattle were stolen from Garissa District and a known number of hundreds of people were killed?

Wherever the refugees are stationed, they have made hell in that place with the dirtiest and smelliest atmosphere. Do not forget the bandit attacks all over Kenya is the work of the Somalis. They have terrorised most of the parts where peace-loving Kenyans have been residing.

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Wherever the refugees are stationed, they have made hell in that place with the dirtiest and smelliest atmosphere. Do not forget the bandit attacks all over Kenya is the work of the Somalis. They have terrorised most of the parts where peace-loving Kenyans have been residing.

**Somali refugees exploit and misuse facilities provided**

I HAVE read countless letters and articles on the refugees in our country, especially the Somali refugees who have invaded our beautiful country left, right and centre.

The Kenyans, right from the top people to the ordinary person, know what Somali refugees are doing in Kenya. First of all, despite all the assistance they are getting, like essential food items and mattresses, being assisted by the UN and other international organisations, they still complain that this is not enough. It is an open secret that the items the refugees are given they sell outside the camp. Moreover, do you think Kenyans are blind that they have not seen Somali refugees engaged in a lot of business for which the local Kenyans are deprived of?

Most of the refugees have looted their own country even banks and brought with them lots of foreign currency and gold, expensive cars and generators, machinery etc. which they are selling in Kenya. Some of the refugees have even opened shops where such things are being sold.

Wherever the refugees are stationed, they have made hell in that place with the dirtiest and smelliest atmosphere. Do not forget the bandit attacks all over Kenya is the work of the Somalis. They have terrorised most of the parts where peace-loving Kenyans have been residing.

Kenyans, please be aware — AIDS is catching fast in Kenya. I am told that many Kenyans have got themselves involved with Somali women who have begun prostitution to earn a living. Just go and stand near the steps of hotels in Kenya where Somali women will be picked up by Kenyans driving Mercedes Benzes!

*James Charo, Mombasa.*

**YOUR STAIRS**

**VIRGO** — Minor health your usual

**LIBRA** — Your career with a rebirth

**SCORPIO** — Good fortune

Article 15: letter to the editor titled: Somali refugees exploit and misuse facilities provided, The Standard, September 5, 1992.

The writer lamented of refugees, "especially" of Somali origin, "who have invaded our beautiful country left, right and center". Other accusations included "the never ending aid appeals and the continuous complains from refugees that the food is not enough". Furthermore, the author indicated that most refugees had looted their banks and industries before fleeing and were therefore in possession of huge amounts of money, a factor which caused the prices of certain basic commodities and house rent to rise with the increase of refugees in urban centres. This will be discussed in more detail later. While these are just a few allegations from the article, the photograph continued to be the main object on which allegations against refugees

were poured, or rather relayed. The subjects in this case were seen as the persons who had committed these accusations, or rather to whom these accusations were directed. Four months later since its first appearance, the photograph still actively functioned to relay negative stories and emotions concerning refugees.

While they appeared differently in different days and accompanying different articles, captions and story headlines largely functioned to direct our reading of all the images discussed above. In considering the gap that exists between the photograph used and the story told, in that there need not be a specific photo for the particular story covered, we are made aware of the media's use of photographs that do not necessarily have to be specific to the story told, but being reduced to symbolisms and metaphors of the relayed message, and above all, the apparent use of images of male refugees as the 'threatening other'. And while photos of men have been associated with negative news on refugees and displacement, those of women, children, or the very old are used to portray suffering (Malkki, 1995; Moeller, 1999; Campbell, 2007). This was also observed in the data under study and can be brought out more clearly in the discussions that follow through an analysis of the stages of covering news on displacement similar to those identified by Moeller (1999).

#### **4.1.1 Displacement as News**

This section highlights the four stages of media coverage mentioned above. The first stage focused on a looming crisis with different agencies and government institutions as news sources. After some time, new arrivals of refugees began to be reported marking the second stage of reporting. This was followed by a middle third stage in which feature articles and documentaries were done. A limit in which resentment towards refugees from national leaders as well as the public began to be reported was then reached. At this final stage, calls for the need to close refugee camps and for the repatriation of refugees were made. The table below summarises different stages of reporting, discussions are made thereafter.

Newspaper	Total news articles	Looming crisis	New arrivals	Progressive reports	Final stage
The Standard 1991	69	2	20	43	4
Daily Nation 1991	61	-	7	54	-
The Standard 2011	14	2	6: 3 principally of refugees, other 3 are broad, e.g. 1 of Kibaki	6	-
Daily Nation 2011	26	5	15 (including those of starving Kenyans)	6	-

Table 5: Table illustrating the different stages of reporting

In general, it was observed that the first two stages utilised few photographs of refugees, but more of national leaders, aid, and aid personnel. The Daily Nation 1991 crisis coverage for example with 7 articles on new arrivals utilised 2 photographs, both of which were of Kenyan leaders, the then Eastern Provincial Commissioner and President Moi (Daily Nation June 3 & 6, 1991). Updates on the new arrival of refugees were therefore made without using photographs of refugees. The middle stage of reporting in which numerous photographs of refugees were utilised to highlight their suffering in refugee camps was also noted. At this stage too, maps on the areas that experienced famine and starvation, or of the different locations of refugee camps in the country were also utilised. The last stage of reporting comprised calls to close down refugee camps and saw a wide use of cartoons as opposed to photographs.

It should however be noted that the crises of displacement did not occur in the clear cut chronological order the discussion here seems to portray. On the contrary, different new-arrival stages were experienced at different moments or even repatriation as seen above at the same time that a middle or final stage of an ongoing coverage was being done. On the other hand however, the four stages can be traced despite various occurrences in between. As analyses proceed, it will be noted that discourses around displacement and the stage of reporting largely influenced the kind of images utilized. These issues raised are discussed in detail below.

#### **4.1.1.1 Early Warning Signs, Starvation and Displacement**

The first stage of reporting warned of a looming crisis comprising a shortage of food and adverse starvation due to crop failure, new arrival of refugees, or of death in the camps due to a shortage of relief supply. Yet as much as these news articles warned of looming crises due to more arrival of refugees in larger numbers, or of further starvation, there were already refugees

fleeing into and in camps, or of Kenyans already experiencing starvation, information which ideally belongs to the second stage of reporting. In this period of sampling therefore, there was not a huge gap between the early warning signs reports of a looming crisis and the experience of the crisis itself. This is the reason why these two stages of reporting are here discussed together.

The early warning signs were meant to inform the government and donor institutions who would then act upon them, thereby curbing the crisis from being realised. As mentioned above, these warning signs were reported at a time when the crisis was ongoing and with their focus on further arrivals or adverse starvation, these news articles functioned to solicit for funds, and to speed up action towards the aid of those who were already undergoing crises.

In June 1991, the standard newspaper warned of the arrival of 0.4 million refugees in Kenya if conflict in the neighbouring countries was not resolved (The Standard, June 5, 1991, p. 13). This was through an address by the then home affairs and national heritage minister Mr. Davidson Kuguru during the handing over of Utange refugee camp in Mombasa to the management of the Kenya Red Cross Society and UNHCR (ibid). In this address, Mr. Kuguru also called on the refugees to respect Kenyan law, a call that was made so often in this early stage of hosting refugees, and will be discussed a little later in the section that compares the 1991/2011 crises periods.

The new arrival of refugees were reported in terms the huge numbers that arrived daily, but as mentioned earlier, few pictures of refugees were utilised, as compared to those of Kenyan leaders and NGO personnel. Below is a photograph, which is the only one in this stage one and two of reporting which has a refugee as the model. All others were done without pictures, and in other cases, with pictures of Kenyan leaders or of aid as earlier discussed. It portrays a woman queuing for registration at the Liboi camp in Northern Kenya.



**TOO WEAK ...** A Somali refugee woman waits for clearance at the Liboi border after arriving from Mogadishu to escape the ravages of civil war currently going on in her country. Most of the refugees walk thousands of kilometers without food or water. Picture by *Hadison Wamwani*.

**Secretary-General, Mr. John Kariuki, witnesses in a case in which a former detainee, George Aworo, has been jailed for seven years on a charge of sedition.**

The ruling was made by Mr. Justice Sotik Okok during the hearing of an application seeking the introduction of more evidence in the case.

Mr. Justice Okok allowed Aworo and three others, former detainees in Embay, Augustus Mera Kallangwa, former professor of psychology at Kenyatta University, Edward Ochiyo, and a former trade unionist, to give evidence relating to their medical records while in prison.

Three Nairobi lawyers, Mr Paul Buri, Mr Walei Mwangi and Mr Muturi Kigaso, appear for the applicants. The state is represented by Mr Philip Murgoe.

In his ruling, Mr Justice Okok noted that Mr. Kere, formerly an Assistant Minister in the Office of the President, had by his recent utterances pertaining to the Aworo case exposed himself as a potential

witness in the proceedings. "This court has the powers to summon him to give evidence in his possession which was not presented to the court during the hearing of the case," he said.

The court would consider whether to call him during the hearing of the appeal but this stage, he said, "the court will be content with the evidence reported in the daily newspapers and written or oral evidence presented to it."

The court, however, allowed the applicants to give evidence regarding their medical health while in prison. He also directed Nairobi and Kenia maximum security prisons authorities to make available to court medical records relating to the applicants.

Mr Justice Okok said the records were relevant to the applicants' application.

Describing witness conditions as pathetic, Mr Kigaso had earlier said there was a perennial shortage of medicines, food and bedding and claimed that his clients had been in solitary confinement for 18 months and were segregated. He urged the court to issue

— Page 2  
**Julie Ward was hacked to death, court told**  
— Page 2  
**University lecturers misusing scheme**  
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**Five killed, six hurt in land clashes**

At least five people were killed and six others injured in land clashes along the Uasin Gishu-Kisumu border on Sunday and yesterday.

The Standard learnt that four of the deceased were killed on Sunday, while the fifth, an old woman, was murdered yesterday morning. By 10 a.m., yesterday, the bodies had not been collected.

Over 100 families were estimated to have been displaced when their homes, granaries and other property were set on fire at Maseben village in Uasin Gishu District.

And so intense were the clashes that motorists avoided the normally busy Bungeo-Eldoret road that traverses the "battle area", largely due to

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**Farmer's Choice**

Article 16: **TOO WEAK ...** A Somali refugee woman waits for clearance at the Liboi border after arriving from Mogadishu to escape the ravages of civil war currently going on in her country, *The Standard*, Feb11, 1992.

In the 2011 crisis period however, the drought and starvation crisis was not only a refugee's crisis, but was also experienced in some parts of Northern Kenya such as Mandera and Turkana. This yielded availability of pictures of context as compared to those of people, an aspect that David Campbell observes, would be the best option of displacement imagery in the attempt to fight stereotypical portrayals of refugees in despair (2007 p. 378). The photograph below is an example.

8 | National News

DAILY NATION  
Wednesday July 27, 2011

**DROUGHT** | Crisis has been worsened by the sharp increase in maize prices, says UN humanitarian coordinator

**More food relief needed as the number of**

United Nations gives Sh1.25 billion to the government to help fight starvation

BY PETER NG'ETICH  
pnet@nationmedia.com

The number of Kenyans at risk of starvation will increase by one million at the end of August. The figure will shoot up from the current 2,442,888 to 3.5 million, according to United Nations statistics.

The UN said that people in 28 districts, mainly in northern Kenya, are faced with starvation due to the prolonged drought.

Wajir, Turkana, Kitui, Kwale, Mandera, Marsabit, Makeni, Mwingi, Garissa and Machakos are the districts hardest hit by famine, with 1,451,864 people on the verge of death.

In Wajir, 205,265 people are in dire need of food aid while in Turkana the figure stands at 194,333.

As a result, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund has given Sh1.25 billion to the government to arrest the situation. An additional Sh282 million was given to the government to specifically deal with refugees.

The organisation said the fund would be used mainly to mitigate the effects of drought through agriculture, livestock, food aid, nutrition, health, water and sanitation.

UN humanitarian coordinator for Kenya Amos Chuma said the fund would also be used to assist the urban poor who are facing starvation.

"The recent increase in food and fuel prices has made it difficult for many families in urban centres to meet

their basic needs, including having a decent meal. Through this funding, UN agencies in Kenya will assist the poor and vulnerable in urban areas," he said.

Mr Chuma said the food crisis had been worsened by a sharp increase in maize prices, leaving the urban poor in a critical state of food insecurity.

In a recent survey released by Synovate Kenya, the proportion of people feeling the pinch of the high cost of living in the country doubled from 33 to 66 per cent in the past four months. The figure is expected to rise further before the end of the year, according to their latest opinion polls.

Mr Chuma said the drought situation was expected to worsen in the coming months in marginal agricultural areas of south-central Kenya.

"The crisis has further fuelled resource-based conflict among pastoral communities. In June, 76 people were killed in cattle rustling incidents in

**THE NUMBERS**

**Food aid sought**

**28**

Number of districts in which residents are starving

**205,265**

Number of people in dire need of food aid in Wajir

**194,333**

Number of people in Turkana who urgently need food relief



The drought has ruined crops in Kalata village, Mwingi. The number of Kenyans at risk of starvation will increase by one million at the end of next month.

the affected areas," he said.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees country representative Elike Seghor said that as a result of drought in the Horn of Africa, 400,000 refugees had fled Somalia and moved to the Dadaab refugee

camp, which is supposed to hold 90,000 people only. Dadaab is the world's largest refugee camp.

He said as a result, tension had gripped the region following the influx of the refugees due to limited resources in the area.

**Agencies inside Somalia to get EU aid directly**

BY NATION CORRESPONDENT

The bulk of EU financial assistance for hunger victims will now be directed to aid agencies inside Somalia.

Funds will only go to organisations that have experience working in that country as it is feared new entrants could be rejected or attacked by al-Shabaab militants.

With funding almost troubled for Horn of Africa drought victims, European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response Kristalina Georgieva said in Nairobi yesterday that focus was on preventing people from walking across the borders.

**Three-day visit**

It is very critical that we work on the ground to strengthen organisations that are already there," Ms Georgieva told an international news conference after a three-day visit to Kenya and southern Somalia.

"We will direct a big part of our assistance to organisations inside Somalia. We strongly believe that experienced organisations in partnership with local chiefs can save lives. It is no time for inexperienced organisations and individuals to venture into Somalia," she said.

She also announced an immediate allocation of Sh3.6 billion, bringing the EU's contribution to Sh12.7 billion, with another Sh3.8 billion on the way to alleviate the suffering of an estimated 11 million people.

Article 17: the drought has ruined crops in Kalata village, Mwingi, *Daily Nation*, July27, 2011.



This photograph portrays dry vegetation, providing additional context to the crisis at hand. In this regard, readers could understand the reasons for the existence of the crisis of starvation, not only in Kenya, but also other affected countries, thereby situating the influx of refugees in its context. In this regard, instead of showing images of weak victims of drought which is an effect of starvation on human beings, the photograph of place portrayed the climatic effects that led to starvation. As Campbell argues, instead of the photo portraying ‘another starving African’ therefore, it has portrayed a photo of place, thereby countering the use of images of victims only, while at the same time offering additional information. It should be noted though, as Campbell (2007) and Moeller (1999) argue, that such photographs of context are hard to come by in situations of conflict or other difficult conditions when journalists cannot travel to the crisis site, thereby undertaking their coverage from refugee camps. This photograph was therefore available for two reasons. First is due to financial considerations in that the crisis was within Kenya and secondly, there was no conflict at the crises zones during this time. In this regard, reporters could be sent to the crises zones with minimal financial constrains to the media house, while at the same time, their safety was ensured.

As mentioned earlier, the Kenyan government complained of taking in more refugees in the 2011 crisis period arguing that this was an extra burden for Kenya, while proposing that relief camps could be constructed in the countries from which refugees were fleeing. This will be discussed in more detail later. But it is important to note during this period of reporting that as much as there were reports on crises of starvation across many parts of the Horn of Africa during this period, national news focused on the crisis of starving Kenyans, while briefly reporting the refugee’s crisis of displacement without using pictures.

#### **4.1.1.2 Progressive Reporting Stage**

This stage covered progressive news on displacement after refugees had settled in camps. It offered reports on aid received, feature stories concerning the dire situations refugees underwent in the camps and at other times, assurance to refugees of relief provision. In the analyses, it was established that there were more photographs of refugees utilized at this stage as compared to the new arrival stage. Moreover, as seen in table 4 above which is also reproduced with slight modifications below, more photographs of women and children were utilized at this stage as compared to those of men.

Newspaper	No. of articles with pictures of refugees	No. of pictures used	Women & children	Men & children	children	women	men	Families	Scene
The Standard 1991	17	23	11	1	5	-	5	-	1
Daily Nation 1991	9	19	2	1	6	4	4	1	1
The Standard 2011	8	10	1	-	1	2	-	-	6
Daily Nation 2011	16	22	4	1	5	1	3	6	2

Table 6: Table on the news articles with pictures of refugees and those of the scene such as dry vegetation

As mentioned above, in the first and second stages of reporting, photographs of aid institutions and personnel, of the Kenyan government leaders, or of representatives of donor institutions were largely utilized, while those of refugees were utilized more at this third stage of reporting. In this regard, while the second stage dealt with new arrival of refugees, most of the articles were done without pictures, and in the cases where photographs were used, they were not of refugees. This third stage of reporting however covered the plight of refugees in the camps, largely focusing on their distressful living conditions with poor sanitation, lack of nutritious food, and deaths that occurred due to these conditions. In this regard, the photographs utilized were of despair, not due to new arrival, but the poor living conditions in the camps. While Moeller (1999) has observed the media coverage of refugees in despair at the time of arrival, this study noted the use of these pictures of refugees in despair not at the time of arrival, but to accompany feature articles at the third stage of reporting. This stage focused on the crisis in refugee camps.

In this regard, as much as there was a crisis of famine and conflict in Somalia, the crisis was also right in Kenya, in refugee camps, and the Kenyan media sought to inform about these crises. Photographs of emaciated Somalis were largely utilized. As representations of displacement, the harrowing impact of war and starvation could be seen. As Malkki observes, refugees in most cases do not speak about their experiences, but their “physical presence is telling of his or her immediate history of violence” and starvation (1996, p. 390). As seen in

the photograph below, the child is so emaciated, itself becoming a metaphoric portrayal of what it has gone through.



WAITING TO DIE ... All this Somali mother can do is hold this feeble child who may die any time, (The Standard, February 13, 1992).

Being held by the mother, the caption tells it all, that the child may die any time. It portrayed the crisis of adverse living conditions at the Liboi camp hosting Somali refugees in February 1992 (The Standard, February 13<sup>th</sup> 1992). During this time, there were numerous deaths due to insufficient food supplies at the camp, although UNHCR stated that the deaths were also due to the refugees' arrival into the camps in already poor conditions. This photograph, as much as it portrays the reality of catastrophes in the camps, which was news, is also heartbreaking. Yet in referring to the concept of singularity adopted in this study as the theoretical foundation, such pictures, as much as they portray suffering which has been criticized by some scholars as leading to the creation and establishment of stereotypes (Moeller, 1999; Mallki, 1995; Campbell, 2010), belong to the genre of photojournalism, which is defined by certain codes of representation, in this case, of news on crises. For this reason, they are specific to this particular news context they represent; that is, portrayals of crises. Another similar picture is seen below.



ANY HELP? ... This wasted child waits for help which may be a difference between life and death, The Standard, February 13, 1992.

This is another image of a wasted child, the caption sums it up, that help awarded this child will be the difference between life and death. The child is pictured alone, highlighting the wide use of images of children in representing crises in a way that heightens compassion towards refugees. In this research, it was established that more pictures of children alone were utilized as compared to those of women, or men alone, highlighting what Moeller identifies that children are the famine icon (1999, p. 98). Moeller notes that

The media's coverage of famine is distilled down into the simple iconic image of a starving infant. An emaciated child is not yet associated with the stereotypes associated to its color, its culture, or its political environment. Skeletal children personify innocence abused. They bring moral clarity to the complex story of famine. Their images cut through the social, economic, and political context to create an imperative statement (1999, p. 98).

In this regard, while pictures of women with children were also utilised, those of children alone were more than those of women alone as seen in the table above. The reality of human suffering in times of crises is made evident in these pictures. They therefore play a double role of informing about a crisis and at the same time appealing for aid for the victims of this situation. As agonizing pictures therefore, they bring out the double role that these pictures play.

Yet this could be true for occasions when a crisis is competing for international coverage with other international news. As seen in chapter two, different criteria are used to judge news worthiness of an event for national and international news, with CNN having to select from different occurrences, and specifically different crises, the ones to award priority. The national news coverage however has more space as compared to international media coverage, which was the case for the data under study. Moreover, the refugees' crisis was a priority for the Kenyan media since it was a national problem. The use of children in this case therefore

deserves a deeper understanding. With Kenya bearing the reality of neighbouring countries in conflict and the crisis itself being a national issue, the use of children in this case is not drawn from their representational tradition only as famine icons, but rather, the reality of the situation. Of emaciation and pain that resulted from the many days of starvation. The news told is therefore coupled by an attempt to garner aid, not only for this child, but for all in this situation. This further points to the symbiotic relation that exists between humanitarian agencies and the mass media mentioned earlier. In this regard, while the mass media informs with the responsibility to not only report news but to also offer solutions for those undergoing crises, humanitarian agencies play the direct role of distributing aid to its recipients.

Below is another photograph of a woman and child. While the infant seems to be in a peaceful deep sleep like any other new born, all its sorrows are born by the woman holding it, because she understands the ongoing situations.



PURE AGONY...an elderly woman holds a baby waiting for clearance at the Liboi camp, The Standard, February 13, 1992.

It shows a woman and child, with agony scribbled all over her face. It renders another harrowing portrayal of starvation and the possible death of this child's mother. As the caption informs, the photo is of an elderly woman with a baby at the Liboi border. As much as it is possible that this child was born enroute to the camp, it is also possible that her mother may have died and the responsibility of its care being left to this elderly woman. This picture points to suffering, not directly of the child, but of this woman as well. But the connotations of even more agony of the child are made clear, especially when such an innocent child is a victim of what it does not really understand.

Below is another photograph, this time of a man and his son. It is evident that it is not only women and children that are pushed so far by the agonies of conflict, war, and starvation, but men as well.



WAITING IN HUNGER ... father and son awaiting relief supplies at Walda Refugee Camp in Moyale District, The Standard, May 20, 1992.

The photograph portrays a man and his child, both looking distressed. The man looks down, as if staring blankly in deep thought. It is not usual that photographs and news on displacement make use of men as their models, and more still, men with children. But this man seems to not only be in deep thought, but also in despair, a perfect metaphor for such news images on starvation, with despair and hopelessness being the key theme. The child is malnourished, and both are looking away from the camera. As much as photographs of men are not commonly used to represent displacement in the media but rather preserved for the 'threatening asylum seeker' imagery as discussed above, the dire situation this man is in qualifies its use here. In this regard, while photographs of men in despair are indeed rare, when available, they are utilised by the media just like those of women and children.

The reality of mass graves also marked the representation of displacement in the crises periods under study. After arrival into refugee camps, many refugees are in very poor health conditions due to malnutrition, starvation and their perceptibility to secondary infections such as typhoid and cholera. In many cases, these lead to death, yielding another trope of representing displacement that points to the crisis, thereby garnering aid for its victims.



FINAL RESTING PLACE ... A mass grave at the Liboi camp where refugees dying daily are burried, The Standard, Feb 13, 1992.

This photograph portrays a grave site. As the caption indicates, it is located “at the Liboi camp where refugees dying everyday were burried” (The Standard, February 13, 1992). As mentioned above, one of the occurrences and therefore characteristics of this period of reporting is death, sometimes due to the dire situations the refugees arrived in, and at other times due to poor sanitation and deficiency food the refugees were given. As a reporting cue, death and graveyards worked to express the desperateness of the situation and in their very nature, triggered sympathy and therefore garnered support for the victims. In this case, it functioned to put pressure on governments and respective donor institutions to donate, especially when the aid was not forthcoming (The Standard, July 18, 2011). Apart from them functioning to garner support, these images were also newsworthy. They were produced in the context of crises as real occurrences in the sense that none of the agonies in these photos were made up, but real. In referring back to the study’s theoretical approach therefore, these representations cannot be villified for representing only despair and hopelessness, but are taken to be specific to this particular news context they represent, which is indeed important in the comprehensive understanding of displacement. In this case, the reality of despair is acknowledged.

Apart from representations of despair due to poor living conditions in the camps as seen above, the plight of refugees after displacement was also a focus of attention at this stage of media coverage. This dwelt on idleness, a factor that although part and parcel of what refugees underwent after displacement, was not tackled by humanitarian organizations since priority was awarded to the provision of basic needs. Idleness was illustrated through feature articles

to update on the after-crises events, especially when there were no more crises images to show. It is largely expected that immediately after displacement, people's initial ways of life are transformed in different ways. In this regard, when crises of displacement occur, it is not only the case that people are in despair due to starvation for example, but also that they lose their initial ways of life. For example, those who were initially employed suddenly lose their employment, and now do not have anything else to do. Farmers cannot farm anymore, herders cannot herd their cattle, children no longer go to school, in essence, the initial way of life is largely disrupted. The result is idleness as seen in the photograph below.



Most of the refugees at Utange, having nothing else to do, just sit all day long dreaming about the time they'll return to their homeland. For many, the boredom has been a terrible experience, Daily Nation, March 4, 1992.

This photograph appeared on the Daily Nation, March 4, 1992 as a feature article focusing on the refugees' plight after displacement. It portrays mostly men, lying down on mats while the rest are seated. They seem to be thoroughly bored. Indeed after displacement and people are in foreign lands, there mostly is nothing else for them to do. In Kenya, most refugees were lying idle after having been displaced. As they awaited repatriation or relocation to third countries, there was a moment of liminality. A moment in which they could neither fully settle in Kenya, nor go home to their countries due to ongoing war (ibid). This moment rendered people inactive and therefore, bored.

But while the article utilized a photo of mostly men lying idle as noted above, the feature was more about refugee professionals who had initiated various activities in the camps in a bid to reduce boredom. The article noted that,



But in the midst of all this despretions (referring to an opening paragraph on the despair experienced by refugees) exists a gallant group of proffessionals who avoid the boredom by working day and night to create order in the camps. It is this group of doctors, engineers, social workers, educationists, and numerous other proffessionals who are responsible for the emerging rays of hope in the camp reputed to be one of the best in the country (Daily Nation, March 4, 1992).

In portraying this group of proffessional refugees, the article revealed the heterogeneity of refugees who could therefore not be lumped as a mass of desperate people. The article begun by remarking on the reality of despair among refugees, for example, that “their eyes are hollow, their bodies weak, their spirit low”, before dwelling on a women group leader who “cuts a dignified pose even in exile in a white gown embroidered with African motifs ...”. The woman, whose name is given although her photo is not shown, goes ahead to state that,

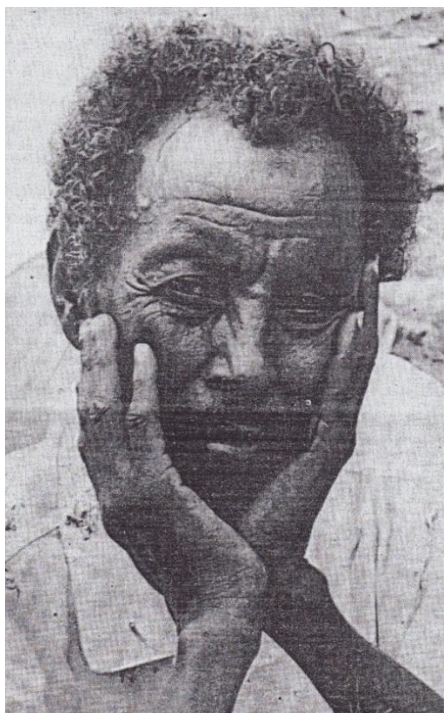
I am so glad that I am very busy through out the day that I don't have time to think about all our problems. If I was not working I think I would have gone mad (ibid).

These portrayals of the heterogeneity that exists among refugees therefore contribute further to the comprehensive representation of displacement. It is evident that refugees are not only hungry and starving as most scholarly arguments would portray, but that among them exist proffessionals. It is however important to note the choice of this particular photograph. In a bid to reveal the various categories of refugees, the article utilised a photo that immediately portrays boredom, reducing its intent of the existence of proffessional refugees, which is actually the most important in the comprehensive understanding of refugees, to the written word. In this regard, a passing reader may fail to get this other reality of the existence of not necessarily desperate refugees. It is evident therefore , that the article falls back to the use of stereotypical-passive-refugee imagery despite the message relayed, so that imagery do not necessarily fit into the story told. However, As will be seen later on, this media coverage of refugees in ways that transgressed dominant modes may have led to a resentment towards refugees form the Kenyan communities among whom they lived, in the thought that they had more affluent lives.

In this period in Kenya, reports told of how some refugees had been introduced to chewing Miraa, a certain drug grown in Kenya, while men were driving around town, and women engaged in prostitution as a source of income. As much as these events were true, an emerging

resentment towards refugees was noted, and men were suddenly the object of this resentment. In this regard, while there were images of men that marked the “threatening asylum seeker” imagery discussed earlier on, there were none to portray idle women, probably preserving images of women as metaphors for despair and hopelessness. While there were no images though, there were elaborate news articles of women refugees engaged in prostitution, and the resultant warnings to Kenyans to be wary of HIV/AIDs (The Standard September 5, 1992). These were during the initial years in the early 90s when HIV/AIDs was also new, not only in Kenya, but also in most parts of the world.

Other extensive feature articles done by journalists focused on refugees’ living conditions in Kenya’s urban areas mainly in Eastleigh in Nairobi. The result were stories of them living in dingy lodgings and overly congested houses resulting to stress as seen in the photo below.



The plight of Somali refugees living in camps in Kenya is well known, but there are hundreds of others who have drifted to Nairobi where they too are living extremely miserable lives, Daily Nation, March 4, 1992.

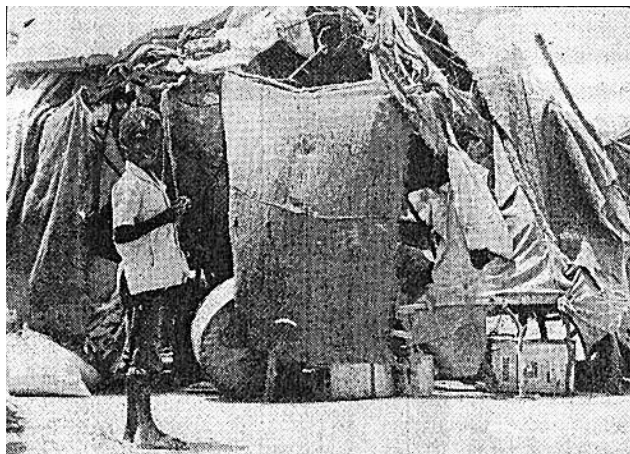
The cycle revolved around the arrival of an energetic refugee, who flew with his “new car” and spent the whole day driving around Nairobi town in order to pass time (Daily Nation, March 4, 1992). After some days however, the enthusiasm dwindled and idleness began to set in, resulting to instant boredom. The next stage was the search for alternative ways to pass time, and the most available was chewing Miraa. As the feature indicted, the men began chewing, and with time, their wives too engaged in this pass time and later on their children. It was no wonder that the then Eastern Provincial Commissioner Mr. Amos Bore in his address to

refugees to “remain within their designated camps” announced the liberalization of the Miraa business to open it up “for anyone interested in the trade” (The Standard, December 13, 1991). This cycle unfortunately ended with the selling of property, including the car, in order to maintain the now acquired drug lifestyle (Daily Nation, March 4, 1992).

In focusing on urban refugees, the article, as opposed to the previous one, continues to present refugees in despair. It focuses on their living conditions in crowded houses where three or more families lived together (ibid). The crisis period under study in the two newspapers sampled was therefore characterised by the media coverage of refugees in extremes of either despair or affluence. As much as the representation of refugees in ways that transgressed dominant modes as mentioned above existed therefore, this mode was not so common as to transgress the overall image of refugees in the media. In this regard, the representation of refugees as passive and desperate was maintained by the media as seen in regards to the photo choice above.

In general, what is evident from the heterogeneity of refugees is that not only do they need the supply of basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing but also that of preoccupation. Most international law however prohibit refugees from working, but through humanitarian organizations, are given aid. Refugees in this case play the sick-role that Vanessa Pupavak (2008) identifies as was discussed in chapter two. In this state, somebody else, normally humanitarian institutions, determine refugees’ needs and speak on their behalf. In most cases, only basic needs are provided, while higher needs of preoccupation are not. It is true that governments institute laws to deter refugees, especially economic refugees, from fleeing their countries. However, the visible idleness by refugees also deserves our attention, and the possible need for contemporary consideration of refugees’ preoccupations after displacement is necessary. Indeed some, especially professionals, can be quite helpful to the countries they flee to.

Apart from idleness, living shelters were also part of this stage of reporting. Refugees were pictured in front of their makeshift camps which were by this time home, as shown below.



MY HOME ... A young refugee stands next to a shed he refers to as his home, *The Standard*, February 13, 1992.

As much as the boy seems to be smiling, the focus is not on the boy, but on the shelter behind him, which he calls home. This shelter therefore feeds further into the despair in refugee camps which is the focus of reporting at this stage. In this way, it contributes to a continuous plea for aid donation to those affected. As will be seen below however, these continuous updates on the plight of refugees in camps may have led to what Moeller (1999) has termed “Compassion Fatigue”. These initiated the final stage of reporting in Kenya in which the public and the government began to call for the repatriation of refugees back to their countries, and the closing down of all refugee camps in Kenya. This is discussed in more detail below. More of such imagery of rugged makeshift camps as homes will be analysed further in the chapter on the visual codes of picturing displacement.

#### **4.1.1.3 Final Stage of Reporting**

This section analyses the representation of displacement as news, but the focus of reporting reveals stereotypes, blame games, humor, that is, events that follow the crisis period of reporting, and a call for the closure, which can also be seen as a call to end the news coverage on the crisis of displacement, is made. Coverage during this time therefore focuses on the negativity of having refugees in the country. Sometimes after the crisis period is over, calm is realised in some countries and refugees begin to go back home. Repatriation stories are therefore part of coverage at this stage. On the other hand however, when peace seems to be taking too long to be realised, and the once temporary camps become more permanent as is the case with those in Dadaab, resentment from the host country emerges. At this stage, the refugee camps become an object for international politics with the host country calling for the immediate closure of the camps, while international pressure to keep the camps running

mounts; adjustments on the next steps of action are then made. As will be seen therefore, the Kenyan government threatened to close down the camps many times, and in the 2011 crisis, declined, for a period of time, to accept refugees, and therefore open up new camps in Dadaab. Further, during this final phase of reporting, cartoons as opposed to photographs are largely utilised. This use of cartoons goes beyond the news form of reporting displacement to a more trivialising form, which as will be seen, can be interpreted as a sign of compassion fatigue.

As mentioned earlier, this final stage of reporting comprises news on the repatriation of refugees back to their countries, or emerging resentment towards refugees when repatriation is not an option. Apart from the government complaining, Kenyan citizens too raised their discontent, an attitude that was traced to the direct effect of the influx of refugees in urban cities on the prices of basic commodities. During the 1991 crisis period when refugees began settling in Eastleigh in Nairobi, the cost of rent and other commodities went up, and the cartoon below demonstrated this frustration.



## Refugees take over Eastleigh

YOU wake up one morning to find the landlord with several people outside the door. You wonder what he is up to since you have no rent arrears.

Then the landlord tells you he is converting the house into a boarding and lodging and that you are supposed to move out immediately.

You look him up in the face to see whether he is joking. He did not give you the mandatory 12 months notice to vacate. His workers, however, are already removing your furniture from the house.

Or you wake up one morning to see a notice pinned at your door. The rent has gone up with immediate effect. If you can't pay, move out, the notice says.

These are only two scenarios that tenants in some estates in Nairobi are being subjected to by landlords and landlords since the influx of Somali and Ethiopian refugees started nearly a year ago.

Other landlords and landlords have had to add unauthorised extensions to accommodate the high paying refugees while others who had started constructing rental houses saw that there is more money in boarding and lodging and subsequently turned them into lodgings.

That is the scenario in many parts of Nairobi but the most affected area is Eastleigh where tenants have been subjected to a lot of harassment to force them out or quit so that the houses could be rented to Somali refugees at exorbitant rents.

The Nyeri Member of Parliament, Vahanya Ndairungu, said in parliament that many people have always wanted to pay — that the refugee influx is causing a lot of distress to Kenyans.

Mr. Vahanya said many workers in Nairobi had been rendered homeless by high spending refugees from Somalia and Ethiopia who were ready to pay any amount in rent.

He said: "Those Somalis came to Kenya to a lot of money and pay landlords huge sums of money which tempt them to row out the lowly paid Kenyan workers."

A survey carried out by *The Standard* in the past two weeks has revealed that evicting and lodging houses have in-

**SUDDENLY the rents go up and some landlords opt to convert their rental houses into boarding and lodging establishments forcing the tenants to retreat to the slums. The influx of refugees says Raphael Kahaso, is responsible for some of these woes facing the Kenyan low paid workers in many parts of the city and especially Eastleigh.**

creased their daily charges to as much as 100 per cent.

Before the influx of the Somali refugees, the bed occupancy tax in lodgings in Eastleigh was less than 40 per cent but this shot up to as much as 80 per cent, leading to the hiking of the charges.

Initially, landlords were reluctant to rent out their flats to the Somali refugees but when they discovered that they had 'bonnes' of money, they set their price and let them in. Some had many months in advance.

A refugee in a new block of flats on Captain Mwangi Street said that he was asked to give the landlord the months advance payment for the lot of two bedrooms and a sitting room. The rent charged for the flat is Shs 4, which is considered expensive for Eastleigh area.

Almost all the refugees in the block of flats had to make several months advance payment before they were given the keys to the houses. They paid gladly because they had stayed in lodgings since their arrival.

Another block of flats on Third Street which had been billed as rental flats, were partitioned to make 100 rooms and now each space which has a kitchenette space meant for a teacher pays for Shs 120 per day.

Many of the Somali refugees are able to pay such exorbitant rents because they tend to live in groups. A landlord letting out his flat to a refugee is knowingly letting it to more than 15 refugees who contribute to pay the rent.

Why do the landlords ask for such high rents in a low class area like Eastleigh? Saw one landlord: "When there is an opportunity to make money, people should take it. After all, we are not making from these people, we are merely giving them a chance."

But by doing these refugees a favour, many landlords are hurting Kenyans because many lowly paid Kenyans have to retreat to the slums because they can't afford the rents charged by the landlords who have found an opportunity to make quick money.

These refugees have to cooperate with the Kenyans for food and during times of shortages, the refugees are willing to pay any amount for essential commodities like sugar and rice. When sugar was selling at Shs 40 per kilo, the refugees simply paid what was being asked while the locals found the amount too high.

This means it is not only landlords who take advantage of these refugees. Businessmen also jump at the opportunity when there was milk shortage in the country the refugees would pay as much as Shs 15 for a half litre packet of the milk. When there was milk shortage in the country the refugees would pay as much as Shs 15 for a half litre packet of the milk. When there was milk shortage in the country the refugees would pay as much as Shs 15 for a half litre packet of the milk.

Some are so poor that they rely on charity and goodwill of their community. These are, however, a minority. It looks like those Somali refugees who made it to the city were loaded with money. That is why some of them have been able to maintain their expensive lifestyles.

I met a family of six Somali refugees in a lodging on Third Street. At first the head of the family who gave his name as Abdi was reluctant to talk, but when I assured him I would not take pictures or give the rest of his names, he agreed to talk.

He is a former businessman in Mogadishu. He lost his brothers at the beginning of the civil war. His shops were looted but he was able to dash for his dear life. Fortunately for him he was able to flee with his family — his wife and four children.

He has since lived in a lodging since he arrived. How much money did he bring with him? It is secret, he says, but by the look of things, he lives comfortably.

Amnar, his 12-year-old son is a healthy boy. But unlike the boys his age, he doesn't attend school. His day starts with a heavy breakfast at 7.00 in the morning followed by a lot of idleness. After another heavy meal at noon, he has yet more time for idleness.

Amina, the eldest of the Abdi family is 15. If the family had not run away from Mogadishu, she would be married now. But here in Nairobi which the family regards as a transit stop, she is an idle girl. Her mother tries to make sure she doesn't fall into bad company. She neither reads nor writes. Her place, as her mother has always told her, is in the kitchen.

The last two daughters, aged 10 and 9 respectively, are also idle. They have nothing else to do but play.

The Abdi family had been a very religious one — that is until their flight to Kenya and finally to Nairobi. He:

Abdi found he had very little to do. Fortunately for him, he had his 4-wheel Toyota so he drove around Nairobi until he bore himself stiff.

Then he found what other refugees had started — chewing miraa. He would chew miraa outside their lodging. Soon he found out that his wife was also chewing miraa. Other women refugees had showed her how to spend the time which they happened to have in abundance.

Now the two are addicted and their two children Amnar and Amina too will soon be. They have been chewing their hearts' contentment — first without their parents' consent and finally with their knowledge.

Abdi found something else. His new friends visited bars. He followed them and now apart from the miraa chewing, he also has three beers after lunch and four after dinner. After the beers at night, he staggers back to the lodging.

"But money is running out fast," he says. He will have to give up one of the three rooms the family is occupying. He pays Shs 360 per day for the three. Before the refugee influx, the rooms were being for Shs 60 per day.

Will he give up on miraa and beer? Abdi says the two items have become part of him. But he says if his plans to go to Canada where the family intends to settle do not materialise soon, he will have to sell his vehicle.

Many Somali refugees lead a lifestyle similar to Abdi's. Apart from the frequent visit to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to check on their applications for settlement in other countries, life is a bore. And to beat the boredom, many have been hooked to beer and miraa.

There are those women refugees who fled Somalia without either their husbands or their parents. Some of them have been reduced to prostitution. However, they want fellow Somali men, not people from other communities.

The situation is expected to become worse as time goes when the refugees have sold all their valuables. All the refugees interviewed said they do not want to be sent to the refugee camps.

Article 18: A cartoon on hiked prices due to the influx of refugees

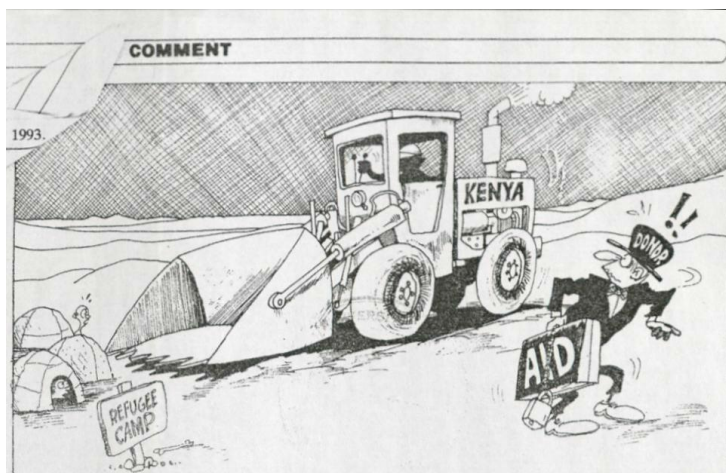
While living expenses in Eastleigh were affordable to many working class Kenyans at that time, the influx of refugees caused the price of rent to shoot up. As demonstrated on the far left side of the cartoon above, a landlord is harshly moving out a Kenyan tenant while a refugee, who is willing to pay the hiked Ksh. 30,000<sup>14</sup> as rent, moves in. This was a huge amount at the time, and was unaffordable to many Kenyans. As indicated in the op-ed, the Somali refugees could afford to pay up to six months rent in advance, and landlords therefore preferred Somali to Kenyan tenants. Furthermore, as seen on the far right, the prices of basic commodities were also hiked, and while the Somali refugees could still afford to buy these commodities, the Kenyan buyer looked in amazement, causing many to move into more affordable estates. With a full basket containing *sukari* (sugar), pasta, and other things, the Somali shopper pays Ksh. 5000, while the next shopper, who is supposedly Kenyan, has got Ksh. 20, and might not be able to afford anything. On the background is a speeding car written Somaliya, and having in mind the original *matatu* (public transportation) type of cars, this referred to cars with Somali numberplates which were common at the time, and were probably the public transportation system between Somalia and the estate (Eastleigh). To date, all public service vehicles to Dadaab and other parts of Northern Kenya such as Wajir and Garissa are boarded from Eastleigh.

With this representational angle in which the journalist invites the reader, assumedly Kenyan, to have a particular understanding of refugees, one of foreigners displacing locals, an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ representational angle was constructed, with the reader being invited to sympathise with the ‘displaced’ Kenyans and stand in the position of the journalist, so that when the journalist spoke, he seemed to be speaking on behalf of Kenyans. This movement of refugees from the camps to urban centres such as Eastleigh therefore caused a resentment towards refugees as brought out through media coverage, with communities among whom refugees lived complaining about the better lives the refugees lived as compared to theirs. It was therefore easy for the Kenyan citizens to support the government in its bid to close down refugee camps as discussed in the section above on the ‘threatening asylum seeker’. Furthermore, during the same period, the Kenya government actually went ahead to insist on

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<sup>14</sup> At an exchange rate of 1Euro to 100Ksh, this is equivalent to 300 Euros. This was high at the time because 400 Euros is approximately the current monthly salary for many people, especially for those living in Eastleigh. However, rising terrorist attacks in the estate caused many people to move out, this may have had an influence on the cost of housing.

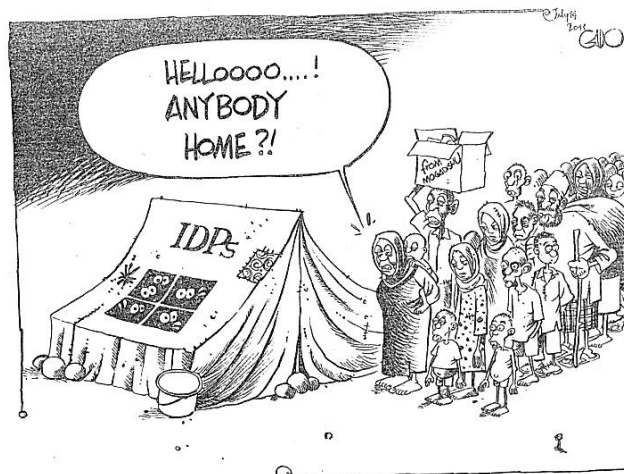
the need to close down the refugee camps in Dadaab. The cartoon below demonstrated this moment.



Article 19: A cartoon on the Kenyan government demolishing refugee camps. Aid organisations are seen leaving the camp.

It shows a construction truck, which represents the Kenyan government uprooting a refugee camp in Dadaab. This reaction occurred when the international community threatened to suspend aid to Kenya due to its refusal to adopt multipartism as a form of government; and as its bargaining tool, the government threatened to close down this camp. Ironically, aid workers were portrayed running away from the camp, leaving refugees under the harsh hands of the Kenyan government. In this regard, while humanitarian institutions were responsible for the provision of basic items to refugees, their (refugees') protection, it seems, was far beyond the capacity of these institutions under the threats of the Kenyan government.

On the other hand, the threat to close down refugee camps at a time when the international community threatened to suspend its aid to Kenya due to Kenya's refusal to embrace democracy portrays how the refugee camp became an object for international politics. In this regard, while the international community gave demands which the Kenya government had to abide by, the government had the refugee camps as their bargaining tool; so that instead of abiding by these demands, they threatened to close down the camps. These threats have been posed by the government for many occasions since 1992, and in the long run, can be said to play a manipulative game of politics, since it has never accomplished its threats. In bringing in the 2011 crisis period as another case, the government declined to take in more refugees as mentioned above, citing the need for them to be resettled as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in their countries of origin. The cartoon below demonstrated this refusal.



Article 20: A cartoon on Somali refugees returning to their country to resettle as IDPs rather than as refugees in Kenya

The 2011 refugee crisis, as was reported by humanitarian institutions, was caused by famine and not conflict. The Kenya government then took up this construction of the causes of the 2011 crisis of displacement and argued for the resettlement of newly arrived refugees as IDPs in Somalia. During this period, the Somali based alshabaab militia were also a threat to Kenya's security (Daily Nation, July 14, 2011). This security threat fuelled further animosity towards refugees. In this regard, while the 2011 crisis was major, calling for the need to open up more refugee camps as the influx was so high, the government dragged its feet, citing the reason above, and moreso, the starvation crisis in Kenya. In this case therefore, while refugees experienced difficult situations in make-shift camps as they awaited acceptance by the Kenya government to host them, the government acted a little bit slowly in accepting them. This became a little bit too late for many as Moeller (1999) notes in regards to situations of displacement in which action is delayed. At the same time, this points to the government's use of the refugee camp as a bargaining tool. When the move is slow and the death rates seem to be increasing, this in itself becomes a spectacle. An alternative was for the refugees to go back to their country as the cartoon indicates, although the new camps were later opened as already noted.

#### 4.2 The 1991 / 2011 Crises Periods

Displacement is an event that has occurred numerous times in the past. This section offers a discussion of the representation of displacement in the Kenyan media, dwelling on the 1991 and 2011 crises periods in order to examine the effect of this temporal aspect on the discourses on displacement. The 1991 crisis period was among the initial moments when crises of displacement were experienced in the Horn of Africa. In Kenya, it was the first time refugees



from neighbouring countries comprising of Ethiopia, Somalia, and the then Sudan, were hosted. In this initial moment, this crisis of displacement was caused by widespread conflict in Ethiopia and Somalia, which was later followed by Sudan. Refugees came into Kenya in huge numbers, and it was Kenya's responsibility to take care of them in providing them with basic needs (The Standard June 5, 1991, p. 13). This provision of basic items comprised of temporary refugee centres, shelters, food, blankets, medication, and in other cases, clothing. There were therefore different refugee centres that were set up including Oda and Walde in Moyale at the Kenyan-Ethiopian border, Utange in Mombasa, two major camps at Hulugho and Liboi in Northern Kenya, Thika refugee camp, Kiunga in Lamu District, and Lokichoggio in the Kenyan-Sudan border<sup>15</sup>. Hulugho and Liboi camps were later thought to be too far for administration and therefore Dagahaley and Hagadera camps in Dadaab were established, and refugees in the Northern part were moved to these two camps (The Standard, April 8, 1992). Camps in Dadaab have since increased in number and by the time of this research, they were six in total.

This initial moment was therefore a learning process for Kenya in terms of establishing structures to handle the refugee crisis, and the development of different refugee centres in different parts of the country until the now more permanent sites in Dadaab and Kakuma were established. Moreover, at this initial period when the provision of refugees' basic needs was the Kenya government's responsibility, the international community such as donor agencies were not involved in this endeavour, and Kenyans were called upon to make donations for the victims of this crisis (The Standard, June 11, 1991). This burden however became too much with time, and the then Kenya's president complained to the international community in a bid to garner external aid for the refugees, that "if we give these people our food, we shall have nothing to eat. It's an extra burden to cater for the refugees" (The Standard, June 6, 1991). Donations then began to trickle in, and later on UNHCR and the Kenya Red Cross Society took over the management of refugee camps in the country, and this is the case to date.

Apart from the refugee crisis being a learning process to both the Kenyan government and the international community on how to handle it during the 1991 crisis period, this was also a time when the country was cautious about hosting refugees who were seen as a possible threat to Kenya's security. During this period therefore, numerous calls for refugees to abide by the

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<sup>15</sup> The Standard, June 5, 1991; June 6, June 8, June 16, June 18, June 25, 1991.

Kenyan law were made by Kenyan leaders. On June 5, 1991, Somali refugees camped in Utange were called upon to respect Kenyan law, and the government was urged to register refugees “instead of being left to roam about and mingle with Kenyans in the town’s streets” (The Standard, June 5, 1992, p. 13). There were fears that the refugees arriving had firearms and this posed a security threat. However, most of these calls were targeted to refugees of Somali origin. Of the 18 number of articles on this topic, 15 calls were directly made to Somali refugees, while 2 to Ethiopian refugees and 1 to refugees of Sudanese origin. The greatest fear of Somali refugees was their possibility to incite Kenyan Somalis among whom they lived in Northern Kenya. For example, the then Kenya African National Union (KANU) branch secretary for Buna sub-location<sup>16</sup> in his address appealed “to all peace-loving Kenyans to help in the prevention of the spread of clannism in Somalia to Kenya” (The Standard, August 6, 1991). But as a threat largely directed by the Kenyan government to refugees of Somali origin without clearly stating the background that informed these threats, these may have in turn worked to reproduce the stereotype later played out in the media of Somali refugees as the ‘threatening asylum seeker’ discussed earlier. On the contrary, these fears of the possible security threat due to a high influx of refugees in the country can be said were, to some extent, realised; when banditry began to be experienced in most parts of Northern Kenya due to collaborations between refugees and the locals (the standard, August 6, 1991). This rising insecurity has not been fully eradicated, but has even been complicated by rising terrorism in Kenya to date. In this regard, as much as Somali citizens were portrayed as epitomes of suffering and despair as discussed initially, they were also portrayed as threatening to Kenya’s security.

On the same note, the 1991 crisis period coincided with the then government’s refusal to adopt multi-partism as a form of government away from the one party system. Apart from this, there were numerous calls for the independence of the civil service and the judiciary (The Standard, June 6, 1991). While the ruling government was against this system which was largely pushed for by the West not only in Kenya but also in other parts of Africa, the opposition fought for the realisation of such a ruling system. In addressing the refugees’ crisis therefore, the crisis was pointed out as a learning lesson to Kenyans by the ruling government on the need to

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<sup>16</sup> Buna sub-location was under Wajir District in ‘Northern Kenya. Sub-locations, locations, districts and provinces were the initial administrative units of government before the adoption of the new constitution in 2011 in which Districts were replaced by counties.

appreciate and uphold the “God given peace” that the country enjoyed, by shunning away from multi-party politics (ibid). In one of his addresses, the then ruling president Moi reiterated that the Somali, Sudanese, and Ethiopian refugees in camps were more concerned about peace and unity back home than democracy and multi-partism “touted for” by the West (Daily Nation, June 6, 1991).

This adamant positions against “pluralistic reforms” ran through other government leaders’ statements, with the then Kenya’s high commissioner to London Dr. Sally Kosgei reiterating that the pluralistic reforms could be adopted within a one party system in the meantime, with multi-party politics coming in at later stages when the country was more stable and free of tribalism (Daily Nation, June 13, 1991).

On a similar tone, the then Kenya’s energy and environment director Dr. Achwoka Awori noted on his disapproval of the agendas of the world environmental day that, “what does those words (global warming, climate change, acid rain, green-house gases) mean in the African context where children are dying in refugee camps for lack of food?” (The Standard, June 14, 1991, p. 19). Awori went ahead to note that those environmental issues were “localised problems of the West being hyped up to assume global dimensions” (ibid). He then called upon Africa to set its own agenda and focus on environmental issues at more localised levels, and think about ways of rooting out the causes of conflict that had seen many refugees flee their countries. In this regard, while the West pushed for the adoption of pluralistic reforms, various government leaders speaking in the position of the Kenyan or African voice, resisted these reforms. On the contrary, the opposition voice was not featured in the newspapers. This way, the refugees’ crisis became a vehicle for the ruling government to relay its adamant position against the multi-party system of government that was the focus of debate at the time, a position that was later overcome. On this note, while sympathy was awarded to refugees at this initial phase of displacement, this crisis was also exploited by the then ruling government as a reason to explain their refusal to adopt multi-partism as a system of government.

These adamant positions also saw the change in attitudes towards refugees from the initial sympathy, to emerging resentment. On the one hand, the initial phase of hosting refugees was informed by sympathetic attitudes, with blame being poured, not on refugees, but on their political leaders who were thought to be selfish, and were therefore called upon to lay their interests aside for the sake of their citizens (The Standard, June 7, 1991). On the other, this

attitude changed to resentment towards refugees with increasing pressure from the West on the need for the government to uphold pluralist reforms, and maybe too due to the longer stay of refugees in the country.

The 2011 crisis was therefore a period when most of the ground rules on how to manage the refugees' crises were already laid, such as the handling of refugees' basic requirements by aid agencies and the construction of more permanent refugee camps. The only complexity that can be noted during this period was the crisis of starvation which was also experienced by Kenyans, a crisis which had an influence on news coverage and the use of images as earlier discussed. In this regard, while there was another phase of new arrival of refugees as explained earlier, this crisis was reported without the use of photographs of refugees, but those of starving Kenyans dwelling on the crisis of starvation in general. The media therefore narrowed its focus to the Kenyan crisis, while covering the refugees' crisis more as a general background. Even this periods' call on Kenyans to offer donations was geared towards the aid of starving Kenyans, with a donations campaign branded "Kenyans for Kenyans" (The Standard, August 13, 2011). This campaign therefore contradicted the 1991 crisis period in which Kenyans were called upon to offer donations in the aid of refugees (The Standard, June 11, 1991, p. 4). This localised focus also yielded photographs of context such as those on the effects of drought on vegetation discussed earlier. In this regard, the 2011 media coverage did not utilise photographs of starving people only, but also those on the effects of famine such as pictures of dry land. Moreover, feature articles focusing on the then 20 years old refugee camps in Dadaab, and the urban refugees especially of Somali origin residing in Eastleigh in Nairobi were done. These feature articles in many cases also complemented the government's refusal to open up more refugee camps in Dadaab that would host the newly arrived, arguing for the refugee's resettlement as IDPs in Somalia as argued earlier.

The 2011 crisis period can also be said to have witnessed a sort of maturity in the Kenyan media in that opinions that were out rightly biased were not published. In the 1991 crisis period, opinion letters to the editors that propagated hatred of refugees were published. In its September 5, 1992 article for example, The Standard published a letter to the editor which read in part that,

Wherever the refugees are stationed, they have made hell in that place with the dirtiest smelly atmosphere. Do not forget the bandit attacks all over Kenya is the work of the

Somalis. They have terrorised most of the parts where peace-loving Kenyans have been residing” (ibid, P. 9).

Such reports on the negative attitudes towards refugees were covered with the belief that refugees had overstayed, and that it was time for them to go back to their countries (The Standard, February 23, 1993). These views came in after the Kenyan government had proposed the repatriation of all refugees in the country following the improvement of the situation of conflict in Ethiopia, Uganda and Sudan on the one hand, and the US army was operating in Somalia under the UN flag on the other. And while the government proposed this repatriation, the UNHCR was not in agreement. This negativity towards refugees was not only seen in Kenya, but also in a German village called Breitenheerda in which German youths protested the resettlement of refugees in a former US barracks in the area (Daily Nation, September 5, 1992, p. 10). This protest was reproduced by the Daily Nation as shown below.

## Germans get rough towards refugees

By MARK FRITZ  
BREITENHEERDA (Germany), Friday  
The foreigners outnumber the Germans in this remote mountain village, a situation the locals find too alien to tolerate.

The conflict between East Germans and outsiders has reached even this pastoral setting, far from the decaying urban cauldrons where neo-Nazi groups plot violence against foreigners. Breitenheerda's natives say it is economics, not racism, that fuels the tension.

When the first bus-load of Slavs, Asians and Africans arrived in May, the City Council took direct legislative action - its members blocked the refugee home driveway with their bodies. Then they resigned.

Residents locked their doors and turned off their lights. Children were ordered to stay home. Robert Mukisa, a young Ugandan, took an occasional stroll down the winding country road outside the refugee home, a fenced-in barracks where East German soldiers once waited vainly to fire rockets at US planes.

An old man honked his car horn and flashed an obscene gesture. A boy jumped off a motorbike and chased Mukisa with a stick. Residents crossed to the other side of the road to avoid an encounter with a black African.

"They treat you like an animal," said Mukisa, 26, a multilingual university graduate writing a book about his bad times in eastern Germany.

Breitenheerda, a farm town high in the hills of Thuringia state 240 kilometres southwest of Berlin, almost hysterically believes it is a tiny blueprint for what Germany may become as it absorbs a stream of refugees.

"We have 300 people here and we get 500 refugees. That is not normal," said Wolfgang Kretschmer, 33, the former deputy mayor who resigned with seven other town leaders.

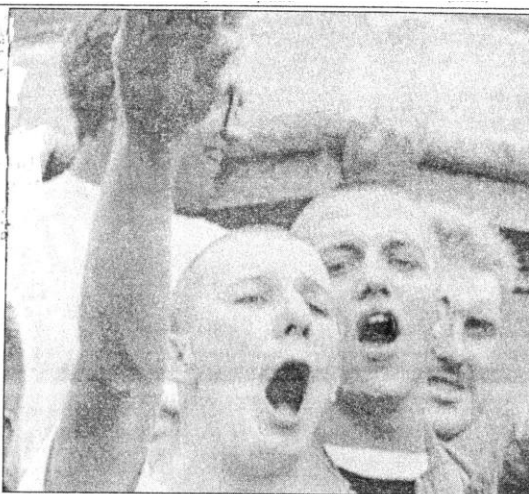
He said economics, not hatred of foreigners, is the reason for the tension in this no-streetlight Burg reachable by narrow axle-smashing roads, a town where country kids on bikes fire pellet gun at the barracks on the edge of town.

Many federal lawmakers agree, and they blame Germany's liberal asylum laws for the surge in refugees and corresponding wave of violence against them, primarily in economically depressed, ideologically confused eastern Germany.

In one of the most vicious attacks, right-wing extremists threw a firebomb overnight on Wednesday into a refugee centre in Ketzin, an eastern German city 20 kilometres west of Berlin. Forty-four refugees were left homeless when the blaze gutted their shelter.

Two weeks of non-stop attacks on refugee homes throughout eastern Germany have increasingly mobilised a bipartisan effort to toughen the nation's asylum laws.

But refugees, who tend to be



Radical German youths at a rally: The message to refugees is quite clear. (Reuter picture)

grouped together in housing compounds, are sometimes merely convenient targets for what some fear is an intolerance of anyone who does not look Western European.

Last year, hundreds of skinheads terrorised Polish visitors arriving by bus after Germany lifted visa restrictions. In the East German city of Hoyerswerda last October, residents attacked not only refugees, but an even larger number of Vietnamese and African guest workers who had worked peacefully in the town's coal plants for years. Authorities finally moved the foreigners out to town.

In East Berlin, skinhead gangs have clashed with gangs of young Turks whose parents came to West Berlin as guest workers.

Breitenheerda, once homogenous, now hosts some of what the United Nations estimates are 18 million refugees worldwide fleeing economic hardship, famine or any one of the 35 conflicts raging worldwide.

They include Soviet Jews, people from parts of the former Yugoslavia, Bulgarians, Romanians and Africans such as Mr Mukisa, who said authorities in Uganda found out he was working with an anti-government opposition group.

"Many of these people have never seen a foreigner," said Hans-Henning Axthelm, the state Social and Health Minister who recently visited Breitenheerda. "Now they see hundreds of them."

He said the state is strapped for space and, for security reasons, must house refugees in for-

mer Soviet and East German military bases.

There also has been a trend to move refugees into more rural areas, farther and farther from population centres where organised neo-Nazi groups are most concentrated.

Kretschmer has a theory about it. "My feeling is that it's better for the government to put it in a small town like this, where they only lose 200 votes."

Although he links the foreigners to crime and is particularly upset by the presence of black Africans, Kretschmer said the town's opposition is based on economics.

The village, dependent on the former nation's moribund farm economy, had plans to lease the barracks to a tent manufacturer.

(AP)

## Hizbollah win stuns Christians

By MICHAEL KULI

BEIRUT, Friday

A major victory for Muslim extremists in Lebanon's controversial elections has dismayed the Christians, who fear losing control of the country they see as a haven in a sea of Islam.

In the two phases of voting held since August 23, eight Muslim fundamentalists have won seat in the 128-member National Assembly. They are expected to win more in the third and last phase of voting on Sunday.

It is the first time since independence in 1943 that fundamentalists, who may now form a substantial block in the new legislature, have made inroads into mainstream political life. Their success has shocked moderate Muslims. The Christians, who boycotted the elections as a ploy by neighbouring Syria to consolidate its grip on the country, are stunned.

"This time they won few seats, next time they might win even more and later more and we will end up being ruled by people who want to turn Lebanon into a radical Islamic state," said Edward Oazzi, a carpenter in Christian East Beirut.

The pro-Iranian Shiite Muslim Hizbollah (Party of God) group gained four seats in the eastern Bekaa Valley and two officials of the Sunni Muslim Islamic Group became Members of Parliament in the northern part of Tripoli.

In the capital, two fundamentalists took advantage of the Christian boycott and won seats last Sunday.

A senior Christian religious leader said a strong presence of radical Muslims in the half-Christian half-Muslim Parliament could increase tension between the two communities, which tended to back opposite sides in the civil war of 1975 to 1990.

Coexistence between moderate Christians and Muslims has been fragile for the past few decades. I wonder what kind of coexistence

Radical German youths at a rally: The message to refugees is quite clear, Daily Nation, September 5, 1992.

In reproducing the news article together with the accompanying photograph in Kenya, the newspaper seemed to have capitalised on these German protests in a bid to justify Kenya's emerging resentment towards refugees. This way, the article seemed to underscore the fact that it was not only Kenya that was resentful towards refugees, but also other parts of the world as

well. Moreover, in the stereotypical reporting towards refugees developed above, the use of labels such as “undesirable elements” or “undesirable aliens” to refer to refugees was also noted (The Standard, June 16, 1991, p. 1). This was averted in the 2011 crisis period whose support for the government’s initial decline to welcome newly arrived refugees was covered through editorials<sup>17</sup> (Daily Nation, July 14, 2011, p. 12). While the government cited economic reasons for not being able to host more refugees and thereby proposing for their resettlement as IDPs in Somalia, the media cited security reasons as the “most persuasive national security concern” that could not be overlooked (Daily Nation July 14, 2011, p. 12). In this regard, while terrorism was a reality in Kenya whose links were traced to Dadaab, public opinions on refugees during this period were not featured. Rather, the media utilized editorials to front objectivity.

### **4.3 Displacement through Development Aid**

The focus of discussions above have dwelt on the representation of displacement by institutions, which as explained, revealed the sort of symbiotic relation that exists between the media and humanitarian institutions. In this case, while the media reported on crises of displacement, these reports also functioned to garner support for those undergoing crises. On the other hand, humanitarian institutions were in most cases mentioned as official sources for news updates on these crises and on the other, were the main channels through which refugees received assistance. Apart from this strand of institutional representation in which NGOs are also part of media representation, NGOs in their undertakings of various activities in the camps also engage in the process of representation. In most cases, these representation engagements are meant to document their activities in the camps, which in the long run function as evidence of their engagements, thereby supporting their plea for further funding from concerned institutions.

Indeed after the crisis period is over and refugees begin to settle in camps, NGOs engage refugees in capacity building activities which are meant to equip them with various skills that curb total dependence on aid, among other respective reasons for such engagements. These engagements are important to its recipients. Yet while media representation, and generally the type of institutional representation discussed above is largely concentrated to the periods of crises when the crisis is still news, NGOs’ activities in the camps, which yield various

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<sup>17</sup> Editorials in their very nature offer the official position of the newspaper organization which in many cases therefore, objectivity is upheld.

representation engagements, are therefore continuous, going beyond the crisis period. This is the focus of analyses in this section. It focuses on analysing photographs obtained from a photography project by American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in collaboration with Film-Aid International (Kenya), in refugee camps in Dadaab. AFSC deals with offering development aid in countries in conflict which are geared towards enhancing peace in the countries of focus. Somalia being one of its beneficiaries in these projects, refugees in Dadaab, most of who were of Somali origin, were the target in this photography project. The ideology of peace could be seen in the photographs they produced, some of which are shown and later analysed below.



Phot 1: The word "peace" made from white stones on the ground.



Photo 2: The two-finger peace sign



Photo 3: Three men pointing to the word "peace" drafted on the ground





Photo 4: A boy holding a placard written “let us promote peace”



Photo 5: A Girls' football team



Photo6: Men from different refugee communities



Photo 7: A Boys' football team with a placard written "we are unity"

In these photographs, the ideology of peace stands out. Most NGO activities, not only in the refugee camps but in all other areas of engagement are informed by the organization's underlying mission. In this regard, the underlying mission informs what they do and how they do it. This project was aimed at equipping refugees with photography skills. Aside from this intention, the underlying mission stressed on the importance of peace back home to refugees, and the need for them to uphold peace, which is AFSC's mission. In order to test their photography skills, they were given an assignment to photographically relay their understanding of peace as they had been trained, and the photographs above were some of the outcomes.

To begin with, the concept of peace clearly stands out in the first four photos, as well as in photo seven. In these photographs, the concept of peace is directly related to the picture taken, something that does not really point to the fact that the idea of peace was internalised. In photo 3 for example, men pointing to the word peace does not necessarily reveal their internalising of this important concept to this refugee community, yet the picture itself is sharp and clear, revealing their photography competence. In this regard, while the project focused on peace, the fact on whether the participants internalised their need to support peace initiatives back home cannot be measured for these photographs, but is something that can be followed up by the organization through time. These photographs were therefore evidence of an assignment they undertook from which their photography skills could be measured.

A similar picture, which is however not so sharp, is photo 4. The photo portrays a young boy holding a placard written “let us uphold peace”. Placards and constructed words on peace such as the one discussed above were largely utilised by participants in this project. It may have been a copied idea from one of the photographer participants, or an idea from the trainer, but in all, they do not bring out the internal conceptualisation of peace that that the organization sought to impart. However, in appreciating the other aim of the project which was to impart photography skills, the photos bring out this understanding, although in varying degrees. As compared to photo 4 therefore, photo 3 is better in quality. It should also be noted here that the cameras utilised by refugees were disposable ones, which are not very good in quality, but largely served the purpose that was intended. And apart from the quality of photographs, these photos portray the kind of NGO activities undertaken in Dadaab. Other capacity building activities include education, tailoring, hair styling, among others. And while some of these projects do not have photography as the core training focus, photography is normally utilised at the final stage to give evidence of accomplished projects in the camps.

The last two photographs that do not out rightly betray the ideology of peace are photos 5 & 6. Photo 5 shows a girls’ football team while photo 6 shows men pausing for a photo under a tree. Football matches are largely organised in Dadaab targeting youths and are part of the initiatives meant to distract refugees from boredom. This football match was not organised by AFSC, by was an ongoing project by a different organization in the camp. The idea of the photographer to photograph this football match emerged from an observation of refugees from different communities playing together. As such, these forums are aimed at promoting friendship among different communities in the camps, thereby upholding peace. A similar message is that portrayed in photo 6. It shows men from different refugee communities pausing for a photo together. As mentioned above, this notion of having refugees from different communities together is a sign of peace, and this was obtained from a video description of the photos. As a video description stated, the ability for these varied communities to be together in this photograph was itself a sign of promoted peace among different communities in the camps. In this case, even while in the camps, violence from refugees from different clans or countries emerge, and the need to uphold peace even within the camps is highly emphasised by development organizations. Seeing refugees from different communities together was therefore a sign of peace for the participants that took these pictures.

In summary, as much as the idea behind the project was to equip refugees with photography skills, the need to uphold peace was also promoted. These photographs, due to the fact that they were produced at a time of calm when refugees had already settled in camps, yield themes that portray refugees not in despair as the media photographs discussed in the earlier sections do, but as active agents engaged in different activities. From the outlook, the subjects portrayed here do not ‘look like refugees’ as Malkki (1995) points out, but could pass for any people not necessarily refugees. These photographs have therefore transgressed the trope of victimhood prevalent in institutional representation of displacement as news in representing refugees more actively, as opposed to their passive representation in moments of crises. This argument is followed up in the chapter that follows.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

In seeking to understand the representation of displacement by institutions, this chapter has analysed the representation of displacement by the Kenyan media in the two newspapers under study, as well as through NGO representation. It began by discussing a general overview of the media coverage, before dwelling on the various stages of the media representation of displacement. The last section on media coverage focused on a comparison between the two crises periods under study. In these analyses, the choice and use of photographs by the media was highlighted. It emerged that the media coverage of displacement did not utilize photographs of refugees only, but also those of aid, aid personnel, Kenyan leaders, just to mention a few. The changing attitudes towards refugees was also noted, being largely influenced by the ongoing government discourses at the time, as well as the economic effects caused by the influx of refugees into Kenya’s urban centres which led to a hike in the prices of basic commodities.

The heterogeneous nature of refugees through media coverage was also noted. This was evident from the representation of professional refugees who assisted in the management of the camps they lived in. However, it emerged that although this was evident in feature articles, the photographs that accompanied those features still portrayed refugees passively. NGO representations therefore transgressed the passive portrayal in actively portraying refugees through the photography project under study. As much as the project was laced with the organization’s mission, the refugees portrayed were clean and shaven. Such photographs are also seen in chapter seven. Yet the theoretical approach that informed these analyses was that of singularity. In this regard, as much as representations transgressed one another in certain

sections identified, preferences between them were not made, but all were interpreted in regards to the contexts in which they were produced. In this regard, the photographs were taken as representations of different aspects of displacement. Vernacular photography genre that portrays yet another aspect of displacement is analysed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Interactive Spectacles of Displacement

#### 5.0 Introduction

While the previous chapter analysed institutional representation as portrayed by the media and humanitarian organizations, this chapter dwells on vernacular photography. These are photographs produced by refugees, not necessarily with the aim of documenting displacement, but for their own purposes, sometimes official, while at other times private. I however adopt this kind of thinking, to view these photographs as documentations of displacement, since in their very nature, they offer another aspect of this phenomenon. This is because displacement is the underlying reason for all photographic engagements in Dadaab. As observed earlier on, without the crises that caused displacement, there would not be refugees in the first place, and the camps in Dadaab would not even be in existence. Yet this is the case, and photography has become a major part of the definitions and experiences of displacement. For this reason, as much as institutions cannot run away from the requirement to photographically document occurrences on displacement, refugees too face this demand.

These photographs are produced in a social context that influences photo content. As alternative representations, themes that emerge out of this genre transgress those of the institutional genre, although not with the intention of doing so. This chapter therefore analyses such alternative themes, not in opposition to what is portrayed in the mainstream media, but for what they are, as another singularity, different from the institutional representation of displacement. It utilizes Giorgio Agamben's (1993) Singularity as an approach to view these images, not as "positive" representations that have gained their "positivity through the narrow eye of the negative" mainstream media (Hall 1991:21), but as specific to the context in which they are produced. Furthermore, Fairclough's (1992, 1995) and Deborah Poole's (1997) contributions on the need to analyse the social conditions of production and reception of the text under study as embedded in its context are also adopted.

As discussions proceed, the close relation that exists between photographic practice and religion in Dadaab will emerge. This chapter therefore focuses on a detailed analysis of the nature of vernacular photography in Dadaab, while touching briefly on the notion of the relation that exists between religion and photographic engagements in this community. More detailed

discussions on the relation between photography and religion will however be undertaken in chapter nine. For the moment, a discussion of vernacular photography's discursive context in Dadaab is analysed below.

### 5.1 Photographic Practice in Dadaab

Photography is a widely practiced mode of self-representation by refugees in Dadaab. As mentioned in chapter three, there are six refugee camps in Dadaab served by three market centres. It was at photo studios located in the market centres that data collection took place. In these photo studios, interviews with studio proprietors were conducted and photographs were sampled. Norman Fairclough observes that “differently positioned social actors” view and represent the world in different ways, thereby yielding different, even contradictory discourses (2001, p. 2). As will be seen in the discussions in this chapter, refugees portrayed themselves in ways that largely transgressed themes in the dominant media. Refugees were pictured with their families, in more active roles, similar to the kind of personal pictures we possess. But even though this was the case, Agamben's (1993) concept of singularity requires the analyses of these varied genres, not in opposition to one another, but inclusively, as singularities contributing towards a comprehensive representation, if not understanding of displacement. For this reason, photographs in this chapter are not compared with those in the previous chapter, but are analysed in a way as to reveal these otherwise largely marginalised representations. In this case, Fairclough's elaboration of different ‘positionings’ of social actors enables the acknowledging of the existence of alternatives while at the same time, in the view of singularity, enabling their comprehensive analyses.

Yet photographic engagement in this largely Muslim community immediately meets a confrontation with religion. Photography in Dadaab is a forbidden practice, and it is through the preaching and interpretation of Islamic laws by *Imams* (Muslim preachers) that photographers realised that engaging in photography was sinful. In this regard, this forbidding is specific to a time frame as will be seen, and also to the kind of Islam practised in Dadaab. Some photographers noted that

*I take passport photographs only due to my religious beliefs. Initially, I used to take full size photos of various types, for example weddings. But since eight years ago, I stopped and focused only on passport photographs. I also used to have different backdrops for*

*my pictures, but nowadays I focus on white, blue and red backdrops depending on agency requirements (Dagahaley studio 3).*

In Hagadera, another studio proprietor noted that,

*When I began the studio in 2004, I did full size photos as well. But Imams preached stating that the money a person earned from such photography was haram (unclean), and so I stopped. I therefore take passport photos only (Hagadera Studio 3).*

As seen therefore, photography in Dadaab is largely forbidden, with institutional photo demands, in this case the passport photo, being legitimised. This restriction of photography however began about eight years ago. In this case, while the refugee camps in Dadaab are by now more than two decades old (UNHCR, 2015), the restriction of photography began much later after the opening of the camps. As seen, the two proprietors began their studios by engaging in full-size photography, a practice which they later on stopped due to the preaching of the *Imams*. This stresses the fact that displacement has caused the demand for both administrative needs for passport photographs as well as individual needs for personal pictures in Dadaab to rise. However, photographic practice in this community involves a complex interaction between the need for these pictures for the two reasons just mentioned above on the one hand, and religion on the other. In this regard, while there is a continuous need for pictures by these separated communities as well as formal requirements for pictures in the camp, the type of Islam practiced in Dadaab restricts photographic practice. This restriction has called for continuous negotiations with engagements in photography as will be seen in the discussions that follow.

Moreover, the above quotes introduce the two major photographic distinctions in Dadaab, the 'passport' and 'full-size' photos. The aspect most striking right from the beginning of the research on vernacular photography was a confrontation with certain concepts that characterized photographic practice in this community. To begin with, these terms 'passport' and 'full-size' pictures characterised photographic practice, with photo operators clearly stating the type of photography they dealt with.

Passport photographs are the kind of official photographs required for administrative purposes. In Dadaab, these photographs were important for registration with UNHCR once refugees



arrived in the camps and needed to obtain alien cards. Other reasons<sup>18</sup> for undertaking such photography included registration for examination purposes, programme participation with NGOs, Visa application for relocation to third countries<sup>19</sup> or for visits to pilgrimage in Mecca, among other official needs for such pictures. Full-size pictures on the other hand comprised photos of one's body from the head to the toes, and were especially taken for personal reasons as opposed to passport photographs which were demanded by institutions. It was as the study progressed that the influence of religion on photography in Dadaab was established.

As stated therefore, due to the demand by institutions for documentation purposes, passport photographs are legitimised, together with other institutional photo requirements such as sports events organised by NGOs or food distribution programmes. In this regard, the passport photo is the most widely undertaken form of photography in Dadaab, largely meant for official purposes. One studio proprietor noted that there was “*a larger market for documentation in Dadaab*”, and this was a good market for them (Hagadera, Studio 5). Another noted that “*refugees need passports regularly and dealing with passport pictures generates good income for me*” (Hagadera, Studio 1). These further point to the wider engagement in passport photography as opposed to the full-size.

The passport pictures taken in Dadaab are of the type we, outside of refugee life, also possess, or are required of us for different administrative reasons. Their stipulations demand almost standard photo specifications, although slight variations across institutions may exist. They are usually in colour as opposed to black and white, and are approximately two by two inches in size, portraying the front view of the full face. They are printed on a photographic paper with different backgrounds ranging in Dadaab from white, blue and red as quoted earlier. In most cases, the natural expression of the face without smiling or frowning is required. Apart from these, no headgear on subjects is allowed, and this was also similar in Dadaab where women removed their headgears for passport photography sessions in an inner room in order to take pictures that included the person's ears in the photo. In this case, most photo studios dealing in passport photography had an inner room for female clients, while male clients took their passport photos outside against the studio doors. In other cases, passers-by were asked to hold the backdrops on two ends while the photographer took the picture.

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<sup>18</sup> Source: interview data that sought to understand the reasons for engagement in passport photography.

<sup>19</sup> Third countries refer to the countries where refugees are relocated to after their arrival in Kenya. In this regard, Kenya acts as a transit country before this relocation.

In most instances, passport photographs were paid for by agencies who awarded contracts to photo studios but in others, refugees paid for these pictures themselves. This will be discussed in more detail a little later below. Apart from the legitimization of passport photographs, other institutional photo requirements were also legitimised such as NGO related photography for project reports. In this regard, photographers who engaged in passport photography undertook NGO photography as well. This involved photography covering food distribution programmes, sports events, water projects, among other related activities in the camps as already noted.

On the contrary, leisure photography which is characterised by the production of full size pictures is forbidden, and therefore not widely practiced. These photographs are forbidden because they are seen to be needed by individuals for their own personal reasons, as compared to genuine institutional demands for photographs. And while this was the case, the fact of displacement and therefore separation of families and friends mentioned above was a fact that demanded personal photographs for keeping in touch with these separated private audiences. For this reason, continuous negotiations on the extent of engagement in photography for both photographers and their clients characterised photographic practice in this community.

On the one hand, there were distinct photo studios that dealt in passport photography only, while others practised full size photography only, and a third lot combined both passport and full size photography. On the other hand, there were clients who took passport pictures only, while others took full size pictures as well. All this was by choice in regards to the kind of Islam practiced in Dadaab so that although it was forbidden, some people practiced it and had their varying justifications for doing so. A photo operator in Hagadera noted that he strictly took passport photographs only and therefore sent his full-size photo clients to photo studios that produced them (Studio 5). In this regard, photo studios were known for the type of photography they engaged in, whether passport or full-size, and photographers had different ways and levels of engaging in this otherwise forbidden but necessary enterprise.

On the other hand, studio operators who dealt in full size photography did so with different levels of engagement. Printing was the main determinant for the extent of engaging in full-size photography. On the first level, some proprietors took, but never printed these full-size photos, choosing rather to give them to their clients in soft copy form. Not printing full size pictures was therefore considered a lesser form of sin as compared to printing them.

Other studio operators on the other hand went ahead to print full-size pictures. This extent of printing was seen as the most sinful by those who did not print. The reasons for engaging in full-size photography therefore varied between photographers, with the underlying fact being that it was a forbidden engagement. Photographers therefore offered different reasons for their engagement. For example, one photo operator noted that

*Full size photography is forbidden, but those to send abroad are needed by relatives to whom these pictures are sent who need to know how those behind are doing. There is therefore a circumstance attached to them, they are utility photos and necessary, therefore not haram (Ifo, Studio 2).*

In this case, such photographs are legitimised, or rather, photographers use ‘circumstances’ to justify their engagement in full size photography. The ‘circumstances’ quoted above refer to the fact of separation between family and friends. Another appropriation of ‘circumstances’ is quoted below. When asked about his engagement in photography and the requirements of Islam that forbid this practice, this photographer smiled, and noted that

*It is indeed forbidden, but for me it is a business. Most of the clients are youth, youth prefer full size photography. It is Islamically forbidden, but what we do is business. Islamically, photos are not allowed. But we are forced to take passports. In this same manner, full size photos are haram, but we do it for business (Hagadera, Studio 4).*

Proprietors in this studio further noted that they earned money from full size photos, and so it was profitable them, and would continue practicing it. This second understanding of circumstances is that of the current situation in the camp, with photography being a source of income. In this case, this photographer separated religion from business as a way of negotiating his photographic practice.

Another studio operator in Ifo noted that he engaged in full size photography since this was more profitable for him. This photographer produced full-size photographs only, and he did not therefore engage in passport photography. His full size photo engagement was also further specialised to taking family pictures only “because the least the group could take were twenty pictures”. For the clients who wanted single full size pictures therefore, this studio never offered their services to them since the studio specialised in bulk, with a minimum of 20

pictures per photo session. In this photo studio, one could also get his photographs printed or in soft copy form depending on the client's needs (Studio 1).

Another photographer however used friendship to justify his engaging in full-size photography, noting that he undertook full-size photographs for his friends only. These varied ways of explaining their practice of photography reveal the guilt that accompanies these practices. The notion of power that emerges from these discussions will be analysed later in chapter eight. For this section, discussing the social context of producing these photos has been essential.

Another characteristic feature of photography in Dadaab was the term 'express photos' to refer to instantly produced images. This connotes the possibility of getting one's photograph instantly as compared to waiting for some time, even days. Having in mind the situation of clients in Dadaab who are refugees and therefore highly mobile, production of instant photographs is widely practiced. In this regard, most photo studios engaged in the production of 'express' photos, and this was part of their advertising strategies. The photo studios instantly printed their photographs for clients and the extent to which this was practised was noteworthy as compared to other photographic engagements in the country, whereby production of instant photographs is not as common in Kenya except for passport photos. Moreover, technological improvements from the analogue to the digital camera have heightened the instant printing of these photographs as was noted by one photographer. He observed that they initially used to send films to be developed in Nairobi, but with the digital technology, "instant printing in the studios has been ensured" (Ifo, Studio 1). Moreover, these digital technological improvements have also heightened the soft-copy transfer of 'full-size' pictures to clients by photographers whose conscience forbids them from printing.

Another striking relationship is that between photography and food donations by World Food Programme (WFP), with engagement in photography, especially in 'full size' photography, being determined by the symbiotic relationship that exists between food aid distribution and photography. When asked on the frequency at which he takes pictures, one photographer noted that

*We rely on food distribution programmes which determine the frequency of clients. When food is distributed in the camps, refugees sell part of the rations in order to get cash. It is from this money that pictures are taken. When sorghum is distributed, it is*

*more expensive, and therefore extra income in the hands of refugees as compared to food distributions without sorghum, containing wheat only (Dagahaley, Studio 2).*

It is this sort of symbiotic relation between food aid and photography that determined photographic engagement, and therefore income for these studio proprietors.

The last relationship is that between photography and the politics of winning photo contracts. As noted earlier, some passport photo requirements were paid for by the agencies that needed them. These agencies awarded contracts to ‘winning’ photo studios in the camps to undertake photography on their (agency’s) behalf for a certain period of time. Winning the contract was however determined by certain politics of consideration. For example, one photographer in Dagahaley noted that

*We never get any contracts from agencies since we are not of Somali origin (Dagahaley, studio 2).*

Connoting that it was easier for Somali photographers, who were his competitors, to get these contracts. Another photographer in Hagadera noted that

*Contracts are applied for by all studios to the particular agency. But the politics of who gets the contract is determined by how much money goes back to the intermediary between the applicant and the agency. For example, if a passport photo would cost Kshs<sup>20</sup>. 200, then the winning studio is one that is willing to take the passports at Kshs. 350, so that the extra Kshs. 150 per photograph goes to the intermediary (Studio 4).*

These politics influence the choices of photographic engagements in Dadaab since those who do not win these (passport-photo) contracts undertake other photographic engagements, the ones forbidden by Islam. For this studio in Hagadera for example, they determined to minimise their engagement in passport photo production to dealing more in full size photographs. This was the same for the former proprietor of South Sudanese origin who decided to engage in production of family pictures only.

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<sup>20</sup> At the time of conducting this research, the exchange rate of the Kenyan shilling to the Euro was 100:1, and the approximations above would be 2, 3.50, and 1.50 euros respectively. 1.50 can buy two meals in Dadaab, at 0.60 cents per meal. It can therefore cater for a family’s meal such as dinner.

But these adjustments on photography choices by photographers demand further explanations on the relation between photography and Islam, more so on the priority given to photographic engagement and corruption in Dadaab on the one hand, and photography and religion in itself as a practice on the other. For the former, what does Islam say about the people who bribe their way into getting a photo contract as opposed to producing full size pictures? For the latter, on the nature of photographic engagement in relation to itself, and the choices proprietors have to make. In this second sense, it is not necessarily the case that those proprietors who engage in passport photo production are ‘keeping the faith<sup>21</sup>’ by producing passport photographs only, but that it could be a coincidence due to the contract won. Furthermore, those who never won the contract and therefore engaged in full size photo production are then faced with the trouble of engaging in this otherwise ‘terrible sin’. For this reason, most of the photo studios in Dadaab did not engage in photography only, but also other businesses related to photography such as typing and printing services, selling movies, copying songs or films to USB sticks or CDs, repairing mobile phones and computers together with other electronics, selling technical appliances such as mobile phone chargers and computer chargers, and for other extraordinary cases, selling edibles such as French fries and fresh juice. Yet as much as production of ‘full size’ photos is forbidden, this practice is rampant, and is the focus of discussion in the section that follows below.

## **5.2 Revealing the Private Realm: Refugees’ Personal Photographs**

In the very nature for the demand of personal photographs, such photographs have been produced in many homes. Yet such a demand is even heightened in the context of Dadaab refugee camp where separation characterises the lives of many. Due to the crisis of displacement, there is overwhelming demand for such kinds of pictures being fuelled by the desire to keep up to date with separated family and friends back home or abroad. The context of production of these pictures is therefore that of separation. These photographs are therefore not to be viewed in the context of personal pictures only, but with the underlying influence of separation as earlier discussed. In this regard, while leisure photography is forbidden by the type of Islam practised by these people, the very demand for these pictures due to separation

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<sup>21</sup> I borrow this phrase from the name of one photo studio in Dadaab which goes by a modification of this phrase, that is, “keep Da Faith express photo studio”.

fuels their production. This has called for continuous negotiation with photography mentioned above.

In regards to this need to keep in touch, one participant noted that the crisis of displacement itself separates family and friends, with others remaining back home, while in other cases, relocation to third countries separate already settled refugees in the camps. Through exchange of photographs, people keep in touch with each other regarding the changes in life such as the age and number of children, marriage, and so on. In instances of polygamy, men are allowed to resettle to third countries with only one wife. These instances do not break such families as would be assumed, but the man continues sending financial support to his wife and children left behind. In turn, these two families exchange pictures of themselves and their children in keeping up to date with each other. Photographs in this case serve the function of maintaining relationships, and as mentioned above, are therefore not to be examined in the context of family pictures only, but of separated ones. A few examples are discussed below.

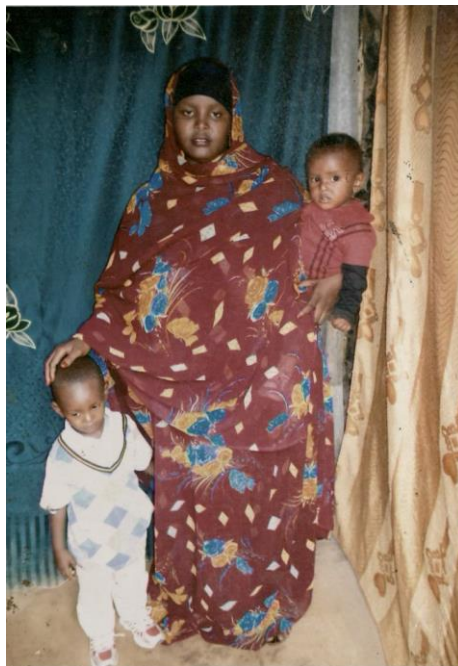


Photo 1: Full-size photo of a woman and two children



Photo 2: Full-size photo of a man and a girl

As seen, the above two photographs transgress dominant themes of portraying refugees by presenting clean and shaven models in more active roles as compared to their dominant representations in times of crises. The lady in photo 1 is looking directly into the camera. She is carrying one child on one hand and her other arm rests on the head of the other older child. With this gesture, she unites the two children forming a family unit with the possible connotation that the two children are hers. Photo 2 portrays a man with his arm around the little girl while the girl's palm rests on his chin. The man is holding a phone to his ear as if in the middle of a phone conversation, but this can also be interpreted as a way of showing off his phone, a possession he has acquired beyond normal expectations of a refugee, or rather a refugee camp as we know it through media representation.

In these two separate photographs, we see refugees posing for a photo, but this time to quite a different audience of close family and friends as compared to that of dominant media. The photo session is also deliberate, with the models having consciously visited the photo studio for a photo, as compared to anonymous photo sessions of the mass media news coverage. When asked concerning his perception of the media as opposed to studio photography, one photographer noted that,



*The photographs are taken at different moments and for different reasons. For the media, photographers come to the camps to report news. But for me, people who have a need for a photo come to be photographed and they pay for it (Dagahaley, Studio 1).*

In this regard, both types of photographs, the passport and full-size photos, are deliberate as compared to that of media representation as far as the photo subject is concerned. On the contrary, the full-size photo sessions are more deliberate as opposed to passport photography bearing in mind the influence of religion on photographic practice in Dadaab. For this reason, despite the restriction by religion on the taking of full size pictures, refugees take these pictures in order to update their separated family and friends. The photo sessions are in this case deliberate since subjects make prior preparations before such photography moments in order to best capture the manner in which they wish to be seen.

Richard Chalfen in discussing vernacular photographs observes that subjects are portrayed in more positive ways that preserve a photographic version of life (1998, p. 228) . Other scholars too such as Gillian Rose (2003) and Brian Wallis (2005) have made similar observations, noting that people preserve their best moments in life through photography. These photographs therefore portray refugees, not in the moment of crisis, but their daily lives, to a different audience as compared to that of institutional photography. In this regard, they transgress dominant representations, although not with the intention of doing so. Yet as much as they transgress dominant modes, they are not analysed in opposition to these dominant modes in this research. Rather, they are taken as another singularity in the representation of displacement. They offer another aspect of displacement different from that of institutional photography. Furthermore, these types of full-size photos, as mentioned above, are produced with the intention of being sent to close family and friends not in the camp. And because of this utility strand they possess of updating their recipients for example on the progress of children's development, most clients preferred to send these pictures directly to their recipients via internet without having to print them due to the requirements of Islam. In other cases however, these were printed for clients depending on their need and the photographer's conscience in regards to his religious belief. In this regard, as much as a client wished to have his photos printed, the studio operator had a choice on whether to print them or not. The photographers who engaged in full size photography therefore inquired what their client preferred, and in turn offered their services in regards to how far they chose to engage in the production of these otherwise forbidden photographs. In this regard, not printing the photos

and therefore transferring in soft copy form to their clients or recipients was seen as a lesser sin as compared to printing them, since the soft copy form connoted the sincere need for these pictures by clients, ceasing to be leisure pictures. In other cases however, there were photographers who engaged in photo-shop by altering photo backgrounds as seen in the photographs below.



Photo 3: Photo with altered background



Photo 4: Photo with altered background



Photo 5: Original photo

Photos 3 and 4 above have been altered so that they do not portray refugees in the camps anymore, but in obviously different places. As much as the usual full-size pictures discussed above in photos 1&2 portrayed the manner in which refugees wished to be seen, photos 3&4 convey even a more conscious attempt in regards to how they wish to be seen in demystifying their existence in refugee camps. They portray them in flowery backyards as seen in photo 1, or in palaces as seen in photo 2. Other places include the sea shore or other countries and big cities, among other backgrounds that clients would choose from, places and dreams that can only be attained through imagination. Heike Behrend (2003) has observed the same in her study on studio photography on the Kenyan coast, noting that the desires of its subjects can be achieved through photo backgrounds. In this regard, as much as refugees are restricted within these camps, they can cross borders to whichever place they would imagine in the world through digital photography. This is evidenced by the original photo 5, which was taken in one of the studios in Dadaab, and altered in different ways as shown in photos 3 and 4. These backgrounds are downloaded from the internet and some examples are as shown below.



Photo 6: Photo-shop background



Photo 7: Photo-shop background

Through interviews, it was established that such photo-shop pictures were a little more expensive than the usual full-size photos. And even though photographers engaged in this practice, some would not print, but transfer them in soft copy form to their clients or recipients, while others went ahead to print them. Yet this photographic demand is forbidden in Islam, a factor that is discussed in more detail in chapter eight.

In summary, the photographs discussed in this chapter comprise important findings on the practice of vernacular photography in Dadaab considering the regulation of photography by Islam. In this regard, while Islam regulates photography within this community, the need for pictures of one-self for personal and not institutional purposes as discussed in chapter six are real. Due to separation, people take pictures of themselves to send to relatives and friends not in the camps. Yet in the knowledge of religious regulations, photographers and clients engaged in photography at different levels. Some photographers would take, but not print such full-size pictures, choosing rather to send to their clients or recipients in soft copy form such as e-mail or CD. In other cases however, photographers took and printed such forbidden pictures for their clients, and in the last case of photographs shown above, their backgrounds were also altered. Photographers explained their engaging in this type of forbidden photography in different ways, largely citing economic reasons. Yet regarding their choices, there was not any immediate punishing authority for their practices, only that it was a person's responsibility to -square it out with the Almighty-. In analysing vernacular photography as practised in Dadaab, this chapter further highlighted the difference in themes portrayed as opposed to those of the previous chapter. Through vernacular photography, refugees reveal aspects of their lives that

are not taken during crises, but the rather calm moments of refugee camps once the crises are over and refugees are settled in the camps. In posing for the specialised audience of close family and friends, the representations reveal the manner in which refugees portray themselves, themes that transgress those of institutional representations without the intention of doing so. In this regard, it was emphasised that the representations here were not analysed in opposition to those of the dominant media, but as singularities that complement our comprehensive understanding of displacement. Until now, the two chapters have analysed the representation of displacement in isolation, that is, in two independent chapters of the two genres under study. Certain codes characterising these portrayals of displacement were also identified. These are the focus of analyses in the chapter that follows.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Visual Codes of Displacement

#### 6.0 Introduction

Displacement has been portrayed differently in different genres of photography. Photojournalism, NGO, and vernacular photography, portray displacement variedly based on strategic goals being pursued by its producers, as well as underlying rules that determine photo content. While the notion of strategic goals will be analysed further in the next chapter, this section examines photo content, to interrogate the rules that lead to the production of such content.

The visual codes of displacement refer to the themes that define what we come to know as displacement. It was observed in the theoretical discussions of chapter three that underlying structures such as news values in the media provide ways of representing topics of concern, so that these in turn determine what we come to know about a particular topic (Michel Foucault, 1978). The previous two chapters dwelt on the representation of displacement through institutional and vernacular photography respectively. In analysing the visual codes characterising the representation of displacement, this chapter examines photo content in the two genres under study, giving more attention to the themes that stood out and which therefore characterised the representation of displacement in these genres. It explores the variedness of representations of displacement as portrayed in different genres of photography so as to highlight the underlying rules that yield such varied content. In this regard, it entails a two-way focus on photographic content as well as underlying rules of production. These rules define and justify photographic content, so that the photographic themes that emerge are products of an existing visual economy which influences representation. In this regard and as argued throughout the study, none of the genres is preferred over the other, but all are embraced as important in the comprehensive understanding of displacement.

In this study, it was established that representational codes varied within the specific genres under study, such as in photojournalism, and across different genres that the study explored, in this case photojournalism in relation to vernacular photography, for example. The codes that emerged in the representation of displacement and are analysed here include the fence, the cup, shelters, Anonymity, gendered portrayals, ideology, and representations of daily life. Some of

these representational codes were identified through literature as reviewed in chapter two, while others emerged through the data. These are discussed under the subheadings that follow.

## 6.1 The Fence

As a photography cue, ‘the fence’ is an important trope within the visual economy of picturing displacement. It involves photographing people across the fence, and thereby reporting displacement as breaking news, a crisis which is ongoing. As will be seen below, whenever the fence was utilized, it was children and not adults who were positioned behind the fence, perhaps confirming Moeller’s observations that “children are the famine icon”, or to add to it, icons of despair in situations of displacement (Moeller 1999).

This trope is used to represent situations of displacement in which refugees are approaching, or sometimes in their host countries. In this case, refugees are situated on the other side of the fence while the photographer is on the inner side. Together with the photographer, we are invited to view refugees as the approaching “other”. In most cases, this functions to record a *timely* event which is still unfolding and which easily qualifies as breaking news for the media. This trope is thus utilized at the initial stages of displacement.

In television news coverage, reporters run this moment in a short clip with accompanying voice that describes the circumstances. Such ‘moving images’ portray its subjects moving towards the fence as if energized by the nearness of the fence, and therefore their destination, as compared to the longer distance of their origin. An example is the CNN news report concerning the crisis in Syria in which its citizens were fleeing to nearby Turkey<sup>22</sup>. Media coverage at this time of displacement largely focuses on the cause of the decision to flee, and the overwhelming, largely heart breaking facts of why this is so. The audience is therefore once again invited to sympathise with those fleeing, since in most cases, they are not to blame for fleeing. This is in comparison to reports on immigrants who ‘break’ international law by forcefully crossing borders they are not supposed to, and in such cases, in the unfortunate event that an accident occurs such as the Lampedusa shipwreck<sup>23</sup>, the audience is not invited to sympathise, but to be

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<sup>22</sup> For more details, see <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/04/06/world/europe/turkey-syrian-refugees>

<sup>23</sup> The Lampedusa shipwreck involved a capsized ship in the Mediterranean Sea near the Italian island of Lampedusa in October 2013. More than 360 people died (<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/italy-more-than-100-killed-in-migrant-boat-shipwreck/>). A more recent crisis was even worse, in which up to 700 people were unaccounted for ([http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/20/world/europe/italy-migrants-capsized-boat-off-libya.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/20/world/europe/italy-migrants-capsized-boat-off-libya.html?_r=0)).

amazed at the reasons why people could make such ridiculous decisions. This invites a thought on the politics of sympathy, but which this study does not however focus on.

Newspapers on the other hand utilize still images of people positioned behind the fence as seen in the photograph below. The accompanying caption and news article help to contextualize the event. The Fence in this news context thus works to justify the truth claims by journalists of the way things are (Zelizer 2004, p. 118). It acts as evidence of displacement in being a proof that these events occurred, and that journalists were there to record.

The main focus of this photograph is the fence, as well as the child behind it. This section will focus on the fence, while broader discussions on the ‘child’ will be carried out in the section of gendered representations.



Article 1: What's happening all around! These young Somali refugees pictured at the Utange camp on Tuesday seem to wonder. They are among thousands of Somali refugees currently at the camp after fleeing their war-torn country (The Standard, Thursday June 6, 1991).

As much as the use of ‘the fence’ signifies timeliness of this news report, the occurrence is however not totally new. Rather, it offers continuity to a developing story of a looming crisis in the concerned country or region. In this sense, the fence functions as a climax to this developing story whose outcome, the displacement, seems to have been lingering in the minds of many. That is, it is the ultimate of what could have happened. In this sense, the fence signifies displacement and therefore confirms the magnitude of the crisis at hand, offering a justification for the media attention that was invested in that developing story in the first place. This is in reference to the different stages of covering displacement as discussed in chapter four, which



begin with the warning signs of a looming crisis. Displacement and the use of the fence is therefore the experience of displacement itself. Understood this way, the fence therefore belongs to this stage of representing developing news on crises -crises which can be tracked back- as compared to natural disasters that strike instantly and in which none or few developing stories exist. On the other hand however, this sort of barrier (fence) is specific to this particular context and should be seen to differ from other kinds of barriers, for example those that exist behind prison cells.



Photo 1: Newly arrived refugee child takes stock of his new “home”. Photo courtesy of photographer Tom Maruko, it appeared in the Daily Nation on July 14, 2011.

Understood this way, the photograph is seen as specific to the crisis which has occurred, and situates the subjects behind the fence as innocent, whose fate, the audience should identify with. This photo is therefore a perfect example of the manner in which the media uses the fence to accompany unfolding news reports on displacement in which people have to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. The photograph portrays a child, seemingly a boy, positioned behind a chain-link fence. He is distantly looking away from the camera, as if to occurrences further away on the other side of the fence. Behind him are blurred images of other refugees which corporately succeed in making the boy the central subject of attention. While signalling the fact that there are many more trapped in this space of liminality, the fusion of a grim looking boy pressing himself against the fence is a powerful metaphor that is probably designed to call the attention of key stakeholders.

As mentioned earlier, the fence is an important marker in the visual representation of displacement, signifying new arrivals of refugees into camps. Their long days of walking on arid terrain are now over and they are thus waiting to be admitted into one of the camps in Dadaab. The sad fact however is that during the 2011 crisis when this photograph was taken,

the number of new daily arrivals was so high that refugees had to queue for long hours, sometimes days, before being registered, and therefore finally getting into the camp ( David Muir 2011). This queuing led to further deterioration of their situation, sometimes leading to death. Make shift camps began dotting longer distances away from the camps when refugees made temporary shelters in which to wait for their turn to be registered. These circumstances yielded another phase of reporting. Pressure began to be put on the government of Kenya to open two more camps which they had declined to open. The Kenya government insisted that the refugees' burden was a huge one it was not prepared to shoulder, arguing that since the crisis was caused by a lack of food and not war as had been framed by UNHCR, the refugees were therefore supposed to be settled as IDPs in Somalia. Yet the very situation of refugees needing humanitarian assistance worked to instil more pressure. In the long run, Ifo2 refugee camp, and later on Ifo3 and Kambios, were opened.

Going back to the pressure built at the fence, two things follow on the part of aid organizations. In order to sustain refugees, aid workers offered emergency assistance to people in the make-shift camps, or in the emergency health care centres constructed to cater for those with the highest risk. This high risk was judged through physical appearance of greater weakness and deterioration and was quite handy for those who received it. On the contrary, this 'high risk' focus may have worked to reproduce victimcy<sup>24</sup>, bearing in mind that all these people had undergone difficult circumstances.

Apart from this, their new identity as refugees is not yet a reality since they have not been granted refugee status on this other side of the fence, but are willing to denounce their citizenship of the other side of the fence, which is their country of origin. In this regard, the fence is significant in producing refugees who, after crossing over, remain refugees and are therefore defined as stateless due to their lack of nationality. Pictured in this manner, their identity is therefore firmly located in the ambiguous state of liminality. Furthermore, they are not defined as internally displaced persons in their countries of origin despite the make-shift camps they occupy on the other side of the fence. There is therefore a sort of interplay between intimacy and distance with regard to their identity. This new identity is so near, and yet still, so far. It is accessible and yet unapproachable. These oppositions form part of the erotics of

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<sup>24</sup> Mats Utas (2005) uses the term victimcy to refer to a form of agency exhibited by victims of a situation in behaving as a category of humanitarian focus demands. In this regard, if humanitarian assistance targets orphans for example, many children who may not necessarily be orphans may register as so for the sake of aid.

this particular code of representation. Furthermore, using this trope, the media easily defines the borders of 'here' and 'there', situating subjects of such representations as the 'other' or as aliens.

This code of 'the fence' also triggers anxiety with regard to the ambiguity of refugee law. Concerning refugees, the law states that they have a right to be hosted by the country into which they flee (Mannik 2012, p. 264). With regard to the host country however, its acceptance to host refugees is voluntary, meaning that they have a choice to either host them or not (ibid). This ambiguity therefore translates into a humanitarian plea. On the one hand, an appeal is made by subjects of such representation not only to us as viewers of this image (whether nationals of host country or not), but more so to the government of the host country to open its gates. But then again a tense moment is connoted for all the parties involved due to the possible responses to this plea. The host country can choose to allow refugees in, but it also has a right to decline, and therefore reject this plea. Political reactions then spring in from here. The boy's look seems to acquiesce with the public's 'why-don't-you-let-them-in' outcry, when the receiving government is left with no option but to open its gates. If the government on the other hand does the 'unimaginable' and refuses to allow these people in, it is immediately viewed with contempt especially in the face of international media and humanitarian organisations, while its nationals may identify with it. This was the case in the 2011 crisis period as discussed in chapter four when newspaper editorials supported the government's refusal to accept refugees and therefore open up two more camps that were required to host them since the existing three were too full to capacity (Daily Nation, July 14, 2011). While the government cited economic burdens on hosting refugees, the media took a security angle, citing the threat of terrorism with the influx of refugees especially from Somalia, a position that was more identifiable with that of Kenyans at the time (ibid). Furthermore, some parts of Kenya had also experienced starvation during this period and the media's attention focused on the Kenyan crisis with a fundraising campaign dubbed Kenyans for Kenyans (The Standard, August 13, 2011, The Standard, July 29, 2011). In this regard, while refugees too had experienced starvation which had been worsened by underlying conflict which triggered their journey to seek refuge in Kenya, the media mentioned their plight in passing, while agreeing with the government's position not to accept more refugees, although with different reasons, and in turn focusing more on the crisis of starving Kenyans. On the contrary, international pressure on Kenya to accept refugees was heightened, and the government later on opened the camps that

were required. In the long run, the initial two and later on third camps were opened as earlier discussed. In this yielding to international pressure, the refugee camp became a sort of political project granted by the Kenyan government in a bid to gain international approval.

In general, ‘the Fence’, together with the accompanying news article, offers a justification of the subjects’ decision to flee, and of their plea to be allowed to cross over into the other, probably safer side of the fence. The boy’s uncertainty revealed through his thoughtful stare therefore speaks for the many more in his company, of the difficult past and of the tense and unsure, though hopefully better future. Better in the sense that it justifies their decision to make such a journey, but unsure due to the fact that they do not know what awaits them on the particular decision to cross over, and also of how life will turn out on the other side of the fence. This code of the fence has therefore highlighted many behind-the-scene occurrences at the time of displacement. The intensity of the crisis heightens media coverage and donations begin to be made by audiences. As much as the media garners aid for victims of crises through media coverage, the role of aid distribution largely belongs to humanitarian organizations in the camps. This highlights the sort of symbiotic relation that exists between the media and humanitarian institutions as discussed in chapter four. NGOs therefore, however much they may not adopt the code of the fence in their project reports, are symbiotically part and parcel of media reporting in times of crises.

## **6.2 The Cup**

As discussed earlier, Terrence Wright (2002) identifies the use of “The Empty Cup” as a representational cue in pictures of displacement, noting that subjects are pictured holding an empty cup. Wright goes further to explain that this empty cup has a biblical relation in pointing to the way God allots punishment for sin, so that the cup can be filled with fire and brimstone for those who have done wrong, or can overflow with blessing for the righteous (2002, p. 58). Indeed pictures of refugees holding a cup were identified in the data and will be analysed below. However, their relation to God’s punishment for sin is Wright’s interpretation which does not necessarily have to apply to all other interpretations like the one undertaken in this study. In fact, Wright himself observes that such an allusion desires further thought (Wright 2000, p. 9). In this regard, this biblical relation will be shunned since it attempts a biblical explanation for the refugees’ current situation, being that they are receiving punishment for their actions which may not necessarily be the case. Examples of the pictures can be seen below.

CRISIS | Millions may die as aid workers are denied access to deserving areas

# Famine worst in 60 years: UN

Humanitarian agencies are working with governments to raise money for food aid

BY JULIUS SIGEI  
jsigei@kenationmedia.com

The United Nations and the G-20 group of nations have described the drought ravaging northern Kenya and the rest of the Horn of Africa as the worst in 60 years.

The crisis had surpassed the 1984 famine in Ethiopia, only that casualties were fewer because of the timely interventions by World Food Programme, and the governments of Kenya and Ethiopia, according to UN official Josette Sheeran.

Ms Sheeran, who is the WFP executive director, declared the crisis as "a corporate urgency" during a tour of Wajir and Dadaab on Saturday. She led a delegation comprising among others the head of Food Agricultural Organisation (FAO), Mr Jacques Diouf and French Agriculture minister Bruno Le Maire.

Ms Sheeran called on the world to urgently raise funds for 11 million people in critical need of food.

"The UN has declared the Horn of Africa the largest humanitarian concern in the world and WFP is working with national governments,

UN agencies and non-governmental organisations to increase life-saving operations," said the WFP boss.

"The UN fears that tens of thousands of people have died of starvation in Somalia. Others are fleeing to neighbouring countries.

An estimated 400,000 people face starvation in Wajir. Thousands of malnourished men, women and children have moved to camps to get relief food.

Ms Sheeran said there was a shortfall of \$350 million (\$12.6 billion) and that WFP was currently accessing only 40 per cent of the hunger-stricken in Somalia, with 2.2 million at the risk of dying in the southern part of the country as "local authorities" (al Shabaab militants) had denied

### THE NUMBERS

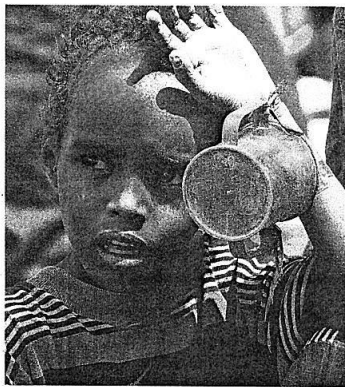
**Famine funds**

**\$h4.4bn**

The amount set aside by government for school feeding

**\$h31.6bn**

The shortfall the UN has in addressing hunger



A Somali child waits for food as refugees register at lfo camp in Dadaab on July 10. Thousands of Somalis have fled their country due to hunger and famine.

## Stop entry of refugees, says Murugi

BY NATIONAL REPORTER

A Cabinet minister has called on the international community to stop the entry of more Somali refugees in Kenya, citing threat to security and strained resources.

"Let Somalis stay in their country. If it is food, we are willing to assist them, but currently we are strained," said Special Programmes minister Esther Murugi.

She said refugee camps should be built in Somalia.

The minister said the strategic grain reserves had shrunk to two million bags of maize instead of the required eight million, noting that buying more was difficult due to increased prices.

### Building roads

"We are targeting \$10.5 billion, and so far \$8 billion has been raised. There is no point of building roads if there will be no Kenyans to use them," she said.

Ms Murugi, Dr Mohammed Sirat (Wajir South MP), United Nations World Food Programme executive director Josette Sheeran, head of Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Jacques Diouf,

and other officials were in Wajir on Saturday.

Article 2: A Somali child waits for food as refugees register at lfo camp in Dadaab on July 10. Thousands of refugees have left their country due to hunger and famine (Daily Nation, July 25, 2011).

August 13, 2011 | STANDARD ON SATURDAY | Page 11 | NEWS ANALYSIS

## Disaster management: Leaders feel Government input has come too late and might be pilfered

### Funds drive

Lord Priddy, a massive fundraiser by corporate organisations and media houses, under the umbrella of Kenya for Kenya, underlined the severity of the crisis in Kenya's spirit of giving when they raised \$300 million in just under three hours, during the emergency Kenya Red Cross Society Secretary-General Abbas Galko's visit to the solution to the problem was for the country to have real and long-term solutions.

"It is the Government's fundamental responsibility to take care of its people by providing water, social infrastructure and other facilities that would enable people, especially those in least developed areas, to prosper," said Galko.

## State faulted for slow response and graft in famine control

BY STEPHEN MAKABILA

Two weeks after Kenya, led by corporate organisations, launched an initiative to raise funds to assist those affected by famine, the Government's central role in intervention strategies and lasting solutions to recurrent famine remains feeble.

It did not surprise many when House Speaker Kenneth Marende on Tuesday accused the Government of failing to feed its own citizens, as he released a \$8.4 million cheque from MPs and Parliamentary staff towards assisting famine-stricken families in northern Kenya and other parts of the country.

Marende's candid observation came days after an attempt by Sabot MP Eugene Wamahwa to move a Motion of adjournment in Parliament over the crisis could not be approved.

"I thought the Motion was timely given the ravaging famine claiming lives of our brothers and sisters, but someone other than the Speaker thought the issue had already been addressed effectively," Wamahwa told The Standard On Saturday.

Luckily, Parliament business was suspended on Tuesday to discuss the crisis following another adjournment Motion moved by nominated MP Mohammed Afey, where MPs accused the Government of neglecting the hungry and attempting to suppress information on the extent of the calamity. On the same day, Marende's deputy, Farah Maalin, noted even the \$1.4 billion released by Government towards famine interventions may just do much as most of it will end-up lining people's pockets. Maalin opines what is being contributed by ordinary Kenyans for Kenya (a target of \$1 billion), could be more effective than the Government's \$1.4 billion.

It's not the first time the country is going through a famine.

In January 2009 President Kibaki declared the then food shortage a national disaster and appealed for \$37 billion to address the crisis. He further directed all arms of the Government to marshal available resources to respond effectively to the situation. The president had expressed deep concern over the deteriorating food security for poor households. Going by the recent crisis many of the country's short and long-term response to food insecurity remain wanting.

Denials of famine-related deaths by Government officials abound, in response to early warning systems by both local and foreign agencies and misappropriation of the donated food remain the Government's base. Police earlier in the week unearthed a racket in which unscrupulous businessmen have been stealing and selling relief food in the city Pokot South DC Nyamongo Nyabero was arrested in Kitale over alleged theft of relief food.

As all this is happening the ravages of famine spread far and wide. Special Programmes Minister Esther Murugi says relief food is released through the provincial administration hierarchy downwards, and that the Government would change the distribution system to contain such practices.

"We are thinking of having only one main distributor of the food to work with the World Food Programme (WFP) instead of relying on many handlers," said Murugi.

During Tuesday's debate in Parliament, Agriculture Minister Saly Koege had said the ministry had policies on food security but inadequate resources curtailed their implementation.

"There is enough maize in this country and we should direct our energies towards buying that," Dr Koege told Parliament.

Wamahwa says it is time the Government takes bold measures to find lasting solutions to recurrent famine in the country.

"We should not only think of expanding irrigation schemes as proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture. We should equally pay farmers well in arable regions to motivate them increase production," says Wamahwa, who represents a constituency in Trans-Country referred to as the agrarian Kenya. PS Ministry of Agriculture Ramano Kiome, has been quoted as saying \$300 billion is going to be channelled into irrigating an additional 650,000 acres of land on top of the current 150,000 acres, in an effort to boost food security.

But according to Wamahwa, strategies towards improved food production should be well thought out, and that even as arid land is made productive, grain farmers in Rift Valley and Western provinces have to be motivated to expand production and the Government's storage facilities improved.

"We should not forget that Kenya is an agricultural based economy with agri-business employing more than 80 per cent of the population," added Wamahwa.

The Sabot MP further noted with a well-managed agricultural sector, the country could not be currently waiting time on the GMO food debate.

Predictions by experts and international agencies indicate the current drought may not end soon, meaning the famine crisis will remain for some months to come. According to the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2011 is the driest period in the eastern Horn of Africa since 1995 with no likelihood of improvement until early 2012.

It is estimated about 15 million people in the region face starvation.

INSIDE TODAY  
Kenya and Tanzania in row over tourism  
News, P.2-13

Article 3: Vagaries of famine has pushed Northern Kenya residents to the brink (The Standard, August 23, 2011).

INTERVENTION | Cabinet takes steps to ensure the hungry are reached on time

# Military, NYS help distribute relief food

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

be agreed upon with regional and international partners," a dispatch from the Presidential Press Services said.

It is the second time in two weeks that a Cabinet meeting chaired by President Kibaki has pre-occupied itself with a crisis that has placed more than 3.5 million Kenyans at risk of starvation.

Two weeks ago, the Cabinet allocated Sh9 billion — Sh5 billion from the Consolidated Fund and Sh4 billion to be raised through budgetary cuts—to fight hunger and drought that has ravaged North Eastern Coast, Eastern and parts of Rift Valley (See story below).

So far, the Treasury has released Sh8 billion to buy relief food.

The food shortage has been complicated further by the influx of starving refugees from Somalia over-running the Dadaab refugee camps in Garissa County, Kenya has been

under sustained pressure from the UN to open another camp to take in more refugees.

The Cabinet meeting yesterday resolved to invite both regional leaders and the wider international community to help save millions of people in the Horn of Africa.

"The conference will seek emergency food requirements for the 14 million people requiring food relief in the Horn of Africa. The meeting will also

**THE NUMBERS**

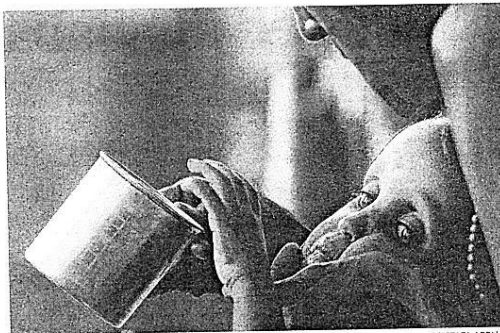
**Call for help**

**Sh8bn**

Money given out by Treasury to buy food aid

**15,000**

Number of refugees arriving at Dadaab monthly



A severely malnourished child is given oral rehydration salts at Mogadishu's Banadir hospital yesterday. Thousands of Somalis have fled to the border with Kenya because of the famine which has put an estimated 3.7 million people - a third of the population - on the brink of starvation.

support the opening of feeding camps inside Somalia in order to stop the influx of refugees to neighbouring countries especially Kenya," said the PPS.

The Dadaab camp which was built to host 90,000 refugees now accommodates more than 400,000, with about 15,000 new arrivals each month. It is the biggest refugee camp in the world.

Apart from seeking immediate measures to avert disaster,

the meeting will come up with both medium and long term solutions to the yearly rituals of drought and food shortages in the region.

The leaders will also tackle the social and security issues such as lack of a stable government in Somalia which have contributed to the worst food crisis the region has faced in a long time.

To tackle the local food emergency, the Cabinet directed that there should be a more efficient

distribution of relief food. The National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) will buy maize that is being imported and the fresh harvest from South Rift to be distributed.

The worst hit areas are parts of North Rift, Eastern and North Eastern provinces.

On Wednesday Prime Minister Raila Odinga told Parliament noted that more relief efforts were needed as the drought was spreading fast across the country.

Article 4: A severely malnourished child is given oral rehydration salts at Mogadishu's Banadir hospital yesterday (Daily Nation, July 29, 2011).

AFRICA NEWS



A malnourished Somali boy watched by several others looks for food in the remote town of Mandera, where no relief aid has reached in 18 months. Thirty to 40 people starve to death there daily. — Picture by AFP

# UN envoy wants food for Somalia

NAIROBI, Wednesday.

UN Special Envoy Mohamed Sahnoun launched an impassioned appeal today for an immediate food airlift to stem the tide of mass starvation threatening 4.5 million people in Somalia.

Following a UN security Council resolution on Monday calling for an expanded UN humanitarian and peacekeeping operation in the Horn of Africa country shattered by 18 months of factional fighting and drought, Sahnoun said several Somali faction leaders had pledged "full co-operation."

A UN technical mission will leave for Somalia next Wednesday to see how best to distribute relief aid, end the civil war, disarm the population and start rebuilding the country, Sahnoun told journalists during a brief stop-over here before returning to Somalia.

"But I want to convince donors that we don't need to wait for the results of the technical team to

Somalis — nearly a third of the population — doomed to die within months without massive relief aid.

Sahnoun said General Mohamed Farah Aidid, the leader of one of Somalia's main warring factions, and three other guerrilla chiefs had agreed to back the UN operation during talks with the UN envoy in Bardera yesterday.

Aidid and the leaders of three other factions who have formed an alliance in a bid to restore order to Somalia told AFP last weekend that they opposed a UN proposal to send in 500 armed troops to guard relief aid. Instead, they urged the UN to help them form a 6,000-strong police force.

Aidid has accepted the deployment of about 50 UN military observers to monitor a ceasefire

AFRICA BRIEFS

Winners named

BRAZZAVILLE — Congolese Interior Minister Alphonse Nkoungou on Tuesday night confirmed the victory of Pascal Lissouba's Pan-African Union for Social Democracy in Sunday's senatorial elections. He said the Upads took a commanding plurality of 23 of the senate's 60 seats, with Bernard Kolelas' Congolese Movement for Democracy and Integral Development in second position with 14 seats.

Socialism deflated

VICTORIA — Seychelles President Albert Rene defended his 15-year socialism rule on Tuesday after winning a multi-party election, but said the Indian Ocean islands were ready for a new Constitution. "The people appreciate our achievements. I have great confidence in the future," he told reporters at his colonial State House residence.

Arms confiscated

JOHANNESBURG — South African police said on Tuesday they had confiscated more than 19,000 guns this year, more than 8,000 of them AK-47 automatic rifles.

Junta restrained

Article 5: A malnourished Somali child watched by several others looks for food in the remote town of Mandera where no relief aid has reached in 18 months (The Standard, July 30, 1992).



**TOO WEAK . . .** A Somali refugee woman waits for clearance at the Liboi border after arriving from Mogadishu to escape the ravages of civil war currently going on in her country. Most of the refugees walk thousands of kilometres without food or water. *Picture by Hudson Wainaina.*

Article 6: **TOO WEAK . . .** A Somali refugee woman waits for clearance at the Liboi border after arriving from Mogadishu to escape the ravage of civil war currently going on in her country (The Standard, Feb 11, 1992).

Article 2 portrays a Somali child waiting for food at Ifo camp in Dadaab while article 3 is of a child with an empty cup crouching and he directly faces the camera. Article 4 portrays a severely malnourished child receiving oral rehydration salt. Article 5 is of a child roaming in search of food in Mandera town in North-Eastern Kenya, while the last article is of a woman awaiting registration at the Liboi border. As indicated in the caption, the first four photos have been taken around food. Subjects are either awaiting or looking for food. It is only the last article which does not mention food, although this is connoted since the woman is too weak, and registration guarantees food distribution as well. Such pictures of empty cups can therefore be seen to have been taken when refugees were receiving food donations in which case, a cup was a necessary requirement especially for children. In article 2 for example, the child is not only holding the cup, but it is tied to his hand, probably so that it does not get lost. This further highlights the necessity of cups in such food distribution contexts especially for children.

The cups in Articles 2 and 3 are empty, but we are not sure of those in articles 5 & 6 due the manner in which they have been held. The one in article 4 contains oral rehydration salt for the

**THE High Court is considering whether to call the DP Secretary-General, Mr John Keen, as a witness in a case in which a former detainee, George Anyona and three others have been jailed for seven years on a charge of sedition.**

The ruling was made by Mr Justice Sam Oguk during the hearing of an application seeking the introduction of more evidence in the case.

Mr Justice Oguk allowed Anyona and three others, a former katu official in Embu, Augustus Njeru Kathangu, a former professor of psychology at Kenyatta University, Edward Oyugi, and a former University of Nairobi Dean of Students, Isaiah Ngotho wa Karuki to give evidence relating to their medical records while in prison.

Three Nairobi lawyers, Mr Paul Buti, Mr Nderi Nduma and Mr Mutua Kigano, appear for the appellants. The State is represented by Mr Philip Murgor.

In his ruling, Mr Justice Oguk noted that Mr Keen, formerly an Assistant Minister in the Office of the President, had by his recent utterances pertaining to the Anyona case exposed himself as a potential

Standard Reporter

witness in the proceedings.

"This court has the powers to summon him to give evidence in his possession which was not presented to the court during the hearing of the case," he said.

The court would consider whether to call him during the hearing of the appeal but "at this stage," he said, "the court will be contented with his revelation reported in the daily newspapers and whether or not he had retracted this."

The court, however, allowed the appellants to give evidence regarding their medical health while in prison. He also directed Naivasha and Kamiti maximum security prisons authorities to make available to court medical records relating to the appellants.

Mr Justice Oguk said the records were relevant to the appellants' application.

Describing prison conditions as pathetic, Mr Kigano had earlier said there was a perpetual shortage of medicines, food and bedding and claimed that his clients had been in solitary confinement for 18 months and were segregated.

He urged the court to sum-

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**strike call**

— Page 2

**Julie Ward was hacked to death, court told**

— Page 2

**University lecturers misusing scheme**

— Page 13

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### Five killed, six hurt in land clashes

AT least five people were killed and six others injured in fresh land clashes along the Uasin Gishu-Kakamega-Nandi districts common border on Sunday and yesterday.

The Standard learnt that four of the deceased were killed on Sunday, while the fifth, an old woman, was murdered yesterday morning. By 10 a.m. yesterday, the bodies had not been collected.

Over 100 families were estimated to have been displaced when their homes, granaries and other property were set on fire at Nusembe village in Uasin Gishu District.

And so intense were the clashes that motorists avoided the normally busy Bungoma-Eldoret road that traverses the "battle area", largely due to

Page 2 — Col. 5

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child receiving it. This use of ‘a cup’ which is not necessarily empty can therefore be seen. In this regard, while Wright points to the use of the empty cup, this section discusses the cup as a representational cue, to allude to the use of pictures of refugees holding a cup, which is not necessarily empty.

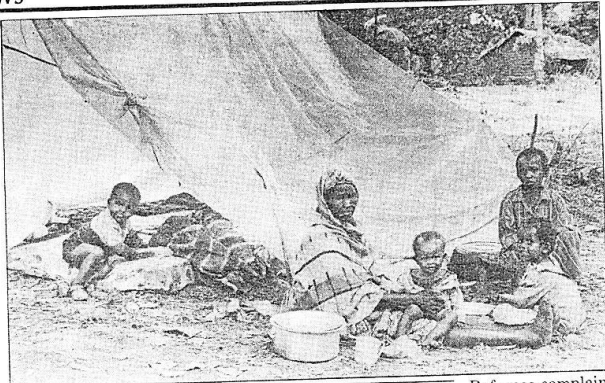
Apart from being photographs with a direct link to food as pointed above, these photographs are also taken around aid. In this regard, apart from being pleas for aid, they also reveal the availability of aid as seen in Article 4, where the child is receiving oral rehydration salt, or Article 2 whereby the child is waiting for food. In this case, the photos indicate the availability of aid, while at the same time, pleas for more aid are made, which is the main object of discussion in the news article that accompanies Article 2. These pictures that desire sympathy, although in most cases empathy from audiences, are effective tools for garnering aid which refugees in this situation are in need of. They hurt, especially when they portray adverse malnutrition. Yet as Vanessa Pupavac critiques, none of the subjects in such photographs that hurt are singly picked out for more specialised care by aid institutions (1200, p. 280). Rather, they serve the purpose of only relaying news, thereby working for the good of refugees as a whole.

### 6.3 Shelters

This trope portrays refugees’ make shift camps which are by this time home. It situates refugees in front of their make shift camps, and as discussed in chapter six, accompanies feature articles on the plight of refugees in camps. An example is as seen below.

DAILY NATION, SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 1992

NS



Refugees complain about graft

**Rumba discharged from Kenyatta Hospital**

By DAVID ROGONCHO and SHEILA WAMBUI

A refugee mother and her children rest near their tent at the Utange Camp. More than 2,000 newly-arrived Somali refugees at the camp have complained they were being sold relief tents and food by self-appointed refugee elders. They said they were being asked to pay between Sh4,000 and Sh10,000 for a tent.

particularly for tuberculosis, had not been performed. Dr. Mwanoya said Mr. Kinuthia

Saints' Cathedral yesterday appointed to the Government to extend clemency to the prisoners.

Article 7: A refugee mother and her children rest near their tent at the Utange camp (Daily Nation, April 11, 1992).



It portrays a woman with children seated in front of their tent, the caption regarding refugees' complaint is about aid distribution, this will be discussed in detail a little later. Another similar photo is as shown below.

DAILY NATION, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1992

## SPECIAL REPORT



A woman refugee and her children in a camp in north-eastern Kenya. INSET: Ethiopian refugees demonstrating in Nairobi streets against the murder of their leader. — File pictures

# The price of hospitality

## NAIROBI

By WANGUI GACHIE

The police launched a massive sweep recently in the residential areas of the Nairobi netting hundreds of refugees whose immigration papers were not in order. Over 1,000 were picked up but many of them were set free later after the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), intervened. Since then the refugee population in the city appears to have gone down. But the animosity that the city residents have for the refugees who swarm the city due to the civil strife in their home countries remains unabated.

Three months ago, Ethiopian refugees held a series of demonstrations in the city protesting the slaying of one of their leaders. Nairobi residents watched in shock at the sheer anger displayed by the foreigners who came to seek refuge and then had the impudence to wage their tribal wars here.

Several weeks later, a Somali peedder stabbed a security guard refused him entry into a bank to hawk some watches. The Somali was immediately subjected to mob justice as enraged members of the public vented their anger

## Many Nairobi residents have resented the odd behaviour of the hundreds of refugees who have invaded the city

the city has begun to create some animosity towards them.

Many city residents have stated their resentment at having their favourite coffee bars and cafes invaded by the foreigners. The usually scarce facilities within the city have been stretched to the limit and it is not surprising that Nairobian feel antagonistic towards the invaders.

For many city residents, the refugee population has overstayed their welcome and hostility towards them is beginning to show. Such hostility easily arises when outsiders fail to get integrated into the already existing system or fail to respect the laws and norms of the host country.

There appears to be a growing distaste towards habits that the refugees consider normal and acceptable. For instance, something as trivial as the common custom of the Somali men squatting casually anywhere on the pavement is considered odd if not totally unacceptable by the standards of

keep noisy Somali refugees from sitting along the raised steps that run around the building.

The caretaker of the building, Ronald Kiboro, said that the management has resorted to building the metal grill around the building because the refugees came to sit outside the building from as early as 10.00 am to 6.30 pm. The building stands directly opposite the Jamia Mosque where the majority of the Muslim refugee communities worship.

"Their loud noise had begun to make it difficult for people working in the offices on the ground floor," he said.

The greatest problem was that the large number of refugees constituted a security risk for the two banks housed in the building.

"In Nairobi, it is common to hear of a client being attacked by gangsters minutes after withdrawing money from the bank," Kiboro said. He added that the security of their clients could not be assured as gangsters could find easy hid-

only marginally as there are still huge crowds that stand around the premises especially during the lunch hour.

Other hotels that have experienced some trouble with refugees within the city centre include the Six Sixty. The management of the hotel had to call in the police to disperse a group of refugees who had resorted to meeting outside the building when they were suspected to be peddling arms.

However, many hotels and restaurants are complaining that they have little control over the frequent patronage of their premises by refugees who are out to pass time.

One such proprietor complained that too many refugees were frequenting his premises to pass away time. After they buy a single cup of coffee, they would drink it for hours, he complained. Yet he cannot refuse them entry into the premises as it would seem discriminatory.

"This refugee situation is bad for business. It may look like we are doing booming business because the premises are always full but the truth is that these people do not have too much money and we cannot send them away because it is so un-African," he said.

The strain on the limited facilities has also extended to the housing situation in the city. Many city residents have begun to complain that the influx of rich refugees into the city has resulted in increased rents in many

Article 8: A woman refugee and her children in North-Eastern Kenya (Daily Nation, September 16, 1992).

It also portrays a woman with two children who appear to be sheltering from the hot sun. With the many household articles scattered near the tent however, this shelter ceases to be one from the hot sun, but a probable living tent as well.

These two photographs accompanied feature articles on complaints alongside the refugee situation. In the former, the news article is about the sale of aid to newly arrived refugees by fellow refugees. This article pointed to the mishandling of refugees by their fellows who arrived in the camps earlier and were tagged as elders. These elders sold aid to the newly arrived refugees which was supposed to be distributed for free (Daily Nation, April 11, 1992). There was however no follow up on this accusation on the reports that followed. In the latter article, the headline reads “the price of hospitality”, and an article on resentment towards refugees follows (Daily Nation, September 16, 1992). This article resents the influx of refugees with “bad habits”, an accusation that was largely discriminative, and different from Kenyan journalism in the coverage of the 2011 crisis which was seen to be more responsible as discussed in chapter four. This article emphasized the rising animosity of Nairobi residents towards refugees, highlighting a demonstration held by Ethiopian refugees “protesting the slaying of one of their leaders” as “Nairobi residents watched in shock at the sheer anger displayed by foreigners who came to seek refuge and then had the impudence to wage their tribal wars here”. Inset is the photo of Ethiopian refugees demonstrating is shown. The article further lamented that

Several weeks later, a Somali peddler stabbed a (Kenyan) security guard in the stomach when the guard refused him entry into a bank to hawk some watches. The Somali was immediately subjected to mob justice as enraged members of the public vented their anger over the growing refugee population in the city. (ibid).

The article went further to lament the strain on the businesses and housing situation in the city since the influx of refugees. This feature article does not therefore have a direct relation to the particular subjects in this photograph, but is an object to which a resentment towards refugees was poured. Furthermore, the photo acts as a representation of anonymous refugees, of refugees as a mass, only that the photos of these two families have been utilised. The subjects in this photograph are not therefore the ones being accused by the article.

Moreover, the use of photographs along such a trope, that is, photographs of women and their children in front of temporary makeshift camps not fit for human habitation deserves our attention. These photographs in themselves would attract sympathy, highlighting the use of photos of women and children as “emissaries of hopelessness and despair” (Malkki 1995, p. 11), but the accompanying article transgresses this emotion. We are therefore called upon to

view refugees as a nuisance despite their situation as needy, perhaps denoting Susan Moeller's (1999) compassion fatigue attitude towards people in despair. In this regard, this photograph of women and children on anonymity can be seen to capture the attention of passing readers, who can immediately know that the article concerns refugees, only to be caused to have a different attitude towards them, that of resentment and not of sympathy. The journalist therefore uses certain word choices, some of which have been quoted above, to direct our attitude towards refugees. Moreover, the inclusion of the reader in the journalist's position who uses words such as "we" or "the Nairóbians" creates the impression that both the journalist and the reader possess the same kind of resentment towards refugees, that of a dislike caused by their influx into Kenya's urban cities (Daily Nation, September 16, 1992). Such articles that portrayed emerging resentment towards refugees were many towards the final stage of reporting the 1991 crisis as seen in chapter five, in which pictures of anonymous male refugees were also utilized.

In general, anonymity characterised most representations of refugees in the crises periods under study in that pictures of refugees without a direct relation to the article covered were utilised. In this case, subjects in the photographs were not direct referents of the featured article, but of refugees in general. These were largely adopted in feature articles as opposed to news articles, although this was not the exception. In this regard, while in most cases news articles on a road accident for example would utilise pictures of the scene, the news articles on refugees adopted anonymity in most cases in utilising pictures of people not directly related to the article covered.

#### **6.4 Gendered Portrayals**

While the fence is adopted at the initial stages of displacement as breaking news, gendered representations offer progressive news on displacement. This trope is adopted when refugees have begun crossing into camps and the fence has therefore lost its timeliness. At this stage, refugees are queuing for registration in the camps, while others undergoing traumatic conditions are receiving emergency medical services. This group at the same time are the basis under which news is focused -malnourished, weak, mostly women and children-. While many refugees have undergone desperate situations at this time, those whose devastation can be seen through their physical appearance capture media attention. As Moeller notes, this category comprises people who would as well be at risk despite the crisis (1999, p. 104). Women, children, and the very old are in day-to-day at risk even in times of calm (*ibid*). In the news, their appearance as malnourished, hopeless and desperate justifies the progressive media

coverage, and maintains the audience's attention for some time. And while they were models for representations on shelters as seen and discussed above, women and children are also subjects of such representations that desire sympathy. Women and children are pictured in the camp, too weak during the crisis period, and receiving medical attention. These are refugees who have essentially 'crossed over the fence', and are now 'safely' sequestered in camps in Dadaab, although still bearing the pain of transit. An example of photographs along this template is as seen below.



Photo 2: Media portrayal of the 2011 crisis, courtesy of photographer Tom Maruko

It captured the crisis of newly arrived refugees into the Dadaab camp following escalating famine that struck Somalia and other parts of Ethiopia and Northern Kenya in the year 2011. The photo captured the horrors of just arrived refugees in the camp receiving medical attention and the much needed rest from days of walking on arid terrain. We chance upon a mother and her two children as the focus of the photo. Agony is scribbled all over her face, marking perhaps the only visual evidence of the suffering she has endured in the war torn Somalia. Her equally traumatised children are a potent sight inviting instant sympathy. A visibly malnourished pair, huddled next to their mother all facing away from the camera, forms a perfect reduction for the mass media on the ramifications of violence. To the left of them is another woman, perhaps another repetition of the mother and child pattern. The gendered nature of how the media visualises the aftermath of conflict is evident in this template of a vulnerable mother and her children, which relates to Dorothea Lange's most famous *migrant mother photograph*, and also to *Madonna and child* paintings in western art, pre-historical visual tropes to which the representations of displacement can be traced (Price & Wells 2006, p. 44). The absence of any male presence in the form of a father or otherwise accentuates the notion of a gendered victimhood that foregrounds feminine vulnerability and childhood innocence.

Here, it is worth noting that the structures that inform the collection and dissemination of news, especially news concerning refugees in times of crises, are most likely to produce photographs along such a template. Moreover, the sight of a woman and child stands out as a perfect metaphor of conflict and violence, for the simple reason that motherhood and children evoke near universal emotions almost familiar to all. Additionally, the visualisation of the weak and innocent, in this case a woman and her children, is used in the media to focus more on the results of conflict, rather than on the politics underlying the conflict (Campbell 2007).

Another such picture is the one below. It portrays the devastation experienced during this period of displacement. It shows a woman, too weak and frail after walking from Mogadishu to this border town, and now awaiting treatment at the makeshift dispensary in Liboi. It portrays the real impact of war and starvation, this time on an adult female. The reality that displacement effects cut across age is made real.



Article 16: Article with a photo of a newly arrived refugee at the Liboi camp (The Standard, Feb11, 1992)

Such agonizing pictures had caused an outcry in Kenya for warring parties in Somalia to lay their interests aside for the sake of its citizens. The picture was also used to highlight the complexities of humanitarian provision that played out in the camp. As much as fleeing into the country was a difficult experience for those who made the journey, further emaciation and even death was another reality after arrival. Possibly being weary of being the icon of this crisis, this woman revealed that,

People have been taking my photographs since my arrival here over the last one week. These people are doctors and medical attendants who have been appearing here and spending longer hours debating on some unnecessary formalities, instead of attending to us. Who cares about our lives anyway (The Standard, February 13<sup>th</sup> 1992).

This expression further complicates our discussions on representation. The media used this woman as the epitome of suffering in order to inform and at the same time garner support for her and all the others in this situation. Yet she complains about the process of photography, that she had been photographed too many times over the last one week she was queuing there. According to her, what she needed was immediate assistance outside of the formalities of humanitarian structures. But was this possible? Could the photojournalist possibly lay down his camera to assist? As compared to the Vietnam war where Zelizer expounds of a photographer who quickly snapped the girl victim of napalm gas before rushing her to hospital (2010, p. 237), effects of starvation are in most cases than not adverse, and procedural treatment is required since this has taken a great toll on the body. Furthermore, it was later revealed in the Sudanese case of Kevin Carter's girl and vulture photo discussed in chapter four that journalists were not supposed to get into contact with victims of starvation in order to avoid the transmission of infectious diseases (Scott Macleod, 2001). In this regard, immediate assistance from the photographer was impossible in the case of Kevin Carter, and may also have been impossible, or at least complex in regards to this particular case. Moreover, there are many others in this situation and therefore the need to garner support for so many others might have been the immediate focus of the photojournalist.

However, as the then Kenya's president lamented after donating 34 bulls, and various sorts of relief aid on June 6, 1991, "if we give these people our food, we shall have nothing to eat" (The Standard). This was after international appeals for relief aid seemed to have fallen on deaf ears, and a single handed assistance from Kenya without outside intervention was at this time

becoming a great toll on the Kenyan government. In this regard, the woman's pain was a sincere complaint in despair, but one which the photographer could not offer immediate assistance.

But while such photographs of women and children trigger sympathy, thereby being effective tools for fundraising, the underlying causes of these crises, such as conflict, have never been completely dealt with. As discussed earlier on, several repatriation periods took place between the two crisis periods this dissertation studied, but at the same time, several new displacements were witnessed. In this regard, the focus on the humanitarian angle of the crisis as opposed to its political angle, which would try to root out the problem, has never been achieved in many interventions. This continuous focus on the humanitarian angle has therefore caused the crisis to seem to be never ending, leading to what Moeller (1999) has termed "compassion fatigue", or resentment towards refugees as already discussed. In such an outcome, photographs of men as the 'threatening other' as earlier analysed, were adopted.

## 6.5 Ideology

The broad concept of ideology in general is the bedrock of most representations, be it institutional or self-representation. In the mass media representation, ideology informs coverage of most events including current affairs, politics, just to mention a few. In such news reports, the selection of photographs is informed by ideological news values. These are the connotative guidelines that inform the selection and publication of articles in the mass media (Zelizer 2004, p. 130; Hall 1981). But the extent to which news reporting is ideologically laden varies depending on what is at stake. Ideological influences on events in which political stakes are high would differ from tragic occurrences in which connotation plays a minimal role. In her discussion, Zelizer notes that war reporting inclines journalists to report in a manner that suits the 'surrounding mandates' on how the war should be reported (2004. P. 131). Contrasting this with tragic events such as road accidents, floods, fire breakouts, or displacements such as the one this study focuses on, the ideological guidelines for coverage of these events are minimal. In this regard, *consonance*, a news value that has elements of ideology, guides this process. Consonance as discussed in chapter two refers to reporting events in a manner that corresponds to audiences' world views and expectations (Davison *et al* 1982, p. 101). For example, reporting refugees' experiences in a pattern similar to what refugees look, or rather should look like. This visual template is central in maintaining the visual tradition of representing crises of displacement, so as not to distort the audiences' worldview. Such

preconceived notions in audiences' minds therefore call for reporting in ways that fit into these established visual traditions.

In such forms of reporting which adopt consonance, Campbell notes that underlying forces that trigger displacement such as long term conflicts are mostly ignored, with media reports focusing on visible effects of the crises such as widespread starvation and famine, which are the immediate triggers of displacement (2007, p. 359). In essence, focus is given to the humanitarian perspective of displacement where deaths and other human crises have been experienced, while ignoring underlying causes such as conflict. In this case therefore, coverage of displacement is a complex issue composed of various underlying layers of triggers, but what we see in the news are the final-stage events characterized by images of human suffering and therefore, ultimate displacement. In such moments therefore, journalists have little choices but to relay unfolding crises with timeliness being the guiding principle. Resulting stories therefore are not so much ideologically laden as they are informational.

On the contrary, NGO representations fail to evade visible ideological influences. The photographs below reveal the NGO's mission focus, which is peace. Despite humanitarian organizations engaging in projects to empower refugees, these have to be related to the broader organisation's mandate.



Photo 3: NGO representation, photo by refugees courtesy of AFSC

Taken by a fellow refugee, this photograph portrays a refugee child holding a placard, the ideology of peace stands. The primary focus of the photograph is a child holding a white paper



written 'I love peace.' An assortment of household Knick knock clutters the background. The rest of the other sections are dark, except for the area around this child, making him the focus of the photograph. This photo was not only part of the NGO's project, but was also the subject of a colourful exhibition during the world Refugee Day in Nairobi in the year 2010. Clearly, it was meant to send a different message of refugees away from the usual staple of hunger, strife and grief, while at the same time being evidence of the NGO's activities in the refugee camp. In this photo, the privacy of shelter is denotatively suggested, while the connotations of comfort and warmth of a house, however simple, are implied. The child, who is the subject of focus in this photograph, is the main object through which the assignment of a 'peace campaign' has been fulfilled.

While in media representation of refugees the mother and child image is used to anchor the message of victimhood and vulnerability, a child who barely understands the complexities of peace and violence becomes a tool whose innocence and vulnerability is used for a seemingly positive effort in this case. Represented by the media as the epitome of human crisis in the previous images analysed such as Photo 2 above, a child is once again propped as the carrier of the banner of peace. This is an indication of how refugees utilise the same patterns that media use to construct news (of victimhood and despondency), and in a move that challenges stereotypical depictions, transgresses victimhood by using a child to send a different, even opposing message. Such inversions<sup>25</sup> are also seen in the photograph below.

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<sup>25</sup> Inversion refers to a representational strategy adopted by would-be subjects of representation that utilizes the same codes that dominant media use, but sends a different, even opposing message (Michael D. Harris 2003, P. 6).



Photo 4: NGO representation, photo by refugees courtesy of AFSC

In this photo, just like the previous one, the influence of the photographer on the conduct and arrangement of the subjects of representation is profound. If mass media photographs reveal a more natural and less overt awareness of being photographed by the subjects, ‘thematically’ produced photos under the auspices of sponsoring NGOs show the opposite. The ‘interference’ of the outcome of photography by the photographer in these photos is not merely on the perceived preparedness, arrangement and choice of setting, but also on the ideological message explicitly espoused. This photo shows five boys raising the universal symbol of peace (and outside of this context, victory). The image conjures thoughts of childhood fun, boundless play and the camaraderie that accompanies such friendship. Still, the raised fingers, especially from the two boys on extreme sides, one raising it only reluctantly, and the other, who seems the oldest in the group, facing down, as if saying ‘I really do not believe or understand what this is all about’, reveal more the ideology and intentions of the sponsoring NGO than the subject’s desire. And contrary to media photos that thrive on news values of conflict and victimhood, the photo provides a view of the camp life one would never see on media photography; fun loving boys, relatively neat, with shoes on and evidently, not starving.

Indeed, the enthusiasm of the boy at the centre whose peace symbol is raised highest reveals energy and a boy’s glee that one would rarely imagine exists in a tented community. Worth noting, while the media exploits childhood innocence to construct victimhood (and news for that matter), development aid photography like the ones discussed here equally exploit childhood innocence to purvey the NGO’s ideology and objectives. Still, as slices of time and

space, both forms of representations enrich our own understanding of the kind of life and experiences in these camps. Another example of photographs in this category which in a connotative sense reveals the religious aspect that embeds photography in Dadaab, is as seen below.



Photo 5: NGO representation; photo by refugees courtesy of AFSC

This photograph shows four men lying, and the fifth squatting on top of a heap of sand. They are all waving their two fingers to symbolise peace, betraying the ideology that informed the production of these pictures. In particular, it reveals two things; the continuous engagement of humanitarian organizations in refugee camps, and the cultural context revolving around photography and religion in Dadaab. This second point which was briefly discussed in chapter five on vernacular photography in Dadaab, is also further analysed in chapter seven. The men's appearances reveal the mixed nature of Dadaab refugee camp which hosts communities from different countries in the horn. The deliberate mix was intended to anchor the concept of unity and peace among previously warring communities and nationalities<sup>26</sup>, and thus an important achievement in this photography task.

Similar to photos discussed earlier in this section, the subjects of this photo are all well-groomed, transgressing the established media representations of refugees in desperate situations. This photograph, taken during the calm moments of Dadaab, highlights the stability that existed at the time of the training and photography task as compared to news on

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<sup>26</sup> Source: Video interviews of participants of this project.

displacement largely focusing on the desperateness of the crisis. While transgressing dominant notions, they portray another aspect of displacement.

In picturing men as the central focus of this photograph, the religious context in which this photo was taken springs up, beckoning a gender consideration. Most cultures from the horn countries, more so within the Somali, prohibit the public display, and therefore photographing of women<sup>27</sup>. This, on the one hand, transgresses prevalent media representations which utilise images of women and children. On the other hand, it points to a need for further thought to issues of gender in scholarly arguments on representation. In this sense, while the mass media utilises images of women and children, women are absent in images produced by refugees for the NGOs<sup>28</sup>, not necessarily due to a contest against stereotypical representations by the media, but rather due to cultural and religious considerations.

## 6.6 Representations of Daily Life

While the pictures analysed in the section above dwelt on discussions of ideology in NGO representation, they have also offered a slight preview into the refugee's daily lives by portraying an aspect of displacement that transgresses that of the mass media. In this way, they are similar to the ones discussed in chapter five on vernacular photography, and also the ones below.



Photo 6: Private self-representation; photo by refugees courtesy of AFSC

<sup>27</sup> This information was obtained from interview data with Film Aid International-Kenya officials.

<sup>28</sup> De Leeuw & Rydin (2007) have differentiated between public and private self-representation. They describe private self-representation to mean the production by subjects "of their own interests without imagining a wider audience" as opposed to public self-representations which are products of assigned tasks. In this case, self-representations by refugees in this section differ from those analysed in chapter five.

While Photo 5 above provides the rarity of males as subjects in representations of displacement, Photo 6 conflates the spontaneity of childhood bliss and the suggested thrill that comes with play. The photo is a genuine interaction<sup>29</sup> comprising photographs produced by refugees for their private consumption. It portrays four children. A girl, visibly excited at the foregoing, holding a baby, and next to her another girl stands facing the photographer. Behind them on a tree is a boy doing what boys his age would probably do with strong trees outside the family home. The photo stands out as a picture of everydayness and normality. There is little evidence of posing, or prior arrangement before the photo is taken. Although it is taken outdoors, the photograph actually invites us into a private sphere; it is the sphere of more intimate relations, that of siblings. Indeed, without knowing the context, one would scarcely associate the photo with a refugee camp. It is full of action and movement and exudes more energy and spontaneity. Such genuine interactions are largely constricted to the private realm, leaving our knowledge of displacement to be defined by institutional spectacles of displacement, largely characterised by victimhood and despair. This argument will be discussed further in the chapter that follows.

Still, as a capture of a frozen moment, a slice in time and space that immortalises such moments, this photograph, like the ones previously discussed, portrays only a limited aspect of displacement, that is, the one restricted to the private realm. Yet, as one that contributes to our discussions on gender, the photograph reveals the enlightening aspect of culture-specific considerations in representation. In absencing women, the photograph has made children its subject. Again, this does not necessarily contest stereotypical media representations taken during times of crises in which children in desperate conditions are pictured. Rather, in portraying daily life, the culture-specific gender considerations of not displaying women emerge in this genre. In short, while the mass media utilises images of women and children in representations of crises of displacement, vernacular photography has situated the culture specific picturing of men and children as subjects in the photographs produced by refugees.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has analysed the visual codes that characterised the representation of displacement as revealed from the data under study. As seen, the media representation was the genre characterised more by codes of representation, as opposed to NGO and vernacular photography

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<sup>29</sup> Understood in the sense of Guy Debord's (1997) theory of the spectacle and specifically the concept of interactive spectacles (Steven Best & Douglas Kellner, 2012) whereby genuine interactions refer to representational content produced by would-be subjects of representation without any external influence.

whose visual codes were analysed in terms of ideology and representations of daily life respectively. The visual codes of media representation included the fence, the cup, shelters, and gendered representation. The fence was seen to characterise the representation of displacement as news, when the crisis of displacement was at its peak and refugees were nearing, or in the countries to which they had moved. It also emerged that children and not adults were situated behind the fence, perhaps being a strategy adopted by the journalists to accentuate the sort of despair that refugees were in. The cup characterised the representations of displacement around aid. Again, this code emphasised despair in portraying very weak children or women holding a cup. This cup was in some cases empty, while at others not, being evidence of aid that refugees had received. Shelters, and in this particular news context on displacement, make-shift camps, also characterised representations of displacement that sought sympathy from readers. In other cases however, they became objects to which emerging resentment towards refugees was poured. Gendered portrayals which characterised the use of images of women and children, and in other cases those of children only, also revealed the way in which these became a perfect reduction of the impacts of the crises by media. In this regard, the images of women and children used were those of refugees in despair, which triggered sympathy for the victims of crises. The opposite attitude of viewing refugees as a nuisance saw the use of images of men as was analysed in chapter five. It was noted that these codes acted as representational criteria that informed the media coverage of displacement. In analysing these visual codes, the chapter answered the third research question which sought to establish the visual codes through which displacement was photographically portrayed. It adopted Michel Foucault's (1978) understanding of representational content as products of underlying rules that informed their production. The question of representation and power still remains unanswered, and this is the focus of discussions in the chapter that follows.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Representation and Power

#### 7.0 Introduction

Having delineated the various spectacles of displacement and discussed displacement's visual codes, it is important to interrogate power relations that characterize such representations. As discussed in various sections earlier on, power relations largely characterised photographic representations of displacement in the data under study. This ranged from the spectrum of photographic engagements characterizing different photography^genres, to the regulation of photographic practice within the private realm. This chapter interrogates these power relations.

It adopts Norman Fairclough's (2001) critical discourse analysis (CDA) in analysing the question of power and the representation of displacement in Dadaab. As discussed in chapter three, CDA has its roots in Michel Foucault's (1977, 1980) discourse theory and his position on discourse, knowledge and power. Foucault developed two approaches to the notion of power. First was in the relation between knowledge and power, noting that these were closely intertwined, and that knowledge linked to power had the privilege of being taken as the truth. Secondly, Foucault conceptualized power as circular and not as a chain, meaning that there is no grand power, but many 'localised powers' to be analysed, as Stuart Hall (1991) puts it. Moreover, Foucault establishes that this power is not only oppressive, but productive as well, since new discourses can emerge out of them. These last two points are applicable in analysing the relation between religion (Islam) and photography in Dadaab, while the former is useful in analysing the relation between institutional and vernacular photography. These are the foci of analyses in the subheadings that follow. Yet in order to delineate the various audiences of the varied genres of photographic representations of displacement which are among the underlying influences on photographic content, the chapter begins with a discussion of the regimes of looking characterizing displacement.

#### 7.1 Regimes of Looking

As much as photographic content is determined by underlying structures, content is also structured to suit the targeted audiences. This is true with the divergent photographic genres this study interrogates. Their content is largely specific to the target audiences as much as they are to the underlying structures influencing production of photo content in the photographic

genres to which they belong. In this regard, different genres are produced for different audiences, connoting different regimes of looking.

Institutional representation as news is produced in times of crises of displacement characterized by human suffering and despair. For this reason, apart from relaying news, strategic goals of fund raising to assist those undergoing crises are connoted. This kind of target audience in most cases is not directly familiar with the subject of representation, but the context in which they are produced rallies support for those suffering. In this case, while not being familiar with the subject of representation, that subject is related with the crisis he is undergoing, in the attempt to mobilise audiences, who do not know the victim, to offer support. This has caused Malkki to argue that refugees speak mutely through their physical appearances (1996, p. 388). This relationship however, between the subject and the crisis he is undergoing, is the context through which we have come to understand most representations of displacement. When we think of refugees, the immediate image that comes to mind is their representations in times of despair. We almost always know what a refugee “looks like”, a desperate mother with her child, which forms an almost stable code of representing displacement, one characterised by despair and hopelessness (Malkki 1995 p. 10).

A second regime of looking is that characterizing representations under the auspices of sponsoring institutions, mostly NGOs. Such representations, as analysed in chapter six, are produced for donors, in order to give evidence of accomplished projects, and therefore justify future funding. They therefore serve ideological missions of sponsoring institutions as discussed previously. The audiences of these photographs are largely sponsors of the projects accomplished. These photographs therefore serve two functions, as a closure to assistance so far, and to legitimize further funds to the respective organizations. The focus of institutions, in terms of their direct mission engagements with victims is therefore seen through their imagery; for example, the photographs betraying the ideology of peace analysed in chapters five and six whose sponsors were dedicated towards rebuilding peace in war-torn countries.

Another quite specialised audience is that characterising personal photographs, that is, genuine interactions<sup>30</sup> as labelled through the concept of the spectacle in chapter three. In this regime

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<sup>30</sup> This is understood in the sense of interactive spectacles of displacement whereby genuine interactions refer to representational content produced by would-be subjects of representation without any external influence (Steven Best & Douglas Kellner, 2012).



of looking, emotional attachments to the subjects of representation are quite strong. As John Tagg (1993) observes, people keep photographs of the people they know. In most cases therefore, the subject in the photo is quite familiar to the audience looking at the photo. As already observed, in the context of production of these photographs in Dadaab, they were produced, not to cover displacement, but for purposes of keeping in touch with separated family and friends. But since they are produced in the context of displacement, this is then how the study views them as documentations of displacement. This regime of looking therefore produces photographs specific to the specialised audience, and which in turn transgress dominant representations of displacement.

In delineating audiences, this section has given an overview of targeted audiences in representations of displacement, and how they in turn influence photographic content. The section that follows below examines power relations that characterize these representations.

## **7.2 Spectrum of Photographic Practice**

As already mentioned above, Foucault (1977, 1980) conceptualizes knowledge linked to power as having the privilege of being taken as the truth. In describing the spectrums of photographic practice, this section establishes the extent to which power relations differ between the two photography genres under study, in order to determine which of the two is linked to power. The term ‘spectrum’ is used here to refer to the disparity of the type and size of audiences that institutional and vernacular photography target. Having in mind Fairclough’s argument that social actors positioned differently see and represent phenomena in varied ways, this section interrogates the manner in which institutional representation tends then, to be the more widely known representation about refugees, and the entire crisis of displacement (2001, p. 2). Indeed the spectrums of institutional and vernacular photography differ in such a way as to resist any attempts to comparison, yet an analysis of the type of knowledge that is widely in circulation on displacement demands such a consideration.

To begin with, institutions have the mandate, and therefore the technology to reach broader audiences as compared to vernacular photography. They do so by targeting public audiences as compared to vernacular photography which on the contrary, operates within the private circle of close family and friends. Vernacular photography’s audiences are quite small and known to the owners of such photos in such a way that whatever aspects of displacement they portray cease to make impact in terms of creating knowledge about refugees. No wonder

Malkki observes that almost everyone knows what a refugee “looks like” (1995, p. 12). The productions by refugees are not meant for public consumption and as much as they exist therefore, they have failed to be widely known. For this reason, the mandate for institutions and their type of audiences awards institutional representation the presence, and therefore position, as the more widely known portrayal of displacement. Having the mandate to reach a public mass of audiences as compared to vernacular photography which operates within the private realm, institutional representation then persists as the widely known portrayal of displacement. In this regard, institutional representation shapes our understanding of experiences of displacement, being characterised by suffering and despair. Vernacular photography therefore, whose themes seem to transgress those of dominant media, fail to be known to the capacity of providing alternative knowledge on displacement.

Since institutional representation has a wider circulation and is therefore widely known, it establishes itself as the dominant form of representing displacement. In this regard, it privileges a particular understanding of the crisis in general, and of refugees in particular. In representing despair, institutions portray displacement at the time of crises as discussed earlier, or in times of need in regards to humanitarian aid. Displacement is therefore constructed in terms of despair and need, while other aspects of displacement when refugees have settled in camps are not portrayed, and therefore marginalised. And as mentioned earlier on, when this pattern of a “single story” is repeated continuously, crises tend to become the only portrayals of Africa, whose impacts seem to be unending.

On the other hand, as much as the media reported on crises of displacement as discussed in chapter four, it did not only give numbers of people affected or their pictures for the sake of it, but in a way that determined attitudes towards refugees. In the initial phase of the 1991 crisis period when refugees just came into Kenya, sympathy towards refugees from Kenyans was upheld, with Kenyans being asked to offer donations to “our fellow brothers” (The Standard, June 11, 1991). As time progressed however, and the pressure towards the Kenyan government to adopt democracy as a form of government was resisted, accompanied by aid threats from the West, this sympathetic attitude turned into resentment. on the one hand, while the government threatened to close refugee camps due to the aid threats, the media too reported on how refugees “were a nuisance” beginning from their “dirty habits” to their “ruining of our beautiful environment” (The Standard, September 5, 1992). A construction of ‘us’ verses ‘them’ began to emerge, with audiences, assumedly Kenyans, being positioned on the side of

the journalists, and cautioned to be wary of refugees. By the time the government threatened to forcefully repatriate refugees due to its unyielding pressure to adopt democracy and other pluralist reforms pressed for by the West, and the aid sanction threats that followed due to this rigidity, the initial sympathy awarded to refugees was replaced by resentment, and media reports conveyed a sort of public support for the government. This was even complicated by terrorist attacks that in numerous occasions since 2011 took place in Kenya, and whose links were traced to Dadaab. In this second instance, terrorists were reported to be camouflaging as refugees in Dadaab, and in other instances, working with refugees in Kenya's urban estates to carry out terrorism. These occurrences established and maintained an 'us/them' outlook towards refugees. And while this was the case, refugees were not given a chance to speak, while all these views were constructed around them. And as seen in chapter two, strategies to solve such stereotypical reporting by not using pictures of people but of the crisis itself were seldom adopted (David Campbell 2007 p. 378). Attitudes towards refugees were therefore constructed and maintained by the media, while in turn the refugees' representations through vernacular photography did not reach the same public that the media targeted. In this regard, without using coercive force, the media established itself as the dominant representation of displacement.

### **7.3 Regulation of Photographic Practice**

Yet as much as there existed power disparity in terms of representation across genres as discussed above, with institutional representation having the privilege to monopolise knowledge on displacement, power relations also characterised representation within genres. In analysing institutional photography as the widely known form of representations on displacement, the above section has also highlighted different ways in which power played out in this genre. This section therefore focuses on vernacular photography in order to discuss the type of power relations characterising this genre.

As noted earlier, it was established that religion, in this case Islam, played a major role in regulating photographic practice in Dadaab. In such regulation, institutional demands for photographs were legitimized, while personal photography, being seen as a leisure activity, was largely delegitimized. For this reason, the terms "passport photography" and "full size photography" largely characterized photographic practice in Dadaab, with photographers clearly stating the kind of photography they dealt in.

It was also noted that passport photography was legitimised in Dadaab due to the administrative nature of most engagements by refugees, beginning from registration with UNHCR upon arrival into the refugee camps. In this case, engagements with refugees by humanitarian institutions in Dadaab are largely administrative, requiring passport photographs. This has caused the legitimisation of this type of photography, while full-size photography was delegitimised. Other legitimized photographic practices included NGO related photography such as food aid distributions or sports events. And as much as photography is regulated for photographers in Dadaab as noted earlier, people too are prohibited from keeping photographs of oneself. In Dagahaley, one proprietor noted that

*Somalis do not keep their own photos but those of their relatives far away (Studio 2).*

This opens our discussions on Islam and photographic representation. As much as the respondent used the noun ‘Somalis’ to define his referents, it was established as the study progressed that it is actually Islam, and specifically, its practice by Muslims in Dadaab, that forbids such photography. This term therefore functioned here as a generic term to refer to Muslims. This is because Somalis, most of whom are Muslim, form the largest population in this camp. Other nationalities such as the Congolese, Rwandese, Ethiopians, and the South Sudanese either stay in Kakuma refugee camp or have been integrated in Kenya’s urban cities, while very few of them reside in Dadaab.

Yet back to our discussion on representation and Islam developed above, the nature of photographic engagements function to highlight religious, and therefore power relations in representation. As we discussed in chapter six and we highlighted it above in this subsection, the delegitimization comes into conflict with the refugees’ continuous need for personal photographs to keep in touch with separated family and friends. For this reason, photo studio operators and their clients negotiated how far they could engage in photography, in attempts to justify the reasons for such engagements and to therefore, cleanse these engagements of any sin.

Some photographers therefore out rightly desisted from undertaking personal ‘full-size’ photography, while choosing to engage only in institutional photography. These chose to take passport photographs only, and any other institutional demands for pictures such as NGO-related photography. This triggers interrogation of the manner in which people in this community interact with the power at hand. In discussing the types of power, Van Dijk

observes that “dominated groups will more or less accept or resist such power, and in other cases legitimise it and find it natural” (2008, p. 355). It is through the preaching of *Imams* (Muslim leaders) in Dadaab that photography was delegitimised. According to the Imam’s interpretation, money gained from photography was *haram* (unclean) and therefore engaging in photography was interpreted as sin. However, the institutional demand for photographs among refugees has legitimised certain types of photographic practice while delegitimising others as delineated above. In this regard, it can be interpreted that those photographers who engaged in institutional photography only accepted this law, and viewed not engaging in other types of photography as natural. In this case, they abided by the law as was preached by the Imam.

On the other hand, some photographers resisted this law by negotiating different levels of engaging in ‘full-size’ photography. These are photographers who took full-size photos, and negotiations dwell on whether to print the photos or not, and to whom this could be done. In revisiting our earlier quote on Somalis, this proprietor further noted that

*Somalis don’t keep their own photos, but those of their relatives far away. So I don’t print the pictures I take, but assist them to send via mail to relatives abroad since most of them are illiterate* (Dagahaley, Studio 2).

This first stage of engagement appeared across many studios visited. It was established that this stage of engagement that does not go ahead to print pictures it has taken, is seen as a better form of sin as opposed to going ahead to print the pictures. In this regard, as much as photographers resist or rather disobey the law by engaging in full-size photography, they do so only to a certain extent, an extent that is legitimised as needful due to the fact of separation between family and friends, and is therefore characterised by not printing the pictures thereof.

When these pictures are not printed, the client gets them in soft copy form. Onus is therefore upon him or her to determine the extent of his engagement in disobedience. Engagements on the part of the clients also varied widely. Some never took pictures of themselves apart from those demanded by institutions. On the other hand, due to demands from separated families, others took these pictures and sent via mail to their recipients, and therefore never kept them. There were however those who printed and kept their own pictures. For this group whom photographers gave pictures in soft copy form and yet went ahead to print, it was established that sin accrued from printing was not counted on the photographer, but on the client himself.

In this regard, both the photographer and the client negotiated on the extent of engagement in full-size photography.

There were however photographers who went ahead to print these pictures, as much as there were clients who printed them on their own. These were in total resistance to the law, although again through legitimising their actions. One photographer stated that

*Islam is Islam, but what I am doing is business...* (Hagadera, Studio 4).

And again,

*My clients are mostly youth, the youth like pictures and so I do it for them. Through it, I get money for my family* (ibid).

Two legitimising reasons emerge from these quotes. One is the separation of religion from business and the other, of financial reasons. For the photographers who separate religion from business, their view of their practices was right since to them, it was independent of their religious beliefs. Those who did it for money however agreed with the fact that it was a sin, but due to their state as refugees, engaging in business was a source of money they so needed since it curbed their total dependency on aid. It can be said therefore that although these two groups resisted the power of religion on their day-to-day lifestyle as photographers, they did so with caution.

It was also established that in this negotiation on the level of engagements with photographic production, what was said or not said by photographers was revealed. As noted earlier, the close relationship between photography and Islam was revealed as the study progressed and not at the earlier stages. The first photographer for example noted on the reasons for his engagement in passport photography only that

*Passport clients are more as compared to other types of photography ... customers find other types of photography as expensive* (Dagahaley, Studio 1).

This reference to clients and customers highlights two points. First, on the fact that it could actually be the case that the demand for passport photos was high, due to the different institutions that demanded them at different times. On the other hand however, this reveals proprietorship choices business people had to make. Being in a locality where photography is forbidden yet photographs were required, the proprietor can be said to make economic and not

necessarily religious choices to engage in passport photographic production which was higher in demand. Furthermore, the proprietor might have chosen to avoid the notion of mentioning religion in preference for an economic related reason. This therefore highlights the notion of what is said or not said. This notion of stating certain facts while being silent on others can also be interpreted in relation to the assumption of what I knew concerning the religious requirements. As mentioned earlier in the methodology section and seen in chapter six, I dressed like a Muslim during my research in Dadaab. The respondent might therefore have assumed that I knew the expectations of Islam in this context concerning photography, and hence did not bother restating this assumed fact.

As a reminder too, the earlier respondent never referred to ‘Muslims’, but to ‘Somalis’ as “*not keeping their own photos*” (Dagahaley, Studio 2). It was however different when another respondent clearly pointed out that he took passport pictures only due to his religious beliefs. He noted that

*Initially I used to take photographs of various types, for example weddings. Since eight years ago, I stopped and focused on passport photos only. I also used to have different backdrops for my pictures, but nowadays I focus on white, blue and red backdrops depending on agency requirements* (Dagahaley, Studio 3).

It was at this point that the relation between religion and photography was noted.

Beyond these negotiations on the nature of photographic engagement, a somewhat striking engagement was also noted. This was the influence of digitization on photography. With the possibility of the internet, photographs were largely altered through Photoshop. Background appearances, clothing, and basically the entire content of the photographs could be altered as discussed in chapter seven. More examples are as seen below.



Photo 1: Photo with altered background, source: studio photography in Dadaab.



Photo 2: Photo with altered background, source: studio photography in Dadaab.

The backgrounds of these two photographs have been altered. The images of the people in them are the original photos, while the backgrounds are not. While these photographs have been produced in full size, a forbidden photographic practice in Dadaab, their backgrounds have also been altered, a more advanced photographic engagement as compared to the forbidden form. This is in regards to negotiations of the different levels of engagement in photography which as seen, are legitimised to varying extents. In these photographs, refugees are portrayed in front of big mansions and cities, flowery backgrounds, and many more beautiful versions of these



backgrounds as seen in chapter six. These deconstruct confinement of refugees to camps. Heike Behrend (2003) has analysed the manner in which through the use of backdrops in photography, subjects achieve their otherwise unachievable dreams of visiting far off countries. In this regard, while the law restricts refugees to refugee camps, their desire to be out of the camps and living wonderful lives in big cities can be attained through photography, and photo-shop to be more precise. Yet with the nagging conscience on photographic practice, these photographs were also subjected to the different levels of negotiation with disobedience discussed above. Despite altering the backgrounds therefore, some proprietors would not print, rather choosing to hand over these pictures to their clients in soft copy form. It was then upon the clients, as noted earlier, to determine their extent of engagement in sin on their part. Other photographers on the other hand went ahead to print these photo-shopped pictures.

This ability for photographers and their clients to negotiate their levels of engagement in photography reveals that power in this context is not absolute. In this regard, as much as there is the fear of an unseen God who will punish those who engage in full-size photography, some people went ahead to engage in this photographic practice, while legitimising their engagements in varied ways. One photographer noted that *“if passport photography has been legitimised because of a need, what we are doing (full-size photography) is also needful, and we have to legitimise this need”* (Hagadera, Studio 4). This possibility for photographers to justify their practices demonstrates power in the hands of refugees, a more localised form.

This power to engage in full size photography can also be said to be productive. This is because in this engagement, photographs that reveal another aspect of refugees, one marginalised by the mainstream media but at the same time delegitimised in vernacular photography, is revealed. These are photographs that portray refugees in their own wish to close family and friends, revelations that transgress dominant themes. These productions are therefore useful in portraying a different aspect of the experiences of displacement, those characterised by the reality of separation with family and friends, and whose themes therefore transgress those of institutional photography.

#### **7.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has analysed power relations that influenced the photographic representations of displacement, not only by institutions, but also in vernacular photography. It has been established that as much as power relations influence what we, as audiences, come to know

concerning refugees and displacement as portrayed through institutional photography, the practice of photography by refugees is also characterise by power relations which regulates photographic practice. This regulation is however not characterised by absolute, but localised power. This power possessed by refugees to determine and legitimise the extent of their photographic engagement has yielded enormous portrayals of displacement, aspects which are largely marginalised by the mainstream media.

Furthermore, it has been seen that such regulations which legitimize institutional requirements for photographs while forbidding personal photography awards power to institutions. In this sense, institutions do not have to negotiate their photographic requirements but their needs are naturalised and in turn, the people have legitimized them. This restriction within vernacular photography further marginalizes photographic portrayals of displacement in the private realm, an already marginalized genre in its spectrum of engagement. In this regard, our knowledge of the crisis of displacement is still largely constructed by institutions. Yet as argued throughout the study, these pictures that portray different aspects of displacement are important in the comprehensive representation of this phenomenon.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Conclusion

#### 8.1 Summary

This study adopted an inclusive approach to the study of varied representational genres, that is, institutional and vernacular photography. In so doing, the study shunned the isolated approach from which representations of displacement have been studied. As noted, initial research has studied varied representational genres in isolation, leading to the comparison of these varied genres with each other. This way, the representation by institutions, in this case the media and humanitarian organisations, has been criticised for portraying suffering in ways that objectify their subjects of representation, (Bleiker & Kay, 2007; Burman, 1994; Malkki, 1995; Moeller, 1999). On the contrary, self-representation through modes such as vernacular and pluralist photography were embraced in related literature as alternative modes of representation capable of overhauling established stereotypes due to their possibility to portray ‘positive’ aspects of the subjects concerned (Wallis, 2003; Bleiker & Kay, 2007).

In this shift towards an inclusive approach in studying varied representational genres therefore, this research studied institutional and vernacular photography inclusively as portraying different aspects of displacement. The study argued that in isolation, these genres portrayed aspects of displacement which were specific to the contexts in which they were produced. A proposition was therefore made, that neither genres ought to be preferred over the other, nor comparisons with each other made, but all should be embraced as important in the comprehensive understanding of displacement.

In this case therefore, representation by institutions such as photojournalism was not criticized for portraying “despair and hopelessness”, but interpreted in regards to the news context to which it belongs, mostly characterised by human suffering and despair. On the other hand, as much as vernacular photography’s themes appeared to transgress those of the dominant media, this genre was not embraced as an alternative to institutional representation, but rather interpreted as a medium which broadens our knowledge concerning displacement. In this case, refugees engaged in self-representation were seen to relay other kinds of information about them which we neither knew about, nor could get access to through the mainstream media (Bleiker & Kay, 2007). In this regard, this genre (of vernacular photography) functioned to

broaden already existing knowledge about refugees and the broader concept of displacement (Grossberg, 2008, p. 94; Horrigan, 1993, p. 166). This way, the binarism characterising discussions of representations of displacement were shunned, while more emphasis was given to their individuality as specific to the contexts to which they belonged.

In order to achieve this, Giorgio Agamben's (1993) concept of Singularity was adopted as an approach that enabled a simultaneous study of varied representational genres. This is because as mentioned earlier, most of the studies undertook isolated approaches to varied representational genres that the study desired to shun. Guy Debord's (1967) concept of the Spectacle was also adopted to pool these varied representational genres together under one theme as the "spectacles of displacement", although more as a technical, than a theoretical tool. Deborah Poole's (1997) theory of visual economy was another theoretical strand that informed discussions of representational content as products of production, circulation and consumption considerations. As seen in chapter four for example, changing government discourses informed the media coverage of displacement which in turn influenced attitudes towards refugees. The theory of discourse propagated by Mitchell Foucault and specifically the more developed critical discourse analysis (CDA) linked to Norman Fairclough (2001) informed data analyses. In this regard, while singularity was an approach of viewing these varied genres as singularities important in the comprehensive understanding of displacement, CDA offered a methodology for the analyses of the data under study.

As much as the photographs under study were the underlying focus of analysis, they were seen to be specific to the contexts in which they were produced, and could therefore not be removed from these contexts. For this reason, in order to understand the media representations of displacement for example, the news articles, headlines, and captions that accompanied these photos were also sampled. Analysing the photo in isolation of this news context would in this sense rip the photo of the context to which it belongs.

Furthermore, it was observed that photography in Dadaab was not a simple day-to-day-occurrence that most of us undertake without almost a second thought, but a practice regulated by religion. In this regard, interviews were important in understanding the underlying regulations on photography, the reasons as to why some people continued to engage in it as much as it was forbidden, and the extent to which they did so. In this regard therefore, interviews aided in situating photographic practice in Dadaab. For this reason, apart from the

sampling of photographs in Dadaab, interviews with studio proprietors were also undertaken. In regards to institutional photography, news articles specific to the 1991/2011 crises periods were sampled. Apart from these, interviews with media as well as NGO personnel were also undertaken. In regards to NGO photography, photographs produced by refugees in an NGO project were sampled, and interviews with the concerned project officers were conducted. Apart from discourse analysis, photographic analysis using William j. t. Mitchell's (2005) approach was also adopted.

Data analysis was undertaken in four separate chapters. Chapter four analysed the institutional representation of displacement. It began with a focus on the media coverage of displacement before moving on to a focus on its representation through development aid. These revealed that unlike scholarly assumptions that have focused only on the representation of refugees in the media and therefore criticized the 'rampant' use of images of despair, there were actually different types of pictures utilized in the crises periods under study, with those of refugees being minimal. In this regard, coverage of displacement did not utilize pictures of refugees only, but also those of Kenyan leaders, aid, aid personnel, ambassadors from different countries to Kenya, and also those of place such as maps and dry vegetation. Maps that situated the location of countries affected as well as refugee camps in the country were utilized. An argument is therefore made that studies that examine the representation of displacement through the media by analysing pictures of refugees only fail to reach comprehensive conclusions. This is because in analysing pictures of refugees only without putting into consideration the other types of imagery utilized, a comprehensive understanding of the media representation of displacement is not attained. An approach that contextualizes these representations by looking at other types of pictures utilized, as well as news articles and any other information available on this topic during the period under study, is therefore preferable. Discourse, and not photographic analysis, was therefore quite fruitful in this regard.

Furthermore, the media coverage of displacement was characterised by certain discourses that informed the choice of pictures, and could be traced through different stages of representation. First, each particular crisis period began with warnings of impending crises by the media and humanitarian organizations, focusing on different crises such as new arrival of refugees, death in camps due to outbreak of diseases, relief shortage, among other warning-sign reports. The next phase of reporting focused on the crisis itself, utilising pictures of refugees in despair in

most cases, and also those of aid, aid personnel, and so on. This third phase was characterised by certain media discourses.

First was a discourse of sympathy towards refugees. Numerous cases that called on Kenyans to offer donations, or treat refugees as their brothers were identified. The then Kenya's president Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi was seen as the driving force towards this attitude, who called on Kenyans to be merciful, and the international community to offer assistance. A desire to dig out the root causes of displacement in the countries affected was also driven. Reports that focused on the plight of refugees in the camps in some cases also called for sympathy towards refugees. The insufficiency of nutritious food, poor sanitation and living conditions, the spread of infectious diseases, among others, put pressure on NGOs and the government to offer humane assistance to refugees.

As coverage progressed however, sympathy towards refugees ceased and this began to be replaced by resentment towards them. The 1991 crisis period for example coincided with two things; first was the western countries' calls for democracy in most African countries. Kenya's ruling government then, which was a one party system, was not willing to adopt democracy and other pluralistic reforms such as the independence of the judiciary as a system of governance. And while aid sanction threats were made to such adamant countries, Kenya threatened to close down refugee camps. It had a tool, comprising of the refugee camps and the 'sympathy' awarded to refugees, as a reverse threat to the West, in which case the refugee camps became a political/bargaining tool.

On the other hand, this crisis period also coincided with the 1992 general elections in Kenya. In view of the country's call to adopt multi-partism, the ruling party used the refugees' experiences as explanations to Kenyans on the reasons against this form of regime. In the first instance, multi-partism was thought to be divisive with possible results of war and conflict, and in the other, it was not seen as a priority. The ruling party in numerous occasions stated that the refugees in camps were more concerned with peace in their countries than with democracy and multi-party politics, something that Kenyans were called to learn from. And while these two forces played out, one on the West's call for multi-partism and second on the government's refusal to adopt this system, anger and resentment towards refugees was built. In the first instance, they were seen to have overstayed in the country and in the other, were seen as a reason for the rising inflation in the country.

This ushered in the fourth, which was the final phase of reporting. As noted, this phase was characterised by resentment towards refugees, and the initial sympathy turned into a sort of anger, and feature articles against refugees were done. These included blame games on their depletion of the environment, their ability to afford rising basic commodities which Kenyans could not afford then, and in other cases, their “bad habits” which were a “nuisance” to Kenyans. In this phase, the initial sympathy turned into resentment, and a construction of “us” verses “them” began to characterise media coverage. Calls to close down refugee camps, this time constructed as though they were emerging from Kenyans and not the government, were made. In this light, this call to close down the camps arising from the media, which was also constructed as emerging from Kenyans, coincided with the government’s, although with differing reasons from these two parties.

The 2011 crisis was even made complex due to rising insecurity and terrorist attacks that began to be experienced. The 2011 negative attitude towards refugees was therefore no longer that of anger due to the economic effects of their arrival or the existing cultural differences between them and Kenyans, but their possible camouflaging as terrorists. Numerous articles characterised by the “them” / “us” criteria on the need to ensure security within Kenyan borders by closing down refugee camps and therefore not welcoming anymore refugees, were made. In this period, the government declined to open more camps stating that they were incapable of shouldering the refugees’ burden, and at the same time calling on other countries to take up the burden as well. In this regard, while insecurity was already an existing threat that the media propagated and which coalesced with the Kenyan citizens’ view, the government added another reason, this time economic. And while this was the case, resentment towards refugees continued to build.

Apart from rising insecurity and the negative attitude towards refugees built over time, a comparison of the 1991/2011 crises periods also revealed certain disparities. To begin with, some parts of Kenya also experienced starvation during the 2011 crisis period. And while refugees mainly from Somalia and Sudan came into Kenya, media coverage focused on starving Kenyans, with a relief campaign dubbed “Kenyans for Kenyans”. In this regard, while refugees were also fleeing into the country, these reports were done as page fillers and not as news headlines like that of the Kenyan crisis. Moreover, the government during this second period declined to accept any more refugees citing security threats, and the media, using the “us” criteria, supported the government on this move, alluding to the need to ensure the security

of Kenyans. This discourse-historical approach therefore brought out these underlying discourses.

Institutional representation that focuses on NGO representation on the other hand were seen to be ideologically defined. These are photographs informed by the organization's mission, and therefore reveal its area of focus. The photographs studied under this section were produced by refugees in a training aimed at building their capacity on photography. And even though that was the case, the photographs produced were characterised by a theme of peace, which is AFSC's<sup>31</sup> interest in working in African countries' in conflict. It was therefore established that as photographs that portray another aspect of displacement as development aid, these photographs were taken in a different context from that of crises, and under certain themes stipulated by the organization. In this regard, while these pictures portrayed refugees in more active roles as compared to media coverage of displacement, these representations were still restrictive in terms of specifying the subject of photography. Power relations therefore characterised photographic production in this genre, and were discussed in terms of the NGO's stipulation on the themes to be photographed by the participants.

On the contrary, vernacular photography which is the focus of analyses in chapter five reveals refugees' representation without any external influence. These are photographs produced by refugees on their own volition and agency, and therefore reveal the manner in which they wished to portray themselves, and therefore be seen. As the field research progressed however, the influence of religion on photography was established. For this reason, apart from analysing the photographs in terms of their themes and discussing the process of photography in Dadaab, this influence of religion on photography was also analysed in terms of power. In this regard, while Islam forbids photography in this community, some photography 'types' such as the passport photograph have been legitimised. And although 'full size' photography, which comprises leisure photographs, that is, the production of personal or family pictures as were widely termed, were forbidden, some people engaged in this type of photography although at different levels. Some photographers therefore engaged in passport photography only which is the legitimised kind of photography in the camp, others negotiated how far they could engage.

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<sup>31</sup> American Friends Service Committee- Kenya



For example, some photographers took, but did not print full-size pictures, while others printed them. Those who did not print gave in soft copy form to their clients.

Other photographers on the other hand went to the extent of altering photo backgrounds using photo-shop. In some cases, only photo backgrounds were altered while in others, body features were altered as well. In further negotiating the extent of engagement, some photographers did not print the photo-shop pictures, but gave in soft copy form to their clients, while others printed them. It was established that in regards to the extent of engagement in photography, there was no external punishing body on those who engaged in photography, but this was personalised to the level of the relationship between a person and his God as was widely stated. The power structure that those who engaged in photography had to face was therefore that of religion, of Islam and their God, whose nature was not so absolute, but a more localised, productive form of it. In this regard, although photographic practice was restricted by Islam, photographers determined and legitimised in various ways the extent of their engagement, a practice which in turn yielded photographs of this genre.

The visual codes of displacement are analysed in chapter six. These are done in relation to Mitchell Foucault's contribution to theory that discourses are governed by certain rules which inform their production. Some of these visual codes were initially established through literature review and an analysis undertaken on the extent to which these were reproduced in the data under study. On the other hand and as analysis progressed, any new emerging visual codes not identified in the literature were also highlighted. It was also established that these codes largely characterised the media representation of displacement in which as an institution, certain visual codes seemed to inform their coverage of displacement. These included the use of the fence, gendered portrayals, make shift camps as homes, death and graveyards, among other codes which seemed to highlight the suffering and despair of the victims of crises. A discussion of vernacular photography dwells on its nature to reveal marginalised aspects of refugees such as family, their day-to-day activities such as schooling and businesses, and more so a life that has moved on after the media's freezing of the moment of crises. NGO representations are on the other hand ideological, with ideology here being understood to mean the organization's stated aims through its mission statement.

The question of representation and power is discussed in the last chapter of data analysis, which is chapter seven. This is undertaken at two levels. First is the analysis of the spectrum of

engagement, focusing on the influences between institutional and vernacular photography on the overall understanding of displacement. It was established that institutional representation targeted and had the technology to reach wider audiences as compared to vernacular photography. For this reason, the experiences of displacement that are widely mainstreamed emanate from media representation and this rendered institutional representation more powerful. In this regard, even though vernacular photography was widely practised in Dadaab, its realm of circulation inhibited the knowledge of its existence by the wider public who are on the other hand informed by the media. Analysis at this stage therefore focused on circulation and the privilege of institutional photography to be widely known, and therefore taken as the most dominant portrayals of displacement. At the second level, power relations in vernacular photography were analysed. In this regard and as discussed earlier, although Islam regulated photographic engagement, people negotiated the extent to which they could engage, ranging from printing or not printing of full size photos. This was seen as an act of agency on the part of those who engaged in such photography. These people did not therefore accept the law as it was, but negotiated with it to legitimise their engagement in photography, while citing varied reasons for doing so.

## **8.2 Implications of the Study**

As has been mentioned, the study focused on the analyses of representation of displacement in two photography genres, that is, institutional and vernacular photography. These two genres portray displacement differently and their inclusive analysis, which does not compare them, but appreciates their specificity to the genres to which they belong, yields a comprehensive understanding of the representation of displacement. Their analyses is therefore not one of comparison, but of in depth analyses in order to understand the representation of displacement in these varied genres.

This approach has certain implications to the field of representation in general, and to media or (vernacular) photography studies in particular. In this regard, it is hoped that the study will be useful as a methodological adoption in studying varied representational genres, and the need for a comprehensive approach to the varied representational genres adopted. This way, away from vilifying media representation as stereotypical, or embracing self-representation as ‘good’ alternative modes, a need for an inclusive approach has been emphasized. It is hoped that these research findings will be useful, not only in the academia, but also as a caution in our usual day-to-day view of ‘otherness’, to be weary of ‘single stories’.

In regards to the field experience, a note on the archiving of newspapers in Kenya is worthwhile. The sampling of news articles was undertaken in major libraries in Kenya that were thought to have newspapers dating back to the early 1990s. I therefore began with university libraries, but as the sampling progressed, it emerged that getting the newspapers was not an easy task since many of them were missing. A university would have newspapers of maybe three months of the sampling period and not others. I therefore visited different universities in order to fill in the gaps. Other universities on the other hand did not have old newspapers at all which were usually sold after a certain period of time. The Kenya National library in Eldoret which is also expected to have had these newspapers did not have them, and also adopted the selling of old newspapers as a way of disposal. In this regard, the importance of old newspapers in libraries, especially university libraries, seemed to be missing and this made the research a little more tasking. Indeed storing newspapers from the past can be overwhelming to most university libraries. However, these could be stored in soft copy form before their disposal in order for the universities to maintain a record of newspapers from which research can be undertaken. The humanities and social sciences can draw a lot from newspapers and especially researches with historical interests. It would be embarrassing in the future if researchers would have to travel to Nairobi for newspaper research when these dailies are sold every day in Eldoret and other smaller towns.

### **8.3 Recommendations for Further Research**

This study focused on the visual representation of displacement through institutional and vernacular photography. Limitations of the study were introduced in order to dwell on its area of focus in-depth. For this reason, not everything in this area was studied, but only those relevant to the study. There are therefore gaps that remained unstudied and these can be undertaken in future researches. These are discussed below.

First, an ethnographic research focusing on the relation between religion and photography can be undertaken, this time focusing on photo clients. As it was evident, the study focused on studio photographers in detail, while touching in brief the relevant issues on photo clients. This gap may therefore be filled by research interests on questions such as the number of Muslim refugees who keep their pictures in regards to those who do not, how they engage in photography in relation to the law that restricts it, whether there are any social impacts on those who do this, such as being shunned by family or fellow Muslims and how they are viewed by society, among other questions that were beyond the focus of this study. That is, further

anthropological research to study family photography in Dadaab, with a focus on the refugees themselves as photo clients and not photographers.

Another ethnographic research could dwell on coping strategies of refugees in camps. Beyond the moment of crisis, and as was observed in the discussions on vernacular photography, life after the crisis period moves on. Refugees are in many cases relocated to third countries, some begin businesses, children go to school, among other coping strategies. In this regard, while institutional representation especially in moments of crises freezes these sad moments, the lives of refugees are in most cases progressive. They do not remain in despair forever, but begin new life in camps. Highlighting these new lives therefore aids in overhauling established stereotypes on displacement.

In conclusion, this research can be applied as a methodological contribution in studying varied representational genres inclusively. As was mentioned at the beginning, the trend in scholarship has been to study varied representational genres in isolation. Findings obtained in these previous studies were done either through appreciating self-representation as an alternative mode, or criticizing media representation for its tendency to establish or reinforce already established stereotypes. An inclusive study which this dissertation has argued for, therefore leads to a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study. This research adopted Agamben's singularity as a world view, and utilised critical discourse analysis as a methodology for analysing data. With this framework, other researchers can also adopt such an inclusive approach in varied areas of research.

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## Research Permit 1



**OFFICE THE PRESIDENT  
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR &  
CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF REFUGEE AFFAIRS**

Website: [www.refugees.go.ke](http://www.refugees.go.ke)  
Tel: +254-020-2093675  
Fax: +254-020-315012

Castle House, James Gichuru Rd  
Lavington Green  
P.O. Box 42227 -00100  
Nairobi, Kenya

When replying please quote:  
**RFG/ADM/7 VOL.23(51)**

**12<sup>th</sup> March, 2014**

Program Director, Somalia  
American Friends Service Committee  
**NAIROBI**

*(Att: Celestin Nkundabemera)*

**RE: AUTHORIZATION TO VISIT DADAAB REFUGEE CAMP**

Your letter dated *10<sup>th</sup> March, 2014* on the above subject refers.

Permission is hereby granted for **Ms. Pamela Chepngetich** to visit **Dadaab Refugee Camp** from **17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2014** to conduct interviews with refugees who were part of a photography project undertaken by the organization.

On arrival, she is advised to report to the DRA Camp Manager for briefing before transacting any business in the Camp.

*Edwin*  
**EDWIN K. NGETICH**  
**FOR: COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEE AFFAIRS**

Copy to:  Refugee Camp Manager  
**DADAAB CAMP**

For: COMMISSIONER FOR  
REFUGEE AFFAIRS  
P. O. Box 42227-00100,  
NAIROBI.

*Permission has been  
extended to 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2014  
W. Nkundabemera  
2013/2014*

## Research Permit 2



**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**  
**MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL**  
**GOVERNMENT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF REFUGEE AFFAIRS**

Website: [www.refugees.go.ke](http://www.refugees.go.ke)  
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 Tel: +254-020-2093675

Castle House, James Gichuru Rd  
 P.O. Box 42227 -00100  
 Nairobi, Kenya

**When replying please quote:**

**RFG/ADM/7 Vol. 23(81)**

**11<sup>th</sup> April, 2014**

**Celestin Nkundabemera**

Program Director, Somali  
 American Friends Service Committee  
 Whitefield Place Unit B3, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
 School Lane, Westlands

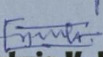
**NAIROBI**

**RE: AUTHORIZATION TO VISIT DADAAB REFUGEE CAMP**

Your application form dated 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2014 on the above subject refers.

Permission is hereby granted for **Ms. Pamela Chepngetich** to visit **Dadaab Refugee Camp** from **20<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2014** to do research on photography as a follow up to her recent visit.

On arrival, she is advised to report to the *DRA Camp Officer* for briefing before transacting any business in the Camp.

  
**Edwin K. Ngetich**

**FOR: COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEE AFFAIRS**



**Copy to: - Camp Officer**  
**DADAAB REFUGEE CAMP**