



# **“And Now on BBC Radio 4...”: Imaginative Geographies of Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe on the Airwaves**

Thesis submitted to the School of Geography and the Environment  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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# Abstract

Geographers have examined the history, materiality, and geopolitical power of radio, but there has been little interest in contemporary radio journalism and its capacity to shape geographical imaginations. This thesis addresses this research gap by exploring how imaginative geographies of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe were constructed on BBC Radio 4 between January 2014 and March 2019, and by examining how broadcasts were produced by journalists and are heard and imagined by listeners. The protracted Syrian conflict, recent drownings in the Mediterranean, and rise of populism in Europe raise important questions about media representations as an act of power with the potential to regulate imagined communities of belonging and condition a sense of responsibility and care for others. By focusing on BBC Radio 4 and the audible spectacle of Europe's migration 'crisis', the thesis seeks to further understandings of the journalistic storytelling of migration that to date have focused almost exclusively on print and photographic journalism, and develop theorisations of the ear and mind's eye in radio geography by revealing the affective and experiential power of broadcasts. The thesis is organised around three empirical chapters: Chapter 4 draws on a thematic analysis of 172 broadcasts across a range of programme genres and identifies two contrasting imaginative geographies of migration that reveal Radio 4 to be a disparate and, at times, contradictory site of representation; Chapter 5 analyses 17 semi-structured interviews conducted with BBC journalists, editors, producers, and senior leaders to reveal the organisational structures and journalistic practices that shape the production of broadcasts; and Chapter 6 draws on 51 listener diaries written in response to a digital playlist of 12 selected broadcasts to reveal how stories and imaginaries of migration, articulated through sounds and voices, are heard, imagined, and felt. The thesis responds to calls in cultural and political geography for analyses of radio that attend to the discursive and affective impacts of listening, and for research on representations of migration in alternative media to print journalism.

**Key words:** 'radio', 'imaginative geographies', 'migration', 'voices', 'sounds', 'listening'



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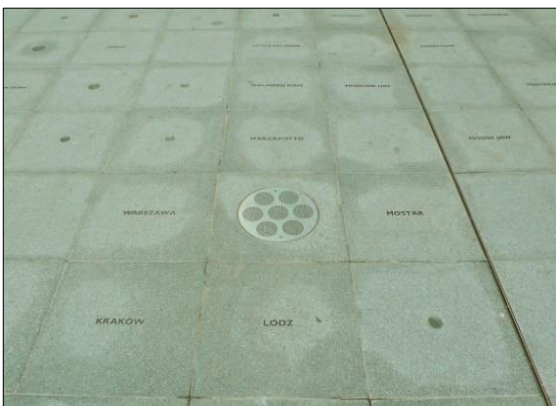
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# 1

## Introduction

### *Radio and Geographical Imaginations*

Commanding attention on Portland Place between Oxford Street and Regent's Park is Broadcasting House, the BBC's central London headquarters and first purpose-built home of radio broadcasting (History of the BBC, n.d.). Originally constructed out of white-grey Portland Stone between 1928 and 1932, the building is now a striking architectural blend of old and new. The grand clock tower and aerial mast of Old Broadcasting House are juxtaposed with the modern, curved glass exterior of New Broadcasting House; an addition completed in 2013 which brought the corporation's national and international television, radio, and online journalism under a single roof (Buildington, n.d.). Connecting these two wings and eras of BBC public service broadcasting is a pavement art installation called *World* and as I approach the building, ready to interview two journalists later that afternoon, my eyes are immediately drawn to the paving stones beneath my feet (Figure 1).





**Figure 1:** *World* in the piazza of Broadcasting House. Images credited to Pimlott (2012)

Etched into the concrete flagstones of the BBC’s public piazza are place names from around the globe: Pompeii, Portsmouth, Addis Ababa, the Aral Sea. It is a rich kaleidoscope of different countries and continents, places and times. Together, the flagstones resemble the surface of the Earth and are dissected by a number of cartographic, copper-coloured lines. This permanent, geographical piece of pavement art, which spills out of the entrance to New Broadcasting House, was created by Canadian artist and architectural designer, Mark Pimlott. Speaking to Professor of Classics, Dame Mary Beard, Pimlott (2017) describes his installation and intentions behind it:

“World is a public place, connecting the buildings of the BBC’s Broadcasting House to each other and to the streets of London. Its surface describes an imaginary globe, marked with lines reminiscent of those of longitude and latitude, and the names of many places. I intended for the names, voices, and lights of world should evoke the idea of our world, its places, people, and history [...] speakers in the ground quietly intone different language broadcasts of the

BBC World Service live. Like a true global map, there is no geological accuracy to the positioning of names. Rather they are placed on the principle that on being read next to each other, various images, connections, and poetry will naturally and inevitably arise: a principle that relies on association, alliteration, and accident for its effects. As names are read aloud by a strolling viewer, their sounds create a litany that, like an imaginary shipping forecast, rouses thoughts of elsewhere and the mysteries and realities of other places, other people, and other times”.

Pimlott (2017) frames his pavement artwork as a visual and audible mapping of the world that captures the power of sounds and the spoken word to connect people and places, and animate geographical imaginations. He envisages visitors to Broadcasting House walking across the flagstones, reading aloud the different place names and conjuring up “images”, “mysteries”, and “realities” in their imaginations. It is telling, I think, that Pimlott chose to embed speakers, rather than screens, in the piazza that, when switched on, immerse journalists and visitors in a soundscape of World Service broadcasting; a quiet, sonic undercurrent that invites everyone who approaches and departs the building to imagine faraway peoples and geographies.

I begin with this vignette because it resonates with the core interest and premise of this thesis: namely, the power of radio journalism to inspire imaginative geographies of spaces, places, and people through sounds and voices in broadcasts. Practitioners, historians, and theorists of radio have long been attuned to the medium’s imaginative power. Lloyd (2015, p.4) argues that radio “demands imagination. When a story is well told, by a presenter or within a news package, a picture will be painted in the mind of every listener”. Elmes (2008, p.xii) similarly emphasises “the sheer power of sound and story to conjure up a picture, a situation [...] a scene - a picture as vivid and as shocking as anything million-dollar Hollywood CGI [computer-generated imagery] can achieve, and with the minimum of resources”. Irrespective of whether he leans towards

hyperbole, there is clear consensus within the radio community about how broadcasts call on listeners to construct ideas and imaginaries in response to sounds and spoken narratives heard on the airwaves. This process is not at all dissimilar from readers picturing the locations and protagonists of a written novel, conjuring up colourful imaginaries in response to the author's printed word. Indeed, if imaginations are understood to be visual, then radio surely enters into "the complex cultural and perceptual connection between seeing and believing, visualisation and cognition" (Ryan, 2003, p.234). A tradition of disciplinary interest in geographical imaginations means that geographers are well placed to examine radio as a medium that engages the ear and appeals to the mind's eye (Pinkerton, 2014).

Radio, however, has received remarkably little attention in geography, particularly when compared with visual media, such as television, film, photography, video games, graphic novels, and social media (Craine, 2014; Rose, 2016; Dittmer and Bos, 2019). This is not to discount research into music, sonic and affective geographies, and radio geopolitics, but rather to suggest that geographers have privileged the visual (Smith, 1997; 2000; Driver, 2003; Pinkerton, 2008a; 2008b; Pinkerton and Dodds, 2009; Graham, Shaw and Warf, 2009; Royal Geographical Society, 2014; Gallagher and Prior, 2014; Weir, 2014; 2020; Gallagher, Kanngieser, and Prior, 2017; Peters, 2018). This is surprising given that radio is an inherently geographical medium: crossing spaces, connecting and giving meaning to people and place, occupying spaces of broadcasting and reception, and shaping the geographical imaginations of listeners (Pinkerton, 2014). The tendency to overlook - or perhaps, not tune into radio - is even more perplexing given the medium's longevity and enduring popularity. At the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Shingler and Wieringa (1998, p.ix) identified radio as "one of the world's most pervasive

mass media, reaching the most far-flung corners of the planet [...] and heard by millions of people every minute of every day”, and their observation still rings true today. The BBC World Service commands a staggering global audience of 384 million people (BBC, 2020a), while closer to home, BBC Radio attracts 34 million listeners in the UK, which represents a 51% share of the country’s overall radio listenership (BBC, 2020b). These recent statistics add weight to Pinkerton and Dodds’ (2009, p.16) observation that:

“Radio listening whether in bed, while taking a shower or eating our breakfast is part of the daily fabric of many people around the world. The capacity of radio to be so widespread and intrinsic to our daily lives has contributed to it being taken for granted at the expense of other media such as television”.

In other words, the ubiquity and familiarity of radio, its ordinariness in the ‘everyday’, has pushed it to the sidelines of geographical attention and enquiry. This thesis therefore joins Pinkerton (2008a; 2008b; 2014; 2019), Weir (2014; 2020), and Peters (2018) in foregrounding radio in geography as a popular medium of mass communication and representation. But it goes further by conducting original empirical research on how contemporary BBC radio journalism constructs imaginative geographies in broadcasts, the organisational structures and journalistic practices out of which these imaginaries emerge, and the complex ways in which the medium shapes the geographical imaginations of listeners.

The prism through which I explore these ideas is BBC Radio 4’s recent journalism on forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe. The arrival of more than 1 million people in Europe in 2015 from countries affected by conflict, political oppression, and economic deprivation led to a proliferation of media coverage on migration and displacement, and sparked the narratorial and televisual construction of a ‘crisis’ at the

borders and shores of Europe (Lindley, 2015; Giannakopoulos, 2016; Crawley et al., 2018; Trilling, 2019). European audiences were confronted with images, radio broadcasts, newspaper headlines, and television footage of perilous journeys across the Mediterranean and epic odysseys over land and sea through southern and eastern Europe. Tropes of rubber dinghies and orange lifejackets, crowded railway stations and securitised border fences, were daily fodder for journalists and served to animate an escalating imaginary and spectacle of crisis (De Genova, 2013; Lindley, 2015; Crawley et al., 2018) (Figure 2).



**Figure 2:** BBC photographic journalism on Europe’s migration ‘crisis’ (BBC News, 2016; Urban, 2016; Evans, 2020)

The evolving story of Europe's migration 'crisis' was reflected in chaotic scenes of a humanitarian emergency on Europe's southern shores becoming progressively juxtaposed with strained diplomatic debates in Brussels over how European Union (EU) member states should effectively manage and respond to new arrivals. The result of years of political intractability over migration within the EU is that thousands of people remain stranded in Greece and along the Balkan route, whilst some European governments are taking an increasingly hard line and unlawful stance towards refugees (Kingsley, 2018; 2020; Smith, 2020b; Tondo, 2020; 2021; McKernan, 2021a; McKernan, 2021b). As Chapter 2 will demonstrate, media and migration scholarship to date focuses almost exclusively on narratives, imaginaries, and patterns of storytelling in newsprint and photojournalism, and excludes radio altogether. This thesis therefore addresses an absence of academic interest in radio journalism by exploring the audible spectacle of a contemporary, and ongoing, 'crisis' of migration and displacement on BBC Radio 4.

With that in mind, the overarching aim of the thesis is to examine how imaginative geographies of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe were constructed across Radio 4's range of programming between January 2014 and March 2019, and to explore how broadcasts were produced by journalists and are heard and interpreted by listeners. The chosen time period witnessed escalating arrivals of refugees and migrants in Europe, the acute politicisation of refugee settlement, and a heightened focus on migration during and after the Brexit referendum in 2016; with March 2019 marking the date the UK was initially due to leave the EU. The confluence of these recent events highlights the importance and timeliness of this research.

It is important to reflect briefly on the terminology used in the thesis. Turton (2003) articulates the discursive, legal, moral, and practical challenges of conceptualising ‘forced migration’ as a coherent sub-category of migrants due to mixed motivations behind migration, diverse experiences over protracted migratory journeys, and its connotations of a lack of agency. Similarly, Erdal and Oeppen (2018) discuss the difficulties of delineating migration into neat analytical categories, such as ‘refugees’ and ‘migrants’, and the risks of undermining legal protection rights enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention. Instead, they argue persuasively for a flexible continuum of experience and categorisation ranging from forced to voluntary mobility. For the purposes of this thesis, however, ‘forced migration’ and ‘refugee settlement’ are defined and understood as the involuntary displacement of people away from their home region and the cross-border movement and practice of claiming asylum and settling in Europe. This emphasis on people who arrived in Europe on their own initiative is distinct from ‘refugee resettlement’, which refers to official state transfer programmes that relocate refugees from an asylum to safe country on the promise of citizenship and permanent residence (UNHCR, 2021a). The thesis therefore focuses on the journalistic story of Europe’s migration ‘crisis’, as told by Radio 4.

The BBC has been selected as Britain’s leading public service broadcaster and Radio 4 as the country’s pre-eminent “speech-based news, current affairs, and factual network” with the largest listenership for a non-music radio station (BBC Radio 4, 2017); an average of 10.6 million people in the UK listen to Radio 4 each week for 10.36 hours (RAJAR, 2019; BBC, 2020c). The size of Radio 4’s domestic audience reaffirms its significance and status in British culture and media, and singles it out as a site that warrants close attention and analysis by social, cultural, and political geographers

(Horton, 2019). Indeed, Radio 4's representation of Europe's migration 'crisis' matters, not only because the network is a popular space of broadcasting that claims to produce radio journalism in the public interest, but because imaginative geographies articulated in the media have the power to shape how audiences understand, imagine, represent, and engage in the world.

Although Pinkerton and Dodds (2009, p.16) recognise that listening to Radio 4 "is an important daily ritual for many citizens in the United Kingdom", the station and its broadcasting have so far escaped detailed analysis in geography. MacDonald (2006, p.628), who is a cultural and historical geographer, hints at the imaginative power of Radio 4's evening shipping forecast to invoke imaginaries of Britain's coastal geographies, suggesting "the shipping forecast constitutes a nightly tour of the extent of the British Isles and its surrounds: a familiar and comforting register of sea areas and coastal stations that have come to define the symbolic boundary of a nation". However, the shipping forecast is used by MacDonald (2006, p.628) to foreground the "name and imaginary of Rockall, an isolated Atlantic rock" located off the north-west coast of Scotland, rather than illuminate the representational and affective power of Radio 4. The thesis aims to address this lacuna by focusing on Radio 4's recent journalism on Europe's migration 'crisis'. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to critical debates in geography about how radio constructs meaning, emerges out of structures and practices of production, and sparks geographical imaginations.

The thesis begins by situating this research within key ideas, theories, and debates in the literature. Chapter 2 traces the contours of existing work in media and migration studies, cultural and political geography, and radio and media scholarship

within and outside of geography, and highlights exciting potential to examine radio as an understudied site of geographical knowledge production, particularly around migration. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology that underpins the research and the innovative method employed to study radio listenership. The thesis is then organised around three empirical chapters that develop an intricate story of imaginative geographies of migration on Radio 4: Chapter 4 draws on a thematic analysis of 172 radio broadcasts across a range of programme genres and identifies two contrasting imaginative geographies of migration that reveal Radio 4 to be a site of disparate and, at times, contradictory representations; Chapter 5 analyses 17 semi-structured interviews conducted with journalists, editors, producers, and senior leaders within and outside of the BBC to reveal the organisational structures and journalistic practices that explain how and why these divergent representations of migration were produced; and Chapter 6 draws on 51 reflective diaries written by listeners in response to a digital playlist of 12 broadcasts to reveal how audible stories and imaginative geographies of migration are heard, interpreted, and imagined. Chapter 7 concludes the thesis by bringing together the main findings of the research. It illustrates the value and necessity of including radio in analyses of media representations of migration and highlights a need to go beyond previous theorisations of 'the mind's eye' in geography to better account for the affective, emotional, and experiential power of radio. It closes by situating radio in a digital, multi-media world and points to potential future directions for geographical scholarship on audio and multi-sensory storytelling.

## Literature Review

### *Sounding Out the Literature*

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Geographers have examined the history, materiality, and geopolitical power of radio, but there has been little interest in contemporary radio journalism and its capacity to shape everyday geographical imaginations. The thesis seeks to address this research gap by exploring the discursive, institutional, and affective power of Radio 4. It begins from a recognition that radio is part of a broad media landscape that mediates the relationship between people and places. The protracted Syrian conflict, recent drownings in the Mediterranean, and rise of populism in Europe raise moral and ethical questions about media representations as an act of power with the potential to regulate imagined communities of belonging and condition a sense of responsibility and care for others (Anderson, 1983; Chouliaraki, 2013). By focusing on Radio 4 and the audible spectacle of Europe's migration 'crisis', the thesis seeks to develop existing understandings of "the journalistic storytelling of migration" that to date focus almost exclusively on print and visual journalism (Chouliaraki and Georgiou, 2019, p.599). Furthermore, exploring the construction of imaginative geographies of migration through sounds and voices in broadcasts will develop theorisations of 'the mind's eye' in geography to reveal the affective, emotional, and experiential power of radio.

This chapter situates the thesis within key theories, themes, and debates in the literature. It is split into seven sub-sections that each provide critical context to the emergence, development, and structure of the thesis and inform my selection and framing of three research questions. The chapter begins by discussing existing research on media representations of migration and points to a lack of empirical research on narratives and imaginaries of migration in radio journalism. With that in mind, I review how radio has been studied by geographers to date and highlight rich potential for exploring the construction of imaginative geographies over the airwaves. The next section outlines literature on imaginative geographies before turning to voices and sounds as central mechanisms through which geographical imaginations are produced and animated in radio. This draws on work that explores the power, politics, and performativity of voice, together with recent interest in sonic and affective geographies. I offer a brief word on sites of audiencing and production in media studies and media geography, before finishing with an overview of research on the BBC and Radio 4 as spaces of knowledge production.

## **2.2 Media Representations of Migration**

The sharp rise in the number of refugees and migrants arriving in Europe in 2015 led to a proliferation of newspaper articles, images, and broadcasts depicting a so-called migration 'crisis' on the borders and shores of Europe. Unsurprisingly, the discursive construction of migration in European media has since attracted significant academic interest (Crawley, McMahon and Jones, 2016; Allen, Blinder, and McNeil, 2017; Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017). Sensitivity towards the power of media to shape how audiences understand, imagine, and respond to migration stems from a recognition

that the media performs a critical role in representing people and places, and defining and regulating the contours of imagined communities of belonging (Anderson, 1983); that is to say, media representations invite audiences “to construct a sense of who “we” are in relation to who “we” are not” (Cottle, 2000, p.2).

Research in the interdisciplinary field of media and migration studies demonstrates how European news coverage routinely fixes migrants and refugees within binary regimes of representation, oscillating between ‘victims’ or ‘villains’, and ‘entrepreneurs’ or ‘threats’ (Greenslade, 2016; Crawley, McMahon and Jones, 2016; Allen, Blinder, and McNeil, 2017; Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017; Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017; Trilling, 2019). Although European media reporting on migration is diverse and space/time specific, these studies highlight an overall trend towards simplistic narratives of victimhood and threat that invite hostile and fearful responses to those defined as Other (Holmes and Castañeda, 2016; Georgiou and Zaborowski, 2017). Through content analyses of, mostly, European newsprint, these researchers demonstrate how the media repeatedly invokes Orientalist imaginaries of migration that silence and objectify people on the move (Malkki, 1996). The reduction of migrants to malevolent figures of threat serves to justify securitised and violent border policies, while the narrow framing of refugees as helpless victims positions people seeking asylum as a burden and problem to be solved by nation states (Bigo, 2002; Triandafyllidou, 2013; Jones, 2016; Vaughan-Williams, 2017).

The erasure of migrant voices within these binary narratives is telling as it illustrates how media representations rest on unequal relations of power that render subjects mute and unable to represent themselves; an idea captured by Marx, cited in

the epigraph to Said's (1978) seminal text *Orientalism*, who observes "They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented". Whilst recent research has begun to explore citizen journalism and patterns of self-representation by refugees within and outside of mainstream media (Godin and Doná, 2016; Chouliaraki, 2017; Gillespie, Osseiran, and Cheesman, 2018), there remains a notable emphasis in media and migration studies towards analysing discourses and voices of migration in print and photographic journalism.

Irrespective of this imbalance between analyses of visual and aural representations, migration scholars demonstrate clearly how the media routinely frames migration to Europe as an unprecedented, linear, and continuous movement of people between two countries or 'worlds' (Mainwaring and Brigden, 2016). They suggest that this popular imaginary of migration as an uninterrupted flow *towards* Europe masks realities of fragmented, diverse, and multidirectional journeys on the ground, which are often punctuated by long periods of waiting and short bursts of mobility (Mainwaring and Brigden, 2016). The complexity of migrant decision-making over the course of disparate and protracted journeys is similarly overlooked due to a journalistic preoccupation with perilous sea crossings, maritime search and rescue efforts, and securitised border fences (Crawley et al., 2018). Researchers argue that this journalistic fascination with geographic sites of heightened drama produces eye-catching spectacles that enact illegality and criminality, and fail to situate migration within broader processes of social, economic, and cultural change (De Genova, 2013; Castles, De Haas, and Miller, 2014). Furthermore, focusing narrowly on points of departure and arrival offers audiences little insight into everyday experiences of forced migration and refugee settlement, the latter of which receives scant attention in the

media relative to how 'host' societies perceive and respond to migrants and refugees. By concentrating on dramatic sites/sights of migration, media representations therefore reflect sedentarist, state-centric thinking that frames irregular mobility as a 'crisis' and privileges stasis as the norm (Malkki, 1992; Lindley, 2015).

Recent research on the discursive construction and mediation of a migration 'crisis' in Europe provides critical context to analysing imaginative geographies of migration in Radio 4 broadcasts and the narrative power of radio journalism. Lindley (2015) outlines how the signifier 'crisis' is used to denote a moment or period of discontinuity relative to a much longer trajectory of stability and normality. In the context of migration, Bigo (2002) illustrates how political and policy discourses frequently invoke narratives of crisis to justify exceptional measures and material interventions, such as increased border patrols and security. Williams (2016, p.27) similarly argues that narratives of a humanitarian crisis are mobilised by states in support of violent migration management policies in "the safety/security nexus", whereby "migrant safety and border security are framed as mutually attainable goals; greater border security is posited as the means to increase migrant safety". Lindley (2015, p.9) reminds us that this rhetoric is strategic and taps into a long history of viewing migration "as dangerous, deviating from a spatial order which naturalises people's connections to place". This echoes Malkki (1992, p.31) who points to a "sedentarist metaphysics" that positions refugees as rootless and therefore a threat to the safety and security of nation states, which in turn, work to fix people in place in order to render them visible, knowable, and measurable (Scott, 1998; Bakewell, 2008; Lindley, 2015). Media representations that re-produce these state-centric narratives obscure how Europe's migration 'crisis' should be situated within longer histories of migration

to Europe and global geographies of conflict, displacement, and refugee hosting. They also displace attention onto migrants and the smugglers who facilitate their movement, rather than interrogating how governments *produce* illegality by failing to provide safe and legal migration pathways (Crawley et al., 2018).

These ideas are threaded throughout Trilling's (2019) analysis of visual media representations of forced migration to Europe in 2015, which concludes "the effect, all too often, was to frame these newly arrived people as others; people from 'over there', who had little to do with Europe itself and were strangers, antagonistic even, to its traditions and culture". The journalistic gaze, he argues, dwelled on stories, sites, and images of what it constituted as a crisis, from shipwrecks and borders to shorelines and camps, with the two-fold effect of masking how Europe is historically entangled in the conflicts and political instability from which people were fleeing, and obscuring decades of EU migration management at and beyond its territorial edge. Giannakopoulos (2016) similarly exposes how simplistic narratives of a humanitarian disaster on Europe's doorstep are animated by familiar imagery of orange lifejackets, leaky boats, and rubber dinghies that, together, construct a visual economy of crisis and emergency. Violent photographs of men pulling down border fences are juxtaposed with sympathetic portrayals of women and children sheltering in material tents. Media headlines fluctuate between intangible facts and statistics, and well-intentioned efforts by journalists to include personal, human, and self-articulated testimonies. The fragmented and contradictory nature of reporting is perhaps best captured in the image of 3-year-old Syrian toddler, Alan Kurdi, whose photograph went viral around the world and led the front page of popular British newspaper, *The Sun*. Trilling (2019) points to the paper's rhetorical framing of the 'crisis' as a matter of life and death, and its impassioned call

for British military intervention in Syria. Crucially, he notes that just a few weeks later, *The Sun* ran a second front page story on refugees, but this time it conjured up imaginaries of “illegals” seeking “back door” entry to Britain.

Every newspaper article, television report, and radio broadcast is an exercise in journalistic storytelling, an attempt to construct and communicate a narrative to audiences about migration to Europe. Yet scholars across media and migration studies have repeatedly overlooked patterns of storytelling in radio journalism. This thesis therefore contributes to theoretical debates around the narrative power of media through an analysis of broadcasts that reveals the disparate ways in which Radio 4 portrayed Europe’s migration ‘crisis’ through sounds and voices. It examines narratorial, emotional, and affective invitations in radio broadcasts, and explores how spatialities and imaginaries of migration are evoked over the airwaves. I emphasise how aural representations are not seen or read but are heard and imagined, and argue that by focusing almost exclusively on newsprint, and excluding radio altogether, media and migration research misses instances of journalistic storytelling with the potential to move beyond binary regimes of representation. More than that, the thesis engages with listeners to better understand how audiences *respond* to media representations of migration and construct geographical imaginations in radio. It therefore addresses a significant lacuna in existing media and migration literature, which focuses primarily on narrative and affective *invitations* in newsprint and photographic journalism.

Indeed, in their analysis of voices in European newspaper coverage of the migration ‘crisis’ in 2015, Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017, p.1) hypothesise the *potential* for journalism that privileges the voices of politicians over refugees to lead to

“a triple misrecognition of refugees as political, social and historical actors [...] outside the remit of ‘our’ communities of belonging”. Similarly, Georgiou (2018, p.54) identifies a welcome amplification of migrant voices in European digital media that offer a “much-needed alternative form of mediation against the voiceless and threatening Other that predominates in Europe’s mainstream media”. However, she stops short of considering how those voices are heard and interpreted by audiences. Chouliaraki and Stolic (2019) also analyse photojournalism on migration and demonstrate how different images situate refugees within visual frames of representation and invite contrasting readings of people on the move. They suggest that an image of a camp or rescue boat locates refugees “within an imagination of mass victimhood”, which renders them bare life in need of a European saviour (Agamben, 1998), while an image of young men pulling down a border fence “stirs insecurity and makes visual proposals to a duty of suspicion” (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2019, pp.324-325). Both, we learn, are instances of “symbolic bordering” that position refugees within binary frames of representation and “an a-historical vacuum where migrants emerge as ‘naked’ humans, as pre-political figures without voice and a story to tell” (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2019, p.325). Whether audiences respond in the ways they hypothesise remains unsaid. This thesis therefore adds to and develops this work through a nuanced analysis of radio listenership that reveals how media representations of migration do not always lead to the discursive or affective response they are theorised to invite (eg. fear, threat, solidarity, recognition).

### **2.3 Imaginative Geographies**

This discussion about the power of media to frame and represent migration to Europe provides essential background to my interest in connecting radio with Said’s (1978)

theoretical concept of imaginative geographies. The thesis argues that radio - like novels, films, photographs, and travelogues - participates in the “universal practice” of imagining spaces and times and imbuing them with meaning (Said, 1978, p.54). Geography has long been considered an ocularcentric discipline due to its “characteristically visual appropriation of the world”, and this privileging of sight has meant that visual media have largely formed the foundation upon which imaginative geographies are understood to construct and give meaning to the world (Gregory, 1994, p.16).

The term ‘imaginative geographies’ emerges from Said’s (1978, p.55) *Orientalism*, a critique of Western cultural imaginings of the East as ‘the Orient’ that legitimised imperial attitudes of dominance and authority, and colonial strategies of control and domestication. Imaginative geographies are not tied to empire, however. Gregory (2009, pp.369-370) defines them as “representations of other places, of peoples and landscapes, cultures and natures, that articulate the desires, fantasies, and fears of their authors”. Indeed, Said (1978, p.55) coins the term to capture how spaces are imbued with meaning and gain “figurative and imaginative value”. This develops Bachelard’s “poetics of space”, an idea that illustrates how spaces become invested with emotional, rational, or fictional significance through representation (Said, 1978, p.54). Said (1978, p.63) also emphasises the theatricality and performativity of representation when he describes ‘the Orient’ as “a theatrical stage affixed to Europe”. Radio is a particularly interesting medium to analyse performances of space because it animates spaces, places, and people through sounds and the spoken word (Beck, 1999). My thesis therefore expands existing discussions of imaginative geographies by focusing on the aural, exploring how imaginaries of migration are articulated in BBC radio journalism,

the techniques journalists use to conjure up imaginaries over the airwaves, and how those imaginaries are heard, interpreted, and imagined by listeners.

Said's (1978) analysis of the power and non-innocence of representation raises interesting questions for media portrayals that typically silence and 'other' refugees (Malkki, 1996; Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017). The asymmetry of representation calls attention to how imaginative geographies constitute the self as well as the Other, "help[ing] the mind to intensify its own sense of itself by dramatising the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away" (Said, 1978, p.55). This process of spatially demarcating 'us' from 'them', and 'here' from 'there' reaffirms that identities are relational and exposes the power of representation to render subjects mute and unable to represent themselves. It is important to note, however, that postcolonial theorists have since challenged Orientalism as an imaginative geography and discourse predicated on an imperial will-to-power. Barnett (2015) points to leakages, ruptures, and slippages in the concept of Orientalism based on an awareness of the interrelationships and encounters between people and places that were central to the formation of colonial knowledge. This poses a challenge to Orientalism as a totalising discourse emanating from 'here' and projected 'over there' by acknowledging the place of non-Western knowledge in the formation of colonial cultures. Tellingly, Said (1993, p.48) later emphasised the entanglement of people and places in his contrapuntal vision of "overlapping territories" and "intertwined histories". Postcolonial attempts to rethink sites of knowledge production raise questions for media representations that speak for or about refugees, and the power of journalists to decide who is seen or heard, and in what capacity.

Geographers have been inspired by Said's (1978) work and sought to examine how, and to what effect, the media produces and articulates imaginative geographies through a process of citation. Gregory (2004) invokes Orientalism when examining the war on terror post-9/11 as an articulation of a colonial present produced by imaginative geographies of identity and difference. He demonstrates how media coverage and political rhetoric in the aftermath of 9/11 re-invoked a critical line between 'us' and 'them', placed the power to construct identity within the West, and reduced a diversity of cultures "into one diabolical landscape" (Gregory, 2004, p.60). The 'West' and 'East' were produced through imaginative geographies that acted to justify "architectures of enmity" and legitimise military action (Gregory, 2004, pp.17-19). These "performances of space" have the capacity to influence the attitudes and beliefs of their audiences and are set in motion by diverse "cultural forms and cultural practices" (Gregory, 2004, pp.17-19). This realm of cultural forms and practices informs my interest in radio as an understudied medium with the capacity to shape geographical imaginations. Following Gregory (2004), I am interested in how spaces, places, and people are represented - that is, heard or silenced, named or 'othered' - in broadcasts on Europe's migration 'crisis'.

Imaginative counter-geographies project alternative ways of seeing the world and seek to challenge, undermine, and contest imaginative geographies imposed by dominant regimes of power. In other words, they attempt to "give voice and vision to their subjects and to undo the separations between 'our space' and 'their space'" (Gregory, 2009, p.371). Toal (1996, p.171) points to Maggie O'Kane's "anti-geopolitical eye" in her written dispatches for *The Guardian* from Bosnia in the 1990s, as a way of seeing and embodied style of journalistic reporting that subverted hegemonic scriptings of the conflict and amplified voices on the ground. Toal (1996, p.182) suggests that

O’Kane wrote “not about an ‘over there’ but about a continental ‘here and now’” by scrambling geographies of ‘us’ and ‘them’, ‘near’ and ‘far’. Reshuffling scales of analysis and moral geographies of responsibility informs work in feminist geopolitics that privileges people and ‘the everyday’ as units of analysis (Hyndman, 2007; Sharp, 2007; Mountz and Hyndman, 2006; Massaro and Williams, 2013). Geographers are becoming increasingly attuned to the role of new media and citizen journalism in creating space for these imaginative counter-geographies to be articulated by seldom heard voices. Wright (2016) and Gillespie, Osseiran, and Cheesman (2018) draw attention to refugees who have used new technologies, like smartphones, to self-articulate their experiences of forced migration, while Godin and Doná (2016) identify social media as a critical space for self-representation. My project is informed by, but also departs from, their work by exploring styles of journalistic witnessing and reporting within the institutional frame of the BBC as Britain’s leading public service broadcaster.

Engaging with journalists and the construction of imaginative geographies in radio raises critical issues of authorship, positionality, and situated knowledge. Foucault (1977) draws attention to the production of knowledge and highlights the centrality of space to understanding how power and discourse operate. Said (1978) also discusses the cultural construction of knowledge and illustrates how relations of power are embedded in acts of representation, such as viewing, writing, and reporting. Both authors demonstrate how these entanglements between knowledge, power, and representation are shot through with questions of geography as claims to knowledge and meaning always emerge from a particular site, space, or context. This is made clear in Haraway’s (1988) work, which challenges science as the pursuit of a disembodied objectivity and replaces it with an awareness about how all knowledge is situated,

embodied, and partial. Indeed, she argues that the language of science is suffused with visual metaphors that create an illusion of disembodied knowledge production (Haraway, 1991); a trickery that seeps into everyday life and conversation, and hides the fact that “embodiment and partiality are the conditions under which knowledge is acquired” and reproduced (Barnes, 2009, p.684). This work informs an understanding of journalists as witnesses and reporters with the capacity to direct the imaginative gaze of audiences to particular people and places. Thus, imaginative geographies of migration constructed in radio broadcasts must be understood as “spaces of constructed (in)visibility” (Gregory, 2009, p.371) that do not exhibit or reflect reality but rather produce and select “what will count as reality” (Butler, 2009, p.xiii). The thesis therefore reflects carefully on the spaces in which journalists work, the locations from which they report, and the techniques through which they render the world visible and knowable.

Whilst recent research in geography evidences a shift in emphasis towards the non- and more-than-representational, which will be discussed in section 2.6, Gregory’s (1998, cited in Hoyler, 1998, p.73) argument for sensitivity towards the narrative power of imaginative geographies and cultural representations remains convincing:

“it’s important politically, it’s important morally, it’s important intellectually and it’s important just to make sure that what we do is *interesting* - to engage the attention and emotions of our audience - to be able to describe the places, the people, the landscapes that we are talking about and to have those descriptions called to account. And that means we really do need to think about questions of representation and how they are constructed in writing, in images, in music and elsewhere”.

His vision for research that is engaging and affecting mirrors Horton’s (2019, p.265) recent call for further work on popular culture in social and cultural geography that is “attuned to, and alive with, these affecting, life-changing, identity-defining, power-laden

geographies". This thesis therefore champions engagement with radio as a popular medium through which imaginative geographies of forced migration to, and refugee settlement in, Europe are articulated and heard by listeners.

## **2.4 Radio Geography**

Geographers, as discussed in Chapter 1, have paid relatively little attention to radio, particularly when compared with work on film, television, advertising, comic books, video games, and social media (Dodds, 2003; Craine, 2007; Dittmer and Larsen, 2007; Adams, 2009; Adams, Craine and Dittmer, 2014; Rose, 2016; Bos, 2018; Dittmer and Bos, 2019). The tendency to overlook radio in geography and popular geopolitics is captured neatly by Peters (2018, p.4) who remarks, "radio has been sorely absent, with audio-visual communications - television and increasingly the internet - dominating examinations. Radio - old, outdated almost - seems less worthy of our attention". However, four authors who have challenged this trend and championed geographical research on radio are Pinkerton (2008a; 2008b; 2014; 2019), Weir (2014; 2020), Wilkinson (2015; 2019), and Peters (2018).

In a compelling account of radio broadcasting in the Falklands War of 1982, Pinkerton (2008a) argues that existing histories of the conflict obscure how islanders and Argentine occupiers frequently engaged with the medium. He illuminates how islanders had "a sophisticated understanding of radio technologies and communications" throughout the conflict, and by sharing information on troop movements, contributed to British military intelligence efforts (Pinkerton, 2008a, p.375). These subtle displays of "radio resistance" were coupled with regular listenership to the BBC World Service to the extent that Pinkerton (2008a, p.375)

suggests, broadcasting and listening conditioned the experience and development of the Falklands Conflict as a “Radio War”.

This historical account of radio in the Falklands resonates with Pinkerton’s (2008b) research on Cold War radio and television broadcasting in South Asia, which traces the contours of the “l’Affaire Louis Malle” that led to the expulsion of the BBC from India on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1970. Despite the retreat of formal colonial structures after independence in 1947, Pinkerton (2008b, p.543) argues that the BBC continued to be seen as “a cultural agent [...] of ‘British imperial interests’ in the region”. He illustrates how this went beyond straightforward disapproval of its depictions of poverty in the country to perceived entanglement and interference in India’s domestic and regional affairs. Whilst BBC radio had once been popular with listeners due to its perceived reputation for objective and truthful reporting, and had played a pivotal role in the broader development of radio broadcasting across the subcontinent, the Louis Malle affair was ultimately the final catalyst in a long line of “audio-visual offences”, with the BBC accused of “a new kind of imperialism” (Pinkerton, 2008b, p.540).

Both of these studies, which illuminate the geopolitical power and historical resonance of BBC radio, contribute to the effort to counter a preoccupation with visual media in geography. Pinkerton and Dodds (2009, p.10) consider the neglect of radio in the discipline to be shortsighted and point to potential future engagements with “radio cultures, broadcasting infrastructure and technology, and [...] the affective impacts of radio on audiences”. Weir (2014) heeds the second tenet of their call by situating radio within theory on technology, infrastructures, materiality, and assemblage. He suggests that work in radio geopolitics should include “a wider scope of objects”, such as drones

and wireless devices (Weir, 2014, p.856). This is not to discount radio as a “representational technology”, but rather to demonstrate that they are not the only sites warranting attention and analysis (Weir, 2014, p.856).

This theoretical groundwork informs Weir’s (2020, p.938) subsequent research on “the late/post-imperial apparatus of BBC radio as a geopolitical assemblage”. He examines the governance and regulation of radio in the 1920s and 1960s, and specifically the BBC’s Middle Eastern Relay System, to reveal “the objects, institutions, individuals and ideas existing in a specific historical-cultural moment of British broadcasting” (Weir, 2020, p.950). This empirical case study is used to illustrate the value of assemblage theory for future engagements with media and redress an imbalance between “practices of representation made audible in popular geopolitical texts” and “the materialities and infrastructures that act to distribute and broadcast them” (Weir, 2020, p.963). Whilst acknowledging the merits of attending to the non-human components of radio, this thesis focuses principally on the representational aspects of BBC radio journalism.

Given the limited number of geographical engagements with radio, it is worth noting Wilkinson’s (2015, p.127) review of literature on youth engagement in community radio. She argues that community radio stations are “crucial spaces of development for young people’s identities and a space of creative learning outside of a more formal environment of school”. This stems from a recognition of how young people’s voices can be amplified in broadcasts and informs her characterisation of local radio stations as potential spaces of social inclusion and belonging. This resonates with Wilkinson’s (2019, p.1261) recent research on a youth-led community radio station in

the northwest of England, which she describes “as a micro space in which, through meaningful interactions, young people negotiate difference”. She points to voice and accent as crucial markers of identity that lead to sonic inclusions and exclusions in broadcasts, and the wider importance of the station as a safe space for conversation and dialogue between different social groups. Whilst Wilkinson’s (2019) discussion of voice echoes my interest in who is heard and silenced in BBC radio journalism, she focuses more on the social and cultural function of community radio as a space of encounter than on the representational power of radio broadcasts they produce.

This thesis is underpinned by a central interest in the capacity of radio to shape the geographical imaginations of listeners. This line of enquiry immediately raises questions about the specificity of radio as a representational medium. I share Pinkerton’s (2014, p.63) contention that repeated references to radio’s “visuality”, “power”, and “magic” suggest there is something specific in its appeal to the imagination that is worth probing further. Specifically, the impact on listeners of sounds and voices heard over the airwaves. Connections between sounds and images have long been recognised in the world of music. Smith (2000, p.615) highlights the value of “learning through listening” and exploring how “space is made through sound as well as sight”. She counters a visual bias in geography by focusing on soundscapes, as well as landscapes, and concludes that “music is integral to the geographical imagination”. Spatial imagining in response to music is also discussed by Botstein (1995) who examines the impact of classical music on audiences in 19<sup>th</sup> Century concert halls. He suggests that prior to the invention of television and moving images, hearing stirring musical scores “created an experience of the visual and emotional imagination” (Botstein, 1995, p.588): that is to say, music inspired rich, visual pictures envisioned in the minds of listeners.

The application to radio is compelling. Speech radio is a form of “sound text” (Cook, 2011, p.42) that engages listeners through auditory registers, but encourages “visual and spatial imaging in response to what we hear” (Squire, 2003, p.294). Bolls and Lang (2003, p.34) examine listener responses to imagery evoked in radio advertisements and conclude that “listeners may indeed ‘see’ it on the radio”. This will come as little surprise to radio practitioners as Bolls (2006, p.201) observes, “radio producers know that a fundamental strength of their medium is imagery, defined as content that vividly paints a picture in the imagination of listeners”. Analyses of radio sports commentary similarly expose the imaginative interplay between aural and visual fields. McCormack (2013, p.127) explains how ahead of the first radio transmission of a football match in 1927, the BBC was “eager to ensure that listeners would be able to visualise what was unfolding”. Anxious about how listeners would make sense of a game playing out over the airwaves, the BBC issued pictorial diagrams of football pitches in the *Radio Times* to spatially orient audiences. Initial concerns soon abated, however, as broadcasters were quick to learn how to “help audiences see events unfold” through fast paced commentary, atmospheric sounds of cheering crowds, and evocative imagery (McCormack, 2013, p.128).

These connections between sound, space, and image are explored in Peters’ (2018) recent account of offshore pirate radio station, Radio Caroline. She argues that geographers need to take seriously the imaginative power of radio and suggests “the visual imagery made possible through listening [...] could not be underestimated in the overall experience of engaging with sea-based illicit broadcasting” (Peters, 2018, p.2). However, Peters (2018) focuses primarily on the atmospherics and embodiment of listening to maritime pirate radio. Indeed, she paints a vivid portrait of how audiences,

often listening at night-time under their bed sheets, were “enfolded into an expanded space, consisting of the seas, ship, records, white noise, wind, all transposed to the space of land through the capacities of radio” (Peters, 2018, p.61). Peters (2018) therefore attends more closely to how soundscapes were embedded in non- and more-than-human geographies than the representational power of sounds and listening. Indeed, reflecting on her work in the preface, Wissman and Palis (2018, p.viii) conclude “an even deeper investigation into the imaginative geographies of listening to radio could easily fill another book”. This thesis responds to their invitation and contributes to nascent geographical work on radio by exploring the specific ways in which Radio 4 journalism constructs audible imaginative geographies of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe, and the imaginative responses of listeners to sounds and voices in broadcasts.

## **2.5 The Power, Politics, and Performativity of Voice**

Voice is a central mechanism through which imaginative geographies are constructed and articulated in radio. The presence, absence, and mediation of voice highlights the narrative power of radio journalism: that is, how places and people are described, categorised, and framed by journalists. Unsurprisingly, the voice - and crucially, a lack of it - is also a key determinant of the identity and status of refugees in the media. After all, the voice is a powerful instrument for self-articulation, expression, and storytelling that enables people to communicate with and relate to others. Butler (2009) discusses how the media produces and normalises particular ways of ‘seeing’ that render some lives more precarious or grievable than others. Similarly, Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017, p.6) identify journalism as a performative site that “names refugees as particular kinds of subjects and inscribes our relationship to them in specific affective and moral

registers". They develop Butler's (2009, p.64) notion of the "field of the perceptible" to expose how journalism determines who is seen or heard and in what capacity, and how 'we' engage with and relate to other people.

This has significant consequences when thinking about media representations of refugees. The first section of this literature review discussed how binary tropes of victimhood or threat co-exist within regimes of media representation that often mobilise rhetorical strategies to silence refugees as a uniform mass of "anonymous corporeality" (Malkki, 1996, p.388). It also hinted at how the erasure of refugee voices undermines recognition of displaced peoples as part of 'our' common humanity and serves to justify state policies that securitise migration (Bigo, 2002). In response, Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017, p.3) coin the term "journalism-as-bordering" to capture how media reporting has the narratorial capacity to regulate, expand, and reduce the imaginary contours of 'our' communities of belonging.

This conceptual framing of journalism as a performative site with the power to determine who is seen and whose voices are heard builds on Butler's (1990, p.33) seminal work on gender and sexuality as performances that are constituted through a series of "expressions" and citations. Whilst these performances of identity are verbal and non-verbal, Pratt (2009) explains that the concept of performativity is rooted in the linguistic act of a performative utterance, captured in the statements 'I pronounce you' or 'I sentence you', which demonstrates how language enacts that which it names. Unsurprisingly, therefore, performativity has been "an important means of theorising the workings of power" (Pratt, 2009, p.526). Of particular interest to this thesis is Glass and Rose-Redwood's (2014) collection of geographical scholarship on political

performativity, which explores how political spaces, such as the nation state, emerge through everyday citational, discursive practices. This is critical because as Schwiter (2017, p.849) notes, “understanding the exercise of power as a citational process acknowledges its contingency and instability. It foregrounds the potential to challenge authority through reiterative counter-performances”.

This idea of power as something which is enacted through performances and speech acts echoes the work of Alexander (2010) who considers how politicians engage in theatrical performances of expertise, authority, and authenticity that aim to connect with, and secure the approval of, geographically proximate and distant voters. Political rallies and televised addresses are just two examples of theatrical performances that rest on the persuasive power of voice. He argues that this involves an intricate and unpredictable process of “symbolic representation” as politicians seek to engineer and project a particular image of, and narrative about, themselves (Alexander, 2010, p.9). Crucially, Alexander (2010, p.15) emphasises the role of the media in communicating, mediating, and participating in this performative process: “Reporters, editors, and other commentariat constitute a giant digital prism through which every candidate’s performance must pass, distorting the light and displacing the verbal and visual images that pass in between”. The application to this thesis on Radio 4 is clear and informs an understanding of radio journalism as a space of performance that mediates, and brings into being, forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe for listeners at home. Journalists must be understood as architects of this performance who theatrically stage migration through sounds and voices, make claims to knowledge and expertise, and decide who is seen, heard, and silenced in broadcasts.

The centrality of voice to radio, and the broader trend in the media towards silencing refugees, raises critical questions about the 'politics of voice'; a term coined by Couldry (2010) to capture who speaks and in what capacity or context. The performative act of speaking has the potential power to imbue refugees with agency and create productive opportunities for alternative ways of representing, thinking about, and relating to displaced people (Arendt, 1958; Butler, 1990). More importantly, voice "constitutes the speaker as a human being - as a social and historical actor belonging to a political community" (Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017, p.16). This potential to recognise refugees as equals in a common humanity through the act of speaking within and outside of media is conceptualised by Couldry (2010) as 'voice as value': that is, the power of voice to collapse imaginative geographies of 'us' and 'them' and expand fields of recognisability, perceptibility, and belonging (Butler, 2009).

However, Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017) advocate stepping back and considering 'voice as narrative' as a necessary precondition in journalism for 'voice as value'. 'Voice as narrative' refers to whose voices are heard in the media, the status of those voices, and how they are contextualised. Two main findings emerge from their analysis of European newsprint on migration: first, a "hierarchy of voices" in news privileges the elite - most notably politicians - and silences refugees and citizens; and second, this hierarchy leads to a "triple misrecognition of refugees as political, social, and historical actors" by readers (Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017, p.17). Identifying journalism as a performative site therefore reveals opportunities for reporting that creates space for refugees to articulate their own stories, histories, and biographies in a media landscape that consistently speaks for, and about, refugees (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017).

Whilst Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) highlight opportunities for self-articulation and representation, they focus exclusively on print journalism. This thesis therefore explores and develops their ideas in relation to radio as a medium predicated on voices and sounds (Shingler and Wieringa, 1998; Beck, 1999). Contrary to visual media that rely on images to ‘do the work’, radio demands that broadcasters paint pictures through the spoken word and evoke a ‘sense of place’ through soundscapes. Its dependency on voices and sounds thus poses an interesting question for representations of refugees: namely, are they doomed only to rearticulate Orientalist tropes of the voiceless ‘Other’ (Spivak, 1988; Malkki, 1996; Georgiou, 2018), or can they allow refugees to speak and be heard?

Certainly, some radio broadcasts do amplify refugee voices, which counters media narratives that stereotype refugees as outsiders, threats, or victims and encourages recognition of refugees as human beings with ideas, hopes, and aspirations (De Haas, 2011). Whilst recognising the editorial power to select and frame their voices, the inclusion of multiple perspectives undermines theories of a singular ‘Refugee Voice’ and points to a plurality of identities and experiences (Turton, 2003; Sigona, 2016). By extension, some radio journalism may answer calls for reportage that enables refugees to “appear as a speaking and acting subject” (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017, p.1174). A preoccupation with visual media therefore conceals how radio can amplify the voices of refugees, facilitate self-expression, and encourage meaningful identification with others. The thesis expands my previous research on radio by analysing broadcasts on migration across Radio 4 programming and assessing listener responses to selected broadcasts. In so doing, it will reveal the complex ways in which a politics of recognition

emerges and how the aural connects with geographical imaginations in ways that may begin to re-work unequal relations of power.

In addition to the voices of refugees and migrants, the affective power and resonance of the journalist voice should not be underestimated. McCormack (2013, p.129) identifies sports commentary in radio as “an affective technology of the voice” that amplifies sonic atmospheres through rhythms, expressions, and turns of phrase. Commentators perform and embody live sporting events, immersing listeners in the action through fast-paced narratives, to the extent that commentating is “a clamour of voices that provides the sonic background of everyday life” (McCormack, 2013, p.125). Within this clamour emerge distinctive voices that become associated with particular events or radio networks. Regular commentators become “the voice” of a match and, due to their popularity, “the voice of national experience” (McCormack, 2013, p.131). Yet the epigraph to McCormack’s (2013, p.117) chapter on commentating by Roger Manvell, which states, “the words they toss off are only meant to be received and forgotten”, distinguishes sports commentary from heavily crafted dispatches and documentaries on Radio 4 that may linger in the imaginations of listeners. It also conceals the way in which broadcasters, such as the BBC, develop a brand through the production of a collective voice.

The production of a distinctive BBC voice exposes the institutional power of radio broadcasting. The BBC Empire and World Services have attracted considerable academic interest as prisms through which to examine the construction of the BBC’s voice over time (Briggs, 1985; Robertson, 2008; Hill, 2010). Pinkerton and Dodds (2009, p.18) examine the history and geopolitics of the BBC, which together, have manufactured its

overseas reputation as “Britain’s ‘Voice around the World’”, recognisable for reliable, objective, and truthful broadcasting: “the true but unbiased ‘Voice of Britain’” (Robertson, 2008, p.465). Scholars, however, have sought to challenge imaginaries of an imperial core broadcasting to an inanimate periphery by highlighting instances of diasporic engagement in BBC programming (Newton, 2008; Gillespie et al., 2010). Gillespie (2010, p.238) argues that amplifying diverse accents was a “tool of enormous cultural and political power” which helped to consolidate the BBC’s reputation for reliable, credible reporting. The inclusion of diasporic voices was therefore a strategic decision to achieve diplomatic gains abroad and to build a reputation for impartial journalism. This raises interesting questions for the journalistic decision to include refugee voices in radio as a strategic move to engage or ‘move’ listeners in emotional and affective registers, and to achieve BBC balance.

## **2.6 Sonic and Affective Geographies**

Sounds, as well as voices, animate geographical imaginations and speak to the affective, as well as narrative, power of radio journalism. Gallagher and Prior (2014, p.267) argue persuasively that “the erasure of audio media within geography silences a rich seam of empirical data”, and obscures how sounds can tell different kinds of stories and represent spaces, places, and people in new and exciting ways. Recent interest in sonic and affective geographies has begun to close a gap in the discipline between visual and aural media, but before reviewing this work, it is important to acknowledge that geography’s entanglement with the visual has a long and important history, particularly when thinking about geographical imaginations.

Driver (2003) discusses the discipline's foundation upon witnessing, observation, and documentation through European travel and exploration, and points to maps, drawings, and visual images as early sites of geographical knowledge production. This harks back to Pratt's (1992) identification of 'imperial eyes' in European travel writing that viewed and scripted the non-European world in ways that supported colonial empire, and to Mitchell's (1988) 'world-as-exhibition' that illustrated how Europeans produced, and were themselves conditioned by, modes of thinking and observing that encouraged them to colonise, order, and represent the world. This required, as Gregory (1998, p.83) notes:

"the development of strategies for visually comprehending - for sightseeing and exhibiting - other cultures which were read as coherent pictures or intelligible texts [...] European tourists venturing to Egypt were simultaneously assured that the traditional Orient was still available to their fascinated gaze, and reassured that they could safely inspect it from the viewing platforms of a recognisably 'European' modernity: grand hotels, restaurants, railway trains and river steamers".

Sight, manifest in the imperial 'gaze', was therefore the dominant sense for apprehending and representing the world, with significant implications for geography, as Smith (1997, p.503) explains: "Geography is, after all, a quintessentially visual enterprise, traditionally using observation as the route to knowledge, and regarding sight as the measure of truth". Not consigned to the origins of the discipline, however, Driver (2003, p.227) points to geographers' continued "enchantment with the visual". This is reaffirmed by Rose (2003, p.213) who points to "the plethora of visual images used by geographers when producing, interpreting and disseminating geographical work". Maps, photographs, video clips, and social media posts populate geographic texts and publications, classrooms and conference halls, to the extent that visual media

have, and continue to be, the dominant mode of producing and structuring geographical thought (Rose, 2003).

It is within this context that sounds emerge as alternative ways of knowing the world and bringing spaces and places into being. As referenced earlier in the chapter, this parallels a theoretical shift towards non- or more-than-representational geographies. Thrift (1996, p.7) first coined the term 'non-representational theory' to capture his interest in practices as a way of experiencing, understanding, and performing the world:

“it is concerned with thinking with the entire body. In turn, this means that non-representational models valorise all the senses, and not just the visual, and their procedures are not modelled solely on the act of looking. It also means that affect is seen as of primary importance”.

Multi-sensory geographies therefore emerged as a counterweight to representational approaches to visual and textual geographies after the cultural turn and have since proven “a particularly effective lightning-rod for disciplinary self-critique” (Lorimer, 2005, p.83). It has not been without its critics, however. ‘More-than-representational theory’ is a term coined by Lorimer (2005, p.84) in response to heated debates around the prefix ‘non’:

“I prefer to think of ‘more-than-representational geography, the teleology of the original 'non-' title having proven an unfortunate hindrance [...] To summarize lots of complex statements as simply as possible, it is multifarious, open encounters in the realm of practice that matter most”.

This shared interest in the realm of practice resonates with Cresswell's (2011, p.238) definition of places as “complex and dynamic collages of things (material culture, objects), representations (places as representations and representations of place) and

practices (the things people do, often habitually)". In a similar vein, Wissmann and Zimmerman (2015) expose how places are constituted through sounds. They highlight how audio drama is produced through pre-recorded, recognisable sounds that enable audiences to construct "a fictitious world" in their geographical imaginations (Wissmann and Zimmerman, 2015, p.803). This contrasts with audio walking tours of cities, which rely on spoken narration and naturally occurring sounds which listeners hear as they move through urban environments. Irrespective of this difference, both examples illustrate how places are forged and experienced through sounds.

In the context of migration studies, soundscapes foregrounding spaces and places of displacement have emerged as a challenge to visual framings of refugees as suffering, humanitarian victims (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2017). The 'spaces and places, not faces' paradigm privileges audio recordings of refugee camps and cities to offer a different way of thinking about and representing spatialities and experiences of displacement (Karimi et al., 2017). Karimi et al. (2017) argue that this "anthropology in sound" encourages listeners to imagine a 'sense of place' and resonates with attempts to represent migration in registers beyond vulnerability and suffering (Couldrey and Peebles, 2018). Put another way, hearing soundscapes of place invites listeners to imagine refugees and migrants in familiar, everyday settings, such as food markets or bustling city streets, and reflect on points of shared experience and connection. Although ethnographies of sound are not new (Samuels et al., 2010), there have been few applications in contexts of migration. I am therefore interested in the power of radio to produce spaces and evoke a sense of place through the various sounds of Europe's migration 'crisis'.

All of this reinforces how sounds “produce space and are produced by them” (Gallagher, Kanngieser, and Prior, 2017, p.621), and together with voices, have the power and potential to connect through affective, emotive, and sometimes indescribable registers (Kanngieser, 2015; 2019). Field recordings, like radio broadcasts, create immersive soundspaces and “invite the listener to suspend disbelief - to *imagine* that they are in the place where the recording was made” (Gallagher and Prior, 2014, p.275). This capacity to collapse distance through the imagination captures the intimacy of sounds and transformatory nature of listening, whereby audio enters the ear and takes on imaginary forms in the mind. This interplay between aural and visual fields, explored earlier in the chapter, speaks to a “deaf spot” in studies of sound (Pavia, 2018, p.8). In his review of sonic geographies, Pavia (2018, p.8) notes that “since Pocock (1993) pointed out that listening is in constant interplay with the other senses, few works have situated listening or sound within larger human or more-than-human perceptual systems”. Although he cites smell and taste as two underexplored senses, research on the interrelationships between audio and visual worlds remains limited, which this research participates in correcting.

A notable exception is Peters’ (2018, p.5) analysis of pirate radio listenership, which illuminates how “the linkages between sound, space, and society are forged through sounds that evoke images, felt emotions, and affects”. This finding resonates with Smith’s (2000, p.633) early interest in “the embodiment of sound”, specifically, how music was *felt* as well as imagined. It also recalls Anderson’s (2004) work on how listening to music can revive personal memories and evoke affective responses. That is to say, how music “renders us speechless, charges our body or transports us somewhere else” (Lorimer, 2005, p.87). Running through this research is a clear shift from studying

media's representational meanings towards its affective experiences, resonances, and reverberations. Indeed, focusing on the body as a site of analysis has revealed how discursive maps of meaning are also embodied maps of feeling with the power to provoke, unsettle, and affect audiences (Gallagher, Kanngieser, and Prior, 2017; Kanngieser, 2015; 2019). This is reflected in recent work on popular culture where Bos (2019, p.xiii) identifies "a more embodied, performative dimension to popular geopolitics - inspired by feminist scholarship - that shifts attention away from screens and texts and instead thinks through *what we do* rather than *what we see*". The critical point here being an interest in how consumers engage with and react to media.

This raises recent theoretical debates in geography around emotions and affects. Pile (2010, p.7) offers a useful distinction when he suggests "emotional geography emphasises the significance of expressed emotions while non-representational theory emphasises the importance of inexpressible affects". Emotions, such as sadness, anger, joy, and happiness, are thus distinguishable from affects, which are pre-cognitive, ungraspable, and appear before knowable, articulatable emotions. Crucially for this research, which integrates the textual (in radio broadcasts) and the bodily (in listener responses), Anderson (2009, p.503) suggests the paradigm of non-representational theory does not "eliminate or supersede others [...] rather, it names a differentiated set of ways of learning". This resonates with Thrift's (1996) original, inclusive vision to 'valorise all the senses' and echoes Lorimer's (2005) intention to expand, rather than close down, geographers' remit of study. Attending to the body and to senses beyond the visual therefore opens up alternative and complementary ways of thinking about, apprehending, and representing the world.

This is made clear in Closs Stephens' (2016; 2019) work on affect and nationalism, which informs an interest in the affective power of radio. Drawing on the concept of 'affective atmospheres', she argues that "ideas about nationalism are felt" and they "emanate from multiple constituencies as part of a nebulous, diffuse atmosphere" (Closs Stephens, 2016, p.182). Her twin interest in the feelings and spatialities of nationalism comes together in a thought-provoking analysis of the atmosphere generated during the London 2012 Olympic Games. Of particular relevance is her discussion of the Games as a mediated event broadcast to audiences through television, social media (and I would add, radio). Closs Stephens (2016, p.183) suggests that this mass mediation and collective viewing experience, in which audiences were swept up in the drama and spectacle of the event, exemplifies the "ways in which national feelings touch us, take hold and become infectious". It also calls for reflection on the banality and 'everydayness' of nationalism, specifically, how "sound, music, colours, patterns, postures and gestures worked to generate national affective experiences" and how "the nation was not only seen but experienced and felt through the rhythms, memories and affects of this mass sporting event" (Closs Stephens, 2016, p.184). This has clear application to analysing sonic representations of migration in Radio 4 journalism and listener responses to broadcasts. The former includes how spaces of migration are evoked through affective (and perhaps, acoustic) atmospheres of place in radio reportage, while the latter sparks an interest in how radio can provoke, unsettle, and 'move' audiences.

Tebbutt's (2006, p.859) call to shift away from narrative "messages" in radio to listener "moods" and "perceptions" prompts Pinkerton and Dodds (2009, p.25) to wonder "if music has a capacity to 'move' then the cultural effects of radio (the tone of

a voice, background music and so on) deserve further consideration". This thesis takes up their invitation and responds directly to their call for further research on the "affective impacts of radio" by exploring how voices and sounds of migration across Radio 4's range of programming are heard, interpreted, and felt by listeners (Pinkerton and Dodds, 2009, p.10); thereby adding to existing geographical scholarship on radio by exploring both the narrative *and* affective power of broadcasts.

## **2.7 Sites of Media Audiencing and Production**

It is worth noting briefly that recent academic interest in multi-sensory and affective geographies builds on a longer trajectory of work on the site of audiencing. In their seminal pieces, Morley (1980) and Hall (1980) argue that producers encode a text with particular messages and meaning before audiences decode a text by interpreting it in different ways. Rose (2007) observes that much of this early research on audiences focused on television and BBC television in particular: Morley (1980) examined audience responses to the BBC's evening television news programme, *Nationwide*, while Buckingham (1987) studied the reactions of children and teenagers to the BBC soap drama, *EastEnders*. Their focus on the reception of BBC content captures the institution's special place and status in British society and culture, which is discussed in the next and final sub-section. These studies privileged audiences as sites of meaning making, but Dittmer and Dodds (2008, p.446) caution "they are not infinitely empowered agents who can stretch the text endlessly". Although their hesitancy stems from a need to account for the spaces in which texts are received, and how those spaces are inflected with identities that shape audience interpretations, it hints at broader

epistemological and methodological debates over where meaning and affect reside, and how media audiences should be studied.

Livingstone (2008) argues that cultural studies of media have revealed audiences to be diverse in their decoding and the importance of socio-cultural context to audience interpretation, but what matters is continued empirical research on encounters between texts and audiences to reveal the parameters within which meaning is made. Crucially, like Horton (2019), she sees this exercise as complementary to, rather than incompatible with, analyses of how texts invite certain readings and interpretations over others. The thesis therefore integrates an analysis of the imaginative geographies of migration articulated in radio broadcasts with an analysis of listener responses. The latter interest in how radio is heard and imagined joins recent work in popular geopolitics that explores “how audiences interact with, experience, and understand popular culture” (Dittmer and Bos, 2019, p.56). This builds on feminist critiques of critical geopolitics in the late 1990s which argued that the field’s emphasis on “discourses and representation left geopolitics abstract and disembodied - literally devoid of people” (Dittmer and Bos, 2019, p.57). Methodological engagement with audiences, as well as texts, is therefore part of the effort to understand how people negotiate and make sense of geopolitical meaning.

The site of media production is equally absent from recent studies in popular geopolitics. This is surprising given that media geography emphasises the importance of considering the spaces, structures, and practices of production out of which imaginative geographies emerge (Craine, 2014). The thesis seeks to fill this lacuna and follows Rodgers (2014, p.69) in defining media production as something “enacted through

particular practices and material settings". His geographical approach builds on two recent theoretical turns in media studies towards understanding media as practices and the spatialities of media (Rodgers, 2018). This is reflected in Couldry's (2012) work, which conceptualises the media as a large domain of practices, and Fast et al.'s (2018, p.10) research, which argues "representations, media practices, and the media industry are shaped by space as well as shape space themselves". The latter invites geographers to explore the sites in which journalists gather their evidence and craft their output, while the former calls for engagement with journalists to examine how methods of reporting and production govern the radio broadcasts heard on air.

It is surprising that geographers have paid little attention to journalists and journalistic practices compared with the photographs, videos, and texts they have produced. Three notable exceptions include Toal's (1996) examination of Maggie O'Kane's dispatches for *The Guardian* from Bosnia in the 1990s, Pinkerton's (2013, p.448) analysis of "the role of journalists, and the practices of journalism, in constructing, interpreting and challenging geopolitical discourses", and Gasher's (2015, p.127) reflection on journalists as "cartographers" and "map-makers" who "forge geographies of news". All three authors highlight the power and partiality of the journalistic gaze and the importance of situated knowledge to forging geographical imaginations. The physical spaces that journalists operate in and report from have attracted even less interest. Fregonese and Ramadan (2015, p.793) build on this work to conceptualise hotels as "geopolitical sites [...] connected to broader architectures of security and insecurity, war- and peacemaking". Hotels, they suggest, are not neutral spaces of leisure and tourism, but important infrastructures in the journalistic reporting of war and conflict: "gathering places for the international media" and "essential

platforms for seeing and reporting war” (Fregonese and Ramadan, 2015, p.803). They cite the Bosnian War and Lebanese Civil War as specific contexts in which hotels were simultaneously safe havens for journalists to retreat to, spaces of encounter between journalists and ‘elite’ political actors, and informal production studios. By exploring how BBC radio production emerges through journalistic practices that are situated in and emerge through particular sites and spaces, the thesis adds to this nascent literature and sheds light on an undocumented part of radio geography.

## **2.8 The BBC and Radio 4**

Researching the site of production highlights a need to review existing work on the BBC and to reflect carefully on its institutional power. Approaching one hundred years since its foundation in 1922, the BBC is Britain’s leading public service broadcaster with national and international reach and recognition. Unsurprisingly, given its scale and cultural status at home and abroad, academics and journalists have sought to document the history and institutional power of the BBC, together with its identity and brand of impartial, independent journalism. Briggs’ (1985) official history of the BBC charts its development from the 1920s through to the 1970s. It is a pre-digital history that explores the BBC prior to the shift from analogue to digital media and resultant explosion in content and competition from alternative broadcasters at the end of the 20th Century. Higgins (2015) also delves into the origins of the BBC to understand its foundation on and claims to produce accurate, truthful, and impartial journalism. She traces the BBC’s emergence out of the Post Office in the early 1920s and the government’s scheme to license wireless sets to fund a British Broadcasting *Company*. We learn how a parliamentary committee in 1925 deemed a company that was

predicated on the accumulation of profit wholly unsuitable for public service broadcasting and so changed its status to a *corporation*. The BBC's predication on public service gave rise to its core and founding principles of independence and impartiality, and this thesis demonstrates how these values continue to govern the radio journalism it produces today.

My interest in geographies and practices of radio production resonates with Born's (2005) anthropological study of the BBC. Through ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Born (2005, p.5) offers "an inside portrait" of the BBC, in her words, "an anthropologist's view of what goes on behind the scenes". She delves into different departments and programme teams, tracing institutional changes to the BBC's structure and governance over time and speaking with the people who shape it, from journalists and producers to network controllers and senior management. Born's (2005) narrative is compelling, mixing academic analysis with empirical snapshots from her fieldwork. These "stories" - which consist of "interviews, dialogues and meetings, scenes observed, anecdotes and revelations, and excerpts from broadcasts and from other people's writings" - add colour to Born's (2005, p.20) analysis and immerse readers in the fabric and daily running of the BBC. I detail her work because it strengthens my interest in exploring the effects of journalistic practices and material settings of BBC radio production. Although not an ethnography, this thesis draws on interviews conducted with journalists, producers, editors, and senior leaders that collectively paint a picture of Radio 4 behind the microphone. Like early audience studies, Born (2005) focuses primarily on BBC television, which highlights room for further research on the inner workings of BBC radio. The thesis aims to fill this gap and

responds to Pinkerton's (2014, p.64) call for more work on the "spatial configurations" and "institutional practices" that determine the production of radio programmes.

Interestingly, it is the BBC World Service that has attracted most attention from media historians and geographers as a prism through which to examine the BBC and concurrent issues of identity, representation, translation, and voice (Webb, 2006; Gillespie, Webb, and Bauman, 2008; Gillespie, 2009; Hill; 2010). The network is framed as Britain's voice overseas and an expression of soft power, particularly due to past funding ties with the government. Originally conceived as the BBC Empire Service, the BBC World Service continued to receive financial input from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office until 2014, which has created an aura of intrigue and mystery appealing to researchers (Pinkerton and Dodds, 2009). Historical geographies of the BBC focus on particular empirical case studies - such as the Empire Service in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand in the 1930s (Potter, 2008), or Persian Service in Iran between 1941-1979 (Sreberny and Torfeh, 2008) - and expose how the post-war period meant early ideas of 'British' broadcasting had to be reimagined. Nationalist demands in Britain's colonies overseas prompted the BBC to redefine its conceptions of empire and rethink connections between place, identity, and belonging. Robertson (2008) highlights official policy documents within the BBC and the British Council that suggest the medium of radio was singled out for its capacity to help consolidate Britain's status as a world power after empire. The network's change of name from the Overseas to World Service in 1965 reflected the BBC's repositioning "in a global rather than imperial context" (Robertson, 2008, p.468).

The BBC, then, has historically performed and enacted a sense of British identity, not least through its connection to material exercises of power during empire, but domestically, too, the BBC continues to have symbolic power and recognition with audiences. Almost 80% of British consumers receive their news from the BBC and it remains, even in these turbulent times for journalism, one of the world's most trusted broadcasters and news providers (Ruddick, 2017; Nielsen, Schulz and Fletcher, 2020; Rusbridger, 2020a). Indeed, the Reuters Institute Digital News Report, which was published in June 2021, found that public trust in news coverage has grown during the Covid-19 global pandemic and that strictly regulated public service broadcasters, including the BBC, remain the most trusted news brands with audiences (Reuters Institute, 2021; Osborne, 2021). The BBC is also considered to have the potential to bind the nation together "in one time frame to communal experience" (Higgins, 2014); one need only think of the BBC's coverage of the London Olympics in 2012 or the collective viewing by millions of its popular terrestrial television programmes, such as *Strictly Come Dancing*, *Line of Duty*, and *Call the Midwife*. Higgins (2014) suggests the BBC is therefore a "carrier of British identity" and represents, alongside the NHS, "one of a dwindling number of institutions held in common in a non-commercialised civic space for the benefit of all". Although writing in *The Guardian* and therefore unsurprisingly in favour of a national institution at a time of commercial competition, she argues that the BBC remains a marker of British culture with the performative power to enact 'Britishness' and resonate with domestic and global audiences.

The power of the BBC to communicate and connect with audiences is particularly pertinent to research on Radio 4, which is the country's most popular speech radio station. Radio 4 replaced its predecessor, the BBC Home Service, in 1967 and over its

50-year history has attracted an average weekly listenership of almost 11 million people (Elmes, 2008; RAJAR, 2019). Despite its popularity, however, the station remains remarkably understudied. An exception are Pinkerton and Dodds (2009) who frame Radio 4 as an expression of banal geopolitics - in reference to the daily rituals of listeners who wake up to the morning *Today* programme and fall asleep to the nightly shipping forecast - but they do so to highlight the omnipresence of radio, rather than the particularities of Radio 4 broadcasting. In that sense, they follow Shingler and Wieringa (1998, p.ix) who suggest that radio “is such an everyday and familiar aspect of modern life that most of us take it entirely for granted, and in so doing, underestimate its power”. The same could be said of geographers who seem to have consigned radio to the heap of archaic and obsolete media relative to the allure of social media, films, and video gaming (Peters, 2018; Dittmer and Bos, 2019).

Less so within media and radio studies where the history and language of Radio 4 has attracted significant scholarly attention. Perhaps most notable is Hendy’s (2007) history of Radio 4, which examines the institutional character and development of the network from 1967-1997. Chignell (2009) also offers a historical account of Radio 4 but focuses on the current affairs programme, *Analysis*, between 1970-1983 to uncover its reportage of political events over time. Mitchell and Stewart (2017) take a different approach by scrutinising the linguistic choices of *Today* programme presenters to examine the extent to which they support or undermine the BBC’s editorial claims to impartiality. This echoes Hendy’s (2006, p.74) analysis of “bad language” on Radio 4 in the 1960s and 1970s, which reveals the tensions, debates, and anxieties around questions of language and tone within and outside of the BBC. It also resonates with Crisell (2006, p.9) who argues that the value of Radio 4 rests on its “analytical and

intellectual” tone and approach to subjects. This research therefore adds to existing work in media and radio studies by exploring the discursive, institutional, and affective power of Radio 4 broadcasts, whilst paying close attention to similar questions of accuracy, truth, and impartiality in the voices and practices of BBC journalists.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter has discussed critical debates, themes, and ideas in the literature that shape the theoretical framing of the thesis. It has drawn on work in migration studies, cultural, political, and media geography, popular geopolitics, and media studies to identify radio as an understudied space of knowledge production with the capacity to shape geographical imaginations. This literature review informs the overarching research aim of the thesis: namely, to understand how imaginative geographies of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe are constructed in Radio 4 journalism between January 2014 and March 2019. It also informs the framing of three research questions:

- RQ1. How are imaginative geographies constructed through sounds and voices in broadcasts?
- RQ2. How do organisational structures and journalistic practices at the BBC shape the production of broadcasts?
- RQ3. How, and to what effect, are broadcasts heard, interpreted, and imagined by listeners?

The thesis is structured around three empirical chapters that address each of these research questions and explore different types of radio power: namely, its narrative

power in broadcasts, institutional power which governs programme production, and affective, emotional, and experiential power through the responses of listeners. Following this, the thesis seeks to make three main contributions to cultural, political, and media geography.

First, by focusing on Radio 4's portrayal of Europe's migration 'crisis', the thesis responds to calls for analyses of forced migration in alternative media to newsprint and illustrates how contemporary radio journalism constructs imaginative geographies of migration through sounds and voices (Allen, Blinder, and McNeil, 2017). Second, examining organisational structures and journalistic practices of BBC radio production reveals some of the specific processes through which these imaginative geographies of migration are produced. Third, exploring listener responses to broadcasts answers Pinkerton and Dodds' (2009) call for a radio geopolitics that considers the affectivity of listening and reveals how listeners adjudicate between the narratorial, institutional, and affective power of radio. It therefore moves beyond existing research that focuses narrowly on textual and affective invitations in media to present a nuanced analysis of the complex ways in which listeners hear, interpret, and imagine audible representations of migration.

Finally, the thesis seeks to highlight the value of an inclusive methodology in media studies that integrates analyses of representation, production, and audience reception to better understand how radio constructs meaning, emerges out of particular organisational structures and journalistic practices, and shapes the geographical imaginations of listeners. The following chapter explores this methodology in depth.

## Methodology

### *Listening to BBC Radio 4*

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Geographical research on radio and sound is limited, as Chapter 2 has discussed. Pinkerton and Dodds (2009) point to a clear absence of interest in radio broadcasting and listening, and despite growing interest in sounds and sonic geographies, visual and textual media and methods continue to overshadow the aural. This is not to diminish past and recent work on music, theatre, dance, affect, and performance (Smith, 1997; Anderson, 2004; McCormack, 2008a; 2008b; Rogers, 2012; 2017; Veal, 2015), which has highlighted senses and methodologies beyond the visual and representational, but rather to suggest that aural media and ways of hearing remain remarkably understudied. Indeed, Whittaker and Peters (2021, p.130) lament that within the discipline, sound still “remains a marginal interest compared to other senses such as vision and touch” and as a result, “sonic methods have also been somewhat neglected”. Interestingly, Gallagher and Prior (2014, p.267) suggest that geographical research on sound to date has been “methodologically conventional”, reliant on familiar, well-rehearsed techniques of data collection, analysis, and (re)presentation, such as interviews, textual readings, and written academic publications. This thesis heeds their call to develop “phonographic methods” in geography that attend to the more-than-

textual and multisensory world around us by combining traditional research methods with an innovative approach to radio listenership (Gallagher and Prior, 2014, p.268).

First, radio broadcasts are understood in this thesis as a representational medium of knowledge production that portrays and animates spaces, places, and people through sounds and the spoken word. This framing of speech radio as a “sound text” (Cook, 2011, p.42) invites a close reading of broadcast transcripts but demands listening simultaneously to the sonic qualities and resonances of radio, including its voices, atmospheres, and soundscapes. Second, semi-structured interviews with BBC journalists, producers, editors, and senior leaders, although methodologically conventional, offer fresh insights into how broadcasts emerge out of particular organisational structures and settings, and the techniques of production and reportage that journalists use to immerse listeners in imaginative worlds over the airwaves. Indeed, no geographical studies to date provide a behind-the-scenes account of contemporary BBC radio journalism when the microphone is switched off. Third, gathering the diary responses of listeners, written in response to a digital playlist of broadcasts on migration, reflects an interest in detailing empirically how radio sparks geographical imaginations and, as I subsequently discovered, provokes “sonic affects, bodily sensations, and emotions” (Gallagher, Kanngieser and Prior, 2017, p.619). This mix of familiar and innovative methods is the focus of this chapter, which offers a methodological blueprint for geographers interested in studying the discursive, institutional, and affective power of radio.

The chapter is split into four subsections that: first, discusses the rationale behind and importance of studying Radio 4 and its recent journalism on Europe’s

migration 'crisis'; second, maps the overall research design around a three-pronged framework of production-text-audience that informs the thesis' three research questions and choice of qualitative research methods; third, outlines each of the three methods and explains how they correspond with the three empirical chapters; and fourth, discusses the thematic analysis that runs across the three data sets. The chapter concludes with some personal reflections on doctoral research in a pandemic before looking ahead to Chapter 4 and the imaginative geographies of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe articulated on air.

### **3.2 Locating and Working with Radio: Initial Considerations**

I began my doctoral research in October 2018 having just finished an MSc in Migration Studies, which reinforced the necessity and urgency of interrogating how cross-border movement and mobility is represented in social, political, and media discourses. Britain's decision to leave the EU had pushed migration high up the political agenda and Brexit continued to dominate the news headlines, bulletins, and television reports. Although somewhat supplanted by countless discussions of withdrawal agreements, the European single market, and Irish backstop, there was little doubt that the journalistic story of more than a million people arriving and claiming asylum in Europe - in the continent's most acute migration 'crisis' since 1945 - had played a critical role in the lead up to Britain's EU referendum vote on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 (Outhwaite, 2019; Lutz, 2021). Yet the story of migration was, and still is not, over. Beneath the surface were stories of families stuck on Greek islands awaiting asylum, European states refusing entry to migrant search and rescue vessels, and people continuing to make desperate attempts to cross the English Channel (Rankin and Smith, 2018; Tondo, 2018; Mohdin, 2018).

Meanwhile, on the opposite side of the Atlantic, reports rolled in of the, then, President of the United States, Donald Trump, threatening on Twitter to close the country's southern border with Mexico due to an approaching caravan of Central American migrants from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala (Durkin and Lakhani, 2018). The entanglement of migration, displacement, and Western geopolitics was clear, as was the power of political and media rhetoric and imagery to represent mobility within visual, discursive, and aural frames of reference. It is within this context that I embarked on a thesis exploring Radio 4's coverage of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe.

BBC Radio 4, as explained previously, was selected as the UK's pre-eminent speech radio network with the largest listenership for a non-music radio station (RAJAR, 2019). Its predication on speech, rather than music, and its diversity of programming made it an intriguing site of geographical knowledge production around Europe's migration 'crisis'. Its special status in radio news journalism is recognised by Pinkerton and Dodds (2009, p.16) who suggest that "few people interested in the daily machination of domestic politics would fail to tune in and listen to the morning news programme 'Today' on Radio 4". The network's four daily news programmes - *Today*, the *World at One (WATO)*, *PM*, and *The World Tonight* - cover domestic and international affairs, which characterises Radio 4 as an important space of political debate and analysis, and highlights its potential for examining radio representations of migration. Yet beyond news and current affairs, Radio 4 offers a wide range of programmes, from history and culture through to arts and drama, which highlights the variety of analytical lenses through which journalists are able to examine migration, and the multiplicity of discourses, narratives, and imaginaries articulated in broadcasts.

It is important to note that the overwhelming majority of BBC radio is music-based - namely, Radio 1, Radio 2, Radio 3, 6Music, and BBC Local Radio - which meant that, at the beginning of the research process, The World Service, 5 Live, and Radio 4 stood out as stations predicated on the spoken word. This dominance of music in BBC radio output is reflected in the wider radio industry, which is populated by commercial stations that deliver music and entertainment: Heart Radio, Capital FM, Smooth Radio, Kiss FM, Virgin Radio, and Classical FM to name a few (YouGov, 2021). Notable exceptions are LBC, talkRADIO, and Times Radio which are all speech radio stations. Despite the strength and popularity of commercial rivals, however, the BBC remains a dominant force in British radio broadcasting due to the quality and diversity of its output and close connection to listeners through the compulsory license fee. Indeed, a recent Statista survey found that, as of the first quarter of 2020, the BBC commanded 4 of the top 5 radio stations in the UK based on weekly reach (Statista, 2021).

The World Service, 5 Live and BBC Local Radio were all considered in the early stages of research design as alternative or comparative objects of study to Radio 4. Chapter 2 evidenced how the BBC World Service has already attracted substantial academic attention around its history, global listenership, and geopolitical power (Webb, 2006; Gillespie, Webb, and Bauman, 2008; Gillespie, 2009; Hill, 2010). Nevertheless, its broadcasting remit, and size and geography of its audience, were appealing for a thesis concerned with BBC radio representations of forced migration to Europe. Indeed, there are interesting points of intersection between the World Service and Radio 4 with content shared and re-deployed across both networks through a collective Radio Current Affairs department. Investigation into the practicalities of studying the World Service, however, revealed a significant limitation: namely, that

broadcasts are catalogued online by programme name and date of broadcast with little or no reference to news item, subject, or theme. Identifying specific broadcasts for analysis on Europe's migration 'crisis' was therefore challenging without listening to hours of World Service content. The intention to study the responses of British listeners was also at odds with its predominantly international audience. A comparative study of representations and listener reception of the World Service and Radio 4 broadcasts, however, remains an exciting avenue for future research.

BBC Local Radio and 5 Live were also considered due to the different audiences they reach and their contrasting tones and styles of broadcasting relative to Radio 4. BBC Local Radio attracts localised listeners of C2DE social class - which is defined as skilled manual occupations, semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, and unemployed and lowest grade occupations (UK Geographics, 2014) - albeit of a similar age to Radio 4 listeners. While 5 Live attracts a more even spread of younger and older audiences interested in news and sport (BBC Trust, 2012). An online search revealed that my local station, BBC Radio Leicester, had produced an online catalogue of '100 Migration Stories' in 2014, which gathered the histories and experiences of people in the community (BBC Radio Leicester, n.d.). Rather than forced migration, however, this proved to be an audio bank of mixed migration stories to Leicester. I searched for similar initiatives across other BBC Local Radio stations - including Coventry given its status as a City of Sanctuary and participation in the government's 'Syrian Vulnerable People's Resettlement Scheme' (Coventry City Council, 2021) - and initially considered gathering the responses of recently resettled refugees to broadcasts on migration that aired on their local BBC radio station. However, online searches did not reveal any migration-specific content and demonstrated that BBC Local Radio and 5 Live broadcasts are also

catalogued online by date and presenter name alone. Furthermore, BBC Local Radio broadcasts are only available to listen to for a single month, thereby blocking access to programmes aired previously and, crucially for this research, during the peak of Europe's migration 'crisis'. Like the World Service, identifying broadcasts that covered forced migration and refugee settlement on either network would therefore have been extremely difficult without listening to hours of audio.

By contrast, Radio 4 catalogues most of its programmes online by theme or subject matter for an unlimited period on programme-specific webpages and the BBC Sounds platform, which ensured ease of access and enabled me to identify specific broadcasts on forced migration and refugee settlement. I therefore selected Radio 4 because of its audience reach, range of programming, and status in radio news journalism, but also because its broadcasts are archived online in a way that is easily accessible and searchable. Section 3.4 of this chapter will outline in detail the identification and selection of broadcasts on Europe's migration 'crisis', but first it is important to discuss how the BBC catalogues its content and why I created my own programme classification system for the purposes of this study.

The BBC categorises its radio and television output online in multiple ways. The BBC Programmes (n.d.) homepage lists eleven genres across radio and television that each have sub-divisions, from "comedy", "drama", and "entertainment" to "factual", "learning", and "sport". BBC Sounds organises its audio content into two categories - music and speech - the latter of which has 25 sub-divisions, again, spanning "arts", "history", and "life stories" through to "money", "politics", and "science and nature". BBC Sounds (n.d.) also directs listeners to the daily programme schedules of its national

and local radio stations. Selecting Radio 4, for example, invites users to listen live or catch up on previously aired broadcasts, which can also be accessed via Radio 4's online homepage. The programmes on offer are incredibly diverse, ranging from debates and hard news analysis to magazine-style programmes and long-form documentaries.

This maze of categorisation across different media in the BBC and between multiple programme genres on Radio 4 prompted me to create my own programme classification system. This sought to organise, and provide a straightforward way of understanding, the range of Radio 4 programming and diversity of broadcasts in my sample, together with their different formats and editorial remits. Once I had established that I could access Radio 4 broadcasts on forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe, I therefore made a distinction between 'news' and 'feature' programmes. Radio 4 has four daily news programmes: namely, the morning *Today*, lunchtime *World at One (WATO)*, afternoon *PM*, and evening *The World Tonight*. *The World Tonight*, which airs every weekday evening from 10-10.45pm, was chosen as a proxy for Radio 4's overall news output. The forthcoming sub-section 3.4.1 will explain and justify this decision.

I then coined the term 'features' as a catch-all for programmes on Radio 4 that fall outside of *The World Tonight*. I split 'features' into the following 6 categories of programmes according to their different formats and remits (Table 1): 'debates' are studio-based roundtables that feature interviewees with opposing points of view and discuss migration through a particular lens, such as morality, ethics, or security; 'monologues' are readings, speeches, or spoken-word addresses, sometimes to a live audience, by a single academic, author, or public policy figure; 'analysis' refers to studio-

based programmes that discuss a particular idea or issue, often with guests, and differ from debates in that they often take an informative, rather than confrontational, approach; ‘magazine’ captures general interest programmes that feature an item on migration within their regular format, for example, female experience of detention on *Woman’s Hour*; ‘documentary’ refers to in-depth, long-form broadcasts, around 30 minutes in length, that explore migration from a ground-level, eye-witness perspective; and ‘current affairs’ captures reportage from *Today*, *WATO*, or *PM* that have been re-packaged online for future listening, for example, Emma Jane Kirby’s series, the ‘Ordinary Italians’ in Lampedusa, for *PM*. *From Our Own Correspondent* (FOOC) is also included in this final current affairs category as a programme that features news journalists who often reflect on their personal experiences of reporting a story. In summary, this classification system aimed to cut through the BBC’s complex organisation of content and illuminate the range of programming across Radio 4 and within my final sample of broadcasts.

<b>‘Feature’ Classification</b>	<b>Example Programmes</b>
Debate	<i>Start the Week; Moral Maze; The Migration Debate</i>
Monologue	<i>Four Thought; Letters from Europe; Migrant Crisis: A Spy Master’s Perspective; A Point of View</i>
Analysis	<i>Time to Rethink Asylum?; Thinking Allowed; More or Less; The Briefing Room; Unreliable Evidence; How Syria Changed the World</i>
Magazine	<i>Woman’s Hour; The Food Programme; The Listening Project; The Media Show; The Bottom Line; Ramblings; The Untold; You and Yours; Sunday; One to One</i>
Documentary	<i>File on 4; Crossing Continents; A Not So Merry Migrant Christmas in Vienna; The Boat Children; Europe: Strangers</i>

	<i>on My Doorstep; The Day the Refugees Came; On Your Farm; Refugee Reminiscence</i>
Current Affairs	<i>Emma Jane Kirby's 'Ordinary Italians' for PM; iPM; From Our Own Correspondent</i>

**Table 1:** 'Feature' Programme Classification

### 3.3 Research Design

The thesis is designed around an analytical framework of production-text-audience that informs the framing of the thesis' three research questions and selection of qualitative methods. This tripartite framework is embedded in critical debates in cultural and media studies that wrestle with where meaning resides and how media should be studied. Livingstone (2005) explains how Hall's (1980) influential encoding and decoding model, cited in Chapter 2, emerged in response to early communication research that proposed a linear, rather than circulatory, process of media transmission from sender to receiver, and emphasised actors rather than processes. Geomedia is a recent paradigm that similarly challenges the unidirectionality of producer to consumer in an age of "new participatory media cultures", where audiences have turned creators of content (Fast et al., 2018, p.61; Gershberg, 2018). Fast et al. (2018, p.61) suggest the umbrella framework of production-text-audience is being subsumed by "cultures of circulation" that unsettle traditional sites of production. This seems attuned to the contemporary moment where 'vertical' journalism is being replaced by more 'horizontal' participatory journalism (Rusbridger, 2018), and where clear distinctions between producers and audiences are blurring in the context of social media platforms, such as *Facebook*, *YouTube*, and *Twitter* (Rose, 2016). Geomedia shares a theoretical and epistemological affinity with non-mediacentric media studies that, again, seeks to shift the focus and

object of enquiry from media texts and processes of production to everyday practices, experiences, and engagements (Couldry, 2004; Morley, 2007; Krajina, Moores, and Morley, 2014; McQuire, 2016).

Downgrading textual analysis, however, misses its importance for exposing the discursive power of media representations and its potential to reveal alternative ways of seeing, thinking about, and imagining the world. After all, decoding media texts does not claim to identify a singular interpretation to which all audiences ascribe, but rather offers readings that shed light on the discursive framing of a subject, together with broader themes and social contexts (Cloke et al., 2004). Moreover, this thesis focuses on BBC broadcast radio rather than participatory journalism and therefore retains a strong interest in the power of public service broadcasters to shape the geographical imaginations of their audiences.

The tripartite framework of production-text-audience offers an attractive blueprint for exploring the discursive, institutional, and affective power of Radio 4. Harrison and Burgess (1994, p.292) were the first to follow this three-pronged approach in geography to illuminate:

“how nature conservation issues are framed in the mass media and the transformations in meaning that occur in the circuit of communication over time: from source (such as a non-governmental organization (NGO)), through the production of news stories and the encoding of meanings within media texts themselves, to the decoding of texts by different groups of consumers within the contexts of their everyday lives”.

The influence of Hall’s (1980) encoding/decoding model on their work is clear and informs their methodology: first, analysing discourses of nature conservation in national newspapers, television, and radio broadcasts; second, conducting interviews with

journalists and conservationists who articulated, and encoded, these discourses; and third, engaging with local residents to understand the reception, and decoding, of these discourses. This early application of the framework in geography speaks to its value for examining discursive constructions of migration in BBC radio journalism. This is not to call for a return to old or outdated methodologies, but to recognise its continued relevance for studying a public service broadcaster, like the BBC, which operates hierarchically, mostly through unidirectional channels, and where formal roles of editor, producer, and journalist still remain.

The thesis' research design is also informed by Chung (2017, p.9) who calls for integrating analyses of texts, production, and audience reception to repair a "divisive gap" in media studies that separates out questions of representation from agents and methods of production and reception. Following Harrison and Burgess (1994), the thesis shuffles the sequencing of the tripartite framework to reposition production as a way of contextualising and explaining the imaginative geographies of migration identified in broadcasts. Moving an analysis of production *after* an analysis of radio broadcasts anticipates any potential charge of perpetuating a linear model of media transmission and communication by reframing production as a way of understanding the processes that shape the narratives and imaginaries heard on air. Whilst aware of the framework's limitations - failing to capture the onward circulation of imaginaries by listeners through social media, for example - it provides a compelling methodological blueprint for examining BBC radio journalism and its capacity to shape geographical imaginations.

This thesis therefore follows the same tripartite structure and order as Harrison and Burgess (1994). First, broadcasts on Radio 4 are analysed as texts of the spoken

word that have the narrative power to shape how listeners understand and imagine forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe. The centrality of sounds and the spoken word in constructing and animating these narratives also sparks an interest in the sonic and affectual qualities of radio. This includes the inclusion or silencing of different voices, together with their tone and modulation, as well as the recording of sounds that serve to orientate listeners, evoke a visceral sense of place, and produce immersive, affective soundscapes with the power to transport listeners to imaginary worlds over the airwaves. Second and following Rodgers (2018), media production is defined as a process shaped by organisational structures and performed through journalistic practices, which are located in different sites, spaces, and settings. Examining structures and practices of BBC radio production will contextualise and explain the diversity of representations across Radio 4 and illustrate how imaginative geographies are shaped by internal divisions, an organisational hierarchy, professional codes of BBC journalism, formal and informal production spaces, and techniques of journalistic storytelling. Finally, engagement with listeners reflects an interest in “the productive effects” of media and an awareness of audiences as active, interpretive communities, rather than passive, disengaged consumers (Rose, 2016, p.254). The chapter goes on to discuss how this research design corresponds with the thesis’ three research questions, qualitative methods, and empirical chapters.

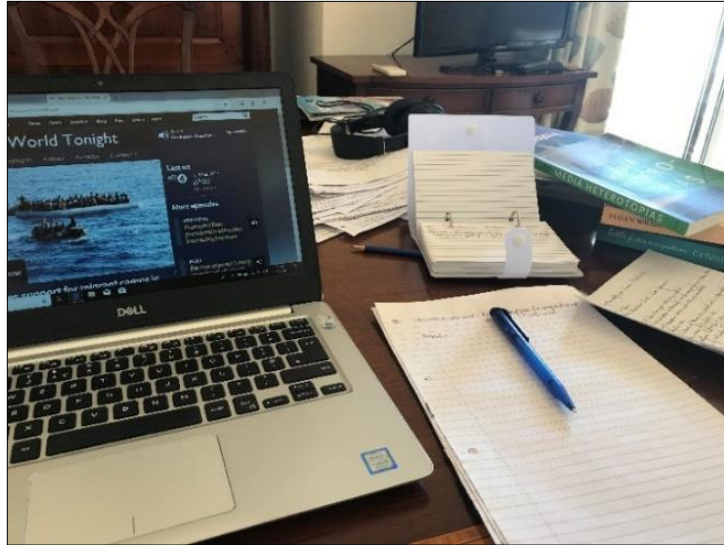
### **3.4 Researching BBC Radio 4: Methods**

#### *3.4.1 Identifying Radio Broadcasts*

To answer RQ1. about how imaginative geographies are constructed through sounds and voices, I identified 172 broadcasts on forced migration and refugee settlement in

Europe across Radio 4's 'news' and 'feature' programmes via the BBC's online programme archive (see Appendix A). As mentioned previously, *The World Tonight* was selected as a proxy for Radio 4's overall news output. *The World Tonight* is forty-five minutes in length and the most international in outlook of Radio 4's daily news programmes. Indeed, it is aligned closely with *Newshour*, its "sister" programme on the BBC World Service (Waterson, 2019), which made it an attractive site for analysing narratives and imaginaries of migration. Past episodes are stored online, ensuring ease of access via BBC Sounds, and crucially, are catalogued by date and headline news issue. This enabled identification of broadcasts by theme and subject matter, which was essential in order to gather a purposive sample on forced migration and refugee resettlement in Europe. By contrast, BBC Sounds excludes past editions of the *Today* programme beyond one calendar month, possibly due its 3-hour length, and categorises episodes by broadcast date alone. The same applies to *WATO* and *PM*. These factors supported the selection of *The World Tonight* as a proxy for Radio 4's news output.

If there was any ambiguity around *The World Tonight's* headline or stories covered in the broadcast, I listened to the presenter's introduction to the programme together with the news bulletin (Figure 3). This emphasis on *The World Tonight's* main news coverage, which drove the sampling strategy, means I focused on broadcasts in which forced migration to, or refugee settlement in, Europe was one of the dominant news stories of the day. Fleeting references to migration may therefore have fallen outside the sample, which underlines its partiality. Between January 2014 and March 2019, 86 editions of *The World Tonight* were identified, which are categorised by year in Table 2.



**Figure 3:** Listening to and identifying broadcasts in *The World Tonight*'s coverage

<b>Year of Broadcast</b>	<b>Number of Editions of <i>The World Tonight</i></b>
2014	16
2015	36
2016	23
2017	5
2018	5
January-March 2019	1

**Table 2:** Editions of *The World Tonight* by Year of Broadcast

As explained earlier in the chapter, Radio 4's four daily news programmes sit alongside an eclectic mix of programmes with different formats, lengths, and lenses through which forced migration and refugee settlement are approached and examined. The majority of programmes are catalogued online by subject matter as well as broadcast date, making possible the identification of a sample of broadcasts on Europe's

migration ‘crisis’ that was accessible with no permissions required. Relevant programmes were discovered on BBC Sounds and its predecessor interface, *iPlayer Radio*, using key search terms: these were ‘forced migration’, ‘irregular migration’, ‘undocumented migration’, ‘migrants’, ‘refugees’, ‘asylum seekers’, ‘Europe’s migration crisis’, ‘Europe’s refugee crisis’, ‘Europe’s migrant crisis’, ‘refugee settlement’, and ‘displacement’. One limitation of this sampling strategy is that the search terms may have excluded some broadcasts, such as the history of the Syrian conflict or displacement in Lebanon, as a result of how broadcasts are described and catalogued by journalists and producers at the BBC. However, the research does not claim to analyse all Radio 4 journalism on migration and a targeted sampling strategy was therefore appropriate. 86 ‘feature’ programmes were identified between January 2014 and March 2019, which are captured in Tables 3 and 4.

<b>Year of Broadcast</b>	<b>Number of ‘Feature’ Broadcasts</b>
2014	4
2015	22
2016	16
2017	21
2018	20
January-March 2019	3

**Table 3:** ‘Feature’ Programmes by Year of Broadcast

<b>'Feature' Classification</b>	<b>Number of Broadcasts</b>	<b>Example Programmes</b>
Debate	4	<i>Start the Week; Moral Maze; The Migration Debate</i>
Monologue	7	<i>Four Thought; Letters from Europe; Migrant Crisis: A Spy Master's Perspective; A Point of View</i>
Analysis	7	<i>Time to Rethink Asylum?; Thinking Allowed; More or Less; The Briefing Room; Unreliable Evidence; How Syria Changed the World</i>
Magazine	21	<i>Woman's Hour; The Food Programme; The Listening Project; The Media Show; The Bottom Line; Ramblings; The Untold; You and Yours; Sunday; One to One</i>
Documentary	17	<i>File on 4; Crossing Continents; A Not So Merry Migrant Christmas in Vienna; The Boat Children; Europe: Strangers on My Doorstep; The Day the Refugees Came; On Your Farm; Refugee Reminiscence</i>
Current Affairs	30	<i>Emma Jane Kirby's 'Ordinary Italians' for PM; iPM; From Our Own Correspondent</i>

**Table 4:** 'Feature' Programme Classification

It is worth noting that my previous undergraduate and Masters research explored representations of Europe's migration 'crisis' on two specific Radio 4

programmes: namely, selected broadcasts of *From Our Own Correspondent* between 2014 and 2016, and the WATO's documentary series, '*A New Life in Europe: The Dnie Family*', broadcast between 2015 and 2017. These 89 broadcasts were excluded from this thesis' sample because they had been analysed previously, which highlights a potential limitation of the study. However, the size of the thesis' dataset, spanning 172 broadcasts across 5 years and 3 months of broadcasting and the full range of Radio 4 programme genres, highlights the scale of analysis undertaken and counterbalances this potential limitation. To include the 89 broadcasts would also have been discordant with the core ambition of the research around how imaginative geographies of forced migration are constructed through sounds and voices in radio journalism, as opposed to a comprehensive analysis of *all* Radio 4 broadcasts.

Audio archives pose a challenge for academic studies of radio as a textual and affective medium. Indeed, the ephemeral nature of audio, invisible and ungraspable relative to material texts that can viewed, touched, and examined by researchers, perhaps explains why sound is a neglected area in geography (Gallagher, Kanngieser, and Prior, 2017). Transcripts, though artificial given that radio is heard and not read, facilitate a robust analysis of the discursive content of broadcasts. The size of the dataset and amount of transcription required led me to experiment with a range of online transcription services that use voice recognition software to automatically transcribe audio recordings. After trialling four services, I found that TRINT provided the most accurate transcripts, particularly when responding to broadcasts with accented voices and multi-layered dialogue. Their transcripts also included timestamps and speaker changes, and organised the text into clear, delineated paragraphs (see Appendix B).

To upload audio files to TRINT, each broadcast had to be digitally recorded and converted to an MP3 or M4a audio file because it was not possible to transfer broadcasts directly from BBC Sounds. I therefore listened to, and digitally recorded, each of the 172 broadcasts using my iPhone's Voice Memo app. I then uploaded the audio files to TRINT's online portal before the software then converted each file into a written transcript for analysis. Whilst online transcription services raise ethical issues around privacy and the use of audio to improve language recognition technologies, BBC radio broadcasts are publicly available and the size of my dataset, reaching an estimated 150 hours of audio, meant it was impossible to transcribe each programme by hand. The transcriptions generated a tangible dataset equivalent to researchers using a textual library or historical archive for their sources and materials. The accuracy of the written transcripts and speed at which they were produced highlights the value of online transcription software in qualitative research and particularly, radio geography.

These transcripts enabled me to follow the methodology adopted in my previous research on radio whereby I simultaneously listened to and read written transcripts of broadcasts, annotating in ambient sounds, music, and protracted pauses. This interrogation of language, imagery, and representation reflects an awareness of radio as a popular medium of mass communication with significant narrative power, while listening simultaneously to the audio ensures that voice, tone, sound, and affect are given equal attention.

#### *3.4.2 Semi-structured Interviews*

To answer RQ2., I conducted 17 semi-structured interviews with journalists, editors, producers, commissioners, and senior leaders, within and outside of the BBC, to

elucidate how organisational structures and journalistic practices shape the production of broadcasts (see Appendix C). Interviewees were chosen according to a number of factors: namely, their professional engagement with migration; the programmes they had presented, produced, edited, or commissioned; the different ways in which journalists work, whether deployed overseas as a foreign correspondent, based in the newsroom in Broadcasting House, or a freelance journalist external to the BBC; and if possible, different levels of seniority, from journalists and producers through to senior editors and commissioners. Guided by these criteria, I took an iterative approach to interviewee recruitment and followed a process of snowball sampling. That is to say, I was informed by my analysis of the broadcasts, which identified key programmes of interest and journalists who frequently engaged with or reported on Europe's migration 'crisis', but was also open to interviewees putting me in touch with their colleagues. Whilst aware of the limitations of this sampling strategy, including bias and no guarantee of cooperation, it enabled me to recruit interviewees who may otherwise have been difficult to reach and make use of journalists' extensive contact networks. It also proved a natural rather than forced extension to each interview, as interviewees often asked who I had spoken to and offered to put me in touch with relevant colleagues. Analysing the broadcasts prior to the interviews gave me a comprehensive overview of Radio 4's migration coverage and enabled me to make connections between their interviewee suggestions and my own target sample. The final sample of 17 interviewees is captured in Table 5 and Appendix C.

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Programmes</b>
Helen Boaden	Former Director of BBC News, Director of Radio, and Controller of Radio 4	
Gwenyth Williams	Former Controller of Radio 4	
Joanna Carr	Head of Current Affairs	
Hugh Levinson	Head of Radio Current Affairs	
Bridget Harney	Editor and Commissioner	<i>Crossing Continents and Assignment on The World Service</i>
Anna Korycinska	Output Editor	<i>The World Tonight</i>
Ritula Shah	Presenter	<i>The World Tonight</i>
Robin Lustig	Former Presenter	<i>The World Tonight</i>
Andrew Hosken	Reporter	<i>The World Tonight</i>
Emma Jane Kirby	Reporter and former foreign correspondent in Europe and Paris	<i>World at One, PM, and Broadcasting House, From Our Own Correspondent</i>
Jenny Hill	BBC Berlin Correspondent	<i>From Our Own Correspondent, The World Tonight</i>
James Reynolds	BBC News Journalist	<i>The World Tonight</i>
Chris Morris	BBC News correspondent, former foreign correspondent in Europe	<i>BBC Reality Check, The World Tonight</i>
Chris Bowlby	Freelance journalist and former BBC journalist	<i>Europe: Strangers on My Doorstep</i>
Sophie Baukham	Senior Journalist and Planner at Radio 4	<i>World at One, PM, and Broadcasting House, The World Tonight</i>
Shabnam Grewal	BBC Producer in TV and Radio	<i>Europe: Strangers on My Doorstep</i>
Maria Margaronis	Freelance Journalist	<i>Crossing Continents, Europe: Strangers on My Doorstep</i>

**Table 5:** Table of BBC and Freelance Journalist Interviewees

Emailing journalists had a high response rate and enabled me to set up interviews. Awareness of the BBC email address format from my previous research facilitated this process. A small minority of those contacted via email did not respond or

declined to take part. When I could not find a personal email address or needed to approach freelance journalists who work outside of the BBC, I made contact through direct private message on Twitter. Attending an Oxford University 'Women and Leadership in Media' event at Magdalen College also gave me the opportunity to approach a former senior manager at the BBC. Exchanging contact details enabled me to set up an interview and the interviewee proved an invaluable gatekeeper to other senior leadership colleagues. A mixture of approaches therefore proved necessary to maximise interviewee recruitment. Overall, I succeeded in meeting my initial criteria and recruited a good spread of interviewees: from former Controllers of Radio 4 and senior editors and commissioners, through to journalists and producers across *The World Tonight*, and documentary series of interest, such as *'Europe: Strangers on My Doorstep'*.

Semi-structured interviews were an appropriate method given their purpose is to elucidate personal experiences and reflections, and fill a gap in knowledge or understanding (Valentine, 2005). This is pertinent given the difficulties of gaining an insight into BBC radio 'behind the scenes' without speaking to those involved in production and reportage. Semi-structured interviews follow predetermined questions and themes but are flexible in lines of enquiry, encouraging interviewees to develop points of interest (Dunn, 2010). Prior to each interview, I prepared a list of ten to fifteen questions tailored to each interviewee and ordered the questions into three or four main themes (see Appendix D). Longhurst (2010, p.105) suggests that for semi-structured interviews to be "conversational and informal in tone", they must progress from a 'warm up' phase to more detailed, in-depth dialogue. After discussing and completing the university ethics and consent forms, I therefore began by establishing

the professional biographies of journalists and the commissioning process behind selected broadcasts. The main focus of the interview depended on whether I was speaking to a journalist, producer, editor or senior commissioner but was centred around elucidating processes and personal experiences of radio production. This included questions about their role and aims of a programme, styles of reporting and different ways of working, how contributors were recruited, and personal reflections on Radio 4 and its coverage of Europe's migration 'crisis'. Asking interviewees to describe a typical day or walk through how a programme was made proved fruitful in revealing geographies and temporalities of radio production. Insights therefore emerged through free-flowing conversations that were guided by pre-determined questions and themes.

Longhurst (2010) underlines the importance of setting to conducting semi-structured interviews. I conducted the interviews in a range of locations that were shaped by the schedules of interviewees and, from March 2020 onwards, the global pandemic which prohibited travel. Six interviews were conducted in person. Although "neutral, informal" places are preferable (Longhurst, 2010, p.110), three interviews were held in and around Broadcasting House in London. Prior to the interviews, I was aware of how locations can reinforce asymmetrical relations of power between participants and academic researchers, potentially leading to "studying up" or exploitative relationships (Dowling, 2010, p.32). Meeting in Broadcasting House, however, had the advantage of enabling me to see studios and the newsroom, and connect with potential interviewees (Figure 4). Cafés adjacent to Broadcasting House raised additional issues of sound quality and I therefore tried to choose quieter areas and position the microphone close to the interviewee. One interview was conducted at the interviewee's home in London and on this occasion, I ensured I was accompanied to

and from their house. I was aware that being a guest sets up an unequal power dynamic, but never felt unable to ask the questions I had planned. Finally, two interviews were conducted at my college, St John's, in Oxford, which reverses relations of power by repositioning me as a host and researcher. A study room in the college library proved a quiet space for recording these conversations.



**Figure 4:** Fieldwork at the BBC: Outside Broadcasting House, the Newsroom, *PM* with Evan Davies, and *Woman's Hour* with Jane Garvey

Power dynamics of space that are exemplified in in-person interviews were overcome in telephone and video interviews. Eleven interviews were held remotely to fit with the time schedules of interviewees, overcome barriers of distance, and adapt to the national lockdown in March 2020. I used my iPhone to ensure that conversations could be heard over loudspeaker and recorded using a Sony handheld device when permission was granted. For virtual interviews conducted on Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Skype, I positioned the device on my keyboard and stored the audio files on a secure, password-protected harddrive. Consent forms had to be emailed prior to our conversation, which occasionally raised the challenge of ensuring that they were returned. It proved more straightforward to present copies of the forms at the start of in-person interviews and explain to interviewees why they were necessary.

Virtual interviews were easier to conduct than phone interviews as I was able to pick up on visual cues and body language, which gave me the confidence to allow for longer silences and pauses between questions and answers. This proved a challenge in phone conversations, particularly in the 'warm up' phase when getting to know the interviewee and learning their pattern of speech. Phone signals often dipped in and out or were unclear, which raised additional challenges of asking interviewees to repeat a sentence, and sometimes affected the sound quality of the recording. Occasionally, interviewees would have a limited time window for the interview, meaning it was essential to be aware of timings and decide key questions prior to the conversation. An advantage of remote phone calls, however, was having the interview questions printed in front of me, which enabled me to track the subjects and themes covered without being concerned about maintaining eye contact. The quality of digital recording technology also meant that conversations could be conducted remotely with relative

ease and saved on travel costs and time. Nevertheless, I preferred conducting interviews in person as I was able to build greater rapport with interviewees and enjoyed the experience of visiting and observing their place of work.

Regardless of whether the interviews were conducted in-person or remotely, I noted thoughts and emerging themes at the end of each interview. This informal notetaking is a form of analysis that enables researchers to document striking observations and reflections on the tone and direction of the conversation in its immediate aftermath (Longhurst, 2010). Whilst this often happened on the train home, rather than directly after the interview, or a few hours after the phone call, it proved a useful exercise for recapping the interview and remembering key moments and highlights of the conversation.

I transcribed the 17 interviews in preparation for analysis. Uploading each of the audio files to a Sony player enabled me to alter the speed of the recording and proved invaluable in facilitating audibility, comprehension, and simultaneous typing. An onscreen playback bar in Microsoft Word enabled me to pause and rewind the audio and relisten to complex passages that proved difficult to type in real time. Transcription was valuable because it requires careful and repeated listening that fosters deep engagement and familiarisation with the material. It is a slow, methodical process that transported me imaginatively back to the interview and facilitated a forensic reading and understanding of the text. It negated the risk of jumping to premature, unsubstantiated conclusions and enabled me to identify unanticipated findings that might not otherwise have been instantly apparent. There were, however, a number of challenges, including deciphering certain passages of audio obscured by external noise.

Idiosyncrasies of speech and free-flowing conversation also made it difficult to type fragmented sentence structures that were punctuated by hesitations and pauses in flow of thought. I found it a time consuming and repetitive task that necessitated frequent breaks. Switching between transcription and analysis helped to keep the process as fresh and engaging as possible. It became clear that while transcription generates a large volume of material, it is not an end in itself and requires thorough analysis and interpretation. Transcription is therefore only a preparatory stage to the main task of ordering, making sense of, and reflecting on the content of the interviews.

### *3.4.3 The Playlist-Diary Method for Radio Listenership*

The third and final method, which addresses RQ3., makes an innovative methodological contribution to radio geography and reflects my interest in engaging with listeners and analysing their responses to selected broadcasts on Europe's migration 'crisis'. Dittmer (2007a, p.265) stresses the importance of studying how texts of the written or spoken word are consumed, citing Iser (1978, p.19) who suggests it is only then "the text begins to unfold its potential; it is in the reader that the text comes to life". This observation sparked my interest in exploring how radio similarly comes to life through the geographical imaginations of its listeners. Despite recent interest in sonic and affective geographies, acts of listening remain under-researched. This created an exciting opportunity to develop a qualitative approach to studying radio listenership aimed at illuminating how broadcasts are heard, interpreted and imagined.

Prior to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, I planned to carry out the diary-photograph-interview method to examine how selected broadcasts were interpreted by listeners and the spatialities produced through different modes of

listening. This was an innovative approach, which adapted the use of participant diaries in social science research on environmental behaviour and personal energy consumption to a radio listenership setting (Zimmerman and Wieder, 1977; Jacelon and Imperio, 2005; Reid, Hunter, and Sutton, 2011). I planned to recruit participants in person in Oxford and ask them to complete a reflective diary in response to a digital playlist of broadcasts. Inspired by Latham (2003), I planned to provide listeners with a disposable camera to photograph the spaces in which they listened to the playlist, whether in the home, workplace, or on the move. Participant photography added a performative element and offered a creative opportunity to capture spatialities of listening comparable to participant observation. Moreover, it re-positioned diary-making as a form of “performance-cum-reportage” that aimed to capture the immediacy of listener responses and stimulate listener imaginations (Latham, 2003, p.2004). I planned to hold follow-up interviews with audio and photo elicitation to probe ideas in the diaries, elicit personal reflections, and develop a nuanced understanding of spatialities of listening. Audio clips for elicitation were going to be broadcast extracts from the playlist and photos would be those taken by participants. The interviews hoped to function as a “reperformance”, revisiting and recounting the listening process and the production of spatialities (Latham, 2003, p.2002). This followed Gibson et al. (2013, p.12) who suggest interviews are a form of co-analysis “where the interviewer learns from the participant how the image was created, the motivation for including it, and what it represents for them”. Follow-up interviews therefore promised to develop a critical insight into the geographies of listening to radio.

A pilot study conducted in February 2020 with 20 colleagues, friends, and family tested the feasibility and practicality of the digital playlist and diary aspects of the

method. The demographic and radio listenership profile of the 15 respondents who completed the pilot study is captured in Table 6. Because the main purpose of the pilot, at this stage, was to trial and receive feedback on the playlist and diary, participants were chosen within my circle of contacts, within and outside of my geography department, rather than on the basis of particular demographics, such as age, gender, or radio listening habits.

	<b>Radio 4 Listeners, aged 45-65</b>	<b>Radio 4 Listeners, aged 20-45</b>	<b>Non/Occasional Radio 4 Listeners, aged 20-65</b>
<b>Number of Respondents</b>	5	3	7
<b>Gender</b>	4 Male, 1 Female	3 Female	3 Male, 4 Female
<b>Age</b>	4 aged 50-64, 1 aged 65+	3 aged 20-34	7 aged 20-34

**Table 6:** Pilot Sample

The first step of designing the pilot was to create a digital playlist of broadcasts. I selected 12 broadcasts between 5 and 30 minutes in length, which ranged from extracts of *The World Tonight's* migration reportage to 'feature' programmes, such as *Ramblings* and *Crossing Continents*. A complete list of the 12 broadcasts included in the playlist is captured in Table 7 and Appendix E. I aimed to reflect the diversity of Radio 4 programming, and therefore included a mixture of formats, perspectives, and themes. I also sought to loosely trace a story of forced migration to and refugee settlement in Europe thereby featuring broadcasts from across the 2014-2019 time period. Broadcasts were also selected on the basis of subtle and overt appeals to the geographical

imaginings of listeners. Clips were created for a minority of broadcasts to ensure the playlist was a reasonable length at 2 hours 20 minutes, but care was taken to ensure that editing did not obscure, dilute, or change the meaning of broadcasts in a way that could mislead listeners.

The playlist was curated on the audio hosting platform, SoundCloud, which enabled me to upload broadcasts with detailed information on audio length, original broadcast date, programme title, and subject matter. SoundCloud was selected on the basis of its clean, interactive interface, ease of use, and because it allowed me to create a private playlist, accessible by URL link, which was available only to chosen participants. Prior to uploading audio to SoundCloud, I consulted the Education Recording Agency license, held by the University of Oxford, which permits external use of radio programmes for educational purposes. I cited this license and included an additional disclaimer that made clear the research was independent of the BBC. I also provided a URL link to the original Radio 4 broadcasts, which are available on BBC Sounds or iPlayer Radio. A SoundCloud ‘Pro’ subscription package provided unlimited audio uploads, replay and rewind tools, and generated feedback statistics, such as the number of listens. Figure 5 provides illustrative screenshots of the playlist on SoundCloud.

<b>Broadcast</b>	<b>Original Date of Broadcast</b>	<b>Broadcast Length</b>	<b>Full Programme or Clip</b>
1. Emma Jane Kirby’s dispatch for <i>From Our Own Correspondent</i>	14.02.2015	5 minutes	Clip
2. <i>The World Tonight</i> - Migrants attempt to break into the Eurotunnel	28.07.2015	8 minutes	Clip

3. <i>Crossing Continents - A Mediterranean Rescue</i>	03.08.2015	28 minutes	Full
4. <i>The World Tonight - Special report on migrants in Calais</i>	23.12.2015	15 minutes	Clip
5. <i>The World Tonight - Riot police clash with migrants in 'jungle' camp</i>	29.02.2016	13 minutes	Clip
6. <i>The Untold: Child Rescue</i>	02.05.2016	28 minutes	Full
7. <i>The Listening Project - Zahra and Yousif</i>	14.04.2017	4 minutes	Full
8. <i>iPM - Part I: Migrants go to Greek school</i>	31.05.2017	9 minutes	Clip
9. <i>On Your Farm - Refugees and Bees</i>	14.01.2018	13 minutes	Clip
10. <i>Ramblings - Reigate, Surrey</i>	26.05.2018	9 minutes	Clip
11. <i>Jenny Hill's dispatch for From Our Own Correspondent</i>	30.06.2018	5 minutes	Clip
12. <i>A Point of View - Imagine</i>	29.07.2018	10 minutes	Full

**Table 7:** Digital Playlist of 12 Selected Broadcasts

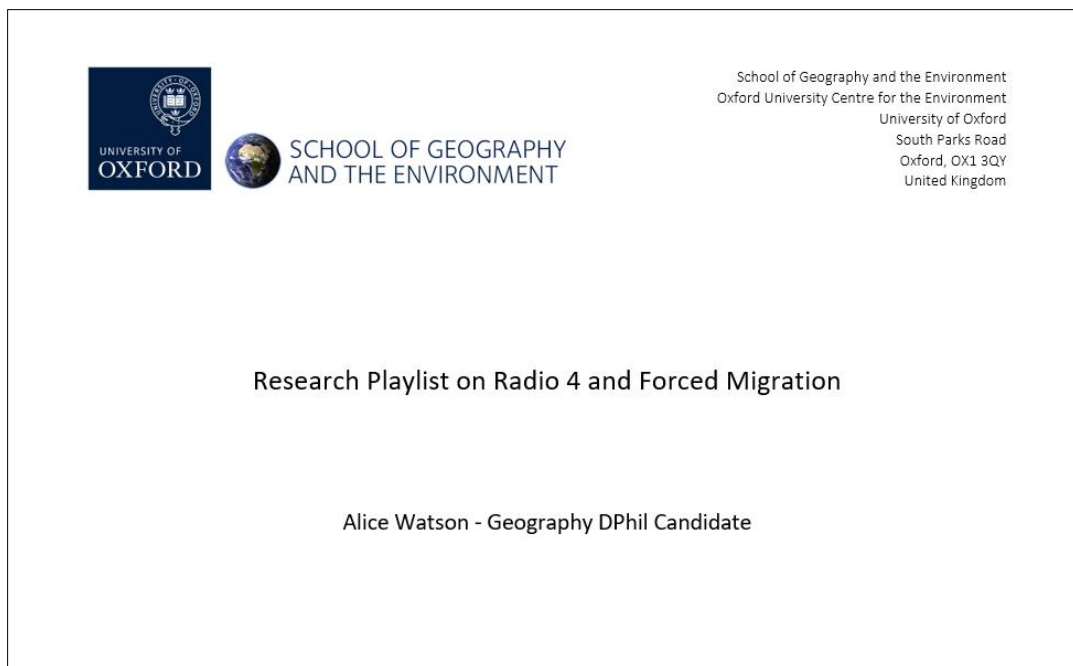
This screenshot shows a SoundCloud track page. At the top, the navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Stream', 'Library', a search bar, and a user profile for 'Alice'. The track title is 'Emma Jane Kirby - From Our Own Correspondent - 14.02.2015 - 5 minutes', posted 4 months ago. A waveform is visible below the title. To the right is the BBC Radio 4 logo. Below the track, there are options to 'Share', 'Edit', 'Add to Next up', 'Add to playlist', and 'More'. A lock icon indicates 'This track is private.' The track description reads: 'Emma Jane Kirby reports from on board a Frontex vessel in her dispatch for From Our Own Correspondent on February 14th 2015. "More and more migrants are trying to cross the Mediterranean and there are suggestions the new force charged with rescuing those in danger of drowning isn't up to the job. Emma Jane Kirby's been to Europe's southern shores to see how it's coping" (FOOC, 2015). Copyright for this material resides with BBC Radio 4. It is being shared under the ERA (Education Recording Agency) licence, held by the University of Oxford, that permits use of extracts of radio programmes broadcast in the UK. It is being shared with you solely for the purposes of academic research, which is independent of the BBC. The full programme can be accessed via this link: [www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b051r66r](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b051r66r)'. On the right sidebar, there are links to 'Alice Research Playlist on', 'Alice 2 - Research Playlist', and 'Alice Pilot - Research Play', with a '1 like' indicator.

This screenshot shows a SoundCloud playlist page. The navigation bar is identical to the first screenshot. The playlist title is 'Pilot - Research Playlist on Radio 4 and Forced Migration', posted 4 months ago. A circular badge indicates '12 TRACKS 2:27:50'. The BBC Radio 4 logo is on the right. Below the title, there are options to 'Share', 'Edit', 'Add to Next up', and 'Delete playlist'. A lock icon indicates 'This playlist is private.' The playlist contains 9 tracks, each with a BBC Radio 4 logo, a track number, title, date, duration, a lock icon, and a play count:

Track Number	Track Title	Date	Duration	Play Count
1	Emma Jane Kirby - From Our Own Correspondent	14.02.2015	5 minutes	212
2	The World Tonight	28.07.2015	8 minutes	116
3	Crossing Continents - A Mediterranean Rescue	03.08.2015	28 minutes	119
4	The World Tonight	23.12.2015	15 minutes	98
5	The World Tonight	29.02.2016	13 minutes	89
6	The Untold - Child Rescue	02.05.2016	28 minutes	90
7	The Listening Project - Zahra and Yousif	14.04.2017	4 minutes	85
8	iPM Part I - Migrants Go To Greek School	31.05.2017	9 minutes	77
9	On Your Farm - Refugees And Bees	14.01.2018	13 minutes	81

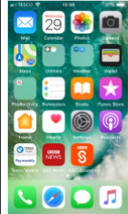
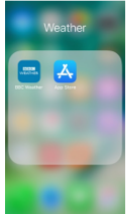
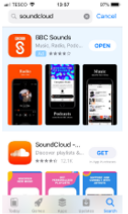
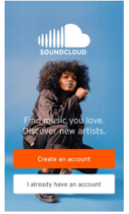
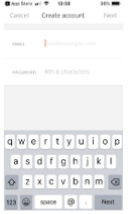

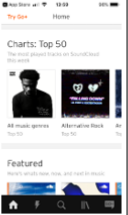
**Figure 5: Digital Playlist on SoundCloud**

The second step of designing the pilot was to create a digital reflective diary for listeners to record their responses and return via email. The diary included an introduction to the research, instructions on accessing the playlist, a questionnaire for collecting demographic and radio listening habit data, and 12 prompt questions to act as an initial guide (see Figure 6 and Appendix G). I made clear the option of accessing the playlist either via an email link or by downloading the free SoundCloud app. A large table provided space for listeners to write or type their responses with a single page devoted to each broadcast. The table included broadcast title, date, and length, whether it was a full programme or clip, and corresponded with the order of broadcasts in the playlist.



**Instructions:**

- I have selected twelve radio broadcasts for you to listen to across news and general interest programmes on Radio 4. I have put these all together in a 'playlist'. Please listen, in your own time, to each recording in the playlist. Table 1 lists each recording by programme, broadcast title, audio length, and date of broadcast. Please try to listen in chronological order, however, this is not essential. You can listen in one sitting or sporadically over the two-week period. The total length of the playlist is 2 hours 20 minutes.
- The playlist is collated on SoundCloud, which is an online audio hosting site. You can access the playlist in two ways: first, I have sent you a link via email. Just click on the link and you'll be taken straight to the playlist. Each time you want to listen, just click on this email link. Second, you are welcome to download the *free* SoundCloud app for ease of listening on your smartphone or tablet. But this is not mandatory. You will be asked to create an account, providing your name, age, and gender. Downloading the free app does not commit you to anything and you can delete the app after use, which also deletes your data. To download the app, just follow these 7 steps:

Step 1: Go to your home screen	Step 2: Select the App store	Step 3: Search for and click 'Get' SoundCloud (NOT BBC Sounds)	Step 4: Open SoundCloud and click 'Create an account'	Step 5: Fill in your email address and create a password	Step 6: Add your age and gender, and click 'Save'	Step 7: Success! Click on my email link, which will open in the app
						

**Listener Details**

1. Do you ever listen to the radio?

- Yes
- No

If Yes, which BBC radio stations do you listen to? (Please tick all that apply)

- BBC Radio 1
- BBC Radio 2
- BBC Radio 3
- BBC Radio 4
- BBC Radio 5 Live
- BBC 6 Music

Other (please state)

Speech Radio Stations

Music Radio Stations

Programme	Broadcast Title	Date of Broadcast	Length of Broadcast	Full Programme or Clip	Where you listened	Reflective Diary: Your Comments
From Our Own Correspondent	Emma Jane Kirby on board a Frontex ship	14/02/2015	5 minutes	Clip	At home sitting in living room	My immediate reaction was one of unease and concern- for the people having to endure these journeys to those patrolling the waters, carrying out a really difficult task. It was almost like listening to an historical novel being read on the radio – so evocative in describing the smells, heat and sounds of the conditions on board. It could almost have been describing a slave ship from Africa or a famine ship from Ireland. I soon got a bit lost in the statistics being quoted and feel the report lost the sense of human tragedy as the relentlessness of a problem was described in which it appeared Europe's politicians had no solutions to offer.

**Figure 6:** Example Reflective Diary

I gave pilot study participants 2 weeks to listen to the playlist and complete the reflective diary. Out of the 20 participants, 15 completed the diary within the agreed time period and following an email reminder after 11 days. The remaining 5 respondents who did not complete the study cited illness, travel, and exam preparation as reasons for lack of participation. The pilot was successful in proving the feasibility and practicality of the digital playlist and reflective diary. Participants were able to use SoundCloud, with no issues or concerns raised, and provided exceptionally detailed and thought-provoking responses in their diaries.

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and national lockdown in the UK in March 2020, however, forced me to revise my research question with its emphasis on spatialities of listening and exclude in-person participant recruitment and photography. All graduate students from the UK were advised to leave Oxford and on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, the country went into a national lockdown, which meant the diary-photograph-interview

method was no longer feasible. Despite no longer exploring where listeners tuned into the playlist, due to the restrictions on movement and uncertainties around the pandemic, I remained committed to studying how radio shapes geographical imaginations.

After discussion with my supervisors, I decided to adopt a slimmer version of the method I had originally proposed and which I had trialled in my pilot: namely, the playlist-diary method. The success of the pilot and quality of diary responses led my supervisors and I to agree that follow up interviews, which I initially considered conducting remotely on Skype during lockdown, were not, in fact, necessary. The depth and richness of the responses I received meant I was confident that my research objectives were met by the playlist and diaries (see Appendix G). That is to say, they provided ample evidence of how radio sparks the geographical imaginations of listeners through sounds, voices, and different styles of journalistic reporting.

It was agreed that I would use snowball sampling to digitally recruit a second round of participants through my pilot cohort, who would be retrospectively recruited into the final sample of listeners. Following re-submission to and approval by the university ethics committee, I engaged in a second wave of listener recruitment in April 2020. The target sample was 20 Radio 4 listeners aged 45-65 years and 20 non/occasional Radio 4 listeners aged 20-65 years. This mirrored my original target demographic of the average Radio 4 listener - who is 56 years of age, balanced equally by gender, from ABC1 social classes (BBC Radio 4 Marketing and Audiences, n.d.), the latter of which is defined as higher and intermediate, managerial, administrative, professional occupations, and supervisory, clerical, and junior managerial,

administrative, and professional occupations (UK Geographics, 2014) - together with non or occasional Radio 4 listeners and younger listeners who the BBC is currently targeting through podcasts and BBC Sounds.

It is worth noting the BBC's stated target audience for Radio 4 is 35-54 years of age, which makes up a quarter of the total audience (BBC Radio 4 Marketing and Audiences, n.d.). Occasional Radio 4 listeners were defined as listening to less than 3 hours per week, while Radio 4 listeners were defined as listening to 3 or more hours per week. Recruitment was therefore based principally on age and radio listening habits. As mentioned previously, I created a questionnaire at the start of the diary entitled 'Listener Details' to collect personal data from participants and ensure that I met my recruitment sample criteria. This included their average weekly radio listening habits, age, and gender. Level of education and current employment status were also collected as indicators of social class. I made clear to listeners that this personal data would be stored in a secure, password protected hard drive.

Pilot study participants were then asked to recommend 2 people who met these target demographics. I contacted and recruited the recommended participants via email when permission had been granted. Overall, I recruited a final sample of 51 listeners, which is captured in Table 8 and Appendix F. My revised playlist-diary method still heeded Latham (2003) and Hunt's (2014) calls for creative approaches to traditional methodologies in cultural geography and represents a new and innovative approach to studying radio listenership.

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Radio 4 Listeners, aged 45-65</b>	<b>Radio 4 Listeners, aged 20-34</b>	<b>Non-Radio 4 Listeners, aged 20-65</b>	<b>Occasional Radio 4 Listeners, aged 20-65</b>
<b>Number of Participants</b>	51	20	3	20	8
<b>Gender</b>	31 F 20 M	10 F 10 M	3 F 0 M	12 F 8 M	6 F 2 M
<b>Age</b>		17 aged 50-64 3 aged 65+	3 aged 20-34	22 aged 20-34 6 aged 50-64	
<b>Level of Education</b>		18 Bachelors degree or higher 1 A-Level or equivalent 1 Diploma	2 Bachelors degree or higher 1 A-Level or equivalent	18 Bachelors degree or higher 2 A-Level or equivalent	8 Bachelors degree or higher
<b>Employment</b>		7 Retired 5 Self-Employed 3 Full Time 3 Part Time 1 Student 1 Unemployed	1 Full Time 2 Students	1 Retired 1 Self-Employed 8 Full Time 3 Part Time 6 Students 1 Unemployed	1 Self-Employed 3 Full Time 1 Part Time 3 Students

**Table 8:** Listenership Study Sample

### 3.5 Research Ethics

In line with the university's research ethics procedures, my project was submitted to, and approved by, the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC). The amendments to the listenership study in light of the Covid-19 pandemic were also reviewed and approved in a second CUREC application. This provided an important space to reflect on the ethical considerations of the study and guided my actions when engaging with journalists and listeners, storing each data set, and citing participants in the thesis.

I made clear my awareness about potential risks to my personal safety when conducting interviews with journalists in London and Oxford, and ensured my supervisors and family were always aware of when and where I was conducting conversations and with whom. I also ensured that I was contactable by phone at all times. Interviews were only recorded if permission was granted and I explained that their data would be stored on a secure, password protected harddrive. I was aware of the professional standards and ethical guidelines set out by the American Association of Geographers (AAG) and strove to follow their example when interacting with participants. This included ensuring that interviewees were aware of the purpose of my research and end use of the information, and engaging with participants in a respectful and fair manner. In line with university guidelines, I provided journalists with an information sheet about the research project, its aims, outcomes, and purpose, and asked each participant to read, complete, and sign an ethical consent form. As discussed earlier, this proved more challenging when conducting interviews digitally and remotely, but I overcame this through regular communication and follow-up emails. All 17 journalists agreed to be cited in the thesis by name, however, 3 caveated this by retaining the right to review direct quotations before publishing. I therefore followed up on their requests by emailing them the proposed quotations to be used in the thesis, which were approved.

Listeners were also given an information sheet together with an ethical consent form to complete and sign. I was aware that I was collecting personal information in the 'Listener Details' section of the reflective diary, which included participants' ages, education, and employment status. I therefore ensured I made clear why this data collection was necessary, namely, for recruiting the appropriate Radio 4 audience

demographics. Again, this data was stored on a secure, password protected harddrive. I was aware that listeners could find certain radio broadcasts on migration distressing given the nature of the subject area. However, I anticipated this to be a minor risk and concluded that self-recruitment into the study, with the option to decline participation or withdraw at any time, would help mitigate against this. Some listeners requested anonymity and I have therefore assigned each of the 51 listeners a pseudonym in Chapter 6. I initially considered referring to listeners numerically, however, I decided that because the 17 journalists are all identifiable by name in Chapter 5, pseudonyms would provide continuity of style across the thesis.

### **3.6 Thematic Analysis**

A thematic analysis was applied to each of the three data sets: namely, the broadcast transcripts, interview transcripts, and reflective diaries. I developed thematic 'codes' and 'subcodes', which were informed by a close reading, hearing, and analysis of the materials and reflected on questions of language and voice, positionality and tone, sounds and music, affects and emotions. Each code was assigned a colour and the data sets were systematically analysed by hand according to the coding frameworks. Colours provided a visual representation of emerging themes and facilitated multiple stages of analysis. The coding frameworks, formed in response to the three data sets, were informed by and developed in conjunction with one another. Indeed, it was a constant and iterative process of listening and re-listening to broadcasts, reading and re-reading the interview transcripts and diaries, and refining and developing the codes over time. This meant that over the course of the analysis, I began to draw connections and overlaps between the thematic 'codes', and identify patterns, anomalies, and cross-

cutting ideas between the three data sets. The following discussion traces each stage of the analysis before reflecting on cross-cutting ideas that emerged towards the end of the process.

### *3.6.1 Radio Broadcasts*

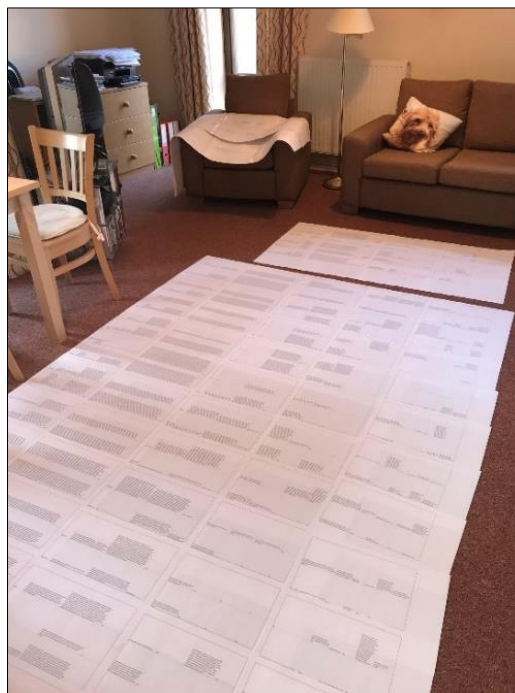
The first step - having identified, recorded, and received transcripts of the 172 radio broadcasts - involved listening to each broadcast and writing any initial thoughts or reflections on the audio and noting down any standout interviews, conversations, or sounds. Each broadcast was then catalogued on an Excel spreadsheet according to broadcast date and programme title, the names of journalists, producers, and editors featured in - or involved in the production of - the programme, and the location(s) of the broadcast. A spreadsheet was created for each year of *The World Tonight* and each year of feature programmes, so that between 2014 and 2019, I had 12 'overview' spreadsheets. The second step involved re-listening to each broadcast and reading, simultaneously, the written transcripts, annotating in any ambient sounds and music and highlighting and underlining particular words, phrases, images, and voices. I occasionally paused the audio recordings to write down any additional notes. This process was essential in order to tabulate each of the broadcasts in a second set of 12 'analysis' Excel spreadsheets.

The broadcasts were then analysed and catalogued thematically. Themes or 'codes' were informed by the initial reading and listening process, and by literature in media and migration studies. Themes included: the imaginative geography of the broadcast, such as painting migration as a threat or risk to the safety, stability, and security of Europe; the content, language, and tone of the broadcast and its

contributors, including notable quotations or repetition of words or phrases, such as crisis, threat, security, migrant, or refugee; the locations featured in the broadcast, such as Libya, France, Greece, and Italy; spaces of migration and displacement, such as beaches, railway stations, or detention centres; the gender and numerical counts of voices heard in the broadcast, including journalists (BBC or freelance), migrants and refugees, politicians (UK, European, or international), humanitarians (non-governmental organisations and charities), citizens ('local' or domestic resident of a country), and 'other' voices (including academics, religious leaders, policy think tank consultants); music and sounds, such as sirens, shouts, and waves; whether the broadcast produced a 'positive' or 'negative' portrayal of migration and how; source countries, such as Syria, Eritrea, Iraq, and Afghanistan; drivers of migration (including conflict, poverty, lack of employment); and any additional notes or reflections.

The spreadsheets were highly detailed, reflecting critically on questions of language, voice and sound, as well as imaginative geographies and the direction and focus of the journalistic gaze. These spreadsheets offered a clear and systematic way of organising my thematic analysis and helped me to identify emerging patterns, tropes, and motifs across the data. Indeed, after tabulating the broadcasts, I was able to appreciate the breadth, content, and nuances of the data and use the search function in Excel to identify recurrent imaginaries, spaces, locations, words, phrases, contributors, and voices. Waitt (2010, p.235) suggests that researchers should be "attuned to silences" and I therefore tried to be attentive to what was concealed as well as revealed in broadcasts. This involved reflecting on dominant or absent locations, amplified or missing voices, across Radio 4's programming.

It is important to acknowledge that I initially considered using the digital software, NVivo, given the size of my dataset and range of materials for analysis. Whilst recognising its impressive interface and tools for analysing and visualising data, I decided to follow the approach I had adopted previously and with which I was most comfortable: namely, a thematic analysis conducted by hand. Although 'old school' and perhaps, more time consuming, it shares the same ambition and objective of identifying themes, patterns, and anomalies, and ordering the data accordingly. I printed and glued the 24 spreadsheets together (Figure 7), which enabled me to highlight, underline, and draw connections across the broadcasts. Whilst recognising the strengths of software, such as NVivo, my approach illustrates how existing technologies and tools can co-exist with more traditional methods of thematic analysis.



**Figure 7:** A printed spreadsheet on the floor of my university accommodation!

### *3.6.2 Interview Transcripts*

A close reading of the interview transcripts led to the development of a second coding framework aimed at understanding the organisational structures and journalistic practices that shape programme production. These codes were informed by my analysis of the broadcasts and refined over time. I settled on 8 main codes, which captured the personal biographies and positionalities of interviewees; processes of programme commissioning, production, and editorial; formal and informal spaces of production; constructing imaginative geographies in broadcasts; discourses around witnessing and reporting migration; thoughts on radio as a medium; the BBC as an organisation and public service broadcaster; and the voice, tone, and sound of Radio 4. Although this framework acted as a useful guide for ordering my analysis, the free-flowing style of interviews made it difficult to colour code in a rigid or systematic way. Instead, I developed an iterative approach, which involved reading and re-reading transcripts, extracting important passages, and looking closely at questions of language and meaning, particularly around journalistic claims to accurate, impartial, and truthful reporting. I remained open to themes that emerged outside of my coding framework and matched direct quotations to core ideas of voices, sounds, and listener imaginations. After initially colour coding, annotating, and underlining the transcripts, I tabulated responses in a document structured around the 8 codes and additional themes. I then identified 5 top-line reflections, including illustrative quotations, that summarised the main findings of the interviews.

### *3.6.3 Listener Diaries*

Following receipt and a close reading of the 51 listener diaries, I developed a coding framework to analyse how selected broadcasts were heard and interpreted by listeners (Figure 8). Again, this was informed by, and developed in conjunction with, the analyses of the broadcasts and journalist interviews. I identified 10 'main' thematic codes for analysing listener responses, each of which had several sub-codes to create a more nuanced understanding of radio listenership; for example, I split the 'main' code 'Emotion - Feeling - Affect' into positive (such as happy, enjoyment, like, glad, satisfaction, delight, hope, sympathy, empathy, inspiring), negative (such as fear, sad, anger, dislike, annoyance, irritation, disappointment, pity, confused), and moved to action (such as further research, volunteering, financial donation). Codes ranged from reflections on the discursive content and language of broadcasts to comments on the positionality, voice, tone, and reporting style of journalists. Each code was assigned a colour and diaries were systematically analysed according to the coding framework. Handwritten notes on the diaries added additional thoughts and reflections, and drew connections between responses to different broadcasts, and over time, between different listeners.

After coding each diary, I added an additional 11th code, entitled 'Listener Response', that aimed to capture its overall format, tone, and style. This included whether the listener diary was a factual and rational or empathetic and emotional account of the broadcasts; evidence of thoughtful, reflective, and analytical responses or a dispassionate recall and summary of particular broadcasts; whether it was written in bullet points or free-flowing prose; and finally, evidence of an imaginative response

or not. This provided a useful overview of the different ways in which listeners engaged in the study and responded to the playlist.



**Figure 8:** Reading, re-reading, and coding the listener diaries in the garden

The colours provided a clear visual representation of prominent themes and facilitated a second stage of analysis, which pulled together extracts and quotations from diaries, organised under each code, and enabled me to compare and contrast different listener responses. 10 top-line reflections emerged from this two-step analysis, complete with illustrative quotations, and informed a third stage of analysis that looked for cross-cutting themes across the diaries in relation to the radio broadcast and production interview analyses. Again, it was an iterative process of reading and re-reading the diaries, identifying patterns and anomalies, and expanding and refining the codes over time. A fourth and final analysis mapped codes onto the listener demographic data, exploring whether imaginative, emotional, or affective responses to broadcasts varied by gender or radio listening habits. The small sample size obviously

negates claims to representativeness, but this fourth stage nevertheless provided a useful oversight of how responses varied between listeners within the study.

#### *3.6.4 Cross-Cutting Themes and Ideas*

The final step, having completed the three strands of analysis on each data set, was to identify and reflect on cross-cutting themes and ideas. I took a bird's eye overview of the data and research process that involved working back and forth across the three coding frameworks and pulling out patterns, trends, and inconsistencies between the different materials. Key themes and ideas that emerged from this process included how imaginative geographies of migration, articulated in broadcasts, emerged from formal and informal spaces of production, and were shaped by professional codes and styles of journalistic reporting, before being heard, interpreted, and imagined by listeners. This final stage of analysis aimed to draw together the main findings of the research, develop answers to my research questions, connect the three empirical chapters, and begin to build a story of Radio 4's reporting on Europe's migration 'crisis'.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined and explained my methodology for studying imaginative geographies in Radio 4's recent journalism on Europe's migration 'crisis'. My methodology takes a three-pronged approach that: first, identifies and analyses 172 broadcasts, across a range of programme genres, to explore how imaginative geographies are discursively constructed through sounds and voices; second, conducts 17 semi-structured interviews with BBC journalists, editors, producers, and senior leaders to understand how organisational structures and journalistic practices at the BBC shape the production of broadcasts; and third, develops the playlist-diary method

to understand how, and to what effect broadcasts are heard, interpreted, and imagined by listeners. These three methods answer the three research questions articulated in Chapter 2 and correspond directly with the forthcoming empirical chapters.

Running quietly through this discussion of my methodology is the context of conducting doctoral research in a pandemic. Whilst I have outlined the necessity of conducting the final few BBC interviews remotely and making significant changes to the listenership study, the impact of the pandemic on me as a person and researcher remains unspoken. It is worth noting that from the middle of March 2020 onwards, I was forced to work remotely at home, alongside many others. A long-term health condition placed me in the government's 'clinically extremely vulnerable' group and meant that my family and I were advised to 'shield' for almost 12 months. All social contact shifted online, leisure space doubled up as office space, and a separation opened up between home and university life. No longer able to leave the house, travel, or meet people slowly took its toll on my physical health, which has continued to affect my quality of life throughout the writing up process. Uncertainties around Covid-19 and adjustments to a new and more limited way of life added to normal, everyday pressures around graduate research as an individual and isolating pursuit. Whilst strategies for living and working from home in a pandemic developed over time, it is worth articulating the impact of negotiating a health condition and doctoral research whilst in 'shielding'; not to place qualifications on the thesis, but to give voice to the contextual setting in which this research took place.

In other ways, however, the pandemic created productive opportunities. I was able to conduct thought-provoking interviews with BBC journalists from the comfort of

my desk thanks to technological developments that allow us to connect with others remotely. Although meeting people in person undoubtedly offers a richer research experience, the pandemic has revealed the possibilities and benefits of adapting to a more rooted and less frantic way of life. The government's 'stay at home' edict in late March 2020 also meant that many participants in my listenership study had newfound time on their hands. Undistracted by the usual busyness of everyday life, participants were able to devote time and effort to the digital playlist and reflective diary, which, perhaps, explains the high response rate and contributed to the qualitative richness of diary entries. Whilst initially disappointing to have to trim back the ambitions of the listenership study, and adopt a targeted, rather than random, sampling strategy, there were clear benefits of recruiting participants who were, quite literally, stuck at home.

This chapter began by musing on the limited number of geographical engagements with radio and Gallagher and Prior's (2014, p.269) observation that "important insights are being lost as a result of the routine erasure of sound". It closes by suggesting that this research forms part of the effort to amplify radio and methods of listening in geography. Simultaneously reading and listening to radio broadcasts expands conventional approaches to thematic analysis by attending to questions of language together with voice and tone, accent and modulation, sounds and music. Similarly, the playlist-diary method, which invites listeners to tune into and reflect on broadcasts, represents an innovative approach to studying the discursive, imaginative, affective, and experiential impacts of radio. Chapter 4, which now follows, reveals how BBC Radio 4 articulated imaginative geographies of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe through sounds and voices in broadcasts.

## Radio Broadcasts

### *Imaginative Geographies of Migration on Air*

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Research in media and migration studies suggests that, despite its diversity, European news coverage converges on a binary misrepresentation of migrants as ‘victims’ or ‘villains’, and more recently, as ‘entrepreneurs’ or ‘threats’ (Greenslade, 2016; Crawley, McMahon and Jones, 2016; Allen, Blinder, and McNeil, 2017; Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017; Trilling, 2019; Chouliaraki and Georgiou, 2019). These simplistic tropes of representation frequently invoke Orientalist imaginaries that silence and objectify migrants as an undifferentiated mass of “anonymous corporeality” (Malkki, 1996, p.388). Indeed, the erasure of migrant voices in European media reinforces imaginative geographies of difference and otherness, and resists opportunities to forge inclusive imaginations (Chouliaraki, 2016): a necessary precursor to rendering migrants tangible and recognisable human beings with “biographical contexts and geopolitical histories” (Chouliaraki and Georgiou, 2019, p.599).

This chapter contributes to debates around the narrative power of media through a thematic analysis of 172 radio broadcasts that reveals the disparate ways in which BBC Radio 4 portrayed forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe between January 2014 and March 2019. It explores how radio constructs narratives, imaginaries, and soundscapes of migration in broadcasts and fills a gap in media and

migration research by focusing on radio as an overlooked medium of mass communication and representation. Indeed, Chapter 2 detailed how European newsprint is by far the most popular site of analysis on media representations of migration. This chapter seeks to address an imbalance between print and radio journalism by examining patterns of representation and storytelling across 86 editions of *The World Tonight* and 86 'feature' programmes, and discussing how broadcasts invite listeners to imagine and affectively respond to migrants and refugees in Europe. After all, representations in radio are not seen or read but are heard and imagined, which raises interesting questions around who is amplified and silenced in broadcasts, and how Europe's migration 'crisis' is constructed through sounds and voices. The chapter therefore reveals how Radio 4's range of programming tells a story of forced migration to, and refugee settlement in, Europe and appeals to the geographical imaginations of listeners.

The chapter identifies two distinct and contrasting imaginative geographies of migration on Radio 4: first, a geopolitical imaginary of crisis, exemplified by *The World Tonight*, that analyses forced migration from a top-down, state-centric perspective, is anchored in the space of the studio, and articulated through 'expert' (most frequently, politician) voices; and second, a more localised, place-based, multi-sensory imaginary of migration, articulated in 'feature' programmes, that explores personal stories and experiences of displacement on the ground, and is articulated through multiple and different (particularly, migrant and refugee) voices. These two imaginative geographies inform and shape the structure of the chapter into two main sections: the first traces a geopolitics of migration through news reportage on *The World Tonight* and highlights shifting imaginaries of crisis over time, from the numerical scale of refugee arrivals to

fragmented state responses, that dovetail closely with narratives of Fortress/Fractured Europe; the second illuminates the diversity of 'feature' programmes outside of news reporting on Radio 4 and details a counter imaginary that emerges through personal stories of people on the move, amplifies multiple and different voices, moves beyond dramatic spectacles of crisis at Europe's sea and land borders, and immerses listeners in sights, sounds, and spaces of migration.

Importantly, the chapter points to overlaps and slippage between the two imaginative geographies, and concludes by arguing that the diversity of programming and range of journalistic reporting means Radio 4 emerges, not as a single space of representation, but rather as a tableau of diverse and, at times, contradictory representations that invites multiple ways of hearing, understanding, and imagining Europe's migration 'crisis'. That is to say, Radio 4 reproduces tropes of illegality, victimhood, and threat, at the same time as it challenges these reductive narratives in stories of individuals who self-articulate their personal experiences, and in nuanced, analytical, and reflexive journalism that situates forced migration to Europe within longer histories and broader, global geographies. The conclusion then looks ahead to Chapter 5, which reveals how organisational structures of production and journalistic practices at the BBC contextualise and explain the diversity of representations articulated across Radio 4.

#### **4.2 The Geopolitical Imaginary of 'Crisis': Reporting Migration on *The World Tonight***

A geopolitical imaginary of 'crisis' emerges in the migration reportage of *The World Tonight*, which aims to offer its listeners "in depth reporting, intelligent analysis, and major breaking news from a global perspective" (The World Tonight, n.d.). A thematic

analysis of its coverage between 2014 and 2019 reveals a propensity to report from a top down perspective that examines the geopolitics of migration from an international or nation state scale; an optic that feeds into Eurocentric representations of migrants and refugees as an undifferentiated mass and invites a fearful affective response to migration as a threat to the safety and sovereignty of Europe. That said, it is important to note that whilst news *bulletins* describe migration in numerical terms and portray migrants as abstract figures of suffering or threat, longer reports by journalists within the main body of *The World Tonight* occasionally scramble these narratives of difference and 'otherness' by featuring named individuals who self-articulate personal and nuanced experiences of migration. Chapter 5 will explain how a division of labour within the News directorate underpins this subtle distinction in styles of representation and storytelling between news bulletins and programme reports.

Nevertheless, a clear geopolitical imaginary is produced in broadcasts that is animated by soundscapes of emergency and 'crisis' at Europe's sea and land borders, and articulated through 'expert' voices. Notably, the programme amplifies and privileges the voices of politicians who are given considerable time and space to articulate their migration policies and perspectives. Across the 86 broadcasts, 121 politicians are heard, 92 of whom are from continental Europe and 29 are from the UK. The trend towards framing migration as a geopolitical issue that is viewed and debated from a Eurocentric perspective is therefore reflected in its editorial selection of politicians as the dominant 'voice' in broadcasts. By contrast, 71 migrant voices are heard across the sample, 59 of which are named and 12 are unnamed. Of the 59 named migrant voices, 45 are male and 14 are female, reflecting a bias in European media coverage of migration that amplifies male over female perspectives (Georgiou and

Zaborowski, 2017). Whilst creating space for migrant voices marks an important step towards countering media representations that silence refugees, individuals on *The World Tonight* are usually heard in short, illustrative voice clips within foreign correspondents' reports, as opposed to lengthy interviews or in-depth conversations that foreground people's stories and biographies of migration to and through Europe. Furthermore, in-situ reports by correspondents are often followed and editorially balanced by studio-based interviews with politicians and other 'elite' figures who are routinely privileged as the final voices. Although migrant voices numerically eclipse other 'elite' interviewees - evidenced by 59 humanitarian voices (eg. charities, non-governmental organisations) and 25 academic voices (eg. university lecturers) - they are often more decorative than central to broadcasts.

The peak of the migration 'crisis' in 2015 and early 2016, as defined by the number of refugees and migrants arriving in Europe, is reflected in the frequency of broadcasts in the sample over time (Table 9). The greatest number of broadcasts was 36 in 2015, followed by 23 in 2016, after which there was a significant and steep decline, with forced migration and refugee settlement almost entirely falling off the news agenda by early 2019. Whilst the number of refugees arriving in Europe certainly declined over time, the journalistic story of migration continued, with particular emphasis on refugees trapped in overcrowded and unsanitary camps in southern Europe and recent reports of illegal pushbacks of refugees stranded at sea (Trilling, 2019; Smith, 2020a; McKernan, 2021b).

Year of Broadcast	Number of broadcasts featuring Europe's migration 'crisis'
2014	16
2015	36
2016	23
2017	5
2018	5
January-March 2019	1

**Table 9:** Editions of *The World Tonight* by Year of Broadcast

Geographically, Europe is the dominant location in *The World Tonight's* coverage, appearing 71 times. Northern Europe, specifically Germany and France, is privileged over southern Europe, appearing 35 times relative to 17. This editorial focus on Europe is, perhaps, unsurprising given the British audience of Radio 4 and, by extension, audience interest in the UK and Europe's responses to refugee arrivals. Nevertheless, given the global geographies of migration and displacement - with refugees arriving from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia, and elsewhere (Crawley et al., 2018) - it speaks to a tendency to report on migration from a Eurocentric perspective. This geographical bias is somewhat at odds with its editorial ambition to report from a "global perspective" (The World Tonight, n.d.). It is, however, important to note that the programme occasionally extends its gaze beyond Europe's shorelines, particularly to the Middle East, which is the second most popular location in its coverage, appearing 26 times. Surprisingly, North Africa only appears 5 times, which arguably downgrades the importance of Libya as a key departure point for migrants journeying to Europe via the Central Mediterranean route (Crawley et al., 2018).

#### 4.2.1 *Shifting Imaginaries of Crisis*

##### 4.2.1.1 *Crisis of Numbers*

From 2014 to the summer of 2015, forced migration to Europe is constructed by *The World Tonight* as a 'crisis' that is borne out of the number of migrants and refugees arriving in southern Europe. Broadcasts articulate a state-centric discourse of emergency and crisis that invokes imaginaries of a continent struggling to cope with an unprecedented influx of new arrivals. The Mediterranean is focalised as a space of danger, animated by precarious sea crossings and criminal smugglers who exploit vulnerable people as they journey to Europe.

This discursive framing of crisis is exemplified in a news bulletin on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014 that reports on the Ezadeen ship, reportedly "carrying 450 migrants" and being towed into the Italian port of Corigliano. Newsreader, Alan Smith, cites the EU which vows to "fight the new tactic used by people smugglers of abandoning ships full of migrants", while World Affairs correspondent, Rob Watson, describes the passengers as "part of an often unreported wave of human misery and hardship" driven by "war and instability in the Middle East and poverty in Africa". The EU's securitised discourse, which displaces attention onto smugglers, is cited uncritically while migrants are represented through abstract numbers and statistics. Their migration via the Central Mediterranean route is described using a water metaphor, as an unstoppable "wave" from geographical zones of insecurity and scarcity, which enacts a two-fold imaginary of migrants as victims and threats: humanitarian sufferers who fell prey to the exploitative behaviour of people smugglers, as well as silent and undifferentiated Others whose presence poses a risk to the security of Europe. *The World Tonight* therefore locates the

'migration crisis' in 2014 in the bodies of migrants and numerical scale of arrivals, which constructs an overall imaginative geography of Europe under siege.

Tropes of crisis in southern Europe reappear in the early summer of 2014 as *The World Tonight* reports on the contentious politics of migration in Italy. Its coverage from Sicily follows the closure of the European election polls, illustrating how the programme situates migration within a geopolitical frame of reference. That is to say, it explores the role of refugees in unsettling and re-shaping the political landscape of Europe. This top-down, Eurocentric perspective is captured in presenter, Phillipa Thomas', cue on May 22<sup>nd</sup>:

**Thomas:** "Immigration, one of the focuses of the UKIP campaign here, has been a very hot topic in many other European election campaigns. In states from France to Finland, parties have been calling for kerbs on illegal migration to be a top priority. But there is one country which is treating it as something more like a national emergency. Italy has had more than 30,000 people arrive to claim asylum this year alone. Its geography, of course, makes it a natural choice for many heading over the Mediterranean Sea towards Europe. Only this week the Italian navy has reported rescuing nearly 1,000 migrants, including more than 100 children in boats that were floundering at sea. And as Paul Moss reports, the one point on which almost everybody in Italy agrees is that the country is getting past the point of coping".

Categories of migration are applied interchangeably as Thomas refers to "immigration", "illegal migration", "migrants", and "asylum", all of which are discussed in terms of putting increasing pressure on European domestic politics. The latest sea rescue is contextualised among a rising number of asylum claims in Italy and used to support a discursive framing of migration as a "national emergency". This cue introduces a dispatch by reporter, Paul Moss, from Sicily which contrasts with the form and tone of news bulletins by including a mix of migrant, humanitarian, political, and academic voices. These multiple and divergent perspectives construct imaginaries of a country

torn between a moral imperative to help refugees and a political desire to stem new arrivals: a debate that Moss suggests is exemplified in graffiti on the town walls of Catania, "an aerosol can discourse writ large in front of you". Italy is therefore foregrounded by *The World Tonight* in 2014 as a political battleground over migration and a country that, by nature of its physical geography, is it at the frontier of Europe's 'crisis'.

Imaginative geographies of Fractured Europe emerge in the latter half of 2014 as the programme reports on fractious relationships between EU member states over rising numbers of refugees. This echoes Crawley's (2016, p.13) observation that "the migration 'crisis' is not a reflection of numbers [...] but rather a crisis of political solidarity". Its broadcast on October 28<sup>th</sup> foregrounds fraught diplomatic relations between Britain and France following the Mayor of Calais' assertion that "the British government hasn't done enough to persuade migrants that Britain was not, in her words, 'Eldorado'". Presenter, Ritula Shah, interviews Charlie Elphicke, Conservative MP for Dover, who blames Italy for insecurity in Calais. He engages in political "scapegoating and finger pointing" (Crawley, 2016, p.18), insisting that the Italians are at fault for allowing migrants to reach Calais in the first place and dismissing Schengen as an "open border system" and "failed project". Although Shah presses Elphicke on multiple issues and challenges his claims, he is privileged as the final voice, which invites listeners to reflect on his imaginary of Britain as a country that is distant and exempt from responsibility over displacement in continental Europe. Contrary to perceptions of a clear shift in media coverage from a humanitarian to political 'crisis' over time, analysis of *The World Tonight* suggests that imaginative geographies of Fractured Europe

appeared as early as 2014: a direct result of rising numbers of refugees and increasingly divergent state responses.

#### *4.2.1.2 Humanitarian Crisis at Sea*

The capsizing of a boat from Libya on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015, which led to the deaths of over 800 people, marks a significant temporal flashpoint of migration to Europe as a humanitarian 'crisis' at sea: a grim signifier that Europe's maritime borders had become a "macabre deathscape" (De Genova, 2017, p.2). April 23<sup>rd</sup>'s broadcast opens with a sombre affective soundscape of a burial service in Malta for the shipwreck's victims, but rather than focusing on the lived experiences and trauma of sea crossings, the programme privileges a state-centric discussion about the politics of EU migration management. Geopolitical debates about how best to manage migration recur on May 18<sup>th</sup> as the EU approves its plan to increase funding for border patrols at sea and target people smugglers in Libya. In the news bulletin, correspondent, Chris Morris, enacts imaginative geographies of a European invasion as he refers to "criminal gangs", "sending tens of thousands of migrants across the Mediterranean towards European shores". Morris rearticulates the EU's tropes of smugglers as perpetrators, which obscures its hand in producing fatalities at sea by failing to provide safe and legal migration pathways (Crawley et al., 2018). The rest of the broadcast, however, offers a more nuanced analysis, interviewing Marc Pierini, a former EU ambassador, who cuts through the EU's rhetoric and dismisses the plan as an "eye-catching operation" that "doesn't mean much". Chapter 5 will reveal how this difference in representation between the news bulletin and the programme maps onto internal structures of production at the BBC, but what it captures is *The World Tonight's* tendency to use

soundscapes of a humanitarian 'crisis' at sea as a catalyst to state-centric, geopolitical discussions about EU migration management.

Studio interviews with politicians are routinely preceded by eyewitness reports from foreign correspondents in the field. In the summer of 2015, boat arrivals in Greece are the dominant soundscape, producing imaginative geographies of a humanitarian crisis that threatens to overwhelm Europe. These audible spectacles of arrival are exemplified in correspondent, James Reynolds', report from Kos on August 7<sup>th</sup>, introduced by presenter, James Coomarasamy:

**Coomarasamy:** July was certainly a dramatic month for Greece but not just economically because according to new figures from the EU border agency, *Frontex*, nearly 50,000 migrants arrived in the country in July. That is more than during the whole of 2014 - and they're still coming. The BBC's James Reynolds is on the island of Kos.

[Sounds of waves lapping against the shore]

**Reynolds:** My colleagues and I are scanning the dark waters for migrant boats. Shortly after 2.00 in the morning we spot a dinghy carrying more than 30 men, women, and children.

[Sounds of waves and indeterminate shouts]

**Reynolds:** Hello. From the BBC. Hello, you're in Europe. How are you?

**Unidentified male voice 1:** I'm fine, now. Now I'm freedom. I'm a human being now! Here are our people.

**Reynolds:** Where are you all from?

**Unidentified male voice 2:** We are from Syria.

**Reynolds:** Why did you come here?

**Unidentified male voice 2:** Because came from war. From IS, IS.

**Unidentified male voice 3:** Syria, Syria.

Although Reynolds attempts to humanise refugees disembarking the boat through the inclusion of their voices, they remain nameless and defined only by their movement from Syria to Greece. This lack of identification, although understandable given the

circumstances, feeds into media narratives of unease and insecurity around who is arriving and why, and although the emphatic cry of one man who shouts, “I’m a human being now”, invites empathy from listeners, the breathless questioning from Reynolds, and ambient sounds of shouting and disembarkation, construct counter imaginaries of chaos and disorder. Male voices are privileged in his report and the principal focus on the audible spectacle of arrival obscures opportunities to understand the stories and biographies of those fleeing Syria. Instead, Reynolds’ ‘live’ reportage from Kos rests on heightened drama and encourages listeners to imagine they are witnessing a boat emerge from Greece’s foreboding “dark waters”.

#### *4.2.1.3 Crisis at Europe’s Land Borders*

Whilst narratives of ‘crisis’ dominate *The World Tonight’s* coverage throughout 2015 and 2016, the geography of ‘crisis’ reportage switches in the summer of 2015 from sea to land borders. The soundscape of the migration ‘crisis’ therefore evolves over time, too, from haphazard and deadly boat arrivals to violent clashes between refugees and security guards at state borders in southern, northern, and eastern Europe.

From the summer of 2015, soundscapes of the Mediterranean are interwoven with, and slowly replaced by, soundscapes of land borders, which produce a two-fold imaginary of Fortress/Fractured Europe. Listeners hear nation states begin to adopt security measures, such as erecting steel border fences and deploying heavy-handed security guards, that are inconsistent with an EU-wide approach to migration. Indeed, De Genova (2017, p.11) notes that by the late summer of 2015 “from week to week and even day to day, the apparent frontline of European border struggles was repeatedly dislocated from one country to another”, with the result that listeners hear in real-time

EU member states wrestle with the intractability of migrant and refugee movements through Europe.

Soundscapes of displacement at Europe's land borders are amplified on June 16<sup>th</sup>, as Lucy Williamson reports from Ventimiglia at the Italian/French border. Williamson paints an imaginary of migrants as the detritus of the Mediterranean, "the people the sea brought in", and as victims of political in-fighting between EU member states. France's decision to close the border, Williamson suggests, has left migrants stranded and immobile, and prompted Italy to feel "it is being left to shoulder this burden alone". Imaginative geographies of 'crisis' at the border are amplified by the voices of two named migrants, Mustafa and Saddam. Mustafa says he is "hopeless", "homeless", and "defenceless" against the French police, while Saddam suggests the authorities are treating migrants "like terrorists", "like animals", "like we come from another planet". Williamson's report therefore encourages critical reflection on Europe's treatment of migrants and locates the 'crisis' both in the embodied experiences of new arrivals and fragile diplomatic relations between Italy and France.

Spectacles of crisis at the French/British border recur in July 2015 as *The World Tonight* reports on the Calais camp and Channel Tunnel. On July 27<sup>th</sup>, presenter Shah states that the Eurotunnel witnessed "around two thousand migrants" attempt "to break into its terminal last night in the biggest attempt to date to get through the tunnel". This cue captures a broader trend in the programme's coverage towards viewing Calais through a lens of border security. Indeed, the news bulletin cites Home Secretary, Theresa May, who has pledged £7 million for "increased security" to "target criminals who profit from [...] 'the vile trade in people trafficking'", thereby articulating

a state-centric discourse that positions Calais as a space of criminality which demands better policing and threatens Britain's frictionless trade. This securitised vision echoes *The World Tonight's* report on July 29<sup>th</sup> as Shah informs listeners that "French police are sending reinforcements to prevent migrants breaking into the Channel Tunnel". Imaginative geographies of violent clashes between French police and unnamed migrants are animated by repeated references to "barbed wire fencing", "security guards", and "sniffer dogs". Eurotunnel spokesperson, John Key, speaks of a "nightly assault" by "groups of fifty or a hundred", which is striking because it discursively frames migrants as shadowy figures of threat relative to lorry drivers as helpless victims.

This is not to dismiss *The World Tonight's* reports from Calais as inaccurate, but rather to expose how the camp is discursively fixed in an imaginative landscape of crisis and insecurity. Left unspoken is critical reflection on how Europe's border security practices at Calais are directed at migrants almost entirely from former European colonies, thereby revealing the entangled and highly significant histories of empire that underpin the camp as an unwanted and politically-charged space of displacement within the EU (Davies and Isakjee, 2019). Similarly, journalists do not situate spectacles and soundscapes of violence and security within the context of unequal hierarchies of mobility, exemplified in the camp's proximity to the Channel Tunnel, whereby borders are gateways for some but barriers to others (Rumford, 2008).

Clashes between migrants and European police reappear on August 21<sup>st</sup> at the Greece/Macedonia border. James Reynolds provides an eyewitness report from the border in light of Macedonia's decision to declare a state of emergency. He mirrors a feminist geopolitics that privileges people, rather than states, as units of analysis

(Hyndman, 2007), and describes a "crush" of humanity as police wave migrants through at intervals that coincide with train departures to Serbia. He constructs an affective atmosphere of violence and chaos through recorded sounds of stun grenades and tear gas being thrown into crowds of refugees, who are animated by desperate shouts and fearful screams. Imaginaries of police brutality are juxtaposed with the vulnerability of humanity as Reynolds points to families "carrying children and babies on their shoulders" and warns there is a "real danger of children getting caught up in it". Notably, he reports through the eyes of refugees, describing the scene as "scary and confusing" and including the voice of 15-year-old Lilian from Aleppo: "They hit us hard, I can barely walk", "we are humans. Why do they hate us? We are trying to be somewhere safe", "I just want to be someplace safe". The infrequency of hearing a young, female voice adds power and resonance to her testimony and captures how Reynolds adopts Toal's (1996, p.178) anti-geopolitical eye, which privileges a "low-flying empiricism" and the human "category of experience"; a journalistic technique and style of reporting that encourages critical reflection on Europe's response to refugees at its internal land borders.

The geography of crisis reportage shifts again in late 2015 to eastern Europe and the Austria/Hungary and Hungary/Serbia borders. On August 27<sup>th</sup>, correspondent, Bethany Bell, reports on the discovery of migrants found dead in a lorry at Austria's border with Hungary, but rather than illustrating how "people's bodies pay the cost of geopolitical bickering over burden-sharing" (Mountz and Loyd, 2013, p.181), *The World Tonight* focuses on the criminality of smugglers. It therefore mirrors the EU's strategy of displacing attention onto the exploitative practices of people smugglers and fails to interrogate how the EU produces precarious migration routes and dangerous border crossings (Scheel, 2017). Indeed, Bell's report, and accompanying voice clip from the

UNHCR's Melissa Fleming, is used as a springboard to a studio interview between presenter, Matthew Price, and former Conservative MP, Anthony Steen:

**Price:** Do you agree with Melissa Fleming that the problem here is a problem of trafficking?

**Steen:** Well, it's a mixture. It is trafficking. It could be political. It could be refugees. It could be economic migrants. You can call it what you like. It's ghastly. It's appalling. And it's about people trying to escape the horrors of their own country. Whatever the reason, whatever you call it, it's the horror of more and more people wanting to get out of their own areas. And we can't hold back the tide of humanity just like King Canute found many years ago...

**Price:** So it can't be held back? There is nothing that can be done to prevent tragedies like today's?

**Steen:** I think a number of things can be done to reduce it...

**Price:** Such as?

**Steen:** Well, you can work upstream, as the new phrase is, with gangs that operate. But you're dealing with swathes of population, millions of people. And the, the, the traffickers will always be there. And so where there is money to be made and there's misery, the two will actually meet. And so you can try and reduce the number of traffickers by working upstream, which I did when I worked as the envoy for the Home Secretary. But you don't solve the problem.

This exchange captures a tendency for the programme to turn to politicians for analysis on migration as a problem to be solved, and to locate the 'crisis' in the practices of people smugglers (Triandafyllidou, 2013). Steen's references to "a tide of humanity", "swathes of population", and "millions of people" are left unchallenged, nor are they situated within a historical context of migration to Europe, or global context of displacement and refugee hosting. He therefore echoes a pattern of representation among politicians that frames migration to Europe in 2015 "as an unprecedented event" and "single coherent flow of people that came 'from nowhere'" (Crawley et al., 2018, p.2). The distinction between smuggling vis a vis trafficking is also blurred in the minds of listeners, which obscures important differences between voluntarism and coercion,

agency and deception (UNHCR, 2021b). This is not to deny the scale of migration in 2015, but to call attention to a political discourse, rearticulated in certain broadcasts, that produces a sense of crisis while absolving policymakers of responsibility.

Crisis reportage at Europe's sea and land borders reaches a peak in September 2015, which witnesses the death of 3-year-old Syrian, Alan Kurdi, and chaos in eastern Europe. On September 2<sup>nd</sup>, presenter Shah opens with the top-line that "a toddler wearing a red t-shirt and blue trousers lies face down on the sand on a beach in Bodrum", which supports Aiken et al.'s (2017, p.1) observation that his image became "metonymic for the plight of refugees" and a symbol of the humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean. The programme is reflective in tone and outlook, interviewing Harold Evans, former Editor of *The Sunday Times*, who discusses the power and potential of photography to change public attitudes towards migration. Imaginative geographies of a child's tragic fatality at sea, however, are swiftly juxtaposed with hostility and humanitarianism in eastern Europe as Matthew Price and Bethany Bell report from Hungary and Austria two days later on September 4<sup>th</sup>. Presenter, James Coomarasamy, describes "a march of people through Europe" as Price reports on refugees walking down the motorway out of Budapest. Meanwhile Bell reports from a train station in Vienna, "further down the trail", which explores the welcome that awaits those heading towards Austria. Both reports immerse listeners in an affective atmosphere of migration on the ground and trace the footsteps of refugees journeying through Europe in 2015. Whilst the dominant soundscape of *The World Tonight* is a political discourse articulated in studio-based interviews, this snapshot of ground-level reportage at Europe's sea and land borders illustrates how the programme engages in multiple and contrasting styles of representation on migration.

#### 4.2.1.4 Political Crisis

In 2016, the migration 'crisis' is located in EU attempts to find policy solutions to migration as a problem to be solved. *The World Tonight* paints an imaginative geography of Europe in turmoil and constructs a narrative of political crisis as the EU tries to unify a fragmented continent. Broadcasts trace the geopolitics of migration from a state-centric perspective, from emergency summits between European leaders to late night talks in Brussels, and provide listeners with a detailed and comprehensive insight into policy debates, alliances, and fissures between different member states. The Calais camp, EU-Turkey migration deal, and Brexit vote all loom large in the programme's migration coverage as it examines the long-term sustainability of Schengen, Britain's relationship with continental Europe, and the threat of visa-free travel being given to millions of Turkish citizens with the promise of EU accession. Forced migration is therefore situated within the broader context of the EU and Britain's membership of it, and deeply entwined with geographical questions of borders, security, and mobility.

Just as Crawley et al. (2018, p.2) observe in their analysis of media coverage of migration, "this was very much a view from Europe". Whilst perhaps unsurprising given that the BBC is a British public service broadcaster and adopts an editorial angle it considers of most interest to its audience, it fails to situate migration within a longer history of migration to Europe or EU strategies of migration management that extend back to the 1990s (Mountz and Loyd, 2013). It also frames migration as a 'problem' to be dealt with - that is, stopped - thereby rearticulating a political preoccupation with "preventing and discouraging people from attempting to reach the EU territory, rather than providing protection and support or addressing the factors that caused people to

move in the first place” (Crawley et al., 2018, p.137). What 2016’s coverage does achieve, however, is a clear positioning of the ‘crisis’ in the inability of European governments to respond effectively to migration.

The Calais camp appears repeatedly in 2016 as French authorities agree to its partial demolition and is framed by *The World Tonight* as a threatening space caught between French/British geopolitical relations. This journalistic interest in Calais reflects Howden’s (2016) observation that it represents a flashpoint in British media representations of Europe’s migration ‘crisis’. The news bulletin on February 29<sup>th</sup> leads with a story of violent clashes between French riot police and migrants as the government attempts to erase the camp’s infrastructure. This sets up programme reporter, Andrew Hosken, to broadcast from Calais where he paints vivid imaginative geographies of police and migrants caught in a war-like standoff. Whilst Hosken laudably makes an effort to interview volunteers in the camp, he perhaps overplays the drama and spectacle of the event at the expense of explaining how it is situated within a history of continuous demolition and re-construction efforts; a cycle critiqued by Hicks and Mallet (2019) as a strategy of control known as ‘temporal violence’. Hosken’s report acts as a precursor to a studio interview with Labour MP, Yvette Cooper, and Conservative MP, Tim Loughton, about unaccompanied child migrants in Europe. Whilst Cooper critiques the UK government for not doing enough to protect vulnerable children, Loughton blames the French authorities for allowing migrants to be in Calais, living in "squalid conditions" for “far too long”. The camp is therefore constructed by journalists and politicians as a spatial manifestation of crisis that is proximate to Britain and raises fraught diplomatic relations over migration between the UK and continental Europe.

Between February and May 2016, EU-Turkey relations are a dominant feature in *The World Tonight's* coverage, constructing an imaginative geography of migration as threat on the periphery of Europe. On February 4<sup>th</sup>, the programme reports on Turkey's declaration that "tens of thousands" of people are fleeing towards its border as fighting around Aleppo escalates and four days later, on February 8<sup>th</sup>, the programme reports on Turkey's estimate that "60,000 Syrian refugees could mass at the border [...] if President Assad's forces continue their assault on Aleppo". The BBC's Turkey correspondent, Mark Lowen, outlines a geopolitical dilemma whereby the EU is reminding Turkey it has a legal obligation to help refugees fleeing persecution, while at the same time warning it must stop migration to Europe. Cleverly, Lowen observes that "caught between the two messages are 35,000 refugees stuck on the Syrian side of the closed border" and he finishes with the striking imaginary that "Syria's descent into hell is still playing out on Europe's borders". This discursive framing of refugees as geopolitical pawns caught between nation states illustrates how narratives of 'crisis' in 2016 are presented as a geopolitical issue of migration management playing out at Europe's eastern edge.

The significance of Syrian displacement and EU-Turkey relations to British listeners is reaffirmed on February 18<sup>th</sup> when *The World Tonight* reports on an EU summit where Brexit and migration are high on the agenda. Presenter, Razia Iqbal, interviews François Crépeau, UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, who discusses the politicisation of migration in Europe. He is critical and reflexive, suggesting that the 'crisis' has exposed deep divisions within the EU, criticising restrictive EU migration policies as "inefficient" and "counter-productive", and suggesting there is no "electoral incentive" to resettle migrants as they are not allowed

to vote, and their voices are missing from public debate. This reflexivity continues as Quentin Peel, Brussels correspondent for *The Financial Times*, draws comparative geographies of refugee hosting and points to a discursive conflation of forced and labour migration by the UK's Vote Leave campaign:

**Peel:** "We have had almost no refugees coming to this country, while Germany, Sweden and Greece and Italy have had hundreds of thousands. But there is of course a connection between the two issues of the refugee crisis and the British decision of whether it leaves the EU or not because those who would like Britain to leave the EU are conflating the two issues of refugees and EU migration".

Peel foreshadows the outcome of the Brexit vote on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, suggesting "the worse the refugee crisis gets, the harder it will be for the Remain campaign to win the referendum this summer". The broadcast therefore represents a key flashpoint in *The World Tonight's* coverage as it positions forced migration and refugee settlement within the context of Britain's imminent vote on EU membership.

This narrative of political 'crisis' crescendos in the spring and summer of 2016 as the programme reports on the EU-Turkey migration deal and concurrent potential for Turkish accession. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, presenter Shah opens with the top line, "As the European Commission looks set to grant Turkish citizens visa free travel in the Schengen area, we hear from critics of the move who say Turkey isn't meeting the mark". Although the programme is weighted towards condemnation by those who highlight human rights violations in Turkey, listeners hear a nuanced analysis from correspondent, Chris Morris, who frames it as an unlikely but nevertheless real possibility. He flags the 3-month limit on visas and captures how accession is tied to "the one-for-one migrant deal" explaining that "Turkey does have a big bargaining chip to play and this is that we have seen this flow of people from the Turkish coast to the Greek islands reduced comparatively to a

trickle, certainly compared to what it was a few months ago". This geopolitical discussion around Turkey, migration, and the EU illustrates how, by 2016, the 'crisis' is no longer located in the bodies of refugees but in the political repercussions of European policies to manage and curb migration.

#### 4.2.1.5 Crisis of (in)security

Insecurity in Germany tops and tails *The World Tonight's* coverage in 2016, which captures how discourses of forced migration and refugee settlement become slowly interwoven with discourses of securitisation. At the start of 2016, however, the programme balances narratives of anti-refugee sentiment with instances of German compassion and tolerance in the wake of the New Year's Eve sexual assault on women in Cologne. On January 14<sup>th</sup>, Paul Moss reports from a refugee support centre in Berlin and although he records protests in Cologne and Leipzig, he privileges the voices of volunteers and refugees:

**Moss:** The refugees I met here were all very news savvy. They'd heard about the New Year's Eve attacks in Cologne and other cities which have been widely blamed on refugees. And they'd also heard about the backlash, foreign-looking men beaten up in Cologne last Sunday. Mustafa Abdul Hai came here from Aleppo in Syria and he's worried.

**Hai:** I come to here to start a new life. I'm afraid now because... maybe it's a problem in future. People in Deutschland maybe are thinking... all refugees bad now... after this problem in Cologne. I wish this problem finish faster.

**Moss:** I have to say this centre itself is the proof that many Germans certainly do want to help refugees who've come here. Everywhere I look there are people scurrying around. They're serving coffee to refugees. They're finding them clean clothes from a huge collection of clothes that have been donated. And there are posters on the wall for all the activities they've organised. There's German lessons for adults, children's play centres, and there's even, I kid you not, a poster for a cat. They're trying to find the owner of a cat that's been separated from its refugee owners and all of this is being done by volunteers.

These imaginative geographies of Germany's welcoming culture, Willkommenskultur, are amplified by Mooney, another Syrian refugee, who has produced a video in which refugees express their sympathy to Germany over the attacks. He shares his hope of speaking with local people in the community and showing them, "we want to live peace, like everyone wants to live". At the start of 2016, *The World Tonight* therefore disrupts narratives of difference and insecurity through a report on openness and co-existence in Germany's capital city.

This contrasts with the programme's coverage at the end of 2016 on the fallout after the terrorist attack on a Christmas market in Berlin. On December 20<sup>th</sup>, presenter Shah articulates a shift in German political discourse, which swirls around increasing anxiety after Merkel's "open-door migration policy". She interviews Monika Holmayer, an MEP for the Bavarian CSU party, who describes 2015 as "a situation where we had an uncontrolled mass influx" and says "terrorists misused the open borders for their purposes. They misused the migration crisis, the refugee crisis, for their purposes and now we really have to check every person without trying to accuse every refugee or every migrant". Whilst the broadcast is informative about potential shifting tides of public and political opinion in Germany, it leaves unchallenged Holmayer's securitised discourse that, although cautious in tone, enacts imaginaries of insecurity and raises suspicion around refugees as potentially threatening Others. It contrasts starkly with Moss' ground-level report from Berlin earlier in the year and captures a clear dichotomy in *The World Tonight's* representation of Europe's migration 'crisis' in 2016.

#### 4.2.1.6 Summary

The programme's migration coverage declines sharply across 2017, 2018, and 2019, with only 11 broadcasts across the 27 months of broadcasting. The editorial focus, however, continues to be on fragmented state responses and European borders under strain. On December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Europe correspondent, Kevin Connolly, reports from an EU summit in Brussels and frames migration as a politically contentious issue at the top of EU leaders' agenda:

**Connolly:** "Their discussion over dinner will be dominated by the vexed and divisive issue of how to handle the waves of migration, which have reached Europe across the Mediterranean in recent years. Eastern European countries have fiercely resisted plans to oblige them to take a share of those migrants. Frontline states, like Italy and Greece, are angry at being left to carry the burden alone".

Connolly's discursive framing of forced migration as an unstoppable "wave" and "burden" gives listeners a clear sense that the crisis no longer lies in the presence of refugees within Europe but in the political failure of EU member states to agree a common solution. This theme of political disunity continues into 2018 when, on June 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, the programme reports on another EU summit in Brussels and paints a spatial geography of Europe split between Germany and France against Italy, Greece, and Hungary. Once again, presenter, Razia Iqbal, foregrounds a lack of solidarity between member states, stating in her top line that, "it could be argued that of all the issues that dominate political discourse in Europe, there is a single one which divides it: migration". The broadcasts engage in policy discussions about mandatory refugee quotas and offshore asylum processing centres in the home countries of migrants, and

illustrate how leaders are constantly balancing domestic politics against EU-wide obligations.

This climaxes in the single broadcast of *The World Tonight* identified in 2019, which covers a diplomatic spat between Italy and France as the Italian government, presenter Shah reports, "blames Europe's migrant crisis on France's colonisation of Africa". The acrimony, listeners learn, comes on the day that France and Germany "seal their friendship with a new treaty". The broadcast therefore focuses on the stark juxtaposition of tensions and coalitions between different EU member states, rather than delving into migration vis a vis the colonial legacies of Europe (De Genova, 2017; Davies and Isakjee, 2019). This reflects an overall trend across the programme's coverage towards positioning forced migration and refugee settlement as catalysts to geopolitical alliances and fissures.

Tracing shifting narratives of crisis over time on *The World Tonight* therefore reveals a clear geopolitical imaginary of migration. Broadcasts privilege a top-down, Eurocentric discourse, articulated through studio interviews with politicians, that enacts imaginaries of a continent determined to manage migration, but politically torn apart by divergent state responses. The tendency to turn to politicians for comment and analysis offers listeners an informative and rich account of policy debates and discussions across Europe, but fails to illustrate how leaders invoke narratives of crisis to justify exceptional measures and support an ongoing process of securitising forced migration to the EU (Freedman, 2019). Ground-level reports by foreign correspondents, to some extent, reverse this lens of representation, evidence individual journalists' critical engagement with the subject of migration, and create, albeit limited, space for

migrant and refugee voices. Yet at the same time, they often produce dramatic spectacles at Europe's sea and land borders that, ultimately, fall short of giving listeners a robust understanding of how refugee arrivals are situated within longer histories of migration and empire, and global geographies of conflict and displacement (De Genova, 2017; Davies and Isakjee, 2019). Furthermore, the structure of broadcasts, which follows in-situ reports by foreign correspondents with studio-based interviews with politicians, invites listeners to imagine forced migration and refugee settlement as a burden and problem to be solved by European member states.

### **4.3 A Counter Imaginary of Migration on the Ground: Reporting in 'Feature'**

#### **Programmes**

The story of Radio 4's migration reporting becomes more complex in 'feature' programmes, which are diverse in their format, tone, sound, and approach. While monologue, debate, and analysis programmes broadly mirror, and occasionally, rearticulate the geopolitical imaginary of *The World Tonight*, magazine, documentary, and current affairs programmes - the most frequent genres in the sample (Table 10) - adopt a bottom up perspective that privileges the scale of the individual and explores experiences of migration and displacement on the ground; an optic that feeds into representations of migrants as human beings with voices and stories, and invites an empathetic affective response from listeners. Journalists go beyond abstract facts and statistics to reveal tangible people behind the headlines, scrambling binary tropes of victimhood and threat through stories that humanise forced migration and refugee settlement, and highlight the agency of individuals.

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Number of broadcasts featuring Europe's migration 'crisis'</b>	<b>Programmes</b>
Debate	4	<i>Start the Week; Moral Maze; The Migration Debate</i>
Monologue	7	<i>Four Thought; Letters from Europe; Migrant Crisis: A Spy Master's Perspective; A Point of View</i>
Analysis	7	<i>Time to Rethink Asylum?; Thinking Allowed; More or Less; The Briefing Room; Unreliable Evidence; How Syria Changed the World</i>
Magazine	21	<i>Woman's Hour; The Food Programme; The Listening Project; The Media Show; The Bottom Line; Ramblings; The Untold; You and Yours; Sunday; One to One</i>
Documentary	17	<i>File on 4; Crossing Continents; A Not So Merry Migrant Christmas in Vienna; The Boat Children; Europe: Strangers on My Doorstep; The Day the Refugees Came; On Your Farm; Refugee Reminiscence</i>
Current affairs	30	<i>Emma Jane Kirby's 'Ordinary Italians' series for PM; iPM; From Our Own Correspondent</i>

**Table 10:** 'Feature' Programme Classification

This human-centric reporting is reflected in the frequency of migrant voices in broadcasts. Across the 86 'feature' programmes, 118 migrant voices are heard, 105 of which are named and 13 are unnamed. Of the 105 named migrant voices, 75 are male and 30 are female. Whilst male refugees usually make up a higher proportion of those who flee and migrate over longer distances, Robinson (2016) notes that between late 2015 and early 2016, women and children accounted for more than half of all refugees arriving in Greece. Mirroring the analysis of *The World Tonight*, this statistic therefore reflects a trend in European media coverage towards privileging male over female perspectives (Georgiou and Zaborowski, 2017). Nevertheless, apart from journalists, migrants are the most dominant voices in broadcasts, which is very striking and challenges a broader trend in the media towards silencing people on the move (Greenslade, 2016). Migrant voices are followed by 58 humanitarian voices (eg. charities, non-governmental organisations) and 56 citizen voices (eg. local residents and members of the public). In stark contrast to *The World Tonight*, only 30 politicians are heard, 17 of which are from the UK and 13 from continental Europe. 22 non-BBC journalists and 20 academics are also heard, together with a minority of other 'elite' figures such as lawyers, policymakers, and religious leaders.

The frequency and spread of 'feature' programmes over time also contrasts sharply with *The World Tonight* with a stable number of broadcasts between 2015 and 2018 (Table 11). The following analysis reveals how this trend is consistent with the editorial focus of feature programmes which are more reflective in tone and approach than news journalism. That is to say, broadcasts are less tied to the daily news agenda and offer more in-depth, nuanced insights into forced migration and refugee settlement post the drama and spectacle of arrival. Chapter 5 will reveal how this reflective

approach corresponds with journalistic practices and organisational structures of production at the BBC, whereby journalists and programme teams are given greater time and space to produce ‘feature’ broadcasts on a diversity of subjects.

<b>Year of Broadcast</b>	<b>Number of ‘feature’ broadcasts</b>
2014	4
2015	22
2016	16
2017	21
2018	20
January-March 2019	3

**Table 11:** ‘Feature’ Programmes by Year of Broadcast

The following analysis therefore reveals a counter imaginary, exemplified in ‘feature’ programmes, that is more localised, immersive, and place-based, transporting listeners to different spaces of migration and giving voice to multiple and different voices. Listeners hear from ‘new’ journalists, who demonstrate critical engagement with migration scholarship and occasionally, are activist and campaigning in tone. Listeners also hear from migrants and refugees who are named and able to articulate their biographies, personal stories, and experiences of migration. Broadcasts are routinely recorded in the field and therefore multi-sensory, immersing listeners in the sights, sounds, and affective atmospheres of migration through a direct appeal to their geographical imaginations. Crucially, journalists in ‘feature’ programmes move beyond dramatic spectacles of migration by tracing protracted journeys to and through Europe, and exploring the challenges and successes of refugee settlement post arrival.

The second half of this chapter begins by first considering similarities with the geopolitical imaginary, evidenced in debate, analysis, and monologue programmes, before tracing the four key characteristics of this counter imaginary of migration: namely, people behind the headlines; multiple and different voices; beyond dramatic spectacles of migration; and place-based, immersive, multi-sensory reporting.

#### *4.3.1 Overlaps with the Geopolitical Imaginary of 'Crisis'*

A geopolitical imaginary of 'crisis', similar to that identified in *The World Tonight*, is produced by debate programmes in which migration is positioned as an invasion that threatens the safety, security, and culture of European nation states. This narrative framing re-articulates a familiar imaginative geography of Fortress Europe as a homogenous and unified space that must defend itself against unwanted inward migration, and mobilises inside/outside, security/threat dichotomies. There is little attempt to situate Europe's migration 'crisis' within a geographical context of global displacement and refugee hosting, and debates routinely articulate a discourse of 'us' and 'them', with the latter remaining silent, undifferentiated Others. Debates therefore begin from an assumption that migration is a disruptive and unwelcome problem to be solved. Broadcasting from the space of the studio, which is also the spatial anchor of *The World Tonight*, further reflects a geographical separation from the people and places they discuss, which silences refugees and privileges abstract, conceptual thinking.

This geopolitical imaginary is exemplified in an edition of *Moral Maze* on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015, which explores the UK's 'moral duty' towards migrants crossing the Mediterranean, introduced by presenter, Michael Buerk:

**Buerk:** It's the bright orange patches that catch the eye on the more remote shorelines of the Dodecanese islands. The people smugglers now often don't bother to land the migrants who paid them so much money for their illegal passage to a new life. Just chuck them in the sea off a Greek island with those orange buoyancy aids they leave behind if they are lucky.

I just spent a month sailing there listening on the radio to a freighter captain saying he picked up eight, but four others had drowned. Finding groups of them on cliffs yelling 'Is this Europe? Please help'. Huddled outside every island police station, Syrians mostly escaping civil war and Islamic extremism. It's even worse on the other side of the Mediterranean. Official figures yesterday estimated 100,000 had tried to cross from the North African coast so far this year. Crammed into leaky boats, at least 1,600 are thought to have drowned. HMS Bulwark picked up more than a thousand last weekend. Many Syrians try from there too, along with people escaping Eritrea, which has become one big concentration camp, from Somalia, a failed state, from Libya, itself now an anarchy of competing warlords, and from poverty and violence in other countries too.

What can we do, is difficult. What should we do, more so. To save lives at sea is a moral imperative as old as humanity, surely without qualification. But does risking your life and bribing a crook put you in a different moral category, give you more of a call on our sympathy and hospitality than those left behind? At what point does an economic migrant become a refugee or has that distinction become meaningless? What's wrong with wanting a better, safer life? But the numbers are staggering. How could we cope with them all? What do we do about the migrants? That's our moral maze...

Buerk's repeated use of the pronoun 'we' sets up a discursive distinction between 'us' and 'them', the latter defined solely by their movement and coastal geography. He renders migrants anonymous and voiceless Others, and characterises smugglers as criminals and "crooks" who carelessly "chuck" people into the sea. Countries are essentialised into zones of violence and insecurity, as Eritrea is deemed "one big concentration camp", Somalia "a failed state", and Libya "an anarchy of competing warlords". Buerk therefore constructs a peripheral imaginative geography of "poverty and violence" that is responsible for an unwelcome outflow of humanity towards Europe. He does not acknowledge the irony of disclosing he has "just spent a month sailing" around the Greek islands, nor reflect on the morality of global inequality and

unequal hierarchies of mobility that his maritime holiday reveals. Instead, he poses a series of rhetorical questions that foreshadow a programme which discusses what ‘we’ in Europe should do about ‘them’. As a result, Buerk participates in a cartographic re-mapping of the world into no go zones of danger and precarity that reinforces divides between the world’s rich and poor (Andersson, 2019), and frames migration in the geographical imagination as a threat to the safety and stability of Europe.

The programme’s structure and editorial selection of contributors further positions humanitarian viewpoints as aberrations to the assumed norm of wanting to limit forced migration to Europe. *Moral Maze* is split between a panel and series of ‘witnesses’ who must defend a moral argument that the panel then interrogates and debates. In this edition, the panel includes Melanie Phillips, from *The Times*, Claire Fox from the Institute of Ideas, Anne McElroy, public policy editor at *The Economist*, and Matthew Taylor, CEO of the Royal Society of Arts; while the ‘witnesses’ are Brigadier Shawareb from the Migrant Offshore Aid Station, Dr Tim Stanley, historian and writer for *The Daily Telegraph*, Steven Hale, CEO of the charity Refugee Action, and Professor Paul Collier from the University of Oxford. This editorial selection of ‘expert’ voices evidences a clear privileging of white, middle-class commentators who debate the movement of refugees who remain nameless and unheard. The debate is ahistorical with no reference to Europe’s securitised and violent policies of migration management stretching back to the 1990s (Jones, 2016), nor its historical entanglement in the conflicts from which people are fleeing (Mayblin and Turner, 2021). The broadcast therefore invites listeners to imagine Europe as a saviour with moral limits to the benevolence it can bestow on nameless Others.

The tendency for debate programmes to broadcast from the space of the recording studio and privilege 'expert' over migrant voices is shared by analysis and monologue programmes that also discuss migration from a top-down perspective. Although both genres evidence critical, informed, and analytical approaches to migration, they amplify academics, lawyers, and think tank researchers, which echoes the 'expert' soundscape of studio-based discussions on *The World Tonight*. It is important to note, however, that analysis and monologue programmes diverge from news and debates by highlighting historical geographies of migration to Europe and drawing comparative geographies of global displacement and refugee hosting. A geopolitical imaginary of migration as crisis therefore begins to be interrogated, challenged, and dispelled in broadcasts that create discursive space for academic and policy experts.

These subtle similarities and differences are illustrated neatly in *How Syria Changed the World*, an analysis programme that aired on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. From the outset, the broadcast paints comparative geographies of displacement and refugee hosting that dispel imaginaries of migration as a crisis in Europe:

**Gerges:** "The overwhelming vast number of refugees, even now, they are in three countries neighbouring Syria. More than 2 million Syrian refugees in Turkey, between 1.5 and 2 million in Lebanon, and about 600,000 refugees in Jordan [...] Lebanon is a country of 4 million people, Lebanon now has 2 million Syrian refugees. This is a very poor country. You have 40 percent of the Lebanese people who live in poverty [...] Imagine if 40% of the population of the United Kingdom were basically migrant, refugees. 40% of the population of Lebanon now are migrant, refugees, in Jordan about, what, 15 percent".

Here Fawaz Gerges, Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics, invites listeners to compare the scale of displacement in countries

neighbouring Syria with Europe, which poses a direct challenge to narratives of crisis and emergency articulated by European politicians and news bulletins. This critical approach to migration and global displacement resonates with *Four Thought*, a monologue programme predicated upon the single voice of an academic, author, or public figure who articulates a particular idea, theory, or point of view. Whilst it shares traits of the geopolitical imaginary, privileging 'experts' who are spatially removed from migratory experiences on the ground, broadcasts encourage listeners to reflect on the subject of, and theoretical approaches to, forced migration. This is illustrated in an edition on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in which Heaven Crawley, Professor of International Migration at Coventry University, lectures on public attitudes towards refugees:

**Crawley:** "I've always wondered whether there's something else going on here. Whether the threat of asylum is rather more symbolic than real and whether asylum has become what we might call a 'touchstone issue' for a broader range of contemporary concerns about the changes that people see around them. There are concerns about changing community structures, about a loss of identity, about issues of national and international security and also about personal security and well-being. So the question is, have asylum seekers become what Stanley Cohen calls 'modern day folk devils' onto which responsibility for a whole range of contemporary anxieties and concerns can be pinned?"

This rhetorical question captures how Crawley addresses listeners directly and provokes reflection on whether 'our' public attitudes towards refugees reveal more about 'us' than 'them'. She urges listeners to pause the next time they hear migration in the media and "take a moment to think about the people at the heart of the story, not as abstract numbers or individuals who want to cause you harm or take away things from you and your family, but as ordinary human beings just like me, just like you". A geopolitical imaginary of crisis, predicted upon a binary distinction between 'us' and 'them', is therefore unsettled and reworked by Crawley who suggests 'we' are part of an inclusive

and common humanity. These three examples demonstrate how some 'feature' programmes share characteristics of the geopolitical imaginary, but also diverge from it by creating space for nuanced analyses of forced migration to, and refugee settlement in, Europe.

#### *4.3.2 People Behind the Headlines: Personal Stories in Hostile/Humanitarian Europe*

This discussion sets up the first of four ways in which 'feature' programmes depart from a geopolitical imaginary of migration: namely, by featuring personal stories of migrants and refugees that reveal tangible and recognisable people behind the headlines. This is exemplified in the content, tone, and style of *From Our Own Correspondent* (FOOC), which is structured around five, five-minute dispatches written and spoken by journalists posted around the world (Grant, 2005). Although closely aligned with news and current affairs - reflected in presenter Kate Adie's short contextual cues to each dispatch - FOOC displays a delicate mix of hard news analysis and colourful storytelling that focuses on the people at the heart of a story. This ground-level, human-centric journalism is evidenced in its migration coverage, which produces imaginative geographies of the people caught up in hostile/humanitarian Europe.

On July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017, freelance journalist, Nick Sturdee, reports from Riace in Italy, a town that encapsulates Europe's polarised attitudes towards forced migration and refugee settlement. The scale and politics of refugee arrivals is relayed in Adie's cue, which informs listeners that "85,000 people have reached the shores of Italy already this year" with "up to a quarter of a million" more expected, and she warns ominously "the backlash is growing". This sense of foreboding anticipates Sturdee's dispatch about divergent public and political opinions in the local community of Riace, which are

embodied in his two central protagonists: Domenico Lugano, the middle-aged town mayor who embraces refugees as a route towards Riace's long term longevity and prosperity after years of "chronic de-population", and Lorenzo Fiato, a 23 year old university student from Milan, who wants "to defend European civilization from invasion". The mayor is therefore framed as a symbol of welcome, while the young student is a figure of hostility who re-articulates Huntington's (1993) divisive clash of civilizations. Sturdee quotes Lugano who boasts, "half this tiny town's population are migrants from 20 different countries", but this inclusive image of a global locality contrasts with Fiato, who insists, "we want to defend Europe against mass immigration and multiculturalism". Sturdee reveals that Fiato is coordinating a campaign against non-governmental organisations saving refugee lives at sea and closes with the menacing image of him launching a "Defend Europe" campaign. This portrait of two generations of Italians therefore adds colour and definition to Adie's geopolitical cue about changing tides of public opinion in Italy, and personalises an abstract imaginary of hostile/humanitarian Europe.

The journalistic imperative to reveal people behind the headlines is reaffirmed in Nick Thorpe's dispatch from Hungary for FOOO on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Although timestamped by Hungarian Prime Minister, Victor Orbán's resistance to the EU's compulsory refugee quota scheme, Thorpe's dispatch privileges personal stories of refugees journeying through and seeking asylum in Eastern Europe. Rather than discussing the geopolitics of refugee settlement from a top down, state-centric perspective like *The World Tonight*, Thorpe focuses on the people navigating hostile/humanitarian Europe on the ground. Listeners hear the story of Mohammed from Iraq, who spent five months with his wife and children in a Hungarian detention

camp “bristling with barbed wire, police patrols, and security personnel”. This dark, securitised image is amplified by Mohammed who is quoted as saying, “I’ll be able to forget the war in Iraq. I’ll even forget the Islamic State group. But I’ll never forget what we suffered in Hungary”. This stark comparative geography constructs Hungary as a hostile, violent, and unwelcoming space, and contextualises calls in late 2016 for the country to be expelled from the EU due to its behaviour towards refugees (Weaver and Kingsley, 2016). However, Thorpe nuances a narrative of Hungarian hostility as Mohammed describes an immigration officer as “kind” and a lawyer who gave them “the strength to keep waiting”, insisting “it’s the system and those who enforce it, the government of Hungary, who are bad, who treat us like criminals”. Thorpe’s decision to foreground the personal story of Mohammed therefore counters media portrayals of refugees as faceless statistics and leads to an interesting juxtaposition of individual acts of kindness vis a vis an antagonistic state within hostile/humanitarian Europe.

This trend towards fleshing out people and personal stories behind abstract headlines on hostile/humanitarian Europe is reflected in ‘feature’ programmes across Radio 4. An example outside of FOOC is *The Untold: Child Rescue*, the first in a two-part documentary series, originally broadcast on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, which offers an intimate insight into the international news story of Rob Lawrie; a former British soldier turned volunteer in the Calais camp who attempted to smuggle 4 year old Bahar from Afghanistan into the UK at her father Reza’s request and, as a consequence, faces criminal conviction. Presenter, Grace Dent, addresses listeners directly and suggests “you might already have a view on what he did. But when I heard the story, I thought I can see how this had happened. This is what you risk when those people on the news become your friends”. The documentary foregrounds Lawrie’s voice, life story, and

friendship with Bahar and Reza to subvert expectations and transform how listeners understand and imagine smugglers and refugees.

Indeed, the documentary challenges the popular media trope of smugglers as ‘villains’ by delving into Lawrie’s background and his thought-process behind the smuggling attempt (Crawley et al., 2018). Throughout, Lawrie speaks as though in conversation with listeners, which establishes a sense of connection over the airwaves. He cites the death of Alan Kurdi as the catalyst to volunteering in Calais and paints himself as a sensitive witness to Europe’s migration ‘crisis’: "I started imagining what his last two minutes of conscious life must have been like. Just trying to imagine that he is rolling round, getting tossed around that sea, freezing cold, probably wondering where his mummy and daddy are...". The confessional tone of the broadcast encourages listeners to reflect on Lawrie’s humanitarian impulse and these moments of spoken narration provide critical context to his failed smuggling attempt, including his firm belief he would be able to reunite Bahar with her family in Leeds. Recorded sound clips of Bahar and Lawrie playing together in the camp invite a re-imagining of Calais as a hopeful space and listeners are ultimately positioned as jury as Lawrie admits, "if I'd had time to think it through, I wouldn't have done it". Foregrounding Lawrie’s story therefore challenges binary imaginaries of hostile/humanitarian Europe by highlighting the fragile line between criminality and compassion. It also subverts possible listener perceptions of smugglers as villains by presenting Lawrie as a flawed but recognisable human being.

#### *4.3.3 Multiple and Different Voices: Listening to Europe’s Migration ‘Crisis’*

The second key characteristic of the counter imaginary of migration is that it is articulated through multiple and different voices. That is to say, ‘feature’ programmes

across Radio 4 amplify the voices and perspectives of named migrants and refugees, rather than politicians, as well as different, often freelance, journalists from outside of the BBC who display clear engagement with academic scholarship on migration and are more strident in tone and analysis than those heard on *The World Tonight*.

#### 4.3.3.1 Refugee Voices

Privileging migrant voices constructs an alternative soundscape of migration that is articulated by people with personal experiences of journeying to, and claiming asylum in, Europe. This contrasts starkly with the geopolitical discourse of *The World Tonight* and reflects a shift away from radio journalism that is anchored in, and broadcast out of, the studio towards encounters recorded in the field. Foregrounding displaced people's voices in 'feature' programmes begins to re-cast 'the migrant' in the geographical imaginations of listeners "as a speaking and acting subject" (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017, p.1174). It also answers Mainwaring and Brigden's (2016) call for expansive accounts of migration in the media that highlight the complexities, risks, and material experiences of clandestine journeys to Europe.

This pattern of representation is exemplified in the documentary, *The Boat Children*, from December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Presented by broadcaster and barrister, Hashi Mohammed, the documentary is predicated upon the voices of 5 unaccompanied children as they journey to and through Europe. Although listeners encounter the children once they have arrived safely in Italy, each describe their motivations for leaving home and paint vivid imaginative geographies of protracted and precarious journeys over land and sea.

Listeners hear from 17-year-old Blues from Gambia who describes leaving his home "so that the next generation can be educated" and to "wipe out the poverty in my family". He recounts an arduous journey through Niger, to Libya, and on to Italy in a clandestine boat trip at night, which confirms Andersson's (2014) finding that migrants are often aware of the risks before departing. His testimony resonates with 17-year-old Herman who fled forced conscription in Eritrea and describes a similar journey, crossing into Ethiopia on foot, travelling through Sudan, before leaving Libya by boat. He paints a visceral portrait of being subjected to abuse by smugglers, which resonates with the experience of 12-year-old Shorehom from Afghanistan. Shorehom recites an epic journey through Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and Greece, and recalls regular violence and exploitation, before smuggling himself onto a ferry "clinging to the underneath of a truck". He makes a final, impassioned plea to listeners, stating "Europe should not be so tough on us. We would not have left our dear country if we had not to come here to seek asylum. Europe shouldn't be so strict, so that people could come here more easily". By privileging the voices of children, Mohammed re-frames refugees as recognisable human beings with agency and aspirations (De Haas, 2011), and counters media representations that render migrants faceless and silent figures of victimhood or threat.

This trend across 'feature' programmes to amplify refugee voices is also evidenced in *Refugee Reminiscence* from August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, which is predicated upon the spoken testimonies of Maurice, Aminah, and Ryad; 3 people who describe their experiences of being a refugee in the UK and a special item they brought with them. There is no additional voice of a presenter or journalist, which means that the programme is an exercise in quasi self-representation. That is to say, the refugees are

given significant time and space to articulate their stories albeit within the editorial frame of BBC radio journalism. This answers the question posed in Chapter 2 by suggesting that mainstream radio broadcasting is not doomed to only rearticulate Orientalist tropes of the silent, voiceless 'Other' and can enable refugees to speak and be heard (Spivak, 1988; Malkki, 1996; Georgiou, 2018).

Maurice describes coming to the UK aged 9 from Biafra and the challenges of negotiating a new language and way of life, admitting, "I think my trauma was actually here". Cleverly, the programme's soundscape reflects his life story from being a homeless drug addict and, in his words, a "low life criminal" to discovering music and becoming a professional musician. Indeed, the broadcast interjects Maurice's spoken narrative with sounds of him singing and playing his guitar. This format of each refugee recalling their life story continues as Aminah describes coming to UK aged 15 from Somalia. Like Maurice, she reveals the struggles of settling in a new country, suffering from depression due to feeling isolated, without support, and split from her family. The challenges of maintaining transnational connections across space are clear when Aminah speaks emotively about returning to see her mother before she died and now treasuring her mother's scarf; an item that triggers memories of her cooking and allows her to "feel my mum's close to me". Finally, listeners hear from Ryad, a former Professor of Agriculture who came to the UK from Damascus in Syria 5 years ago. Ryad describes his passion for beekeeping and joy at joining a local beekeeping association, which has made him feel "born again in this life". He speaks enthusiastically about exporting local honey and his involvement in the 'Buzz project', which teaches beekeeping skills to refugees, job seekers, and vulnerable people in the community. Like Maurice's guitar

and Aminah's scarf, Ryad chooses his beehive smoker as his cherished item from Syria. The broadcast therefore counters media representations that present refugees as "pre-political figures without voice and a story to tell" by inviting listeners to re-imagine refugees as rounded individuals with agency and life stories (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2019, p.325); stories that are filled with familiar and universal experiences of daily challenges and struggles, and future hopes and aspirations.

#### *4.3.3.2 Journalist Voices*

'Feature' programmes similarly amplify the voices of different - often freelance - journalists to those heard in news broadcasts, some of whom are more campaigning, activist, and critical in tone. On October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018, freelance journalist, Sally Hayden, uses her dispatch for FOOC to critique EU-funded, offshore detention centres in Libya. Hayden acts as a conduit for the stories of migrants held in the Ain Zara centre in Tripoli and through their correspondence, she paints vivid imaginative geographies of exploitation, of woman giving birth unaided, and of migrants gathering together surreptitiously to handwrite letters to the 'outside' world. Crucially, she does not conceal her positionality as an activist journalist, condemning "the EU-backed Libyan coast guard, which has been intercepting migrants and refugees trying to cross the Mediterranean since last year". Hayden's decision to foreground the experiences of migrants on the ground contrasts starkly with a geopolitical imaginary of migration management articulated by EU politicians in news journalism.

Hayden's reporting resonates with the tone and approach of another freelance journalist, Benjamin Zand, who also concentrates on Libyan detention centres in his dispatch for FOOC from September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. Zand describes them as "black holes

where migrants go and may never return", which echoes the language and analysis of migration scholar, Bialasiewicz (2012, p.861) who conceptualises EU-funded detention centres as legal blind spots and "'offshore' black holes where European norms, standards, and regulations simply do not apply". 'Feature' programmes therefore create space for journalists who evidence clear expertise in critical migration scholarship, and in this case, inform listeners about how offshore migration management strategies are embedded within a precarious politics of legality, vulnerability, and abandonment.

This trend towards giving voice to freelance journalists who evidence close engagement with academic research on migration is reflected in Maria Margaronis' documentary, 'Greece's Haven Hotel', for *Crossing Continents* on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The documentary foregrounds City Plaza, a former hotel turned refugee squat that is now home to almost four hundred refugees and has a waiting list of over four thousand. Margaronis characterises City Plaza as "an experiment in living [...] where refugees from sixteen different countries and the volunteers who support them, live and work together". What is striking is that she uses the Greek volunteer's preferred term, "solidarians", and explains its meaning to erase unequal relations of power between refugees and citizens. This taps into Van Hear's (2018) research on future transnational societies and how they might be forged by displaced people and supportive citizens working together to build political solidarities and meaningful social connections. Interestingly, Van Hear's (2018) work is inspired by Greek solidarians in Europe's migration 'crisis' who rejected hierarchical social relations implicit in the terms 'volunteer', 'humanitarian', and 'beneficiary', and based their activities on the more inclusive principle of solidarity.

By using this term, Margaronis embeds City Plaza within a politics of humanitarianism, highlighting its significance as a repurposed space and emergency solution to refugees trapped in Greece in the wake of European border closures. It is framed as a spatial manifestation of the grey zone between legality and illegality, which offers a window onto the precarious state of refugee settlement policy in southern Europe. Margaronis records Olga, a solidarian who first occupied the hotel and emphasises the building's vulnerability, constantly under threat of eviction and denigrated by the Greek authorities. Her voice is balanced by Ioannis Mouzalas, the Greek Migration Minister, who denies the existence of any squats in Athens. This contrasts with Lefteris Papagiannakis, the Deputy Mayor, and Giovannelli Leprey of UNHCR, who both acknowledge that squats fill an unmet social need for displaced refugees awaiting asylum.

This abstract politics of refugee settlement, which Hynes (2009, p.115) describes as "policy-imposed liminality", is rendered tangible by Margaronis who identifies a further twelve refugee squats in Athens and paints a striking imaginative geography of hidden city spaces, a "city inside the city". Through this investigative journalism, Margaronis challenges the Ministry's claims and frames City Plaza as "a haven for the people who found both shelter and human comfort here", "a utopian experiment that can only exist in the cracks of a broken system", and "a space of possibility, sometimes even hope". By giving voice to a freelance journalist, *Crossing Continents* therefore delves into the illicit world of city squats in Greece that reveals a counter-politics of hidden humanitarianism and constructs an imaginative geography of a city, country, and continent struggling to cope with refugees.

#### 4.3.4 *Beyond the Spectacle: Longer Histories and Broader Geographies of Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement at the Local Scale*

The third and penultimate way in which ‘feature’ programmes diverge from the geopolitical imaginary is by resisting the drama and spectacle of migration at Europe’s sea and land borders. The extended length of ‘feature’ programmes means that journalists are able to explore and nuance the story of migration relative to news broadcasts constrained by short narrative frames and fast-paced production cycles. Radio documentaries range between 28 and 40 minutes in length and this additional space is used to situate the ‘crisis’ within longer histories and broader geographies of migration to Europe, and reflect on divergent experiences of refugee settlement. Journalists routinely adopt an eyewitness perspective that enables them to record experiences and encounters on the ground, and soundscapes that imaginatively transport listeners to the locations and spaces visited in the broadcast. This more granular approach to migration at the local scale echoes a feminist geopolitics that subverts state-centric narratives by focusing on the individual and the ‘everyday’ (Mountz and Hyndman, 2006; Sharp, 2007).

Historical geographies of migration to Europe are at the forefront of Chris Bowlby’s documentary, ‘Germany at the Centre’, on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016, in a three-part documentary series entitled *Europe: Strangers on my Doorstep*. Bowlby situates Germany’s contemporary response to refugees within historical frames of reference, foregrounding a family in the German city of Kassel which, through multiple generations, has a rich migration history. The documentary opens with convivial sounds of the family enjoying “Kaffee und Kuchen”, coffee and cake, and Bowlby introduces them by saying

that "like so many in Germany" they have "refugee stories lurking in family memory". Listeners hear grandmother, Adel, describe fleeing Silesia, in former Eastern Germany and now part of Poland, and the advancing Red Army as a child in 1945. Bowlby juxtaposes the displacement of ethnic Germans in the East, who were often framed as a burden, with contemporary hostility towards refugees. He also dispels imaginaries of Europe's migration 'crisis' as an unprecedented event by pointing to the scale of displacement, with around 15 million reported to have fled to Western Germany.

These historical geographies of migration are animated by Karin, daughter of Adel who later married a Turkish guest worker after a second wave of migration to Germany in the 1950s and 60s. Although born to a German mother and Turkish father, Karin reveals how German law in the 1960s defined nationality according to the father, meaning she was classed as a Turkish, rather than German, citizen. She describes having to apply for a German passport in the 1980s and prove she was a German citizen; an experience that speaks to a recent history of hostility towards those defined as Other. Bowlby highlights how this contentious relationship between Germany and its migration history frames the country's contemporary response to refugees, and he juxtaposes soundscapes of Germany's *Willkommenskultur*, or welcoming culture, with support for the right-wing populist party, *Alternative für Deutschland*. Europe's migration 'crisis' is therefore situated within a longer history, which provides listeners with critical context to ongoing debates around identity, citizenship, and nationhood.

Broader, global geographies of migration to Europe are evoked in Lucy Ash's documentary, 'The Harragas of Algeria', for *Crossing Continents*, on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Ash counters a trend on Radio 4 of reporting mainly from European countries by

travelling to Algeria to find out why, in her words, the country “remains one of the main sources of illegal migrants to Europe”. Although Ash cites Algeria’s civil war in the 1990s and Arab Spring of 2011, she makes no reference to its history as a former colony of France, nor its declaration of independence in 1962. This absence of empire perhaps explains Ash’s uncritical use of the term ‘illegality’ and conceals how the story of migrants journeying to Europe is deeply embedded in Algeria’s colonial past (M’charek, 2020). Nevertheless, Ash illustrates how “deep divisions between the elite and the neglected majority”, spatially manifest in the affluent city of Annaba relative to the rundown neighbourhood of Sidi Salem, drive motivations to reach Europe.

Crucially, however, Ash goes beyond simplistic push factors of migration, such as economic inequality or a lack of employment (Castles, De Haas, and Miller, 2014), by highlighting the imaginative power of transnational connections between those who have reached Europe and those left behind. Listeners hear the story of Mechouan, who lived comfortably with his family in Annaba but despite having a successful job, repeatedly applied for and was denied a visa to Europe. His father, Kamal, says “he had lots of friends and cousins in France and Belgium and other places. He talked with them on Skype, and he just wanted to see what life was like on the other side of the Mediterranean”. Although Ash does not probe the likely colonial origins of these familial connections, she evidences how it is not just the poor or uneducated who imagine and journey to Europe.

Furthermore, Ash does not shy away from the politics of migration to Europe and demonstrates how the EU is complicit in deaths at sea (De Genova, 2017). This is

exemplified in her interview with a human rights lawyer who paints a critical portrait of Fortress Europe:

**Lawyer:** “There are several reasons, but the main factor is the absence of freedom. There is a complete rupture between these young people and the authorities. Young people have ambitions but find themselves in a country where they can’t realize their dreams, so they can’t face the prospect of staying in a place that has become like an open-air prison. These laws have been imposed by Europe and our authorities have become guard dogs. Algeria has become a guard dog for Fortress Europe. That way if anyone dies, those casualties will be at our doorstep not Europe's”

The lawyer highlights the close working relationship between the EU and North Africa with the latter receiving financial incentives to police its territorial waters, create development opportunities, and prevent people from crossing the Mediterranean (Huysmans, 2000; Andersson, 2016). This resonates with M’charek’s (2020) analysis which points to the EU’s Emergency Trust Fund for Africa - with €656 million assigned to North Africa - and highlights its focus on Europe’s external border and migration management. Like the freelance journalists cited earlier in the chapter, Ash goes beyond dramatic spectacles of migration in the Mediterranean and invites listeners to reflect critically on the lived experiences of ambitious, disenfranchised young men, who imagine a life outside of Algeria but are ultimately embroiled in a contentious politics of life and death at Europe’s territorial edge.

#### *4.3.4.1 Refugee Settlement after the Spectacle of Arrival*

Journalists in ‘feature’ programmes similarly extend their analytical gaze beyond Europe’s beaches and borders to explore experiences of refugee settlement after the heightened spectacle of arrival. This is reflected in an edition of *Woman’s Hour* on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, which reports on the UK government’s declaration that the country

would accept more unaccompanied child refugees from Syria and other conflict zones. Rather than focusing on the geopolitics of the announcement like *The World Tonight*, the broadcast focuses on the local scale and explores the experience of foster mother, Karen, and her 14 year old foster son, Javid, from Afghanistan who now live together in Yorkshire. Recorded inside their home, the report amplifies the voice of Karen who articulates how initial concerns about fostering a child refugee were dispelled on meeting Javid, who she describes as a “lovely, kind, generous, amazing boy” who “appreciates everything”. Listeners hear Javid laughing as he admits he enjoys his “mum” Karen’s “lamb chops” and reveals he has made “good friends” at school. By foregrounding their story, *Woman’s Hour* animates the government’s abstract policy announcement with a local case study that paints a positive and hopeful imaginary of refugee settlement in the UK.

This journalistic interest in refugee settlement at the local scale resonates with a three-part series of *The Food Programme*, which explores the Syrian conflict through the lens of food. In the second episode on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016, presenter, Dan Saladino, introduces Dehir and Fayed, a Syrian couple forced to flee Homs and seek asylum. Listeners are transported imaginatively into their new home in Mansfield through sounds of the couple cooking and sharing food with friends, the only other Syrian family in the area. Despite the convivial atmosphere, Saladino suggests they appear “isolated” and have “a long and expensive bus journey” to buy ingredients. This echoes Loyd and Mountz (2014) who consider the spatial distancing of refugees from cities to be a form of territorial bordering. It also resonates with Darling (2017) who suggests UK resettlement policies reflect an aspiration to accommodate, rather than integrate, refugees. Indeed, when Saladino enquires about memories of sharing food at

Eid in Syria, listeners hear Dehir and Fayed begin to cry as they remember family left behind. Despite evoking memories of home and transnational connection across space, food is therefore a painful reminder of loss, distance, and separation for newly settled refugees.

This negative portrait of refugee settlement contrasts with the story of Imad Alanab, another Syrian refugee, in the third and final instalment on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018. Presenter, Sheila Dillon, goes beyond the spectacle of arrival by inviting listeners to reflect on the challenges of being forced to flee and create a life in a new country:

**Dillon:** All around the UK Syrian families who have been granted asylum are beginning to build new lives. Can you imagine doing it if you had to flee the UK to a country with a different language and culture and habits? I can't. But last week I went to meet a man using food to do just that. He is Imad Alanab: a well-known chef in his native Damascus before his restaurants were bombed. Now he has a growing reputation here, based on his catering company and a pop-up restaurant in East London, where I went to meet him as he began the evening's cooking..."

This strategy of asking listeners a rhetorical question encourages an empathetic response and despite tapping into media tropes of refugee entrepreneurship - which "validate the migrant as economic actor, while vilifying and excluding those who are unable (or refuse) to engage with the economic rationalities of western capitalism" (Chouliaraki and Georgiou, 2019, p.599) - Dillon imbues Alanab with agency and renders him a tangible human being. Indeed, listeners hear Alanab at work in his bustling restaurant, which contrasts with media representations that routinely fix refugees in land- and soundscapes of trauma, vulnerability, and precarity. Alanab dispels imaginative geographies of 'us' and 'them' by revealing there are "not only Syrians in my kitchen. There is Syrians, British, even from Eastern Europe. In my kitchen, we are all

brothers and sisters. We do not believe in borders. I believe more in humanity". *The Food Programme* therefore invites reflection on divergent experiences of refugee settlement post arrival and, in this instance, recasts refugees as an economic and cultural benefit to host societies.

#### *4.3.5 Place-Based, Immersive, Multi-Sensory Reportage: Spaces of Migration and Displacement*

This leads to the fourth and final characteristic of the counter imaginary of migration: namely, place-based radio reportage that immerses listeners in sights, sounds, and spaces of displacement. While spatialities of migration form the backdrop to news reports on *The World Tonight*, they are frequently the centerpiece of 'feature' programmes and particularly, documentaries. Journalists foreground spaces, such as hotels, airports, and camps, that transport listeners imaginatively and experientially over the airwaves and, crucially, reveal something about the lived experience and politics of migration to Europe. Whilst some might critique these sites for producing audible spectacles of migration and illegality, it is this analytical leap that distinguishes this type of geographical reportage from news journalism limited by short narrative frames. Put simply, journalists use documentaries to examine how migration is manifest spatially, with spaces *driving* the narrative, rather than simply animating it. The following three spaces - The Magdas Hotel, Hellinikon International Airport, and The Oinofyta Camp - have been chosen as clear illustrations of this spatially driven radio journalism.

##### *4.3.5.1 The Magdas Hotel*

Suitcases are what first catch the eye of freelance journalist, Frances Stonor Saunders, on entering the Magdas Hotel in Vienna; a space which occupies a central place in her

documentary, 'A Not So Merry Migrant Christmas in Vienna', for *The Report* on December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Staffed by refugees from 16 countries, the Magdas Hotel was refurbished by the Catholic charity, *Caritas*, and has gained international attention since opening in February 2015 (Johnstone, 2015). Saunders foregrounds the hotel as a space that sheds light on experiences of refugee settlement after "the euphoria of arrival" and re-works the unequal politics of host and guest. Indeed, at the start of the broadcast, Saunders tells listeners that "to be a refugee means to be a supplicant. You are dependent on others for pretty much everything, food, shelter, clothes. I have come to the Magdas Hotel because here the terms are reversed. The refugee is now the host". This striking observation immediately identifies the Magdas Hotel as an intriguing and exceptional space, and characterises Saunders as a critical thinker and reporter on the subject of migration.

Saunders guides listeners around the hotel and its philosophy, which she describes as "a small-scale harmonious confederation of different nationalities, cultures, and religion", "a bold new model of social business where humanitarian values and profit are proving to be entirely compatible". This early characterisation of the Magdas Hotel hints at Saunders' positionality as an empathetic and reflexive witness of migration, which is reflected in her decision to give voice to the refugees who work there. Saunders introduces Nicholas who invites her to see his sheltered accommodation in the city and describes leaving his home in Nigeria with a single rucksack containing a bible, cassette player, clothes, and toothbrush. This stark image prompts Saunders to reflect on comparative geographies of privilege: "as Nicholas talks, I reflect with some embarrassment on my suitcase, and I probably won't need half of what I packed for this trip [...] I take it for granted that I can map where I'm going, and I

can come home again". Repeated use of personal pronouns establishes an intimacy with listeners as Saunders flags 'our' shared privilege at being able to travel easily across nation state borders. Afterwards she confesses, "back in my spacious room at Magdas Hotel I thought about Nicholas' cramped accommodation and of what it must be like always to be living in that in-between place of the refugee, while your status and identity is still being negotiated". This juxtaposition of two contrasting spaces characterises Saunders as a self-aware and thoughtful observer, and evidences her deep engagement with what it means to be a refugee. That is to say, the Magdas Hotel is used as a springboard to critical reflection on the politics and lived experiences of refugee settlement in Europe.

Geography, location, and place are at the centre of Saunders' documentary as she traces spatialities of displacement across Vienna. While cycling the city streets she learns of a velodrome housing around 600 newly arrived refugees. Located "in the heart of imperial Vienna", the velodrome acts as a spatial reminder of how privilege and poverty, grandeur and displacement sit cheek by jowl in central Europe. Saunders describes its foyers where people lie asleep, and admits "it's a bit of a shock after the horse and carriage boulevard down the Prater Park and cycling around 19th Century Vienna with all its splendour". This juxtaposition of the city's grand imperial history with the contemporary reality of global dislocation sits uneasily with Saunders:

**Saunders:** "I didn't want to go into the velodrome. It didn't feel right [...] many were already asleep. Looking into the lobbies through the floor to ceiling windows, I felt like a voyeur. Sleep is normally such a private thing. Not a widescreen public spectacle. Privacy is one of the many things you lose when you undertake this journey".

Here, Saunders likens the journalistic act of witnessing to voyeurism and points to the inversion of public and private acts in spaces of displacement. The jarring sight of refugees forced to sleep in a space designed for sporting events acts a catalyst for reflection on the cost and reality of forced migration, once again evidencing her skill at turning a banal observation on space into an astute comment on refugee experiences.

#### 4.3.5.2 *Hellinikon International Airport*

**Kemp:** “Well this is completely surreal. I'm standing in what must have been the old forecourt to the airport. And there are children out playing in the puddles as lightning flashes in the distance. And I can see tiny handprints painted on the walls where this must be used as a kind of nursery during the daytime. There's just an overwhelming sense of futility about the place. Toddlers' clothes hanging out to dry in the middle of a torrential downpour. And hundreds of migrants sleeping in the middle of an old airport terminal who, ironically, aren't going anywhere.”

These are the words of Phil Kemp, an investigative reporter, in ‘A Greek Tragedy’ from January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a documentary that explores the experiences of unaccompanied refugee children in Greece for *File on 4*. Kemp highlights shifting imaginaries of ‘crisis’, informing listeners that although the number of refugees arriving in Europe has fallen, “a new crisis has taken its place and thousands are now trapped in Greece waiting to see if they'll be granted asylum in the EU”. This apt observation sets up the theme of stasis as Kemp reports from inside the former Hellinikon International Airport on the outskirts of Athens, now repurposed to house refugees. Kemp highlights the irony of accommodating refugees in a space previously devoted to international travel and invites listeners to reflect on inequalities of global mobility (Rumford, 2008), which facilitates frictionless travel for some while prohibiting cross-border movement for others.

Kemp encourages listeners to imagine the sights and sounds of the airport terminal and interviews Mustafa, “a shy 17-year-old Afghan boy”, who has “pitched his tent [...] near to the sign for passport control”; a former symbol of mobility that now hangs above a lived reality of stasis. Kemp informs listeners that Mustafa arrived three days after the Greek border closed, trapping him and thousands of others on Greece’s coastal shores. Through an interpreter, Mustafa describes his finite possessions and recounts his story of migration, forced to flee Afghanistan after the Taliban threatened his family. Creating space for Mustafa’s voice and story reinforces tropes of vulnerability and victimhood, which are compounded by the physical environment in which he now resides. This calls to mind Ehrkamp’s (2017, p.818) reflection on the delicate line scholars tread between telling stories that emphasise the costs and losses of migration without reducing refugees to victims. Brun and Fábos’ (2015, p.20) proposed solution is to frame protracted displacement as “agency-in-waiting” and Kemp follows suit by highlighting instances of agency that complicate refugees as victims.

Kemp records sounds of children “playing in the puddles”, describes “tiny handprints painted on the walls” in a makeshift nursery, and observes “toddlers’ clothes hanging out to dry”. These banal observations expose subtle instances of agency and domesticity as refugees transform an inhospitable space into a liveable, temporary ‘home’. His style of journalistic reporting resonates strongly with Parsloe’s (2017) research on the Tempelhof airport in Berlin, which was similarly appropriated as a ‘holding’ space for refugees (Le Blond, 2015; Paterson, 2016). Parsloe (2017, p.36) highlights where residents have rearranged their beds, used blankets and sheets to section off areas of privacy, and drawn colourful graffiti on cubicle dividers, which, he suggests, illustrate how “walls became canvases upon which refugees could express

their frustrations, hopes and enduring cultural identities". Kemp's editorial decision to undercut tropes of victimhood through 'agency-in-waiting' is reaffirmed when he awards the final words of the documentary to 15-year-old Bilau from Afghanistan, who says, "I want to be in future a doctor, if I can't be doctor I want to be an engineer, if I can't be engineer, I want to be a lawyer". Whilst Kemp balances a narrative of 'crisis' with optimistic accounts of refugee agency, foregrounding the space of the Hellinikon airport constructs an imaginative geography of Greece as a country struggling to cope with new arrivals.

#### 4.3.5.3 *The Oinofyta Camp*

Located north of Athens on the site of a former chemical factory is the Oinofyta camp, the focus of a three-part documentary presented by journalist, Luke Jones, on *iPM*; a programme devoted to the stories of its listeners. Isobel, a retired teacher and volunteer at the makeshift school in Oinofyta, contacted *iPM* and each broadcast begins with her testimony:

**Isobel:** "I want you to see the importance of education for children. I wanted you to see that even in this very bleak place, and it is bleak in so many ways, that if you give children education, you give families hope. As a parent myself, any parent knows that in a way you will give up your life, you will give up your hopes and aspirations, but you will not give up those for your children".

In this opening motif, Isobel disrupts imaginative geographies of 'us' and 'them' by appealing to shared experiences of parenthood and the universal value of education. It captures what volunteering in Oinofyta has taught her and these quasi moral lessons are scattered throughout:

**Isobel:** “We get bombarded by media images of thousands of people crossing borders and it's all a bit scary. And then you come and meet people and you think, ‘these people are like me. If I had lived in Afghanistan, I would have left too. We could be the other way round’. And I think that is one of the biggest lessons for everybody who comes here is, you might come thinking you are helping them, but actually it helps you understand your life”.

Like Saunders and Kemp, Isobel speaks directly to listeners. She identifies Oinofyta as a space of encounter that facilitates new ways of seeing migration and prompts critical reflection on ‘our’ lives and comparative circumstances. The camp is therefore framed as a space with potential to transform the thinking of volunteers and, by extension, listeners who visit imaginatively through the broadcast.

The gentle tinkling of a handbell signals the start of a new school day, and it competes aurally with the thundering roar of traffic from the busy road adjoining the camp. These contrasting sounds immediately characterise the camp as a contradictory space of compassionate humanitarianism and environmental hostility. Jones describes the school as a “sanctuary” for children and its dual function as a space of learning and refuge is articulated by Kat, another volunteer, who praises it as a “safe and secure environment” that offers children “a few hours of normality”. This is confirmed by star pupil Dina, a 10-year old girl from Afghanistan and an eloquent English speaker, who gushes about her love of learning and describes the classroom as “beautiful”.

These positive, hopeful imaginaries, however, are undercut by the bleak and disorientating landscape in which the camp is situated. Jones flags its history as a former chemical factory, refers to frequent fights between teenage boys who are described as lost and without direction, and observes large families squeezed into tiny, cramped tents with no natural light. The juxtaposition of these two contrasting ‘worlds’ within Oinofyta

counters media representations of camps as singular spaces of humanitarianism or threat. Indeed, Oinofyta is presented as a case study that illuminates the contentious politics of migration in a continent overwhelmed by new arrivals. Suspended in a liminal state between permanence and temporariness, refugee camps are often subject to cycles of demolition and reconstruction, and Oinofyta is no exception (Hicks and Mallet, 2019). Jones returns to Oinofyta in November 2017 following the Greek authority's decision to close the camp and Kat reveals that the government objected to their work in the school "because if we're still here it makes it look like people can stay"; an observation that speaks to state strategies to manipulate and control displaced populations by dismantling infrastructures of humanitarianism.

On his return trip, Jones documents the complexities of relocating vulnerable families to UNHCR apartments in Athens, while remaining camp residents are sent to alternative camps in Greece. Following an interview with Leo Dobbs from UNHCR who is audibly unqualified and ill-informed, his assistant, Stella, intervenes with an explanation of how families are selected. Listeners hear Jones fulfil his journalistic duty to hold power to account, challenging UNHCR with Kat's claim that there is no correlation between the allocation of apartments and the vulnerability of individuals. The documentary closes with Kat and Lisa, another volunteer, looking ahead to renting an apartment in the city to support the families, as Lisa explains: "I am going to stand as a witness. I'm going to talk about what has happened here, I'm going to try to make people understand that we are all human beings, and these guys want the same things we want". In this final emphatic testimony, Lisa highlights the power of witnessing and a need to unravel narratives of difference and otherness that frequently punctate political and media discourses of migration. Immersing listeners in the materiality and

evolving story of Oinofyta therefore offers a ground-level, experiential, almost first-hand insight into spatialities of displacement, as well as the fraught politics of refugee settlement on Europe's southern frontier.

#### 4.3.6 Summary

In summary, analysing 'feature' programmes across Radio 4 reveals a counter imaginary of migration that has four key characteristics: namely, they reveal named and recognisable people behind the headlines; amplify refugee over political voices, and create space for different, sometimes freelance, journalists who display critical engagement with academic scholarship on migration; go beyond dramatic spectacles of crisis at Europe's sea and land borders by delving into much longer histories of migration to Europe and broader, global geographies of displacement; and finally, evidence place-based, multi-sensory radio journalism that immerses listeners in spaces of migration and displacement. Whilst a minority of 'feature' programmes share and, occasionally, rearticulate the geopolitical imaginary of *The World Tonight*, magazine, documentary, and current affairs programmes on Radio 4 privilege human-centric reporting that highlights personal stories and experiences of migration on the ground. This mixture of nuanced analysis from journalists and amplification of refugee voices hints at an awareness among programme-makers at the BBC that "the lives of others are worthy storytelling material" (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017, p.1174), and, taken collectively, invite audiences to imagine refugees as human beings and equals.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter drew on a thematic analysis of 172 broadcasts to examine imaginative geographies of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe across Radio 4's

range of programming. It was organised around two sections that: first, identified a geopolitical imaginary of 'crisis', exemplified in broadcasts of *The World Tonight*, that reports on migration from a top-down, state-centric perspective, from the space of the studio, and is articulated through 'expert' voices; and second, highlighted a counter imaginary of migration, exemplified in 'feature' programmes, that is more localised, place-based, and multi-sensory, explores personal and nuanced experiences on the ground, and is articulated through multiple and different voices.

This analysis of two distinct imaginative geographies of migration is used to support a conceptual framing of Radio 4 as a diverse and, occasionally, contradictory site of representation. The chapter traces shifting imaginaries of crisis over time on *The World Tonight*, from the numerical scale of refugee arrivals to a lack of solidarity between EU member states, and points to different styles of representation between short news bulletins and longer programme reports. The latter, which consist of in-situ reports by foreign correspondents in the field, share characteristics of the counter imaginary of migration exemplified in 'feature' programmes. This nuances the core argument of the chapter by pointing to convergences between the two imaginaries, whereby some 'on location' reports in *The World Tonight* produce a local, immersive, and nuanced imaginary of migration, while certain 'feature' programmes share characteristics of the geopolitical imaginary of crisis.

Nevertheless, place-based, immersive, and multi-sensory reporting on the ground in the majority of 'feature' programmes amplifies 'new' - that is, different - voices, most notably refugees and migrants, who are named and given space to articulate personal and differentiated experiences of forced migration and refugee

settlement; a style of journalistic storytelling that invites listeners to re-imagine people on the move as tangible, recognisable, and relatable human beings (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017). Journalists go beyond the drama of maritime and land border crossings, and political framings of migration as a burden and problem to be solved, by situating migration within longer histories and global geographies, and exploring how spaces of displacement are caught up in the contentious politics of migration to Europe. These two imaginaries of migration are produced by, and emerge from, different optics and spaces of reporting: namely, top-down, studio-based broadcasts vis a vis ground-level, in-situ radio programmes. Radio 4 therefore emerges, not as a single space of representation, but as a tableau of eclectic and, at times, conflicting representations that invites multiple ways of hearing, imagining, and interpreting Europe's migration 'crisis'.

Radio 4 undoubtedly offers listeners the "view from Europe" (Crawley et al., 2018, p.7), but it is important to note that a minority of broadcasts, not explored here, extend their gaze beyond Europe's shores; most notably, Andrew Hosken's short series of reports from the Zataari refugee camp in Jordan for *The World Tonight* in 2015. It is also worth recalling from Chapter 3 that the sample concentrates on programmes which focus on or cite forced migration or refugee settlement in Europe in their title or description. This means that broadcasts with fleeting references to migration or which are labelled differently - such as the history and politics of the Syrian conflict - may be excluded. This caveat illustrates how the geographical bias in Radio 4's reporting could be a result of the methodological approach taken in the research and acknowledges a potential limitation of the sample. Nevertheless, the scale of analysis undertaken, tracing patterns of representation and storytelling across 172 broadcasts, offers a

comprehensive insight into how and from where Radio 4 framed and located Europe's migration 'crisis'.

The chapter makes a significant contribution to literature on geographical imaginations by revealing the myriad ways in which BBC radio journalism constructs audible imaginative geographies through sounds and voices that invite listeners to imagine spaces, places, and people on the move. Just as Said (1978, p.55) is interested in how spaces are imbued with meaning and gain "imaginative value" through representation, this chapter reveals the specificities of radio journalism and how it produces and animates geographical imaginations around migration. The geopolitical imaginary in news is animated by chaotic sounds of boats arriving and violent clashes at border fences that invoke audible spectacles of emergency and crisis. Meanwhile the counter imaginary in 'feature' programmes imaginatively transports listeners into people's homes, city squats, hotels, former airports, and camps as spatialities of migration that refugees inhabit and encounter in the 'everyday'. The chapter therefore identifies a particular style and format of radio journalism, exemplified in 'feature' programmes, that mirrors a feminist geopolitics by privileging people, rather than states, as units of analysis and calling on listeners to imagine ground-level, everyday experiences of migration and displacement (Hyndman, 2007; Sharp, 2007; Mountz and Hyndman, 2006; Massaro and Williams, 2013).

Heard together, however, both of these geographical imaginaries and soundscapes evoke an acute sense of place and immerse listeners in the affective atmospheres and geographies of migration to and through Europe. After all, radio's predication on sounds and the spoken word means that journalists must work hard to

produce evocative reportage and provoke spatial imagining in the mind's eye of listeners. This contrasts with print and television journalism that is able to provide readers and viewers with visual cues, pictures, and video footage of migration.

Hearing and imagining people on the move in radio journalism, then, has the potential to collapse imaginative geographies of 'us' and 'them', and spatial divisions between 'here' and 'there', by inspiring critical reflection on shared and inclusive communities of belonging. Of course, voices can enact division as much as connection, and human-interest stories are, to some extent, a dominant regime of representation that can divert scrutiny away from the EU and its production of illegality, and obscure how Europe's migration 'crisis' is enmeshed in post-colonial histories and legacies (De Genova, 2017). Nevertheless, the act of *hearing* soundscapes and voices of migration, particularly in Radio 4's vast collection of 'feature' programmes, harbours important potential for recognising migrants and refugees, not as abstract victims or spectral threats, but as human beings who are part of 'us' and 'our' common humanity (Arendt, 1958; Butler, 2009; Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017).

The chapter raises two critical questions that will be addressed in the following empirical chapters: first, why do such diverse representations and imaginative geographies of migration emerge on Radio 4, and how do they correspond with organisational structures of production and journalistic practices at the BBC?; and second, how are these representations heard, interpreted, and imagined by listeners, and does the act of hearing migrant voices forge geographical imaginations that expand fields of perceptibility, recognition, and solidarity with 'vulnerable' others?

## Production

### *Behind the Microphone at BBC Radio 4*

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores how and why disparate representations of forced migration to Europe emerged on Radio 4 by drawing on 17 interviews conducted with journalists, producers, editors, and senior leaders within, and outside of, the BBC. Following Caldwell (2008) and Chung (2017), the thesis connects a ‘textual’ analysis of the broadcasts in Chapter 4 to an ‘extratextual’ analysis of production and audience reception in Chapters 5 and 6. This inclusive and integrated methodology aims to close “the divisive gap” in media studies that separates out questions of representation from agents and methods of production and reception (Chung, 2017, p.9). Rodgers’ (2014, p.69) interest in how media are “enacted through particular practices and material settings” informs this analysis of radio production at the BBC. That is to say, production is defined and understood as a process shaped by organisational structures and performed through journalistic practices, which are located in particular spaces and settings (Rodgers, 2018). This geographical approach builds on two recent theoretical turns in media studies towards studying media as practices and the spatialities of media (Couldry, 2012; Adams and Jansson, 2012; Rodgers, 2014; 2018; Fast et al., 2018).

Whilst Caldwell (2008) observes a trend in the film industry of manufactured self-representation that allows viewers a glimpse behind the scenes, radio production remains largely hidden. This is not to overlook the recent encroachment of cameras into recording studios, which now enables listeners to watch broadcasts live on air, but to emphasise that radio production is comparatively undocumented, particularly in geography. Indeed, Pinkerton (2013, p.440) points out that “while the material output of journalistic endeavour (the texts, the photographs and the audio-visuals) have provoked considerable scholarly interest, the crucial role of journalists (among others) in their production, interpretation and circulation has been somewhat occluded behind a kaleidoscope of geopolitical ‘visions’ and ‘imaginaries’”. Speaking with journalists, producers, editors, and senior leaders is not an attempt to offer an inside portrait of Radio 4 or the BBC per se, but rather a step towards highlighting practices and material settings of production that explain how and why imaginative geographies of migration to Europe emerged. The chapter therefore responds to Pinkerton’s (2014, p.64) call for geographical scholarship on the “institutional practices that determine [...] radio programming” and the dynamics between broadcasts, journalists, and listeners.

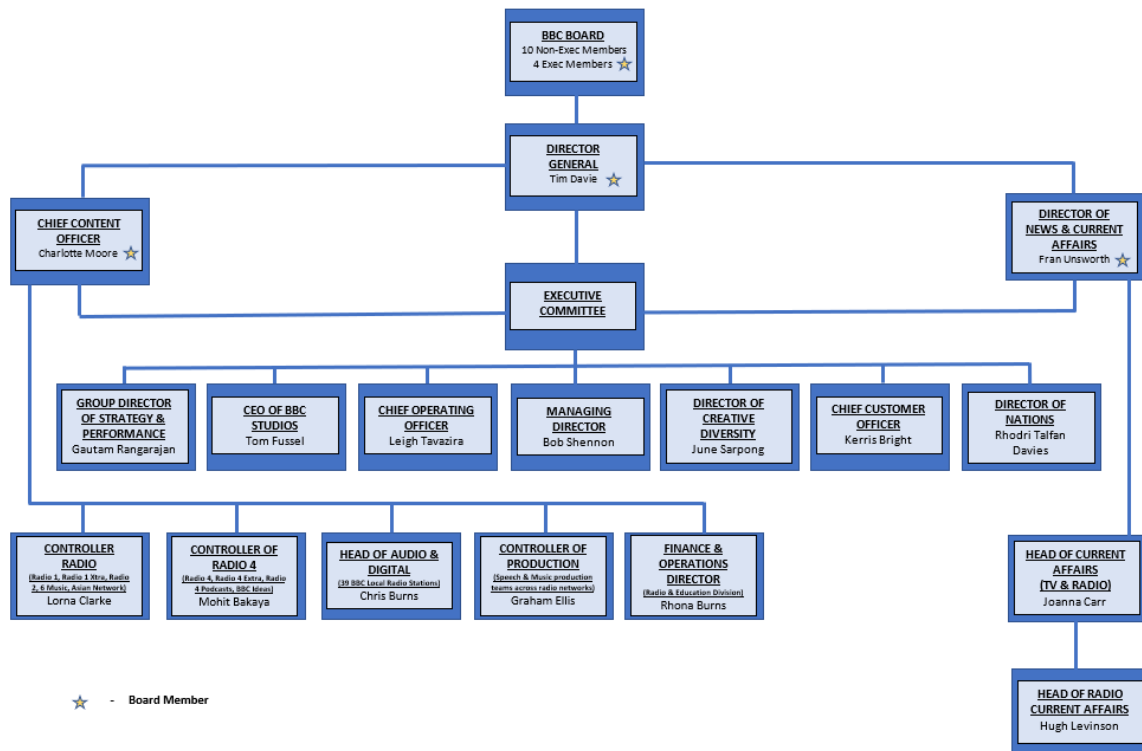
The chapter is structured around two sections that examine the production of broadcasts heard on Radio 4: namely, organisational structures and journalistic practices. The first section discusses how the geopolitical imaginary of crisis and the more place-based, multi-sensory, and personalised imaginary of migration emerge out of three internal divisions within the BBC and a hierarchy of entrusted power and responsibility, which are two organisational structures that shape the commissioning and production of broadcasts on migration. The second section discusses two professional codes that govern journalistic practices and reveal the centrality of

audiences to the production of BBC content. It locates these journalistic practices within sites and spaces of production that scramble the idea of broadcasts made exclusively through journalists as eyewitnesses to migration 'in the field', before foregrounding storytelling as a key technique through which journalists seek to engage listeners in radio by appealing to their geographical imaginations.

## **5.2 Organisational Structures of Production**

### *5.2.1 Internal Divisions within the BBC*

From the perspective of listeners, programmes heard on Radio 4 might be assumed, understandably, to have been produced by Radio 4. However, an analysis of organisational structures within the BBC, identified through interview responses, reveals this is not always the case. The diverse and contradictory nature of representations across Radio 4 programming only begins to make sense when we start to unpack the relationship between broadcasts and internal organisational divisions. The geopolitical imaginary of crisis in *The World Tonight*, together with the place-based, multi-sensory, personalised imaginary of migration in 'feature' programmes, emerge out of three organisational divisions that shape the commissioning and production of BBC broadcasts: namely, Radio 4, the News and Current Affairs directorate, and Radio Current Affairs. Creative tensions between the three divisions leads to a diversity of broadcasts on forced migration and refugee settlement as journalists and editors seek to produce contrasting and complementary coverage. These three divisions therefore provide a grounded understanding of the organisational structures out of which imaginative geographies emerge and the significance of senior leaders who commission and oversee the production of broadcasts (Figure 9).



**Figure 9:** Organisational Structure of the BBC in 2021 (BBC Who We Are, n.d.)

#### 5.2.1.1 Radio 4

Radio 4 is the first division in the triumvirate, which is responsible for a large proportion of broadcasts that articulate the more localised, place-based, multi-sensory imaginary of migration. Located in Old Broadcasting House - identified in Chapter 1 by its grand clock tower and aerial mast - Radio 4 is split into two departments that commission different genres of programmes: namely, Factual and Arts. The factual department commissions across current affairs, politics, history, science, and religion, and programmes include *Woman’s Hour*, *The Food Programme*, and *Ramblings*. By contrast, the arts department commissions across comedy and drama, and programmes include *The News Quiz*, *Just a Minute*, and *The Archers*. These two departments highlight the breadth of Radio 4’s commissioning remit, which begins to explain the diversity of programmes on, and representations of, migration by illuminating the number of

analytical lenses through which journalists can examine migration, from history and politics to religion and drama.

Both the factual and arts departments have a Commissioning Editor who oversees programme development and editorial strategy, and reports to the Controller of Radio 4. The Controller of Radio 4, currently Mohit Bakaya who was appointed in 2019, has the authority to determine the network's editorial direction and creative content. Gwyneth Williams, who was Controller from 2010-2019, defines the role as "the editorial leader" who is responsible for Radio 4's strategy, budget, sound, and quality (Interview, 11.03.20). She describes editorial oversight as a daily and weekly task that is focused on ensuring "coverage *feels* right editorially" (Interview, 11.03.20). This subjective intuition about the editorial feel of broadcasts translates into concrete questions about the selection and spread of stories, and whether reportage is fair, balanced, and impartial. Unsurprisingly, the Controller listens to hours of broadcasting and works closely with programme teams. While Helen Boaden, who was Controller of Radio 4 from 2000-2004, acknowledges the impossibility of listening to all output, she emphasises the importance of avoiding a repetition of ideas or content, and is supported in this effort by a Scheduler and Editorial Policy Advisor (Interview, 14.02.20). For Williams, the role of Controller crystallises around asking, "are you giving people the tools with which to understand the world properly and make choices?" (Interview, 11.03.20). This ambition signals a top-down overview that feeds into a commissioning process in which the creative strategy is set at the start of each year.

Indeed, my interviews with both Williams and Boaden illuminate how the Controller provides a vision for Radio 4's sound and creative direction to which

producers and journalists from the independent sector and in-house departments submit ideas. Reaching outside of the BBC for programme ideas and broadcasting talent highlights room for freelance journalists to inject fresh creativity into the organisation and crucially for this research, amplify different voices around the subject of forced migration and refugee settlement. These ideas are then shortlisted by BBC editors and schedulers who work with the Controller to choose the basic shape of the network for the year ahead. A quarter of the programme schedule is held back for rolling commissions that react more closely to the daily news cycle and manifest in weekly meetings to which in-house and independent companies, again, pitch ideas. It is therefore clear that the Controller and Commissioning Editors have significant influence and authority to determine the overall vision, content, and sound of Radio 4 - but importantly, not all programming.

#### *5.2.1.2 The News and Current Affairs Directorate*

The four daily news programmes on Radio 4 - which are *Today*, *WATO*, *PM*, and *The World Tonight* - are funded and produced by the BBC's News and Current Affairs directorate. The directorate is currently led by Fran Unsworth and located in the modern, glass extension of New Broadcasting House. This means that the geopolitical imaginary of crisis, articulated most clearly in *The World Tonight*, is a product of the News directorate, rather than Radio 4. Significantly, it also means that the four news programmes, known within the BBC as 'sequences', are editorially and financially independent of Radio 4 and its Controller. Differences in narratives and imaginative geographies of migration between 'news' and 'feature' programmes therefore begin to be explained by an organisational division between Radio 4 and the News directorate.

The stark difference in representations of migrants and refugees produced in news bulletins, which top and tail the sequences, relative to the main programme coverage in *The World Tonight*, can also be explained by a division of labour within News. Several of my interviewees point out that journalists in News write and deliver the bulletins, while sequence programme teams - located separately on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor - have editorial and creative control over the stories they cover in the rest of the broadcast. This creates an interesting dynamic whereby the news bulletin could lead with one story while the programme could open with another. The seam between the news bulletin and rest of the programme is inaudible, identifiable only by a switch in voice from news reader to programme presenter, which means the average listener is unlikely to be aware of the internal division between the News directorate and Radio 4.

Correspondents, who are frequently heard in *The World Tonight's* migration coverage doing two-way conversations from Brussels or reports on refugees from Greece, Turkey, and Germany, work for News and file their reports through Newsgathering, which is responsible for producing content for radio and television networks and other multi-media outlets across BBC News. Incoming and outgoing reports from correspondents posted around the world are visible on a central hub of rolling screens in the basement of New Broadcasting House, which gives a sense of the fast-paced dynamism of the directorate, handling and redirecting stories coming in from across the globe. Senior journalist, Sophie Baukham, explains how the Planning department, which has multiple sections, acts as a mediator between the sequence programmes and the rest of the News directorate (Interview, 12.03.20). Journalists in Radio 4 Planning, for example, are responsible for pre-prepared items, which includes the commissioning of original journalism that reflects the editorial strategy and vision of

a sequence programme, and news reports filed by correspondents. Imaginative geographies of migration articulated on Radio 4 are therefore shaped by a range of different journalists, editors, and producers within and outside of News.

The relationship between News and Radio 4 has been, and continues to be, subject to organisational restructuring efforts, which provides important context to lingering frictions between the two divisions that underscore the diversity of broadcasts on migration. Under John Birt's premiership as the BBC's Director General from 1987-2000, the separate departments of News and Current Affairs were brought together under a collective News and Current Affairs division in 1987 (Born, 2005). This was followed in 1991 by the centralisation of radio and television news into a single Newsgathering department to cut costs, streamline jobs, and respond to rapid changes in technology; the result being that reporters worked for Newsgathering, rather than specific programme teams. Born (2005, p.407) suggests this restructuring bred a collective feeling within the BBC that news coverage became too analytical, editorially timid, and creatively stale, and contributed to "escalating tensions from the early nineties between News management and the controllers". Greg Dyke's appointment as Director General in 2000 led to a reversal of some of these decisions, reinstating separate radio and television news divisions and imposing a flatter organisational structure. Born (2005, p.459) argues that Dyke "grasped the deleterious effects of the shift away from editorial autonomy towards anxious hierarchies embodied in added layers of management, and he wanted to encourage people to take independent and creative editorial decisions". At the turn of the century, authority therefore returned to editors who were given renewed creative freedom and editorial control over

programme content under a less centralised and more devolved BBC; a critical point that shapes the production of broadcasts and is explored in the following sub-section.

Old frictions between News and the network controllers have not entirely dissipated under subsequent restructures, however. While Boaden describes the relationship between Radio 4 and News as “collaborative” (Interview, 14.02.20), Williams refers to it as “challenging” (Interview, 11.03.20). The Controller of Radio 4 works with the Director of News and Current Affairs on the appointment of sequence programme presenters and time critical decisions about whether programmes should be extended, and the schedule reshuffled, in response to breaking news stories. In my interview with her, Williams recalls regular “arguments” and difficult “conversations” that hint at ongoing tensions between the two divisions (Interview, 11.03.20). She does, however, acknowledge the necessity of a close working relationship to foster a creative dynamic, as well as the overall importance of news to the network: “news is so key, it’s central [...] if it isn’t good, really, you can forget about the rest of Radio 4 because it is absolutely the heart of Radio 4” (Interview, 11.03.20). Uncovering and probing these relationships between internal divisions is important because the organisational structure of creative processes conditions the content on migration that is commissioned and produced. That is to say, lingering frictions between the different divisions is a catalyst to journalistic and programme-level creativity.

#### *5.2.1.3 Radio Current Affairs*

This point about frictions between divisions is developed by Bridget Harney, Commissioning Editor of *Crossing Continents* in Radio Current Affairs (RCA), the third

and final division in the triumvirate. Harney suggests that similar tensions exist *between* news and current affairs journalism:

“The news is sort of this relentless kind of bang, bang, bang, bang, and I think there is a lot of space for documentaries [...] we do fight our corner because people sort of say, ‘well, news is essential, the documentaries are nice to have’ and our view is that documentaries are essential too” (Interview, 06.04.20).

The fact that programmes in current affairs are forced to justify their relevance and value relative to news, hints at frictions and forces that are pulling and pushing *within*, as well as between, divisions. After all, RCA is a subset of the much larger News and Current Affairs directorate under Unsworth and operates across different networks, from Radio 4 to the World Service. Harney’s insight also confirms Born’s (2005, p.77) conclusion that:

“the distinct identity of each production area, expressed in scepticism towards rival departments and other parts of the BBC, is vital to the BBC’s wellbeing. It fosters internal diversity and the space for dissent and debate - essential preconditions for an independent and innovative production culture”.

A diversity of broadcasts on migration is therefore, at least partially, a product of scepticism or antagonism between different divisions who articulate a need to create contrasting and complementary content.

Structurally, RCA is part of the Current Affairs department led by Joanna Carr, who commissions and oversees television and radio output, and reports to Unsworth. Hugh Levinson, Head of RCA, reports to Carr and is responsible for ad-hoc radio programmes, podcasts, and ‘strands’; the latter of which are regular, longstanding programmes and make up two-thirds of the overall output with typically one editor for

every two strands (Interview, 07.04.20). Strands heard on Radio 4 include *Crossing Continents*, *File on 4*, *From Our Own Correspondent (FOOC)*, and *A Point of View*. This is where the relationship between internal divisions and imaginative geographies articulated on Radio 4 becomes more complex. Eagle-eyed readers may have noticed that this list includes *FOOC*, which Chapter 4 suggested shared and resisted characteristics of the geopolitical imaginary, as well as *Crossing Continents*, which was cited as an exemplar of the more personalised, multi-vocal reporting of migratory experiences ‘on the ground’. Just like the distinction between news bulletins and sequence programme content, the relationship between News and a top-down, state-centric, geopolitical framing of migration is not a direct or causal one. Similarly, *Moral Maze*, which was critiqued in Chapter 4 for invoking imaginaries of migration as a threat to the safety and stability of Europe, is commissioned and produced by Radio 4’s Factual department. This reinforces an important finding that internal divisions do not always map neatly onto narrative frames of representation.

Nevertheless, it is possible to identify broad trends in patterns of storytelling around migration across the three divisions and there is a noticeable difference in the temporal rhythms governing current affairs relative to news journalism. Harney colloquially defines the pace of news production as a “relentless kind of bang, bang, bang” (Interview, 06.04.20), relative to the unspoken, but unmistakable characterisation of current affairs as the home of slower, more reflective radio production. This corresponds with how migration is framed by news bulletins, produced every hour or half hour, relative to documentaries that are crafted over a number of weeks. Interestingly, in my interview with her, Carr suggests commissioning in RCA also has three distinct temporal rhythms:

“The first rhythm is that of the regular strands [...] they are what’s called self-commissioning strands, so they just get on and sort themselves out. The second rhythm is that of the of the commissioning round from main clients, so that would include Radio 4 and they have their own seasonal commissioning round which is different for the different genres [...] arts, factual, entertainment [...] and the third timescale is just what we call ad-hoc commissions [...] they’re a bit more immediate and following the news agenda of the moment” (Interview, 29.04.20).

Behind the commissioning and production of broadcasts are temporal cycles that are designed to produce, react, and respond to different stories. Indeed, it is not a stretch to imagine that at the peak of Europe’s migration ‘crisis’ in 2015, some programmes produced by RCA are likely to have been the result of ad-hoc commissioning, which is most closely tied to “the news agenda of the moment” (Interview, 29.04.20). This suggests that the horizontal relationship between the three internal divisions - Radio 4, News, and RCA - is underpinned by temporalities that condition the programmes produced and heard on air. The following section explains how an organisational hierarchy dissects these three divisions and is critical to understanding the production of broadcasts.

### *5.2.2 Hierarchy of Entrusted Power and Responsibility*

Programme production is governed by an organisational hierarchy of power and responsibility from senior commissioners and controllers down to programme-level editors, journalists, and producers that is fundamental to explaining the diversity of representations on forced migration and refugee settlement across Radio 4. Indeed, senior leaders at the BBC place their trust in journalists and programme teams to produce accurate, independent, and impartial journalism, and with this responsibility

comes a degree of freedom to determine the editorial and creative direction of broadcasts:

“The BBC system is that every individual journalist is inculcated with the values of accuracy, independence, and impartiality [...] then it’s up to the producers of the day and then editors to ensure that people abide by those. You know, it’s a devolved power system. I remember Greg Dyke when he became Director General, he said, ‘I can’t believe how much responsibility we give our editors’, he said, ‘but it’s the only way it could work’ - and of course, it is the only way it could work” (Interview, 14.02.20).

Here, Boaden suggests that the size and scale of the BBC makes this transference of responsibility - from executive leadership and managerial heads of department down to programme editors, producers, reporters, and presenters - essential to the daily running of the organisation. Her imaginary of the BBC as a vast institution bound together by a “devolved power system” obscures how significant authority, control, and influence remains within senior management (Interview, 14.02.20). It does, however, capture how power and responsibility over the production of programme content filters down the organisational hierarchy, which is critical to understanding how broadcasts are commissioned and produced. Put simply, journalists and programme teams are given the creative space and editorial authority to construct broadcasts, which begins to explain the diversity of output on migration across Radio 4.

Senior managers may be responsible for overall strategy and oversight but Levinson echoes Boaden by emphasising the agency of programme editors, stating “I just want to make the editors have as much autonomy as possible because I think they’ll come up with better results, so I try not to oversee their choices, their commissioning process too tightly” (Interview, 07.04.20). This resonates with Anna Korycinska, Output

Editor of *The World Tonight*, who also describes the autonomy given to programme teams:

“The role of the Output Editor is basically you are the person who decides what goes in the programme. And we have a lot of responsibility, but also a lot of freedom [...] what you hear on the radio is obviously the result of a collaboration between the output editor, presenter, producers, but ultimately, you know, the responsibility of what you hear, what goes on air, is the output editor’s responsibility. And I just want to stress that because sometimes people say, ‘oh, you know, the BBC bias and the BBC hasn’t this or that’ [...] but it’s shaped by people, so there is no edict from above that you should do this, or you should do that. It’s very much what the editor of the day thinks is the agenda that he or she wants to, you know, put out, put across, so you have a lot of independence” (Interview, 10.04.20).

Korycinska emphasises the agency of programme teams to set a creative and editorial direction to counter what she sees as false perceptions of the BBC as a homogenous and tightly controlled institution with a single directive. She draws attention to the responsibility and independence of editors, producers, and presenters at programme-level and suggests that contrary to popular opinion “there is no edict from above” influencing what is broadcast (Interview, 10.04.20). That being said, it is important to flag that all programmes must follow the BBC’s public service mission and editorial standards, which are instilled in journalists and discussed in detail in section 5.3.1. The Editor and Deputy Editor of *The World Tonight* form a checks and balances system in which they may intervene on questions of balance or editorial direction, but Korycinska stresses, “it doesn’t happen very often” (Interview, 10.04.20). This is significant because it reveals space for the personal interpretations and subjectivities of journalists and editors to inflect the production of broadcasts on Europe’s migration ‘crisis’.

Korycinska's dual emphasis on responsibility and freedom resonates with Chris Morris, correspondent for BBC News, who emphasises the trust placed in journalists by senior management:

"You are given quite a lot of latitude. I think if you're trusted, then that's the way it should be [...] if you're trusting me to go there and be your eyes and ears and your voice, then you've got to trust me [...] Over the years, you build up a bit of trust that you know what you're doing" (Interview, 06.03.20).

Morris corroborates his colleagues by emphasising the trust afforded him by editors and senior leaders to be a witness and commentator to events - in this case, migration - unfolding on the ground. Whilst he collaborates with a producer when making a news package, tight deadlines mean that editors rarely listen to it before it goes out on air. Morris points out that trust is something that develops over time, which suggests creative freedom and journalistic responsibility is conditional on experience. This adds nuance to the organisational hierarchy by suggesting that being trained in the BBC's editorial standards is not enough in and of itself. Rather training is a foundation and prerequisite to gaining trust and "latitude" through experience over time (Interview, 06.03.20). Nevertheless, it still reaffirms how trust and authority filter down the organisational hierarchy from senior leaders and managerial heads of department to journalists and programme teams who have room to steer their creative and editorial direction.

### **5.3 Journalistic Practices**

A vast network of journalists operates within these organisational structures of production, each with their own positionalities and programme commitments, who bring multiple ways of seeing, thinking about, and reporting on migration. Some

journalists are stationed overseas as foreign correspondents, while others work in and are deployed out of Broadcasting House, or are employed on a freelance basis from outside the BBC. Although everyone who works for the BBC is trained in and bound by rules around truthful, accurate, and impartial reporting, journalists have a degree of creative latitude to inflect broadcasts with personal styles of witnessing and reporting. The second half of this chapter therefore examines the figure of the journalist and the journalistic practices that govern programme production. It explores how they 'see' themselves, interpret the professional codes that guide them, and reflect on their role and responsibility when covering Europe's migration 'crisis'. This echoes Pinkerton's (2013, p.448) characterisation of journalists as "geopolitical 'agents'" in reference to their capacity to interpret, mediate, and represent the world. Comparing and contrasting mindsets, motivations, and methods behind broadcasts matters because it provides context to the conceptual framing of Radio 4 in Chapter 4 as a tableau of diverse and, at times, contradictory representations on migration, and reveals a nuanced picture of radio production.

### *5.3.1 Professional Codes*

There are two professional codes that guide journalists and govern the production of broadcasts: namely, the BBC's Reithian mission to inform, educate, and entertain audiences, and its editorial imperative to produce truthful, accurate, and impartial journalism (BBC Editorial Standards, n.d.). These codes are outlined in the Royal Charter, which forms the constitutional basis for the BBC. The Charter was first published on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1927, and identified the BBC as an instrument of education and entertainment with subsequent Charters adding the dissemination of information to its

remit (BBC Royal Charter Archive, n.d.). It is a formal guarantee of the BBC's independence from government, secures its editorial and creative freedom, and specifies its purpose, objectives, and values. This independence is complicated by the Charter being subject to parliamentary review and renewal every ten years, and decisions about the license fee and appointment of Board members, who oversee the organisation, resting with the government (Born, 2005). Nevertheless, Born (2005, p.31) states that "journalists and programme-makers are not simply creatures of the governors of the day, let alone of the government", which speaks to creative and editorial autonomy within the organisation to produce content aimed at informing, educating, and entertaining audiences.

This emphasis on audiences is important because both codes revolve around the BBC's purpose as a public service broadcaster aimed at serving the public interest. Journalists who work for the BBC are therefore trained in, and guided by, a set of editorial standards upon which its claims to trust, independence, and quality depend. The BBC's editorial imperative centres around "reporting stories of significance to our audiences and holding power to account" (BBC Editorial Standards, n.d.), which translates into the production of journalism on migration the BBC considers truthful, accurate, and impartial. There is clear slippage between these two codes with the editorial imperative articulated in terms of achieving its Reithian ideals. This suggests that attempts to draw a marked distinction - to identify the dynamics governing programme production - are perhaps arbitrary. It does, however, reinforce the centrality of audiences to the production of BBC content. That is to say, programmes are commissioned and made according to a guiding principle of securing audience

engagement and winning their trust: a task that falls to journalists and governs journalistic practices.

Bearing witness is positioned by journalists as a precursor to the production of truthful, accurate, and impartial radio broadcasts. This self-characterisation of the journalist as eyewitness captures the main strategy through which they claim authority and seek trust from listeners: namely, through their physical presence in a place and “‘truth-telling’ as ‘eyewitnesses’” (Pinkerton, 2013, p.442). Broadcasts and the imaginative geographies of migration articulated within them are therefore products of the spaces and places that journalists have observed and visited first-hand. This speaks to a “low-flying empiricism” that disrupts a geopolitical tradition of distanced and disembodied reports through ground-level, eyewitness perspectives aimed at collapsing distance between journalists and their audiences (Toal, 1996, p.178). Robin Lustig, presenter of *The World Tonight* from 1989-2012, captures how journalists see themselves, first and foremost, as a proxy for listeners ‘at home’:

“I always had in my head the idea that I wanted to convey to a listener what they would have seen and heard if they were where I was, so give them a sense of what I’m seeing, give them a sense of what I’ve learned. One of the first producers I ever worked with in radio after I moved from newspapers, I remember we were walking through the shipyards in Gdansk in Poland, where the anti-communist movement had been born. And we were on our way to interview somebody, just walking through shipyards and suddenly she thrust the microphone under my nose and just said, ‘Tell me what you see’. And it was, it was a wonderful, succinct way of explaining what a reporter’s job is. Tell me what you see, what’s going on. You’re the listener’s eyes and ears, which is both very simple and very difficult” (Interview, 12.03.20).

Observation and the act of describing sights and sounds are therefore critical to how journalists make claims to truth and trustworthiness. Correspondent, Chris Morris, agrees that witnessing is the primary function of BBC journalists:

“Bearing witness, just, just as simple as that. Everyone knows we live in a complicated world and there are good and bad reasons for things happening and right and wrong reasons for things happening. But sometimes you just need to say, ‘This is what’s happening’, and people need to know this is what’s happening, so I think that bearing witness to events is important” (Interview, 06.03.20).

Bearing witness is a moral and ethical idea that captures the privileged position journalists hold in observing events and relaying them to audiences. It speaks to the function of public service broadcasting to accurately report events and hints at its capacity to engage people’s potential to care for others (Chouliaraki, 2013). The bare act of witnessing does, however, suggest a passivity and lack of agency that obscures the power of journalists to direct the gaze and ear of listeners by selecting particular words and phrases.

This is not to say that journalists are unaware of their power to construct and frame the world, particularly when linguistic categories of migration from ‘migrant’ and ‘immigrant’ to ‘refugee’ and ‘asylum seeker’, are imbued with social and political connotations, popular imaginaries, and legal implications. Jenny Hill, the BBC’s Berlin correspondent, demonstrates an acute awareness of the responsibility of journalists around questions of discourse:

“I was always aware and I’m still really aware of the power of all these words and, and how much responsibility you have when you report on a story like this [...] over simplistic narratives are, are really damaging, and it’s really difficult as a reporter to counter those because, of course, we kind of contribute to them, but there’s so much more nuance than those very simple narratives that come out at the end of the day” (Interview, 11.02.20).

Hill admits that the discursive power to frame migration makes her “quite nervous”, highlighting how linguistic dilemmas and decisions can be embodied and internalised

(Interview, 11.02.20). She explains that the BBC eventually came to an organisation-wide decision to “use the word ‘migrant’ as a sort of catchall for anybody who is moving countries for whatever reason” (Interview, 11.02.20). This is evidenced in the BBC’s online news articles on Europe’s migration ‘crisis’ from the time that include an explanatory footnote on terminology. However, the potential for journalists to resist and rework top-down decisions is clear when Hill admits to avoiding the term ‘migrant’ due to her own personal view that it is “dehumanising” (Interview, 11.02.20). This sensitivity to the discursive power of language mirrors Crawley and Skleparis’ (2018, p.48) critique of simplistic terminology in the media for failing “to capture adequately the complex relationship between political, social and economic drivers of migration or their shifting significance for individuals over time and space”. Chris Bowlby, freelance journalist and former BBC correspondent in Prague, echoes Hill’s stance:

“There’s a great tendency to categorise migration and migrants either in a hostile way or a positive way as uniform groups, whereas always within them there are groups of all the mix that is humanity really, and, and that’s part of the debate about, for example, asylum, who deserves, who is an economic migrant, who isn’t, that kind of thing. But that’s real and they’re real human stories, which we partly ought to be reporting anyway because they give you an insight. But it is, it’s quite an important thing to get beyond those labels that are readily applied” (Interview, 15.04.20).

This shared impulse to humanise coverage of migration by resisting homogenous labels suggests that bearing witness is not a passive or neutral act, but an act shot through with discursive dilemmas and social, political, and legal implications. Whilst BBC journalists are governed by editorial rules around truthful, accurate, and impartial journalism, there is clear room to inflect broadcasts with personal styles of reporting. Production therefore emerges as a flexible process that takes place within strict professional guidelines.

The journalists I interviewed are also reflexive about the contentious nature of the three tenets of BBC journalism in theory and in practice. Lustig suggests that accuracy is conditional on the positionality of journalists and production deadlines:

“The first duty always is just simply to report as accurately as you can. I think sometimes it is under appreciated by non-journalists the pressures that journalists are under, time pressure, you never know the whole story because no one person can know the whole story. And so inevitably, what you report, particularly if you’re broadcasting and you’re on a daily news timeframe, it is a series of snapshots. And if you’re a news reporter, you’re given a minute and a half, if you’re making a tape report, then maybe you’re given four minutes. But I mean, it’s tiny, tiny, tiny, and you’ve got to get it all done in a couple of hours, so it’s really hard. But you have a responsibility to try to be accurate” (Interview, 12.03.20).

The ambition “to be accurate” is therefore balanced against an awareness that “no one person can know the whole story”, while tight production timescales and short reports can lead to news coverage that only amounts to “a series of snapshots” (Interview, 12.03.20). This conditionality applies to truthful reporting, which is also predicated on the embodied experiences of journalists, as Emma Jane Kirby, reporter for the *World at One*, *PM*, and *Broadcasting House*, explains:

“I think that we really, you know, we’ve got the privilege of going to see these places, going to meet people and, and see the truth of what’s happening, and I think it is our duty to tell the truth. Sometimes, you know, we’re told, ‘Oh, we’re, we’re, you know, too far left’, or what have you, or ‘We’re just reporting all the misery, these people shouldn’t be coming’. I get this all the time and I always say, ‘Look, I’m a journalist, I tell the truth’. If I see people in misery, I will tell you that they are in misery. I’m not making that up, I’m going to tell the truth. If you don’t want to hear the truth, you don’t have to hear it. But I will always tell you the truth” (Interview, 10.02.20).

Accuracy and truth are couched by both journalists in terms of duty, signalling how BBC journalism is often positioned within moral frames of reference as a public service. The concept of truth, however, comes under strain when set against the third BBC ideal of

impartiality. Ritula Shah, who is the current presenter of *The World Tonight*, rejects impartiality as a form of false balance where “A says this, B says that” and defines it instead as “a plurality of views across a period of time” (Interview, 24.02.20). She mirrors Hill’s anxiety around terminology on migration when she describes ongoing unease around achieving impartiality:

“We think about it all the time. That’s what makes me really sad that people are so disparaging because it’s something we worry about, we think about, we, we factor into everything we do. And yeah, this idea that everybody is just putting on their particular, you know, whatever it is, pro this, anti that agenda, it’s just not true. And I’m not saying we always get it right but it’s not because we’re not trying” (Interview, 24.02.20).

Shah points to a constant pressure at programme-level to factor impartiality into the discursive framing of broadcasts and the editorial choice of interviewees. She counters ideas of a BBC edict or agenda by outlining how impartiality is rooted in daily decision making by individuals and programme teams. This reaffirms the power and agency of journalists to shape the content and tone of broadcasts, which as Shah reflects, means impartiality is not always ‘done right’. Maria Margaronis, freelance journalist for the BBC, corroborates this by suggesting impartiality is fundamentally challenged by subjectivity and situated knowledge:

“Impartiality is a very tricky word, right, because everything you do, everything, every story you tell, every question you frame comes obviously from your own point of view and your own set of values and assumptions, so, no, I mean, I think a documentary can absolutely have a point of view, but you have to give a right of reply to people, you know, who don’t agree with that point of view or to people you might be criticising in it and you have to be truthful, honest, accurate, you’re not making propaganda, you’re making, you’re making, you’re telling a story and it has to be true” (Interview, 07.02.20).

Margaronis rearticulates the BBC's core tenets of accurate and truthful journalism but explains how impartiality is embroiled in questions of positionality and perspective, which means imaginative geographies are always partial and situated. This echoes Haraway's (1988; 1991) work and highlights an awareness among some journalists about the importance of subject position and authorship when making radio programmes. Production is therefore governed by editorial guidelines that are theoretical cornerstones of BBC journalism, set out in its constitutional Charter, but challenged by journalistic practices on the ground.

The story of migration to Europe further reveals how the BBC's editorial imperative, which governs production, is stretched to its limits in humanitarian reporting. The 'crisis' posed a challenge to journalists torn between a need to be impartial and distanced, and a human instinct to connect with, and intervene in, the story and its protagonists: what Chouliaraki (2013, p.138) describes as a "tension between an ethics of the profession and an ethics of human life". The struggle between observation and participation is not new, however. The Bosnian War between 1992-1995 was a juncture at which the moral and ethical dilemmas of journalism rose to the surface (Toal, 1996; McLaughlin, 2016). The BBC's Martin Bell declared he could not be impartial in the face of atrocity and proposed a 'journalism of attachment' that proclaimed a moral duty to tell the truth over a professional obligation to remain impartial. This echoed Christiane Amanpour, news anchor for CNN, who famously coined the phrase 'to be truthful, not neutral', calling into question objectivity and moral equivalence in journalism. Critics, including the BBC's John Simpson, suggested a journalism of attachment risked 'look at me journalism', a style of reporting that runs

counter to a BBC ambition to focus “not on the storyteller but on telling the story” (McLaughlin, 2016, p.52).

Old debates around the role and responsibility of journalists are revived by Europe’s migration ‘crisis’ as a humanitarian story that lays bare asymmetrical relations of power. Olsson (2017, p.1) argues that many European journalists found themselves, for the first time, “reporting from a position of safety about people in very difficult circumstances in their own ‘back yard’”. Its proximity scrambled geographies of distance and detachment, posed a challenge to objectivity and dispassionate journalism, and raised questions in the minds of journalists about the place of emotion in reportage. Emma Jane Kirby suggests that emotion has a place in order to speak truth to audiences (Interview, 10.02.20). That is to say, BBC journalists have a duty to be honest and transparent about their personal capacity to be moved by what they see:

“Obviously, we have to be impartial, but I will never apologise for being moved by the things I see, because, you know, we’re also human beings. What we’re trying to tell are human stories and crikey, if we’re not moved by, you know, the human condition I don’t think we should be journalists really. I do not mean that we should be sobbing on the 10 o’clock news, nobody wants to see somebody not in control, but I do think it’s perfectly okay to, to tell it as it is, to tell the brutal truth [...] I’m not going to lie, I come home regularly and cry my eyes out. But again, I think that, you know, the day you’ve become desensitised to it is the day you want to stop really. Because these are, what you’re trying to tell people is, the people we’re telling you about are real human beings like you and me and they matter, they matter as much as you, they matter as much as me, they matter as much as your child, so you know, if it doesn’t affect me, it’s not going to affect anybody else” (Interview, 10.02.20).

Here, Kirby articulates the delicate line BBC journalists tread between revealing the emotional impact of reporting but not distracting from the story. A professional obligation to remain objective is therefore balanced against a human instinct to show feeling, and the straitjacket of impartiality arguably finds its release when she admits to

crying behind closed doors. Although not quite an advocate of Bell's 'journalism of attachment', Kirby leans towards a style of reporting that seeks to engage listeners through emotional connection. This is not to say that affect is used strategically by journalists but rather to highlight a consciousness around the place of emotion when broadcasting live and producing 'truthful' broadcasts. It calls to mind Toal's (1996, p.176) discussion about O'Kane's dispatches from Bosnia in which, he suggests, "the personal is geopolitical, the experience of ordinary selves [...] the central register for recording the story of the war". Just as Kirby seeks to make her audience aware that "the people we're telling you about are real human beings" (Interview, 10.02.20), Toal (1996, p.176) argues that O'Kane's writing "relentlessly personalises the people she meets, naming them and describing their age, colour, and look". This personal style of reporting, he notes, was often derided by critics for being 'overly emotional', but concludes that O'Kane's reportage reflects a feminist objectivity (Toal, 1996, p.179):

"O'Kane's journalism is never a view from above or a view from nowhere but a situated and embodied view from the somewhere between being an educated Western woman, an informed journalist trying to narrate a war, and a humane eyewitness to systematic human displacement and mutilating violence. The tensions within the very subject positions O'Kane occupies produce an objectivity that is never neutral and naïve but pointed, moral and, in many cases, justly angry".

Whilst Kirby's impartial radio journalism for the BBC stops short of being "justly angry" (Toal, 1996, p.179), it communicates effectively why audiences should be interested in and care emotionally and morally about the people she witnesses and encounters. These reflections on O'Kane's positionality, inspired by Haraway (1991), resonate strongly with Kirby's clear sensitivity towards how best to report human stories of

migration within the editorial frame of BBC journalism. Interestingly, Kirby's stance is echoed by James Reynolds:

"I didn't want to be a person on camera hugging people or crying or being involved in a way that I didn't think would help the audience, that's not why they sent me there. So, there's that, so I didn't want to get in the way, but on the other hand, no journalist gets a pass as a human being. You know, we are all human beings, and the question is, I think, how you process that [...] how do you keep your editorial standards where you want to say, you know, where a journalist might want to say, 'I am impartial, but I felt like crying' [...] where should that boundary be put? The answer is, I don't think anyone in the world, even if they're Matteo Salvini would not want to find compassion for children arriving on a boat. I just don't think you cannot have compassion for, you know, children surviving a boat journey and, and whether I needed to show that on camera? I don't think I did because I didn't want every piece to be about me [...] I wanted on camera to be as sympathetic, as compassionate as I could be, and off camera as well, to people without being a campaigner either way, without letting that get in the way of journalism but also knowing that, you know, speaking to people who are crying is, you know, if you don't, if that doesn't elicit a human reaction, you are probably not doing your job. But the question is, I think it's just the question of, it's not whether one feels affected, it's how you channel that" (Interview, 03.02.20).

Reynolds makes clear that BBC journalists routinely wrestle with the place of compassion in reportage and how values around a common humanity rub up against unequal relations of power in journalism. He settles the debate in his own mind by suggesting that how journalists "channel" emotion supersedes the question of whether they are affected in the first place (Interview, 03.02.20). This stems from a reluctance to cross from journalist to campaigner on and behind the microphone. Whilst Kirby and Reynolds might not strategically use "pathos and scripted sentimentalism to evoke [...] emotion" like O'Kane did in her dispatches (Toal, 1996, p.177), they nevertheless articulate an impulse to be compassionate and 'human' when reporting on air and off it. What is clear is that BBC journalists therefore embody a precarious position torn between a professional duty to remain impartial and distanced, and a human instinct to

care and intervene: a moral and ethical quandary that pulls at the seams of the BBC's editorial standards and influences the production of broadcasts on migration.

In summary, BBC radio broadcasts are produced according to an editorial code around truthful, accurate, and impartial reportage. This is predicated, in part, upon the journalist being an eyewitness on the ground and guided by an organisational mission to engage audiences and win their trust. Interrogating journalistic practices, however, reveals an awareness among journalists about how the BBC's editorial standards are challenged by questions of subjectivity and positionality, and strained by the geographical proximity of Europe's migration 'crisis'. It also suggests that professional guidelines bind journalists together through a shared editorial imperative while at the same time allowing personal styles of reporting to seep into the production of broadcasts. This space for journalists to imprint broadcasts, albeit within editorial constraints, helps to explain the diversity of audible representations on migration articulated across Radio 4.

### *5.3.2 Locating Journalistic Practices*

Applying a geographical lens to Radio 4, reveals that programmes are frequently produced in multiple locations and spaces, rather than exclusively through journalists witnessing and reporting migration 'in the field'. Pinkerton's (2014, p.58) observation that radio is "spatially situated and rooted 'in place'" informs an analysis of where broadcasts are made and how the two imaginative geographies identified in Chapter 4 emerge from particular sites, locations, and places. Space is therefore understood as a container for journalistic practices and a product of the locations in which broadcasts are made. That is to say, where a journalist works, and over what timeframe, makes a

difference to the representations of migration articulated on air. This section therefore explores spatialities and temporalities of production behind documentaries in Radio Current Affairs (RCA) and news broadcasts of *The World Tonight*. It resonates with Rodgers' (2014) interest in material settings of media production and recent approaches in radio studies that focus on spaces, such as the studio and writer's room, to illuminate production practices that are invisible and inaudible to listeners (VanCour, 2018). Comparing and contrasting spatialities and temporalities of production between the two programme genres of 'current affairs' and 'news' demonstrates how imaginative geographies of forced migration and refugee settlement articulated on Radio 4 are products of the spaces and timescales in which journalists work.

#### *5.3.2.1 Radio Documentaries*

The newsroom, field, and studio are three key sites that structure the production of long-form radio documentaries on migration from conception through to broadcast. Contrary to possible listener perceptions of being recorded in real-time or produced exclusively 'in the field', documentaries are products of a lengthy process that begins with research and logistical planning in the newsroom, and ends with scripting, editing, and recording in a studio. Unlike news reports that are broadcast by a journalist witnessing and reporting events within tight deadlines, documentaries in RCA are crafted by a team over weeks and months, and subject to significant editorial oversight. Adopting a geographical lens to production therefore reveals a level of planning, authorship, and craft distinct from news bulletins and packages that explains why documentaries resist dramatic spectacles of 'crisis' and offer more nuanced accounts

that situate recent arrivals in Europe within longer histories and global geographies of migration and displacement.

The newsroom emerges as an initial space of journalistic planning and editorial oversight. Chris Bowlby, presenter of *Germany: at the Centre* in 2016, which was analysed in Chapter 4 for its focus on a multi-generational family in the city of Kassel with a rich migration history, describes a thorough and extensive research process that involves liaising with an editor before departure about potential locations and interviewees (Interview, 15.04.20). Bowlby frames this early dialogue in terms of anticipating and mitigating against editorial issues of balance and impartiality, while at the same time wanting to be “open to serendipity” when in Germany (Interview, 15.04.20). He also reveals how thought behind his documentary stretched back to a post-school exchange programme in Berlin, where he witnessed Sri Lankan refugees being pushed across the border from East Germany in the 1970s, and to working in the House of Commons on asylum and refugee policy before embarking on a career in journalism. The personal biographies and experiences of journalists therefore inflect commissioning in ways that help explain how and why documentaries come into being, and why they evidence more reflexive, analytical journalism on forced migration and refugee settlement. That is to say, the editorial selection and framing of people and places in documentaries is revealed to be driven by careful research and contact networks mined in the newsroom, as much as by chance encounters in ‘the field’.

Bowlby’s account resonates with Bridget Harney, Commissioning Editor of *Crossing Continents*, who describes engaging journalists and producers in practical conversations in the newsroom about risk management and logistics, from flights and

travel dates to recruitment of interviewees (Interview, 06.04.20). This pre-departure dialogue extends into ‘the field’ where the team is required to engage in twice daily check in and check out calls with editor Harney via WhatsApp. These safety measures evidence the close working relationship between an editor, journalist, and producer throughout documentary production and the constant spatial connection between the newsroom in London and a journalist’s destination country. These geographies and temporalities of radio production are inaudible to listeners but crucial to understanding how documentaries take shape.

The spatial trajectory from newsroom to field to studio is outlined in my interview with freelance journalist, Maria Margaronis (Interview, 07.02.20). Margaronis frames her methodology in the field as an intuitive, almost ethnographic process of recording audio that is dictated by ground-level experiences and face-to-face interactions. This speaks to the journalist as eyewitness and characterises the field as a space of encounter valued for its potential to surprise through exploration and chance meetings:

“What you mostly want is you want life on the ground and experience and things happening and ordinary people and so on, so you record a lot more than you’re ever going to use [...] we did just kind of talk to people you meet along the way [...] it’s a bit sort of haphazard in a way, but if you kind of do enough of that, you get a sense of what’s going on [...] but no story that you tell like that is going to be a definitive story, it’s a path through the issue” (Interview, 07.02.20).

This bottom-up and quite random method of recording “life on the ground” highlights a creative freedom in production that mirrors Bowlby’s instinct to be open to serendipity (Interview, 07.02.20). It also recalls Andersson’s (2017) reflections on the overlaps between journalism and ethnography after fieldwork on migration in North Africa,

where he observes a shared ambition to be immersed and engaged in experiences on the ground. The journalist therefore emerges as an eyewitness *and* participant, who meets people and records encounters, “to get a sense of what’s going on” (Interview, 07.02.20). This methodology is reflected in Margaronis’ 2018 documentary, *Greece’s Haven Hotel*, which was analysed in Chapter 4 and foregrounds City Plaza, the hotel turned refugee squat in Athens. It is filled with rich and evocative soundscapes that directly echo her intention to record “experience and things happening and ordinary people” (Interview, 07.02.20). Delving into methods of recording therefore begins to explain why documentaries produce a more localised, place-based, and immersive imaginative geography of migration that amplifies the voices and human stories of refugees on the ground. Whilst the field is the primary location and space in which audio is gathered, however, it is not the only place where documentaries are made.

The studio emerges as the third and final space of production in which scripts and soundscapes are pieced together. Margaronis describes an intensive production process of listening to and transcribing her audio recordings before writing and recording a script. Again, this process is hidden from and inaudible to listeners but significant because it reveals the high production values:

“When you get back with all this material, you just go through it all and you somehow [...] that’s the hardest part, is pulling out what’s going to tell the story and [...] accurately reflects the experience you had and what you learned and what you saw but what will also be a kind of gripping listen [...] and so you come back and work with the producer to shape the thing [...] we listen to everything, log it, sometimes transcribe it, then once you’ve got a sort of rough cut of what’s going in, then I write the script that goes with it” (Interview, 07.02.20).

Her producer, Shabnam Grewal, tells me in her interview that they would often download, transfer, and listen to the audio whilst travelling back on the aeroplane

(Interview, 24.02.20), revealing how an aircraft cabin can double up as an informal production space. Editor of *Crossing Continents*, Bridget Harney, describes a similar process of working closely with a journalist and producer after they return from the field:

“It’s a conversation about kind of what they’ve got [...] and they then start the editing process. And then once they’ve started going through all that material and started to script it, they then come back to me and say, ‘when can we have a read through?’, which is [...] my initial kind of exposure to the material and to the script, and I will sit with them in a studio and go through it, go through the audio and go through what they propose as a structure [...] then they [...] work with a studio director who will then help them put it all together [...] then they’ll get me to listen to it” (Interview, 06.04.20).

In the “read through”, Harney adopts the position of a first-time listener and makes editorial suggestions on points of language, characterisation, and structure (Interview, 06.04.20). The studio is therefore an editorial and creative space in which documentaries are co-constructed by a team who sequence audio recordings and overlay a subsequently voiced script. This methodology of crafting a written and audio narrative casts doubt on whether the selectivity and constructed nature of documentaries is always clear to listeners. Understanding the production process is important because it confirms that imaginative geographies of migration are not straightforward reflections of the world but are power-laden productions of it. This is not to diminish the value of documentaries but rather to suggest a spatial analysis of production furthers understandings of how imaginative geographies come into being. That is to say, tracing spatialities and temporalities of radio reveals a hidden geography of production that demonstrates how even the ground-level, place-based, and multi-sensory imaginary of migration in ‘feature’ programmes is in fact a product of ‘here’ as much as ‘there’.

### 5.3.2.2 *The World Tonight*

The inherent geography of *The World Tonight* is clear from its title: a programme that seeks to be global in scope and reflective in tone as it brings listeners the day's news. Spatially, it broadcasts from a studio in London and draws on news packages from foreign correspondents, presenting a portrait of the world that produces and is animated by imaginaries of distant people and places. Temporally, it airs every weeknight at 10pm and therefore follows, participates in, and reproduces a daily news cycle. Exploring the spaces in which *The World Tonight* is made and timescales along which it operates exposes a multilocational production process that reveals how, why, and from where the geopolitical imaginary of 'crisis' emerges. Events are brought to listeners by foreign correspondents, while a production team in London assembles, orders, and frames the world from a newsroom and recording studio in New Broadcasting House. This echoes Gasher's (2015) conception of journalists as cartographers who map the world for their audiences, selecting news stories and framing people, spaces, and places in particular ways. But it also develops his theorisation of "the geography of news" and "vantage point from which they report" (Gasher, 2015, p.130), by highlighting *multiple* vantage points from which these journalists view and frame the world. That is to say, *The World Tonight* is not made in a single location or time, but rather draws on multiple production spaces and temporalities that shape the imaginative geographies of migration on air.

Conducting interviews with *The World Tonight* team reveals multiple editors, producers, a presenter, and broadcast assistants who sit at shared desks in an open-plan newsroom on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of New Broadcasting House. The studio and output area -

known to journalists as the OPs area - are visible from the desks and colourful social seating pods are dotted around the office; possibly reflecting an organisational belief that creative ideas flow out of informal conversations and vibrant spatialities. The geography of the newsroom is important because it reflects the collective effort that goes into producing the programme. Whilst the output editor is responsible for setting an editorial agenda and direction, the team works together to select and order news items, and recruit interviewees.

An ideas meeting at 1.45pm sets production in motion as the team meets with the overall editor, or deputy editor, together with a planning editor from News, who lists the fixed items the programme will receive; pre-prepared packages filed by correspondents through Newsgathering, which mean that part of the programme schedule is pre-planned. Conversation then turns to the selection and framing of news stories but the time lag to broadcast means, as presenter Shah puts it, “we always have to be prepared to do, what I call, a handbrake turn!” (Interview 24.02.20). Nevertheless, initial selection of news items flows out of a lunchtime discussion described by Korycinska as a “collaborative process” in which “everybody chips in” (Interview, 10.04.20). It is a critical space of dialogue that values and relies upon team members pitching ideas about possible stories and appropriate contributors, the latter chosen according to relevance, reliability, and engagingness. Shah suggests that three or four interviewees are often proposed who producers call in the afternoon. Production is therefore a fluid and iterative process that evolves over the day as stories are followed up and dropped, interviewees are recruited and fall through, and the news cycle develops and re-routes.

A second team meeting is convened around 4pm to draw together the running order, decide on a lead story, assess the selection of interviewees, and discuss lines of questioning. The team keeps a watchful eye on the *BBC Six* and *Ten o'clock News*, *Channel 4 News*, and *Newsnight*, all of which are displayed on screens in the OPs area, to help inform the shape and direction of the programme. Korycinska admits that up until broadcast “everything is in flux” and the team remains prepared to change direction, even live on air (Interview, 10.04.20). The time of broadcast at 10pm means *The World Tonight* is the last of Radio 4’s four daily news programmes and production is therefore driven by an editorial ambition to be more analytical and reflective, as Korycinska explains:

“Our idea is always to step back from the immediate and step back from the news and sort of look behind and look at things that might not have been talked about [...] be more analytical, be more thinking, be more thoughtful [...] we try to discuss issues, to look behind what’s shaping the news” (Interview, 10.04.20).

Shah agrees that *The World Tonight* aims to apply a critical lens to the news, asking ‘why’ rather than simply ‘what’ happened:

“I don’t see it as a news programme. You’ve got the bulletin to do the stories, ideally we should be doing fewer stories in more detail [...] one of the faults in news is we often do ‘the what happened’ but we’re not nearly so good at explaining ‘the why’ and I’m always interested in the why” (Interview, 24.02.20).

Lustig adds that the time of broadcast underpins its international outlook and reflective tone:

“You always had to think of a way of moving the story forward, of asking questions that hadn’t already been asked [...] so you’re always looking for little bits of a story that you think your colleagues have forgotten or ignored or not explored in sufficient depth and move it forward that way [...] *The World Tonight* always prided itself on being slightly more global in outlook than the other Radio

4 programmes, so in the days when there was a great deal less foreign news than there is now we would quite often focus on stories which we just felt our colleagues had ignored [...] I think the thing about going on air at 10 o'clock at night, we knew anecdotally, and also from a bit of audience research, that a lot of people were either already in bed or going to bed and so the sort of gladiatorial approach of the morning programme was not appropriate at that point [...] so we always tried to come at things a little bit more calmly, a little bit, I always said, you know, let's try for more, more light and less heat" (Interview, 12.03.20).

These extracts reveal how *The World Tonight* aims to be, and sees itself as, a more considered, thoughtful, and international offering than Radio 4's other news output. Temporal rhythms govern production as the team listens attentively to the breakfast *Today*, lunchtime *World at One*, and afternoon *PM* programmes to hear the news stories covered and angles taken, and ensure they develop the network's coverage. The team gathers after broadcast for a 5-minute conversation, known as a 'wash up', to consider what worked well, the contributions of interviewees, questions asked, and overall arc and sound of the programme, but Korycinska admits "it's not very formal, it's more a chat" (Interview, 10.04.20). Despite a collective mission to be more reflective on air, this small window in the afterglow of live broadcasting leaves little room for significant reflection. Instead, the programme continues to participate in and reproduce a fast-paced daily news cycle in which reflection takes place over the course of a day or week, rather than over a more extended and lasting timeframe. This is pertinent to understanding the contrast in imaginative geographies of migration produced by news relative to 'feature' programmes because while it speaks to a dynamism and agility within news journalism to respond to, cover, and analyse stories in real-time, it also demonstrates how geopolitical narratives of crisis are products of short production timescales that offer journalists and editors few opportunities for sustained reflection

on the ongoing and complex subject of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe.

That said, Andrew Hosken, who until very recently was a programme reporter for *The World Tonight*, provides a rich insight in his interview into the geographies of producing ground-level news reports that Chapter 4 suggests share characteristics of the place-based and multi-sensory imaginary (Interview, 24.02.20). He reveals a lengthy temporal rhythm guiding the commissioning of news stories whereby his personal interest in Calais over the last 20 years shapes his decision to return to the camp and report repeatedly on displacement there. He describes a connection to the story and subject of migration that is distinct from correspondents directed by the News directorate in London about where to go and what to report on. This is underscored by an informal hierarchy within the BBC in which some correspondents admit in their interviews to privileging and feeling obligated towards programmes with the largest audiences. The *Ten o'clock Television News* and Radio 4's *Today* programme therefore quietly take priority over producing reports for *The World Tonight*. Jenny Hill describes sharing content between media to maximise efficiency in the face of tight deadlines and stretched budgets (Interview, 11.03.20), while James Reynolds suggests the difficulty of juggling multi-media demands for News can lead to a downgrading of radio output relative to television (Interview, 03.02.20).

Programme-specific reporters, like Hosken, therefore act as a counterweight to foreign correspondents by having the time and space to produce bespoke radio packages for *The World Tonight*. Whilst some might argue that camps, like Calais, are exemplar sites of spectacle and crisis (De Genova, 2013), the extended timeframe in

which Hosken is able to return to and cover Calais relative to foreign correspondents highlights room for more considered and reflexive journalism on migration. This is not to suggest that correspondents have no agency to identify stories or develop expertise in a subject over time, but to highlight the contrasting and hidden geographies that govern radio production.

Hosken traces a typical journey from London to Calais, where he might spend two or three days recording in the camp and surrounding area before crafting a news package from his hotel room in the local *Holiday Inn*. Hosken paints a vivid portrait of sitting under a bed sheet to optimise sound and block out external noise, constructing a seven to eight-minute report which he then files back to London for broadcast, often with only five minutes to spare:

“If you want to make it sound like a studio with your commentary, the tip there is to put, use a sheet so you try and get a spare sheet from the bed and you put that, a blanket is too thick, it sounds too muffled in hotel rooms, so you switch off the air conditioning and the heating and draw the curtains and kill out all the outside sound. You put a sheet over and then you record [...] Internets go down and I’ve been in a situation where I’ve been in a hotel reception trying to get them to, because it’s crashed or has gone down and [...] you’re left to, you know, rush into an internet café with a FOP or something like that [...] but, you know, you are responsible for visualising the piece, the sound quality of the piece, producing it, editing it and getting it back” (Interview, 24.02.20).

This hotel-cum-studio provides a place to stay and produce radio. It reveals how the more localised imaginary in some news reportage that records personal, sensorial accounts of migration is a product of the informal production spaces out of which journalists work, as much as ‘the field’. Applying a geographical lens to *The World Tonight* therefore reveals multiple spatialities and temporalities of production that

illustrate how imaginative geographies of Europe's migration 'crisis' on Radio 4 are constructs of 'here' as much as 'there'.

This finding about where journalistic practices are spatially located in a fast-paced daily sequence programme like *The World Tonight* is relevant to other programmes on Radio 4, such as *Woman's Hour*, which is broadcast from London but sometimes includes more localised, immersive, and personal reports on forced migration and refugee settlement from journalists sent out to different locations and places. The two contrasting imaginative geographies of migration in Chapter 4 therefore, to some extent, share multi-locational production practices. A key difference, however, is that while *The World Tonight* is anchored in the space of the studio at Broadcasting House, documentaries, like *Crossing Continents*, are rooted in experiences, encounters, and voices recorded in the field. This applies to other 'feature' programmes, such as *Ramblings*, which are similarly detached from the studio and predicated upon voices and soundscapes recorded more slowly on the ground. Therefore, just as the first section of this chapter revealed the relationship between internal divisions at the BBC and frames of representation to be not always linear, a geographical analysis of journalistic practices highlights similar overlaps and dissonances between the two genres of news and current affairs.

### *5.3.3 Journalistic Storytelling*

Running through these geographies is the BBC's Reithian mission to serve and engage audiences, which reveals production to be a process ultimately driven by listenability. Journalists seek to engage listeners in their broadcasts by offering new angles on the subject of migration, including voices often silenced in the media, and by directly

appealing to their imaginations. These three strategies, which shape the production of news and 'feature' programmes, are instances of journalistic storytelling, techniques that journalists use to secure audience engagement. Indeed, radio is consistently framed by the journalists interviewed as a storytelling medium that is exceptional in its ability to connect with listeners and spark their geographical imaginations. The final section of this chapter therefore discusses the strategies that journalists use to engage listeners and how journalists articulate a discourse about radio that produces it as a space of storytelling.

#### *5.3.3.1 New Angles on Migration*

Offering a new angle on the story of migration is the first strategy journalists use to capture audience attention. This stems not only from a commercial imperative to reach the largest listenership, but an awareness about fragile audience engagement with migration over time. In a recent essay on compassion fatigue, Gabbert (2018) cites the war in Syria and refugee crises as examples of ongoing news stories that make daily demands on audience attention and their capacity to care. Moeller's (1999, p.9) definition of compassion fatigue rests on a presumed exhaustion among audiences driven by repetitive, formulaic, and sensationalised coverage that leaves them "overstimulated and bored all at once". Interview responses suggest that BBC editors and journalists recognised and feared a similar exhaustion among listeners around Europe's migration 'crisis', which drove them to produce broadcasts aimed at mitigating against this 'switch off' journalism. Hugh Levinson describes an editorial ambition in RCA to counter and complement the BBC's daily news coverage of migration:

"One particular problem is we don't want to do just what the news is doing, so the daily news was doing some very, very good reportage on what was

happening on the boats, what was happening at the borders, what was happening in the, you know, refugee camps in Jordan and so on while this crisis was going on, and I think our issue was how to cover this huge global phenomenon in a way that was really distinctive, so we were always trying to look for a different way of telling the story, a more individual way, a counterintuitive way, or maybe going back to a story once it's been forgotten" (Interview, 07.04.20).

Levinson's impulse to produce radio that is "different", "distinctive", and "counterintuitive" (Interview, 07.04.20) resonates with *The Untold's* coverage of Rob Lawrie, an ex-soldier turned volunteer in Calais, broadcast in May and November of 2016, as well as Radio 4's subsequent 2020 podcast series, *Girl Taken*, which revisited Lawrie's story four years later. These documentaries engage in long-form storytelling that scrambles popular media tropes of smugglers as 'villains' by portraying Lawrie as a complex, flawed, and recognisable human being (Crawley et al., 2018). A fear of audience compassion fatigue around Europe's migration 'crisis' therefore drives the commissioning and production of different and distinctive radio programmes as Levinson notes that "just doing stories of misery is really, really hard to get the audience to take in" (Interview, 07.04.20).

Although Levinson praises BBC News for focusing on "boats", "borders", and "camps" (Interview, 07.04.20), De Genova (2013) critiques a journalistic preoccupation with sites/sights that create spectacles of illegality and justify exclusionary migration policies. Documentaries that counter dramatic spectacles through long-form storytelling, however, have the potential to avoid compassion fatigue driven by sensationalised coverage. Chris Bowlby, for example, describes the motivation behind his documentary, *Germany at the Centre*, in 2016 as "to make it sound different from the news bulletins, feel different, to get the different characters" (Interview, 15.04.20).

Similarly, Maria Margaronis suggests a fresh perspective was critical to engaging audiences and commissioners in her documentary, *Greece's Haven Hotel*, in 2018:

“Here’s a story about something that’s got hope in it and pleasure and so on [...] something different because that’s the other thing is, you get this kind of, ‘Oh, we’ve done refugees, we’ve done refugees’, it’s like, how do you tell a different story, a story that’s going to make people listen and not go, ‘Oh, here’s another’ [...] it’s that horrible phrase ‘compassion fatigue’ and I’m very aware of that now in Greece because things are, as you probably know, really terrible on the islands and partly I can’t bear to go back and do it again because it’s that you just get really...worn down by these terrible situations and stories, but also it’s very hard to get anyone to pay attention” (Interview, 07.02.20).

The need to ensure that editors and commissioners at the BBC do not reject a programme pitch on the assumption “we’ve done refugees” drives journalists to seek out “different” stories with narratives containing “hope” and “pleasure”, rather than despair and misery (Interview, 07.02.20). Ironically, Margaronis hints at her own sense of fatigue driven by witnessing “terrible situations and stories” and the constant need to attract audience attention (Interview, 07.02.20). The protracted temporality of migration therefore poses a creative challenge to journalists who must delve into different genres of radio, such as documentaries, and experiment with styles of reporting, like long-form storytelling, to ensure broadcasts are commissioned and heard.

#### 5.3.3.2 *Including Unheard Voices*

The inclusion of voices that are often erased from, and silenced in, European media coverage of migration is a second strategy of storytelling that journalists use to try and engage disinterested and desensitised audiences (Malkki, 1996; Crawley, McMahon, and Jones, 2016; Greenslade, 2016; Allen, Blinder, and McNeil, 2017; Trilling, 2019).

Emma Jane Kirby points to waning public interest in Europe's migration 'crisis' as the motivation behind her series, *The Ordinary Italians*, for *PM* in 2015. Five episodes amplify the voices of local Lampedusa residents facing new arrivals firsthand: from Maria Grazia, a chef at Catania's migrant soup kitchen, to Salvatore Giuffrida, Catania's hospital director:

"The whole point was to stop this compassion fatigue for me. I was, I was getting very, very, very disheartened as a correspondent [...] people were just switching off. You know, you know, people just became, the migrants got lost in numbers. And you know, everybody was saturated with those images on television of boats flipping over and people in the water [...] it had lost its impact. So, this was a way of turning the whole thing on its head and saying, this is why it matters and should matter to you" (Interview, 10.02.20).

Joanna Carr, who was editor of *PM* at the time, reveals in her interview that the idea came from watching a television news report that depicted Italians living cheek by jowl with migrants from sub-Saharan Africa: "it was just an extraordinary image of the consequences of our global world" (Interview, 29.04.20). As an editor, she reflects, "you're always asking yourself, you know, who are the missing voices, what don't I know about this, what are the interesting questions, who can tell me?" (Interview, 29.04.20), questions which drove her to commission Kirby's series. The ambition to combat audience fatigue through the inclusion of rarely heard voices is realised when Kirby reveals many Radio 4 listeners wrote to her saying, "it made them see the migration crisis for the first time" (Interview, 10.02.20). Recording multiple, unheard voices resonates with Toal's (1996, p.176) analysis of O'Kane's dispatches from Bosnia, which made clear "the personal is geopolitical". Indeed, Toal (1996, p.176) suggests that O'Kane's columns "have many voices giving testimony to many different perspectives and experiences", which subverted typical, geopolitical representations of Bosnia by

drawing readers' attention to 'ordinary' experiences on the ground. Kirby and Carr similarly sought to counter audience compassion fatigue driven by familiar images of migrants arriving in boats by offering listeners the fresh perspective of 'ordinary' Lampedusa residents. A thesis limited to studying representations on Radio 4 alone might have critiqued Kirby's series for privileging European over migrant voices, but studying production reveals a motivation to re-engage disinterested listeners in the subject of migration. This supports the methodology of the thesis by highlighting the value of an inclusive and integrated approach to studying media in geography.

The technological simplicity of radio means that journalists can easily record people's voices. Reliant on just a microphone and recorder, as opposed to cameras, sound, and lighting equipment in television, radio enables journalists to access people and places that are challenging for more technology-laden media. Journalists in radio can quietly and discreetly approach interviewees for conversation without fear of intimidation or creating an atmosphere of performance, as Chris Morris explains:

"As you're making radio it feels more intimate because you don't have this clunky thing with a camera and making television is just more complicated. Radio, you can just [...] sidle up to somebody and we can just have a chat, and whereas with television, 'have we got the angles right...', and you kind of, so it's more intimate, and I think, sometimes you can therefore tell sort of personal stories better on the radio than on television, you don't have to be thinking about, 'are these pictures going to edit together and...', it just doesn't matter [...] you're just there, so I think it gives you a bit more freedom" (Interview, 06.03.20).

This potential to tell "personal stories better" is corroborated by senior journalist, Sophie Baukham, who suggests that "people will talk to you much more easily without a TV camera in their face and they will give you a much more natural interview" (Interview, 12.03.20). Producer, Shabnam Grewal, agrees that with television:

“The minute you start filming you get a crowd [...] so that then changes what’s going on because whoever you’re interviewing is aware of this huge crowd [...] so it’s much harder to get reality and true kind of feeling and for the person you’re interviewing to forget they’re being interviewed, for them just to chat and talk” (Interview, 24.02.20).

Whilst these ambitions to capture “reality” and a “natural” or “true kind of feeling” (Interview, 24.02.20) obscure how radio constructs the world, it captures how radio’s simplicity lends itself to storytelling through voice. Although radio’s technological subtlety raises ethical questions about how interviewees could be manipulated into speaking to journalists, it highlights potential for interviewing refugees who may be anxious about articulating their experiences due to trauma or a fear of identification when claiming asylum (Crawley, McMahon, and Jones, 2016). This opportunity to be heard without being seen illustrates how radio offers rich potential for including voices routinely absent from media coverage of migration.

The counter effort among journalists to personalise, name, and give voice to people on the move raises interesting questions for radio as a medium predicated on voice. Margaronis, who has spent most of her career in print journalism, describes a ‘lightbulb moment’ in which she recognised the power of radio relative to print:

“For me, the point is to hear from people who you don’t hear from [...] the voice is such a powerful thing, just to hear someone’s, you hear so much. That was for me the great revelation of radio, you know, it’s like if you’re doing print, you know, you write down what they said, but it’s just, you know, it’s just black and white, as it were. But when you hear the timbre of the voice and the place where people choke up or where they pause, it’s very emotional, it’s a very emotional medium” (Interview, 07.02.20).

Rather than reading “black and white” quotations on the page (Interview, 07.02.20), listeners can hear migrant voices spoken on the airwaves, detecting when people’s

voices crack in sadness or anger, or when emphasis is placed on particular words or phrases. Journalists are therefore aware of, and strategically include, voices in radio broadcasts based on their potential to engage and affectively 'move' listeners.

Radio's predication on voice, as well as sound, speaks to the potential for listeners to recognise vulnerable others through the act of speaking as part of 'our' shared and common humanity (Chouliaraki and Georgiou, 2019). Similarly, it demonstrates how some radio journalism can answer calls within media and migration studies for reportage that amplifies the voices and stories of people on the move, and enables refugees to "appear as a speaking and acting subject" (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017, p.1174). Important issues of translation, however, are raised by Margaronis who reveals that because Radio 4 is an English language station, she tends to gravitate towards people who can speak English to avoid the need for voiceovers: "I came to realise how people who are more educated, who speak English, who have that kind of confidence to speak, are in a much better position to get out, to make it, you know, how to manage more easily than the people who are even more vulnerable" (Interview, 07.02.20). This points to a possible stratification of voice in radio journalism on forced migration according to linguistic fluency and skill, and raises critical questions around who gets heard in media, and why.

Nevertheless, storytelling through the inclusion of migrant voices in radio broadcasts comes from a recognition among journalists about the power they hold to humanise the subject of migration and connect interpersonally with listeners. Chris Morris argues that migrants "deserve to have their own voice" and journalists should work to include their testimonies in order to highlight the diversity of migratory

experiences (Interview, 06.03.20). This idea of deservingness suggests that Morris is acutely aware of a journalistic responsibility to record the voices of the central protagonists of Europe's migration story. It also calls to mind Chouliaraki and Zaborowski's (2017, p.3) hope that some media stories "may enable us to recognise those different from 'us' as worthy to be listened to and thus encourage 'us' to stretch the imaginary boundaries of 'our' community in order to include 'them'". The journalistic instinct to humanise migration through the inclusion of people's voice, however, appears to be at odds with editorial scepticism about the extent to which refugee testimonies can be trusted, as Hugh Levinson explains:

"There is something about the nature of reporting about refugees that is very difficult for journalism, which is actually knowing whether anybody is actually telling you the truth. I think there's an inbuilt structural reason that people won't tell you the truth, and it's difficult to really get round I think [...] people rarely have any documentation to back up any of their stories and there are lots of inbuilt reasons for them to lie, so I think, I don't know what the answer is to that, but it's a problem" (Interview, 07.04.20).

This temptation to distrust refugees re-enacts Orientalist imaginaries of the deceitful and threatening Other (Said, 1978), and obscures how refugees by definition are people forced to flee their country due to conflict, persecution, or natural disaster, meaning documents are often forgotten, lost, or destroyed by smugglers (GSMA, 2017). Their vulnerability relative to the state as a gatekeeper to asylum and citizenship rests in part upon the absence of written identity authentication. Levinson therefore characterises the role of editor as an adjudicator of trust who, not unlike the state, must verify and validate voices before they appear on air. Whilst not corroborated by other interviewees, it suggests that a journalistic imperative to include migrant voices on

moral grounds of deservingness and commercial grounds of listenership, might be discordant with editorial scepticism about the trustworthiness of refugees.

### *5.3.3.3 Appealing to the Geographical Imaginations of Listeners*

The third and final way in which journalists engage in storytelling is through an appeal to the geographical imaginations of listeners through place-based sounds and voices. Journalists seek to captivate listeners by imaginatively transporting them to a place through sounds that create an affective atmosphere and voices that animate people who can be envisaged in the mind's eye. Methods of production aimed at maximising the imaginative value of radio broadcasts are particularly pertinent to media representations of migration because it reveals radio's potential for establishing imaginative identification with, and recognition of, 'vulnerable' others (Chouliaraki and Georgiou, 2019). It is widely acknowledged in radio studies that the medium's predication on the spoken word and direct appeal to listener imaginations means that it echoes an oral tradition of storytelling, as Biewen (2017, p.2) explains:

“Radio and podcasting boast humanity's oldest and best storytelling tool: the voice. Long before film, photography, even the quill pen, people told stories to one another, the pictures conjured in the listener's imagination. The best audio storytellers spark vivid movies in the mind's eye”.

The interwoven acts of speaking, listening, and imagining capture how radio encourages listeners to translate voices heard on the airwaves into pictures 'seen' in the mind. As Allison (2017, p.2) observes, “we are blind listening to the radio. Our imaginations are in play. We create the characters and envision the settings [...] we participate in their creation”. Journalists at Radio 4, including Chris Morris, echo these characterisations of radio as an imaginative, storytelling medium:

“Radio is a more effective way of telling a story because [...] you’re having an image painted inside your head, so the image is not something you’re looking at with your eyes, the image is inside your brain, almost, that’s what radio does to you [...] it’s the geography of your imagination and good radio paints those pictures” (Interview, 06.03.20).

Emma Jane Kirby suggests that radio’s capacity to humanise the abstract and intangible rests on its appeal to the imagination through storytelling:

“Radio is just so much a more delightful medium than television to play to the imagination because you are telling people stories and storytelling is an ancient art, you know, we know that, from the time people could speak they told stories, people gathered around campfires and listened to stories. And people still want stories because stories make people think and it puts human faces on numbers” (Interview, 10.02.20).

Of course, voices can enact division as easily as they can establish connection, and they are not always used to tell stories, but the critical point for radio is “the prejudicial eye is not involved” (Allison, 2017, p.6).

Robin Lustig suggests that the power of voice, which radio exploits, has early origins: “the human voice is, you know, it is the first communication medium that a baby responds to even in the womb [...] the human voice is absolutely the key form of communication, it’s incredibly powerful and very intimate” (Interview, 12.03.20). Sound is framed in similarly corporeal terms by James Reynolds who describes it as our earliest and last remaining sense:

“Radio is the most primal of all mediums. Of all it is the only medium of journalism that can be consumed in a room in the dark with your eyes closed. Sound is the most primal of all the senses, it’s the last sense to go when a person is dying [...] there’s something about sound which is so primal actually, that radio connects to and is more intimate with a connection to another human being than sight” (Interview, 03.02.20).

This capacity to tap into senses which begin and end the human lifecycle speaks to radio's stripped back reliance on voices and sounds as "primal" tools of storytelling to engage and imaginatively transport listeners, as Chris Morris explains:

"One of the really important things, if you're somewhere dramatic, is just tell people what you can see, you're their eyes and ears [...] what you can see, what you can hear and what you can taste as well [...] just try and take them there as much as possible [...] and obviously sound can help you with the, sound can take [...] somebody somewhere" (Interview, 06.03.20).

Morris combines the journalistic impulse to bear witness with a creative desire to transport listeners through sight, sound, and taste. Spaces of migration evoked in broadcasts are therefore produced and animated by rich descriptions and affective soundscapes designed to conjure up an image in the mind, as Jenny Hill explains:

"You want to make sure you create a bit of a soundscape, so there's nothing duller than just listening to someone talking on the radio, of course, so, you want to try and recreate the atmosphere of where you are for the piece. So obviously if you're at a march or something like that, then it's easy to pick up the sound, you know, people chanting, footsteps moving along, there's maybe rain coming down if it's a nasty night. And if you're not actually somewhere where there's obvious atmosphere, then you would try to think about how you could make your radio package sound interesting. So, you might for example think to record the church bells, you know, if the march is gathering near a church" (Interview, 11.02.20).

Here, Hill reflects on reporting anti-refugee marches in Germany and describes the importance of recreating the "atmosphere" and "soundscape" of place to capture its acoustics and provoke an imaginative, affective response from listeners (Interview, 11.02.20). This resonates with McCormack (2013) and Closs Stephens' (2016) work on affective atmospheres and demonstrates how journalists actively record authentic, place-based sounds in radio to help listeners envision people and places. This methodological approach to producing radio journalism is corroborated by Andrew

Hosken who likens reports for *The World Tonight* to “mini documentaries” which “requires a different degree of storytelling” (Interview, 24.02.20):

“You travel around and try and construct a narrative, that particular story. So I always try to decide what the story is that I want to tell [...] I think of the cue which is what the presenter reads [...] start to think about the sort of cast list of people I want in the piece, so then I sort of work to that. As you go along, you’re coming up with the story arc and how it fits together, rather than going out with a set idea from here say [...] So I think about the cue and then you want to start off with a sound, something, you know, so you, you try and get people into the atmosphere, so you know, it’s somebody cooking stew or whether it’s somebody singing in a church, a makeshift church, you want to get people in there and describe, and you do [...] pieces to mic...” (Interview, 24.02.20).

Hosken reveals the constructed and performative nature of narratives with a “cue”, “story arc”, and “cast list”, reminiscent of devices used by a novelist or dramatist (Interview, 24.02.20). It calls to mind Gasher’s (2015, p.134) portrait of news as a “compilation of stories” with each story possessing “a setting in a specific time and place, a clearly-identified cast of characters, a narrative trajectory pulling these ingredients together and a vantage point from which the story is told”. Just like a storyteller, Hosken includes sounds and voices to evoke a sense of place and an immersive atmosphere. This evocative, place-based, multi-sensory journalism is exemplified in his reportage from Calais, which appeals to listeners’ senses and geographical imaginations. Hosken characterises storytelling in radio as a creative practice of “staging the unseen” (VanCour, 2018, p.1), trying to enable listeners to imagine the sights and scenes of migration unfolding before him. It is a highly constructed process that, as Gasher (2015, p.134) points out, inevitably means “the people, places and events that don’t make it into the news are, by definition, rendered unimportant, uninteresting, irrelevant, not worth the audiences’ notice”.

The documentary is another genre in which journalists turn storytellers when producing radio broadcasts. Bridget Harney describes *Crossing Continents* as a “storytelling vehicle” and “long-form storytelling” (Interview, 06.04.20). By that she means constructing a compelling narrative that draws in listeners and provides an in-depth insight into a person or place. Harney values documentaries in which “you get taken into people’s lives and hear their stories in a way that you just don’t in the normal current affairs, and news and current affairs, output because, you know, you’ve got the space to do that” (Interview, 06.04.20). The length of a documentary, around twenty-eight minutes, is therefore fundamental to explaining radio that privileges long-form storytelling over issue-driven news coverage. Like Hosken, she uses theatre as a performative metaphor for production:

“I always say to people who come to me who’ve never made this kind of thing before [...] try and imagine when you go to the theatre [...] and the curtain goes up and usually there’s one or two people on the stage and those are the main protagonists, and the curtain might come down, the scenes might change, you know, three or four times during the course of the play but those one or two characters are always going to be on stage. And that is what you’re trying to do with long-form storytelling. So, you know, you have your core narrative or narrative hook, which is usually a person, sometimes it’s a thing, sometimes it’s a place, and that is what, that is your narrative spine. And you go often, you know, you could go off in little directions and discover things around and about the place, but you’re always coming back to that central person, that central story” (Interview, 06.04.20).

These references to “stages”, “scenes”, and “protagonists” (Interview, 06.04.20) highlight a creative impulse behind documentaries that is distinct from news as journalists are encouraged to imagine themselves as playwrights or theatregoers and employ similar narrative techniques. Whilst a “narrative hook” is reminiscent of cues or top lines that are designed to grab attention, the comparative time and space in documentaries to “discover” is striking as it highlights their capacity to resist reductive

stereotypes and simplifications of forced migration and instead, explore nuance and complexity through in-depth and intricate stories of people and places (Interview, 06.04.20). Contrary to expectations that theatrical metaphors of storytelling might describe methods of radio production that lead to ear-catching spectacles of crisis, documentaries and lengthier news packages on *The World Tonight* stand out for amplifying personal stories and voices, and situating migration within longer histories and global geographies of displacement. These two programme formats in current affairs and news therefore again highlight slippages between the two imaginative geographies and together, provide the clearest evidence of radio as a storytelling medium.

In summary, storytelling emerges as a key technique of production designed to engage listeners in radio, and journalists who work across the BBC articulate its three main characteristics: first, offering new angles on the subject of migration; second, amplifying voices that are often silenced in the media; and third, appealing to geographical imaginations through multi-sensory reportage. These three strategies, which shape the production of programmes on Radio 4, aim to secure listener engagement. However, these strategies move beyond a straightforward commercial imperative to attract the largest audience and speak to the specificity of radio as a medium. That is to say, the journalists interviewed in this thesis point to radio's predication upon sounds and voices as clear evidence of its engagement with an oral tradition of storytelling and use this to support a discursive framing of radio as a storytelling medium that is exceptional in its ability to connect with listeners and animate their geographical imaginations.

## 5.4 Conclusion

Through 17 interviews conducted with journalists, producers, editors, and senior commissioners, this chapter makes a significant contribution to media and radio geography by documenting organisational structures and journalistic practices of production at the BBC that contextualise and explain the diversity of representations across Radio 4 programming. It responds to Dittmer and Bos' (2019) call for more research on the site of production and to Pinkerton's (2014) vision for geographical scholarship on the institutions and spatial locations from which radio emerges.

The chapter was split into two sections that contextualised the imaginative geographies identified in Chapter 4 by demonstrating how they are products of the spatialities and practices that govern programme production. The chapter began by illustrating how the geopolitical imaginary of 'crisis' and the more place-based, immersive, multi-sensory imaginary of migration on the ground emerge out of three internal divisions, and a hierarchy of entrusted power and responsibility that, taken together, determine how radio programmes are commissioned, produced, and broadcast. That is to say, broadcasts on Europe's migration 'crisis' are produced by an organisational structure that values, and is predicated upon, editorial and journalistic autonomy and programme-specific creativity.

This informed the focus of the second half of the chapter on journalists. It identified two professional codes that guide journalists and shape programme production: namely, the BBC's Reithian mission to inform, educate, and entertain audiences, and editorial imperative to produce truthful, accurate, and impartial journalism; institutional principles that are inscribed into the physical geography of

Broadcasting House where a portrait of John Reith hangs in the Council Chamber and a bronze statue of George Orwell stands in the public piazza (BBC Collections Art, n.d.). However, the chapter revealed how journalists occupy different positionalities and perspectives that, together with the proximity of Europe's migration 'crisis', pose an epistemological challenge to these pillars of BBC journalism. This accounts for the diversity of output on forced migration and refugee settlement across Radio 4 by highlighting editorial and creative room for journalists to inflect broadcasts with personal styles of witnessing and reporting. Examining production therefore reaches beyond an organisational account of the BBC and Radio 4 into deeper questions about claims to truth, impartiality, and objectivity in journalism. Indeed, Europe's migration 'crisis', as a geopolitical event and a humanitarian story, reignites 'old' debates around the journalist as eyewitness, audience engagement and compassion fatigue, and the power of the media to select, frame, and amplify people's voices.

Tracing temporalities and spatialities of production in RCA and News demonstrated how imaginative geographies of migration heard across Radio 4 are fundamentally shaped by questions of geography. It revealed how the geopolitical imaginary of 'crisis', exemplified in *The World Tonight*, is a product of tight production deadlines, short bulletins and reports, and a fast-paced daily news cycle which leave little room for sustained reflection or analysis. This contrasts with the lengthier timescales and programmes in current affairs which offer journalists more time and narrative space to articulate the complexities of migration through a place-based, multi-sensory, and multi-vocal imaginary exemplified in 'feature' programmes.

Attending to spatialities of production, however, illuminated how documentaries in *RCA* and *The World Tonight* are both subject to multi-locational production practices; a finding which reveals how programmes, and the imaginative geographies within them, are products of 'here' as much as 'there'. That is to say, the chapter documents how Broadcasting House acts as a spatial anchor for journalists reporting on migration for *Crossing Continents* who return with hours of sound recordings and co-construct documentaries in studios with editors, producers, and broadcast assistants; and for *The World Tonight*, which is produced in, and presented out of, London, but also draws on reports from foreign correspondents posted around the world. This matters because it demonstrates that *where* a journalist works, and over what *timeframe*, makes a difference to the representations heard on air. The chapter therefore makes a valuable contribution to radio geography by mapping hidden geographies of contemporary BBC radio production, providing rich, empirical evidence for Pinkerton's (2014, p.58) contention that radio is "spatially situated and rooted 'in place'". Yet it goes further by revealing some of the temporal rhythms that underpin radio production and shape the imaginative geographies of migration articulated across Radio 4 programming.

In conclusion, the BBC may be a single institution, but interviews conducted with journalists, editors, producers, and senior leaders demonstrate how production is a process that is manifest in multiple settings, roles, and media that operate across a variety of temporalities and spatialities. What binds these geographies together is an organisational mission to serve audiences and a journalistic imperative to engage listeners in radio through imaginative and immersive storytelling. Whether broadcasts and the imaginative geographies within them captivate listeners as journalists hoped

and intended is the focus of the next and final chapter. After all, Sontag (2003, p.117) concludes that photographs of suffering “cannot be more than an invitation to pay attention, to reflect, to learn”. The thesis therefore shifts away from discursive and affective invitations in and behind broadcasts, to their realisation and reception by listeners.

## Audience

### *In the Ear, the Mind's Eye, and the Body*

#### **6.1 Introduction**

Whilst media representations of migration have attracted considerable academic interest, few have examined how audiences react to migrant stories, voices, and imaginaries in journalism. Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017, p.1) identify a clear hierarchy of voices across European newspaper coverage of the migration 'crisis' that privileges politicians at the expense of citizens and refugees, but they only hypothesise its potential to lead audiences into a "triple misrecognition of refugees as political, social and historical actors". Similarly, Georgiou (2018) explores how migrant voices are included, framed, and silenced in a selection of European digital media, but she stops short of considering how those voices are heard and interpreted. This lacuna is surprising given that how audiences interpret media representations of migration is critical to forging an inclusive politics of recognition and understanding.

Whilst the previous chapter examined organisational structures and journalistic practices at the BBC as a way of contextualising and explaining the diversity of representations articulated across Radio 4, this chapter explores how those representations are heard, interpreted, and imagined by listeners. It answers questions posed in the first two empirical chapters by revealing whether soundscapes and spoken discourses of migration in radio broadcasts, intended by journalists or otherwise, are

pictured in the imaginations of listeners and exposing which geographical imaginaries, if any, expand fields of perceptibility, recognition, and relatability with others (Butler, 2009; Chouliaraki, 2013). It therefore moves beyond research that focuses exclusively on narratorial and affective *invitations* in visual media to consider how listeners hear, interpret, and imagine Radio 4 broadcasts on migration.

By exploring audience reception of radio, the chapter makes a valuable contribution to geographical studies of radio that to date have focused on the history and geopolitics of the medium. It responds to Pinkerton and Dodds' (2009, pp.10-25) call for research on the "affective impacts of radio", but goes further by detailing the discursive, as well as the affective, responses of listeners to Radio 4 broadcasting. Interest in the affective power of radio reflects a broader theoretical shift away from studying media 'effects' to affective experiences, resonances, and reverberations, whereby discursive maps of meaning are also revealed to be affective maps of feeling. The chapter therefore draws on, and applies to speech radio, recent research in geography on sounds and voices as "sonic affects" and ways of knowing that bring spaces and worlds into being and hold the potential to connect and transform through affective, unfamiliar, and occasionally, indescribable registers (Gallagher, Kanngieser, and Prior, 2017, p.619; Kanngieser, 2015; 2019). This framing of sound as productive and affectual is central to understanding how radio broadcasts and the imaginative geographies within them are pictured, experienced, and felt in affective and emotional registers. It is important to note that the theoretical distinction between 'affect' and 'emotion' is understood here as: pre-cognitive, 'gut' feelings or affects versus cognitive, articulatable emotions, such as despair, anger, or happiness, both of which are within

and can move between bodies (Pile, 2010). In his research on commercial radio in Australia, Tebbutt (2006, p.859) emphasises a need to move away from narrative “messages” in radio to listener “moods” and “perceptions”, re-focusing attention on the body as “a site of a multiplicity of potential responses”. His intervention prompts Pinkerton and Dodds (2009, p.25) to wonder “if music has a capacity to ‘move’ then the cultural effects of radio (the tone of a voice, background music and so on) deserve further consideration”. This chapter takes up that invitation by analysing the affective impacts of radio together with how listeners interpret and make sense of speech radio journalism on migration.

The chapter therefore also engages with, and develops, recent research in migration studies on the relationship between media representations and audience responses. Chapter 2 detailed how the locus of attention has been on discursive framings of migration in newsprint and photojournalism, rather than on audience *interpretations* of those narratives and images. This is exemplified in Chouliaraki and Zaborowski’s (2017, p.19) analysis, which theorises the potential for newspaper coverage to deny refugees “the capacity to be seen and validated” as political, social, or historical actors. It is also reflected in Chouliaraki and Stolic’s (2019) work, which speculates on the extent to which different images of migration invite contrasting affective and discursive responses. Their research prompts the question: how are audible representations of migration articulated through sounds and voices in Radio 4 journalism heard, interpreted, imagined, and felt by listeners?

Interestingly, in a chapter on the media in the World Migration Report, Allen, Blinder, and McNeil (2017) discuss the potential impacts of media reportage on

audience perceptions of migration and cite Lippmann (1922, p.11) who argues that people's opinions about an issue are based on the "pictures in our head". These imaginative pictures are shaped by personal experiences and the different sources people engage with, including the media. Their discussion resonates with this thesis' interest in how radio shapes the geographical imaginations of listeners around migration. By studying how listeners respond to broadcasts, this chapter provides rich empirical evidence for Crisell's (1994, p.7) early observation that in radio, "the listener is compelled to 'supply' the visual data for himself. The details are described, or they may suggest themselves through sound, but they are not 'pictured' for him. He must picture them himself". But it goes further by delving deeper into this envisioning process and uncovering how geographical imaginations are spatially and materially manifest, shaped by personal memories and experiences, traverse different spatial and temporal scales, and condition emotive and affective responses.

With that in mind, the chapter is based on the diary responses of 51 listeners to a digital playlist of 12 Radio 4 broadcasts on Europe's migration 'crisis'. It is worth recalling from the methodology chapter that the playlist sought to reflect the diversity of Radio 4 programming and the two contrasting imaginative geographies of migration identified in Chapter 4 (see Appendix E). However, given those imaginaries emerged from a detailed textual analysis of 172, rather than 12, broadcasts on migration, I do not impose my interpretation onto listeners, nor search for evidence of those imaginative geographies in their reflective diaries. Instead, the analysis in this chapter, in line with the framing of my third research question, is driven by the responses of listeners to selected broadcasts. The 51 listeners are identified by, and referred to anonymously

through, pseudonyms and the demographic and radio listenership data for each participant can be viewed in Appendix F.

This thesis conceptualises the radio broadcast as a space of encounter that participates in shaping the geographical imaginations of listeners and holds affective power to elicit emotions and feelings towards people on the move. Chouliaraki and Stolic (2019, p.315) similarly identify photos of refugees as “a space of recognition - a space where the encounter between spectators and arriving others can become a moment of reflection and solidarity”. Whilst they hypothesise the *potential* for photography to inspire “affective moods” - empathy, fear, suspicion - that could translate into socio-political responses and action (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2019, p.320), this chapter analyses the *realisation* of that potential in listener responses to radio broadcasts. The notion of encounter is defined here as the point of interaction between a listener and broadcast upon which geographical imaginations of migration are built. That is to say, the moment or experience of a listener hearing and engaging with radio. This contrasts subtly with Chouliaraki and Stolic’s (2019) approach as threaded throughout the chapter are *multiple* encounters between a listener and different people, spaces, and landscapes, depending on who and where is featured in a broadcast. This includes encounters with migrants, journalists, novelists, politicians, volunteers, and camps, the Mediterranean, boats, detention centres, and so on. The point being that broadcasts are animated by a range of people and places - rather than migrants alone - upon which listener imaginations are constructed. The chapter reveals how voices and soundscapes invoke imaginative geographies ‘seen’ in the mind’s eye, understood and interpreted, as well as felt and experienced in the body, and discusses how these imaginaries mark instances of connection or distancing, identification or

rejection, recognition or exclusion. Indeed, a thematic analysis of the diaries reveals the complexities and nuances of listening, which unsettles direct correlations between discursive representations and audience responses theorised in previous media and migration research.

The chapter is split into three subsections that are driven by the empirical findings and illustrate how and to what effect listeners hear and interpret radio broadcasts on forced migration to, and refugee settlement in, Europe: first, listeners hear broadcasts through the interpretative frames of BBC journalism and their own personal experiences and subjectivities, both of which condition how they imagine and affectively respond to Europe's migration 'crisis'; second, listeners prefer and value broadcasts predicated upon the personal stories and voices of migrants, which are critical to eliciting emotional and affective responses, and establishing a politics of recognition; and third, listeners describe being able to 'picture', 'see', and 'imagine' broadcasts, which demonstrates how radio engages geographical imaginations and realises its potential for imaginative and emotional identification with others. It concludes by suggesting that the unanticipated finding about how broadcasts are embodied, experienced, and felt, as well as imagined, highlights a need to develop conceptualisations of the mind's eye in geography to better account for the affective and experiential dimensions of radio.

## **6.2 Interpretative Frames of Listening**

The listener diaries reveal two interpretative frames through which Radio 4 broadcasts on migration are heard and imagined: namely, the institutional frame of the BBC and the biographical frame of listener positionalities. Whilst listener responses reveal

overlaps and slippage between the two interpretative frames - demonstrating how they co-exist and dovetail with one another, as opposed to being mutually exclusive - the following analysis discusses each in turn.

### *6.2.1 The Institutional Frame of the BBC*

Listeners hear and interpret radio broadcasts with an expectation of balance and impartiality, and articulate their responses in a Reithian language that reveals an awareness of the BBC's mission to inform, educate, and entertain. It is perhaps no surprise that listeners are conscious of the values and ambitions of BBC broadcasting. Born (2005, p.5) describes the BBC as "the world's most famous cultural institution", "the model for public broadcasters on every continent", and "a cornerstone of British democracy". These definitions are striking because they capture the size, scale, and reach of the BBC 'at home' and abroad, and underline its presence in public imaginations. Households in Britain are legally obliged to pay an annual license fee, which means that audiences are invested in and claim ownership over its content, services, and actions. This connection extends beyond a purely financial or contractual relationship into epistemological questions around knowledge production and representation. Put simply, "the BBC claims universality - the right to speak to and for the 'nation'" (Born, 2005, p.10). This claim speaks to its foundation upon and enduring commitment to the Reithian idea of broadcasting as a public service and social and moral force, which means that the BBC is philosophically, as well as materially, bound to its audiences. Love it or loathe it, the BBC occupies a central place in British society and listeners reveal an awareness of its journalistic values and mission statement.

This awareness translates into two sets of critical responses that interestingly echo the previous two empirical chapters: first, about the content, tone, and editorial framing of broadcasts; and second, about the positionality and discursive choices of journalists. Listeners share an expectation that broadcasts should be balanced and impartial in their representation of migration, however, there is divergence over what listeners think balanced and impartial reporting sounds like. In response to *The World Tonight's* coverage of migrants at the Eurotunnel on July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Francesca writes:

“The whole report used highly inflammatory and combative language and tone, so it sounded like an invading army was attempting to breach the UK’s defenses. I was shocked at how the report seemed to conflate the actions of migrants with those of organised criminals - the 2 groups were described interchangeably. The picture in my head was of warriors at the gate, scrambling over walls and fences to invade the UK. I felt angry when Nigel Farage came on to ‘up the ante’ as the report felt completely one-sided and sensationalist [...] When I think back to this report it feels like the BBC had gone full ‘Daily Mail’”.

Francesca reflects critically on the language and tone of the broadcast, and its discursive framing of migration as “an invading army” of “organised criminals”. She considers the interview with UKIP representative, Nigel Farage, taken from radio station LBC, to undermine the BBC’s claims to balanced journalism. Indeed, Francesca goes as far as to suggest the BBC has “gone full ‘Daily Mail’” in reference to what she believes is “one-sided and sensationalist” coverage. Her response resonates with Felicity who writes:

“Security framing/perspective. Migrants (notably not called refugees here) ‘breaking in’ on ‘unprecedented scale’. Emphasis on number of attempts. Suggests these people are criminals. Does mention that some migrants have been injured trying to get onto trains, but the focus is definitely on portraying these people as breaking the law and inconveniencing innocent people [...] Overall, an unbalanced report. Why was a rep from UKIP interviewed but no other political parties (other than the PM)? I came away from the broadcast feeling stressed/concerned about the impact this kind of reporting will have on people’s opinions towards the migrant crisis i.e. seeing it as a security issue rather than a humanitarian crisis”.

Like Francesca, Felicity considers the news report to be “unbalanced” due to its representation of migration as a security threat and its inclusion of Nigel Farage, who she rejects as a counterweight to the voice of Conservative Home Secretary, Theresa May. Felicity’s response is thoughtful and forensic, extracting direct quotations and describing an affective response that is conditioned by imagining how the broadcast might be heard and received by others. That is to say, she describes “feeling stressed” about how other listeners might be influenced by the programme’s portrayal of “the migrant crisis” as “a security issue”. This imaginative leap into the minds of other listeners is pertinent given the contrasting response of Colin to the same excerpt:

“One thing I could imagine was the sense of lawlessness of the migrants and their complete disregard for property and the law, the inconvenience and cost to private companies and national governments. If this is their attitude, how do they expect UK citizens to accept them, look after them and help them integrate if they ever reach the UK. Having personally witnessed migrants trying to board a Eurotunnel train that I was onboard, the broadcast brought back memories of that evening when migrant youths were running across the countryside and climbing over the train. It was a frightening experience for everyone on board”.

Colin responds to imaginaries of criminality, disorder, and security because the broadcast resonates with and sparks memories of a similar experience he had at the Eurotunnel. He agrees with and rearticulates the threat of “migrant youths” but does not comment on or question its political representation. This resonates with the response of Sophia who, rather than challenging the broadcast’s selection of contributors and securitised framing of migrants, considers the broadcast “a rather neutral and impartial account [...] I was quite shocked at the scale of the problem. Troubled by the extent and severity of the situation. Must not be allowed to go unchecked”. These divergent interpretations of the same broadcast capture how BBC

'balance' and 'impartiality' are ideas rooted in the subjectivities of audiences whose responses are conditioned by personal values, experiences, and preconceptions.

Listeners engage critically with the language and editorial balance of contributors in broadcasts, which is evidenced in responses to a second edition of *The World Tonight* from Calais on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015. The broadcast begins with a report recorded inside the camp by journalist, Andrew Hosken, in which he interviews Milly Scott-Steele, a British volunteer, and asks her what she thinks about the term 'jungle':

**Scott-Steele:** "Yeah, I agree with it. Jungles are brutal but beautiful. And that is what this place is. It's brutal, but so many times throughout the day your face lights up because something beautiful has happened. And the people here do feel like they're treated like animals. They really do and they are treated like animals".

Milly paints a striking juxtaposition of beauty and brutality that scrambles imaginative geographies of Calais as a uniformly degenerate space but echoes Vaughan-Williams' (2015) biopolitical critique of 'zoopolitical spaces' that, he argues, function to dehumanise migrants. Listeners repeatedly single out this interview 'moment' but diverge in their responses to it:

"I agreed and sympathised with the girl who said she felt a sense of shame which made her volunteer. 'Brutal but beautiful' – amazing description. Heart wrenching but also positive in some ways" (Graham)

"I found it very interesting to hear Milly's point of view on the name 'the jungle'. It was good to hear the point of view of someone who has experienced being there and the fact that she thinks it is a fitting name and that the inhabitants are treated like animals reiterates the terrible conditions of the camp" (Elizabeth)

"It makes me wonder about the use of the term jungle to describe the Calais camp – is it slightly 'Orientalist'? Is it a disparaging way of speaking of African

migrants in particular, ‘uncivilised’ and coming ‘from the jungle’? I certainly wouldn’t call the term jungle ‘beautiful’. It’s actually very oppressive” (Liam)

“I’m not sure about the name of ‘The Jungle’. The description of the refugee camp sounds a lot worse than a jungle. In a jungle life can thrive and the food chain, while brutal is a necessary part of life. This camp sounds more like hell than a jungle” (Victoria)

“‘Jungle’ seems to be in many ways an inappropriate description of the situation, we are told that people are treated like ‘Animals’ yet animals in a real jungle which is an ecosystem do not live in such squalor. The misery and horror of the situation being man made” (Daniel)

These extracts capture a striking attentiveness to the discursive power of language around how the Calais camp and its inhabitants are described, imagined, and understood (Harker, 2016). They also illustrate how a single passage can prompt conflicting responses based on listener subjectivities. Hosken’s eyewitness account is editorially balanced by a studio-based interview with Conservative MP, Damian Green, and this time, listeners share an expectation that politicians should offer solutions to Europe’s migration ‘crisis’:

“Damien [sic] Green saying that getting into lorries isn’t a good way to seek asylum is so annoying and such an avoidance of the problem” (Mia)

“The shift in discussion into the technical factors and responsibilities between French, British and other authorities, while important, make me feel that these political ‘armchair’ conversations will not yield effective results” (Liam)

“The interview with the MP was interesting but one that I do not recall as I feel he did not give answers that were significant or helpful” (Ella)

“The studio interview with Damien [sic] Green didn’t seem that constructive with little responsibility offered to sort out the migration issue” (Amy)

This collective desire for political interviews to produce “effective results” and elicit “constructive” and “helpful” answers points to a wider media framing of forced migration as a problem to be solved (Triandafyllidou, 2013), and hints at a frustration among listeners about political intractability over the ‘crisis’. Whilst the broadcast was well received for offsetting a volunteer in Calais with a Conservative politician in the studio to achieve BBC ‘balance’, there is a clear wish among these listeners for programmes, and political decision makers, to offer tangible solutions to forced migration to Europe.

Listeners routinely couch their responses in the BBC’s language of neutrality, impartiality, and bias, but they diverge over how each of the terms are applied to broadcasts. This is evidenced in conflicting responses to another report on the demolition of the Calais camp by Hosken for *The World Tonight* on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Samuel writes:

“Starts with factual account of clash - not judgemental. Bulldozers ploughing through jungle - feels brutal. Just as bad in Macedonia. It sounds like a European scale problem. Depressing that it’s a huge Europe wide problem. Practical issue of where tear gas is blown - neutral reporting on a riot”.

Samuel is sympathetic to Hosken’s portrayal of a standoff between French police and migrants, which he considers to be “factual” on the basis of its “neutral” and non-judgemental tone. However, the report sits uneasily with Michael who questions its narrative framing:

“Posited as an equal conflict between police and immigrants - but how can this ever be equal? “Impartiality” apparently means not condemning the approach, just watching it. How can tear gas vs rocks be fair? How can a heavily armed police force tear gassing a crowd and bulldozing meagre shelters be equally opposed by people throwing stones? There is no justification”.

Michael is critical of Hosken's representation of an "equal conflict" between riot police and stone-throwing residents, and questions the BBC's understanding of impartiality, which he believes falsely privileges spectatorship over justifiable condemnation. Grace, however, interprets the portrayal differently again:

"I also felt the image of heavily protected police with tear gas and rubber bullets against migrants with stones portrayed clearly the power dynamics in the clash. However, the rest of the report I found incredibly frustrating. As the journalist described the clash, he described the gas as coming towards 'us', which placed him - and by extension the listener - as on the side of the police and not the migrants. This was possibly not deliberate, but if so, this might be even more telling about the unconscious biases of the report".

Grace praises Hosken's account as a clear illustration of an unequal power dynamic between two sides but calls out where he physically stands to report from as a subtle marker of "unconscious bias". She suggests Hosken's proximity to the police and distance from the migrants aligns him, perhaps unwittingly, with the force of the state. Irrespective of a journalist's intentions, listeners therefore reveal a tendency to interrogate and disagree over whether they fulfilled their role as impartial witnesses. Broadcasts are therefore simultaneously spaces of contestation and affirmation as they variously challenge and endorse the world views of different listeners.

Listeners reflect critically on the figure of the BBC journalist, commenting on their positionality, language, and tone of voice. Whilst the journalists interviewed in Chapter 5 consider themselves to be secondary and subsidiary to the events they are covering, listeners foreground the journalist as a dominant presence in broadcasts. Rather than being a background or peripheral figure, journalists captivate the attention of listeners who reflect on their styles of interviewing, interactions with interviewees, and discursive choices. Although listeners diverge over whether they like particular

journalists, there is shared appreciation for those who create space for migrant voices, approach interviewees with sensitivity, and pose questions that elicit thoughtful responses. This is evidenced in responses to *On Your Farm*, broadcast on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018, which almost universally praise presenter, Caz Graham, for her interviewing style:

“Thought the reporter in this broadcast was fantastic - really allowing Riyadh [sic] to tell his story” (Elizabeth)

“I thought the interviewer was good, she allowed him to talk and asked good questions and made him feel at ease” (Scarlett)

“Thought the interviewer did a really good job - warm yet incisive questioning” (Emma)

Listeners also respond positively to the personable approach of journalist, Gabriel Gatehouse, in his documentary, ‘A Mediterranean Rescue’ for *Crossing Continents* on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, which was recorded onboard The Phoenix, a former fishing vessel turned Migrant Offshore Aid Station, as it sailed from Malta to Libya:

“I appreciated the presenter focusing on asking questions and letting people tell their own story” (Henry)

“The impression I got from the whole program though was that the reporters were genuinely interested in the migrants’ stories, so perhaps the migrants themselves also got this impression and so were happier to speak to the reporters” (Holly)

“I have come away appreciating the journalist more than the others, as he actually went and spoke to the refugees rather than spoke \*about\* them, which makes a huge difference to the quality of the broadcast and my respect for the journalist. He treated them like they were people and asked decent, non-patronising, questions which I liked” (Lily)

Listeners value journalists who relate to migrants as human beings, ask thought-provoking questions, and provide space for people to articulate their stories, thereby fulfilling an expectation of BBC neutrality. Exceptions to this trend are Patrick and Sarah who question Gatehouse's impartiality and positionality:

"The journalist was laughing with migrants therefore does this help the situation and we pay journalists via the BBC" (Patrick)

"I wondered if the journalist was taking up a space on the rescue boat that could have been used for a migrant" (Sarah)

Although the majority of listeners praise Gatehouse for naming and giving voice to migrants, Patrick and Sarah critique a perceived alignment with interviewees and raise ethical questions about his presence onboard the boat. Whilst this criticality is a potential reflection of the educated sample and format of the study, it nevertheless illustrates how audiences are attuned to the positionality and reporting styles of journalists.

The language and tone of journalists also attracts significant attention as listeners identify particular words and phrases that linger in the mind and reflect on how voice can be both a barrier and entry into a programme. This is evidenced in contradictory responses to *A Point of View: Imagine*, broadcast on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and presented by author Michael Morpurgo, who, although not a journalist, attracts identical commentary on language and tone. Some listeners react positively to his impassioned pitch about child refugees:

"'Tsunami of suffering' - this phrase really stood out to me and stuck with me after finishing listening to the broadcast" (Elizabeth)

“There is clear emotion in the broadcaster’s words – emphasis on different words etc. Creating a sense of obligation to vulnerable children, regardless of their nationality. ‘It is shameful’ is said very emphatically and stands out because of this” (Felicity)

“I found the phrasing in this broadcast very powerful and evocative, such as ‘witnessing man’s inhumanity to man’, that is should ‘shame us’ [...] It was beautiful, powerful language” (Grace)

Others, however, critique the broadcast on the same principles of discourse and tone:

“The language seemed forcefully descriptive and emotive, which made me feel like I was listening to a fictional novel. The speaker narrated with dramatic tones in his voice which again made the whole thing sound a bit over the top” (Clare)

“Michael Morpurgo is a skilled storyteller, however his reasoning tends towards an appeal to emotion eg. ‘tsunami of suffering’” (Noah)

“I was slightly underwhelmed by this podcast, if [sic] felt very ‘preachy’” (Gabiella)

“I did not warm to this broadcast. It sounded like a church sermon and lacked the warmth and authenticity of broadcasts featuring interviews with people who are sharing their real experiences. I did not like the tone/accent of the person doing the broadcast” (Sophia)

These extracts illustrate how audiences listen carefully to the language and tone of broadcasts, but diverge in their responses according to personal preferences and subjectivities. Voices of journalists are therefore unifying and dividing forces that are subject to the thoughts and feelings of listeners.

Interestingly, some listeners identify Michael Morpurgo - and Clare Balding in *Ramblings* - by name, which contrasts with the anonymity of journalists in other broadcasts who remain nameless and defined according to their role as a reporter,

presenter, or broadcaster. Although their celebrity status cuts through to some, it is no guarantee of audience engagement with suffering (Chouliaraki, 2012; Scott, 2015). Listeners respond positively to Balding's empathetic interaction with refugees in an edition of *Ramblings* from May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018, where she walks through Reigate in Surrey with *Refugee Tales*, a charity that supports people in indefinite detention as they await asylum. Balding is perceived to be authentic due to her proximity to, and shared conversations with, named refugees. By contrast, Morpurgo elicits conflicting responses with some accusing him of being overly "dramatic" and "emotive", and a poor substitute for the "warmth" and "authenticity" of interviews with refugees. His distance from those he speaks *about* prompts listeners to re-direct attention towards his performance and vocal delivery as an inauthentic communicator. Although perhaps well-intentioned, Morpurgo falls victim to Goodman's (2010, p.104) apt observation that, "it is now through the global media mega-star that the subaltern speaks". That is to say, a celebrity author who *replaces* and *speaks for* refugees is read as an unwelcome intervention into the 'crisis' and illustrates how audience reception of a recognisable public figure turned mediator of suffering is contested and ambivalent.

Listeners repeatedly comment on finding the broadcasts informative, educational, and enjoyable, which speaks to an awareness around the BBC's Reithian mission. This manifests in responses that suggest broadcasts introduce new ideas, offer alternative perspectives, provoke reflection, and are interesting and engaging. Indeed, listeners react positively to broadcasts that expose them to fresh ideas and offer clarity of insight into the complexity of migration. The informative and educational capacity of broadcasts is echoed in diary responses to *iPM*, broadcast on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017, which centres around a makeshift school in the Oinofyta refugee camp in Greece:

“Leave this feeling uplifted and hopeful. I also feel better informed” (Amelia)

“A very informative program about education of migrant children in a camp. Staggering figures of 3.7 million refugee children were reported which hit home the scale of the problem” (Colin)

“There were lots of interesting viewpoints in this podcast: the teacher describing why a school was needed, the camp coordinator speaking of how the school was set up and of value, the pupils themselves discussing their personal experiences. This held my attention and I felt I learned a lot” (Clare)

These listeners value hearing different perspectives, which function to retain their interest in, and increase their understanding of, educational challenges in refugee camps. Although the substantive focus of migration might preclude responses that suggest broadcasts are entertaining, listeners frequently note when they enjoy or dislike a broadcast. Almost all describe *On Your Farm* as a “positive” and “enjoyable” listen, and the programme is exceptional in its realisation of all three of the BBC’s broadcasting ambitions. It introduces listeners to the environmental impact of the Syrian conflict through an interview with Dr Ryad Alsous, former Professor of Agriculture at Damascus University and a passionate beekeeper who, having fled Syria, now lives in Huddersfield, England. Listeners are repeatedly taken aback by the idea and scale of ecological damage:

“Never realised that beekeeping was a big business in Syria! That’s really interesting and the amount of bees destroyed because of the effect on plant life etc. is an effect of war that you don’t really think about” (Mia)

“I was sad to hear of the destruction of bee hives [sic] in Syria. I hope the bees manage to find other places to colonise. A reminder that wars are usually ecocidal as well as humanitarian disasters” (Sebastian)

“87% of bees lost because of the war? Something I just hadn’t thought about” (Emma)

“A very interesting broadcast introducing the new concept of thinking about how wars affect nature and the environment as well as people [...] It was very informative to learn how beekeeping is big business in Syria and how this man had once had a large business empire making cosmetics and health products from his honey. We learnt that because of the war 87% of bees in Syria have been lost, including this professor’s bees from the university” (Colin)

The broadcast informs by raising a thought-provoking idea and surprises by challenging the preconceptions of non-Radio 4 listeners:

“The clip provided an interesting example of the various different ways migrants can enrich a community. I didn’t realise BBC Radio 4 had this range of programming” (Henry)

“Broadcast sticks with you because it is unusual as beekeeping is not a story you expect to hear with the migrant crisis [...] remember the interviewee’s migrant experience because of it” (Ben)

This ability to confound expectations dovetails with other listeners who reflect on its power to counter divisive media representations of migration:

“I think it is important to listen to such stories and understand more the lives of the migrants/refugees - it makes them more ‘human’ compared to some very ‘cold’ reports” (Zoe)

“Although I have followed the Syrian crisis on the news, this broadcast touched me in a different way. It made it more real” (Sophia)

The broadcast not only serves to humanise those who are usually distant and abstract, but touches listeners in emotional registers. Whilst the BBC does not aim to fulfill its

three Reithian ambitions in every programme, responses to *On Your Farm* suggest it is perhaps an expectation of listeners.

In summary, the BBC's editorial standards of journalism and Reithian mission are articulated in, and provide structure to, diary responses and condition the kinds of evidence listeners use to construct their geographical imaginations. That is to say, listeners hear, interpret, and imagine broadcasts within the context and institutional framework of the BBC as Britain's leading public service broadcaster.

### *6.2.2 The Biographical Frame of Listener Positionalities*

Listeners also hear radio broadcasts through the biographical frame of their positionalities as programmes routinely prompt self-reflection on personal circumstances, experiences, and preconceptions. This propensity to turn inwards suggests that listening fosters an introspective impulse and migration is a catalyst for self-reflection among those in host societies. However, listeners tend to articulate their responses in the first instance through emotional and affective registers, which suggests that emotions and affects are precursors to reasoning and analysis. 94% of women, relative to 65% of men, with no difference between Radio 4 and non-Radio 4 listeners, evidence an emotive response, which is captured in the following opening sentences to participant diaries:

“This makes me feel very sad” (Lily - *Ramblings*)

“THE MOST moving broadcast yet! Made a HUGE lasting impression on me (Justine - *The Untold*)

“Loved this!! What a great story of human resilience as this very educated man builds a new life from nothing in a new country” (Gabriella - *On Your Farm*)

“I was distressed by this broadcast. Created an image of Bumbling British Bureaucracy and Human Rights at its worse! Graphic account of horrific living conditions in the make-shift camps in Calais” (Sophia - *TWT Calais*)

“What an uplifting story. It’s good that it is representing different skills and aspects of migrants’ personalises [sic]” (Abigail - *On Your Farm*)

“Immediate reaction: Horror at the way migrants are treated and feel hopeless and embarrassed by the countries’ responses to it” (Sarah - *EJK’s FOOC*)

“An uplifting and positive listening experience” (Francesca - *The Listening Project*)

These quotations highlight the power of radio across programme genres to shape the emotions of listeners who comment on feeling distressed, uplifted, moved, saddened, and horrified by broadcasts. They shift fluidly and interchangeably between emotions as they listen to the playlist, which suggests that audible representations of migration are embodied and internalised as much as they are analysed and interrogated. Feelings and emotions are therefore revealed to be precursors to or, at the very least, are interwoven with thought, analysis, and reflexivity.

Reflexivity is split into four key trends across the diaries that are rooted in the biographies, positionalities, and experiences of listeners. First, listeners hear broadcasts through the lens of personal experiences and circumstances, which facilitates their engagement with and connection to broadcasts. In response to *Ramblings*, a programme predicated on conversations that are held and recorded whilst walking through the countryside, Matthew reflects:

“As a listener, I can really relate from my own experience to Anna, founder of the charity, who speaks of the transformative power of walking in the outdoors”.

Matthew reflects on a shared point of interest and connection between himself and an interviewee based on his personal experience of walking, which he similarly values and considers “transformative”. This resonates with Amelia’s response to *iPM*, which opens with volunteer teacher, Maria, ringing a bell to wake up children asleep in their tents. Amelia responds positively to the familiarity and context of the sound:

“Loved the bell, feels like getting my own children up. Tired kids waking up for school”.

Amelia is able to connect with the broadcast by recognising a relatable activity, which prompts self-reflection on her own family experiences. This capacity for connection and relatability is confirmed when she writes:

“Reminder that many are middle-class well-educated families. (‘People like me’)”.

Imaginative geographies of difference are therefore collapsed in a realisation that refugees are not distant Others but “people like me”. This propensity to listen through a filter of personal experiences resonates with Grace’s response to *On Your Farm* in which Ryad describes how his family were forced to flee Syria:

“As a PhD student, so someone who’s [sic] life is very university based, I found the conversation about the university slowly closing during the war very affecting [...] as awful as this is, it's always easier to imagine the situation of someone who started out in a position close to yours”.

Grace connects with the Alsous family through the university as a shared point of interest and relatability. She is able to imagine fleeing a country as a refugee by placing herself in the family’s shoes, suddenly forced to abandon her graduate studies due to

war. This mirrors Isabella's response to refugees crossing the Mediterranean in *Crossing Continents*, which prompts reflection on family histories of migration:

"The report was effective in exciting my compassion for these people who really are just like us and indeed just like my ancestors who fled from poverty in Ireland to the UK, USA, and Australia".

Affective responses may therefore be conditional on being able to connect imaginatively and emotionally with a broadcast, which is shaped by listening through a filter of personal experiences and histories.

Second, listeners often conclude their diary responses with a point of reflection on their positionality relative to those heard about in broadcasts. This is evidenced in collective reactions to *iPM*:

"The broadcast makes one feel so humble and grateful for what we have compared to these children" (Ben)

"I'm left with a feeling of gratitude for the life I and my family have" (Camilla)

"Good to have a school and a community building ethos in a refugee camp, but so sad to think this is mainly because of the certainty that they are going to be stuck in the camp in Greece for a very long time" (Sebastian)

"Their stories really reinforced what person at the start was saying about the importance of education and made me realise how much we take access to it and the social benefits of it for granted" (Emma)

These testimonies illustrate how the act of listening and story of migration foster introspection among those in host societies who reflect on their comparative life chances. However, whilst some listeners connect with refugees through shared personal

experiences, others leave broadcasts reflecting on points of difference. This is confirmed in recurrent tropes of privilege and appreciation across the diaries:

“Makes me appreciate my place of birth” (Oliver - *JH's FOOC*)

“Tear gas on children is awful - makes me sad to be in a privileged position and not being able to do anything” (Hazel - *TWT Calais*)

“Sadness that being privileged to be born and educated in a western country and knowing that for me to succeed, earn more, or do a job I love I only have to apply or complete further education courses; rather than having to risk my life to flee a country” (Ella - *Crossing Continents*)

There is an undercurrent of helplessness and despondency to these responses as listeners dwell on comparative geographies of distance and difference. This resonates with the responses of Lucas and Patrick to Emma Jane Kirby's dispatch for *From Our Own Correspondent* on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in which she describes her experience of travelling onboard the EU border agency's search and rescue ship:

“Feeling of helplessness on part of the listener when faced with the size of the problem” (Lucas)

“Makes one feel guilty and helpless, but what can anyone do?” (Patrick)

The subject matter of Kirby's broadcast, which addresses the scale of migration across the Mediterranean and EU attempts to 'manage' it, leaves both listeners feeling despondent and powerless. Affective responses to radio are therefore shaped by self-reflection on one's own positionality, which, given the global geographies of forced migration, is often predicated upon markers of injustice and inequality.

Third, listeners are honest and reflexive about their degree of engagement, which occasionally reveals as much about the listener as their responses to broadcasts. Rather than concealing a lack of interest, emotion, or empathy, listeners are forthcoming about their interaction, as evidenced by Daniel's response to *The Untold: Child Rescue*, broadcast on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016:

"I feel shocked by my lack of involvement and empathy for the human story and situation. When I feel that I am having my emotions manipulated by the reporting I switch off emotionally, as I would switch off the TV news when I'm overwhelmed by negative images. I do feel guilty having such feelings and my lack of ability to engage with this story".

Whilst unusual within the sample for not connecting with a human story of migration, Daniel evidences a compassion fatigue that, as we learnt in Chapter 5, journalists and editors feared. His response also suggests that not all listeners respond positively to strategic attempts to cut through to audiences through human-centric storytelling. This honesty and reflexivity resonates with Chloe who, in response to Hosken's report from Calais for *The World Tonight* on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, writes:

"Makes me realise that we do try and avoid the reality of knowing what is happening".

The broadcast prompts Chloe to acknowledge and confront a tendency to avoid engaging with "the reality" of migration and hints at a possible pattern of consumer behaviour outside of the study; namely, an inclination to sidestep or disengage from media representations that are distressing or disturbing. The counterpoint is that other listeners reveal personal dissatisfaction with their circumstances, as evidenced by Audrey's responses to hearing the contentment of volunteers in *iPM* and *Ramblings* respectively:

“I was impressed and admired the volunteers and envied their feelings of fulfilment from their role”.

“Admired the volunteers who made that possible as well as envying their sense of fulfilment and satisfaction at helping”.

Repeated use of the word ‘envy’ suggests a degree of unhappiness and disappointment with their life or career choices, illustrating how diaries occasionally reveal as much about the listener as their interpretation of radio broadcasts. Either way, this pattern of behaviour speaks to an introspective impulse that comes out of listening to radio journalism on Europe’s migration ‘crisis’.

Finally, listeners occasionally reflect on the practical experience of engaging with the playlist and the temporality of the study. Broadcasts that are overly descriptive or reliant on the voice of a presenter alone prompt divergent responses between those who struggle to retain attention and those who engage fully. This is illustrated in contrasting reactions to *A Point of View: Imagine*:

“I stopped what I was doing and closed my eyes as told to” (Ella)

“This broadcast was also far more explicit in leading you to create a mental image, even if other broadcasts had implicitly done the same, as it asked you to close your eyes and imagine. It was a very powerful device” (Grace)

“Interesting exercise (following the instructions of closing eyes and picturing things)” (Graham)

These positive appraisals contrast with others who find Morpurgo’s tone of voice hinders concentration:

“Poetic, zoned out and had to reengage. Perhaps heard the story too many times?” (Ruby)

“Somewhat monotony of the programme makes it harder to stay focused on the words (or maybe that’s because I’m tired today!)” (Felicity)

“I think his voice is just a bit too relaxing... I struggled to concentrate (I’m also a little sleepy so that might be part of it too!)” (Natalie)

These listeners are honest about the broadcast’s inability to captivate attention, citing tiredness and familiarity with the subject matter as possible explanations. Imaginative responses are therefore conditional on the participatory practice of listening and subject to different behavioral patterns of engaging with radio.

It is important to acknowledge that the timing of the study, conducted in April 2020, asks participants to listen retrospectively to broadcasts on Europe’s migration ‘crisis’ and listeners occasionally reflect on how this temporality conditions their responses. The Brexit vote of June 2016 and Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 are two events that are scattered, albeit infrequently, across the diaries:

“It makes me feel sad how our views of children fleeing wars has changed. I think it shows how selfish and isolationist the country has become. Brexit also shows that. I think that’s a very sad fact of our current society” (Mia - *POV*)

“It makes me hope that Osman was able to work in an old people’s home and take care of people in need during this time of Covid” (Jacob - *Ramblings*).

Unsurprisingly, social context has a bearing on audience reactions and although not the primary focus of the study, it is important to note that debates about Britain’s membership of the European Union were tightly interwoven with discourses and anxieties around forced migration to, and refugee settlement in, Europe.

In summary, listeners hear broadcasts through the biographical frame of their own positionalities as they reflect and draw on personal experiences, feelings, and biases. These are articulated and felt in both discursive and emotional registers. Together with listeners' ideas about, and their perceptions of, the BBC this personal frame of reference conditions a sense of relationality with, and connection to, a broadcast and acts as an important foundation upon which geographical imaginations around migration are built.

### **6.3 Migrant Stories and Voices**

Voices of migrants are critical to how listeners hear, imagine, and respond to aural representations of migration to Europe. Listeners equate the voices of migrants with authenticity, 'real-ness', and humanisation of those who are usually scripted and perceived as abstract, silent, and remote Others (Malkki, 1996). The act of hearing migrants articulate their stories enables listeners to imagine tangible and relatable people, and to connect emotionally and interpersonally with migrants as fellow human beings. This confirms empirically that the performative act of speaking is critical to imbuing migrants with agency and recognisability (Butler, 2009), and to appearing in audience imaginations as "a social and historical actor belonging to a political community" (Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017, p.16). Indeed, it is striking that listeners overwhelmingly prefer to hear migrants speak directly, rather than testimonies mediated through a journalist, which suggests authenticity is equated with hearing people's voices (Røyneland and Jensen, 2020). However, there are sometimes limits to how well these 'authentic' voices and stories of migration are received. That is to say, exposure to multiple voices across different broadcasts makes listeners realise that

people are not always likeable, they can be contradictory and provocative, and natural, free-flowing conversations are often disjointed, fragmented, and difficult to listen to.

### 6.3.1 Authenticity and 'Real-ness'

Listeners suggest that hearing personal stories articulated by migrants makes people seem 'real', however, there are different facets to what listeners mean by this. First, 'real-ness' is about humanisation of those who usually seem distant and abstract. In *Ramblings*, Balding speaks with four named refugees who each describe why they have come to the UK and the positive impact of the charity, *Refugee Tales*: Cam who fled the Tamil Tiger conflict in Sri Lanka, Lee who fled Tibetan protests in China, Rasheed who fled war in Sudan, and Osman who fled forced conscription in Eritrea. These self-articulated stories endow refugees with agency and ensure they no longer appear as ahistorical, anonymous, and unrecognisable Others (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2019):

"Was effective in making them seem very *real* and *human* as opposed to distant statistics" (Isabella)

"The refugees interviewed were given space to speak in their own voice, which really *humanised* them" (Francesca)

The inclusion of voices therefore humanises refugees who are reframed in listener imaginations as authentic and 'real', and counters media representations that erase, silence, or portray refugees in numerical and impersonal terms.

Second and closely related, is the way in which 'real-ness' is about being able to imagine a tangible and recognisable person. *The Untold: Child Rescue*, as detailed in Chapter 4, follows the story of Rob Lawrie, an ex-soldier turned humanitarian, who is convicted for attempting to smuggle a four-year old refugee into Britain from Calais.

Although Rob is the primary focus of the broadcast, it includes the voice of young Bahar who he tries to reunite with her family in Leeds. Camilla writes:

“The hardest and most vivid part of the report was hearing Bahar’s voice. Each time she spoke it made everything very *real*”.

Whilst newspaper reports render Bahar a voiceless victim, listeners react to hearing Bahar’s voice, which reframes her as a perceptible and recognisable child. This applies to Rob, too, who is given space to articulate his story, biography, and motivations. Lucy reflects:

“I’ve no doubt that this had such an impact because it was a story of individuals rather than faceless groups, sides, or statistics, and of *real* lives with all the complications of background stories, motivations, and emotions”.

‘Real-ness’ is therefore equated with authenticity as Rob’s voice counters simplistic media stereotypes of smugglers as exploitative ‘villains’ (Crawley et al., 2018), by revealing a complex, flawed, and recognisable human being.

Finally, real-ness is about the extent to which personal stories establish an interpersonal connection and sense of relatability between listeners and migrants. Although *From Our Own Correspondent* is a programme that is predicated upon the isolated voices of journalists, there is scope for these journalists to cite and relay people’s stories and testimonies. This is captured neatly in Jenny Hill’s dispatch from June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 which traces the story of Ali, a Syrian refugee now living in the German town of Abensberg who initially received a warm welcome - wearing Lederhosen at the town festival and working at a local dental practice - but has since experienced challenges to integration:

**Hill:** “Ali looked 15 years older. His once thick black hair now run through with grey. He'd needed money, he explained, to become a German dentist. He'll need to qualify at a German university and places are oversubscribed. So while he's waiting, he's opened his own business. But he looked at the floor. He's made mistakes, he said. I took a seat at a table outside and he served up delicious plates of food. It turns out he really can cook! And he slowly described his first months as a businessman in Abensberg. He was reticent. Didn't want to blame his new community. But as he spoke it became quite clear that this was no easy place for an outsider. The bureaucratic obstacles were just the start and as the two restaurants either side of us quickly filled up, his remained almost empty. ‘I'm not one of them’, he said”.

Amelia captures how hearing Ali's personal journey enables her to connect with the abstract idea of refugee settlement in Europe, be immersed in his life experiences, and figuratively cheer him on:

“This personal story makes it feel *real*, I am completely drawn into Ali's world and am rooting for him”.

Listening to personal stories of migration can therefore establish interpersonal connections between listeners and refugees who are re-cast as recognisable and relatable human beings. The counterpoint, however, is that the majority of listeners express a clear preference for hearing directly from migrants, rather than stories that are mediated through a journalist, and this plays a critical role in regulating their emotional engagement with a broadcast and its protagonists:

“Not hearing the voice of the individual in question made it hard to be personable or have the emotions toward them” (Ella)

“It is odd to hear a report about one person but where nothing they say is audibly quoted. Even if it would need translation, it would be better to hear them fed in. Tone is quite patronising, compounded by the lack of the person's actual voice [...] because of the above, I really struggle to comprehend the person reported on, let alone relate or sympathise” (Stephen)

“We finally got to hear some of Ali’s words later in the podcast [...] these were read out by Jenny and I think it would have been more powerful to hear them from Ali himself” (Felicity)

These comments echo the responses of other listeners to Emma Jane Kirby’s dispatch in which she reflects on being a passenger onboard a *Frontex* ship in the Mediterranean:

“Failed to make me really empathise... it lacked emotional power. No input from migrants themselves” (Jacob)

“Spoken like an audiobook [...] which makes the desired effect lost somewhat” (Stephen)

Empathy and emotional connection are therefore conditional on hearing migrants speak in broadcasts. This is not a reflection on Hill and Kirby as journalists, but rather on the format of *From Our Own Correspondent*. Although celebrated within Radio 4 as a powerful and reflective space of storytelling, the programme’s reliance on journalists’ voices alone, with no additional sound or voice recordings, hinders the engagement of some listeners with its subject matter.

### 6.3.2 Voice and Affectivity

Hearing migrants articulate their own stories has an affective impact on listeners that captures how radio can establish emotional connections and construct imaginative communities of belonging. Listeners share the light-bulb moment of journalist, Maria Margaronis, cited in Chapter 5, about the power of *hearing* migrant voices in radio, as opposed to *reading* migrant testimonies in newsprint. Listeners describe having an affective response to hearing the tone, pace, and emotion of people’s voices, which translates into embodied and corporeal reactions, and speaks to the intimacy of radio

as a medium. Strategies of storytelling in radio whereby journalists include migrant voices based on an intuition about their potential to connect with listeners are therefore shown to be accurate and successful.

In *Ramblings*, listeners hear Osman describe his journey to the UK in broken and accented English, from being held in an underground prison in Eritrea before escaping to Libya, where he was trafficked, and then fleeing to Europe. On arrival in England, Osman describes being detained in a detention centre outside Gatwick airport, where he first met Celia, a volunteer with *Refugee Tales*:

**Osman:** “When they go to detention, really, I lose everything inside my health. And then that day, it was black day for me. I don't like to be detained because I'm no crime. First time I meet Celia, that lady, she's changed my life, you know. She gives me hope”.

[Voice breaks. Sounds of crying]

**Balding:** “Oh bless you Osman”.

**Osman:** “But still. Time is hard because I can't be free person to live in this... as human being”.

[With emphasis]

**Balding:** “It's one thing hearing their stories but also observing the way Rashid and Osman are with each other because as Osman got very emotional there and a tear started rolling down his cheek, Rashid just put his hand out and touched his shoulder and then found a tissue and silently handed it to him. You think, gosh, their, their bond is so deep because, only they understand what the other one has been through”.

Listeners comment repeatedly on having an affective response to this exchange and although Osman is in conversation with presenter, Clare Balding, the format of radio means that he appears to be speaking directly to listeners:

“Welled up a bit along with Osman when he was talking about how his life was changed in that he finally gained hope when met Celia” (Emma)

“Made me tearful listening to the emotions of Osman and his friend Rashid”  
(Amelia)

Both listeners have an embodied reaction to hearing the break in Osman’s voice and mirror his emotional state by crying along with him. The power of voice to connect emotionally is evidenced by another listener who writes:

“I felt very emotional and sad about the personal story” (Zoe)

Radio’s predication on voice, which manifests both in conversations held between interviewees in the broadcast and the way in which the medium appears to speak directly to listeners, therefore plays a key part in determining radio’s capacity to shape the affective moods of audiences.

Similar responses to *On Your Farm: Refugees and Bees* confirm this is not an isolated example. The broadcast focuses on Ryad’s local initiative, *The Buzz Project*, in which he teaches refugees and job seekers in the community how to keep bees and produce honey, but the presenter, Caz Graham, also asks Ryad about leaving Syria:

**Graham:** What was that like for you, having to leave your home, everything that you'd built up over the years?

**Ryad:** I hope now to build again. I started. I like integrated with this society. And now I am thinking I am one of the society.

**Graham:** Could you share with me some of the emotions you had when you had to leave Syria?

[Long pause]

[With emotion]

**Ryad:** I can't.

**Graham:** That's too difficult.

**Ryad:** I can't.

**Graham:** Yeah. I understand. It's, it's too difficult.

The power of hearing Ryad struggle vocally to articulate his feelings is captured by Felicity who reflects:

“I was really taken aback, made my stomach drop, when she asked what emotions he felt leaving Syria and then there is this huge pause and you can hear him choking up. Really emotional for listener”.

This gut reaction to the extended silence and catch in Ryad’s voice echoes Scarlett who admits:

“I teared up when he was unable to talk due to emotion”.

These embodied reactions to the tone and intonation of Ryad’s voice and fragmented dialogue with Graham reflects Kanngieser’s (2015, p.81) observation that “sound does not just connect things; it changes them”. That is to say, human bodies are “moved, changed, affected” by what they hear (Gallagher, 2016, p.43). There is a clear transference of affect over the airwaves as both listeners are physically moved by the conversation and interestingly, its poignant silences. This supports theories that describe how affect flows between bodies, is contagious and transmissible, and produces affective atmospheres in which listeners get swept up in the sound and dialogue (McCormack, 2008b; Pile, 2010; Closs Stephens, 2016). Whilst these physical, affectual responses to radio are cited by only 20% of listeners, emotional responses to broadcasts are widespread, experienced by 82% of listeners. Despite obvious slippage between the two, the distinction rests on listeners more frequently articulating tangible emotions, such as sadness, happiness, or frustration, than corporeal, affectual responses. The directness, personability, and emotionality of voice helps explain how and why radio journalism is able to engage, move, and connect with listeners.

The power of spoken testimonies to rework representations of migration and expand imaginative communities of belonging is clear in diary responses that show listeners relate to migrants as human beings. Ruby writes tellingly:

“I forgot he was a refugee. He was an expert in bees and very interesting”.

This striking admission evidences how the inclusion of refugee voices in the media can break down discourses of migration and displacement that serve to distance and alienate audiences. The simple act of naming migrants in the diaries illustrates how some listeners engage in a politics of recognition when invited to by journalists who name their interviewees:

“The interview allowed Ryad good space to tell his story” (Daniel)

This simple act of naming demonstrates how broadcasts can recast migrants and refugees as tangible and identifiable human beings, rather than shadowy figures of victimhood or threat, defined narrowly by their movement or statelessness.

Singing, as well as speech and silences, holds the affective power to move listeners and adds a new rhythm and register into broadcasts (Lloyd, 2015). This is clear in responses to ‘A Mediterranean Rescue’, which records the jubilant sound of women and children singing and clapping along to a church hymn on the deck of a ship the day after being rescued. This affecting, musical interlude is juxtaposed with the precarious sounds of waves lapping against the boat and given added resonance by journalist, Gabriel Gatehouse, who translates the hymn’s lyrics as “thanks be to God, we've come from a dangerous place”. Listeners describe having an affectual response to this choral ‘moment’, which evokes an atmosphere of joy and hope:

“I was particularly moved by the sound of the children singing on the boat”  
(Holly)

“It’s heartbreaking listening to their hope whilst singing songs” (Lily)

“It was such a happy sound to hear the children singing the next morning”  
(Hayley)

“The sound of women and children singing ‘thanks to God’ the day after the rescue stayed with me after listening to the programme” (Matthew)

These affective responses emerge out of the striking contrast between the high drama of sea rescue and the relief of reaching safety. The unexpected use of voice as a musical instrument connects with listeners, elicits emotions ranging from happiness to heartbreak, and reaffirms that listening is an embodied process that can leave lasting impressions.

Less clear is the extent to which affective and personable responses to hearing stories and voices of migration translate into practical or ‘meaningful’ action. 20% of listeners are moved to action with no marked difference between genders or radio listening habits, which suggests that affects and emotions perhaps act as a substitute for, or undisclosed precursor to, material change. However, this should not overshadow listeners who describe future intentions and interestingly, ‘feature’ programmes, rather than news broadcasts, are always the catalyst for action:

“After listening to the clip, I looked up articles on how this story developed and watched his recent TED talk” (Henry - *The Untold*)

“Makes me want to look into whether there are volunteering opportunities to help out” (Graham - *Crossing Continents*)

“Being a teacher myself I loved this podcast. I even looked up this charity on line!! [sic]” (Gabriella - *iPM*)

“Googled Refugee Tales and the detention centres out of curiosity afterwards” (Emma - *Ramblings*)

The format of the study, which demanded proximity to a smartphone, computer, or tablet, perhaps accounts for these actions, however, the digitisation of radio through audio platforms and smart speakers, such as BBC Sounds and Alexa, facilitates mixed media engagement. This potential to translate affectivity into practical action is encapsulated in Hayley’s response to *A Point of View*:

“If there was a finish that said, ‘click on this link to sign a petition in support of this target’, I would quiet [sic] happily done so”.

Although inclusion of campaign links might pose a challenge to the BBC as an impartial broadcaster, it speaks to the power of radio to ‘move’ some listeners to action and highlights scope for future research on audience interactions with aural and visual media. Moreover, it confirms Chouliaraki and Stolic’s (2019, p.311) hypothesis that media representations of migration have the potential to “touch upon people’s emotional and activist sensibilities”, thereby resisting and re-working scriptings of migrants as dangerous or threatening Others.

### *6.3.3 Voice and Representations of Migration*

Voices imbue migrants with agency and provide listeners with a more nuanced understanding of migration, journeys, and decision making (Couldry, 2010; De Haas, 2011; Mainwaring and Brigden, 2016; Georgiou, 2018). Although migrant voices are editorially framed by BBC journalists, there is a clear perception among listeners that

hearing directly from migrants is authentic because their voices are, relatively, unmediated. Despite a preference for migrant voices, however, there are limits to how well these authentic accounts are received. In 'A Mediterranean Rescue', Gatehouse uncovers the biographies of those he encounters and their journeys to and through Europe, thereby subverting a journalistic preoccupation with spectacles that fail to situate migration within longer histories and global geographies (Castles, De Haas, and Miller, 2014; Crawley et al., 2018). He names and gives voice to three Eritreans - Mohammed, a software engineer, Agnes, a former soldier, and Heptom, an aspiring journalist - who describe their arduous journeys through the Sahara, exploitive interactions with smugglers, and mixed reasons for trying to reach Europe. Grace reflects:

"I felt like the broadcast presented a very nuanced picture of those crossing the Mediterranean, particularly in its inclusion of the man who had lied to his wife to come to Europe, and its focus on the fact that many of those on board were motivated by economic factors. It complicated the image we sometimes have in the west of refugees as completely helpless, and without agency, but also blurs the lines between what some media paints as the dichotomy between those refugees with their lives in immediate danger and those travelling for economic reasons. It puts a human voice to those economic reasons, but at the same time highlights that the human voices behind these reasons might not always be likeable".

Hearing multiple refugee voices sheds light on mixed motivations behind migration, which can shift and change over the course of protracted and fragmentary journeys (Crawley and Skleparis, 2018). Heptom is simultaneously 'pushed' by conflict in Eritrea and 'pulled' by career opportunities in Europe and, as Grace observes, these mixed rationales can challenge neat divisions between 'migrants' and 'refugees' (De Haas, 2011). Listeners agree that personal testimonies of migration are informative:

“I feel I am more aware of the different stages of migration and that there are many reasons why a migrant would leave a country” (Jacob)

“This particular detailed podcast helped me increase my awareness of refugee conditions and the complex factors involved in this crisis” (Liam)

However, Heptom’s confession that he aspired to a job in journalism and concealed his departure from his family, who remain in Eritrea, sits uneasily with others:

“Feeling really quite negative about him - however bad things are, why would you leave your kids” (Amelia)

“I was shocked the journalist hadn’t told his wife” (Audrey)

“I had mixed feelings about this clip. Parts of it were very sad [...] other parts were more ‘perplexing’, such as finding out that the young man from Eritrea had left his country because he did not like his teaching job. I am all for people having choices and job satisfaction, but this does not seem to me like a valid reason to leave your family (without telling them, his poor wife had no choice in this matter!!)” (Gabriella)

Questioning and condemning Heptom’s actions illustrates how refugees are expected to “enact particular scripts”, such as gratitude or ‘good’ behaviour (Hyndman, 2010, p.454), and confirms Grace’s apt observation that the humanisation of refugees through voice inevitably means some people are not always desirable or likeable. This is not to undermine the necessity of including migrant voices in media, but rather to highlight the critical importance of doing so if media portrayals of migration, and the richness of humanity within them, are to be truly representative and authentic. Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017, p.19) argue that “we need to portray refugees themselves as political, social and historical actors, entitled to speak about their reasons for leaving and their aspirations - whether we accept these or not is precisely the matter of debate we are

not currently having". However, the diary extracts explored here demonstrate how the exclusion of radio journalism from analyses of media representations of migration means that instances of critical debate and reflexivity among audiences are inevitably missed.

Limits to the palatability of migrant authenticity are reaffirmed in responses to *The Listening Project*, which records a five-minute conversation between Yousif and Zahra, brother and sister, and children of Iraqi refugees now living in Britain. The programme's format means that apart from a brief introduction by presenter, Fi Glover, the conversation is free flowing and positions the listener as a 'fly on the wall'. Responses are split between those who appreciate the conversation and consider it to be authentic and natural, and those who find it frustrating and irritating:

"This was an interesting broadcast. It came across as authentic. Yousif and Zahra sounded like two normal young adults" (Sophia)

"Felt like a very natural conversation with the two talking over each other and following a train of thought" (Sarah)

"I love the 'Listening Project' - as it focuses on ordinary people who talk together" (Ruby)

"Eloquent, educated, and motivated young people" (Adam)

"Direct voices of sister and brother grabbed my attention - authentic" (Justine)

However, this authenticity, which is predicated upon hearing an uninterrupted dialogue with no journalist as mediator, rankles with others:

"It annoyed me that Zahra was speaking over Yousif the first time we heard him try to talk and then continuously throughout the podcast. This became really

jarring actually, although in small doses added a more natural, conversational feel” (Clare)

“I find them, particularly their tone, insufferable, which does put me off the content of what they’re saying” (Stephen)

“I felt slightly irritated by the way they kept interrupting each other, often just to repeat what the other had said, but it did make the conversation authentic” (Audrey)

Authenticity is therefore conditional on listenability. That is to say, listeners value hearing from migrants but there are limits to how well these natural and authentic conversations are received. Whilst migrant voices therefore play a critical role in how listeners imagine and affectively respond to radio representations of migration, they do not always translate into an inclusive politics of recognition and belonging. However, clear listener preference for hearing migrants articulate their own stories - in order to imagine tangible, ‘real’, and relatable people - suggests that the voice is a key mechanism through which affectual and imaginative connections can be established; a significant finding which represents an important step forward in ensuring that the media creates space for, rather than speaks about, people on the move.

#### **6.4 Radio and Geographical Imaginations**

The listener diaries provide rich and original empirical evidence for Pinkerton’s (2014) conjecture that radio is a key technology for appealing to the twin spaces of the ear and the mind’s eye by revealing how broadcasts are heard and imagined. This capacity to ignite geographical imaginations is evidenced in 71% of responses, with no difference by gender or radio listening habits, that suggest listeners can ‘picture’, ‘see’, and ‘imagine’ broadcasts. Radio therefore realises its potential to enact “*soundspace*s” as

listeners construct sites and spaces in their imaginations (Pinkerton, 2014, p.64). Conjuring up imaginative geographies in response to the digital playlist provides clear evidence of radio's visuality and counters perceptions of radio as a "blind medium" (Crisell, 1994, p.3). It also confirms that listening is an active, rather than a passive, process as listeners participate in the imaginative production of people and places.

Whilst the mind's eye has a long genealogy, this thesis does not use it as an analytical concept or critical tool. Rather its significance emerges from how the mind's eye is invoked by listeners in a way that dovetails with some uses of this term in radio scholarship. McLeish (1978, p.1), for example, suggests radio "can stimulate the imagination so that, as soon as a voice comes out of the loudspeaker, the listener attempts to visualise the source of the sound and to create in the mind's eye the owner of the voice". Shingler and Wieringa (1998, p.74) similarly discuss radio's appeal to audience imaginations and include a short extract of Dylan Thomas' (1954) evocative radio play, *Under Milk Wood*, to illustrate how the medium "can allow its audience to see in the dark, to see the invisible, to see the unseeable [...] In their mind's eye, the radio listeners can see all of this and possibly even more besides". The act of reading is often cited by radio scholars as an analogy to help explain this imaginative process. Drawing on Raban (1981), Shingler and Wieringa (1998, p.76) reflect that "just as the written page can evoke strong visual impressions for its reader, radio's sounds, voices and music can similarly create vivid pictures in the mind of its listener". The final section of this chapter builds on and develops this literature by detailing empirically how geographical imaginations are constructed in response to radio, take multiple forms, and function in different ways.

Listeners articulate different types of imaginative geographies of migration in response to broadcasts, ranging from people and places to journeys and emotions. Radio relies upon voices and sounds to set the scene and evoke a sense of place, and listeners respond to these “sonic affects” by imagining people’s physical appearances and spatial environments (Gallagher, Kanngieser, and Prior, 2017, p.619):

“I can picture the Syrian man’s animated and enthusiastic face when talking about beekeeping” (Henry - *On Your Farm*)

“It gives you a vivid mental picture of the awful, dangerous conditions suffered by these people” (Ben - *EJK’s FOOC*)

“I could picture the scenes where Ali cooked for Jenny - basically a very natural, welcoming setting” (Zoe - *JH’s FOOC*)

Repeated use of the term ‘picture’ captures the visuality of geographical imaginations as listeners transform voices and sounds heard on the airwaves into imaginative geographies that are ‘seen’ in the mind’s eye. It hints at a creative impulse behind listening which leaves room for audiences to participate in the co-construction of imaginaries. Whilst journalists direct the ear and gaze of audiences through their discursive choices and selection of recordings, listeners bring their imaginations into play by picturing the people and places they hear.

The diaries confirm Pinkerton’s (2014) hypothesis that the mind’s eye is shaped by personal experiences and memories, as listeners comment on being able to imagine a scene or landscape because they have previously seen it:

“I go walking in Surrey, so I was able to visualise this through the heat haze” (Ruby - *Ramblings*)

“I have been to Reigate so means I’m able to put myself in the surroundings”  
(Felicity - *Ramblings*)

“The volunteers taking the initiative and identifying what was needed reminded me of some amazing people I met while volunteering at a camp in Greece for a few days in 2016” (Henry - *TWT Calais*)

“Otley is the place I grew up until I went to university [...] I went swimming there and can imagine the changing rooms at the outdoor pool” (Ruby - *The Untold*)

Again, listeners hear radio broadcasts through the interpretative lens of their past experiences, memories, and subjectivities that in turn shape their imaginative responses. These extracts also suggest that radio has the capacity to rekindle previous affective responses - from meeting “amazing” volunteers in Greece to memories of university student days in Leeds - which suggests that photographic memories of people and place are embedded in previous emotions and affects to the extent that broadcasts are *felt* as well as imagined. This hints at a need to develop theorisations of the mind’s eye in radio geography to capture the experiential and embodied nature of listening in ways that push beyond the imaginative and cognitive realm.

Listeners occasionally reference other media when describing the visuality of radio and explaining the act of envisioning imaginative geographies in the mind. In response to *The Untold: Child Rescue*, listeners cite written novels and television as technologies that invoke similar imaginative responses:

“I picture the people and scenes vividly, as I might having read a novel” (Lucy)

“Storytelling seems to add a different dimension to it. Almost seems like a TV programme without the screen” (Hazel)

Clear distinctions between the aural and visual are blurred in the acts of listening and imagining, and in an age when people have access to and engage with multiple media. Listeners draw on visual cues while listening to radio, such as the widely circulated photograph of three-year old boy, Alan Kurdi, who drowned trying to reach Europe in 2015:

“Hearing this clip, I was visualising the child who drowned and washed up on the beach” (Abigail)

In response to Emma Jane Kirby’s dispatch for *From Our Own Correspondent*, one listener recalls film footage of *Dunkirk*:

“A very stark picture is painted by Emma Jane Kirby. It reminds me of a scene from the Dunkirk film where during the war lots of soldiers are in a boat in awful conditions” (Philip)

Another listener likens Kirby’s broadcast to a fictional novel:

“It was almost like listening to an historical novel being read on the radio - so evocative in describing the smells, heat, and sounds of the conditions onboard” (Francesca)

Faced with the disorientating and unfamiliar, listeners turn to the memorable and recognisable. They recall photographs, video clips, films, and novels to help them comprehend and engage in broadcasts, and to add colour and definition to the discourses and imaginaries articulated on air. Imaginative connections are also established through familiar tropes circulated in the everyday:

“So sad that they are in flimsy rubber rings, this image is powerful, relates to things I am familiar with” (Amelia - *CC Rescue*)

“I found the beginning interesting in that it drew on established images we have of Germany - lederhosen, beer, festivals - so it was easy to imagine Adi [sic] in these environments” (Grace - *JH's FOOC*)

Hearing about inflatable rubber rings helps Amelia to relate to children crossing the Mediterranean by recalling family swimming lessons, while recognisable iconography of Germany enables Grace to picture the physical geography and setting of the broadcast. Imaginative geographies are therefore grounded in and animated by familiar imagery that help listeners connect imaginatively with a broadcast and its subject matter.

Broadcasts often prompt listeners to make imaginative connections across space and time. Listeners move imaginatively between the local, national, and international scale, and relate histories of migration to the contemporary ‘crisis’ in Europe. This is evidenced in responses to Jenny Hill’s dispatch for *From Our Own Correspondent*, which translate her local account of refugee settlement in Germany into reflection on the country’s national response to new arrivals:

“I think it is amazing that Angela Merkel is still Chancellor of Germany given that she has implemented such an open immigration policy in recent years. She seems determined not to let history repeat itself in Germany and that is impressive. I know that’s not exactly what the news report is about but it’s what I got thinking about while and after I listened to it” (Hayley)

“Interesting to hear how situation changed 3 years on from initially settling in Germany” (Adam)

“It was a good reminder that it will be a number of years (and perhaps a generation) before we will understand the range of outcomes from the movement of people during this period” (Francesca)

Radio therefore inspires geographical imaginations that range across different spatial and temporal scales as listeners engage critically and reflexively with what they hear.

Similarly, listeners respond to Emma Jane Kirby's dispatch for *From Our Own Correspondent* by drawing comparative histories and geographies with slavery and 'push' factors driving forced migration:

"I began thinking about the African slave trade that saw over 10 million people transported involuntarily in horrific conditions to the USA, Caribbean, and South America and was struck by the irony of the people in this modern migration were actually paying to endure such horrid transport because where they come from (I presume) must be so unbearable" (Hayley)

"It could almost have been describing a slave ship from Africa or a famine ship from Ireland" (Francesca)

"My mind drifted to what must their lives be like in their home countries that this is their only option" (Victoria)

Kirby's metaphorical description of waves "smashing" against the ship and imaginaries of refugees "crammed into the bowels of the boat" prompt listeners to reflect on the trauma, lived experience, and history of sea crossings. Whilst this tendency to draw connections might be a reflection of the educated sample of listeners, it points to the capacity of radio to inspire geographical imaginations that operate across spatial and temporal scales.

Imaginative geographies are revealed to be multi-sensory, shaped and defined by sights, sounds, and smells. Listeners react imaginatively to broadcasts that appeal to their senses, which reframes the mind's eye as a *sensoryspace*, not just a "soundspace" (Pinkerton, 2014, p.64), and again, signals a need to expand and stretch its meaning to better account for the embodied, sensorial nature of listening. This is exemplified in responses to Hosken's evocative report from the Calais camp for *The World Tonight* on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015:

**Hosken:** “Skies of battleship grey above. A sprawling shantytown of tents and little shacks below. But it's probably best to describe ‘the jungle’ by its ever present, slightly strange and rancid smell to give you a real idea of the place. The smell of burning rubbish, stagnant puddles, rotting food, excrement, body odour, the salt of the English Channel not so far away and the chemical toilets in need of emptying. That's how I would describe *Eau de Jungle*, the scent of desperation.

[Sounds of drilling]

And then there are the sounds of the jungle. The small petrol driven generators ring of a kind of civilization sporadically here and there. Light, heat, and even refrigeration mainly to dozens of tiny makeshift shops.

[Musical sound of someone singing]

A little church built by Eritrean Orthodox Christians. The simple wooden frame covered in white plastic sheeting and painted on that in vivid colours, the apostles and attendant angels.

[Singing continues]

A bell on the end of a pole stuck in the ground will summon worshippers on Christmas Day.

[Sounds of cafe]

The cafe ‘Ashram’ stands nearby. Stews and a bean-type mush simmer in big pots. The place is run by Milly Scott-Steele who threw in her job as a restaurant manager in the UK to work in the jungle as a volunteer...

Listeners pick up on Hosken’s overt appeal to their senses, which helps them imagine the spatiality and materiality of the camp:

“Andrew Hoskin’s [sic] vivid and detailed description of the horrible conditions of the camps, activates the entire sensory spectrum” (Liam)

“The reporter here gives a vivid description of the atmosphere of ‘the jungle’ through his different senses (sight/smell/hearing)” (Elizabeth)

“Reporting the sounds, smells and sights of the ‘jungle’, are extremely effective and emotive. I felt disgusted and horrified by the descriptions, imaging pure slum and squalor - is that anyway for a human to live?” (Ella)

“The reporter in Calais painted a clear picture of the sights and smells of the Jungle” (Simon)

“He paints an excellent picture of what the jungle looks like and is very evocative, makes me imagine really well a brown squalid and dishevelled camp” (Lily)

Adjectives like “vivid”, “evocative”, and “emotive” capture how imaginative geographies are animated by sights, smells, and sounds that add colour, texture, and definition to spaces of migration. Listeners picture a “squalid”, “horrible”, and “dishevelled” camp, which highlights the power of sounds and spoken discourses to represent space and influence perceptions of it. Ella admits to feeling “disgusted and horrified”, highlighting the capacity of sounds to evoke emotion (Gallagher, Kanngieser, and Prior, 2017), and the affective impact of sensory journalism.

Sounds and rich descriptive language are therefore key triggers to imaginative thinking in radio. Ambient sounds of spaces, from beaches and railway stations to boats and reception centres, support journalistic claims to truth and authenticity as listeners hear, imagine, and are immersed in a sense of place. Listeners comment repeatedly on Hosken’s inclusion of ‘authentic’ sounds that animate imaginaries of Calais:

“The audio in the broadcast (eg. the sound of the musicians in the camp/the sound of hammers and new shacks being constructed) made me more able to picture the environment in my mind” (Elizabeth)

“Hearing the sounds of the camp is very useful; something that comes across on radio better than TV reports” (Stephen)

“My immediate reaction to the broadcast is of being overwhelmed by sounds, images of filth and stench, a morass of human beings” (Daniel)

“I like the descriptions of the ‘Jungle’ with the addition of the sounds of the jungle, it really brings it to life” (Mia)

“The popping sound from tear gas grenades and the description of throat and lungs being affected is striking and helps listeners imagine the situation vividly” (Liam)

Imaginative geographies of migration are therefore inspired and shaped by sounds that “produce space and are produced by them” (Gallagher, Kanngieser, Prior, 2017, p.621; Kanngieser, 2019). Put simply, audio recordings of Calais function to construct the camp in the minds of listeners. The linguistic choices of journalists are also critical to evoking geographical imaginations and listeners repeatedly quote specific words and phrases that activate their mind’s eye:

“I thought the reported [sic] used excellent descriptive language to help the listener imagine the camp conditions, especially his use of the 5 senses. The phrase ‘the scent of desperation’ stands out” (Colin)

“The beginning of the narration is very descriptive, I can picture the smell of burning rubbish, rotting food, disgusting, awful” (Zoe)

“Smell of burning rubbish, rotting food, BO; all strong descriptors” (Stephen)

“The language around smell at the beginning of the broadcast was very powerful, particularly the use of ‘the scent of desperation’. It was very evocative and created a very vivid picture of the place, despite not knowing what it looked like” (Grace)

“Descriptive language and sounds played in the background helped me visualise the jungle. I could imagine the church and shops as they were described” (Scarlett)

These extracts suggest listeners value broadcasts that engage in storytelling and apply techniques of creative writing to fact-based radio reporting. This is not to frame this style of radio journalism, described by journalists in Chapter 5, as fictitious but rather to highlight the power of discourse to produce imaginative geographies of space.

Imaginative geographies are also transportive as listeners imagine themselves in particular scenes, spaces, and places. Sounds, again, are triggers to this imaginative and experiential listening that collapses distance and transports listeners out of their immediate surroundings into ‘worlds’ conjured over the airwaves. Sounds therefore contract and represent space “in a more immersive way than other representational techniques” (Gallagher and Prior, 2014, pp.276-277). These ideas are exemplified in responses to ‘A Mediterranean Rescue’. In-situ audio recordings and narration provide listeners with an eyewitness account of a search and rescue mission, from the wail of a foghorn that signals detection of a migrant boat to pulling alongside a wooden fishing boat packed with people. Desperate sounds of people disembarking and scrambling for lifejackets evoke an affective atmosphere of panic, urgency, and desperation. Once everyone is safely onboard, Gatehouse clammers onto the empty migrant boat and describes a precarious space of confinement and asphyxiation stratified between an upper deck and hold below:

**Gatehouse:** “I can't stand up, bent double here. It's littered with clothes, five litre bottles that were once full of water and now are full of urine. And you can see the boat itself is taking on water. It's not going to stay afloat for very long. It's lucky we found them when we did. Then right next to the engine here, boiling hot, stifling, the air is hard to breathe. And that's with this almost empty. You can imagine what it would have been like stuffed with two hundred and fifty people”.

Gatehouse speaks as though in conversation with the listener who is addressed directly, creating a sense of intimacy and connection. Whirring sounds of the engine accentuate the cramped and suffocating conditions, and synesthetic description of the air as “boiling hot”, “stifling”, and “hard to breathe” constructs a corporeal narrative that

invites reflection on the lived experience of sea crossings. Listeners respond to the ambient sounds and in-situ reporting by imagining they are onboard:

“The broadcast was very evocative - all the background noises and vivid descriptions almost made me feel like I was on the boat” (Henry)

“The background noises also help imagine I am there. That is what I am seeing in my mind’s eye, the scenarios described, which is made easier by the descriptive language used” (Natalie)

“Amazement: I feel like I experienced a ‘live’ rescue mission” (Justine)

“Giving out the lifejackets - it almost feels like I’m there” (Samuel)

“Diary-style broadcast in the ‘field’ (ie. with interviews, live recordings, and sounds) makes you feel more involved with the broadcast - can picture the scene they are describing” (Ethan)

“The background noises of the foghorn and water and real time journalism makes me imagine in my mind what it might look like” (Scarlett)

In-situ reportage conveys an immediacy to listeners who connect with the distant idea of migrant search and rescue by imagining they are experiencing it first-hand. The documentary functions like a field recording as it captures the space and time of the mission, and re-produces it in the minds of listeners (Gallagher, 2015). Repeated use of the term “feel” captures the transportive and connective capacity of radio by illustrating how listener reactions are embodied and experiential. They are also visual as listeners describe being able to “picture”, “see”, and “imagine” the scenes unfolding, as though they are witnessing the rescue in person. Natalie even uses the term “my mind’s eye” when describing the interplay between sounds and her imagination.

Put simply, listeners respond overwhelmingly to Gatehouse's unspoken invitation to "suspend disbelief - to imagine that they are in the place where the recording was made" (Gallagher and Prior, 2014, p.275). This resonates with Douglas (2004, p.75) who recognises how early radio broadcasting offered "out-of-body experiences, by which you could travel through space and time mentally while remaining physically safe and comfortable in your own house". Interestingly, she acknowledges a possible temptation to dismiss listener enthusiasm for radio in the 1920s "as quaint yet fervid gushings of an antique time when people were technologically deprived - and naïve" (Douglas, 2004, p.75). However, these recent responses to an edition of *Crossing Continents* suggest that radio retains its experiential and transportive power in a multi-media age. Perceptions of space and time are scrambled by place-based sounds that evoke the motion of waves and affective atmosphere of the boat, and by Gatehouse's spoken narration which transports listeners into the world of search and rescue at sea.

The transportive capacity of radio applies to people as well as places as listeners are occasionally invited to imagine themselves in the position of others. This is most obvious in Morpurgo's broadcast of *A Point of View*, which invites listeners to imagine they are a child refugee journeying to Europe. It was selected for the playlist precisely because of its direct appeal to geographical imaginations:

**Morpurgo:** “Close your eyes for a moment. And imagine that you are a child alone. You have no place you can call home. No community. No family. All you have are memories. But the memories are a torment to you. Memories of terrible suffering. Of loss and grieving. Of fear and terror. Of witnessing man's inhumanity to man. Of living with death and destruction all around you. You are overcome with sadness and exhaustion with cold or heat. You are weakened with hunger. And thirst and illness. You are hiding from danger. Fleeing for your life. All you can do is put one foot in front of the other. And walk with others towards hope. Somewhere up ahead. You hear there is safety. And shelter. And food and clean water and warmth. And comfort. So keep walking. Find any boat or lorry or train that will get you there. Just keep going. It is your only hope. There will be a home for you somewhere. There has to be. There will be an end to this”.

Listener responses to Morpurgo's opening monologue, however, are varied. Some welcome and engage in the proposed activity by imagining they are physically in the 'shoes' of a child. Others dislike and struggle with the invitation, and reflect on the difficulties of imagining the thoughts and feelings of a refugee:

“I stopped what I was doing and closed my eyes as told to - this walk through of how the children may feel gave me goosebumps and a feeling of sadness. I felt this more powerful to be able to see and imagine the lives of the young people and children making the journeys searching for 'hope'” (Ella)

“The contributor asking the listener to imagine themselves in the situation of the child refugees is very effective. I certainly find it much easier to feel the emotion of the story when I imagine myself in that person's shoes rather than just hearing a report of the facts” (Elizabeth)

“Good to ask us to do this even though it is hard for us to imagine” (Chloe)

“I don't like this imagining exercise. It's upsetting and unimaginable really, so just trying is a sad experience. I understand this is important to the understanding of the child's experience but it is not something I want to imagine” (Natalie)

Whilst the first two responses capture how the imagination can enhance emotional and affective engagement with a person or subject matter, the latter raise issues of

relatability and shared life experience, whereby a lack of imaginative and affective engagement stems from putting up an emotional barrier and drawing down a psychological shutter. Together, these diary extracts capture how the capacity of radio to spark geographical imaginations is partly conditional on the feelings and subjectivities of listeners. It also suggests that explicit attempts by journalists to appeal to listener imaginations are perhaps less well received than ground-level radio reports that evoke a sense of people and place through voices and affective soundscapes.

In summary, this final section has discussed the various ways in which radio appeals to and constructs geographical imaginations. Journalistic storytelling through sounds and voices in broadcasts is shown to be effective in sparking images that are 'seen' in the mind's eye, which demonstrates how listeners are co-producers in the construction of geographical imaginaries. This relationship between a listener and broadcast is similar to that of a reader and novel whereby the written word inspires pictures that are imagined in the mind, and interestingly, some listeners draw on other media as reference points when describing the act of envisioning people and places in radio. This capacity to establish imaginative connections is particularly pertinent to audible representations of migration as it captures how listeners use sounds and voices heard on the airwaves to imagine migrants as 'real', tangible, and relatable human beings. An unanticipated finding is the overall significance of embodied and affectual responses to broadcasts that suggest radio is *felt* as well as imagined. These visceral and affective reactions to hearing refugee voices and stories, and to multi-sensory journalism on migration, highlights a need to develop existing theorisations of the mind's eye in geography to better account for the embodied, experiential, and affective

dimensions of radio and listening in ways that push beyond the purely discursive and imaginative realm.

## 6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated how a purposive sample of 51 listeners responded to Radio 4 broadcasts on forced migration to, and refugee settlement in, Europe to better understand how radio sparks geographical imaginations and expands fields of perceptibility, recognition, and relatability with others. It engaged in a three-step analysis that: first, captured how listeners hear broadcasts through the interpretative frames of the BBC and their positionalities, which condition how they imagine and respond to Europe's migration 'crisis'; second, highlighted the pivotal role of migrant voices and stories in determining how listeners hear, imagine, and are emotionally and affectively moved by broadcasts; and third, detailed the myriad ways in which listening to radio involves constructing geographical imaginations around migration. This analysis leads up to two final arguments.

First, the majority of listeners express a preference for personal stories voiced by migrants who re-appear in the imagination as authentic, tangible, and relatable human beings, which confirms the Arendtian view that voice is "instrumental in endowing the refugee with personhood and historicity - and hence with the potential for recognition" (Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017, p.16). However, Chouliaraki and Zaborowski's (2017) conclusion is based upon a *hypothesis* about journalism and its performative *potential* to portray migrants as political and social actors who are able to articulate their reasons for migrating and future aspirations. Voice is therefore

*envisioned* as a pre-requisite for journalism that could “imagine Europe as a more inclusive and open community” (Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017, p.20).

This chapter expands and develops their study by demonstrating how and under what conditions radio journalism that amplifies migrant voices does lead to relatability and recognition between listeners and migrants: essential precursors to imagining Europe as a shared and inclusive community of belonging. Indeed, radio’s predication on the spoken word raises important questions about the difference between *reading* migrant testimonies in print journalism and *hearing* migrants speak on the radio. Listener diaries suggest that hearing the tone, inflection, and timbre of people’s voices plays a crucial part in conditioning affective, emotional, and socio-political responses. Listeners are surprised, engaged, and affectively moved by personal stories of migration and express feelings of greater connection, understanding, and relatability to those they hear from. They pick up on vocal cues, such as a voice cracking with emotion or falling silent altogether, that lead to a re-imagining of migrants as tangible and relatable human beings.

Crucially, however, there are instances when some listeners are critical of and angered by migrants who articulate their stories and reasons for journeying to Europe. This nuances theory in media and migration studies which considers the simple act of including migrant voices in journalism a direct precursor to audience responses of identification or solidarity with ‘vulnerable’ others. Instead, listening is revealed to be a complex process that resists straightforward correlations between discursive representations and audience responses, and is shot through with confounding variables such as listener positionalities and expectations of BBC journalism. Yet

instances of critique and rejection perhaps provide further evidence of listeners identifying migrants as relatable human beings who are not always likeable. This reaffirms the necessity of including migrant voices in the media if representations of migration are to be 'authentic' and catalysts for inclusive ways of 'seeing' and imagining. *Hearing* stories of migration is therefore distinct from *reading* stories of migration, and radio must be added to media studies of print journalism if we are to fully understand how a politics of recognition emerges.

Second, the majority of responses suggest that listeners can "picture", "imagine", or "see" what is being described, which provides clear empirical evidence for Pinkerton's (2014) conjecture that radio appeals to the mind's eye. It goes further, however, by detailing the various ways in which geographical imaginations are constructed and exposing a need to expand theorisations of the mind's eye in geography to better account for the embodied, experiential, and affective aspects of radio. Listeners respond to live, in-situ, and multi-sensory radio journalism, which enables them to envision people, spaces, and places, and *feel* as though they are transported to the locations in which the recording was made. Familiar imagery and tropes, together with personal memories and previous experiences of place, facilitate this creative process of conjuring up pictures in the imagination and hints at a blurring of visual and aural fields in the twin acts of listening and imagining. Indeed, ambient sounds and rich, evocative language are triggers to imaginative thinking that collapses distance and transports listeners into visceral and immersive 'worlds' conjured over the airwaves.

This propensity to turn sounds and voices that enter the ear into geographies pictured in the imagination, and affectively felt in the body, suggests that radio can

realise its potential for establishing imaginative and emotional identification with others. There are clear instances of perceptibility and recognition whereby listeners imagine shared experiences, objects, and places, which leads to a re-imagining of refugees and migrants as 'people like us'. That is to say, radio elicits among some listeners, "a leap to the realization that 'this could have been us', what Arendt calls the 'imaginative mobility' of the mind" (Villa, 1999, p.18 cited in Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2019, p.320). Again, this is by no means a universal response as some express irritation with authentic migrant voices and others resist overt attempts by journalists to engage their imaginations and evoke empathy. Nevertheless, in successfully evoking the geographical imaginations of a majority of listeners, radio participates in the affective work necessary to expand imaginative communities of belonging and forge meaningful connections and solidarities with others. That is not to say all radio journalism achieves this goal, but in failing to study radio representations altogether, we miss how the aural connects with geographical imaginations in ways that may begin to re-work unequal relations of power.

## Conclusion

### *Radio and Geographical Imaginations in a Digital, Multi-Media, Multi-Sensory World*

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This thesis has woven a story of Radio 4's recent journalism on Europe's migration 'crisis'. By exploring narratives, imaginaries, and soundscapes of migration in BBC radio, it extends existing research on media representations of migration that focuses principally on European newsprint. This narrow preoccupation with print media is surprising given that readership of newspapers is in decline, relative to sustained audience engagement with television and radio, and rapid growth in social media and podcasts (Ofcom, 2020). It also seems discordant with recent interest in the framing and status of migrant voices in the media (Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017; Georgiou, 2018), and calls within geography to engage more creatively with sounds and sonic geographies, as well as audio archives and methods of listening (Gallagher and Prior, 2014; Prior, 2017; Gallagher, Kanngieser and Prior, 2017; Whittaker and Peters, 2021).

Radio's predication on sounds and the spoken word raises interesting questions around whose voices are heard in broadcasts and in what capacity, how journalists understand their role and responsibility when recording audible stories of migration, and what is distinctive, if anything, about the act of listening to, rather than reading

about, refugees. By engaging with broadcasts, journalists, and listeners, the thesis has explored and provided answers to these questions, and highlighted the value of a methodology that integrates analyses of representation, production, and audience reception. In doing so, the thesis contributes to timely debates in media geography about how radio constructs meaning and feeling, emerges out of organisational structures of production and journalistic practices, and animates geographical imaginations. This concluding chapter draws together the main findings and contributions of the thesis, before considering potential directions for future geographical research on audio and multi-sensory storytelling.

## **7.2 Radio Geographies: Narrating, Producing, and Listening to Europe's Migration 'Crisis'**

The central research aim of this thesis was to examine how imaginative geographies of forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe were constructed across Radio 4 programming between January 2014 and March 2019, and to explore how broadcasts were produced by journalists and are heard and interpreted by listeners. I sought to address this through three research questions:

- RQ1. How are imaginative geographies constructed through sounds and voices in broadcasts?
- RQ2. How do organisational structures and journalistic practices at the BBC shape the production of broadcasts?
- RQ3. How, and to what effect, are broadcasts heard, interpreted, and imagined by listeners?

In response to RQ1., Chapter 4 identified two contrasting imaginative geographies of migration which emerged out of an analysis of 172 broadcasts across Radio 4 programming. First, a geopolitical imaginary of ‘crisis’ animated by sounds recorded at Europe’s borders and shorelines, and articulated through ‘expert’ voices that, more often than not, frame refugees and migrants as a burden and problem to be solved. This is exemplified in *The World Tonight*, which reports from a top-down, state-centric perspective and privileges studio interviews with politicians who are given significant time and space to articulate their policies and perspectives. Whilst this style of representation is reversed in immersive, multi-sensory reportage from journalists witnessing migration on the ground, most reports leave limited room for migrant voices, produce tropes of chaos, disorder, and emergency, and fall short of situating recent arrivals within longer histories of migration to Europe and global geographies of displacement. Similarly, although the programme gives listeners a detailed insight into people’s journeys through Europe and policy debates in Brussels, the programme turns most frequently to politicians who invite listeners to imagine migration as a crisis that threatens Europe’s safety, sovereignty, and solidarity.

This contrasts with a counter imaginary, exemplified in ‘feature’ programmes, that is constructed through localised, place-based sounds of migration and refugee settlement on the ground, and is articulated by multiple and different voices. This bottom-up perspective creates space for named refugees who are recast as human beings with biographies and stories to tell, and invites an empathetic affective response from listeners. In contrast to news bulletins that define migrants through abstract statistics, journalists in ‘feature’ programmes humanise refugees and highlight the agency and aspirations of recognisable individuals. The extended length of these

programmes, particularly documentaries, creates room for journalists to engage in critical and reflexive journalism on migration and immerse listeners in sights, soundscapes, and spaces of displacement. Indeed, listeners hear from both BBC and freelance journalists who engage with academic scholarship on migration and encourage reflection on shared histories and experiences of mobility and belonging. Chapter 4 was careful to highlight convergences between the two imaginative geographies, but they were used to support an overall interpretation of Radio 4 as a diverse and, at times, contradictory site of representation. That is to say, the variety of programming introduces listeners to multiple voices and different perspectives on migration, and contrasting styles of witnessing, reporting, and storytelling.

By undertaking a comprehensive analysis of Radio 4 broadcasting between January 2014 and March 2019, the thesis makes a valuable empirical contribution to migration studies that has repeatedly overlooked radio journalism in favour of newsprint and photography. It also answers Gallagher and Prior's (2014, p.268) call for geographers to more frequently immerse themselves in digital audio archives, recognising that "audio can tell different kinds of stories to other media". By simultaneously listening to, and reading written transcripts of, broadcasts, the thesis makes a methodological contribution to media geography by illustrating a way of attending to the narrative power of radio as well as "the features of the voice of the speaker [...] accent, pauses, background noises - in short, *everything* one can hear on a recording" (Hoffman, 2015, p.75). This combination of listening and reading raises exciting possibilities for future geographical scholarship on audio media and popular culture by opening up new sources of data, including podcasts and voice tweets on Twitter, as well as other radio journalism.

The thesis hints at potential directions this future work might take. Analysing geopolitical narratives of crisis in Radio 4 journalism on migration has much wider application to analysing representations of other subjects, such as climate-induced displacement. Climate change, like migration, is framed as a “wicked problem” (Rittel and Webber, 1973), an issue so complex and severe in its effects that it evades neat articulation and simple solutions, demands multiple areas of knowledge and expertise, and has repeatedly led to political inertia. Headlines warn of a rapidly escalating climate crisis and related threats of rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and land degradation that could displace millions and spark mass migration (Harvey, 2021; Mason, 2021). Chapter 4 raises important questions about the strengths and limitations of different programme formats and styles of journalistic storytelling, and suggests geographers need to reflect carefully on audible constructions of crisis, threat, and emergency.

While discourses and soundscapes of crisis in environmental reporting may convey the urgency of a situation, without proper contextualisation and analysis, they risk leaving audiences unaware of longer trajectories and global geographies that are essential to developing a nuanced understanding of climate-induced mobility; in this case, citing research that counters alarmist discourses by highlighting their reliance on simplistic push-pull thinking, failure to account for population adaptation to climatic change, and omission that migration is likely to be over short distances, rather than across multiple countries or continents (Tacoli, 2009; Findlay, 2011). On the other hand, the signifier ‘crisis’ may hold the necessary affective power to expose the immediacy of climate change and galvanize audiences into demanding governmental action in order to mitigate against catastrophic rises in temperatures and atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels.

Either way, the thesis reaffirms the importance of analysing media framings of crisis by reflecting on who is heard and silenced in reports, the power of journalists to represent people and places, and the specific role of sounds and voices in constructing geographical imaginations around the urgent issues of our time.

One of those issues is forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe, the story of which is far from over. Whilst this research focused on a fixed time period between 2014 and 2019 to capture Europe's migration 'crisis' and its politicisation around the Brexit referendum, it could create a false impression that migration has stopped or is no longer a headline news issue. On the contrary, the geopolitics of migration and media representations of it continue apace. In June 2020, the UNHCR observed that the number of forcibly displaced people around the world had almost doubled in the past decade to 79.5 million, the highest figure on record (Refugee Council, 2020). They also noted that 85% of refugees are hosted in 'developing' countries, such as Turkey, Uganda, and Sudan, with the majority of refugees experiencing long-term displacement; an unsustainable 'solution' that underlines a serious need for more states to offer resettlement opportunities (UNHCR, 2020).

It is within this global context that journalists reported in September 2020 the UK Home Secretary, Priti Patel, had asked officials to explore the idea of processing asylum applicants on Ascension Island, a British overseas territory in the South Atlantic 4,000 miles from the UK (Parker et al., 2020). The following month, reports emerged that the Home Office had consulted the trade group Maritime UK to discuss building a floating wall in the English Channel to block asylum seekers from arriving by boat (Pickard et al., 2020). Such strategies of border externalisation, securitisation, and

deterrence are not limited to the UK, however. In December 2020, journalists reported that a “black book” documenting hundreds of illegal pushbacks by European authorities against asylum seekers had been delivered to the EU commission (Tondo, 2020). This was followed in January 2021 by news that the UNHCR had issued a statement of alarm at the behaviour of European governments and called for an urgent investigation into increasing violence against refugees (Grant, 2021). Rather than prompt a change in policy direction, however, journalists noted in April that Denmark had become the first European country to deny the renewal of temporary residency permits to 189 Syrian refugees on the basis the government now considered parts of Syria safe to return to (McKernan, 2021a).

The recent fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban after the withdrawal of American and NATO troops in August 2021 has, given this track record on migration, sparked a predictable response. The French president Emmanuel Macron has declared, “we must anticipate and protect ourselves against significant irregular flows of migration” (Leali, 2021); Turkey’s president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has warned, “Turkey has no duty, responsibility or obligation to be Europe’s refugee warehouse” (Yackley, 2021); while Poland’s deputy prime minister, Piotr Gliński, has advised, “Poland defended itself against the wave of refugees in 2015, and it will defend itself again now” (Chazan, 2021). On the ground, Warsaw has reportedly dispatched over 900 soldiers to its border with Belarus after an increase in refugees and revealed plans to extend its barbed wire fence (Wilczek, 2021). Meanwhile Greece has built a new 25-mile wall on its border with Turkey and installed a surveillance system aimed at preventing asylum seekers from reaching Europe (Taylor, 2021). Closer to home, British headlines claim that European leaders “fear a repeat” of the “2015 migrant crisis” with a potential “influx of Afghan

refugees”, while Priti Patel continues to pursue a policy of pushing back migrant boats across the Channel (Chazan, 2021; Crisp, 2021; Huggler et al., 2021; Syal, 2021).

Geographers have a social and moral responsibility to engage with this ‘everyday’ geopolitics of migration to Europe and to critically interrogate media representations of it. There is an urgency to this task given that Davies, Isakjee, and Dhesi (2017) argue the EU’s abandonment of refugees - who are still residing in makeshift camps within Europe years after the so-called ‘crisis’ has ended - is a deliberate policy of migration management that evidences why geographers must attend to political *inaction*, as much as action, towards displaced people. Chapter 4 offers a methodological blueprint for analysing spoken narratives and affective soundscapes of migration in radio journalism, and revealing the disparate and contradictory ways in which a single media organisation can portray migrants and refugees.

In response to RQ2., Chapter 5 explored how organisational structures and journalistic practices shape the production of broadcasts through an analysis of 17 interviews conducted with journalists, producers, editors, commissioners, and senior leaders, within and outside of the BBC. The first section illustrated how the two imaginative geographies identified in Chapter 4 emerge out of three internal divisions: namely, Radio 4, the News and Current Affairs directorate, and Radio Current Affairs. These three divisions are spatially distinct, located in separate parts of Broadcasting House, and governed by contrasting production timescales and ambitions. Indeed, the narrative constraints and short production timescales in news relative to current affairs are critical to explaining some of the differences in styles of representation. Running

through the three divisions is an organisational hierarchy of power and responsibility that places trust and authority in programme-level editors, producers, and journalists who are given the creative space and editorial freedom to shape the content of broadcasts. This helps to explain the diversity of representations of migration across Radio 4 by revealing room for journalists to inflect broadcasts with personal - or at least, differing - styles of witnessing and reporting.

The second section of Chapter 5 examined two professional codes - namely, the BBC's Reithian mission to inform, educate, and entertain, and editorial imperative to produce truthful, accurate, and impartial journalism - that guide journalistic practices and emphasise the centrality of audiences to the production of BBC content. Adopting a geographical lens located these methods of working within particular sites and spaces, and traced the temporalities that govern programme production in news relative to current affairs. This revealed that where a journalist works, and over what timeframe, makes a difference to the representations articulated on air. It therefore provided compelling evidence for Pinkerton's (2014, p.58) observation that radio is "spatially situated and rooted 'in place'", but went further to highlight the significance of temporality to the production of radio. The chapter closed with a discussion of storytelling as a technique used by journalists across the BBC to engage audiences in radio by appealing to their geographical imaginations. Conducting interviews with journalists behind the microphone therefore offered a rich insight into the structures and practices that govern programme production and shape the imaginative geographies heard on air.

This chapter is the first account of contemporary BBC radio production in geography. Muller (2012, p.3) describes organisations in and outside of the media as “black boxes” given that internal processes, actors, and ways of working are often concealed from academics and the public. Dittmer and Bos (2019, p.63) agree, noting that the site of production remains an underdeveloped area of popular geopolitics because of “difficulties in contacting and communicating with media and cultural institutions”. This thesis therefore makes a substantial empirical and conceptual contribution to media geography and popular geopolitics by demonstrating how journalists understand their role and responsibility when producing BBC journalism on migration, and highlighting the internal structures and processes that shape radio programme production. Engaging with journalists reveals Europe’s migration ‘crisis’, like Bosnia in the 1990s, to be a story that stretches the founding, editorial principles of BBC journalism to their limits. It reveals journalists to be thoughtful and reflexive about their position, profession, and craft, highlighting ongoing tensions around remaining distanced and impartial when covering an event unfolding on ‘our’ doorstep, rather than ‘over there’. These issues, first discussed by Toal (1996) in response to O’Kane’s dispatches from Bosnia for *The Guardian*, suggest that accounts of journalistic production practices have an important role to play in continuing to examine and reflect upon the business and practice of journalism.

The contemporary politics of the BBC provides vital context to these ongoing tensions and dilemmas around public service journalism, and how it is produced and performed by journalists. In a discussion about the codes that guide journalistic practices and their enshrinement in the Royal Charter, Chapter 5 reflected on the intriguing relationship between the BBC and the government; on the one hand,

editorially and creatively independent of the ruling politicians of the day, but also dependent upon on them for the renewal of the Charter, decisions about the license fee, and appointment of senior board members. Today, the BBC is facing growing pressure from the Conservative Party who question its value, stature, and place in British broadcasting (Reuters Institute, 2020). Rusbridger (2020b) discusses the volume of recent calls to defund the BBC and abolish the license fee on the basis that the free market now delivers high quality content to audiences. Critics cite the plethora of streaming channels, such as Netflix, HBO, and Amazon Prime, as examples of a thriving marketplace that challenges the primacy of the BBC and its special relationship with the public. Often left unspoken is the BBC's remit of public service journalism, including 39 local radio stations, the World Service, and online, radio, and television output, all of which contrasts with the scope of its commercial, for profit, streaming 'competitors'. Rusbridger (2020b) recalls that the government's initial proposals for chairs of the BBC and Ofcom, according to *The Sunday Times*, were Charles Moore, former editor of *The Daily Telegraph*, and Paul Dacre, former editor of *The Daily Mail*, who he claims are "two former editors not known for impartiality or sympathy for the BBC, its journalism or its funding model". Meanwhile, Sherwin (2020) points out that Tim Davie, the BBC's current Director General, stood as a Conservative councillor and deputy chairman of the Hammersmith and Fulham party in the 1990s. These proposals and appointees to senior positions in British media speak to the contemporary politics in which the BBC is situated, and its journalism is heard and interpreted.

Chapter 5 also documented the personal dilemmas of journalists around the place of emotion and affect in BBC reportage on Europe's migration 'crisis'. This discussion, which highlights the delicate line that journalists tread between their

personal and professional selves, must be contextualised by a recent shift towards a strict 'no tolerance' policy on journalists' social media accounts if deemed by senior management to breach the corporation's impartiality commitments (Sandhu, 2020; Waterson, 2020b). Chapter 5 revealed the precarity of impartiality as an editorial principle due to its fundamental reliance upon journalistic practices enacted in the 'everyday'. These tensions, which are at the heart of how BBC journalism is practiced and performed, made headlines in May 2020 when presenter of *Newsnight*, Emily Maitlis, was reprimanded by her bosses for not having met editorial standards in an introduction about former government aide, Dominic Cummings; a decision she continues to reject (Sherwin, 2021). Both of these recent examples illustrate the importance of continuing to examine how public service journalism is produced and debated, on and off air. They also reaffirm why geographers must reflect on the power relations that frame and underpin journalistic output, and integrate analyses of representation with production to better understand the contexts and settings out of which imaginative geographies emerge.

In response to RQ3., Chapter 6 examined the reflective diaries of 51 listeners to a digital playlist of 12 Radio 4 broadcasts to understand how, and to what effect, listeners hear, interpret, and imagine radio coverage of migration. It makes a methodological contribution to radio geography through the design and implementation of the playlist-diary method. This innovative approach to listenership answers Gallagher, Kanngieser and Prior's (2017, p.620) call "to develop broader sonic sensibilities" and highlights the potential of engaging with sound and radio in geography. There is scope to scale-up the listener study to include larger audiences with different demographics and characteristics, and to return to the original methodology, proposed

prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, of using audio and photo elicitation in follow-up interviews to explore the 'everyday' geographies of listening to radio. The ability to conduct the playlist-diary method remotely similarly highlights untapped potential to gather international audience responses - for example, to BBC World Service broadcasting - and explore the impact of radio on geographical imaginations around migration in 'source', 'host', and destination countries.

Chapter 6 revealed how listeners hear broadcasts through the interpretative frames of BBC journalism and their personal experiences and subjectivities, which condition how they imagine and affectively respond to Radio 4 journalism on Europe's migration 'crisis'. There was a clear pattern across the diaries of listeners preferring programmes that amplify the stories and voices of refugees, which are critical to eliciting emotional and affective responses, and establishing a politics of recognition. That is to say, hearing from refugees who self-articulate their biographies, journeys, and aspirations leads many listeners to express feelings of greater connection, understanding, and relatability to those usually perceived, and represented as, Other. However, the chapter nuanced this argument by highlighting instances where listeners express irritation, frustration, or disapproval of people's voices and mixed motivations for journeying to Europe, which reinforces that the simple act of including migrant voices or stories in the media does not always lead to identification or solidarity with 'vulnerable' others. Nevertheless, listeners provide rich evidence of how geographical imaginations are constructed in radio and the necessary conditions for achieving imaginative identification with refugees. That is to say, listeners imagine shared experiences, familiar objects, and personal memories of places visited in broadcasts, which begin to collapse imaginaries of 'us' and 'them', and 'here' and 'there', and

prompt a re-imagining of migrants as people like 'us'. This is particularly clear when Grace writes, "it's always easier to imagine the situation of someone who started out in a position close to yours", and when Ruby reflects, "I forgot he was a refugee. He was an expert in bees".

The listener diaries also revealed three further important and unanticipated research findings: first, that radio can be felt as well imagined; second, that silences and pauses can provoke affective responses as strong as those articulated after hearing voices and spoken narratives; and third, that listeners are transported experientially, as well as imaginatively, to worlds evoked over the airwaves. These three points speak to the embodied and multi-sensory impacts of listening to radio and suggest that geographical imaginations are not restricted to the visual or cognitive realm. Responses where listeners write they "teared up" or their "stomach dropped" expose how radio can 'move' people in emotional and affective registers that push beyond the imaginative realm. Exploring how broadcasts are heard, interpreted, and imagined has therefore revealed how radio representations of migration "can 'speak through the body'" (Madge, 2014, p.181). Some listeners are even taken outside of their body and immediate surroundings, and transported imaginatively and experientially through soundscapes and affective atmospheres of migration. This is evidenced when Samuel writes, "feels like I'm there", and when Justine reflects, "feel like I experienced a 'live' rescue mission". Radio therefore has the power to offer listeners encounters and experiences that immerse them in multi-sensory worlds evoked over the airwaves.

Whilst I set out at the start of this research with Said's (1978) concept of imaginative geographies and interest in exploring how radio sparks pictures in the

mind's eye, the empirical data from my listenership study has highlighted a need to stretch the meaning of imaginative geographies and to expand theorisations of the mind's eye to better account for the affective, emotional, and experiential dimensions of radio. The diaries evidence how broadcasts prompt spatial imaging in response to sounds and voices, which develops previous research in geography by evidencing how exactly radio constructs geographical imaginations. But they also point to an additional process at play that captures the multisensory aspects of listening and suggests that sonic representations of migration in BBC radio are embodied as much as they are visualised. This unanticipated finding resonates with Smith (2000, p.615) who explores how musical performances and listening practices are embodied and can move people emotionally and politically to the extent that she wonders "what can be known through sound may not be accessible from the visible world". This suggestion that sounds "may offer a rather different way of knowing" to sight and visual media (Smith, 2000, p.635), echoes my contention that the diaries point to ways of understanding, imagining, and relating to refugees that are founded upon the act of hearing soundscapes and voices of migration. The thesis therefore contributes to research in migration studies and sound geography by demonstrating that methodologies of listening to radio journalism on migration can reveal new epistemologies of understanding migration.

These connections between voice, affectivity, and sonic representations of migration have significant implications for journalists. They suggest that the silencing of refugees and migrants in the media can translate into a lack of positive affectivity in audiences; a disinterest in, or distrust of, people on the move, who cannot vocalise their experiences or reasons for migrating and therefore appear in listener imaginations as

abstract or intangible figures. This absence of care or affectivity in audiences around refugees has the potential to support exclusionary policies and practices of migration management. This is not too big a leap or extrapolation given that audiences who remain unmoved or unaffected by what they see or hear in the media are unlikely to challenge, critique, or at the very least, engage with the politics of migration and displacement. Indeed, Carter and McCormack (2014, p.320) argue that “affectivity is part of the moving ground from which thinking - including thinking critically about geopolitics - emerges and is cultivated”. In other words, it is a critical catalyst and precursor to geopolitical intervention, and this affectivity does not have to be profound or even graspable. On the contrary, it can be “a sense of corporeal disquiet, a knot in the stomach, a visceral unease” (Carter and McCormack, 2014, p.320). Therefore, whilst Chapter 6 evidenced a minority of listeners who are ‘moved to action’ by broadcasts - whether googling a refugee charity or seeking out volunteering opportunities - even the smallest affect, feeling, or emotion expressed or left unarticulated in the diaries may be enough to spark future engagement with, and challenge audience apathy around, the subject and protagonists of migration.

Holzberg, Kolbe, and Zaborowski (2018, p.548) argue that “alternative discourses need to start from the perspective of migrants themselves and acknowledge that the socio-economic and political developments in the Middle East and North Africa are intimately linked to Europe’s colonial pasts and current global power relations”. This thesis develops their conclusion by suggesting that the perspective of migrants needs to be included in the media in a specific way: namely, in radio journalism that amplifies the voices of people who are able to self-articulate their biographies and stories of

migration; creates room for journalists to contextualise their voices with longer histories and global geographies of migration, empire, conflict, and displacement; and records immersive soundscapes that enable listeners to hear, imagine, and affectively engage with experiences and spatialities of migration.

This is particularly important for journalism that privileges the voices and perspectives of politicians over refugees and produces, rather than contextualises, imaginative geographies of chaos, crisis, and emergency at Europe's borders. Chapter 5 illustrates how this goes beyond a discursive shift in representations and instead requires a fundamental change to how news is gathered and produced. Tight production timescales and multi-media demands on journalists who parachute in and out of migration hotspots translates into narratives that cannot, by their very nature, be anything more than informative but partial and ahistorical snapshots. An ambition to produce attention-grabbing stories can lead journalists and editors to seek out ever more dramatic sites/sights and spectacles at the expense of offering audiences a rounded understanding of the histories and geographies that drive migration and connect 'our world' to 'theirs'. The contrast in representations identified in 'feature' programmes supports this argument by showing that broadcasts outside the narrative constraints of news amplify multiple and different voices, resist binary framings of victimhood or threat, and engage in critical, reflexive, and human-centric reporting.

### *7.2.1 Cross-Cutting Themes*

Before considering future directions for geographical research on audio and multi-sensory storytelling, it is worth reflecting on the intersections between narrating,

producing, and listening to Radio 4's journalism on Europe's migration 'crisis', as explored in the three empirical chapters of this thesis.

In a discussion about the imaginative power of radio to conjure up spaces envisioned in the mind's eye, Pinkerton (2014, p.64) laments "this kind of conceptual work on radio remains in the margins of the academy". This thesis responds to his conjecture and makes a significant empirical and conceptual contribution to radio geography by revealing the specific ways in which BBC radio journalism appeals to and constructs geographical imaginations. Probing journalistic practices of storytelling together with listener responses reveals a strong correlation between journalistic attempts at evocative, sensorial radio reportage and imaginative, multi-sensory audience responses that are 'seen' in the mind and felt in the body. At the same time, however, this thesis reveals a tension between tight production timescales and creative space for journalists to engage in imaginative, immersive storytelling. That is to say, fast-paced news cycles and multi-media demands increasingly leave journalists with limited opportunities to produce carefully crafted, sound-rich radio reportage that this thesis suggests resonates most strongly with listeners.

Whether imaginative storytelling is a central ambition of news journalism is a separate question. However, recent spending and job cuts at the BBC with programme-specific reporters at Radio 4 being axed (Waterson, 2020a), raise serious questions about whether this 'bespoke' style of radio journalism - which is filled with nuanced, multi-vocal narratives that push beyond reductive stereotypes and spectacles, and engage listener imaginations in ways that begin to rework unequal relations of power - may become a rare or lost 'art'. The fact that some of the journalists who were

interviewed in this thesis have now left Radio 4 is a timely reminder that geographers must heed Dittmer and Bos' (2019) call to engage with media organisations, and the actors within them, to understand - and document - the institutional and journalistic practices that shape representations.

Placing a spotlight on journalists in and outside of the BBC has delved deeper into Pinkerton's (2013, p.448) theorisation of the journalist as a geopolitical agent with the power to "translate, interpret, and re-present the world". By identifying the contrasting imaginaries produced across Radio 4, this thesis reinforces the discursive power of journalists to frame and explain Europe's migration 'crisis' to listeners in particular ways. Editorial choices about where to report from, who to interview, and how to describe the places and people they witness and encounter resonates with Gasher's (2015, p.127) compelling characterisation of journalists as cartographers who "map the 'news world', selecting from a constellation of current affairs which events, issues, peoples and places warrant their audiences attention". Reflecting on the intersections between the professional 'codes' that govern BBC journalists and the varied responses of listeners to broadcasts, however, begins to unsettle ideas about journalistic power and agency.

This thesis reveals that while BBC journalists are governed by strict editorial standards, they work within an organisational structure that gives them creative and editorial agency to select the news stories they cover and engage in multiple and contrasting styles of witnessing and reporting. Organisational guidelines around what BBC journalism should sound like also interface with the fact they rely on journalists working 'on the ground' to enact them on an hourly, daily, and weekly basis. In other

words, the BBC's founding principles of truthful, accurate, and impartial reporting are performed by, and mediated through, journalists who are situated in particular times and places. This complicates the BBC's institutional power by drawing attention to its precarity and situated nature. The thesis also reveals the journalists interviewed to be thoughtful and reflexive 'agents' who recognise this tension, together with their narrative power and moral responsibility when witnessing and reporting Europe's migration 'crisis'.

Detailing divergent audience responses to the same broadcasts further problematises the power and agency of journalists by illustrating that how representations are heard, interpreted, and imagined ultimately rests with listeners. Listeners who in this study demonstrate the capacity to critique the narratives and soundscapes they hear on air, question a programme's editorial selection of contributors, and resist journalistic attempts to shape how they think about, imagine, and affectively respond to displaced people. Journalists may hold significant power, through their linguistic and representational choices, to shape BBC audiences' "mental maps of the world" (Gasher, 2015, p.132), but this thesis reveals the relationship between representations and listener responses to be not a linear or straightforward one. It therefore develops existing work in media and migration studies by demonstrating that journalists' depictions of migration do not always lead to the discursive and affective responses they are intended and theorised to invite.

It is, however, important to acknowledge the specificity of the audience studied here. This thesis has already reflected on the demographic profile of listeners and absence of data on listeners' nationalities, ethnicities, political persuasions, and

personal experiences of migration or the 'industry' which surrounds it (Andersson, 2014). But it has not yet speculated on the fact that different audiences are likely to expect and be receptive towards contrasting styles and formats of radio journalism. Whilst listeners in this thesis were most engaged by, and affectively respondent to, broadcasts that privileged the voices and stories of people on the move, others may prefer news journalism that privileges European politicians and policy-makers responsible for 'managing' migration at the national and international level, as presented in *The World Tonight*. The thesis therefore raises thought-provoking questions about different audience expectations, the purpose of news and current affairs reportage, and potential feedback loops between the cartographers and consumers of journalism. Indeed, even this neat divide must be unsettled in a participatory age of citizen journalism and social media networking that pull at the seams of who is, and what it means to be, a 'journalist' or 'listener'.

In summary, this thesis makes a significant empirical, conceptual, and methodological contribution to media geography by offering a way of thinking about and studying the connections and dissonances between narrating, producing, and listening to Radio 4's journalism on migration. It highlights the value of applying a geographical lens to radio and, as the following section reveals, raises exciting opportunities for future research on audio and multi-sensory storytelling. Indeed, the sheer diversity of audible representations, production practices, and listener responses explored in this thesis suggests it is misleading to speak of 'Radio 4' - let alone 'the media' - as a unified or homogenous space of storytelling. Instead, this research underlines a need within geography and migration studies to engage more readily with

audio as well as visual media, audiences and journalists as well as representations, and methods of listening as well as seeing, if we are to fully understand the power of radio and implications of journalistic representations of migration.

### **7.3 Radio and Geographical Imaginations in a Digital, Multi-Media, Multi-Sensory World**

The final section of this concluding chapter considers potential future directions for geographical research on audio and multi-sensory storytelling. It begins from a recognition that radio is embedded in a digital, multi-media, multi-sensory world that provides fertile ground for geographers interested in the construction of geographical imaginations who are keen to engage their ears, as well as their eyes. This multi-media world was brought to life by the journalists in Chapter 5 who described having to produce and share content between radio and television output, and by listeners in Chapter 6 who recalled photographs, films, and novels when listening, imagining, and responding to broadcasts.

I therefore end by considering podcasts and virtual reality as two media that dovetail closely with radio journalism and hold exciting potential for geographers. It is important to acknowledge that social media is an additional - and obvious - medium of interest given widespread engagement among audiences and journalists alike. It is a place where radio listeners can debate ideas, share feedback, and recommend other episodes. Broadcasters, too, can publicise their programmes, share related images, videos, and articles, and even stream radio live. It is also a place where audiences can view and interact with citizen journalism, thereby bypassing content mediated through a professional journalist or traditional broadcaster (Bulkley, 2012). Given this fertile

terrain, it is unsurprising that there has been a wealth of academic interest in digital geographies to which this thesis cannot do justice (Ash, Kitchin, Leszczynski, 2018; Horton, 2019). I therefore focus on podcasts and virtual reality as two nascent areas of research and reflect on what the findings of this thesis suggest geographers should be interested in and attuned to.

### *7.3.1 Podcasts*

The rise of podcasts in recent years has led some to suggest we are living through a “golden age of audio” (Ganesh, 2016). Low-cost production coupled with on-demand listening and a flexibility to explore topics and formats normally excluded from radio schedules has led to a proliferation of podcasts, which are no longer the sole preserve of enthusiasts and amateurs, nor simply downloadable and repackaged versions of existing radio programmes (Berry, 2015; Sawyer, 2020). The medium’s exponential growth is reflected in the announcement by streaming giant, *Spotify*, of its strategic expansion beyond music in 2018, which has since led to a remarkable portfolio of an estimated 2.2 million podcasts (Sweney, 2021). The BBC also launched its digital app, BBC Sounds, in 2018 with the ambition of integrating radio, music, and podcasts, and attracting younger listeners. Tellingly, the BBC’s former Director of Radio and Education, James Purnell, described the app as an attempt to better serve younger audiences and “lean into the podcast revolution” (BBC News, 2018).

This upward trajectory in the production of podcasts is matched by a rising number of listeners. Ofcom (2019) reports that an average of 7.1 million people in the UK listen to podcasts each week, with annual growth in podcast listenership climbing year on year. Significantly, Ofcom (2019) records that 9 in 10 people still listen to live

radio every week, but many are combining this with podcasts. In fact, podcasts are acting as an entrée into radio as 37% of listeners say they have tuned into radio for the first time as a direct result of listening to a podcast (Ofcom, 2019). This surge in both the production and reception of podcasts is captured by Sawyer (2020) who writes:

“This is podcasting’s boom time. There are now more than 900,000 podcasts to choose from. In the US, 22% of the population listens to at least one podcast every week and 51% to at least one podcast in their life (roughly 168 million people). In the UK, 12.5% of us (about 7.1 million people) listen to podcasts weekly, up 58% in the past two years. And on average, those UK podcast fans are hoovering up approximately seven podcasts a week. Even throughout lockdown, when other art forms closed or stopped producing, podcasts have continued to grow”.

There is clear potential for geographers to delve into this rich repository of podcasting material. This thesis illustrates a way of engaging with audio archives that can be productively applied to podcasts, whether that be researching how spaces, places, and people are represented through sounds and voices, or tracing spatialities and temporalities of podcast production and listenership. Chapter 3 reflected on my initial intention to follow the ‘playlist-diary-interview’ method, which has clear transferability to researching the ubiquity of podcasts and connections between the spaces they traverse and the construction of geographical imaginations.

Geographers are already beginning to recognise that podcasts hold exciting methodological opportunities for creative research on the urgent issues of today. Kinkaid, Emard, and Senanayake (2019, pp.1-2) advocate the “podcast-as-method” and suggest the participatory nature of podcasting, based on conversations between researchers and participants, presents:

“new points of entry for geographers to shape and intervene in current public debates concerning global environmental change, geopolitical relations, migration, social and environmental justice, and other pressing and contentious issues while spurring innovation in geographic methods more broadly”.

This thesis highlights the readiness of some journalists to engage with academic research on media reporting of migration and hints at future opportunities for geographers to work collaboratively with journalists and refugees, co-producing podcasts or radio programmes to engage in meaningful knowledge exchange and potentially redress an unequal hierarchy of voices in the media (Chouliaraki and Zaborowski, 2017). This potential to amplify voices usually silenced in the media is recognised by Kinkaid, Emard, and Senanayake (2019, p.5) who suggest “scholars investigating geographies of migration could harness the podcast format to share the voices of migrants, border residents, or detention workers in ways that more intimately portray the complex lived experiences of migration”. Whilst sharing enthusiasm for audible representations of, and participant engagement with, migration, this thesis highlights a need for caution around emancipatory discourses of podcasts and the potential to amplify unheard or marginalised voices. The predication of podcasts on voice is no guarantee that ‘new’ or ‘different’ voices will be included, even when low-cost production holds promise for podcasts to be made outside of ‘mainstream’ media broadcasting. Chapters 4 and 6 further remind us that geographers must remain attentive to how voices are editorially framed in podcasts, as well as heard and interpreted by listeners.

Podcasts are often characterised by a relaxed, informal style and tone of broadcasting, and this thesis raises interesting questions about how journalists communicate with listeners and make claims to trust and authority outside of more

'formal' radio journalism. The BBC's popular political podcast, *Brexitcast*, which accumulated 18 million downloads by January 2020 (Fleming, 2020), brings together journalists Laura Kuenssberg, Katya Adler, Adam Fleming, and Chris Mason to discuss the latest machinations of the UK's withdrawal from the EU. The podcast, which is frequently recorded late at night after their formal broadcasting commitments, has a chatty and laidback tone. Indeed, Sturges (2019) argues that "the series offers an alternative way of doing news, one that includes running gags, daft small-talk, and general astonishment at the latest developments".

Chapter 5 encourages us to reflect carefully on how journalists balance their professional commitments to accurate, impartial, and truthful journalism with this casual, conversational style of podcasting. Katya Adler tells Sturges (2019) that informality is the key to *Brexitcast's* success, distinguishing it from the television news when "we've got our coats on, it's a certain [type of] delivery". Echoing this thesis' conclusions about the strengths of long-form documentaries relative to short news bulletins and reports, Chris Mason explains "whether it's [Radio 4's] *Today* or the *Six O'Clock News*, even on the biggest of big days, there's only a finite number of minutes for analysis, whereas here any of us can wang on for three minutes straight" (Sturges, 2019). This suggests the length of podcasts enables journalists to engage in a different style of representation and storytelling that, given the size of *Brexitcast's* audience, resonates with listeners. Unpacking some of the specific ways in which journalists produce geopolitical narratives in podcasts, while balancing their professional commitments, certainly warrants close attention and analysis by sonic geographers.

Exploring spatialities and practices of radio production in Chapter 5 similarly holds promise for future geographical research on locating and mapping podcasts. Memorably, Kuenssberg once recorded an episode of *Brexitcast* from the back of a taxicab and her transformation of a vehicle into a quasi-recording studio has familiar echoes of Andrew Hosken piecing together a report for *The World Tonight* under a bedsheet in his hotel room, and Shabnam Grewal and Maria Margaronis listening to their audio recordings in an aircraft cabin on the way back to London. This thesis demonstrates that examining the temporalities and spatialities that underpin the production of audio media is vital because they have a direct bearing on the representations heard on air. Documenting the off-mic, and perhaps more informal, geographies of podcast production is therefore a rich avenue for geographers who are curious about how geopolitical imaginaries emerge from particular sites, settings, and spaces. Undoubtedly, there is more work to do in locating podcasts as the new “everywhere medium” (Pinkerton, 2014, p.58).

*Brexitcast*'s expansion into television in 2019 further holds promise for geographers interested in emerging synergies between audio and visual media, and implications for the construction of geographical imaginations in news journalism. No longer restricted to listening to the journalists through headphones, audiences can watch them broadcasting live from a Westminster studio. Its first transmission in late 2019 drew in over a million viewers, which signals the appeal of podcasts turned television shows (Walker, 2019). Editors and producers often extract video clips and soundbites from the programme and repackage them for online and social media content, which raises timely questions about how audio is now accessed and consumed. Ofcom (2019) reports that for listeners aged 18 to 55, the video platform, YouTube, is

the most popular way of accessing podcasts, which signals potential avenues for geographers to analyse how audiences are immersed in, and taking advantage of, a mixed-media environment.

Finally, Chapter 5 reflected on how journalists draw on metaphors of performance and theatricality when describing how they think about, structure, and produce radio. Pushing this idea in a more literal direction, it is interesting to note that radio and podcasts have become box office for theatres with presenters taking to the stage to record live shows for in-person audiences. 300 listeners secured tickets to see a recording of *Brexitcast* at Broadcasting House's theatre in early 2020 and the BBC routinely takes its radio programmes on the road (Fleming, 2020). Former Editor of the *Today* programme, Sarah Sands, introduced live recordings from universities in an attempt to reach younger listeners, while Radio 4's Jane Garvey and Fi Glover have taken their hit podcast, *Fortunately*, to theatre audiences across the country. There is rich potential for geographers to apply their expertise in spatiality, staging, affect, and performance to these theatrical manifestations of audio, and explore the new and exciting ways in which popular culture is shaping, and being shaped by, sound.

### *7.3.2 Virtual Reality*

The BBC has recently experimented in integrating radio and podcasts with nascent technologies, like virtual reality (VR), to deliver news to audiences through multi-platform, multi-sensory storytelling. VR uses computer-generated simulations and 360-degree images and video footage to create a virtual place, setting, or scene, and it has been heralded by some as the future of news with the potential to reshape journalistic storytelling and reporting (Rogers, 2020). Combining audio and visual media in a

package of news has significant implications for geographers interested in how geographical imaginations are shaped and animated. Cloke et al. (2004, pp.114-115) suggest that technologies like VR:

“may offer the potential to engage in radically new ways with imaginative sources. Instead of sitting in a cinema to watch a film, for example, it may be possible to ‘walk through’ the screen and ‘take part in the action’. Here, too, the traditional distinction between reader and author and between the real and the imaginary is blurred or eliminated”.

This blurring of the real and imaginary in VR is intriguing in the context of journalism, which is already wrestling with epistemological questions around truth and securing audience trust. It is also pertinent to media portrayals of migration and innovative attempts to attract the attention of disengaged audiences. Whilst mixed media journalism is not new, the inclusion of VR in a package of news is, which raises timely questions about what its addition might mean for audio coverage of migration. That is to say, if journalists begin to use VR in combination with radio and podcasts to communicate the story of migration, what do the findings of this thesis suggest geographers should be attuned to.

Radio, podcasts, and VR were all grouped together in two of the BBC’s recent multi-media news series, ‘Damming the Nile’ and ‘Congo’, released in 2018. The inclusion of a binaural podcast in Congo was particularly striking as binaural audio is recorded using two microphones to create a three dimensional, surround sound listening experience: thereby echoing the immersive aspirations of radio and VR content. Indeed, Roginska and Geluso (2017, p.1) argue that binaural radio produces “immersive sound” that “can give the listener an experience of being there through sound”. Combining the three media therefore speaks to a journalistic ambition to

immerse audiences in a location or setting, and there is justified cause to wonder whether their integration could enhance efforts to collapse imaginative distinctions between 'us' and 'them', 'here' and 'there'. Just as Chapter 6 revealed radio to be successful in transporting listeners imaginatively over the airwaves, VR and binaural podcasts promise an immersive encounter that could combat audience compassion fatigue through bodily experience and by appealing to geographical imaginations.

VR could therefore add colour, definition, and richness to imaginaries and soundscapes of migration in radio and podcasts. Multi-media news production and engagement could place audiences visually and experientially, as well as sonically and imaginatively, in spaces of migration. Bond (2020, p.674) reflects on immersive representations of migration and suggests that VR's emphasis on the body - which enables audiences to walk virtually in the shoes of migrants and refugees - has the potential to reverse the passivity of the spectator and elicit "empathy for the real-life experiences of others". This follows Laurel's compelling observation that VR offers users the rare opportunity to take "your body with you into worlds of imagination" (cited in Bond, 2020, p.674). VR's ability to work across expansive landscapes and rugged terrain also signals interesting opportunities for audiences to encounter protracted journeys over land and sea. Chapter 2 explained how migratory experiences beyond the high drama of departure or arrival are a blind spot in media coverage and VR could therefore complement audio journalism by documenting a hidden aspect of displacement. Witnessing and virtually experiencing the challenges of physical geography that people overcome may highlight migrant agency and provide audiences with a deeper understanding of the lengths and risks people go to and take in order to reach Europe.

Yet this thesis raises questions about the potential pitfalls of portraying migration as spectacle. The titles of the BBC's 2018 series hint at a primary interest in the physical landscape and suggest VR may be instinctively drawn to eye-catching spectacles in ways that some radio journalism subverts and resists. If VR is drawn to the visuality and drama of a story, then its representations of migration risk re-focusing attention on points of crisis to capture and retain audience interest; sites/sights that already dominate media coverage and may compound, rather than mitigate against, waning audience engagement over time. Migration is also punctuated by long periods of stasis and waiting that do not lend themselves to compulsive VR viewing. Chapter 2 cited recent research in migration studies that advocates soundscapes as sonic representations that challenge reductive visual tropes of refugees in the media. This would suggest that VR may threaten to undo the constructive work of radio that amplifies place-based sounds and voices of migration. Listener responses in Chapter 6 also warn that picture-led migration reportage risks undermining the affective power of hearing migrant voices without visual distraction. This resonates with Allison (2017, p.6) who concludes a core strength of radio is that "the prejudicial eye is not involved". VR produced and consumed in combination with radio journalism may therefore turn listeners, who are co-producers in the construction of geographical imaginations, into immersed but indifferent witnesses.

Geographers could also productively reflect on the immersive and affective power of VR. Cloke et al.'s (2004, pp.114-115) suggestion that viewers may be able to "take part in the action" raises ethical questions around trauma and distress, and the responsibility of journalists to exercise judgement around the emotional impact of a story. This is a pressing concern given that Feinstein and Storm (2017, p.11) analyse the

psychological impact on journalists of covering Europe's migration 'crisis' and point to "the injury done to a person's conscience or moral compass by perpetrating, witnessing, or failing to prevent acts that transgress personal moral and ethical values or codes of conduct". The act of witnessing in VR, and inability to intervene, may therefore lead to unintended consequences around mental health in audiences as well as journalists. Whilst radio broadcasts may have given some listeners the distinct impression of 'seeing' a live search and rescue mission, a virtual simulation of the event could be a step too far. Similarly, Bond (2020, p.679) reflects that "the moral or ethical counterargument to using virtual and immersive technologies to represent the refugee experience is, of course, that they allow participants to 'parachute' into a story of trauma, but that they are then free to leave". Fleeting immersion with the safety net of extracting oneself from trauma therefore speaks to a contradiction at the heart of immersive representations and storytelling.

On the flip side, Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) discuss how the media makes demands on 'our' sense of moral responsibility towards refugees. Interestingly, they reflect on "the media's psychological mechanism to protect audiences from emotional trauma" (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017, p.1166), and argue that:

"In turning the (relatively) safe West into the object of protection and treating suffering 'others' as 'hurtful' spectacles, media visualities perpetuate an ethnocentric ethics that remains absorbed with 'our' concerns while keeping 'others' outside of 'our' sphere of responsibility".

VR journalism that foregrounds the stories, voices, and embodied experiences of refugees might usefully contribute to efforts to prevent the trauma, violence, and

suffering of migration - and crucially, 'our' historical, political, and socio-economic entanglements in it - from being hidden, quite literally, from view. The experiential nature of VR, which unsettles ideas of passive spectatorship, means that it has an interesting role to play in defining what future "media visualities" on displacement might look like, and how they engage audiences and their capacity to care (Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017, p.1166). Listener responses in Chapter 6, however, suggest that immersive, place-based radio reportage may strike the perfect balance, whereby hearing audible accounts of migration cuts through moral indifference and expands imaginative communities of belonging without raising additional ethical concerns of emotional distress or moral injury caused by the act of witnessing and virtually experiencing. Either way, there is rich potential for geographers to delve deeper into multi-media journalism and reflect on what the integration of radio, podcasts, and VR might mean for studying the affective, emotional, and imaginative impact of reporting.

### *7.3.3 Summary*

These concluding reflections on podcasts and VR capture what Berry (2013, p.170) describes as "audio-visual convergences". They demonstrate how radio and podcasts are not isolated media, listened to in a silo or vacuum, but embedded within a broad media landscape with the potential to shape multisensory geographical imaginations. The BBC's integration of radio and podcasts with other media in news journalism highlights productive opportunities for future research on how listeners discover, engage with, and respond to audio and how geographical imaginations are constructed in a digital, multi-platform environment. This potential is recognised by Berry (2013, p.170) who discusses how radio "is using new technology and storytelling techniques to

drive brand awareness and offer audiences new experiences by adding a visual dimension to radio context". He points to the BBC's use of cameras in studios and sharing of content on social media that enable audiences to watch radio presenters broadcasting live and revisit programmes heard previously. After all, radio is no longer confined to the wireless in the living room, but increasingly consumed 'everywhere' and on the move via digital apps on smartphones, televisions, and tablets. This digitisation has not only led to portability, but to exciting synergies between radio and other media as journalists now share related or behind-the-scenes content that supports a broadcast and leads to a visualisation of radio.

Berry (2013), however, is careful to separate out content shared around a radio programme and the imaginative geographies envisioned by listeners in response to the broadcast. He distinguishes between "visual stimulus in the form of text, images, and interactive content that may help the audience to understand the programme better" and "the self-visualisation already performed in the mind of the listener" (Berry, 2013, p.173). Indeed, he stresses that "the programme remains the 'main event', but visualisation enhances and extends that experience" (Berry, 2013, p.172). This is to ensure his readers recognise that the imaginative capacity of radio remains its core attribute and strength. However, the findings of my listenership study suggest that media seen previously feed directly into what listeners imagine. In other words, additional prompts and cues, like VR and podcasts, are not separate from or additional to broadcasts, but *integral* to radio's construction of geographical imaginations.

Exploring how geographical imaginations are shaped by listening to radio alongside and in partnership with other media raises important questions for how

geographers might best capture and study this fluid environment of multi-media engagement. Adams (2011, p.48) develops a taxonomy that distinguishes between media in spaces, spaces in media, media in places, and places in media and re-conceptualises communication geography as “a field whose corners are defined by intersecting oppositions but whose middle remains a mystery”. He points towards “an area open to investigations” that unsettles neat distinctions of space and place, content and context, and instead thinks in terms of networks, translations, and flows (Adams, 2011, p.48). This vision for research that illuminates “the betweenness” (Adams, 2011, p.48) is given greater definition in his proposal of a new paradigm for media and communication geography: namely, “the metaphysics of encounter” (Adams, 2017, p.365). Adams (2017, p.365) argues that recent work on performance, networks, agency, politics, emotions, affect, materiality, and immateriality comes together in thinking about communications “not merely as transmissions through infrastructure, space and time, but rather as encounters between various human and non-human agents. The metaphysical question is exactly what such encounters do to participants”.

This proposed paradigm may be pertinent to future studies aimed at understanding how geographical imaginations are shaped, not just by radio, but by a digital, multi-media, multi-sensory world because as Adams (2017, p.371) reflects, “In the new metaphysics of encounter people engage with a wide range of different media and simultaneously encounter other people and things, near or far, still or mobile”. These encounters are not static or fixed, but dynamic and malleable. They are ‘events’ that speak to a broader “sensitivity of representation-as-practice, an ongoing process of making and re-making meaning” (Adams, 2017, p.371). Dittmer (2021) concurs noting that recent scholarship demonstrates a shift from media artefacts towards everyday

practices whereby popular culture is conceived “as a set of doings, as the lifeways of everyday people”. This has profound implications for how media geographers understand and study audience reception, not simply as “the endpoint of a media artefact”, but as “a lily pad on which processes of cultural production alight for a moment before moving on” (Dittmer, 2021). As Dittmer (2021) explains, “A more rhizomatic perpetually-in-flux world awaits our analysis, surging with affects and teeming with practices”. Yet crucially for Adams (2017, p.365), it is the generative potential of these practices and encounters which is crucial, “how agents are transformed by other agents’ communications”.

This potential for transformation is particularly important for geographers interested in news journalism and subjects like forced migration given the pace of technological innovation, which has led to a proliferation of ‘new’ media, and shifts in audience behaviour towards multi-media engagement (Ofcom, 2020); new realities that prompt Hahn (2013, p.8) to conclude “increasingly, people don’t actively look for news, but instead the news finds them”. There is room for caution, however. Television remains the dominant medium of choice where 75% of adults in the UK still consume their news, and interestingly, engagement with radio remains at a respectable 42% (Ofcom, 2020). Whilst these trends reverse in the 16 to 24-year-old age group - painting a clear direction of travel in the years ahead - they reinforce the necessity of integrating analyses of traditional and ‘new’ media. That is to say, there is scope for geographers to analyse how radio journalism is produced, consumed, and shared alongside other media in ways that animate, shape, and enhance the construction of geographical imaginations.

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This thesis began with the material geography of Broadcasting House and specifically, the sonic qualities, and imaginative aspirations, of its pavement art installation called *World*. It has ended with a discussion about the digital technologies that are re-inventing radio and, potentially, shaping how geographical imaginations are constructed in a multi-media, multi-sensory age. Returning to my fieldnotes written in response to interviewing journalists at the BBC on Portland Place helps makes this point clearly:

After walking across the concrete paving stones inscribed with place names from around the world, I arrive at the revolving glass doors of New Broadcasting House. On entering the building, ready to interview a journalist, I am directed by the reception desk to a comfortable seating area on the right-hand side. Having had my bag scanned and inspected by security, I take a seat in front of a vast cinema-sized screen showing live coverage of the BBC News channel. After watching international correspondent, Orla Guerin, reporting from Turkey, I glance around the entrance area. Embedded within a concrete column in the middle of the floorspace is another screen projecting the latest television dramas and popular podcasts on BBC Sounds. Occasionally, the screen flashes to a scrolling Twitter feed, showing breaking news stories and exchanges between BBC journalists. It is a glossy, colourful space, constantly bustling with people coming in and out of the building.

After a short wait, my interviewee emerges from a second set of revolving glass doors that split off the sunken newsroom from the public reception area. She kindly invites me in, showing her official pass to a burly security guard, and guides me to the lifts that will take us up to Floor 4. We press the button signalling 'up' and the lift doors immediately open. Suddenly, I am struck by the sound of radio broadcasting. It turns out we are in the 'Radio 2 lift' and she tells me that each lift has a signature station. We share a joke about being relieved we are not in the Radio 1 lift - signalling our shared passion for Radio 4 - and are transported high up into the heart of the building.

It turns out, we spoke too soon. The first available lift on the way down immerses us in the official music chart with Radio 1 DJ, Scott Mills. We exchange a knowing smile and begin our descent to the ground floor. I thank her and wave goodbye before meeting my second interviewee. This time, we stay on the same level and walk over to the BBC's media café. It is a light, welcoming space with windows on both sides: those on the left look onto the busy traffic of Portland Place, while those on the right give a fabulous, bird's-eye view of the lively newsroom below. Dotted around the café are more screens displaying rolling television coverage and screenshots from the BBC's online news page. It becomes clear to me that

the full range of the BBC's output is on display. More than that, it is built into the very fabric of the building.

This closing vignette captures the digital, multisensory world around us. Journalism, within and outside of radio, is experiencing transformations in how stories are communicated, consumed, circulated, and re-told. Bailenson (2018) reminds us that “new media technologies have always gone hand-in-hand with journalism” and “the definition of journalism has constantly evolved along with those technologies”. Similarly, we, as consumers, are constantly interacting with and being confronted by visual and sonic stimuli that compete for our attention and immerse us in a digital, multi-media world. This thesis demonstrates some of the specific ways in which geographers can explore how journalism is produced and consumed, and highlights the value of engaging with journalists and listeners to better understand how geographical imaginations are constructed, shaped, and animated in radio - through the ear, mind's eye, and body.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Reference List of 172 Radio Broadcasts

86 Editions of BBC Radio 4's *The World Tonight*. Available at: [BBC Radio 4 - The World Tonight - Available now](#) [Accessed on: June 20<sup>th</sup> 2021].

### 2014

*Africa and Migration to Europe*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 1 January 2014.

*Ship carrying migrants towed into port in Italy and Impact of immigration on Slough*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 2 January 2014.

*Government announcement today that "around 500 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees will be granted asylum in the UK". But Government is "facing criticism for its treatment of women refugees" following report published today by Women for Refugee Women*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 January 2014.

*Politics of migration and asylum in Italy*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 22 May 2014.

*Libya. Transit point for migration to Europe*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 30 May 2014.

*Refugees stranded in northern Iraq*, 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 13 August 2014.

*Mayor of Calais "has threatened to block the port to cope with the influx of migrants"*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 4 September 2014.

*Latest from Calais "where migrants are calling for more protection from police" ahead of a counter-protest on Sunday by an anti-immigration group whom they fear*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 5 September 2014.

*Turkey fears that hundreds of thousands of Syrians could flee across the border to escape Islamic State fighters*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 22 September 2014.

*Mayor of Calais says "migrants who've arrived at the port are prepared to die to reach Britain because of its generous benefits system"*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 28 October 2014.

*UNHCR announce that Western countries have agreed to increase the number of Syrian refugees they will accept for resettlement*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 9 December 2014.

*Pegida march [Patriotic Europeans against the Islamicisation of the Occident] in Dresden and counter protest. Germany's migration debate heats up*. 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 December 2014.

*Monastery in Switzerland that has opened its doors to asylum seekers.* 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 23 December 2014.

*Immigration. "Is Britain really a soft touch?"* 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 December 2014.

*Stories of migrants from Old Europe who come to work in Britain.* 2014. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 30 December 2014.

## **2015**

*Ship carrying 450 migrants towed to Italy.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 2 January 2015.

*MSF launches own search and rescue mission in Mediterranean in wake of FRONTEX mission aimed at "tightening borders".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 10 April 2015.

*EU announces that it's tripling funding for border patrol/search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean and clamping down on people smugglers.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 23 April 2015.

*EU approves plans to launch military mission to combat "people traffickers" and their "business model" in the Mediterranean, but will it work?* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 18 May 2015.

*Closure of the Italian/French border "latest flash point in the crisis". But EU talks aimed at "sharing the burden" of "thousands of migrants" ended without a deal. Is Schengen under threat?* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 16 June 2015.

*EU leaders at summit in Brussels to discuss a scheme to relocate 40,000 refugees currently in Greece and Italy.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 25 June 2015.

*Billionaire businessman proposes housing the world's refugees on an uninhabited island as a new refugee country.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 27 July 2015.

*2000 migrants break into the Eurotunnel terminal. The World Tonight speaks with lorry driver representative.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 28 July 2015.

*French police sending reinforcements to Channel Tunnel terminal.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 July 2015.

*David Cameron criticized for "swarm" comments when describing migrants trying to reach Britain.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 30 July 2015.

*UNHCR critical of Europe's treatment of migrants.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 07 August 2015.

*Clashes at the Macedonia/Greek border between police and migrants as Macedonia declares state of emergency.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 21 August 2015.

*Germany suspends Dublin agreement to make it easier for Syrian refugees to gain asylum.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 25 August 2015.

*"What should be done to stop the people traffickers"? Bodies of between 20-50 migrants found in a lorry on the Austrian/Hungarian border.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 27 August 2015.

*As four suspected people traffickers are arrested over deaths of more than 70 people in lorry in Austria the World Tonight asks whether compassion and moral duty are being left out of the migration debate.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 28 August 2015.

*As vehicle checks increase on the Hungarian-Austrian border and Merkel warns the "refugee crisis may call into question the Schengen Agreement", The World Tonight asks whether free movement should survive.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 31 August 2015.

*Police/migrant clashes in Budapest. Drowning of Syrian child refugee Aylan Kurdi.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 02 September 2015.

*David Cameron comes under increasing pressure to accept more refugees against backdrop of violent clashes in Hungary and BBC News Interviews with Aylan Kurdi's father and aunt.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 03 September 2015.

*As chaos reigns in Hungary and David Cameron proposes to take in thousands more Syrians from UN refugee camps in neighbouring countries, The World Tonight debates "concerns that a large influx of migrants would change the face of Europe and Britain".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 04 September 2015.

*As the UNHCR criticises Europe's asylum policies the World Tonight discusses "the latest on Europe's quota plans and hears what forces people to flee from Syria".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 08 September 2015.

*As the EU President calls for EU countries to accept a compulsory quota scheme the World Tonight asks whether "Europe is divided on the issue between former communist countries and their Western allies".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 09 September 2015.

*Hungary says that it's going to arrest those "crossing its border illegally" whilst Human Rights groups condemn the treatment of refugees in a detention centre in Hungary.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 11 September 2015.

*Hungary tightening security with plans for more border fences, meanwhile plans are put forward for camps outside Europe as a "longer term solution to the migrant crisis".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 September 2015.

*EU approves "controversial plan" to relocate 120,000 refugees around member states through a compulsory quota system.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 22 September 2015.

*Emergency EU summit continues "trying to find a common solution to the migrant crisis". More financial support to go to countries and agencies hosting Syrian refugees.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 23 September 2015.

*Theresa May announces changes to Britain's asylum policy and claims immigration hinders a "cohesive society" and "didn't help the economy".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 06 October 2015.

*Criticism grows over Angela Merkel's migration policy.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 09 October 2015.

*As foreign ministers hold talks in Vienna to try and find a solution to the Syrian conflict the World Tonight reports from Jordan's refugee camps "where conditions are so dire, some are making the treacherous trip back to Syria".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 October 2015.

*Special report on the "exploitation of Syrian refugee children".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 03 November 2015.

*European and African leaders meet in Malta to discuss how to reduce number of people migrating from Africa to Europe.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 11 November 2015.

*Special edition recorded at the Refugees Study Centre in Oxford with "expert panel on immigration and cohesion".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 20 November 2015.

*Christmas in Calais. Life in a camp for those "hoping to make a new life in the UK".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 23 December 2015.

*The year in review featuring migration, Europe, terrorism and Syria.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 24 December 2015.

*The best of 2015. Collection of reports from the World Tonight throughout the year.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 31 December 2015.

## 2016

*Deputy Mayor of Calais has condemned British volunteers working in the camp as "activists" who are working to "manipulate the migrants".* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 14 January 2016.

*Are attitudes towards refugees and migrants changing in Europe?* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 January 2016.

*President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, warns that "the EU has no more than 2 months to get the crisis under control".* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 19 January 2016.

*Some EU states plan to prolong temporary border controls for up to 2 years and criticise Greece for not doing enough to stop migrants.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 25 January 2016.

*Danish parliament votes to allow border police to seize valuables from asylum seekers to cover the cost of benefits and extend the waiting time for family reunification from 1 to 3 years.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 26 January 2016.

*Turkey says "tens of thousands" are fleeing towards its border as fighting around Aleppo escalates. Meanwhile billions of pounds have been pledged "to help Syrian refugees" at an international donor conference in London.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 04 February 2016.

*Angela Merkel has condemned the Russian bombing of Aleppo as thousands of migrants flee the Syrian city.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 08 February 2016.

*As thousands of Syrians flee from the conflict Turkey pleas for more international help.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 09 February 2016.

*Discussion of the EU's stance on migration after a summit in Brussels on Brexit and migration. Two arts students have designed a "wearable habitation coat" for refugees.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 18 February 2016.

*EU under pressure to reduce numbers arriving with some pointing to risk posed to Schengen. Austria/Greece relations sour over migration and borders.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 25 February 2016.

*Clashes in Calais between riot police and migrants. Unaccompanied child migrants in Europe.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 February 2016.

*Has the EU run out of ideas on how to deal with the crisis? President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, warns "illegal economic migrants [...] not to come to Europe", whilst Francois Hollande warns Britain that if it votes to leave the EU there will be*

*"consequences", including "over the control of immigration".* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 03 March 2016.

*EU leaders meet to discuss a new EU-Turkey deal.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 07 March 2016.

*The UN says that the draft deal approved by European leaders thought to contravene international law.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 08 March 2016.

*EU says its naval operation in the Mediterranean has saved thousands in the past six months as Pope is set to visit the Morea camp on Lesbos.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 April 2016.

*More than a thousand people reported to have died in the Mediterranean crossing from Libya to Italy in the last eight days.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 31 May 2016.

*David Cameron on immigration and Brexit; German Parliament declares mass killing of Armenians in early 20<sup>th</sup> Century as "genocide", throwing into jeopardy Germany-Turkey relations.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 02 June 2016.

*BBC reporter recounts the dangers facing those journeying to Europe through Libya; Italy's plans to disperse refugees across the country.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 01 September 2016.

*Angela Merkel says her migration policy was to blame for her party's electoral defeat in her home state. Is this the beginning of the end for Europe's most powerful politician?* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 05 September 2016.

*French authorities say that they've cleared the Calais camp ahead of demolition but reports that "hundreds of people are still there" including unaccompanied children.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 26 October 2016.

*Pakistani asylum seeker released after his arrest following terror attack on Christmas market in Berlin. Growing pressure on Angela Merkel to change her migrant policy.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 20 December 2016.

*Whilst Syrian army says it's now in full control of Aleppo the World Tonight hears from seven year old, Bana Alabed, famous for her tweets about living in Aleppo.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 22 December 2016.

## **2017**

*EU pledges support for migrant camps in Libya.* 2017. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 03 February 2017.

*Geert Wilders' anti-immigration Freedom Party loses Dutch elections.* 2017. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 March 2017.

*New plan to stem the flow of migrants crossing the Mediterranean.* 2017. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 04 July 2017.

*Smugglers push African migrants off their boats off the coast of Yemen with many feared drowned.* 2017. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 10 August 2017.

*EU summit split over migrant policy.* 2017. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 14 December 2017.

## **2018**

*Europe divided on migration policy.* 2018. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 June 2018.

*EU summit deal 'blocked' by Italy over migration.* 2018. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 28 June 2018.

*EU leaders disagree over migration deal hours after signing it.* 2018. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 June 2018.

*UN claims Venezuela situation "as bad as Mediterranean migrant crisis".* 2018. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 24 August 2018.

*Border Force patrol ships being deployed in English Channel "to help stop migrants trying to cross from France".* 2018. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 31 December 2018.

## **2019**

*Italian government "blames Europe's migrant crisis on France's colonisation of Africa". Geopolitical rows between member states over migration signals continuing division.* 2019. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 22 January 2019.

**86 'Feature' Programmes on BBC Radio 4. Available at: [BBC Radio 4 FM - Schedules](#) [Accessed on: June 20<sup>th</sup> 2021].**

## **2014**

*Refugee Stories*. 2014. Four Thought. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 12 January 2014.

*Asylum*. 2014. Four Thought. BBC Radio 4. 9 February 2014.

*Time to Rethink Asylum?* 2014. Analysis. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 8 June 2014.

*Syrian refugees*. 2014. Woman's Hour. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 9 July 2014.

## **2015**

*Julia Franck*. 2015. Letters from Europe. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 11 February 2015.

*Asylum Seekers*. 2015. File on 4. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 February 2015.

*Stories behind immigration*. 2015. Thinking Aloud. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 27 April 2015.

*What is our moral duty to Mediterranean migrants?* 2015. Moral Maze. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 13 June 2015.

*The Chef: "We cook as if we were cooking for our own family"*. 2015. PM. Ordinary Italians. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 25 June 2015.

*The Gravedigger: "We have to face this reality"*. 2015. PM. Ordinary Italians. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 26 June 2015.

*The Hospital Director: "We've all pulled together, all of us"*. 2015. PM. Ordinary Italians. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 27 June 2015.

*The Optician: "I've never seen so many people in the water"*. 2015. PM. Ordinary Italians. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 28 June 2015.

*The Carpenter: "It's a good feeling, to give a cross"*. 2015. PM. Ordinary Italians. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 June 2015.

*Ticket to Hide*. 2015. File on 4. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 28 June 2015.

*A Mediterranean Rescue*. 2015. Crossing Continents. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 3 August 2015.

*The Harragas of Algeria*. 2015. Crossing Continents. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 24 August 2015.

*Migrant Crisis*. 2015. More or Less. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 16 August 2015.

*The Migration Dilemma*. 2015. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 12 September 2015.

*Food Stories from Syria.* 2015. The Food Programme. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 27 September 2015.

*Everything you wanted to know about migration.* 2015. PM. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 6 October 2015.

*The Billion-Dollar Aid Question.* 2015. File on 4. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 1 November 2015.

*Changing Laws of War.* 2015. Four Thought. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 11 November 2015.

*Lebanon.* 2015. The Listening Project. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 20 December 2015

*Reporting Migration.* 2015. The Media Show. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 23 December 2015

*A Not So Merry Migrant Christmas in Vienna.* 2015. The Report. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 24 December 2015

*The Boat Children.* 2015. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 December 2015.

## **2016**

*Seeking sanctuary in Germany.* 2016. Sunday. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 17 January 2016.

*Migration and Citizenship.* 2016. Start the Week. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 25 January 2016.

*Child refugees.* 2016. Woman's Hour. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 3 February 2016.

*Germany: At the Centre.* 2016. Europe: Strangers on my Doorstep. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 February 2016.

*Hungary: At the Cutting Edge.* 2016. Europe: Strangers on my Doorstep. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 22 February 2016.

*A Swedish Tale.* 2016. Europe: Strangers on my Doorstep. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 February 2016.

*Sunday Omnibus: Migration.* 2016. The Listening Project. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 6 March 2016.

*The Day the Refugees Came.* 2016. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 13 March 2016.

*Child Rescue.* 2016. The Untold. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 2 May 2016.

*The Migrant Crisis: A Spy Master's Perspective.* 2016. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 16 May 2016.

- Reporting the Migration Crisis*. 2016. The Media Show. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 June 2016.
- John McCarthy meets Afghan refugee Rafi*. 2016. One to One. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 3 August 2016.
- Food Stories from Syria 2*. 2016. The Food Programme. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 25 September 2016.
- Lampedusa Reunion: The Optician and the migrant*. 2016. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 4 October 2016.
- Moral Imagination and Migration*. 2016. Moral Maze. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 26 October 2016.
- The Search for Bru: The search for four year-old Bru and her father who had been living in the Calais jungle*. 2016. The Untold. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 14 November 2016.
- 2017**
- A Greek Tragedy*. 2017. File on 4. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 January 2017.
- Breaking into Britain*. 2017. File on 4. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 22 January 2017.
- Lebanon's trapped refugees*. 2017. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 18 March 2017.
- Migrant Entrepreneurs*. 2017. The Bottom Line. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 25 March 2017.
- Mount Edgumbe Plymouth. Clare Balding joins a group of refugees and students who enjoy walking together*. 2017. Ramblings. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 1 April 2017.
- Zahra and Yousif. A Lot of Pay Back*. 2017. The Listening Project. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 14 April 2017.
- Getting out of Afghanistan*. 2017. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 22 April 2017.
- Assad and Helen. Isolation versus Privacy*. 2017. The Listening Project. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 26 May 2017.
- Education and integration. Migrants go to Greek School*. 2017. iPM. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 27 May 2017.
- Finding the Right Words. Border crossings in the Spanish enclave of Ceuta and in Germany a Syrian selfie fanatic at the heart of the battle against fake news*. 2017. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 1 June 2017.

*Hard to stomach. Refugees continue to cross the Eritrean border into Ethiopia.* 2017. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 8 June 2017.

*Talk of War. Plain clothes policemen following anti-migrant campaigners while a TV drama is being filmed about the mayor opening his town to Syrians.* 2017. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 8 July 2017.

*The refugees' crisis.* 2017. iPM. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 July 2017.

*Why is there still a migrant crisis in Europe?* 2017. The Briefing Room. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 27 July 2017.

*Hard to Read. Nick Thorpe meets the migrants trying to cross the Hungary-Serbia border.* 2017. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 16 September 2017.

*Clinging to Hope. African migrants that refuse to give up on their European dreams.* 2017. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 23 September 2017.

*Future shock. Why did so many Germans vote for the anti-immigration AFD Party?* 2017. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 28 September 2017.

*This Time it's Different. Migrant children in Sweden and "Resignation Syndrome".* 2017. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 21 October 2017.

*Evacuating a Greek Migrant Camp.* 2017. iPM. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 4 November 2017.

*Life after a migrant camp.* 2017. iPM. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 11 November 2017.

*Mike and Nouri go fishing.* 2017. The Untold. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 27 November 2017.

**2018**

*Refugees and Bees. Syrian bee expert Dr Ryad Alsous on how he's teaching fellow refugees to be beekeepers.* On Your Farm. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 14 January 2018.

*Mosul. Life after ISIS.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 3 February 2018.

*Blood and Tears. From Lebanon, Syrian refugees watch the destruction of their homes in Eastern Ghouta.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 8 March 2018.

*Greece's Haven Hotel.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 9 April 2018.

*Yonathan and Rachel. Refugees at Home.* 2018. The Listening Project. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 13 April 2018.

*Asylum.* 2018. Unreliable Evidence. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 21 April 2018.

*How hostile or tolerant is the UK, in your personal experience, to immigration?* 2018. You and Yours. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 1 May 2018.

*Not welcome here. Migrants returning home to Nigeria from Libya.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 5 May 2018.

*Food Stories from Syria 3.* 2018. The Food Programme. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 21 May 2018.

*Clare Balding walks with former detainees of the Gatwick Immigration Removal Centres.* 2018. Ramblings. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 26 May 2018.

*Refugees.* 2018. How Syria Changed the World. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 May 2018.

*A New front in the Fight Against Terror on the Edge of the Sahara.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 21 June 2018.

*What Hope? Jenny Hill meets Syrian refugee Eli in Abensberg, Germany.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 30 June 2018.

*Imagine. Michael Morpurgo on child refugees in Britain.* 2018. A Point of View. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 July 2018.

*The Sound of Syria.* 2018. Four Thought. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 18 August 2018.

*Refugee Reminiscence.* 2018. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 22 August 2018.

*The Yazidis Still Missing in Iraq.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 8 September 2018.

*A Syrian Radio Drama.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 15 September 2018.

*Life Inside Libya's Migrant Detention Centres.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 11 October 2018.

*Immigration and Religion: A Sunday Programme Special.* 2018. Sunday. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 30 December 2018.

## **2019**

*Migrants – Refugees.* 2019. Thinking Allowed. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 14 January 2019.

*A community centre on the Greek island of Lesbos.* 2019. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 14 February 2019.

*The Crossing. What's being done to stop people risking their lives crossing the English Channel.* 2019. File on 4. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 24 March 2019.

## Appendix B: Example Broadcast Transcript - *The Listening Project* - 14.04.2017

[Tinkling theme music bed]

Fi Glover: This is a conversation between brother and sister Yousif and Zahra. It's about how they feel about how all of us might feel about them. That's a sentence that will immediately become clearer once they start chatting.

Yousif was born in Turkey en route on an arduous journey his parents had to take to flee Iraq in 1997 after his father took part in an uprising against Saddam Hussein. They left everything behind. They reached this country, and after a long and complicated process, they were awarded refugee status and are now full citizens.

Yousif is studying politics and international relations at university and his younger sister Zahra one of two younger sisters is doing her GCSEs.

[Music ends]

Zahra: I don't think I'd be as ambitious as I was if I, like, had English parents and I grew up in England

Yousif: Because of, like, the struggle...

Zahra: I think so...I think so...

Yousif: ...of getting here.

Zahra: So I mean mama and baba are like crossing the oceans and the world and whatever for us to be here...

Yousif: The mighty journey, yeah...

Zahra: ...mighty journey. I'm sorry, like, climbing up mountains, carrying you and stuff like that. I think, if I didn't have that I wouldn't strive to get As, I wouldn't strive to get into the best unis, to make them happy and stuff like that. I don't think, 100 percent.

Yousif: So do you think you owe them anything?

Zahra: 100 percent. There are very few people in this world that will sacrifice for you and I think especially nowadays there are very few people who will stick by you and will be loyal by you through everything. So I think that's why it's important to appreciate what they have done. But appreciation isn't anything if you don't give it back.

Yousif: Like I agree with you because most of the things I mean I would say 90 percent of the reason why I strive to kind of achieve things in my life is to kind of say...

Listen, mama and baba, you have fought something that, like we are seeing in the news now, the Mediterranean, erm, migrant crisis where people are drowning, literally drowning with their kids, to get to this country. They did that. My motivation in life in this country is like, number one: I owe this country, something.

Zahra: That's true. That's true.

Yousif: I mean like I owe this country to contribute to it. Whatever, I want to get into politics. That's my area. You want to get into medicine like that's your contribution. I will go as far like in public service to this country as possible. To contribute to the country.

Zahra: I'm sorry, like...

Yousif: They've given me shelter...

Zahra: ...they came in here with nothing and then we had... Like, free health service

Yousif: ...free healthcare, free housing, the world-class education, an opportunity to go to, basically the best universities in the world.

Zahra: Acceptance, as well.

Yousif: ...and acceptance. Like...

Zahra: We're not, like, isolated...

Yousif: We're not, not,

Zahra: I don't see, like, stones being thrown at us...

Yousif: No, no... That's one part of motivation. My second part is, like, okay mama and baba, I owe you something.

Zahra: It's true

Yousif: You have done all of that and you think after all of that we come to this country and I don't give back to you? And I don't think it's monetary. Like I think it's beyond money like it's not even a money thing. It's a success it's like I just want dad to look and say, okay I did all of that, yeah, it was worth it.

Zahra: It's like, it's like. Do you know what it's like? Children are investments.

Yousif: We are investments.

Zahra: We are investments. So, I'm not going to sit there, yeah, and...

Yousif: ... and kind of just mess about and...

Zahra: ...and say, oh, do you know what...

Yousif: But that a good motivation?

Zahra: Yeah! Of course, it's good motivation! What do you mean?!

Yousif: No, cause a lot of people have questioned me, like I've had conversations with people like. Wait, so your only motivation in life is to give back to your parents?

Zahra: No, I don't, I don't think so. I also, like, I, okay this is a bit selfish, but I also want to make a name for myself, but I'm not going to lie...

Yousif: No, no. Part of me also wants to say, I'm a Muslim.

Zahra: Yeah.

Yousif: I'm an immigrant.

Zahra: Yeah. It's true.

Yousif: Look, I have done something with my life.

Zahra: It's not even that. I'm not like...

Yousif: I am not what the papers present me to be, I am not a statistic.

[Tinkling theme music bed]

Fi Glover: Zahra and Yousif were recorded by Louise Pepper at BBC Radio London.

## Appendix C: List of 17 Interviews Conducted with Journalists

- Baukham, S., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Telephone interview. March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Boaden, H., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Face to face interview. Oxford. February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Bowlby, C., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Telephone interview. April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Carr, J., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Telephone interview. April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Grewal, S., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Face to face interview. London. February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Harney, B., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Virtual interview. April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Hill, J., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Telephone interview. February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Hosken, A., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Face to face interview. London. February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Kirby, E.J., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Telephone interview. February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Korycinska, A., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Virtual interview. April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Levinson, H., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Telephone interview. April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Lustig, R., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Telephone interview. March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Margaronis, M., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Face to face interview. London. February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Morris, C., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Face to face interview. Oxford. March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Reynolds, J., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Virtual interview. February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.

Shah, R., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Face to face interview. London. February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Williams, G., 2020. *Research on BBC Radio 4, Forced Migration and Refugee Settlement in Europe*. Interviewed by Alice Watson. Telephone interview. March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

## Appendix D: Example Interview Questions for Presenter of *The World Tonight*

### Presenting The World Tonight (TWT)

1. What was your route to becoming presenter of TWT and could you tell me about your experience presenting the programme?
2. Could you describe a typical day preparing for the evening's edition of TWT?
3. How did you prepare for such an array of news stories? Did you have researchers?
4. How would you describe your role as presenter?
5. What was the most challenging and rewarding thing about being presenter?

### Production and Editorial at TWT

6. Could you describe the team who work on the programme?
7. Could you describe the network of BBC correspondents you are able to draw on?
8. How far in advance did you prepare the 'feature' stories for each programme? And how did you select/who selects which stories to give extended coverage to?
9. Could you tell me about the editorial processes behind the programme? And the kinds of editorial conversations you'd have on a daily/weekly basis?
10. How did you select interviewees and contributors?

### TWT and Radio 4 News Output

11. How does TWT fit into Radio 4's overall news output?
12. TWT claims to be more global in output than Radio 4's other flagship news programmes. Do you think it achieves this ambition, why and how?
13. Did you have regular conversations with the news teams behind Today, WATO, and PM - and The World Service's Newshour - about the stories they are covering or angles they are taking? And do you adjust or shape your coverage in relation to their output?
14. How would you define the role of TWT?
15. How would you define the voice of Radio 4?

### TWT, Migration, and Radio

16. Are there any moments from TWT's migration coverage that have stayed with you?
17. You often had/have to orchestrate conversations between opposing politicians or interviewees. What was that experience like?
18. Looking back on Radio 4's coverage of Europe's migration 'crisis', what did it do well? What might it have done better?
19. What do you think is the role and responsibility of journalists when reporting on migration?
20. What is distinctive, if anything, about radio journalism on the 'crisis' relative to television/newspaper reports?

## Appendix E: List of 12 Radio Broadcasts in Digital Playlist

- Italy (at sea) on board a Frontex patrol boat ill-equipped to take over from Italy's navy.* 2015. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme]. BBC Radio 4. 14 February 2015.
- 2000 migrants break into the Eurotunnel terminal. The World Tonight speaks with lorry driver representative.* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 28 July 2015.
- A Mediterranean Rescue.* 2015. Crossing Continents. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 3 August 2015.
- Christmas in Calais. Life in a camp for those "hoping to make a new life in the UK".* 2015. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 23 December 2015.
- Clashes in Calais between riot police and migrants. Unaccompanied child migrants in Europe.* 2016. The World Tonight. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 February 2016.
- Child Rescue.* 2016. The Untold. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 2 May 2016.
- Zahra and Yousif. A Lot of Pay Back.* 2017. The Listening Project. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 14 April 2017.
- Education and integration. Migrants go to Greek School.* 2017. iPM. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 27 May 2017.
- Refugees and Bees. Syrian bee expert Dr Ryad Alsous on how he's teaching fellow refugees to be beekeepers.* On Your Farm. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 14 January 2018.
- Clare Balding walks with former detainees of the Gatwick Immigration Removal Centres.* 2018. Ramblings. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 26 May 2018.
- What Hope? Jenny Hill meets Syrian refugee Eli in Abensberg, Germany.* 2018. From Our Own Correspondent. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 30 June 2018.
- Imagine. Michael Morpurgo on child refugees in Britain.* 2018. A Point of View. [Radio Programme] BBC Radio 4. 29 July 2018.

## **Appendix F: Listenership Study Participant Characteristics**

Matthew. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Male. 50-64 Years. Doctorate. Retired. BBC Radio 4 listener. 10 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Adam. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Male. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Self-Employed. BBC Radio 4 listener. 3 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Francesca. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Retired. BBC Radio 4 listener. 12 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Patrick. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Male. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Self-Employed. BBC Radio 4 listener. 14 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Simon. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Male. 65+ Years. Doctorate. Full Time. BBC Radio 4 listener. 7 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Philip. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Male. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Unemployed. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Clare. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Student. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Stephen. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Male. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 1.5 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Felicity. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Masters. Full Time. BBC Radio 4 listener. 5 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Elizabeth. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Masters. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 1 hour of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Natalie. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Masters. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Holly. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Masters. Student. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 1.5 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Sarah. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Masters. Student. BBC Radio 4 listener. 7 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Emma. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. A-Level. Student. BBC Radio 4 listener. 5 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Graham. Pilot Cohort. February-March 2020. Other. 20-34 Years. Masters. Part-Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Amy. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Masters. Retired. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Mia. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Masters. Student. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Liam. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 20-34 Years. Masters. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Charlotte. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Self-Employed. BBC Radio 4 listener. 5 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Sophia. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Part-Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Isabella. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Masters. Retired. BBC Radio 4 listener. 10 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Amelia. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Self-Employed. BBC Radio 4 listener. 12 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Colin. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Self-Employed. BBC Radio 4 listener. 4 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Noah. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Camilla. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. A-Level. Part-Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Oliver. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Abigail. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Masters. Student. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Ella. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Scarlett. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Part-Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 1 hour of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Grace. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Masters. Student. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Ben. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Self-Employed. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Lucas. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 50-64 Years. Diploma. Full Time. BBC Radio 4 listener. 5-10 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Chloe. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. A-Level. Student. BBC Radio 4 listener. 7-8 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Hazel. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. A-Level. Student. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Henry. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 20-34 Years. Masters. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Victoria. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Lily. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Student. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 2 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Michael. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 20-34 Years. Bachelors. Student. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 2 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Ethan. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 20-34 Years. Masters. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Daniel. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Full Time. BBC Radio 4 listener. 5-10 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Justine. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Part-Time. BBC Radio 4 listener. 7 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Zoe. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 20-34 Years. Masters. Student. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 0 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Susan. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Retired. BBC Radio 4 listener. 3 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Lucy. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Part-Time. BBC Radio 4 listener. 15 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Jacob. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 50-64 Years. Bachelors. Retired. BBC Radio 4 listener. 3 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Audrey. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 65+ Years. Doctorate. Retired. BBC Radio 4 listener. 10 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Ruby. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Masters. Part-Time. BBC Radio 4 listener. 10 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Sebastian. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 65+ Years. Bachelors. Retired. BBC Radio 4 listener. 20 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Samuel. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Male. 50-64 Years. Masters. Unemployed. BBC Radio 4 listener. 4 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Gabriella. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Masters. Self-Employed. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 1-2 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

Hayley. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wave Cohort. April-June 2020. Female. 50-64 Years. Masters. Full Time. Non/Occasional BBC Radio 4 listener. 2 hours of BBC Radio 4 per week.

## Appendix G: Example Extract from Listener Reflective Diary



 SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY  
AND THE ENVIRONMENT

School of Geography and the Environment  
Oxford University Centre for the Environment  
University of Oxford  
South Parks Road  
Oxford, OX1 3QY  
United Kingdom

### Research Playlist on Radio 4 and Forced Migration

Alice Watson - Geography DPhil Candidate

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Hello,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research on Radio 4 and forced migration to Europe. I really appreciate your time and effort, and this project would not be possible without your involvement.

I am interested in how Radio 4 portrayed forced migration and refugee settlement in Europe and how radio sparks the imagination of listeners - calling on you to *imagine* the places and people that broadcasters describe, whether through sounds or spoken word.

I am therefore asking you to record your responses, thoughts, and reactions to selected Radio 4 broadcasts between 2014 and 2019: a period that witnessed escalating refugee arrivals in Europe and the acute politicisation of migration during the Brexit campaign.

Before you embark on the study, I'd be grateful if you could complete your 'Listener Details' (Page 3 - 6). Please remember to return your signed ethical consent form, along with this reflective diary, at the end of the two-week period.

Please read carefully the instructions (Page 7 - 8) and if you have any questions, queries, or problems, please don't hesitate to get in touch: [alice.watson@sjc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alice.watson@sjc.ox.ac.uk) [07955 872600](tel:07955872600)

Many thanks and best wishes,

Alice

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**Listener Details**

1. Do you ever listen to the radio?

Yes - Yes

No

If Yes, which BBC radio stations do you listen to? (Please tick all that apply)

BBC Radio 1 No

BBC Radio 2 No

BBC Radio 3 No

BBC Radio 4 Yes

BBC Radio 5 Live Yes

BBC 6 Music No

Other (please state)

Speech Radio Stations **None**

Music Radio Stations **Classic FM**

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2. Approximately how many hours a week do you listen to each of your selected radio stations?

Radio Station	Hours Per Week
BBC Radio 1	
BBC Radio 2	
BBC Radio 3	
BBC Radio 4	2 hours
BBC Radio 5 Live	Infrequently. Less than half an hour but not every week.
BBC 6 Music	
Other	2 hours

3. Please indicate which age bracket you fall into?

20 – 34 years

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- 35 – 49 years
- 50 – 64 years **Yes**
- 65 years and over

4. What is your gender?

- Female **Yes**
- Male
- Other
- Prefer not to say

5. What is your highest degree or level of school qualification you have completed?

- GCSE or equivalent
- A-Level or equivalent
- Bachelors degree
- Masters degree **Yes**
- Doctorate
- Other (please specify)

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6. What is your current employment status?

- Full time **Yes**
- Part time
- Unemployed
- Self employed
- Student
- Retired
- Unable to work

Thank you very much for providing your listener details.


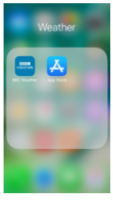
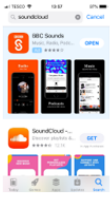
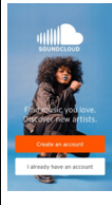
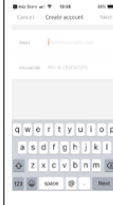
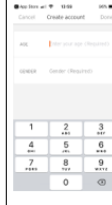
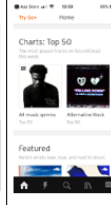
Please note, any data from which you can be identified, which in this case includes name, email address, age, employment, education, and radio listening habits is known as **personal data**. **Personal data** will be stored in a secure, password protected hard-drive and stored for three years after submission of the thesis.

The information you provide during the study (ie. in the reflective diary) is **research data**. My two supervisors and I will have access to the **research data**. Responsible members of the University of Oxford may be given access to the data for monitoring and/or audit of the research.

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**Instructions:**

- I have selected twelve radio broadcasts for you to listen to across news and general interest programmes on Radio 4. I have put these all together in a 'playlist'. Please listen, in your own time, to each recording in the playlist. Table 1 lists each recording by programme, broadcast title, audio length, and date of broadcast. Please try to listen in chronological order, however, this is not essential. You can listen in one sitting or sporadically over the two-week period. The total length of the playlist is 2 hours 20 minutes.
- The playlist is collated on SoundCloud, which is an online audio hosting site. You can access the playlist in two ways: first, I have sent you a link via email. Just click on the link and you'll be taken straight to the playlist. Each time you want to listen, just go back to this email link. Second, you are welcome to download the free SoundCloud app for ease of listening on your smartphone or tablet. But this is not mandatory. You will be asked to create an account, providing your name, age, and gender. Downloading the free app does not commit you to anything and you can delete the app after use, which also deletes your data. To download the app, just follow these 7 steps:

Step 1: Go to your home screen	Step 2: Select the App store	Step 3: Search for and click 'Get' SoundCloud	Step 4: Open SoundCloud and click 'Create an account'	Step 5: Fill in your email address and create a password	Step 6: Add your age and gender, and click 'Save'	Step 7: You're ready to get started!
						

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- Table 1 is your reflective diary. It has two columns for you to write in as you listen to each recording in the playlist:
  - Column: 'Where you listened' - please detail where you listened to each broadcast - eg. at home, whilst on a walk in the park. Please do not listen to the playlist while driving a car and take extra care if listening while walking or crossing a road.
  - Column: 'Reflective Diary: Your Comments' - please write your thoughts, reactions, and feelings about each broadcast. I have provided some prompt questions below to think about while listening to the playlist - but please don't feel tied to these questions, they are just an initial guide. Please don't feel you need to fill the whole space provided. Write as much or as little as you like!
- At the end of the two-week period, please return your reflective diary by email.

**Questions to think about when listening to the broadcasts and writing your reflective diary:**

- What is your immediate reaction to the broadcast?
- What do you imagine when listening to the broadcast?
- What do you picture in your mind?
- How do you imagine the people and places in the broadcast?
- How does it make you feel?
- Is there anything that surprises, shocks, or annoys you?
- Is there anything you like or dislike about the broadcast?
- Is there a particular moment, scene, conversation, or sound that catches your attention?
- Do you have any thoughts about the journalist or contributors heard in the broadcast?
- What does it make you think about refugees and migration to Europe?
- Do you have any thoughts about the language used in the broadcast?
- Is there anything that has stayed with you after listening to the broadcast or the playlist in its entirety?

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Table 1: Playlist Details and Reflective Diary

Programme	Broadcast Title	Date of Broadcast	Length of Broadcast	Full Programme or Clip	Where you listened	Reflective Diary: Your Comments
From Our Own Correspondent	Emma Jane Kirby on board a Frontex ship	14/02/2015	5 minutes	Clip	In my room.	<p>This report was packed full of information and made me aware of how poor my listening skills are. Secure in a Buckinghamshire house it's hard to immediately be transported via a news report into the travails of an Icelandic Frontex mission trying to save migrants who have paid to be transported in horrific conditions. Not only was I listening to the reporter and her personal agony of being on board a boat in "pig" conditions as described by the captain or a crewmate but I was also listening to her report on a Frontex member discussing how valuable human life is and the horrific conditions that refugees/or migrants experience in paying to be transported to a place they view as safer.</p> <p>Near the beginning of the report I began thinking about the African slave trade that saw over 10 million people transported involuntarily in horrific conditions to the USA, Caribbean, and South America and was struck by the irony of the people in this modern migration were actually paying to endure such horrid transport because where they come from (I presume) must be so unbearable. I really wanted, for the purposes of this study, to listen to the report again because I felt like there was so much I missed out on understanding and was therefore the poorer for it. It did strike me that the refugee problem is an example of a modern injustice that is impossible to properly solve because of the power imbalances that exist in this world. Iceland is a country as was said of only about 300000 people and yet is trying to help with a problem that larger and better resourced countries have abandoned.</p>

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						<p>It all just seems so big and like they are fishing in an ocean trying to provide a band aid to an insoluble problem to mix my metaphors. It was sad.</p>
The World Tonight	Migrants attempt to break into Eurotunnel	28/07/2015	8 minutes	Clip		<p>This report had much more of a focus on law and order, homeland security and was discussing migrants and refugees not as a humanitarian issue but rather with Theresa May, as the Home Secretary speaking, focusing on criminal gangs, lawlessness and the threat to borders. Destruction of property is incredibly serious but I would have been interested to find out if all those who had harmed property actually were members of lawless gangs. The report focused on intragovernmental co-operation to address the lawless situation but as soon as Nigel Farage was introduced discussing an army presence with boots on the ground I was not impressed because I wouldn't trust a word he says. There was a transportation representative discussing how unprecedented the situation was and I thought back to when it occurred as I was living in New Zealand at the time and remember there being reportage in the news there about the attempt to break into the Eurotunnel and I just thought it was symptomatic of a much bigger problem which was the effects of the Syrian war and the unprecedented migration that was taking place because of refugees from that country wanting to find peace. Anyway, the transportation</p>

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					<p>representative was discussing employment and safety issues I suppose which do need airplay. What I didn't like about Theresa May's comments was when she seemed to speak about, along with addressing the criminal gang aspect, ensuring that the migrants were taken back to Africa so that they would learn that there was <u>not</u> place for them in the UK. I understand that as Home Secretary she is in charge of Immigration Policy and what a highly politicised and controversial portfolio that is but I suppose she wasn't in a position when discussing the lawlessness around the Eurotunnel to start making statements about why Africans would be wanting to leave their own country and what potentially was wrong in those nations. It just seemed a report that was very concerned with law and order, that pitched the discussion around gangs and lawlessness, as discussed by May, that with Farage wanted the army to sort it out, and that with the transportation rep was focused on employment and safety. All of which plays well to a <u>right wing</u> base. Not that I'm not concerned about a country being lawful, people being protected, jobs being safe, and property being kept intact.</p>
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Crossing Continents	A Mediterranean Rescue	03/08/2015	28 minutes	Full	<p>The final note of this report about the Europeans crossing the Atlantic a century ago was excellent as during the report as I was listening to how one of the two specific men followed to Switzerland and Sweden was an economic migrant who had left his family at home and wanted a better job (ultimately in journalism). I had been thinking of my father's family who in the nineteenth century left Ireland and via boats to Canada and Australia emigrated to New Zealand. They were economic migrants. And <u>of course</u> that's been a <u>world wide</u> phenomenon. Nineteenth century immigration/emigration was huge. I liked the initial part of the report discussing the work of the rescue boat the Phoenix and how that philanthropist who runs it could, in conjunction with navy boats, end up saving 5 migrant boats, overladen with people, in one fell swoop. And the description of the precision with which they were transported off their original boat and then checked by medics on the rescue boat was all reassuring. It was such a happy sound to hear the children singing the next morning. I also did not like to hear of those from Eritrea having to escape military service/conscription and it struck me again how pointless war is in so many ways that a society should want to train its entire adult population in some aspect for this service.</p> <p>And I thought of a NZ cousin of mine, who has crewed on a Mediterranean sailing ship, and how he expressed wonder and awe about the journey some of these families would take because they thought they could make a better life for themselves elsewhere. It's the conditions they are prepared to put up with and the risk of death that exists. As the reporter said, it is a choice but there can be strong reasons for making that <u>choice</u>. In some ways I was a little perturbed by how easily the two men focused on transported to Switzerland and Sweden. They seemed very savvy and resourceful. Not that those are bad qualities to have but I just would have thought they would be helpless landing in a foreign country. I also wondered how and why Switzerland and Sweden had been so accommodating for them.</p>
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