

**A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Representation of Migrants on Twitter: The
Case of #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis**

by

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work, and that it has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

Abstract

This research examines anti-migrant discourse on Twitter. I carry out a qualitative analysis of tweets with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* *#السعودية_ للسعوديين* from a discourse-historical perspective (see Reisigl & Wodak, 2016). The main aim of this thesis is to explore the discursive construction of the main social actors involved and to examine topoi as a key part of argumentation schemes employed to justify and downplay the exclusionary discourses within this hashtag. The study sample consisted of 836 tweets with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* posted between the years 2016 and 2020. A two-level analysis was carried out to investigate the representation and argumentation strategies. The first level focuses on mapping out the content of the tweets, that is the discourse topics within the tweets with the *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* hashtag, and the semiotic resources which are often employed in the data set as forms of legitimation. The second level is an in-depth analysis of the discursive construction of ‘migrants’ in Saudi and their ‘allies’ as social actors where particular attention is paid to nominative and predicative strategies, followed by an analysis of a sample of the most salient argumentative shortcuts (topoi) exploited in the tweets to legitimise the self and delegitimise the other (see Reisigl and Wodak 2001). Given that Twitter provides its users with various meaning-making resources, they rely partially or solely on multimodal resources to construct the other or to advance an argument, the in-depth analysis inevitably draws on multimodal analysis (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006) combined with the DHA approach.

The first stage of analysis revealed that of the codes related to social processes, those that belong to the category unemployment were the most prevalent codes in the data set. Institutional favouritism was the most frequent code in the data set followed by Saudization issues. On the other hand, thematic hashtags were the most frequent code among the semiotic resources identified in the data set.

Taking advantage of people's frustrations with unemployment and fears of losing their identity has led to the scapegoating of migrants, naturalised Saudis, and those who defend them. In the second stage of analysis which focused on the representational and argumentation strategies present in the data set, Arab migrants were the most negatively constructed group of migrants. They were portrayed as the ungrateful, ill-intentioned other who look down upon Saudi as just an uncivilised desert Bedouin society. Ethnonyms or nationyms are usually used in conjunction with other strategies such as criminalisation and problematisation that evoke stereotyped images of all migrants but particularly Arabs. The presumed lack of belonging of naturalised citizens led to their exclusion, and both naturalised Saudis and other Saudis who defend migrants were portrayed as traitors with ulterior motives.

The argumentation schemes that are typical of antimigrant discourse were identified using Reisigl & Wodak's (2001) list of topoi. The topos of threat, which is a common topos in populist discourses was the most dominant topos identified in the data set. It is often employed textually and visually to legitimise the self and delegitimise the other. Migrants were constructed as a threat to Saudi Arabia's culture, national security, but most primarily to Saudis' employment and wages. Other topoi such as the topos of responsibility, abuse and culture were also present in the data set.

This thesis aims to contribute to the body of knowledge about anti-migrant discourse online by examining Saudi Arabia, a largely understudied context. It focuses on how discriminatory ideologies within tweets with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* are constructed and propagated. The analysis shows that the affordances of Twitter facilitated this negative construction of 'migrants' and their 'allies' in the data set and thereby paved the way for the legitimisation of discriminatory ideologies in relation to migration.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In this study I present a critical analysis of السعودية_السعوديين *asū ‘ūdiyah lisū ‘ūdiīn* discourse. I conduct a qualitative analysis of the representational and argumentative strategies utilised in the discursive construction of migrants using this hashtag from 2016–2020. I use the discourse-historical approach (DHA), a qualitatively oriented approach, to examine the critical role that social media play in the dissemination of antimigrant sentiment on a daily basis. Thus, this thesis aims to provide insights into how migrant-related bottom-up discourses, which are unlike top-down discourses that highlight the role of the media or the state in shaping public opinion, emphasise the importance of people's daily discussions about migration and belonging, and in the case of this research as constructed on Twitter. The thesis also focuses on how Twitter affordances facilitate the construction, dissemination and naturalisation of such exclusionary bottom-up migrant-related discourses. In the remainder of this introductory chapter, I first review the background of this research and the significance of the study. Then, I describe the research context and my position as an analyst, and introduce the research questions. Finally, I present an outline of the thesis' structure.

1.1 Research Background and Significance of the Study

Previous research on migrants, refugees and asylum seekers has largely focused on traditional media content, key politicians' speeches or critiques of policy documents published by government agencies in various settings, such as KhosraviNik's (2009, 2010) examination of the representation of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in the British newspapers; Teo (2000) on how Vietnamese migrants are portrayed in Australian newspapers; Joo (2015) on the representation of migrants in Korean news; and Efe's (2019) & Onay-Coker's (2019) analyses of the representation of Syrian refugees in the Turkish press.

Similarly, Lawton (2013) examined the English-only movement in the US while Huot et al. (2016) carried out a critical analysis of the Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act. Although critical discourse analysis (CDA) may have traditionally been used to analyse media content and formal documents, as shown above, there is a movement towards utilizing CDA to investigate newly emerging texts and discourses in addition to formal and traditional media texts. Thus, many studies have examined mediated anti-migrant discourses on various social media platforms, particularly Twitter. For example, Kreis (2017a) conducted a multimodal critical discourse analysis of the hashtag #refugeesnotwelcome to explore anti-refugee discourse during the so-called European refugee crisis. Focusing on referential, argumentation and intensification strategies, Erdogan-Ozturk & Isik-Guler (2020) employed the DHA to examine the hostility and racism towards Syrian refugees in Turkey as manifested in the hashtag (#idontwantsyriansinmycountry). In a similar vein, Bozdağ (2020) examined representations of Syrian refugees in Turkey and concluded that Turkish nationalist discourse on social media reinforces ethnocentric views about citizenship. In a more recent study, Abdeslam (2021) examined tweets of the far-right party Rassemblement National and its leader on Twitter and revealed that the party and its politicians tend to juxtapose the survival of the so-called native French citizen with the vanquishing of immigrants, whether Muslims or of any other foreign descent. Also, Olmos-Alcaraz (2022) examined Spanish extreme-right discourse on Twitter and revealed that it tends to portray immigrants as a threat, particularly a cultural one. Similar to the above studies but in a different context, Schröter (2022) examined German right-wing discourse on Facebook. The study demonstrated that topoi of burden, danger and injustice prevailed in users' migrant-related comments, and specific features such as sarcasm and self-victimisation dominated those comments as well. Krzyżanowski's (2018b) study investigated the role of PiS Tweets in disseminating and perpetuating racist, Islamophobic discourses in Poland. While PiS tweets were essentially recontextualising the

key ideas in Jarosław Kaczyński's statements and speeches on the refugee crisis by using short excerpts from his catchy statements, those tweets also benefited from such mediatisation of politics by mitigating his racist statements. As Krzyżanowski (2018b) argues, such mediatisation of politics functions to "modify political communication's message/ tone in situations of political controversy or whenever strategic and discursive boundary testing reaches and overstretches the limits of accepted political language on immigration" (p. 93).

As KhosraviNik and Sarkhoh (2017) argue, critical discourse studies (CDS) "has always been a problem-oriented academic endeavour, and, as such, topics of collective identity, nationalism, racism, and persuasion through new media are still very relevant" (p. 3618), especially since current global populist movements rely heavily on both social media and new media (Bennett, 2019). Therefore, microblogging sites like Twitter, which qualifies as a social media communicative space, and CDA as a socially committed and problem-oriented critical study of language, cannot shy away from engaging with the new forms of communication on social media platforms, despite the many theoretical and methodological challenges a CDS analyst might face. As (KhosraviNik, 2017) argues, "there is discursive power where there is communication concentration" (p. 586). Moreover, such communicative spheres with the new dynamics of power have created a repository of authentic data that are worth investigating (KhosraviNik & Unger, 2016).

These new forms of communication will inevitably result in power imbalances, which will usually result in social wrongs that could be potential sites of study for CDS. According to KhosraviNik & Esposito (2018), "digital media(tion) industries, play a crucial role in the scale, characteristics and mechanism of new digital discursive practices of symbolic violence, discrimination and hate" (p. 56), such as the case of this hashtag. Therefore, it is very important to benefit from the bottom-up social discourses found on social media platforms

because of their potential “to represent social attitudes rather than institutionally gate-kept discourses” (KhosraviNik, 2014, p. 294). However, when examining social media discourse, one must bear in mind the particularities of each society, especially in relation to social media platforms and the nature of politics within a society (KhosraviNik, 2017).

Despite the increasing number of research papers in discourse studies on immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers that examine mediated discourses, those studies seem to be confined mostly to the Global North, though with some notable exceptions. As such, my research topic will broaden existing knowledge of this subject area, because it focuses on the Saudi Arabian setting, which, to the best of my knowledge, has not been examined in this way to date. With the growing popularity of Twitter in Saudi Arabia, especially regarding political and social issues (Altwayjiri, 2017), and motivated by a curiosity to see whether an investigation of the argumentation and representational strategies pertaining to migrants in Saudi Arabia in the data set would yield similar results to those obtained in other contexts, I examine how migrants in Saudi Arabia are discursively constructed using the anti-migrant hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*. My analysis focuses on bottom-up data rather than a traditional analysis of news reports or institutional records that critical discourse studies (CDS) is often interested in. As KhosraviNik & Unger (2016) argue, the discourse-historical approach (DHA), which is the main approach this thesis draws upon, has proved useful in investigating the discursive construction of social actors and argumentation strategies in digitally mediated texts discussing politics (see Kreis, 2017a; KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014), among other studies reviewed above.

With a particular focus on bottom-up mediated racist discourses on Twitter, the analysis of representational and argumentative strategies in this thesis contributes to the existing literature on migration discourse. The data analysed provide a snapshot of the nature of anti-migrant discourse on Twitter in the Saudi context. I pay particular attention to how

Twitter affordances such as multimodality (see section 3-2) paved the way for new forms of argumentation strategies used to legitimise racist discourses using the hashtag.

1.2 Research Context

The hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* on which this research is based started on 26 December 2016 and exceeded 90,000 tweets within the first 48 hours (Tajāwaz, 2016). It is important to mention that five months prior to the launch of this hashtag, Saudi Arabia's Central Department of Statistics and Information released a report on recent population growth in the country suggesting that there were 11 million migrants working and living in Saudi Arabia (at the end of 2015). These statistics were shared with the public through the Department of Statistics' official Twitter account (Saudi population, 2016). In response, many Saudi citizens took to social media sites and newspaper comment sections to express their shock at the number of migrants in the kingdom. Al-Qashqari (2017) claims that the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* is not a racist one but rather a desperate attempt by some unemployed Saudis to combat unemployment by gathering together like-minded people, via this hashtag, whom he referred to as "jobless brothers and sisters" who want officials to hear their voices and resolve their dilemma. Regardless of the claimed intention of the hashtag, I believe that its very title is exclusionary and most of the tweets shifted the focus away from unemployment issues, instead displaying rather racist attitudes towards migrants. Richardson & Wodak (2009a) assert that economic exclusionary arguments such as the ones used with the hashtag about unemployment, although they might not intend to exclude others, pave the way for more pernicious racism. Also, denials of racism, usually achieved through disclaimers, are very often linked to discourses that claim to be based on reason rather than racism, while stressing the representation of the self as tolerant and fair (Wodak & Sedlak 2000). Drawing mainly on the discourse historical approach, the following three research

questions aim to investigate the characteristics of the anti-migrant discourse under this specific hashtag, taking into account the broader sociopolitical context in which these discourses have appeared. Thus, I intend to shed light on systematic methods of presenting arguments that either support or undermine the legitimacy of certain migrant-related viewpoints by closely examining patterns of language use when looking at the representational and argumentative analysis of the discourse at hand.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What topics are discussed and what semiotic resources are utilised by Twitter users in discursive constructions of migrants in tweets with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis?*
2. How are the main social actors -the migrants and their allies- represented with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis?*
3. What argumentation strategies (topoi) are employed by contributors to this hashtag to justify their standpoints? How do the contributors to this hashtag utilise the unique properties of Twitter as a digitally mediated space to construct arguments for or against migrants in the selected data?

1.4 Thesis Structure

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides a contextual account of migration in Saudi Arabia, and the country's citizenship and naturalisation laws, along with a review of the central topic of this thesis, which is Saudization (Saudi Nationalization Scheme). It also describes the context of Twitter in Saudi Arabia. This second chapter is essential in providing a comprehensive understanding of the broader sociopolitical context of this research, as advocated by proponents of the discourse-historical approach (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016).

Chapter 3 reviews the literature on migration discourse along with national identity and banal nationalism as relevant concepts informing the analysis. Chapter 4 reviews the theoretical background of this study. It focuses on the key theoretical concepts that underpin this research, such as discourse and power as two fundamental concepts of CDA, along with the DHA's concepts of intertextuality, interdiscursivity and recontextualisation. I also review some approaches to argumentation in the DHA (topoi). However, the DHA's main analytical tools are revisited later, in Chapter 5. This fourth chapter also discusses the concept of the public sphere on Twitter and reviews relevant literature on multimodality and metaphor, as they inform the analysis of this thesis.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the methods utilised for data selection and data sampling. The first section of this chapter describes data selection, downsizing and data sampling. Next, ethical considerations are discussed along with a description of the coding process for selected data. While I discuss the DHA's fundamental concepts in Chapter 4, I present the tools for data analysis that the DHA as the main analytical framework of this thesis offers in Chapter 5. Finally, I briefly discuss the operationalisation of multimodality previously discussed in Chapter 4, bearing in mind that it is a subsidiary analytical method woven into the representational and argumentation analysis.

Chapter 6 is a first-stage analysis in which I present the results of the codification process. I begin by reviewing the codes related to the topics and semiotic resources in the data set. The topics are classified into social processes and social actors, and I provide definitions with examples for both the topics and semiotic resources identified. The argumentative analysis will be built upon the main topics identified and will provide insights into how the key topics identified in this chapter will be utilised to construct various arguments. Thus, a general understanding of the content of tweets and their context will facilitate and guide the representational and argumentation analyses in Chapters 7 and 8.

Chapter 7 is concerned with how the main social actors are discursively constructed. This chapter focuses on the representation of migrants and their allies as the main social actors involved. The linguistic othering of migrants and their allies relies on Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) selected referential strategies adapted from van Leeuwen's system network of social actors' representation in discourse.

Chapter 8 conducts an argumentative analysis to investigate how the negative construction of migrants investigated in Chapter 7 is justified through topoi as ready conclusion rules. Special attention is paid to how Twitter's semiotic resources have facilitated new forms of legitimation. This final analysis chapter is followed by Chapter 9 which concludes the thesis by summarising its findings, presenting its limitations, suggesting future research and offering some final thoughts.

Chapter 2: Sociopolitical Context in Saudi Arabia and on Saudi Twitter

It is crucial to highlight the wider sociopolitical setting in order to analyse discourses and construct meanings because the context affects the interpretation of the discourse at hand. Thus, this chapter starts by providing a brief account of the history of migration in Saudi Arabia, which includes refugees and irregular migrants. This is followed by a section focusing on Arab migrants as the main antagonised group of migrants in the thesis. The next section reviews citizenship and naturalisation laws in GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) states,¹ including an overview of recent naturalisation laws in Saudi Arabia. There follows a definition along with a brief account of Saudization, which is the Saudi Nationalization Scheme as one of the most relevant topics used with this hashtag. This is followed by a subsection on issues with Saudization, in which I present the most problematic issues regarding the Nationalization Scheme. Section 2.3 briefly reviews the concepts of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Arabism and the concept of nation in Saudi Arabia. A subsection on Saudi Arabia's new nationalism focuses on the kingdom's current form of nationalism. This is a highly relevant aspect of the macro sociopolitical environment and plays a pivotal role in our understanding of the discourse at hand. Along with the broader sociopolitical context, an overview of the social media context, i.e. Twitter in Saudi in this case, as the context of production, is essential. Thus, this final section reviews social and political discussions on Saudi Twitter and provides an overview of Twitter's potential as a public sphere in Saudi Arabia.

2.1 Migration in Saudi Arabia

Many migrant workers moved to the kingdom in the late 1930s as the processes of oil discovery and extraction meant operating new devices that would require skilled labour and

¹ Includes the monarchical states of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman

technicians. Saudis – at that time - were not able to do all those jobs as they lacked the necessary skills (De Bel-Air, 2018). Therefore, the government resorted to recruiting foreign workers to extract the kingdom's oil. These migrants were mostly from Western countries and less affluent Arab states. However, with the first oil boom after 1973, more Arabs and Asians migrated to work in Saudi Arabia, the biggest economy in the Arab world (De Bel-Air, 2018).

According to the Saudi General Authority for statistics, the total population of Saudi Arabia reached 34.1 million in 2021 (midpoint). The number of Saudis reached 21.69 million compared to 12.42 million non-Saudis. The report released by the authority highlighted a decrease of 2.6% compared to the middle of 2020 and attributed this decrease in the total population to a decrease in the number of non-Saudis by 8.6%, many of whom left the country during the Covid-19 pandemic according to the report (General Authority for Statistics, 2021). However, enforcement of the Nitaqat Scheme (see section 2.2) in Saudi Arabia forced many migrants to return to their home countries (George, 2020). Also, in 2018, migrants left the country in large numbers due to the introduction of new taxes in the kingdom, such as VAT and levies on migrant workers and their dependents. The number of migrants who left the Saudi labour market during the first half of 2018 was 524,000. Along with 466,000 migrants who lost their jobs in 2017, the total number of migrants leaving the kingdom in 2018 reached around 990,000 (General Authority for Statistics, 2018). And yet, Saudi Arabia is still the third largest destination country for international migrants after the US and Germany (IOM UN Migration, 2022).

It is worth mentioning that over 2.5 million of those migrants are Indian nationals, who make up the largest population of migrants in Saudi Arabia and nearly one million Egyptian migrants work in Saudi Arabia along with one million Bangladeshi citizens. Due to geographical proximity, there are more Yemenis in Saudi Arabia than in other GCC countries (Shah, 2004). Moreover, remittances from Saudi Arabia rose from USD 31bn in 2019 to USD

34bn in 2020 (IOM UN Migration, 2022).

The “kafalah” or sponsorship system in GCC states results in tremendous power imbalances over migrant workers’ mobility and legal status. Migrants need a “kafeel” (a sponsor or guarantor) to enter and reside in a GCC country. Their residence is thus dependent on their kafeel’s satisfaction. This form of labour contract subjects workers, particularly domestic workers who are the most vulnerable ones, to do tasks outside their job description (Longva, 2005). Ahmad (2012) argues that the hierarchical kafalah system in GCC states is a remnant of the racialised order harking back to the early days of the oil industry. Vitalis (2002) documents the racism and exclusionary practices of the Americans who ran Saudi Arabia’s oil company in its early years. He reports that Saudis were discriminated against and suffered racial slurs, such as rag heads and coolies, and were not allowed inside American compounds.

The Saudi Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development announced that starting on 14 March 2021, abolition of the kafalah system would come into force as part of Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 labour reform initiative to build a more attractive labour market. The reform allows migrants to change jobs and leave and enter Saudi Arabia via an e-government portal without the need for their employer’s consent, and the contract is certified by the government. However, this reform, according to the ministry, excludes domestic workers, the most vulnerable among the migrants in Saudi, as it only applies to expatriate workers in the private sector (Khubrani, 2021). It should be noted, however, as Longva (2005) argues, that a “lack of security, legal and otherwise, is a problem common to working-class expatriates all over the world and is not specific to the Gulf region” (p. 117).

2.1.1 Refugees and Irregular Migrants

While Saudi Arabia is not a signatory to the Refugee Convention, it has taken in significant numbers of refugees over the years. However, they are regulated as foreign workers. The UNHCR has announced that 67 per cent of refugees around the world in 2020 came from five countries, three of which being Syria, Afghanistan and Myanmar, from where Saudi Arabia hosts significant numbers of displaced people. Also, Saudi has significant numbers of Palestinian refugees who are not included in the UNHCR's statistics (Lysa, 2022). According to the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2015, para. 1), "The Kingdom has received around 2.5 million Syrians since the beginning of the conflict" and "[in] order to ensure their dignity and safety, the Kingdom adopted the policy not to treat them as refugees or place them in refugee camps" (p. 1). As Lysa (2022) points out, official discourse in Saudi refers to refugees as guests, visitors or brothers, and this "rhetoric suggests that Islamic norms and traditions forms the basis of state response to refugees domestically" (p. 10). This may be seen on the Saudi embassy's website, where Syrian refugees are referred to as brothers and sisters, and "The Kingdom's efforts were not limited to accepting our Syrian brothers and sisters after their crisis" (The Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2015, para. 2).

Moreover, in 2019, Saudi Arabia granted citizenship to more than 50,000 displaced people who moved to the kingdom following political, economic and social turmoil in their home countries, and issued IDs to more than 800,000 displaced people who were living in Saudi Arabia without proper documentation (Kingdom granted citizenship, 2019). Lysa (2022) reports that both Palestinians and Rohingya have a long history of settling in Saudi Arabia. The Palestinians' arrival started with their forced expulsion from Palestine in 1948, and continued after that. These two groups have been welcomed by Saudi authorities and they have established permanent communities there; the estimated numbers of Palestinians

and Rohingya is around one million each, while only a small number of each group have been granted citizenship (Lysa, 2022). Saudi Arabia also hosts large communities of Somalis and Sudanese who fled conflicts in their countries, and it hosted Uzbeks and Uighurs who fled communism from the 1930s to the 1950s (De Bel-Air, 2015). As suggested earlier, “these populations fleeing conflicts generally used the employment channels, or overstayed pilgrimage, visit to relatives, or tourist visas” (De Bel-Air, 2015, p. 7). Also, during the mass deportation campaign targeting irregular migrants that began in November 2013, Saudi Arabia exempted Rohingya, Syrians and Palestinian residents even if they breached residency regulations. Also, in 2012, Saudi universities were ordered to accept 3,000 Syrian students per year free of charge (De Bel-Air, 2015). While irregular migrants are difficult to account for, it is estimated that there are over two million irregular migrants in Saudi Arabia, which includes those who have overstayed a pilgrimage visa, absconded an employment contract or crossed the border without obtaining a visa (Lysa, 2022).

2.1.2 Arab Migrants and GCC States

Arab labour migrated from less wealthy countries to GCC states, which, from the middle of the twentieth century, were transformed from being among the poorest Arab states to among the wealthiest countries in the world (Babar, 2017). During the 1960s and '70s, the majority of migrants were Arabs. GCC states' small populations meant there was a need for more labour, and Arab migrants constituted 72% of the total population of migrants in the Gulf in 1975 (Babar, 2017). However, their numbers gradually dropped over the years in favour of South Asian migrants, yet the poor economic conditions and welfare in many Arab countries meant that their need to find employment in GCC states was ever increasing (Babar, 2017). During the 1950s and '60s, Arab migrants were mostly skilled workers working in prestigious fields such as medicine, engineering and education; however, by the 1970s and

subsequently, GCC states' labour markets were dominated by less-skilled Arabs in low-paying jobs, particularly from Egypt (Babar, 2017). Many Arab countries, particularly Egypt, benefited from the remittances coming from GCC states for decades; however, during the 1980s and subsequent decades, the collapse of GCC states' oil prices meant that their numbers gradually reduced due to the presence of low-waged Asian labour that GCC states preferred (Babar, 2017).

Besides the economic benefits of hiring Asian labour instead of Arabs, GCC governments were concerned that "labour migration policies were not immune to political events" (Babar, 2017, p. 7), particularly after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, at which point Arab states with high numbers of their citizens working in GCC states either expressed support for the Iraqi invasion or remained neutral. This resulted in many GCC states deporting Arab migrants from those countries, whereas Syrians benefited from the support their country showed to Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion with increasing numbers of Syrians being employed in GCC states after the Gulf War (Babar, 2017).

As noted earlier, Arab migrants enjoyed a higher social status than non-Arab migrants due to their prestigious jobs. Also, their cultural and linguistic familiarity along with the adherence of the majority to Islam afforded them access to the national population in GCC states, and consequently the opportunity to spread their political opinions and ideologies, some of which were deemed worrying and even threatening to GCC governments, particularly pan-Arabism (see section 2.3) (Longva, 2005). Asian labour on the other hand, "fell outside the pale of pan-Arab identification and mobilisation" (Chalcraft, 2011, p. 44). Babar (2017) argues that Asians also have "less of a moral right to or interest in permanent settlement or citizenship" (Babar, 2017, p. 8). Asian migrants tend to leave their families behind whereas Arab migrants bring their families with them in the hope of permanent settlement (Kapiszewski, 2004). As Kapiszewski (2004) points out, the presence of migrants,

particularly Arab migrants, in Saudi is affected by regional political tensions, along with women's participation in the labour market, that is growing in Saudi, the high birth rate of nationals and the economy's inability to generate more jobs, which are all factors that might lead to fewer migrants seeking jobs in Saudi Arabia in the future.

2.1.3 Citizenship and Naturalisation Laws in GCC States and Saudi Arabia

While transnational migrants and diasporic groups in many parts of the world eventually become naturalised citizens, migration to GCC countries is known for being strict in terms of permanent settlement and naturalisation, even for second and third generations of migrants and their presence is contingent upon their work contracts (Ahmad, 2012). Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman, despite the differences between them, are treated as relatives by their neighbours and citizens. Dresch (2005) argues that the informal Arabic word *خليجي* *khalījī*, which translates as "Gulfy", "has the common-sense status of terms such as Sham! (a northern Arab) or Maghrib!" (p. 1). Their oil wealth, he argues, is one of their shared features that they believe to be "pillaged by outsiders" (p. 1). There is also an established commonality of heritage (Dresch, 2005). Longva (2005) advances that in GCC states, "the defining feature is not race, language or religion but citizenship conceived in terms of shared descent" (p. 119). As Partrick (2009) holds, the "nationals of the GCC states did not think of their Gulf identity as a political construct" but rather "there is a sense of a shakseeeya Khaleejia (Gulf personality, i.e. common cultural traits)" (p. 31).

Despite the lack of precise data to evaluate the number of second and third generation migrants born in Saudi to non-nationals and to Saudi mothers, estimates range from one to two million of the population, with an estimated number of 30,000 third-generation Saudi-born Indians living in Saudi Arabia in 2013 (De Bel-Air, 2018). Although those migrants

have lived their whole lives in Saudi Arabia, and they have no ties to their country of origin or citizenship, they remain foreigners in the kingdom (De Bel-Air, 2018). As Meijer & Butenschøn (2017) argue, “the Gulf states experience a ‘citizenship hierarchy’ between citizens themselves, based on tribal, familial, economic, sectarian, and gender bases, as well as between citizens and the migrant expat community, based on work permits, rights of abode, investment opportunities, and so on” (p. 24). Consequently, naturalisation is extremely restricted, and intermarriage is discouraged. Longva (2005) argues that marriage between Gulf Arabs and non-Gulf Arabs is frowned upon; “families ‘of good stock’ (asil) pride themselves on fetching their brides from backgrounds similar to their own” (p. 133), and children born to foreign mothers are presumed to have no loyalty to their own countries.

“Citizenship is conferred by virtue of patrilineal descent” in Saudi Arabia (Altorki, 2000, p. 224). De Bel-Air (2014) points out that the beneficiaries of naturalisation after the late 1980s were mostly females who married Saudi men. Such gendered citizenship resulted in discouraging Saudi women from considering marrying non-nationals (Sater, 2017) because, unlike their fellow Saudi men, they could not confer citizenship on their children. De Bel-Air (2014) reports that those migrants who benefited from naturalisation in Saudi Arabia in the past were relatively small in number, “They never accounted for more than 0.03 percent of the rates of population increase over the years” (p. 13). Furthermore, the vast majority of those who naturalised in the past were Arabs, accounting for 80 percent or more, and mostly from Egypt, Syria and Yemen.

In 2017, the Shura Council refused to amend the law on naturalizing the children of Saudi women; an amendment was proposed by some members of the Council who submitted a draft resolution to automatically grant Saudi citizenship to those born inside or outside the kingdom to a foreign father and a Saudi mother. The draft resolution was tabled again in 2018, but again rejected by a majority vote. A year later, Shura members rejected a

recommendation to amend the residency system to allow the children of female citizens to reside permanently without fees, as their stay is dependent on their Saudi mother being a sponsor, and should she die, they would have to find another sponsor. The recommendation was short of only two votes and this rejection was justified by one Shura member as merely economic (‘uḍu bimajlis aṣḥūra, 2019; su‘ūdiūn yaʿfuḍūn, 2020). However, in 2020, the Saudi Press Agency announced that the Council of Ministers had amended Council Resolution No. 406, relating to the arrangements for the children of a Saudi mother and a non-Saudi father. The amendment states that non-Saudi children of a Saudi woman who are residing in the kingdom are granted residency under the sponsorship of their mother, exempt from residency fees, allowed to work in the private sector and treated like Saudis in terms of access to free education and healthcare. They are also counted among the percentage of Saudization in the private sector (Ministry of the Interior, 2020). While this is a step in the right direction, the children of Saudi mothers are still not granted permanent residence whereas non-Saudi mothers of Saudi children were granted permanent residence back in September 2013, with the state covering residence fees (De Bel-Air, 2014).

Saudi Arabia announced recently, in January 2023, an amendment to article eight of the Saudi nationality law that concerns children born in Saudi Arabia to a Saudi mother married to a non-national; however, this royal decree only replaced the phrase “by decision of the Minister of the Interior” in Article 8 with “by an order of the Prime Minister based on a Minister of the Interior proposal”, which means that the authority to grant citizenship was transferred from the Minister of the Interior to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. It means that this amendment still does not automatically grant citizenship to those children, but they can apply after meeting certain requirements (Albarqawy, 2023). The government also amended the Naturalisation Law in 2004 to allow long-term residents who had lived in the

Kingdom for 10 years to apply for citizenship, though priority was given to migrants with degrees in certain scientific fields (De Bel-Air, 2014).

To attract certain skillsets, Saudi Arabia opened the door to the naturalisation of those with medical, scientific, cultural, sports and technical competencies in 2019; however, granting citizenship to such individuals is based on their nomination in accordance with the public interest, with no opening for applications (b‘ad mañḥihā, 2021). King Salman bin Abdulaziz granted Saudi nationality to the first list of those with relevant competencies who lived in the kingdom and enjoyed all the necessary conditions for obtaining it in November 2021. Among those granted citizenship was the chief calligrapher of the “kiswa” (the black covering of the Kaaba) of the Holy Kaaba, Iraqi Samaan Al-Ani, who is one of the pioneers of Saudi theatre; and Syrian professor Muhammad Al-Beqai, who had lived for nearly half a century in Saudi and worked as a professor of linguistics studies and critical literature, and had authored about 40 books on various arts (Kiswa calligrapher, 2021; b‘ad mañḥihā, 2021).

Saudi Arabia also introduced a Premium Residency Scheme (green card) in 2019. Under this residency scheme, skilled foreign residents and financiers are able to invest in and run a business, as well as self-sponsor themselves and travel freely within and outside Saudi Arabia. They can also own residential and commercial property and recruit domestic workers. Moreover, it provides a wide range of economic and personal privileges, such as securing residency visas for family members and banking privileges, among many others (Premium Residency Centre, 2019). This permit, however, only targets wealthy privileged migrants and investors as it costs USD 213,000 for Permanent Residency (SP1) and (USD 26,660) for 1-year Renewable Residency (SP2), which are the two options this scheme offers.

2.2 Saudization (Saudi nationalization scheme)

The number of unemployed Saudis along with the increasing numbers of foreign workers entering the market over the years has put significant pressure on the government to create jobs for its unemployed youth. The unemployment rate for the Saudi population was 12.7% in the fourth quarter of 2018 (General Authority for Statistics, 2018). This is somewhat higher than other GCC countries, such as Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait which have very low unemployment rates ranging from 0.1% to 2.1% (Williams, 2022). However, this may be attributed to the large population of Saudi Arabia, currently 36 million in 2023, compared to only 1.485 million in Bahrain and 4.310 million in Kuwait (World Population Review, 2023). In 2022 the unemployment rate in Saudi Arabia decreased to 9.7% in the second quarter; however, it rose slightly to 9.9% in the third quarter of 2022 according to the General Authority of Statistics (Abueish, 2022). In the 4th quarter of 2018, six million migrants worked in the private sector compared to only 1.703 million Saudis employed in this sector (De Bel-Air, 2018). The number of Saudis rose to 2.41 million workers by the end of the second quarter of 2022, though foreign labour still represents the majority of the private sector's workforce of 6.93 million workers (al't'amīnāt, 2022).

Job creation has been a major concern for the government, particularly given that by the end of the 20th century, the public sector had absorbed the national workforce and could no longer generate jobs despite being supported by oil revenues (Fakeeh, 2009). Thus, the government introduced "Saudization" to alleviate unemployment. Saudization is a development strategy that seeks to replace foreign workers with Saudis. This is done in phases by training and qualifying Saudi labour to replace foreign labour (Looney, 2004; Ramady, 2010). Saudi Arabia is not the only country to have adopted a programme that prioritises the employment of nationals over foreign workers. "Kuwaitization, Emiratization

and Qatarization” are similar programmes implemented in neighbouring GCC countries (Looney, 2004). The term was coined in the 1970s by the Saudi government, although its measures were not implemented until 1994 (Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014). According to Ramady (2010), “the Saudization programme has been successful in replacing foreign workers with Saudi employees, but this has been primarily in the government sector where there is much more hiring control than in the private sector” (p. 365). With fluctuating oil prices, the government’s reliance on oil revenues to pay wage bills in the public sector put a strain on the kingdom’s budget; thus, the government took the initiative to steer nationals towards working in the private sector through the Nitaqat programme enacted in 2011 (Hani & Lopesciolo, 2021). This means that the freedom the private sector once enjoyed to hire foreign employees with no restrictions came to an end.

نطاقات or *nitāqāt* is a “ranges” scheme that classifies private sector establishments into four categories, green, yellow, red and platinum, depending on the percentage of their national workforce, and “the classification of the employment sectors and required ‘Saudization’ percentages depend on two factors: the activity of the company; and the number of employees working for the company” (Sadi, 2013, p. 41). Firms in the green range are those that show satisfactory levels of compliance, whereas those in the yellow range show poor levels of compliance, while the red zone signifies a non-compliant establishment. Firms in the red and yellow ranges face various penalties such as denying them extensions or renewals of visas for their foreign workforce. Also, they are not issued with new visas until they comply with the Saudization rate required and are in the green range (Sadi, 2013). The platinum range signifies an exceptional level of compliance, which enables such entities to renew and issue work permits for their foreign workers (Aldosari, 2013). The government has taken several other measures to increase employment opportunities for Saudis. For example, they restricted many jobs to Saudis, these are mostly in sales, such as electrical and electronic

appliances, eyewear, carpets and furniture and auto parts, among others (Young, 2018). In addition, the validity of work visas for migrants working in the private sector has been reduced from two years to one. Also, under Vision 2030 that seeks to empower women and increase their employability, the ban on women driving was lifted in June 2018. This would necessarily lead to a decrease in the number of migrants working as drivers in the kingdom (De Bel-Air, 2018). Also, hiring foreign workers became even more costly as a result of the introduction of compulsory health care insurance that establishments have to pay when they hire workers (Hussain 2020).

2.2.1 Issues with Saudization

Regardless of the Saudi government directives and inducements, the private sector's reluctance to adhere to Saudization still exists today. It is justified by the allegedly high cost of employing nationals who are often described as lacking adequate qualifications and discipline that only foreign workers seem to possess (Ramady, 2010; Fakeeh, 2009). Also, Ramady (2010) asserts that Saudis are not preferred by the private sector because they are less likely to change job locations if requested to do so. This cultural issue is explained by Byars & Rue (2006, as cited in Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014), who point out that social ties in Saudi are strong and so young Saudis' mobility is often hindered if they find themselves in a situation where they have to take care of elderly relatives.

Sadi (2013) argues that the issue with Nitaqat and other Saudization policies is that firms are forced to hire incompetent locals only to avoid penalties and achieve the nationalisation quotas required. This, he argues further, has not only affected those firms negatively but will also cause serious harm to the Saudi economy in the long run. He points out that the programme should focus on the quality of the local pool rather than the quantity in its implementation process. Al-Asfour & Khan (2014) advance that such policies have

contributed to the emergence of the phenomenon of “ghost workers” or “ghost Saudization”, whereby private firms hire Saudis and pay them a low monthly salary on condition that they don’t show up for work but are registered as working for a given organisation. This helps to cut costs while complying with the Saudization rate required. Hani & Lopesciolo (2021) highlight that foreign labour that left Saudi was not replaced by Saudis but rather by other foreign workers as they are needed to do jobs that Saudis won’t or can’t do. This means that new jobs created and filled by Saudis in the private sector are largely in clerical, mechanical, sales and personal services. Thus, “while the quotas force firms to hire more Saudis, the expatriate levy increases the price of ‘the substitute’, making the decision to hire Saudis relatively less costly” (p. 33).

Despite the many young Saudis taking jobs in restaurants and vegetable markets and all sorts of menial jobs with low pay (Ramady, 2010), the failure of Saudization is still largely blamed on the alleged attitude Saudis have towards certain jobs that lack social prestige (Fakeeh, 2009; Ramady, 2010; Sadi, 2013; Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014) and their preference to work in the public sector is attributed to its association with higher social status (Albabbain, 2015). The issue, as Al-Waqfi & Forstenlechner (2010) point out, is that “those at the very top of organizations, the well informed and the decision makers are even stronger in their stereotyping of citizens than those further down the corporate ladder, independent of whether they are expatriates or citizens themselves” (p. 377). Sadi (2013) highlights the need for a “drastic shift in cultural perceptions of work” (p. 45), while turning a blind eye to the job security, higher salaries, lenient demands and fewer working hours that the public sector offers (Hani & Lopesciolo, 2021). According to Al Sulimani (2006, as cited in Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014), tenure is a major reason for Saudis’ preference for public sector jobs. Thus, the failure of Saudization should not be reduced to the alleged cultural attitudes towards certain jobs, lack of qualifications (Fakeeh, 2009) or alleged higher wages paid to Saudis in the

private sector.

While Al-Asfour & Khan (2014) assert that “the expectations of both parties do not intersect and meet” (p. 250), in reference to unemployed Saudis and the private sector, I believe it is more that the private sector seeks to prioritise financial gain over anything else. Goby (2015) addresses the alleged GCC workers’ sense of entitlement that makes them demand more privileges merely for being citizens. She refutes this alleged claim and argues that it is corporate entitlement that is the issue in GCC states. She elaborates that the sense of entitlement of such corporations manifests itself in employing foreign labour that is paid low wages in order to increase their profit margins while neglecting the economic realities of the affluent countries of the locals and the poor economic conditions of foreigners’ home countries. She also highlights that the norm in GCC states’ private sector is that they hire their foreign labour from a particular country which paves the way for favouritism based on national origin. Thus, “not only do local workers find it difficult to secure a private sector position, but when they do, they are likely to suffer exclusion within the workplace” (p. 418). Similarly, while some insist on a narrative that Saudis refuse to accept socio-economic realities by refusing vocational jobs (Thompson, 2018), they fail to mention that their preference for administrative rather than vocational jobs, for instance, stems from the imbalance in wages between these two job types (Mellahi, 2000).

Government efforts to reduce the amount of foreign labour through Saudization policies has proved to be largely ineffective as the private sector finds ways to manipulate the system through “ghost Saudization”, as mentioned earlier. Also, influential trade and merchant families in Saudi who built their fortunes largely on importing foreign labour on minimum wages lobby to support the continued importation of foreign labour (Ramady, 2010). In addition, when the private sector is obligated to hire local talent, they tend to assign such employees to non-key positions (Sidani & Ariss, 2013). Alshanbri et al.’s (2015) study

revealed that HR managers in Saudi Arabia find that the alleged high salaries they pay to Saudis is a barrier to Saudization, as they claim they can hire more talented foreign workers who are “willing to work harder for less pay” (p. 902). It is worth noting that the average salary for Saudis in the private sector is around SR3,000 (USD800), which is the lowest in the GCC (Hani & Lopesciolo, 2021). Although the majority of migrants are paid low wages and are easier to control (Ramady, 2010), “expatriate wage levels mask some extremely high salary levels for professionals and technical experts, whose tax-free compensation packages provide superior levels of earnings than similar jobs in their home countries” (Ramady, 2010, p361). Hani & Lopesciolo (2021) argue that those migrants with high salaries “bring the skills and experience necessary for the Saudi economy and for job creation” (p. 38). Although the government announced that the minimum wage for both the public and private sectors would be raised to SR 3,000 per month (\$800) in 2011, introducing a minimum wage hasn’t benefited Saudis or migrants as the private sector once again seem to find ways to keep costs down by employing the minimum required number of locals to comply with quotas and stay in the green or yellow zone, while the heavy lifting is still done by unregulated foreign workers who are paid very low salaries (Ramady, 2013). In summary, the issue with unemployment in the private sector is that in wealthy emerging economies “local workforces are rejected in favour of cheaper workers from poorer emerging economies” (Goby, 2015, p. 419).

In 2011, the Saudi government introduced Hafiz, or unemployment benefits. Those eligible would receive SR 2,000 (\$533) per month; however, this allowance is paid based on several criteria, one of which is education level. For example, a high school graduate would only be paid SR 975 (\$260) per month. Also, it is paid for one year only during which time the applicant is required to attend job interviews they are matched with. Also, they are required to attend training courses offered, and if they do not comply, the monthly allowance

is reduced. Thus, the issue of unemployment can hardly be attributed to laziness and dependence on social benefits or attitudinal reasons. As Hani & Lopesciolo (2021) clarify, unemployment in Saudi is driven by educated youth, and the lack of job security in the private sector drives many away even if the salaries are attractive, which is usually not the case. They add that there aren't enough jobs created for educated Saudi men and women that match their skills as most available jobs are labour-intensive that most Saudis are not trained for. Thus, Aldossari (2020) stresses the importance of technical and vocational education and training in Saudi Arabia to meet the needs of the labour market, and his study revealed a very optimistic societal view towards it. He suggests "developing partnerships between companies in the private sector and vocational and technical training systems" (p. 22). Also, several scholars (Alshanhri et al., 2015; Al-Dosary & Rahman, 2007; Albabtain, 2015; Peck, 2017) suggest similar measures and argue that the current pace is slow in creating jobs that are suitable for inexperienced educated youth who make up the majority of the unemployed Saudis, and that relying on a quota system is not feasible if not accompanied with working to invest in educating and vocational training of Saudis to provide the private sector with talented locals to recruit from. Alkhowaiter (2021) suggests introducing a minimum wage for both foreigners and nationals, which he argues would reduce the unemployment rate. He adds that a minimum wage would make the private sector less inclined to hire large numbers of foreign workers. This is because they cannot exploit them by paying them lower wages, and paying foreigners the same minimum wage as Saudis would mean that "remittance outflows from Saudi Arabia would increase drastically, thus helping to further fight poverty in their home countries and reduce overall global inequality" (Alkhowaiter, 2021).

2.3 Pan-Islamism, Pan-Arabism and the Concept of Nation in Saudi Arabia

In the Middle East, national identity usually revolves around three components, Islam, Arab and nation. Nevo (1998) maintains that the three components differ in their extent of shaping a citizen's national identity depending on the social, religious structure of each country and the political system it adopts. He argues that “those components do not necessarily complement each other and are not always in harmony” (p. 34). According to classical Islamic law, *Ummah*, the Islamic nation, has no borders and individuals can move freely within this nation (Abu-Sahlieh, 1996). “Muslims within and outside of Muslim territories were defined not by their ethnicity, but rather according to their religious affiliations” (Aslan, 2015, p. 26). Non-Muslims were referred to as *Ahl dar al-kufr*, which means *people of the land of unbelief*, while Muslims were referred to as *ahl dar al-Islam*, meaning people of the Islamic territory. However, this is no longer the case in our modern times. After the end of the Ottoman Empire, known as *the Ottoman Caliphate*, in 1924, nation-states were created (Abu-Sahlieh, 1996). It was not until the 19th century that the Arabic term *watan*, which means homeland, was first introduced. This term prevailed throughout the Muslim world under Western influence and managed to establish political and physical borders. It was then when Muslims started to associate their political affiliations with their nationalities based on certain geographical locations. Consequently, the concept of an Islamic nation did not hold as before. Many Muslim countries do not necessarily follow Sharia law, while many others regulate religious practice by banning citizens from practising certain aspects of their faith that many Western countries usually allow (Abu-Sahlieh, 1996). Moreover, not all Muslim-majority countries declare themselves as Islamic states, some are secular states (Abu-Sahlieh, 1996). Abu-Sahlieh (1996) further argues that “the unity of religion has not prevented friction between ethnic groups” (p. 41), which is evident in the tension between Shia and Sunnis in the Muslim world today. In addition, “the idea of Arab

nationalism has limited the concept of the *Umma*” and “the emergence of the nation-state has minimized it even further” (Nevo, 1998, p. 35).

The Arab nationalist ideology known as Pan-Arabism means that Arab countries represent one nation that shares language, culture and history and should thus be a unified Arab state (Partrick, 2009). Since Pan-Arabism paved the way for each Arab country to interfere in the affairs of others, a sense of fear of the possible ambitions of neighbouring Arab regimes arose (Rubin, 1991). This has resulted in a strengthening of individual Arab regimes and a weakening of the much-aspired-to Arab unity (Rubin, 1991). Rubin (1991) argues that since only a few Arab countries were privileged with oil, this Arab unity would somehow necessitate rich oil countries sharing their wealth with less fortunate Arab states. Kapiszewski (2004) reports that “whereas the oil-producing countries which preferred to retain that wealth began to link the entitlement of oil revenues to state sovereignty, poorer states increasingly stressed their Arab identity as a good reason to demand their share in the revenues: Iraq even used the oil-related arguments as a justification to invade Kuwait in 1990” (p. 120). It was also considered a problem that Arab-nationalism led GCC states to involve themselves in Arab-Israeli conflict politics. Consequently, these geopolitical realities reduced this unity to the Arab League, which was established in 1945; but as an organisation, it has remained paralyzed and unresponsive to the economic and political realities in the Arab region. It is a mere bureaucratic institution, as Fetouri (2019) puts it. Arabism in the Gulf merely manifested itself in the form of financial aid and solidarity with the Palestinian cause, and Arabism has been reduced to a shared language. While official narratives of what nation means centralise Arab and Islam constructs, it is marginalised in practice (Partrick, 2009). As Zubaida (2004) argues, while Pan-Arabism implies that only Arabs will enjoy certain rights within other Arab countries, reality states that Arab countries are modern states where only citizenship status will allow an individual to fully benefit from certain rights regardless of

their ethnicity. He emphasises that “Pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism have been dreams and aspirations, while the territorial nation-state is the only concrete political reality, as nation and as state” (p. 413). He further argues that Pan-Arab nationalism has long been dead and is being employed by governments simply as a rhetorical framework to achieve ideological goals. Similarly, Islamic nationalism is now reduced to a set of sentiments that are usually provoked to achieve religious solidarity against the antagonistic West (Zubaida, 2004). As Partrick (2009) reports, official discourses use the term “*watan*” or “*watani*”, which means nation or national, to stress the existing borders of individual states as opposed to the ambiguities surrounding the term “*umma*”, meaning Islamic nation. Saudi Arabia in no exception to this sociopolitical reality. It is a member of the Arab league and Pan-Arabism is merely a set of sentiments in the Saudi context as well. As Nevo (1998) advances, within Saudi Arabia, “promoting Islam as a state religion means, in the first place, bestowing a prestigious, favourable status on the religious establishment. It is, however, a state establishment, whose power and authority derive from the state (i.e., the ruling family), whose decrees and directives regulate its activity” (p. 41).

2.3.1 Saudi Arabia’s New Nationalism

Saudi Arabia today is embracing nationalism as an alternative to its previous religious identity. The diverse nature of a vast country like Saudi Arabia in terms of its sectarian, tribal and regional groups compelled the government to create “a unified sense of national belonging” (Alhoussein, 2019b). Alhoussein (2019b) asserts that this process of transformation from a religious identity to a nationalist one was facilitated by the young Saudi population who do not find themselves aligned with the religious atmosphere that has pervaded the country for decades. The current nationalist mobilisation is a counter-narrative initiated and propagated by the state. The foundations for this new nationalism were laid earlier, in 2005,

in the era of the late King Abdullah, when Saudi National Day was made a public holiday (Alhussein, 2019b). It is interesting to note that this annual national holiday falls on 23 September in accordance with the Gregorian (Christian) calendar, reflecting a clerical need to separate this celebration from the Islamic year (Partrick, 2009). Saudi National Day marks the unification of the kingdom in 1932 by King Abdulaziz bin Al Saud, and naming the country the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) (El Yaakoubi, 2022). Only recently, in 2022, King Salman bin Abdulaziz issued a royal decree making 22 February an official public holiday, called “Founding Day”. This day commemorates the country’s foundation in 1727, when the founder of the first Saudi state, Mohammed bin Saud, took over Diriyah, birthplace of the Al Saud dynasty (El Yaakoubi, 2022). For decades Saudis did not celebrate national holidays as fatwas were issued by senior scholars banning any celebrations of holidays other than religious holidays so as to prioritise a religious identity (Dadouch, 2022). Instituted by a royal decree in March 2023, Saudi Flag Day is a new national holiday that will be observed annually on 11 March (Royal decree, 2023).

To promote citizens’ participation in constructing the new Saudi narrative, the chairman of the General Entertainment Authority announced that those dressed in traditional Saudi attire on Founding Day would be able to enter entertainment venues free of charge, and a video of crowds was later posted on his Twitter account to promote this event further (Alhussein, 2022). Many traditional festivals have also taken place across the country in recent years to highlight its heritage and culture, such as Sadu² festival. When Saudi Arabia hosted the G-20 summit in 2020, a Sadu-inspired logo was used as the official logo for it. Furthermore, The Saudi Ministry of Culture also promoted local cuisine and announced that

² Sadu is a traditional form of embroidery common on the Arabian Peninsula.

2022 would be the “year of Saudi coffee”. Following this announcement, the Ministry of Commerce changed the name “Arabic coffee” to “Saudi coffee” in cafés and restaurants and the Minister of Culture stated that coffee “conveys deep meanings of generosity, hospitality, cultural diversity, and the specificity of the unique Saudi culture” (Alhussein, 2022, p. 5). Also, Saudi Arabia has paid special attention to revitalizing and promoting Diriyah as part of its new cultural initiative, and several cultural events and exhibitions now take place in Diriyah.

Underpinning this new nationalism are the government’s attempts to put an end to the reliance on state benefits and oil revenues by taking several initiatives, such as Saudization, among other transformative projects (Dadouch, 2022; Alhussein, 2022). For example, Saudi Arabia is trying to attract international investment and tourism. Thus, many of the country’s cultural events, sports events and movies are aimed at a foreign audience instead of a local one (Alhussein, 2022).

Non-religious tourism is being boosted via numerous development plans and there is a focus on reviving pre-Islamic history (Alhussein, 2022). Archaeological heritage sites such as pre-Islamic ruins that were once disregarded and condemned are now celebrated and promoted for tourism. As opposed to the religious stance that often casts a negative light on pre-Islamic civilisations, Saudi Arabia today is trying to emphasise that its history extends to pre-Islamic Arabia (Alhussein, 2019b). The newly established Royal Heritage Commission is conducting intensive research and restoration across Saudi Arabia in order to restore and preserve ancient remnants of pre-Islamic history (Alhussein, 2019b). For example, al-Ula, one of the most important tourist attractions in Saudi Arabia and an essential part of the country’s Vision 2030 plan is now celebrated. The celebration of these sites in school textbooks is unprecedented and demonstrates the state’s interest in incorporating pre-Islamic history into the Saudi national narrative (Alhussein, 2019a).

Pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism as two ideologies that have been a constant concern for the state are absent from new textbooks on “Social Studies and Citizenship” and “history” (Alhussein, 2019a). There is now a new focus on allegiance to the state by highlighting national pride, devotion and loyalty to the state, while emphasizing Saudi Arabia’s weight in the Muslim world as “the birthplace of Islam” (Alhussein, 2019a). Also, the new textbooks maintain that Saudi Arabia supports and has always supported the Palestinian cause through its political stance and financial aid over the years (Alhussein, 2019a). There has also a growing emphasis on Najdi identity in the construction of the new national narrative in the recent years. This is seen in history books where images of Saudi Najdi attire and slogans are prominent in an attempt to redefine Saudi identity in light of Najdi practices and customs (Alhussein, 2019a).

2.4 Social and Political Discussions on Saudi Twitter

According to Al-Khalifa (2012), the growing popularity of Twitter among Saudis has led to a relatively new trend in the kingdom, as many Saudi government agencies have created Twitter accounts, such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Justice, to name but a few (Al-Nahari, 2016). However, such accounts are rarely interactive. They use Twitter as a platform for making announcements and disseminating news, benefiting from its popularity in Saudi Arabia (Al-Nahari, 2016). Moreover, Al-Khalifa (2012) points out that the introduction of Arabic hashtags as a new feature has made it possible for all ages in Saudi Arabia to participate on Twitter. Al-Jabri et al. (2015) believe that what makes Twitter popular in the Arab region and in Saudi Arabia in particular is the relative lack of gatekeeping compared to traditional media outlets, which enables users to express opinions on political social or religious matters such as poverty, unemployment and corruption.

Journalists in Saudi usually self-censor because of their awareness of the Ministry's censorship laws on the national press (Alshamri, 1992; Awad, 2010). This practice of self-censorship extends to social media platforms as well. As Aljabre (2011) points out, "Saudi Arabia is blunt about its censorship practices" (p. 164). For example, in Saudi Arabia, there are restrictions imposed by the government regarding critical views of Sharia law, state law and the government, especially heads of state (Oidine, 2013). In addition, there are restrictions on any disruption of public order promoted online, among other restrictions (Oidine, 2013). Saudi Twitter users seem to be well aware of the cyber-crime laws in the kingdom, which is why they "opt to self-censor their online activities to avoid problematic speech" (Noman, Faris, & Kelly, 2015, p. 1). Alothman (2013) explains that in Saudi Arabia, Twitter is the platform usually chosen by citizens for discussing political and social matters in the kingdom. Alothman (2013) argues that such utilisation of social media platforms in the kingdom seems to be contributing to the formation of public discourse in the kingdom more than traditional media outlets. Similarly, Worth (2012) stresses that the rebellious tone on Twitter has transferred to traditional media outlets, which includes discussions of issues first raised on Twitter.

Saudis took to Twitter to criticise public services as well as to discuss other political and social issues that used to be taboo (Noman, Faris & Kelly, 2015). Winder (2014) argues that there has been an increase in the use of Twitter by government agencies and officials, and that they are being more responsive to public statements and circulated reports than ever. Almazroui (2012) observed hashtags calling for officials to find solutions to unemployment and hashtags to boycott companies that exploit people in Saudi Arabia. Similarly, the Arabic hashtag "#تحرش_شباب_بفتيات_بالشرقية", which translates as "young men harassing girls in the Eastern region", and the use of similar hashtags reporting harassment, "has become a major priority in the Kingdom's Twittersphere" (Winder, 2014), which mostly leads to the

aggressors' arrest. Also, the dismissal of the Minister of the Civil Service Khaled Al-Araj by a royal decree in April 2017 happened after a hashtag was started by a Saudi citizen who released a document proving that the minister exploited his position to employ his son in a high paying job (Saudis celebrate removal, 2017). Similarly, Worth (2012) quotes a Saudi citizen:

This is increasing the culture of rights here," Mr. Abdullah said, "And it matters. Yesterday, I wrote a tweet about the court system, accusing the judges of arrogance. The judiciary minister himself called me to talk about it. So you see, they read it. These changes to the reality, which I believe have underlying sociopolitical motives, are nonetheless a response from the government which monitors people's discontent online regarding different issues."

According to Kinnimont (2013), "governments across the world are getting better at using social media both to communicate with younger citizens and to monitor dissent" (p. 5). As Al-Saggaf & Simmons (2015) argue, in Saudi Arabia, "social media may be the only way to communicate to the government", especially when Majlis Al-Shura, which is supposed to be a body representative of the common citizen's issues, is still ineffective (Winder, 2014). Thus, in the absence of channels of communication with the government, Twitter seems to work as a medium to deliver the needs of the public (Al-Jenaibi, 2016).

2.4.1 Twitter's Potential as a Public Sphere in Saudi Arabia

Habermas (1992) defines the public sphere as a space in society where people engage in rational conversations on public issues, aiming for deliberative democracy. His concept emphasises the critical role of active citizen participation in shaping public opinion and policies through such rational transparent conversations (see section 3.2). Habermas's (1992) public sphere is problematic in the Saudi context, as it is a country that conforms to Islamic

principles and culture which underpin its structure and practices, rather than observing Western values of democracy. Thus, debates in Saudi Arabia necessarily differ from those in democratic countries. The public sphere in Saudi must still account for religion and culture when theorizing concepts like critique and citizenship, for instance. However, Saudi Arabia as a monarchy rather than a democracy can still benefit from Twitter to fulfil some of the functions of Habermas's conception of the public sphere. Worth (2012) reported a young lawyer from Saudi saying, "Twitter for us is like a parliament, but not the kind of parliament that exists in this region. It's a true parliament, where people from all political sides meet and speak freely". Lacroix (2011, p. 241) has used the same metaphor to refer to Internet discussion forums in Saudi constituting a "veritable Saudi Parliament" that is used to discuss political, economic and social issues mainly using pseudonyms. Although they are restricted, such forums have paved the way for what he calls an "authentic public sphere". However, although he does not elaborate on what he means by an authentic public sphere, the term seems too optimistic when it comes to online discussions in Saudi Arabia. Fraser's (1992) concept of "subaltern counter publics" seems to better represent the public sphere on social media in Saudi Arabia. She refers to "parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interest, and needs" (p. 123). She explains that these subaltern counter publics emerged as a response to their exclusion from the dominant publics. However, she maintains that just because counter publics focus on issues neglected by the dominant public sphere, it does not necessarily mean they are advocating virtuous issues. So, instead of a single sphere, there are always alternative or counter publics, usually formed by those excluded from dominant publics.

As Winder (2014) argues, just as Twitter is used to criticise the government in Saudi Arabia and demand equal rights for women, it is still used by many Saudis to defend and

preserve their traditions and conservative values. Fraser (1990) distinguishes between a strong public and a weak public since, “as the terms ‘strong public’ and ‘weak public’ suggest, the ‘force of public opinion’ is strengthened when a body representing it is empowered to translate such ‘opinion’ into authoritative decisions” (p. 75). Therefore, in a political system like the Saudi one, where political participation is non-existent, the role of the public is limited. Thus, opinions posted online might fall into the category of weak public. Although Papacharissi (2002) warns that political participation online might give users a “false sense of empowerment”, when in fact their opinions have no impact on the decision-making process (p. 17), I think that such political microblogging in Saudi Arabia, in spite of its cultural complexities, has enabled what used to be passive consumers to become active news producers. Those marginalised by traditional media can now engage in public debates, as journalists in mass media are no longer gatekeepers and “translators of the words of others” (O'Mahony, 2013, p. 378). In addition, Abbasgholizadeh (2014) emphasises that “movements do not necessarily need open and democratic spaces in which to grow” (p. 839). Exchanging information, expressing political discontent, sharing similar concerns and demands and revealing truths might eventually help to create a democratic digital space.

While Habermas's public sphere has been criticised for marginalizing minorities like women (Fraser, 1992), some scholars (Almahmoud, 2015; Alotaibi, 2017; Sahly, 2016; Altoaimy 2018) argue that Twitter provides a place for Saudis, particularly women, to express their frustrations with certain laws in this patriarchal society, particularly regarding the driving ban on women. Similarly, Guta & Karolak (2015) interviewed seven Saudi women who explained that social media sites like Facebook and Twitter help them to negotiate their self-image, as their online identity is not a reflection of their traditional one, due to social norms and restrictions within their conservative society. I endorse Altoaimy's (2018) view that one cannot suggest a causal link between social media campaigns such as

#women_driving and the policy change that lifted the driving ban on women in September 2017. She further argues that “the constant negotiation of women’s issues and power structures can bring awareness to the disadvantaged situation of women and put pressure on established forms of authority in unprecedented ways” (p. 11). Similarly, Al-Jenaibi (2016) emphasises that it is not the mere existence of social media that made women, for instance, protest against patriarchy in Saudi Arabia in several hashtags; rather, it is the difficulties they face that cause them to protest online.

Although the campaigns on Twitter such as #women_driving and #women2drive were not the reason behind lifting the ban, as the sociopolitical context and the kingdom's current economic situation should not be overlooked or oversimplified, I would still argue that voicing their opinions on a media platform such as Twitter might have contributed in some way to lifting the driving ban on women. As KhosraviNik and Unger (2016, p. 212) argue, in a different context, "it does not make sense to talk of a social media revolution, but rather of a revolution that makes use of social media and is visible on them".

2.5 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the broad sociopolitical context related to the anti-migrant discourse at hand. A brief review of the history of migration has been conducted along with an account of the citizenship and naturalisation laws in the kingdom. After that, I reviewed the Saudization scheme that was created to nationalise jobs and alleviate unemployment among Saudis. This review is essential as unemployment issues, particularly those related to the Saudization scheme, are at the core of this hashtag. Thus, I have conducted a thorough review of the issues pertaining to that scheme, in which I conclude that laziness, dependence on social benefits or attitudinal factors are unlikely to be the cause of unemployment as claimed by corporates. Rather, I assert that there are a number of factors contributing to Saudi

unemployment, including the private sector's manipulation of the Saudization system, their efforts to prioritise financial gain over better working conditions and the disparities in wages between private and public sector jobs, as well as those between vocational and administrative positions. Moreover, as a result of the lack of investment in vocational training for Saudi nationals, the private sector still relies on foreign workers to fill positions due to the scarcity of skilled locals. Also, I briefly reviewed the concepts of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Arabism and the concept of nation in Saudi Arabia, with a strong focus on the country's new nationalism. This new nationalism, as the review above reveals, is replacing the religious identity that characterised Saudi Arabia for so many years, and it is propagated by the state. This nationalism is manifested in the state's unprecedented celebration of national holidays and pre-Islamic sites, and the investment in promoting Saudi's heritage. Finally, I give an account of the social and political discussions on Saudi Twitter and its potential as a public sphere in Saudi, and I conclude that in Saudi Arabia as elsewhere, social media accelerate social processes already in play, that new media are reflective of the underlying social dynamics, rather than being transformative on their own.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Examining nationalism is crucial for understanding discourse surrounding migration. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the concepts of national identity and banal nationalism to lay the groundwork for the analysis of examples of the latter in the selected data. Consequently, the first section of this chapter offers insights into national identity and banal nationalism in the context of this study, despite the fact that most manifestations of nationhood in mass media do not align with Billig's (1995) definition of banal nationalism, but rather with other forms of nationalism. The next section of this chapter presents an overview of discourses on migration in both traditional mass media and other digital environments. The overview begins by outlining earlier influential studies that have shaped our understanding of migration discourse in mass media and other forms of political discourse across various geographical contexts. The subsequent section accounts for the discourse surrounding migration within various digital environments, including discussion forums and participatory social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Finally, I present a summary of the main points and key themes present in the reviewed literature.

3.1 National Identity and Banal Nationalism

Gellner (1983), Anderson (1991) and Wodak et al. (1999) all perceive nations as mental constructs or an "imagined community". According to Anderson (1991), a nation is "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (p. 6). He further elaborates that it is imagined because even the smallest nation will never meet, know or even hear from most of its members, yet they carry the image of their communication in their minds, and it is limited in the sense that even the largest of nations has finite boundaries where other states exist beyond them. Wodak et al. (1999) emphasise that this imagined community and unity "exists only as a discursive construct" (p. 24).

National identity is “constructed and conveyed in discourse”, and thus it is “the product of discourse” (Wodak et al., 1999, p. 22). Wodak (2021) notes that national identities are “discursively produced, reproduced, transformed and destructed by means of language and other semiotic systems” (p. 98). Drawing on Bourdieu’s notion of habitus, Wodak et al. (1999) maintain that national identities can be seen as a set of shared perceptual schemata, ideas or attitudes. A group of individuals is intersubjectively bound by (a) shared emotional attitudes as well as (b) similar behavioural dispositions, both of which are then internalised by socializing in the national or nationalizing sense, that is through politics, education or media for instance. Thus, Wodak (2021) argues, as pointed out earlier, that the national subject is a discursively produced notion. In the discursive construction of national identities, a nation's culture, past, body, language and self-representation are always accompanied by the construction of the nation’s uniqueness and difference (Wodak, 2017). According to Wodak (2017), nationalist discourse is dominated by a discourse of sameness and one of difference. The former highlights the nation’s distinctiveness while overlooking differences within the nation-state. Conversely, the latter points out the differences between nations. As Delanty (1995) puts it:

Instead of identity being defined by a sense of belongingness and solidarity arising out of shared life-worlds, it becomes focused on opposition to an other: the ‘we’ is defined not by reference to a framework of shared experiences, common goals and a collective horizon, but by the negation of the other (p. 5).

This discursive construction of an us and them dichotomy is detailed by Van Dijk (1998, p. 245) in his theoretical framework of an ideological square to uncover the discursive reproduction of the ideology of a positive us and negative them. As noted earlier, nationalist discourse supports the concept of a nation as a sovereign, homogenous and bound entity that

is superior to others (Wodak et al., 1999), and thus such a national imagining of a community excludes others who do not comply with their national self-perception, be it a different culture, race, religion etc. Wodak et al. (1999) further emphasises that a national community's attempt to highlight the differences between itself and other nations is most evident when the other nationality possesses and shows "traits similar to those of one's own national community" (p. 4).

Billig's (1995) study emphasises that the reproduction of nation in discourse is seen in "banal words, jingling in the ears of the citizens, or passing before their eyes" (p. 93). He argues that in everyday life, we encounter ordinary, often unnoticed, instances of nationalism like flags on public buildings and the use of common deictic words such as 'ours' or 'us'. While it is one of the most influential and earliest works on bottom-up nationalism that places the individual in the core of nation-building, it has been criticised for overlooking the individual's agency (Thompson, 2001; Rossetto, 2015; Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008; Antonsich, 2016). They argue that people's unconscious use of "banal words" presumes that they have no agency in the reproduction of nationhood. Thompson (2001) highlights that individuals make deliberate choices in their understanding of nationhood, which means that they have agency and are conscious of how they negotiate a national identity rather than passive receivers of banal nationalism produced by the state. Fox & Miller-Idriss (2008) argue that rather than focusing on elite discourse, the focus should be on examining how ordinary people "talk about and with the nation", that is, "the ways the nation is discursively invoked and constituted by ordinary people" (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008, p. 538). Using focus groups and in-depth interviews, Wodak et al. (1999) analysed how Austrians constructed their national identities in relation to the EU, immigration issues and the Nazi past, while focusing on the discourse of differences with Germany. Similarly, KhosraviNik and Zia's (2014) study showed that Iran's nationalist identity on Facebook was constructed through a dichotomy of

us versus them (Persian versus Arab). While Wodak et al. (1999) focused on the discourse of differences with Germany, Iranians on Facebook focused on differentiating themselves from Arabs and resisting the official narrative of an Islamic identity propagated by the state. Also, KhosraviNik & Sarkhoh (2017) and Sarkhoh & KhosraviNik (2020) examined the construction of an imagined pan-Arabic identity versus its regional rival Persian identity in bottom-up discursive practices on social media. Sarkhoh & KhosraviNik's (2020) study revealed that top-down and bottom-up discourses are strikingly similar on the Arabist side of the conflict, whereas the bottom-up social attitudes in Persian nationalist discourse are in opposition to the top-down narratives espoused by Iranian officials. This seems natural, as the dynamics of power within social media are "unfixed and constantly shifting according to the contextual environments upon which they are produced and consumed" (Kelsey and Bennett 2014, p. 43). Similarly, Stratoudaki's (2022) study on the portrayal of Greek national identity on Twitter revealed that citizens' construction of Greek national identity yielded far different results from what was being promoted by the state, and argues that within the national body, different groups share contrasting perspectives on the meaning of national identity.

Hodge (2014) argues that the modern mediatized world is "producing ever larger and more dispersed discursive manifestations of identity" (p. 307). Thus, I argue that the dichotomy of us versus them in this research is constructed through various linguistic and multimodal resources that Twitter offers, such as videos, hashtags and images, and the discursive construction of a Saudi identity manifests itself in the analysis of nomination, predication and argumentation strategies. The negative construction of the other is essential in constructing a Saudi identity as it distinguishes itself as unique and distinct through this othering. As Delanty (1995) argues, "The purity and stability of the 'We' is guaranteed first in the naming, then in the demonisation" of the other (p. 5). Various lexical choices and multimodal resources are used in the creation of a collective identity narrative for the in-

group, which are largely a product of 'banal' nationhood practices such as displaying the Saudi flag, green hearts, the national anthem and songs that express national pride, and hashtags. In addition, the out-group national identity and belonging is negotiated and reproduced in a similar manner.

As KhosraviNik (2017) argues, one cannot ignore the changes in the dynamic of discursive power in the new forms of participatory communication. He clarifies that not only do top-down discourses maintain and perpetuate the unequal power relations and hegemonic discriminatory discourses found online, but also that bottom-up discourses are capable of that too, since online users are no longer passive and can also contribute to the production of discriminatory discourses. This means that the users of this hashtag contribute to the reproduction of a “banal nationalism”, as this bottom-up social discourse found on Twitter has the potential “to represent social attitudes rather than institutionally gate-kept discourses” (KhosraviNik, 2014, p. 294). KhosraviNik & Zia (2014) further argue that data found on social media platforms are worthy of study as they “provide opportunities for research on bottom-up discourses on identity representations in social contexts; even more so for contexts which lack a healthy public sphere (pp. 757-758). The hashtag offers users a chance to construct their national identity and belonging in which they are constantly demarcating what is Saudi and what is not. The users of this hashtag not only affirm the hegemonic portrayal of the nation orchestrated by the state, or resist it, but also contribute to it. Although manifestations of national identity found with the hashtag are examples of various reminders of the nation, i.e. Billig’s banal nationalism, I argue that those are not subconscious reminders of the Saudi nation as users are deliberately active in the formation of this identity. Also, I argue that the semiotic resources available to them on this communicative online platform, along with linguistic resources, contribute to extreme forms of nationalism in this digitally mediated antimigrant discourse.

3.2 Mass Media Discourse and Other Forms of Political Discourse

The discourse propagated by mass media, along with various other forms of political discourse, has played a significant role in portraying immigrants and refugees in a negative light, while also fostering the normalisation of right-wing nationalist discourse across diverse geopolitical contexts. Van Dijk (1988) argues that headlines play an important role in the reproduction of racism because of their communicative role and the fact that they represent the most prominent element of news reports. He further argues that most readers do not have alternative resources that report the everyday life of minorities. Consequently, they cannot defy the narrative presented to them by the Dutch press about minorities. Furthermore, he points out that readers rely on such narratives in their interpretation of ethnic minorities-related events, which results in framing migrants negatively. He demonstrates that headlines in the national Dutch press between 1985 and 1986 denoted minority groups using generic terms such as refugees and foreigners rather than identifying them by race or colour. Journalists also used specific names such as ‘Turks’, ‘Moroccans’, ‘Jews’ and ‘Iranians’ among others. He points out that the term ‘foreigner’ in the Dutch press carries similar connotations as the word ‘immigrant’ does in the English press, denoting non-white immigrants or ethnic minorities. The headlines of the Conservative popular press are stereotypical in their reporting of migrants’ street crimes, drug use, violence, and moral deviance. Moreover, topics such as education and housing, which are often reported on for dominant groups, are barely covered for minority groups. If these topics are mentioned, they are presented as problems that arise from the presence of the minority groups. He further asserts that smaller left-wing newspapers often focus on individual incidents of racism rather than addressing the broader issue of structural racism or societal discrimination. Consequently, individuals involved in what are depicted as isolated instances of racism are

portrayed neutrally, such as police officers merely carrying out their duties, while instances of exploitation of foreign workers are rarely covered.

In another examination of news headlines, this time in the British context, Van Dijk (1991) illustrates that following 'police' and 'riot', the lexical choice 'black' ranks as the third most frequently used word in headlines across five British newspapers from 1981 to 1986. Rather than framing protests as forms of legitimate public action, they are depicted as riots instigated by black youths, as indicated by the syntactic and semantic structures of the headlines, such as 'blacks riot with the police' or 'black youths revolt'. Consequently, disruptions highlighted in the headlines are linked with ethnicity or skin colour, a feature that was absent in his previous study of Dutch headlines (Van Dijk, 1988), where the focus was on more generic terms like "foreigners." While terms such as 'terror', 'violence', 'shot' and 'attack' would typically dominate headlines covering riot incidents, this violence-related register also appears in headlines reporting events involving ethnic minorities. Aggressive language is primarily applied to minority actors, portraying them as active agents of violence. The reporting of racism in the headlines in this study is similar to that in the Dutch context (Van Dijk, 1988). Instances of racial attacks by white individuals against Asians are described in neutral or even positive terms, such as 'police save agents', with the police depicted positively and the perpetrators of the attack on Asians unmentioned. Minority protesters are labelled as a 'mob' rather than a 'crowd', facilitating the attribution of qualities such as irrationality and lack of control, despite their engagement in legitimate public action.

A recent analysis of newspaper headlines concerning migrants and refugees was conducted within the Greek context. Serafis et al. (2020) examined the portrayal of migrants and refugees during the 'refugee crisis' in Greece by analysing headlines and accompanying photographs from two mainstream newspapers. Their aim was to unpack the arguments conveyed in these multimodal representations. In the two examples analysed, migrants and

refugees are depicted as a natural disaster, a 'wave'. This portrayal, which is common in migration discourse, implicitly suggests that the influx of migrants must be halted to prevent another financial crisis in Greece, a country still recovering from recent economic difficulties. The use of the nominal 'wave of inflows' in one of the headlines dehumanises migrants and refugees, and this dehumanizing metaphor is reinforced by an accompanying image depicting them as an indistinguishable mass seated on the ground. Similar to the observations made by Serafis et al. (2020) regarding Greek national newspapers, Australian newspapers also depicted refugees in a dehumanizing manner by portraying them as anonymous masses on boats rather than as individuals with identifiable facial features. Bleiker et al. (2013) argue that these images create a perception of refugees as a threat to Australia's security and sovereignty, rather than as individuals experiencing a humanitarian crisis who deserve compassion. Their research found that during the two periods they studied, there were twenty times more images of boats than individual images of asylum seekers.

In line with the findings of Van Dijk (1988), marginalising minority voices in newspapers while perpetuating an 'us versus them' narrative was also observed in Australian newspapers. Adopting a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach, Teo (2000) examines how Vietnamese immigrants are portrayed by analysing the coverage of a Vietnamese gang in two Australian newspapers. The study reveals a prevalent theme of victim blaming directed towards minorities. Rather than attributing the criminal activities of the Vietnamese gang 5T to their social marginalisation and economic hardships, the newspapers depict them as lazy individuals reliant on social welfare and lacking ambition. Moreover, the gang's criminality is generalised to include the broader Vietnamese and Asian communities, evident in the labelling of drug-dealers as 'Vietnamese,' 'Southeast Asian' or 'Asian.' Furthermore, the newspapers frequently use terms such as 'youth' or 'young' to describe the Vietnamese gang

members, not only to inform readers of their age but also to instil fear by suggesting that these immigrants are predisposed to criminal behaviour from a young age.

Baker et al. (2008) proposes a methodology that combines corpus linguistics (CL) with critical discourse analysis (CDA), specifically the discourse-historical approach (DHA). Their aim was to analyse how British newspapers portray refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants, and migrants (RASIM). They utilised a 140-million-word corpus spanning a decade of various national and regional British newspapers. While CL focuses on identifying lexical patterns and collocations as a starting point for analysis, the deeper investigation into discursive strategies, such as referential strategies, provides richer insights into the linguistic patterns found in traditional media representations of refugees and asylum seekers. According to Baker et al. (2008), “the CDA (DHA) analysis also provides explanatory power to the descriptive results of the CL analysis” (p. 295). Terms like ‘refugees’, ‘asylum seekers’ and ‘immigrants’ are consistently associated with negative connotations, while the term ‘migrant’, though also problematic, is sometimes used in a more positive context, as noted in earlier studies. They also found that terms such as ‘migrants’, ‘immigrants’, ‘refugees’ and ‘asylum seekers’ are all associated with a having negative impact on the economy. However, refugees and asylum seekers are particularly framed as placing strain on the welfare system, while ‘migrants’ and ‘immigrants’ are viewed as competitors who take away job opportunities. Positive references are rare, especially in tabloids, which tend to adopt a negative stance, whereas broadsheets exhibit a more balanced approach towards RASIM. Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) also confirm the one-sided negative depiction of migrants and refugees in media coverage. They observe that tabloid newspapers often employ more overtly negative terms like ‘illegal refugee’, or ‘bogus refugee’ compared to broadsheet newspapers.

KhosraviNik's (2009, 2010) examination of the representation of refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in the British newspapers yields similar conclusions.

Drawing on CDA and visual grammar as theoretical models, Lirola (2013) examines the linguistic and visual choices in three Spanish newspapers, revealing how they exhibited elite racism in their coverage of the immigrant return plan. Only one newspaper, *Latino*, which is published by immigrants (Latin American people), expresses the opinions of immigrants regarding the return plan. *Latino* criticises the Spanish government for disregarding the socio-economic conditions of migrants' countries of origin, as well as other difficult circumstances. Additionally, there is a failure to acknowledge that migrants have established social networks in Spain and may lack social ties to their home countries. The other two newspapers, published by Spanish people, neglect to consider the perspectives of migrants, and portray the return plan positively. The analysed images also suggest a lack of integration into society and exploitation of the return plan, despite immigrants being required to pay for their return tickets. Lirola (2013) notes that the term "unemployed" often precedes the term "immigrant", carrying negative connotations and implying their lack of productivity.

Bates (2023) utilises the discourse-historical approach (DHA) to examine the main argumentative strategies employed by Labour politicians in Britain in 2016 to promote stricter immigration controls. Analysing 86 texts, including speeches, newspaper articles, and opinion columns, Bates (2023) points out that prominent Labour figures portray Labour voters as open-minded individuals who have historically welcomed migrants, particularly Polish migrants. To advocate for tighter immigration controls, Labour politicians employ left-wing populism, framing the debate as the concerns of the British working class, whose jobs and wages are threatened due to limited job opportunities. Despite attempting to distance themselves from prejudiced rhetoric by emphasising economic justice and class language,

their discourse is fundamentally nativist, implicitly creating a binary in which Polish migrants in particular are othered. Similar to right-wing discourse, elites are criticised for not prioritising locals in employment opportunities. Additionally, while Labour party advocates acknowledge the exploitation of migrant labour by elites, they do not propose immigration control to address such exploitation, nor do they attempt to fully unpack the causal relationship between immigration, wages and unemployment.

Similarly, Balch and Balabanova (2017) note that the portrayal of Romanian and Bulgarian immigrants in British newspapers between 2006 and 2013 relies heavily on 'welfare chauvinist' narratives. Thus, unlike non-European migrants, who are perceived as a threat to British values and culture, Eastern Europeans are depicted as a threat to the British economy, with arguments suggesting they drain its resources and steal locals' jobs.

Blommaert & Verschueren (1998) argue that in Belgium, Polish migrants are problematised because they belong to the poorer category of migrants who are more likely to reside in the country permanently, unlike the Japanese and the Swedes who come from affluent countries and will eventually return to their home countries. Consequently, the term 'migrant', with its negative connotations, is used predominately to refer to Polish migrants in Belgium and sporadically to refer to Scandinavians and Japanese migrants. Thus, arguments regarding migrant integration are not extended to Eastern Europeans as seen above. On the other hand, Van Leeuwen & Wodak (1999) highlight the significant reliance on the notion of 'integration' in the rejection of family reunion applications in Austria. They further note that this notion of 'integration' is predominantly associated with immigrants from Islamic countries, with the assertion that they struggle to adapt and assimilate into Austrian society.

In the analysis conducted by Onay-Coker (2019), the print editions of Turkey's three most popular mainstream newspapers are examined through a critical discourse lens. A prominent theme observed in the discourse is national self-glorification. The newspapers

portray Turkey as a tolerant nation, particularly towards other faiths, and report Turks as exceptionally hospitable, especially towards Syrian refugees. The argumentation strategy of victim-victimiser reversal is evident in the portrayal of Turkish people as victims at the hand of the 'influx' of Syrians, who are depicted as economic burdens benefiting from the welfare system, including education, housing, and healthcare, while noble Turks struggle to make ends meet. Onay-Coker further argues that the term 'guest', used for Syrian migrants, implies a temporary stay, thus depriving them of the rights typically afforded to refugees.

The strategy of victim-victimiser reversal observed above in the Turkish context is similarly present in South Africa, as noted by Banda & Mawadza (2015). They argue that articles regarding Zimbabwean immigrants in South Africa exhibit bias by presenting Zimbabwean immigrants as unfairly gaining access to homes and social benefits at the expense of 'poor' South Africans. As with the negative construction of Syrians in Turkey, social issues such as reduced wages, healthcare and housing challenges, and increased crime and unemployment are attributed to the 'influx of Zimbabwean immigrants', who are depicted as a threat to locals. Verbs like 'flock', 'pour' and 'smothering' reinforce the portrayal of an ominous other.

According to Capdevila & Callaghan (2008), the notion of hospitality is used to positively represent the self in Michael Howard's speech during the run up to the UK elections. Howard frames immigration-control discourse by emphasising the notion of hospitality as a feature that reflects the compassionate nature of the British. He argues that this hospitality has turned into a weakness as it is abused by terrorists and smugglers; thus, he suggests that it should be conditional and extended only to hard working immigrants who contribute positively to society. Capdevila & Callaghan (2008) advance a similar argument to that of Onay-Coker (2019), suggesting that hospitality is offered to guests rather than

residents, indicating that the guest is implicitly perceived as the other who does not, or should not, enjoy the same entitlements as a citizen.

However, Efe (2019) finds that Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey were initially referred to as ‘guests’ at the beginning of the crisis, but the term gradually faded as policies shifted from temporary to permanent integration, and they were then labelled as refugees. Drawing on critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics, Efe (2019) investigates the representation of Syrian asylum seekers in five Turkish newspapers between 2011 and 2015. A feature that is quite distinct to this context is the use of fraternity terms, such as ‘brothers’, by newspapers adopting a humanitarian viewpoint. This term stems from a common religious background. Similarly, Ozduzen et al. (2021) reveal that the majority of anti-racist tweets in their study emphasised aspects such as ‘the Muslim brotherhood’ and the religious obligations of Turkish people towards Syrians, rather than political or humanitarian motivations, to foster solidarity with Syrian refugees. However, Efe (2019) maintains that the portrayal of asylum seekers varies from terms such as ‘our brothers’, ‘victims’ and ‘needy people’, to those commonly found in traditional anti-migrant discourse, like ‘threats’, ‘criminals’, etc. Nonetheless, those with an opposing stance argue that the fraternity discourse lacks societal foundations. Various quantifications, such as ‘thousands’ and ‘millions’ are employed, often accompanied by metaphors of physical movement such as ‘swept into’ or ‘leaned upon the Turkish border,’ perpetuating a discourse of threat and burden. However, in certain representations, Syrian children were passively portrayed as victims of nature and boats, thereby overshadowing the involvement of politicians and other significant political aspects.

Alaazi et al. (2021) examine the representation of African immigrant parenting in Canadian newspaper articles between 1990 and 2019. The study reveals that African immigrant parenting methods are frequently portrayed as conflicting with Canadian parenting standards. Consequently, African parents are held responsible for adverse interactions with

Canadian society, its educational institutions, and the children welfare system. Caucasian residents in one article characterise African families as "swarms" infiltrating Canadian society with their undisciplined and ill-mannered children. The articles emphasise the perceived inability of African immigrants to adhere to Canadian values, which are depicted as superior to the cultural traditions of African families. Moreover, African families are often depicted as a homogeneous group under the broad term 'African community', perpetuating long-standing stereotypes of crime, disobedience and violence. Additionally, Alaazi et al. (2021) argue that even when African families are portrayed sympathetically by focusing on their economic challenges, such depictions still carry an undertone of idealising Canadian parenting culture and fail to address the underlying institutional issues faced by African parents in Canada.

While the majority of critical discourse studies on anti-immigrant sentiment focus on Europe, there are also lesser-explored contexts that have been investigated, yielding results largely similar to those obtained in Europe. For instance, Joo (2015) analyses the content featured on the Korean Broadcasting Service (KBS) to explore the portrayal of migrants and foreigners in South Korea's main news program. Similar to findings in the European context, migrants are depicted as lacking newsworthiness, leading to their voices being marginalised. Furthermore, when they are represented, their perspectives are often filtered through the viewpoints of Korean nationals. The representation of migrants in KBS follows a pattern of promoting positive self-identity for Koreans while demonising others through the use of hyperbole and metaphor, associating migrants with various social pathologies. Issues such as single-parent households, mental health disorders, and drug abuse are exaggerated to underscore the perceived contrast between the 'civilised' Korean people and the 'barbaric' migrant population. For instance, South Asian migrants are unjustly accused of spreading HIV/AIDS to Korean men, and their increasing presence in Korea is portrayed as a threat to

public health. The findings reveal that migrants are only acknowledged during traditional Korean holidays, as these occasions provide them with an opportunity to see migrants assimilate and display the perceived superiority of Korean culture within a societal framework that prioritises assimilation over multiculturalism. However, despite migrants expressing positive sentiments towards Korean cuisine and holidays during some interviews, their positive intention is not reciprocated but is met with expressions of racist nationalism, characterising them as 'uncivilised' and 'jobless wanderers' who are fortunate to enjoy Korea's superior culture during holidays.

One distinctive feature that is quite specific to the Korean context and not encountered in European anti-migrant discourse is that female migrants are only accepted if they are assimilated into Korea's patriarchal structures. Migrant spouses are acknowledged and celebrated by KBS only when they conform to traditional Korean gender roles, such as caring for in-laws, educating their children, supporting their husbands and maintaining a well-kept household, thereby limiting women to stereotypical roles devoid of agency beyond their roles as wives and mothers. Instances of abuse by Korean men towards their migrant spouses are often tolerated and rationalised by attributing mental illness to the victims. KBS reports further contribute to the dehumanisation of migrant wives by labelling them as coming from developed countries with inferior cultures, emphasising their duty to adapt to the culture of their Korean in-laws. Consequently, these women are primarily depicted in KBS reports as 'daughters-in-law', erasing their individual identities and autonomy.

Lastly, a similar pattern of results to the studies reviewed above is observed in the Chilean context as well (Doña-Reveco, 2022). However, slightly different findings emerged from the data, namely the presence of both xenophilic and xenophobic sentiments in the portrayal of migrants in Chilean newspapers from 1991 to 2001. It is noted that Chilean newspapers often frame migrants in a binary manner, distinguishing between favourable

portrayals of European immigrants and negative representations of immigrants from neighbouring Latin American nations. The historical influx of European immigrants is typically depicted in a positive light, associating them with notions of 'civilisation.' Conversely, recent Latin American immigrants are described as inferior to Chileans and described as illegal, job-stealing immigrants from developing countries.

3.3 Migration within Digital Environments

Previous research on migrants, refugees and asylum seekers has largely focused on traditional media content, key politicians' speeches or critiques of policy documents published by government agencies in various settings. Although critical discourse analysis (CDA) may have traditionally been used to analyse mass media content and formal documents, as shown above, there is a movement towards utilising CDA to investigate newly emerging texts and discourses in addition to formal and traditional media texts. Thus, many studies are now examining mediated anti-migrant discourses on various digital environments. For example, Kang (2020) studied posts related to discussions about multiculturalism in two influential South Korean political online forums between 2012 and 2017. She argues that both right-wing conservative and self-identified liberal online forums promote anti-multiculturalism sentiment. Selective scapegoating of migrants is a prominent feature in this study. A racial distinction is made between white workers and dark-skinned Southeast Asians, and only the latter is a target of xenophobic sentiments. In this context, dark-skinned migrants are depicted as beneficiaries of an elite coalition that is accused of depriving South Korean men of their entitled rights. Kang (2020) suggests that South Koreans align themselves with 'Western' nations, incorporating Euro-American experiences as they dismiss any discussion of a multicultural society. Circulating images of Muslims in the streets of Europe expressing

their religious identities serve as eye-opening examples of future cultural threats Koreans can expect to witness if they embrace multiculturalism sentiments.

Kang also discovered that interracial marriages are labelled with a pejorative term rather than the more neutral ‘international marriage,’ and that children of multicultural families are referred to as ‘mixed-blood kids’. Kang (2020) argues that the “...acceptance of women but rejection of adult children – reveals online users’ implicit judgments that people from multicultural backgrounds are acceptable as long as they remain subservient – as wives and children – and serve as instruments of national survival” (p. 101). Gomes (2014) also examines online forums, but in Singapore, where laws prevent various forms of government critique and public disorder. She argues that Singaporeans resort to using online forums to express their dissatisfaction with government policies regarding their economic welfare concerns by scapegoating foreign talents. Such frustration with the government manifests itself through xenophobic comments on several online forums in which citizens respond to commentaries, opinion pieces and reports that address ‘foreign talent migrants’. The comments accuse the government of favouring these foreign talents at the expense of the ‘true Singaporeans’. The loyalty of these foreign talent migrants to Singapore is questioned by users who believe that they are in it for the money. They are often referred to in derogatory terms that suggest poor hygiene practises. Furthermore, hatred towards migrants is incited by evoking fear of unemployment through the use of metaphors such as ‘economic genocide’, which indicate that the quality of life of ‘true Singaporeans’ (i.e. native citizens) is being threatened. Thus, Singaporeans hold the government accountable for their economic challenges by leveraging the existence of foreign talent. Various economic issues affecting Singaporeans are explicitly associated with foreign talent migrants, such as employment, housing, and healthcare.

In Europe, Islamophobia has dominated anti-migrant discourse. Horsti (2017) examined the online circulation of a forensic photograph of a Swedish woman who was assaulted. The image and story were first discussed in Scandinavian languages by far-right Nordic bloggers before the story was translated into English and the image was modified and reframed by a Norwegian blogger as “Immigrant rape wave in Sweden”. The story then spread extensively across multiple blogs in Europe and the United States. A forensic image of gendered violence has been recontextualised to render such violence to Muslim men. The Muslim man is described as “a self-moving organism or an animal, a predator, incapable of controlling his instincts” (Horsti, 2017, p.1450). This portrayal of Muslim men as hypersexual rapists is juxtaposed with the bloggers’ portrayal of Nordic men as the epitome of civilization. Ironically, these supposedly civilized Nordic men mourn an imagined past of white masculinity and patriarchy. They romanticize the Viking era, particularly when criticizing multiculturalism and feminism. They argue that these ideologies enable Muslim predators to harm white, blonde Swedish women. Horsti (2017) argues that the wide circulation of the image is not solely attributed to digital technology but also to its alignment with the longstanding trajectory of Islamophobic ideology. Digital media has merely accelerated the circulation of the image transnationally.

Studying user comments on the Spanish online newspaper “*El País*” from a CDA perspective, Belmonte et al. (2013) exposes the ideological stances found in the comments in relation to the representation of immigrants. Some users denounce racism, express shame and disgust with racist comments and appeal to human values of solidarity and coexistence. They also call for action to combat racism. However, the denial of racism is also prevalent in the comments. Violent characteristics are associated with racial minorities and immigrants and some commenters perpetuate the premise that white Spanish people are as disadvantaged as black people. As found in traditional anti-migrant discourse, the comments accuse

immigrants of exhausting the welfare system. Lastly, some users express ambivalent opinions that simultaneously recognise and reject racism.

Yamaguchi (2013) conducted online and offline ethnographic fieldwork in which she investigated the xenophobic nationalist discourse of the Action Conservative Movement (ACM). ACM was founded with the goal of further marginalising Koreans, Chinese and other minorities in Japan. She argues that the ACM has not attracted much attention offline and heavily depends on the sharing of online videos and livestreams in which ACM disseminate aggressive hate speech. She argues that “the movement's conceptualisation of "action" is deeply connected to the use of the Internet” (p. 104), and thus “the movement's actions are influenced and even structured to a certain extent by Internet-based communication, especially video streaming and video sharing” (p. 105). Yamaguchi (2013) proposes that public opinion and subsequent governmental policies in Japan have been influenced by the nationalistic and xenophobic discourse that emerged from the dissemination of hate speech online. Anti-Korean online discourse led to the publication of the bestseller comic book ‘The Hate Korean Wave Manga’. Additionally, this hate resulted in ethnic North Korean high schools in Japan being denied tuition exemptions and other assistance available to other schools in Japan.

Social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook have also fostered right-wing, nationalist discourses and facilitated the dissemination of anti-migrant discourses by leveraging platform-specific technological affordances. Kreis (2017a) conducted a multimodal critical discourse analysis of the hashtag #refugeesnotwelcome to explore the anti-refugee rhetoric prevalent during the so-called European refugee crisis. Her study investigates the negative presentation of refugees by examining various discursive strategies such as nomination, argumentation and perspectivisation. This primarily involves the circulation of images and narratives depicting immigrants and refugees as criminals. She

argues that the pronoun 'we' used to denote the in-group lacks clarity regarding who the members of the in-group are, yet this in-group exhibits a unified stance against refugees in Europe. Thus, contributors to this hashtag on Twitter may come from different locations but are able to forge connections that transcend geopolitical boundaries, rallying together to express opposition towards refugees and immigrants on the platform.

Similarly, Erdogan-Ozturk & Isik-Guler (2020) used the discourse historical approach (DHA) to investigate hostility towards Syrian refugees in Turkey by analysing a selection of tweets featuring the hashtag (*#idontwantsyriansinmycountry*). Their analysis reveals a notable distinction between the portrayal of Syrian refugees in traditional print media versus digitally mediated political discourses, in which the negative portrayal of refugees is more pronounced and conveyed with a sharper rhetorical tone. In contrast to Efe's (2019) study, which identified some sympathetic views towards Syrian refugees in the Turkish press, such as referring to them as 'brothers', the discourse observed in this study opposes the government campaigns that emphasise a presumed brotherhood based on shared religious affiliation, given Turkey's predominantly Muslim population. Participants in the hashtag reject this assumed brotherhood and the associated responsibility to aid fellow Muslims, instead labelling Syrian refugees as fake coreligionists. Moreover, the sympathy and tolerance towards Syrian refugees is conditional, limited to moments of their suffering; otherwise, contributors to the hashtag express anger when Syrian refugees are engaged in recreational activities. Such anger is evident even towards refugees engaging in seemingly innocuous activities like participating in New Year celebrations. The dataset examined reveals a troubling prevalence of anti-Arab sentiments and a growing trend of racism towards Syrian refugees particularly. The representation of Turkish superiority is implied in the positive self, negative other representation across the dataset, particularly through extreme accusations labelling Arabs as sexual perverts who molest children. Additionally, the

discourse employs a victim-victimiser reversal, depicting Turks as losing safety, job opportunities and majority status to an invading 'other'.

Using tweets from the 2019 Canadian federal election as an example, Walsh (2023) examines how immigrants were framed in this discourse. Numerous prominent anti-immigration hashtags referencing the election demonstrated a shift towards nativism in which concerns are expressed about security, cultural displacement and sovereignty. A racial tone often characterises the discussion, especially as Muslims are portrayed as inherently suspicious. The users also claim connections between refugees, terrorism, extremism and violent, sexually motivated crimes in Europe and North America. Regardless of whether mainstream culture accepts nativist content, high levels of involvement with such content could lead to radicalisation among committed participants and create more rifts within communities. Xenophobia was linked to practical concerns about jobs, overpopulation, and excessive spending, thus presenting foreigners as burdens and competitors. Walsh (2023) suggests that within the Canadian context, those with limited political influence, feeling marginalised and threatened by existing power structures, sought to express their grievances and reshape the public discourse by establishing a counter public space on Twitter.

Merrill & Åkerlund (2018) report that the Stand up for Sweden (SUFS) Facebook group employed long-established pre-digital anti-immigrant discourses to disseminate both overt and covert forms of racism online. Thus, it is not entirely novel to observe racist discourse in SUFS. However, its normalisation and integration into mainstream discourse has been facilitated by Facebook's architectures and affordances. Echoing previous anti-immigrant research, the dehumanisation and animalisation of immigrants was observed in the dataset. They were referred to as animals and parasites stealing jobs from unemployed ethnic Swedes. Politically correct elites were described by (SUFS) as traitors and were accused of being incompetent individuals who neglect the interests of 'genuine Swedes' or 'native

Swedes' and give priority to the immigrants' needs because they favour the 'dark kind'.

Attributing "almost traitor-like qualities" to those defending the outgroup was also found in Devlin and Grant's (2017) study of Irish Facebook users' comments on an article concerning the 2016 refugee crisis in Europe.

As pointed out earlier, the portrayal of Muslim migrants as the antagonistic enemy of non-Muslims is quite widespread in several other digital contexts. Ben-David & Matamoros-Fernandez (2016) report the prevalence of Islamophobic attitudes towards Muslim migrants on the Facebook pages of seven extreme-right political parties in Spain, spanning a four-year period. The discriminatory prejudiced attitudes towards Muslims on Facebook included visual content and hyperlinks to other discriminatory content. They argue that Facebook's corporate logic, its technological affordances and user practices all contribute to the dissemination of Islamophobia and its normalisation. Similarly, Farkas et al. (2018) highlight the role of Facebook's corporate logic in disseminating hate speech, particularly that targeting Muslims. They point out that this Islamophobic climate has driven extremists in Denmark to establish fake Facebook pages posing as Muslim extremists residing in the country, disseminating content endorsing violence and assault against Danish citizens. These deceptive pages serve to amplify hostile sentiments towards Muslim migrants in Denmark.

Zhang (2019) warns against the digital laundering of hateful rhetoric (see Klein, 2012) and argues that right-wing discourses on a popular Chinese social media website resemble the pre-existing vocabulary and arguments of right-wing populism in the west. The prevailing topics discussed by the users are those pertaining to immigration, refugees, Muslims and economy. She further asserts that it is through nationalist, Islamophobic and authoritarian ideologies that mass detentions and forced assimilation practices carried out by the Chinese government are justified online. Zhang (2019) maintains that Western populism and Eastern authoritarianism should not be viewed as distinct or separate ideologies; rather,

they are interconnected and exert mutual influence on each other. Despite their apparent differences, they share commonalities in their underlying ideologies and epistemologies.

Ekman (2019b) suggests that social media platforms are used by individuals who oppose immigration to slowly mainstream previously unacceptable attitudes and expressions that contribute to the incitement or facilitation of violent political actions against immigrants. He demonstrates that a key approach in anti-migrant discourse involves reinterpreting migrant-related issues presented by mainstream media by predominantly focusing on negative topics, including cultural concerns, the economic impact of migrants, their involvement in crimes and instances of public unrest. The primary factor shaping the circulation of content within the group is the conventional anti-migrant discourse. He reports that user engagement is also driven by expressions of distrust towards politicians and mainstream media. Guided by a racist agenda, the recontextualisation of stories featured in mainstream media involves the use of specific referential strategies, selective extraction, and rewriting paragraphs, often omitting contextual explanations that would not fit their desired narrative. Ekman (2019) further argues that Facebook and Twitter persist in reinforcing the negative portrayal of immigrants and refugees by circulating negative stories highlighted in mainstream media. The circulation of such negative mainstream media stories is further facilitated by hyperlinked texts on Twitter and Facebook, which, as Bennet (2018) argues, offer novel hyper(inter)textual legitimisation strategies. He asserts that hyperlinks on Twitter provides political actors in the UK with yet another multimodal form of legitimising discriminatory discourse against migrants and calling for stricter migration policies within the British context.

3.4 Summary

The first part of this chapter reviewed national identity and banal nationalism as concepts informing parts of the analysis. The second part of the chapter presented an overview of the relevant nationalist, xenophobic and right-wing discourses in both traditional mass media and other digital environments.

The portrayal of immigrants and refugees in mass media and other forms of political discourse was predominantly negative across diverse geopolitical contexts. There was a clear pattern of marginalisation and dehumanisation evident in the studies reviewed across the UK, Greece, South Africa, South Korea, and Chile among others, with variations reflecting each country's unique socio-political context. The othering of immigrants and refugees was achieved through headlines framing protests as riots instigated by minority groups and through visual representations depicting migrants as threatening masses. This negative construction of migrants facilitates advancing anti-migrant political agendas such as advocating for tighter immigration policies and pulling focus away from institutional failures.

Furthermore, politicians in countries such as the UK and Australia exploit the nativist sentiments and economic concerns of the public, making them more willing to vote for what were once considered fringe far right political parties. Politicians also exploit tragic events and strategically frame migration as a crisis by leveraging digital media to perpetuate discriminatory narratives against immigrants and refugees. In addition, there is a consistent pattern of victim-blaming and stereotype reinforcement directed at minority communities who are often portrayed as responsible for their own struggles as evidenced by Vietnamese immigrants being viewed as lazy criminals reliant on welfare, or African immigrant parents as unable to conform to Canadian parenting style.

Although migrants are predominantly depicted in a negative light, there are instances where xenophilic sentiments emerge. Certain groups are favoured and perceived as more culturally compatible or economically beneficial, such as the European immigrants in Chile

being favoured over their Latin American counterparts. Also noteworthy is the role of gender and patriarchal systems in shaping migrant narratives in South Korea, where migrant women are embraced only when they adhere to conventional gender expectations.

Despite the different contexts reviewed above and the different methods adopted to investigate migration discourse, the construction of migrants in mass media and within the various digital environments available reveal mostly similar patterns, relying heavily on common topoi such as the topos of burden and/or threat. Positive self and negative other construction was achieved through nationalist, xenophobic and, in many contexts, Islamophobic discourses. However, anti-migrant discourse on various social media platforms has benefited from the various modes and semiotic resources available to construct and amplify anti-migrant sentiments.

Overall, the variations in anti-migrant narratives and rhetoric across different countries and media outlets are minimal while the underlying themes of othering and stereotyping immigrants remain consistent. Thus, critically analysing media representations of immigration is essential for advocating policies that are more inclusive and empathetic as well as for challenging harmful narratives. The biased portrayal of immigrants and refugees on mass media outlets and digital platforms, such as the ones reviewed above, significantly shapes public opinion, and has other ramifications, including influencing policies and attitudes towards migrants and refugees.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I introduce the key theoretical concepts that form the basis of this study. The first part begins by briefly defining critical discourse studies (CDS), followed by definitions of two fundamental concepts of CDS, namely, discourse and power. To correspond to the study's objective, the conceptualisation of the notion of power is linked to the social media context. This is followed by a description of the main theoretical and methodological approach used in the present study, which is the discourse-historical approach (DHA). I provide brief conceptualisations of intertextuality, interdiscursivity and recontextualisation, followed by a review of argumentation in the DHA (topoi). I also conduct a brief review of multimodal discourse analysis and critical metaphor analysis as relevant concepts and frameworks touched on in this thesis. The second part is related to the concept of the public sphere and its potential on social media platforms, i.e. Twitter in this case. While this chapter presents an overview of the theoretical concepts relevant to this study, the methods and analytical tools used to analyse the data can be found in Chapter 5.

4.1 Critical Discourse Studies (CDS)

According to van Dijk (2015), CDS mainly focuses on studying social and political issues, which requires a multidisciplinary approach. It pays particular attention to relations of power abuse as CDS distinguishes itself from “uncritical” “asocial” approaches to discourse by highlighting the role of language in society. Thus, CDS is primarily concerned with “the way social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context” (van Dijk, 2015, p. 466). According to Wodak & Meyer (2016), CDS is rooted in the fields of “rhetoric, text linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, social psychology, cognitive science, literary studies and sociolinguistics, as well as applied linguistics and pragmatics” (p. 2). Although CDS has a variety of approaches to

examining power relations in discourse, all approaches are problem-oriented, interdisciplinary and eclectic (Wodak & Meyer, 2016), and discourse analysts makes their position explicit while seeking to challenge social inequality (van Dijk, 2015).

A key feature of CDA scholarship is its focus on discourse as a social practice. CDA perceives discourse that is spoken and written language as a form of “social practice”, which in turn implies that a discursive event is shaped by the institutions and social structures that frame it, and a discursive event is not only shaped by them but also shapes them (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Since discourse is socially conditioned, issues of unequal power relations, as mentioned earlier, are at the forefront of CDS (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Jäger and Maier (2009) understand discourse from a Foucauldian perspective in which discourse is a system of knowledge that shapes society as it determines collective and individual actions and constitutes power. They stress the importance of “the knowledges contained in discourses” and “how these knowledges are firmly connected to power relations in power/ knowledge complexes” (pp. 34–35). Jäger (2001) maintains that society is shaped by “the flow of knowledge – and/or the whole of stored societal knowledge” that has accumulated over the years (p. 35). He points out that the meanings rooted in the knowledge system that discourse holds change as discourse changes, and can be allocated new meaning.

Drawing on Halliday’s (1994) systemic-functional linguistics, Fairclough (2003) proposes a three-dimensional view of discourse in which language has three main functions: ideational, which refers to texts being representative of the world; interpersonal, which is the social interactions between participants, and textual, which refers to how the aforementioned ideas and social relations are integrated to create meaningful texts, i.e. cohesion and coherence in a text. Fairclough (2003) stresses that discourse is a social practice and language is not just representative of society or separate from it but rather a social process that constitutes and define society. Alternatively, van Dijk’s (2009, 2014) triangulated approach to

discourse, cognition and society maintains that cognition mediates between discourse and society. He defines discourse as “a form of social interaction in society and at the same time the expression and reproduction of social cognition” (van Dijk, 2014, p. 12) and argues that discourse is both multimodal and multidimensional. It is multimodal as it covers all the semiotics of communication such as images, gestures and written texts, as well as verbal communication. As Reisigl (2018) points out, discourse “transcends the unit of a single text or conversation” (p. 51). Van Dijk (2009) also stresses the multidimensionality of discourse and maintains that discourse is an action, such as a threat, a social practice, such as a lecture, or a cultural product such as telenovelas, and lists various other dimensions of discourse (p. 67). This research aligns itself with Reisigl and Wodak’s (2016) view of discourse as:

- a cluster of context-dependent semiotic practices that are situated within specific fields of social action
- socially constituted and socially constitutive
- related to a macro-topic
- linked to argumentation about validity claims such as truth and normative validity involving several social actors who have different points of view (p. 27).

The discourse-historical approach, which is the framework that this thesis draws upon both theoretically and methodologically, aligns itself with van Dijk’s socio-cognitive theory and views discourse as “structured forms of knowledge” while text refers to “concrete oral utterances or written documents” (Wodak & Meyer, 2016, p. 6). As Wodak (2008) argues, “a text creates no sense in itself but only in connection with knowledge of the world and of the text” (p. 8). Thus, the notion of discourse in this thesis highlights the aforementioned dialectic relationship between discourse and social structure and how such “structured forms of knowledge” shape the societal reality and construct and maintain power structures within a

community. As Foucault (1980) proposes, alternative discourses are marginalised in society because certain discourses dominate the way society defines itself and others. He further maintains that in the interplay of power and knowledge, discourse is responsible for constituting the reality by producing certainties or truths that are often taken for granted, and consequently influence other discourses and behaviours. Such stereotypical truths about migrants, as in the case of this research, are contingent on historical discourses that reinforce those stereotypes (Foucault, 1980). The discourse at hand is characterised by nationalism that is embedded in the social and current political context (see section 2.3.1) and manifested in written texts as well as in the various semiotic resources found in each tweet. The discourse topics identified in this thesis along with their argumentation strategies also reveal the nationalist nature of the discourse at hand, which relies on the repertoire of collective knowledge and memories they share with the audience as ‘truths’ in the Foucauldian sense about migration and migrants, which are created through discourse.

4.1.1 Notion of Power and Dynamics of Power in SM-CDS

CDA views texts as manifestations of social action and is “fundamentally interested in examining opaque and transparent structures of dominance, discrimination, power and control manifest through language” (Weiss & Wodak, 2003, p. 15). However, Wodak & Meyer (2016) emphasise that in the investigation of power dynamics, “power remains mostly invisible” (p. 12). Weiss & Wodak (2003) emphasise agency, as “for CDA, language is not powerful on its own – it gains power by the use powerful people make of it” (p. 14). They further maintain that it is precisely for this reason that CDA chooses to analyse the language used by those in power who are responsible for establishing inequalities, and they view texts as “sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance” (p. 15). Weiss & Wodak (2003) further advance that CDA

stresses the need for interdisciplinary approaches to studying how language functions in the formation and transmission of knowledge, or in the exercise of power. Thus, since this research is situated in the context of social media, and since the notion of discourse is closely associated with the notion of power, it is essential to examine the notion of power within the paradigm of social media. KhosraviNik (2014) explains that the power behind or contained within discourse is related to the Foucauldian definition of discourse in which power is conceptualised as the institutional top-down exercising of power that mass media exert over society. This power behind discourse, which requires restrictive access, is shared by politicians, religious scholars and journalists at different levels. In this view, the critique of power stems from a micro-level analysis of the textual features of a given text, accompanied by a macro social and political critique of the unequal restricted access to the production and distribution of texts. On the other hand, power in discourse is understood as the power dynamics found in a localised social setting where a group of individuals aim to influence one another by engaging in communicative interaction. Thus, the power in and behind discourse differs in the degrees to which individuals are passivised or activated. This research focuses on discourse formation at the interaction level, which highlights the agency of Twitter users using this hashtag as it is more relevant to the participatory nature of Twitter. Bottom-up discourses on social media negotiate the top-down discourses of media, politicians, education and the various institutions within a nation (Eriksson, 2016)

KhosraviNik (2014) proposes that since CDA perceives discourse to be both socially constitutive and constituted, then “the connection between the two theoretically-defined notions of power should be viewed as a circular one, as one feeds on and emerges from the other” (p. 290). Therefore, although the new dynamics of communicative power within social media have minimised the role of the power behind discourse, it is still at play. For example, advertisements found online are one form of soft gatekeeping pushed by the institutional

power of new media technologies. This shows that they are not “free from ideology in their design. They are deliberately organised around a form of digital market economic perspective” (KhosraviNik, 2018, p. 440). As KhosraviNik & Unger (2016) point out, “bottom-up language-in-use, seems today to be the focus of interested domains of politics and the corporate world” (p. 211). Kelsey & Bennett (2014) suggest the existence of an interplay of both panoptic and synoptic power and point out that “[t]he arrival of mass media and contemporary technologies meant that the many could watch the few” (p. 41). This synoptic power entails synoptic resistance where individuals are no longer passive and can use whatever technological affordances are available to them to resist authority. Here, individuals are observed by the few but they themselves can observe others. They observe the elites and respond to them, and they observe each other. This mutual surveillance (the many watching the many) on social media platforms has been referred to by Kelsey & Bennett (2014) as omnioptic surveillance, which is the most powerful form of surveillance. However, they emphasise that such an omnioptic environment does not necessarily imply the existence of “a utopian development of power that overrides all traditional, top-down practice” (p. 43). On the contrary, top-down bias has never been absent even when the many watch the many, as some individuals might be serving the interests of powerful elites. Papacharissi (2002) argues that public policy formation is still in the elites' hands as power relations exist online, just as they do offline.

However, it is important to clarify that it is not only top-down discourses that maintain and perpetuate the unequal power relations and hegemonic discriminatory discourses found online, as bottom-up discourses are also capable of that since online users are no longer passive, and can therefore contribute to the production of discriminatory discourses. According to KhosraviNik & Unger (2016), new media technologies have challenged the perceived notion of power being restricted to media text producers. They

argue that with the absence of gatekeeping within new media technologies, the recipients of media texts are no longer passive as they can produce and distribute texts themselves, thus breaking the unidirectionality of content flow usually observed in mass media. However, they stress that “the functions, characteristics and dynamic of the participatory web and what it may develop into in a given society could (radically) vary in different contexts” (p. 212).

In contrast to Western democratic contexts where right-wing populist anti-migrant narratives are predominantly driven by political leaders, the examined populist nationalist anti-migrant discourses here originate from a bottom-up production of discourse. Although He et al.'s (2023) study focuses on the Chinese context and uses a relatively small dataset, my understanding of Twitter as a bottom-up space of discourse production within the Saudi Arabian context aligns with theirs, particularly regarding power dynamics. While this thesis acknowledges that there is a power element at play at the discursive, hegemonic level, it underscores a distinct approach to understanding the power dynamics and consequently, to understanding Twitter as a bottom-up space of discourse production. The Foucauldian concept of self-governance is crucial in this regard.

As He et al. (2023) aptly argue, a trait of obedience that is closely linked to bottom-up discourses exists within non-democratic contexts since the public is conscious of the censorship mechanisms on digital platforms in their respective countries. Thus, obedience is instilled through the bottom-up implementation of censorship, encouraging individuals to self-censor. This leads to social media platforms being utilised differently, irrespective of their technical capabilities. As a result, instead of utilising media platform affordances for dissent or resistance, cultural norms within non-democratic contexts redirect public discontent, permitting individuals to express their frustrations on Twitter as long as their discourse is tolerated by the authorities and conforms to specific parameters set by the government. As He et al. (2023) suggest, populist discourse is tolerated online in non-

democratic contexts as long as it remains individually oriented, i.e., targeting specific individual elites. This way, populist nationalist discourses on social media platforms function as a 'pressure valve', allowing the public to vent their discontent toward isolated individuals.

While Twitter may appear to be a platform for unrestricted expression in Saudi Arabia, it remains subject to moderation. Users engage in bottom-up discourse by challenging dominant narratives on employment issues disseminated in a top-down manner by public institutions and public figures. Their goal is to contest the employment discourse promoted mostly by influential figures such as ministers and officials. However, many of these tweets originate from accounts with access to alternative networks of power not typically available to those opposing top-down narratives. Some users leverage powerful communication channels, such as interviews on state-run television channels, to amplify their voices. Twitter users position themselves as concerned citizens exposing institutional favouritism and ministerial abuses toward young Saudis seeking employment, hoping that the government will address their grievances when faced with bottom-up pressure. Twitter users within this hashtag navigate between portraying themselves as loyal patriots, supportive of the royal family and government, and as representatives of unemployed Saudi youth facing obstacles imposed by foreigners and complicit Saudi elites. Additionally, they position themselves as defenders of the nation's resources, security, culture, identity and values, opposing threats posed by foreigners and the policies of corrupt elites within Saudi Arabia.

4.1.2 Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA)

As an approach to critical discourse studies (CDS), the discourse-historical approach (DHA) was developed along with linguistic tools that aim to analyse racist discourse. An early application involved the analysis of anti-Semitic discourse in presidential campaigns in Austria (Wodak, 1990). The DHA draws on various theories and methods to adequately

examine the discourse at hand. The principle of triangulation, one of the main principles of the DHA, is a way of approaching both discursive phenomena and social structures from different perspectives, that is by working on different data, methods and theories to enable researchers to minimise subjectivity. Thus, Reisigl and Wodak (2016) recommend the triangulation of data, different theories and methods to provide various perspectives on the research at hand.

As explained earlier, the research at hand follows an abductive perspective by moving back and forth between theories about migration, social media, national identity and data when investigating this hashtag. Assumptions are generated by moving back and forth between the textual features and theoretical constructs related to this research topic. Reisigl and Wodak (2016) point out that this abductive approach is the result of the DHA's aim as a theoretical approach in CDS to grasp the dialectical relationship between discourse and society. Reisigl (2018) demonstrates that the DHA as a problem-oriented approach requires the integration of various social theories from different disciplines in order to account for the context in which a given discursive phenomenon is situated. He stresses the importance of interdisciplinary research, as “the selected discourse-related social problems are multidimensional” (p. 47). For example, this research is situated in three areas that overlap: language, politics and media. Thus, the integration of various theories and methods is necessary to better understand and then interpret the multidimensional social problem being examined. The socio-theoretical grounding underpinning the discourse at hand is reviewed in this chapter.

The DHA also pays particular attention to context at four levels, the first of which is the descriptive level (micro), with the other three being at the meso (intertextuality and interdiscursivity) and macro levels (situating the research in society):

1. The immediate, language or text-internal co-text and co-discourse
2. The intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses
3. The social variables and institutional frames of a specific ‘context of situation’
4. The broader sociopolitical and historical context, which the discursive practices are embedded in and related to. (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016, pp. 30–31)

By considering these four levels of context, I aim to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the discursive practices of Twitter users who use the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*. I examine the immediate language or text-internal co-text by categorising the linguistic and semiotic resources of the tweets employed by the participants, such as the presence of certain key words that are analysed in light of the broader sociopolitical context. Similarly, it is crucial to examine intertextuality and interdiscursivity as they facilitate the negative portrayal of certain groups of migrants. Fallacious arguments are constructed through intertextuality and interdiscursivity by quoting elements of sacred texts that are falsely interpreted or through reference to various topics and the evocation of current or past events. Certain texts experience recontextualisation, where specific elements of discursive practices are altered or excluded to align with the communicative intentions of Twitter users. Thus, to help to uncover the underlying meanings and power dynamics within discourses, these four levels of context are taken into consideration.

The DHA proposes three dimensions of analysis: identifying discourse topics and/or their contents, investigating discursive strategies, and finally examining the various linguistic means and their context-dependent linguistic realisations (Reisigl & Wodak 2016). It distinguishes between five discursive strategies employed in a positive self-negative other representation and in realizing pragmatic aspects besides the linguistic ones, and most

importantly the realisation of the argumentative schemes employed to further perpetuate the 'Us' versus 'them' division. Reisigl & Wodak (2016) define strategies as “a more or less intentional plan of practice (including discursive practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goal” (p. 33). The following are the five discursive strategies of the DHA (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 94):

1. Nomination or referential strategies: Strategies that construct the discursive event or phenomenon and the social actors involved through methods such as membership categorisation devices, deictics, metaphors, nouns etc.
2. Predication strategies: Strategies in which social actors, phenomena and objects are assigned positive or negative evaluative attributions and stereotypes through metaphors, adjectives, pronouns etc.
3. Argumentation strategies: Strategies in which the speaker or writer uses topoi and fallacies to justify claims of truth and normative rightness.
4. Perspectivisation or framing strategies: The speaker or writer establishes his or her stance and becomes either distanced from or involved in the discourse through discourse markers, metaphors, direct or indirect speech etc.
5. Intensification or mitigation strategies: The speaker or writer either intensifies or mitigates the illocutionary force of utterances through vague expressions, tag questions etc.

As KhosraviNik & Zia (2014) point out, the prominence of a discursive strategy is strongly connected to the genre of the data and the research questions. While acknowledging the lack of well-structured argumentative content in social media texts usually present in political speeches and policy documents, as KhosraviNik & Zia (2014) argue, I still foreground argumentation strategies to examine the structural change in the way argumentation and thus

persuasion is conceived in this new environment, such as being strongly affective and visually based (see sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2). Due to space restrictions, intensification and mitigation strategies are not analysed, particularly given that the main interest of the research questions relates to the first three strategies listed above. In addition, it is common to give different weights to different strategies in DHA analyses, depending on which strategies the preliminary stages of the research suggest are the most important. Finally, it should be noted that these strategies often overlap in the analysis.

4.1.3 Intertextuality, Interdiscursivity and Recontextualisation

As explained earlier, the DHA is based on a four-level conceptualisation of context that should be considered in the analysis. Intertextuality and interdiscursivity represent the second dimension of this conceptualisation (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016, p. 30) Also, Reisigl & Wodak (2016) maintain that discourse “is not a closed unit” but rather “dynamic” and “open to reinterpretation and continuation” (p. 27). Such an understanding of discourse entails that intertextuality and interdiscursivity are central concepts of discourse in the DHA.

According to Fairclough (1993), intertextuality refers to the “relations between texts”, while interdiscursivity refers to the “relations between different types of discourse” (p. 47). He differentiates between manifest intertextuality and constitutive intertextuality. The latter refers to “the configuration of discourse conventions that go into its production” (p. 104), whereas the former means that “specific other texts are overtly drawn upon within a text” (p. 117). Similarly, Reisigl & Wodak (2001) define intertextuality as “explicit surface relationships between texts, and implicit thematic chains which relate texts to each other via underlying assumptions and presuppositions” (p. 185). They clarify that “[t]he process of transferring given elements to new contexts is labelled recontextualisation; if an element is taken out of a specific context, we observe the process of de-contextualisation; if the

respective element is then inserted into a new context, we witness the process of recontextualisation. The element (partly) acquires a new meaning, since meanings are formed in use” (p. 90).

Unger (2013) stresses that recontextualisation is key to interpreting arguments. The recontextualisation process starts with spotting arguments in the source text and then locating the same arguments in the second text, finally arriving at interpretations of “how the new context (and co-text) affects arguments” (p. 58). Wodak & Fairclough (2010) propose that “recontextualisation is often textually realized in the mixing of ‘new’ recontextualised elements and ‘old’ elements, such as particular words, expressions, arguments, topoi, rhetorical devices and so forth” (p. 24).

Analysing intertextual references leads to further interpretation of the sociocultural context. The DHA as a three-dimensional approach pays particular attention to identifying discourse topics as a first dimension of linguistic analysis (Reisigl & Wodak 2016). Identifying topics and subtopics of a given discourse allows the researcher to capture interdiscursivity. According to Wodak & Fairclough (2010), “Interdiscursivity signifies that discourses are linked to each other in various ways. If we conceive of ‘discourse’ as primarily topic-related (as ‘discourse on x’), we will observe that a discourse on climate change frequently refers to topics or sub-topics of other discourses, such as finance or health. Discourses are open and often hybrid: new sub-topics can be created at many points” (p. 90).

The historical orientation of the DHA necessitates studying intertextual and interdiscursive references to see how texts are linked together over time, and what new meanings they can construct. Wodak & Krzyżanowski (2008) point out that texts achieve meanings through intertextuality. When making interpretations, intertextuality helps, as the text itself cannot be interpreted if the researcher does not include in their interpretations the other texts involved. Moreover, as Filardo-Llamas & Boyd (2018) argue, “intertextual

relations between different types of genres are of key importance for understanding how political genres can evolve, and how this can affect other socio-political practices” (p. 316). Wodak & De Cillia (2007) claim that recontextualisation is a significant process of text production. New meanings are constructed when arguments, narratives and events are transmitted into new genres and public spheres. Chilton and Schäffner (2002) explain that recontextualisation can be done unconsciously as some discourses dominate others, they give the example that speaking of students as customers is the product of intertextuality where “the commercial genre had colonized the educational” (p. 18). In a similar vein, Bennett (2018) argues that “recontextualisation is not value neutral” (p. 148). For example, right-wing parties tend to recontextualise clearly ideologically loaded concepts using different linguistic forms (Richardson and Wodak, 2009a).

Intertextuality is deeply rooted in the hyperlinked nature of online discourse. According to Tagg (2015), intertextuality is inherited in online practices as it usually makes references to hyperlinks in blogs, mainstream sites and other social networking sites. Similarly, Zappavigna (2012) describes Twitter as a medium that is “multiparty, temporally fluid and highly intertextual” (p. 195). Thus, I follow Barros (2014) in arguing that social media's functionalities have transformed traditional intertextuality and created a new form that is known as hyper-intertextuality. “Hyper-intertextuality is the construction of more immediate, intense and transparent links between texts. For instance, the original design of the web structure, through the virtual element of hypertext, already allows individual texts to be instantaneously linked to a multiplicity of other discourses” (Barros, 2014, p. 1223). In the same context, Bennett (2018) relies on Barros (2014) to explain that the hyperlinks within a digital text create a new tool of discourse production known as hyper-intertextuality. Barros (2014) characterises hyper-intertextuality as “a new form of intertextuality magnified by the media characteristics of immediacy, intensity and transparency” (p. 1212). Looking at

hyperlinked texts is expected to make the research at hand more robust since those hyperlinked texts, whether they belong to mainstream or nonmainstream media, are the source texts of mediated recontextualised discourses on Twitter (Bennett, 2018). This hyper-intertextuality is manifested through the affordances of Twitter, such as hashtags and mentions. Bennett (2018) rightly argues that “there is no doubt that intertextuality, interdiscursivity, and recontextualisation characterize all political discourses and are present in all genres; however I would propose that it is this potential for hyper-intertextuality and hyper-recontextualisation that marks Twitter as a unique site of discourse (re)production; the format allows for instantaneous recontextualisation and reinterpretation of social practices and of discourses, and this in turn is a powerful method of legitimation” (p. 148). His remark that hyper-intertextuality entails creating powerful methods of legitimation supports Barros’s (2014) statement that within new media, rationalisation depends heavily on the hyper-intertextuality of the medium, for example, by shifting the focus from the primary text to the authoritative texts it is referencing. Thus, examining hyper-linked intertextuality and interdiscursivity within a digital text proves vital for the analysis of the argumentation strategies involved. Thus, the focus in this thesis will be on how hyper-intertextuality has been utilised by the contributors using the hashtag under analysis to serve the macro strategies of a positive self and negative other presentation, as well as legitimation.

4.1.4 Argumentation in the DHA (Topoi)

Reisigl (2014) argues that the basic purpose of argumentation “is to persuade – either in the sense of convincing by sound arguments or in the sense of influencing somebody suggestively and manipulatively by fallacies” (p. 70). Van der Valk (2003) proposes that the use of topoi in the political arena can be attributed to their ability to “provide the (standard) arguments, typical for specific issues” (p. 319). As a result, many researchers examining

political discourse tend to focus on topoi when dealing with argumentation analysis in CDA. The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), for instance, has paid much attention to topoi (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, 2009) as a central concept of its argumentation strategies.

Žagar (2010) criticises the application of the concept of topoi in the DHA because of what he claims to be vagueness when contrasted with the concept of topoi in ancient rhetoric. Reisigl (2014), however, responds in detail to his criticism, arguing that the DHA's conceptualisation of topoi was formulated following Wengeler's (2003) and Kienpointner's (1997) approaches, as cited in Reisigl (2014). These two contemporary typologies of argumentation schemes that are taken from classical rhetoric have been developed and documented to a high standard, that is to say the argumentation schemes upon which the DHA's tools for analysing argumentative discourse were based are presented in an explicit manner and based on the empirical analysis of authentic data (Kienpointner, 2018). Moreover, Reisigl (2014) points out that the DHA has an integrative framework that connects formal, functional and content related aspects of texts with a particular focus on content-related topoi, as it provides researchers with very clear criteria for its operationalisation (see p. 93). He further emphasises that "critical self-reflection will help to avoid the arbitrary coining of content-related categories" (p. 86). The DHA looks beyond the abstract aspects of argumentation and focuses on content-related topoi. Reisigl (2014) goes on to explain that "content-related topoi tell more about the specific character of discourses (subject positions, controversial claims, justification strategies, ideologies, etc.) than a purely functional or formal analysis" (p. 77).

Thus, for the study at hand, my understanding of topoi aligns itself with Reisigl & Wodak's (2009, p. 110) view of topoi as "content-related warrants or 'conclusion rules' that connect the argument(s) with the conclusion, the claim. As such, they justify the transition

from the argument(s) to the conclusion and each topos can be formulated as a conditional statement.”

For identifying fallacies, the discourse-historical approach draws on the pragma-dialectical approach (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992) and employs its rules of rational arguing as the normative basis for examining the rationality of the argumentation strategies in a text. A list of rules for rational arguing is given by Reisigl & Wodak (2001, pp. 70–71). Although Pragma-dialectics seems to be “the most comprehensive and most influential research programme within contemporary argumentation theory” (Kienpointer, 2018, p. 233), I endorse Reisigl's (2014) statement that “they are not a sufficient basis” (p. 92). He points out that “it is rather difficult to distinguish between fallacious and sound arguments since it heavily depends on the previous topic-related knowledge of the analysts and on the respective ‘field’ in which the argumentation is embedded” (p. 79). Nevertheless, I believe that it seems sensible to overlook evaluating the rationality of the arguments in this research, as the social media context is not an argumentative environment in the traditional sense (KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014). In general, social media discourse has the characteristics of being informal, brief and affective, and such characteristics probably entail a paradigm shift in the way persuasion is conceived. For instance, a visual topos can replace a verbal one since discourse is a process of meaning making and this does not have to be achieved through linguistic means. In addition, “topoi are candidates for manipulative acts of communication since what is actually expressed is a simple assertion rather than an argument” (Hart, 2013, p. 202).

4.1.5 Multimodal Discourse Analysis

According to (Kress, 2012) “multimodality asserts that ‘language’ is just one among the many resources for making meaning” (p. 38), and meaning is communicated differently through the various modes available. Adami (2017) argues that multimodality as a

phenomenon of communication is “the combination of different semiotic resources, or modes, in texts and communicative events, such as still and moving images, speech, writing, layout, gesture, and/or proxemics” (p. 451). Bezemer & Jewitt (2018) assert that just like speech and writing, other modes of meaning-making are not more resourceful, but rather have different communicative potential. Interpreting discursive events and their communicative functions requires an examination of other semiotic resources besides the written form. Thus, multimodality forms an indispensable part of analysing media discourse, particularly when analysing a discursive phenomenon on a highly multimodal social media platform like Twitter. KhosraviNik and Unger (2016) maintain that social media are “inherently and substantially multimodal” (p. 211). In addition, Twitter’s character limit pushes its users to take advantage of the various semiotic resources available to them to fully communicate their messages.

Multimodal analysis enables the examination of how visual aspects are able to “create moods and attitudes, convey ideas, create flow across the composition, in the same way that there are linguistic devices for doing the same in texts” (Machin, 2007, xi). It is undeniable that the analysis of the multimodal aspects of a text is central in recent approaches to CDS. This is even stressed as a result of the multimodality of the participatory web. Herring (2013) argues that “text remains the predominant channel of communication among web users, whether it be in blogs, microblogs, wikis, comments on news sites, or web discussion forums” (p. 9). However, she points out that “multimodal discourse requires the analyst to devise new analytical methods and to draw from theoretical frameworks outside linguistics (e.g., visual semiotics)” (p. 20). Although Kress & Van Leeuwen's (2006) approach to multimodality is not a linguistic one, they maintain that its development was facilitated by achievements in linguistics. However, they make the distinction that “language and visual communication can both be used to realise the ‘same’ fundamental systems of meaning that

constitute our cultures, but that each does so by means of its own specific forms, does so differently, and independently” (p. 19). They emphasise that visual communication almost always communicates ideological positions, especially in political uses. For example, Machin & Mayr (2012) observe that an image of a Muslim woman in traditional clothing would communicate a “broader discourse about clashes of culture and values” and this is done “implicitly through visual semiotic resources” (p. 31). Drawing on Michael Halliday's three meta-functions, Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006) developed their social semiotic approach to analyse visual representations. They hold the view that such meta-functions can be extended to all semiotic modes, going beyond speech and writing. These three functions are the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual. All three are used for the interpretation of meanings made by visual representations. (See Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 42–43 for more details of the three meta-functions.)

There is much controversy around the potential of visual and multi-modal media to deliver arguments (see Richardson & Wodak, 2009b; Blair, 2004 for this discussion). Richardson & Wodak (2009b) dismiss the critique that visual arguments are vague and point out that while they may be ambiguous, so are verbal ones. They stress that vagueness is “an inherent feature of political communication” (p. 50). They suggest that just like verbal arguments, researchers will have to account for implicit premises when dealing with visual arguments. They go on to explain what a visual argument is: “if it is possible to reconstruct from an image, a reason for accepting or believing some proposition or for modifying a belief or action – that is, if the meaning of an image can be reconstructed as advancing or defending a standpoint – it should be regarded as a visual argument” (p. 52). Blair (2012) argues that in terms of functionality, visual and verbal arguments are similar; an argument, be it visual or verbal, is a “propositional entity, merely expressed differently” (p. 223). Similarly, Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006) argue that meanings will be realised differently and expressed

differently despite the mistaken belief that they are expressing the same meanings, just in different forms. Blair's (2012) understanding of visual arguments is that they are "propositional arguments in which the propositions and their argumentative function and roles are expressed visually, for example by paintings and drawings, photographs, sculpture, film or video images, cartoons, animations, or computer-designed visuals" (p. 209). Just like Richardson & Wodak (2009b), Blair (2004) addresses "the vagueness critique". He makes a distinction between ambiguity and vagueness in visual argumentation. Ambiguity means that one cannot decide between two possible meanings that a visual argument is trying to convey; however, just like in verbal arguments, the context will assist the researcher in arriving at the potential meaning of an image produced by an author. However, vagueness means having to decide from many possible interpretations. Blair (2004) asserts that "vagueness and ambiguity can be managed in verbal argument, and so are in principle manageable in visual communication" (p. 59). Regarding the critique that visual communication lacks propositional content, he argues that "propositions can be expressed visually no less than verbally" (p. 59). He further clarifies that visual arguments present themselves as enthymemes, or "arguments with gaps left to be filled in by the participation of the audience" (p. 52). Therefore, "the arguer must know and relate not only to the beliefs and attitudes of the intended audience, but also to the visual imagery that is meaningful to it" (p. 52). Finally, he points out an important feature of visual arguments, that "the visual element in visual arguments is most significantly a rhetorical dimension, rather than logical or dialectical" (p. 51). They are distinguished from verbal arguments by their rhetorical power. They are influential in the sense that they "connect our beliefs and experience into meaningful stories which we adopt as elements of our personal or collective worldviews" (Blair, 2012, p. 219). Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006) suggest that visual language is not universally understood as "it is culturally specific" (p. 4). Thus, the meanings assigned to visual semiosis will stem from

the cultural context in which they are situated, and their interpretations will be culturally specific as well. For this reason, my analysis of the semiotic resources employed departs from a social semiotic perspective, in which a mode is a meaning-making resource that is socially shaped and culturally dependent (Bezemer & Jewitt, 2018; Kress, 2012), meaning that the social context dictates which modes are used and how to interpret their meanings.

4.1.6 Critical Metaphor Analysis

During detailed textual analysis of representational and argumentative strategies, several metaphors that are usually found in migrant-related discourse were present in the posts analysed, such as metaphors of animals, commodities and objects and natural disasters along with organic metaphors and a house metaphor. Thus, to account for the usage of these conventional metaphors in the negative discursive construction of migrants in Saudi Arabia and in the argumentative structure of the exclusionary discourse at hand, I briefly review metaphors in migration discourse.

Lakoff & Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory, which is arguably the most prominent approach to metaphor, points out that "the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (p. 5). Their theory views metaphor from a cognitive perspective, that is, "what goes on inside people's heads" (Chilton, 2005, p. 23). Van der Valk (2000) explains that "in a metaphor a domain of reality is compared to another, more familiar domain of reality whereby the understanding of the less familiar domain is enhanced with the help of common-sense reasoning" (p. 234). She further argues that "metaphors help bridge the gap between cognition and affection" (p. 234).

Cunningham-Parmeter (2011) observes that metaphors that antagonise migrants such as metaphors of war and natural disasters, among others, have a profound influence on the public as they will tend to frame migrant-related issues within the negative associations these

metaphors create. Such associations, he argues, are less likely to be critically challenged with time and people will draw on them unconsciously. In addition, Semino (2008) illustrates that “when particular uses of metaphor become the dominant way of talking about a particular aspect of reality within a particular discourse, they may be extremely difficult to perceive and challenge, since they come to represent the ‘common sense’ or ‘natural’ view of things. In such cases, conventional conceptual metaphors can be seen as an important part of the shared sets of beliefs, or ‘ideology’, that characterise a particular social group” (p. 33). In line with Cunningham-Parmeter (2011) and Semino (2008), Taylor (2021) further asserts that a reader’s perception of a metaphor will not correspond to its positive features, as it is affected by their prolonged exposure to texts that use metaphors to highlight the negative qualities contained in the metaphors employed.

Cunningham-Parmeter (2011) warns that “as a selective process that emphasises certain aspects of source and target domains, while masking others, metaphors do not tell stories completely” (p. 1556). He illustrates that a metaphor like immigration is a flood ignores its positive outcomes, such as fertile soil, and only highlights its destructive qualities. That is, negative metaphors tend to conceal the economic benefits brought about by migrants who are depicted as invaders, animals or floods. Taylor (2021) argues that “the same kind of argument can be made about metaphors which favourably construct migrants as an economic resource and may mask exploitation and erase other kinds of positive contribution made to society” (p. 466). Likewise, Semino et al. (2018) point out that this foregrounding and backgrounding of certain aspects of metaphors adds “an evaluative dimension” to metaphor which is one of its key functions (p. 30). Such “selective mapping”, according to Koller (2020), is a distinguishing feature of conceptual metaphor that enables text producers to pass on their ideological agendas.

Although the negative discursive construction of the other in the data was achieved through several conventional metaphors, such as the house metaphor and metaphors of animals, natural disasters and commodities, along with organic metaphors, I only focus on analysing migration as an invasion in a sample of tweets in Chapter 7. A negative-other presentation was partially achieved through the topological strategy of militarisation realised in various metaphor-related expressions from the war domain that occurred in the data with appreciable frequency. Migration is an invasion is a common metaphor found in migration discourse in the context of the United States (Santa Ana, 1999; O'Brien, 2003; Cunningham-Parmeter, 2011) and in the European context (Van der Valk, 2003; Charteris-Black, 2006; Baker et al., 2008; Baider and Kopytowska, 2017), among others. El Refaie (2001) examined Austrian newspapers and revealed that the Kurdish asylum-seekers who arrived in Italy in 1998 were portrayed through three dominant metaphors: asylum-seekers as water, criminals or an invading army. Similarly, Cunningham-Parmeter (2011) points out that immigration is a flood, immigration is an invasion and immigrants are aliens are the three dominant metaphors found in Supreme Court texts in the US to describe immigrants and immigration. Van Dijk (1991) examined the reproduction of racism in the British and Dutch press by analysing news reports in which immigration is depicted as an invasion. Likewise, van der Valk (2003) highlights the metaphor of war as one of the most prominent metaphors found in the discourse of the Right in French parliamentary debates. Baider & Kopytowska (2017) advance that metaphors of invasion in the online comments they examined imply the existence of both a physical and a symbolic threat posed by immigrants and refugees to Greece and Poland. Serafis et al. (2021) revealed the usage of the metaphor migration as invasion in their examination of the reporting of the refugee crisis in mainstream Italian newspapers. Hart (2021), on the other hand, examined how extreme versions of animalising and militarising metaphors introduced to his participants affected their attitudes towards

immigrants and immigration policies. He concludes that such emotionally infused metaphors led the participants to express sympathy toward immigrants and to be more critical of anti-immigration policies. He argues that, “People, it seems, are critically sensitive to extreme metaphors and their implications” (p. 247). He revealed that the dehumanizing effects of animalising metaphors were perceived by the participants as more negatively charged metaphorical expressions when compared to non-dehumanizing military metaphors. Thus, in line with Hart’s conclusion, I believe that it is best to focus on a critical analysis of more normalised metaphors, “which nevertheless carry implications antithetical to progressive values” (p. 247), as in the case of the militarizing metaphors I examine in Chapter 7.

4.2 The Public Sphere, Political Participation and Empowerment on Social Media Platforms

Social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook have been increasingly recognised as important social media outlets for hosting political discourse, given their emancipatory impact on minorities and marginalised groups (Guta & Karolak, 2015; Odine, 2013; Bondarenko et al., 2021; Freelon et al., 2018; Chong, 2023). The potential of social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to increase democracy has led many researchers to revisit the term public sphere as envisioned by Habermas (1992) within this digital space. Habermas (1992) theorised the public sphere as a democratic space where individuals gather to engage in discussions of public affairs that could eventually lead to the formation of public opinion based on rational critical debates; and this public political participation is for all, free from profit-driven markets, state surveillance and censorship. It is “a sphere between civil society and the state, in which critical public discussion of matters of general interest was institutionally guaranteed” and “state authority was publicly monitored through informed and critical discourse by the people” (p.xi). Burns & Highfield (2016)

proposed a new model, which is a transformation from a public sphere into several overlapping publics. They argue that “a more complex system of distinct and diverse, yet interconnected and overlapping, publics can be identified which represent different topics and approaches to mediated communication” (p. 124). Such a model has been touched upon by Pappacharissi (2002), in which she maintains that “multiple public spheres exist, which are not equally powerful, articulate, or privileged, and which give voice to collective identities and interests” (p. 11). This implies that power relations play an important role within these multiple spheres where certain voices are ignored.

Habermas’s public sphere has been criticised for its exclusion of the voices of minorities and women, denying them equal participation in public debates while focusing on privileged educated white men (Fraser, 1990; Papacharissi, 2002). Susen (2011) warns against excluding non-bourgeois voices and argues that “to reduce the complexity of the modern public sphere to the singularity of the bourgeois public sphere means to underestimate the sociological significance of alternative—i.e. non-bourgeois—collective realms that contribute to a rational-critical engagement with the world” (p. 52). Papacharissi (2002) notes that a new public space does not necessarily imply a new public sphere. She rightfully argues that “as [a] public space, the internet provides yet another forum for political deliberation. As [a] public sphere, the internet could facilitate discussion that promotes a democratic exchange of ideas and opinions” (p. 11). Therefore, scholars are trying to test social media's potential to serve as a democratizing tool for less privileged individuals.

Some scholars suggest that social media sites can meet the requisites of the public sphere as proposed by Habermas because they are free of the financial influence of corporations and offer unrestricted accessibility to information and equal opportunities for participation (Loader and Mercea, 2011; Jenkins, 2006). However, as Kruse et al. (2018) propose, “promoting the idea that unlimited access and equal participation exist on social

media ignores the social and political realities of contemporary society” (p. 64). They add that one must account for computer literacy around the world, and those with no access to the Internet when examining the digital public sphere. According to Mehanna (2010), access to information is not always possible as Internet subscriptions can be costly for some underprivileged individuals. She argues that the ones who benefit the most from the democratizing potential of the Internet in Egypt are those who belong to the upper and middle economic classes; and therefore, equality of access is questionable. Papacharissi (2002) argues that since access to online technologies is restricted to certain classes of society, then this digital public sphere is elitist and “not terribly different from the bourgeois public sphere of the 17th and 18th centuries” (p. 14). Similarly, Harlow & Guo (2014) assert that when examining immigration activism and its capacity for societal change, one must account for the digital divide within immigrant communities. They highlight the challenge faced by digitally illiterate migrants in utilising online platforms and their lack of access to technology as well. Conversely, they maintain that “any talk of a Facebook or Twitter revolution is premature as long as so much of the population is excluded from new technologies” (p. 475).

4.2.1 Political Polarisation and Absence of Civil Discourse

Sunstein (2007) claims that the use of social media for political deliberation often leads to political polarisation and the creation of echo chambers, as users have no tolerance for opposing views and seek like-minded individuals and groups online. Similarly, Kopytowska (2022) asserts that algorithmic processes contribute to the formation of filter bubbles and echo chambers, reinforcing extreme ideologies such as populist agendas, fuelled by social media, so that “those with radical ideas become even more radicalised, because their biases and fears can be shared, confirmed, and supported” (p. 156). Liu and Weber (2014) in their evaluation of Twitter as a public sphere found that users often communicate

with those who share their ideology. In addition, Kruse et al. (2018) observed that many of the participants they interviewed reported that they prefer to limit their interaction online to likeminded others or, as one participant put it, the “hug box”. Sunstein (2007) infers that the Web has become a place where hate groups communicate with one another and seek solidarity with other likeminded members while disseminating propaganda.

Kruse et al. (2018) and Sunstein (2007) report that the algorithms and filtering systems of social media sites driven by corporate control of them help in creating information cocoons by prioritizing content that matches their own opinions and previous searches while eliminating opposing or diverse voices on a particular topic online. This filtering, which Pariser (2011) refers to as the filter bubble, limits the potential of democratic discourse online where users are isolated in their own ideological bubbles. Therefore, this digital space fails to fulfil its function as a public sphere as it has led to increased polarisation instead of creating a venue that hosts healthy democratic debate. Sunstein (2008) points out that those algorithms deny equal access to information, thus making it difficult to sustain civil participatory democracy online as an essential element of Habermas's public sphere. The recommendation algorithms on YouTube and Facebook exacerbate the spread of hate speech and discrimination by suggesting comparable or even more strongly prejudiced content (Lim, 2020). Similarly, Twitter's promotional algorithms elevate the probability of individuals encountering xenophobic material by suggesting associated hashtags, accounts, and information (Kreis, 2017; Lim, 2020).

Halpern and Gibbs (2013) state that political participation on Facebook tends to be superficial and to lack rational reasoning. Similarly, Fuchs (2021) argues that in 2019, the majority of popular hashtags were related to entertainment, with technology following closely behind, and none were related to politics. He suggests that when entertainment dominates discussions on digital platforms like Twitter, political discussions are more likely to become

tabloidised. A similar conclusion was reached by Papacharissi (2016) who maintains that Twitter changes the quality of discussions, promoting informal, affective communication that can reshape public discussions. Moreover, Papacharissi (2002) reports that online discussions tend to involve expressing hasty opinions rather than rational ones. She asserts that although the Web seems like a place to promote democracy, some of the information and discussions found online are discriminatory and do not promote democratic ideals when participants benefit from freedom of speech to spread hatred. According to Kruse et al. (2018), some of the participants in their study reported that they preferred to avoid political discussions or to use pseudonymous when expressing sensitive political views. They further propose that although anonymity can give users a chance to express themselves freely, it can also be a tool to empower those who attack and insult others aggressively when faced with a different opinion, and this will eventually contribute to the decline of civil discourse online. Similarly, Liu and Weber (2014) and Yang et al. (2017) empirically tested Twitter's potential for hosting democratic debates, and found out that even on Twitter, louder, more powerful voices were heard while voices of the public were ignored. This supports Goode's (2015) argument that "as long as public spheres operate above the heads of consumers and not in interaction with a critically debating public, they remain sorely lacking as public spheres" (p. 26).

Kruse et al. (2018) hold that the uncivil political discourse found online is just a reflection of what political leaders are saying or a reflection of the broader political atmosphere. In a similar vein, Papacharissi (2002) concludes that "the virtual sphere is politically divided in a manner that echoes traditional politics, thus simply serving as a space for additional expression, rather than radically reforming political thought and structure" (p. 14). Although social media sites might have failed to revitalise Habermas's public sphere, and online political discussions might not differ from those found offline, some of the political discussions found online do, in my opinion, seem to be contributing to online activism by

publicizing existing social movements, and spreading awareness of certain issues to a wider audience. Such audiences cannot be reached otherwise, as many voices are denied access to offline media outlets. In this case, the digital public sphere will serve as the only platform available for expressing opinions rather than being an additional one. Thus, I strongly endorse Good's (2015) statement that “most discussions of the new media scape and the public sphere have highlighted the role of, say, the Internet as a public sphere, focusing on how well or how poorly the practices it embodies live up to the values of Habermasian discourse ethics. However, the problem here is that such enquiries highlight just part of the equation. They tend to treat the public sphere in abstraction from the broader socio-political and cultural context” (p. 114). As Su (2015) argues, the democratic potential of the virtual public sphere is conditioned by the political system of the country. Therefore, when examining Twitter as a public sphere for microblogging about political matters in Saudi Arabia in this research, I take into consideration the absence of genuine democracy and political participation (Zuhur, 2011; Albassam, 2011).

4.2.2 Surveillance and Institutional Influence

According to Kruse et al. (2018), surveillance results in information and participation online being constrained since it “is performed at the state, institutional, and interpersonal levels” (p. 65). Such surveillance causes users to be cautious and possibly not honest in expressing their political views to avoid potential online harassment and any negative effects those views might have on their personal relationships or jobs. Thus, since institutional influence controls the information to be presented and selects the content that offers financial gain by targeting advertisements, then social media sites are lacking the essence of the public sphere as envisioned by Habermas. Habermas (2006) maintains that social media sites have failed to revitalise the public sphere because of the institutional influence of mass media.

Papacharissi (2002) further argues that new media technologies have become increasingly commercially oriented because of the capitalist mode of production and advances that “for a vast majority of corporations the internet is viewed as another mass enterprise” (p. 19). Thus, Fuchs (2021) stresses that the potential social media platforms have for fostering democracy is undermined by the inherent power dynamics in which corporate profit logic prevails. He points out that Twitter is a profit-oriented platform; therefore, powerful celebrities and entertainers have more access and visibility than other users, echoing the much-criticised bourgeois public sphere. Fuchs (2021) further clarifies that “Twitter’s reality is one of asymmetric visibility. Its democratic potentials are limited by the reality of stratified attention and the visibility characteristic for a capitalist culture” (p. 219).

Fuchs (2014) suggests that the alternative to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube is non-commercial social media platforms. He argues that they are independent from the interests of digital capitalism as they strive for autonomy; however, this comes at a great cost. Although they offer users better privacy protection mechanisms, they suffer from a lack of resources and visibility. Fuchs (2014) clarifies that “this circumstance is not activists’ fault, but rather the consequence of the political economy of capitalism that limits the possibilities for civil society by making voice dependent on money and political resources” (p. 96). He concludes that “contemporary social media as a whole do not form a public sphere, but are in a particularistic manner controlled by corporations and the state that colonise and thereby destroy the public sphere potentials of social media” (p. 89). Although social media platforms are under state surveillance and colonised by corporations’ profit interest, they are relatively free when compared to traditional media, even in countries where Internet use is regulated, as in China, Iran, Egypt and Saudi Arabia (Mehanna, 2010; Su, 2015).

4.2.3 Online Political Participation and Empowerment

Citizens' participation in the political process is considered a prerequisite for a healthy functioning democracy. According to Van Deth (2014), "participation is the elixir of life for democracy" (p. 350). He further explains that "political participation can be loosely defined as citizens' activities affecting politics" (p. 351). Bakker & De Vreese (2011) argue that the Internet has facilitated the rise of new or alternative forms of easily accessible, low-cost forms of political participation online. Similarly, Harlow & Guo (2014) argue that social media "reduce[s] participation costs, promote[s] collective identity, and create[s] a sense of community" (p. 466). Hoffman et al. (2013) suggest that citizens engage in politics online because of their "desire to influence government as well as a desire to communicate political ideas to others" and that such desires "drive both "participatory" and "communicative" behaviours" (p. 2250). They further propose that not every online political behaviour is to be considered a participatory act. They argue that posting a link of a political nature on a social networking site is a communicative act rather than a participatory one. Morozov (2009) describes posting links online as a type of activism known as "slacktivism". The term refers to "feel-good online activism that has zero political or social impact" (Morozov, 2009, n.d.). Thus, critics have raised doubts about the impact of such forms of social media activism, suggesting that online movements often fail to achieve meaningful change due to their lack of structure and sustainability over time (Benkler et al., 2018). However, I argue that what one person perceives as a communicative act may be perceived by another person as a participatory one, depending on the definition of political participation they choose to adopt. If we were to consider political participation as "citizens' activities affecting politics" (Van Deth, 2014, p. 351), then even posting a link online could be considered a form of political participation as it aims eventually to affect politics, and that can happen by posting links and communicating political messages to other individuals online. Moreover, "the character of participation, and of politics itself, is transforming, as social and cultural foundations of

democracy become refigured” (Dahlgren, 2015, p. 21). Dahlgren (2015) believes that social media use not only for news consumption, but also for social interaction, can pave the way for online users to engage in political expression and thus political participation. This means that even users who are not interested in politics can end up expressing political views online as a result of interacting with others on different media platforms. He points out that “young people and less-privileged individuals tend to express their voice politically via social media” (p. 621). Similarly, Harlow & Guo (2014) maintain that “technologies also open up the digital public sphere to more potential actors, allowing people to participate who otherwise might never get involved” (p. 474). They reported that the participants in their study suggested that "slacktivism" can be effective even if only a small percentage of 'couch advocates' shift from online to offline activism.

Bekafigo & McBride (2013) report that individuals who are politically engaged offline often carry their interest in politics onto social media platforms, such as Twitter. They have also found evidence that social media platforms can potentially encourage people to take part in politics even if they have not been politically engaged offline. In addition, Bakker & De Vreese (2011) show that using the Internet for non-political purposes such as online communication and visiting sites not related to politics can actually contribute to various forms of political participation. They state that, “being connected online is positively related to both on and offline forms of participation” (p. 465). In a similar vein, Gil De Zúñiga et al. (2014) state that social media platforms offer a suitable environment for political expression online, which sometimes paves the way for citizens to engage in different forms of political participation both offline and online. They point out that political expression online may transfer a user from being just an observer expressing views online into a participant engaged in political action. They explain that on social media platforms, “the pathway to political participation may begin with content consumption, but it goes through expression as a key

mediating construct” (p. 615). However, I argue that such mediation exists more easily within democratic contexts, whereas in the context of this research, political engagement in the form of content consumption and political expression online seems less likely to exceed offline participation. As Pausch (2011) points out, individual freedom, and thus political participation, is contingent upon the political system that exists, and whether it offers “democratic structures, opportunities to choose and a public sphere” (p. 21). According to Al-Saggaf (2012), in Saudi Arabia, “offline activism is not permitted and social media is one of a very few alternatives to call for action” (p. 13). Similarly, Xie (2009) states that channels for political engagement and participation in China have to align with government policies. As Lowrance (2016) points out, within the Tunisian context, blogging activists remained active online and offline because “the costs of public opposition to the government are low, as they are with social media activism (i.e., “sharing” or commenting on Facebook)” (p. 173). Dahlgren (2015) argues that people are more likely to be interested in political participation if they see that being politically engaged is “both possible and meaningful” (p. 30). He further clarifies that a key prerequisite for meaningful political participation is for people to see themselves as actors with the power to make meaningful contributions to various political issues. That is, they need “an empowering civic identity” (Dahlgren, 2015, p. 30). Similarly, Pausch (2011) points out that one positive function of political participation, from an individualistic perspective, is that “it leads to political freedom or at least to the individual’s impression to [be able to] have a say on political matters” (p. 20). However, the existence of this empowering civic identity is highly dependent on the sociocultural setting of each country and the nature of its political system, because even in democratic settings, “the exact role and powers of the individual citizen vary amongst different models of democracy” (Gerodimos et al., 2013, p. 2). To conclude, although media platforms may be used by authoritarian regimes as tools to suppress social movements and political activism online, as

well as for surveillance and regime propaganda (Morozov, 2011), media platforms can still be empowering. Gerbaudo (2022) stresses that inequality of participation is magnified within the social media public sphere. He states that “there is a profound asymmetry among social media users: on the one hand, we find a great number of common users who mostly act as “reactors,” and on the other, a tiny minority of users and channels that are instead active generators of content” (p.135). However, he argues that while optimists can exaggerate the democratic potential inherent in the social media public sphere, one must not overlook some of its democratic aspects. He further clarifies that although online crowds are mostly ‘reactors’, they can significantly shape the political atmosphere by their responses. He advances that many politicians, political leaders and internet personalities frequently find themselves compelled to modify their stances in response to user reactions indicating disagreement.

Citizens might not be able to vote to elect decision-makers in authoritarian states, but they can influence the decisions those officials make by voicing their opinions online, and this can be considered a form of political participation that might lead to offline political participation one day (Yang, 2011; Al-Saggaf & Simmons, 2015). Savigny (2013) stresses that the issue with empowerment and media platforms is that many believe that media platforms and the Internet generally empower individuals on their own. Thus, as Dahlgren (2015) advances, technology must not be at the centre of this discussion while backgrounding the sociocultural settings. While memes are employed by some social media users to conceal hate speech in some contexts (see, Matamoros-Fernández, 2017), they also have the potential to play a positive role in alternative social and cultural settings, contingent upon the agency and creativity of their diverse users. Al Zidjaly (2017) advances that the memes that circulate on various social media platforms in non-democratic countries, such as Oman, serve as a means for citizens to express their political and religious concerns and mitigate political

dissent in an indirect and playful manner. She suggests that this type of online activism can foster what she labels a "pre-action phase" within Middle Eastern contexts.

Eriksson, Krutrök & Åkerlund (2023) highlight that popular videos addressing black issues are predominantly created by white users. They further explain that such videos often cater to a white audience and fail to represent the first-hand experiences of black individuals affected by police brutality. They proceed to conclude that this racial bias on TikTok detracts attention from the genuine voices of black content creators discussing racial injustice. However, they believe that despite this racial bias, videos on TikTok “are adhering to the notion of collective political action and raising awareness for the Black Lives Matter movement and racial inequality in the US” (p. 2007).

Cervi & Marín-Lladó (2022) report how the unique affordances of TikTok enable content creators to develop a novel form of online activism, which they label as ‘playful activism’. It is playful in the sense that it facilitates the introduction of "hard" topics, such as the oppression of Palestinians at the hands of Israeli occupation, in a way that suits the Gen Z audience, who may not be drawn to the conventional political language found on social media platforms usually associated with adults, such as Twitter or Facebook. While there is no assurance that such forms of playful activism will lead to tangible change, they play a role in increasing visibility and awareness, particularly among broader audiences like Gen Z.

Furthermore, Freelon et al. (2018) and Bondarenko et al. (2021) argue that social media has the potential to challenge the dominant white narrative on black victims of police brutality and can contribute to the empowerment of black voices and movements. They suggest that "Black Twitter" can serve as a platform for activism in which users can address issues important to the black community that may be overlooked or misrepresented by mainstream media. Bondarenko et al. (2021) note that “digital activism on social platforms

represents the struggle for space in the public sphere and is used as means to challenge the power exercised by the dominant groups” (p. 96).

Similarly, Hacıyakupoglu & Zhang (2015) argue that amid the Gezi Protests, an environmental sit-in that evolved into a social movement in Turkey, Facebook and Twitter served as channels for communicating protest-related matters, including tactics for dealing with police and promoting awareness of the cause. However, they maintain that attributing the success of the Gezi Protests solely to social media would be an overstatement. Thus, as Papacharissi (2015) suggests, researchers should focus on unpacking modern forms of activism, such as the affective aspects that are deeply embedded in online social interactions, instead of solely looking at instances in which social media has led to conventional forms of civic engagement or immediate changes.

4.2.4 Populist Discourse and the Role of Social Media Affordances

Taking advantage of their immediate participatory nature and intertextual and multimodal potential along with their perceived anonymity, many individuals have used social media platforms to spread discriminatory hateful messages (Perry and Olsson, 2009). Such individuals “are able to digitally launder hateful rhetoric through Internet channels in order to produce a loose form of accepted ‘public discourse’” (Klein, 2012, p. 443). For example, Waltman & Mattheis (2017) warn that using social media to mobilise hate memes means that extremist ideologies and hate can become normalised in both political and non-political spheres, further accelerating the spread of hate ideology into society as a whole. On Twitter, individuals share explicitly racist images by disguising them as memes and utilising the platform's "sensitive media" filters. These filters are designed to alert viewers to potentially sensitive content, like sexually explicit material. However, racists exploit this feature to conceal hate speech, making it less likely to be reported by others (Matamoros-

Fernández, 2017). KhosraviNik (2017) suggests that to analyse a communicative discursive practice online, one must account for two levels of contextualisation: A) a horizontal one, where we explain how communicative affordances contribute to or shape a given digital communicative phenomenon; and B) at a vertical level to analyse a digital communicative event in light of the specific cultural and social context. Thus, when examining a discursive practice online, KhosraviNik & Esposito (2018) warn researchers against “a straightforward establishment of a cause effect relation between the affordances of the participatory web and practices of hostility online, highlighting the role of the medium and downplaying socio-political structures and power hierarchies” (p. 58).

They argue that “the construction, perception and communication of hate is primarily a social construct, i.e., constituted in the socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic context of the society” (p. 48). This means that a communicative discursive event on social media is primarily a social construct, but one that is being shaped by technology affordances. In a similar vein, KhosraviNik (2018) maintains that the new digital participatory technology is not to be blamed for the emerging populist discourse that is being disseminated within its different outlets as populist tendencies stem from the sociopolitical and cultural context of a given society. He argues that the “hyper-normalisation and triumph of neo-liberal rationality in late modern societies and new media affordances have created a momentum for the growth of haphazard populist politics in every sense” (p. 429). In addition, he demonstrates that the political economy and values within social media spaces have contributed to establishing affective politics, which foregrounds beliefs and feelings over argumentation and facts, as social media nowadays “are about visibility/ popularity not facts” (p. 438). He elaborates that social media platforms encourage such a visibility equals credibility motto, as it guarantees more commercial investment and financial gain while disregarding the consequences of such a practice. He further states that mass media gate-keeping systems naturally ensure that

affective modes of an individual are filtered before publishing, while on social media platforms the individual tends to be encouraged to express his/her opinion regarding different matters using various affective qualities. Consequently, such opinions mostly lack rational argument, yet they gain in popularity and thus in credibility. Bennett and Pfetsch (2018) argue that the absence of gatekeeping can lead to a “disrupted public sphere” that has facilitated the existence of bots, trolls, hacking, and disinformation (the circulation of fake news).

Kopytowska (2022) asserts that the architecture of social media platforms enhances the influence of radical and racist opinions by enabling political and mainstream media messages to be recontextualised and shared, creating a trans-spatial and trans-temporal communication flow. She argues that while social media appeals to users on cognitive and emotional levels, its true power lies in its facilitation of discourse production and consumption through its technological affordances. She maintains that social media users now play a crucial role in shaping public discourse and challenging traditional gatekeeping mechanisms. Thus, she points out that while politicians and mainstream media contribute to framing migrants as a threat in discussions surrounding immigration, it is the dissemination and consumption of such narratives by the general public, especially on social media, that significantly influence their impact. She demonstrates that the difference in the impact of Enoch Powell's original speech and its remediations on social media stems from YouTube's capacity to enhance the accessibility and emotional resonance of the original broadcast. Similarly, Walsh (2023) emphasises that “while not exclusively featuring xenophobic discourse and exclusionary solidarities, Twitter can be harnessed to promote them in ways not available in prior media ecologies” such as employing several anti-immigration hashtags that evoke anxiety around Canadians' safety and their potential cultural displacement, as seen in #nomoreterrorists and #Canada4Canadians (p. 2636). Moreover, Ozduzen et al. (2021) note

that nativist and anti-immigrant discourse online is facilitated by Twitter's algorithms of racism and affordances such as hashtags. Cisneros & Nakayama's (2015) study shows that specific cultural features of social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook can contribute to the circulation and perpetuation of racism. For example, the perceived anonymity encourages some Twitter users to express racist attitudes in a rather explicit way, especially when a tweet is meant to be shared with intimate like-minded followers.

Farkas et al. (2018) proposes that Facebook's corporate logic, its technological affordances, along with user behaviour collaboratively contributed to the spread of hate speech. They introduce the term 'platformed antagonism', which refers to the use of false identities on social media platforms to portray specific ethnic or religious communities negatively (see section 3.3 for more details). Their investigation focused on how this practice targeted Muslims in Denmark and highlighted that within Facebook's technological structure, page administrators can remain completely anonymous. Additionally, they observe that these administrators were cautious in regularly removing comments indicating the pages' lack of authenticity, which made challenging or disputing the pages' legitimacy difficult.

Avraamidou et al. (2021) argue that extreme ideologies use various social media affordances, such as hashtags, to subtly advance their agendas, often without violating platform rules or legal restrictions, such as those prohibiting hate speech. They reveal that ambiguous or seemingly innocent hashtags, such as #IStandWithGreece, provide a convenient means for spreading hidden extremist rhetoric online on platforms like Twitter. This hashtag was trending during a border crisis at Europe's periphery and was exploited by influential Twitter users to propagate anti-immigrant and nationalist beliefs. The researchers found that some top influencers, not necessarily Greek, promoted extremist ideologies alongside support for Greece. These elites of the far-right use hyperbolic hashtags like #Jihadists and #DefendEurope to invoke urgency around the perceived threat of migration,

transcending national boundaries within the global north. That is, far-right extremists on Twitter used "an offline event and Twitter as the online instrument to spark a political agenda marked by intolerance against migrants in the name of security, the nation, race, and culture, transcending the geographical context of the events" (p. 2861). As KhosraviNik (2018) emphasises, although populist nationalist discourses have very different social fabrics and political practices across global contexts, their origins, characteristics and discursive strategies are strikingly similar, and the essence of populist nationalist discourse is its focus on real or manufactured problems in the current social, economic and political situation.

4.3 Summary

An overview of the relevant theoretical frameworks used in the discursive construction of migrants with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForThe Saudis* has been presented in this chapter. The first part of this chapter started by reviewing the CDA paradigm. I conducted a review of fundamental CDA concepts, such as discourse and power, and situated the notion of power in a social media context. I also covered the DHA as the main theoretical framework for this thesis. In addition, I reviewed some key concepts, like intertextuality, interdiscursivity and recontextualisation, as they are employed by CDA and the DHA, particularly how intertextuality applies to the analysis of social media discourse. After that, I reviewed the notion of topoi as a central concept of the DHA's argumentation strategies and emphasised the need to examine how topoi are conceived in a social media context. The context of this study, which is social media discourse analysis, necessitates interdisciplinarity, thus I outlined multimodal discourse analysis and critical metaphor analysis as the other two subsidiary frameworks needed to account for meaning-making through multimodality and metaphor as pivotal aspects of representational and argumentation analysis.

In the second part of this chapter, I covered the concept of the public sphere in relation to digital media discourse and its potential to empower individuals and facilitate social and political change. Finally, I reviewed the role of social media affordances in disseminating and normalizing populist discourse.

Chapter 5: Methodology (Data and Methods)

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section describes the data chosen for the study and the means of data selection, collection, downsizing and sampling. After that, a review of the ethical concerns associated with this kind of online data is presented, followed by a description of the coding process. The second section begins by reviewing the methodological tools applied in this study. Having discussed the theoretical underpinnings of the discourse-historical approach (DHA) in the previous chapter, I now present the analytic tools I employ to carry out the representational and argumentative analyses in Chapters 7 and 8, respectively. I mainly follow Reisigl and Wodak's (2016) methodological steps, which I describe in more detail in the following section, to carry out the analysis. This chapter also extends the discussion of multimodality introduced in Chapter 4 by explaining the operationalisation of the concept in the context of this study. Multimodal discourse analysis and critical metaphor analysis are reviewed here as subsidiary methodological frameworks that I draw on to complement the representational and argumentative analyses carried out mainly using the DHA's analytic tools. I briefly review the operationalisation of the aforementioned frameworks to account for the usage of metaphor in the representation of the other in this thesis, but most importantly to account for the various semiotic resources afforded by Twitter as new forms of meaning-making either on their own or in combination with written texts in the construction of migrant-related arguments.

5.1 Data

5.1.1 Data Selection and Sampling

Before considering the data for the study at hand, I was personally invested in migrants' representation in Saudi media. However, as a Twitter user, I often found myself

interested in widely circulated hashtags that refer to various social and political matters in Saudi on Twitter. Among the hashtags that I had noticed and followed for a while was the prominent hashtag *السعودية_للسعوديين* *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*, which frames the issue of Saudis' unemployment through an exclusionary discourse of migrants in Saudi Arabia. Following the DHA's eight-step methodology (Wodak & Meyer, 2016), I started by reading relevant literature on migration studies online and established that literature that examines the discursive construction of migration representation in Saudi Arabia in print media or on social media is almost non-existent. Although I initially considered looking at the representation of migrants in print media, I decided to exclusively examine their representation online along with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*, partly because accessing archives of print media proved to be rather problematic. Thus, this hashtag being fairly easily accessible for data collection seemed more plausible. This is particularly because tweets, although not representative of the whole population of Saudi Arabia, do provide a snapshot of the nature of anti-migrant discourse in the country. Also, I found the hashtag to be more relevant to current discursive events because Twitter, unlike other media platforms in the kingdom, is the primary place to address social and political issues (Altwayjiri, 2017; see also section 2.4).

I began the data collection for this research by using Twitter's advanced search page, where I typed the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* in Arabic and restricted the results to the period from 1 December 2016, when the hashtag first occurred, to 16 February 2019, which marks the last day of data capture. The collection of this sample over 26.5 months, is likely to have helped to ensure that a variety of views on migrants were captured since the first use of the hashtag, and the timeframe captured gives me a snapshot of ongoing migrant-related discussions. To scrape the tweets, I used the Chrome Data Miner extension. I opened Twitter's advanced search feature, chose the timeframe and the hashtag and let the software

scrape the tweets. This search resulted in massive volumes of tweets that would have been difficult to manage and analyse manually within the timeframe of this study. Because the volume of posts on social media on a certain topic decreases and increases depending on accompanying events that elicit such discussions, I chose to downsize the data by looking at the most active periods within the chosen timeframe. Using Brand24, a media monitoring tool that provides analytics, I entered the hashtag and the time period mentioned earlier. Then, the analytical tools showed the most active days for the hashtag in each year in graphical form. Brand24 relied on Twitter impressions to create these analytics. Using Data Miner again, I entered those active days into Twitter's advanced search to elicit the results. All scraped tweets were saved as an Excel file. To preserve multimodality as it informs the third research question of this study, I saved the pages as a pdf file; however, the pdf did not capture multimodality well as videos were blank and some pictures were missing. Therefore, since the Excel spreadsheet contained a column with links to the original tweets, I had to manually screen-capture all the tweets to have access to its multimodal features. However, 67 tweets were deleted and 35 accounts were suspended by the time I started capturing the multimodal features of tweets.

The most active days for the hashtag within the timeframe set resulted in 936 tweets, which formed the final data set that I qualitatively analyse later in the thesis. However, after inspecting those 936 tweets for spam and sensitive tweets whose content could endanger me as a researcher or the participants (see section 5.1.2), the data set was reduced to 798 tweets. Ninety-seven of the original 936 tweets were spam, while only 41 were of a sensitive nature. After that, a pdf file of the final 798 tweets was uploaded to ATLAS.ti for coding. As videos cannot be captured in a pdf file, I recorded them and saved them in a separate file to be coded separately, and to go back to them when needed for analysis of the representational and

argumentative strategies in Chapters 7 and 8. However, the codes for the videos were added to the corresponding original tweets in the pdf file in ATLAS.ti (see Fig. 1 below).

Figure 1

Tweet coded for the video it contains

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

How beautiful are your words Dr

Tawfiq Alsaif

@t_saif]



As explained earlier, a total of 102 tweets could not be captured in their original format as their accounts had been suspended. Although the textual format of these tweets was still saved in Excel, I chose not to include those tweets based on ethical recommendations and advice not to publish deleted tweets, particularly if not generated by organisational or public figure accounts (Williams et al., 2018). By the time I started coding the 696 tweets that comprised the data set, and to compensate for the excluded tweets, I used the same data collection method mentioned earlier to collect tweets from 2019 and 2020. This was also beneficial in keeping the data up to date. I downsized the data again by collecting tweets from the most active periods in 2019 and 2020, which generated only 64 and 76 tweets, respectively, resulting in a final data set of 836, which is I believe sufficient to facilitate the analysis of the chosen categories. An initial look at the data set suggested that it was rather

rich in terms of its discursive contents. I consider the data to be rich and thus the sample sufficient because although the initial focus is on the tweets, the coding and analysis are not limited to plain text but extend to the hyperlinked text in quoted tweets, as well as all the other multimodal resources present, such as images or videos, which are usually incorporated into a textual tweet to inform the debate or used to construct visual arguments on their own. Thus, as Reisigl & Wodak (2016) advance, the theoretical and analytical framework adopted in any research should depend on the genre of the data and the purpose of the research at hand. Therefore, a qualitative perspective to analyse this data set seems necessary, as it is full of multimodal features, idioms and sarcasm, none of which can be adequately captured by automated analysis, but which is vital to my analysis of discursive and argumentative strategies. Besides, this small sample does not seek to be representative as “the goal of most qualitative studies is not to generalise but rather to provide a rich, contextualized understanding of some aspect of human experience through the intensive study of particular cases” (Polit & Beck, 2010, p. 1451). Moreover, Mautner (2005) argues that “large corpora and qualitative methods are generally a bad fit” (p. 822). Similarly, Dörnyei (2007) points out that qualitative research is exploratory in nature and helpful in understanding intricate phenomena in a detailed thorough style, which is the aim of the research at hand. However, this does not mean that I fully cover all the linguistic realisations of the discursive strategies I examine, but rather that the linguistic realisations presented in the analysis chapters are adequate for constructing an argument and answering the research questions. Fossey et al. (2002) assert that in qualitative research, the aim is to collect sufficient data that will eventually lead to an adequate detailed description of the phenomenon under study, rather than gathering a fixed number of data, which is attainable considering the nature of the posts on this social media platform, which are highly multimodal. They add that in qualitative research, “The applicability of findings from one setting to another depends on the likeness

between the bodies of knowledge, or contexts, as judged by those wishing to apply the findings” (p. 730).

5.1.2 Ethical Concerns

While social media platforms can save researchers' time and resources by facilitating the collection of abundant naturally occurring data on almost any topic, they also present them with novel ethical challenges. A number of ethical implications at play when collecting social media data posted by individuals have been addressed by the British Psychological Society (2021) and the Association of Internet Researchers (2019) in their ethical guidelines for researching and obtaining social media data. Page et al. (2022) argue that “the distinction between a ‘person’ and a ‘text’ is not straightforward when we consider social media materials. Although a research project might focus on textual interactions, those social media materials are produced (at least in part) by people” (p. 58). This suggests that when researching social media posts, one must prioritise the people behind those tweets and be alert to the risks of harming them.

Stommel & de Rijk (2021) argue that ethical decisions within studying CDS online lack self-reflection and transparency. They criticised CDS-oriented journals that failed to tackle significant ethical concerns, such as the potential harm to users, especially when examining sensitive topics. They pointed out that most articles that involved researching online data disregarded the retrievability of posts. Additionally, they noted an oversight in addressing users' expectations regarding the reach of their posts and argued that it is unlikely that most users would expect their tweets to be quoted in a research paper, regardless of how aware they are of the public nature of their posts. Similarly, Williams et al. (2017) assert that a reflexive ethical approach is needed even if certain practices related to obtaining Twitter data do not seem to be in conflict with the platform’s terms of service. Östman & Turtiainen

(2016) stress that researchers tend to hold different opinions regarding what kind of ethics should be observed when conducting online research, and thus, self-reflection is essential when making ethical decisions. Fuchs (2017) emphasises the importance of adopting critical realism when examining digital media, advising social scientists to neither overlook nor overtly fetishise research ethics.

As Boyd & Crawford (2012) stress, “the process of evaluating the research ethics cannot be ignored simply because the data are seemingly public” (p. 672). Markham (2012) highlights that while some users realise that their tweets are public and share them willingly, they might feel violated if they find their tweets quoted and criticised in a research paper. This is because “People may operate in public spaces but maintain strong expectations of privacy” (p. 336). Thus, a number of scholars have advised keeping users’ expectations of privacy in mind and cautioned against publishing verbatim quotes in order to prevent the identification of the authors of online posts (Markham, 2012; Stommel & de Rijk 2021; Mackenzie, 2017). One example of this is how Zappavigna & Zhao (2017) safeguarded the anonymity of the mothers involved in their multimodal analysis of daily portrayal of motherhood experiences on Instagram. They took measures to minimise the likelihood of the images being discovered through an image search by applying a filter. The researchers acknowledged the possibility that these mothers may not have anticipated their images being utilised as research data, even though the images were publicly accessible on Instagram. Similarly, in her study of feminist humour on Reddit, Massanari (2019) slightly modified any direct quotations to protect the anonymity of the writers while maintaining the intended meaning. Merrill & Åkerlund (2018) used translation to analyse anti-immigration Facebook posts. This was done to ensure the anonymity of the authors, particularly because they might be exposed to harm if their posts circulated beyond their intended contexts due to the sensitive nature of the content of their posts. Examining digitally mediated misogyny,

(Formato, 2021) chose to anonymise ordinary users' profiles but did not disguise the profiles of corporations or celebrities.

The data I collected is on an open platform (Twitter) rather than on a closed forum, which, in comparison with data found in closed or private online spaces, presents fewer ethical issues (Townsend & Wallace, 2016). The privacy policy of Twitter informs its users about the public nature of their posts if they choose not to protect their tweets by making their Twitter accounts private. Therefore, tweets from public accounts are visible to anyone, whether a Twitter user or not. Since posts with hashtags are searchable, preserving subjects' anonymity would be impossible when verbatim data are involved. Taking the ethical guidelines and recommendations mentioned above into account, I tried to be self-reflexive and take into consideration the community's expectations of publicity and privacy. I followed Markham's (2012) recommendation to examine the context as it "can provide some information for the researcher to assess the extent to which privacy might become an issue" (p. 337).

As a Saudi citizen born and raised in the country, I am confident that I can handle any politically sensitive data without endangering the participants or myself. I am familiar with the cyber-crime laws in the kingdom and the cultural taboos in the country, and I believe that such awareness qualifies me to make good judgements about what should be excluded from the data set. The exclusion criteria are primarily based on Saudi Arabia's anti-cyber-crime laws. For example, tweets insulting religion or state laws or promoting public disruption were excluded from the data set because they could count as cyber-crimes in Saudi Arabia. It is important to clarify that such exclusions are unlikely to have had much impact on my analysis as most Saudi users are aware of the cyber-crime laws in the kingdom and realise that certain activities on Twitter are monitored by government agencies. Therefore, they opt to self-censor to avoid problematic issues. Posts on Twitter that do not criticise the

government's heads of state, i.e. the royal family, but rather criticise the quality of public services and ministries, such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development or the Ministry of Health, which is the case with this hashtag, are unlikely to lead to censorship or expose users to risks. I addressed all ethical concerns in detail in my ethics application submitted to the FASS ethics committee, which was approved in August 2018 (FL17158).

Because of the racist nature of the hashtag along with the critical stance I take in my research, I did not approach the users for their consent. As Fuchs (2022) suggests, asking for informed consent in such a case would likely not only be met with rejection but could put the researcher at risk of being harassed or threatened. Aiston (2023) refrained from contacting Reddit users for their consent as she rightfully argues that due to CDS transparency about its ideological stance and lack of objectivity, users involved in contentious topics on social media platforms are more inclined to decline participation in research led by someone they view as an ideological or political adversary. Thus, she used generic labels instead of usernames and eliminated any references to potentially identifiable information.

In addition to the likelihood of refusing to give consent, given the large number of Twitter users involved in such research, obtaining consent would be nearly impossible, (Fuchs, 2022). Townsend & Wallace (2017) argue that in nationalist hashtags, “the authors expect and want to be observed by strangers in order to make a political point that they want others to read” (205), and they maintain that there is no need for informed consent, though they do recommend anonymizing authors. Similarly, Fuchs (2022) argues that informed consent does not need to be obtained for tweets that use hashtags as they aim for more for public visibility. For example, the users in this hashtag sometimes tag and mention government officials in their tweets, which means they are aware of the reach of their tweets and want to be heard and supported by a wider audience. However, Fuchs stresses that

researchers should ensure that Twitter users cannot be identified by either their usernames or by searching text they post on Twitter. I would also argue that the risk of tweeting racist views in a hashtag is greater than being quoted indirectly in a PhD thesis. However, I ensured that the risk of harming the participants would be mitigated by anonymising the users.

My research focuses on both the content of the data set as well as the linguistic features of the content, necessitating the use of verbatim tweets. Although nicknames can carry significant meaning, they are not vital for my analysis, so I chose to anonymise tweet authors' user names. However, including original tweets in Arabic makes it rather easy to identify the authors via searching. Therefore, I am only including the translated tweets in my published thesis in order to make them less searchable, and only the examiners will have access to both the original tweets and the translated ones. It must be noted that I have used the original Arabic tweets for my linguistic analysis to illustrate certain linguistic phenomena and maintain analytical rigour.

5.1.3 Coding Process

Unlike automated coding of Twitter content, manual coding can be rather slow. However, it is needed if the data set is “challenging to code because of nuances in language, rare occurrences, or topic complexity” (Kim et al., 2013, p. 144). They stress that “analysis of tweet content is hampered by the brevity of tweets and by the use of slang, sarcasm, and unconventional forms of written expression, including hashtags, emoticons, and acronyms”. Coding the data in this research requires considerable background knowledge on my part about the context of the research, its discourse topics and the accompanying discursive events, thus making manual coding necessary. Therefore, I performed coding manually, and used ATLAS.ti to help systematically explore, organise and code the topics of the tweets. I also coded the multimodal semiotic resources and topoi found in the tweets. Semiotic

resources can be images, cartoons or infographics. They can also be any videos, replies, mentions and sub-hashtags found in the tweets.

According to Saldaña (2013), “A code in [a] qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 3). Williams & Moser (2019) recommend a three-level coding process, namely, open coding, axial coding and selective coding. “In open coding, themes are being developed” while in axial coding “the relationships among themes are explicitly stated, examined, and categorized”. Selective coding, which is the third level of coding, “enables the researcher to select and integrate categories of organized data from axial coding in cohesive and meaning-filled expressions” (p. 52). Following their recommendation and to capture the primary content of each tweet, a code or several codes were assigned to each one. Then, these codes were classified into categories and finally into topics or themes. The difference between codes and categories is that “codes are essence-capturing and essential elements of the research story that, when clustered together according to similarity and regularity (a pattern), they actively facilitate the development of categories and thus analysis of their connections” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 8).

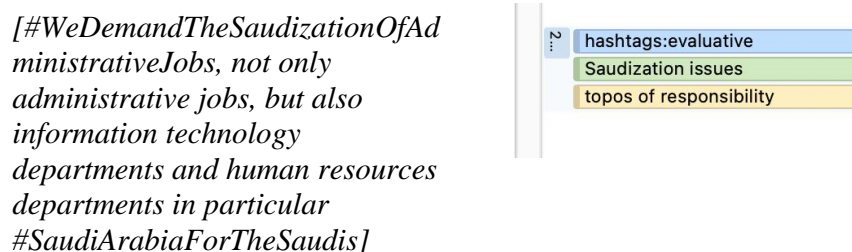
To arrive at those themes or topics, a content analysis was carried out. Content analysis, according to Krippendorff (2019), is a scientific tool that the researcher relies on to make valid and replicable inferences derived directly from texts. He emphasises that any meaning-making sources are considered data and thus texts transcend a textual format to include other formats such as videos and images. The type of coding I carried out in this research is called descriptive coding or topic coding. It “summarizes in a word or short phrase – most often as a noun – the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 88). However, he points out that the choice of codes might differ from one researcher to another, as coding is an interpretive act, rather than a precise science. The coding process is

crucial because it functions as “the transitional process between data collection and more extensive data analysis” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 5). Moreover, it helped me identify the discourse topics necessary to answer my first research question, and the common-sense reasoning schemes (topoi) to answer the third research question. So, this first stage of analysis (coding) was necessary to provide a systematic description of the content of the data, and what topics, semiotic resources or topoi would be further analysed in the second stage of analysis (analysis of representational and argumentative strategies).

ATLAS.ti assisted in carrying out the content analysis necessary for the first stage of analysis. As mentioned earlier, the coding was carried out manually using qualitative data analysis software: ATLAS.ti. This software facilitates the process of categorizing and visualizing content. It also helps researchers to make connections between the various data formats being analysed. The coding involves highlighting quotations and tagging them with a certain code. The code represents the central information, or kernel, contained in the quotation. With the help of ATLAS.ti, the main topic(s), semiotic resources and topoi of each tweet were assigned relevant codes (see Fig. 2 below).

Figure 2

Codification of topics and semiotic resources in ATLAS.ti



ATLAS.ti shows the frequency of each code, which is helpful for further analysis, such as showing the most prevalent topics. In addition, it proved useful when trying to establish connections to interpret the data better using the co-occurrence function. For

instance, to check how many of the 133 videos in the data set were associated with the code *Arab migrants*, I used the co-occurrence table feature in ATLAS.ti, which allowed me to explore the relationship between two codes. It showed that 33 of the coded videos were tagged with the code *Arab migrants*. It also revealed that 43 videos were tagged with the code *other migrants*, which mostly does not specify the geographical origin of the migrants, but rather refers to them generically. Such connections are crucial in informing the second stage of analysis, particularly when pointing out how the affordances of Twitter, such as videos, are being utilised to construct the other negatively and to advance arguments related to the migrants involved. The number of videos associated with *Arab migrants* for instance, along with screenshots and images, established *Arab migrants* as the most frequently mentioned group of migrants in the data set.

For the first cycle of coding, 13 codes were created to identify semiotic resources while 18 codes were related to topics found in the data. While collecting the data and during the first cycle of coding, I felt that it was necessary to code all the social actors involved. This allows me to address my second research question. Following Herrera (2020), I therefore created two bigger categories to group the codes used to identify topics, which are social processes and social actors, respectively. Herrera defines the former as processes “related to actions, which are the core of social practices” (p. 99), whereas the latter refers to “participants in social processes, with different roles” (p. 97).

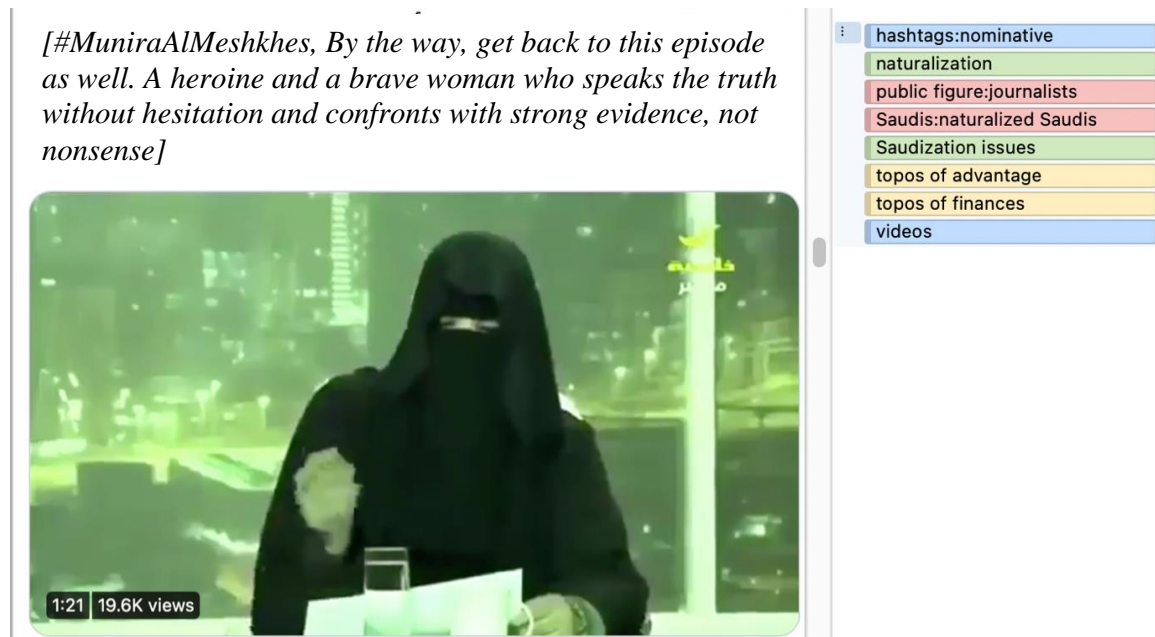
In the second cycle of coding, and thorough observation of each tweet, the codes within the category social actors remained unchanged, with 14 actors identified. However, some codes within the category of social processes were merged with other codes. I merged the code *Hijaz* under *threat to Saudi culture* as the code *Hijaz* is primarily assigned to tweets that see Saudi culture in Hijaz threatened by residents there, be they migrants or naturalised citizens. Thus, to reduce redundancy, these codes were merged. Also, the code *perceptions of*

Saudis was merged with the code *unethical behaviour*, as those tweets include insulting and disparaging of Saudis which are in essence unethical behaviours. These minor changes reduced the total number of codes related to topics to 16. Figure 5 in chapter 6 illustrates the categories and codes for the prominent topics found in the data set, which helped to provide an overview of what the users were discussing. An overview of these topics, their frequencies and examples of each discourse topic is provided in Chapter 6 as well.

Regarding topic identification, some tweets were assigned more than one code for a topic, as tweets usually involve some semiotic resources such as videos that may contain a discussion of many issues that require more than one topic-related code. To elaborate, the textual tweet below is a statement written by a user in which they encourage others to view the video, thus they implicitly endorse the racist remarks made by a journalist, whom they describe as a courageous heroine. Thus, the coding of topics relies on what is said in the attached video of two Saudi journalists on a TV show debating naturalisation. In the video, one journalist is talking about naturalised Saudis, where she portrays them negatively and argues against the process of naturalisation. As a result, the tweet is identified using the code *naturalisation*. However, she goes on to discuss how Saudis are only employed in blue-collar jobs, which requires the code *Saudization issues* to describe the content of the video. The tweet was also tagged with two codes related to the social actors involved, i.e. *public figure: journalists* and *Saudis: naturalised Saudis*. Regarding the semiotic resources in this tweet, two codes were tagged, *videos* and *nominative hashtags*. The nominative hashtag is used to refer to the social actor involved in the tweet, the journalist in the video. The nominative hashtag contains her first name and surname. Thus, it can be used to find posts with content related to the same journalist.

Figure 3

Tweet as assigned two codes for topics



Regarding social actors, a detailed review of the social actors involved along with examples from the data are provided in Chapter 6. Figure 6 in chapter 6, shows the categories and codes used to identify the social actors involved in this hashtag.

To identify semiotic resources, I adopted Herrera's (2020) classification of the codes used to identify them. However, I made some adjustments, such as excluding polls, GIFs, quotations and other codes that either do not exist in my data or are not of primary importance to the second stage of analysis. Figure 7 in chapter 6, shows the 13 codes used to identify the semiotic resources in the data set, which are illustrated further with examples in Chapter 6.

As mentioned earlier, the identification of semiotic resources in the first stage of analysis informs the second stage of analysis as users rely heavily on them to construct their arguments online and to negatively construct the other. Below are brief descriptions of the semiotic resources found in the data set:

- Hashtags: Hashtags are “conversational tagging” (Huang et al., 2010) where a word or a phrase is preceded by the symbol (#) which can contribute to creating affiliation online (Zappavigna, 2018). These built-in hyperlinking capabilities of Twitter hashtags have several functions. Following Herrera (2020), the category hashtags includes three codes: “thematic, which indicate the topic of the tweet; nominative, which are used to link the tweet with someone; and evaluative, which indicate a particular stance or viewpoint” (p. 103).
- Mentions: This category includes the code’s direct address, which is using the @ sign followed by a Twitter username in a tweet. The other code in this category is the code reply, which is “A response to another person’s Tweet”. One can reply by clicking the reply icon next to the tweet one wants to respond to (Twitter, 2023).
- Quoted tweets: Through quoted tweets, Twitter users can retweet another user’s post and comment on it. The quoted tweet is embedded within the post and thus grants other users access to the original embedded tweet.
- Emojis: Danesi (2016) defines emojis as pictographic systems used to enhance or substitute a text and they are generally associated with informal friendly messages; they “have reshaped communication, leading to the emergence of new modes of

exchange that are supposedly more entertaining, more transparent and less time-consuming” (Wagner et al., 2020, p. 307).

- Images: “visual resources added to the tweets using Twitter’s native image upload capabilities or hyperlinks directly to image files which are displayed as embedded images in most Twitter clients” (Herrera, 2020, p. 104). The codes included in this category are screenshots, photographs, infographics and cartoons:
 - Screenshots: They are captured images of what is seen on the screen, usually of various types of content on web pages and media platforms, among others, that operate as evidence.
 - Photographs: photos of various social actors among other photos relevant to the discussion within a tweet.
 - Infographics: They are “a larger graphic design that combines data visualisations, illustrations, text, and images together into a format that tells a complete story” (Krum, 2013, p. 6) with the aim of facilitating data processing. Infographics can contain emotionally activating elements, such as textual or visual cues that invoke fear, anger and many other emotions (Amit-Danhi, & Shifman, 2022)
 - Cartoons: The cartoons included are political; a cartoon is “an illustration, usually in a single panel” with the purpose “to represent an aspect of social, cultural, or political life in a way that condenses reality and transforms it in a striking, original, and/or humorous way” (El Refaie, 2009, p. 175).
- Videos: these are audio-visual resources included in a tweet.
- Hyperlinks: these are words or phrases that are activated by users clicking on them to transfer them to another location on the Web where they can view different kinds of material.

5.1.3.1 Identifying nominations and predications in the coding process

For the representational analysis, I chose to focus on the construction of migrants and their allies as the primary social actors. In order to code for the prominent linguistic realisations of nominating and predicating migrants and their allies, I relied on Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) selected referential strategies. The linguistic othering of the above-mentioned social actors was mostly achieved using several of these referential strategies. However, to establish the prominence of Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) strategies of reference in this context, I used a data driven approach - an immersive approach in which I analysed each tweet to note recurring lexical items. I calculated the frequency of the prevalent key lexical items in the dataset used as referents, and thus, based on the frequency of these items, they were matched with their corresponding referential strategies and were subjected to closer analysis in chapter 7. For example, the strategy of de-spatialisation was realised through the extensive use of the term 'ajnabī'. I coded how many times the term 'ajnabī' occurred in the data with all its lemmatisation, i.e., taking into consideration plurality, definiteness and gender. The term was employed 290 times and thus the strategy of de-spatialisation was the one utilised the most to refer to migrants in Saudi Arabia within the dataset. The data revealed a range of referential strategies employed in the construction of the migrants, but the six main strategies were spatialisation, actionalisation, professionalisation, nationalisation, ethnification and militarisation. On the other hand, the main referential strategies employed in the construction of migrants allies were political actionalisation, negative ideologisation and somatisation. Due to space limitations, I present the results of the codification of the prominent strategies of reference related to the other (the migrants) and the other within (their allies) in Appendix A rather than in the related chapter, which is chapter 7.

While I focus on identifying all the prominent strategies of reference in Appendix A, there are other less prominent references and various predicates ascribed to the migrants and their allies that corresponded to other referential strategies, such as criminalisation, which usually occur in combination with the main strategies identified above and can be found in Chapter 7, where I examine in detail the representations of migrants and their allies. A comprehensive review of all the examples in the data is not possible due to time and space constraints; thus, I have included examples from the larger dataset to illustrate the prominent linguistic realisations of nominating and predicating migrants and their allies in chapter 7.

5.1.3.2 Identifying topoi in the coding process

During the second cycle of coding, I also coded the data to establish the argumentation schemes (topoi) evident in each tweet. The coding informed the analysis of the third research question as it revealed the frequency of each topos and the nature of the topoi employed in this context, be they visual, textual or both. The coding of the topoi embedded in the tweets and the detailed argumentative analysis carried out in Chapter 8 relied on the list of topoi typically found in anti-migrant discourse as shown in Table 1, below; it is adapted from Reisigl & Wodak (2001). Tweets that had no argumentation scheme present were coded as no topos and the data set was checked twice to ensure that the identification of topoi was reliable.

Table 1

List of prevailing topoi found in anti-migrant discourse

1. Usefulness, advantage	2. Uselessness, disadvantage
3. Definition	4. Danger and threat
5. Humanitarianism	6. Justice
7. Responsibility	8. Burdening
9. Economy	10. Reality
11. Numbers	12. Law and right
13. History	14. Culture

15. Abuse

It is important to note that a tweet can contain more than one code for a topos or topoi, as shown in Figure 4, below. The tweet below includes a video of authorities arresting migrants who were apparently faking fingerprints to activate sim cards and was tagged with the code topos of threat; however, the post includes the numbers of migrants in Saudi Arabia and thus was also coded with the topos of numbers. The post reads:

The arrest of foreign laborers faking fingerprints to activate sim cards. This is an odious crime that may be used for carrying out more perilous crimes. Now, we hear voices saying, we have 12 million immigrants contributing to the development of our national economy. These are highly professional, specialised, well-trained workforce.

Figure 4

A tweet containing two different topoi

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis The arrest of foreign laborers faking fingerprints to activate sim cards. This is an odious crime that may be used for carrying out more perilous crimes. Now, we hear voices saying, we have 12 million immigrants contributing to the development of our national economy. These are highly professional, specialised, well-trained workforce]



Institutions: others institutions
 migrants:other migrants
 migrants' corruption
 topos of numbers
 topos of threat
 videos

5.2 Analytical Tools

This section presents the research methodology for this thesis, which is guided by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate anti-migrant discourse on Twitter. Several CDA approaches have been devised, and although they draw upon different theories, all of which are problem-oriented, interested in naturally occurring language, integrate non-verbal aspects of communication and seek to deconstruct ideologies and power relations through the analysis of various meaning-making resources (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Thus, all approaches to CDA can be used as a framework to analyse the exclusionary discourse at hand (see Wodak & Meyer, 2016, p. 18 for a list of all the methods and their theoretical orientations). However, of all the major approaches to CDA, I chose the DHA as an inductively oriented approach that fits the research design, as it employs mainly qualitative methodologies. Inductive approaches like the DHA “usually remain at the ‘meso-level’ and select problems they are ‘curious’ about and where they attempt to discover new insights through in-depth case studies and ample data collection” (Wodak & Meyer, 2016, p. 18). In addition, the main focus of the thesis is on the analysis of representational and argumentative strategies for which the DHA provides useful systematic analytical tools. Moreover, several studies have shown the DHA to be useful in examining political discourse online, including Twitter (see KhosraviNik & Zia, 2014; KhosraviNik & Unger, 2016; Kreis, 2017b; Erdogan-Ozturk & Isik-Guler, 2020; Boukala, 2018; Abdeslam, 2021). A description of the DHA’s theoretical underpinnings was presented in Chapter 4. The following is a review of its analytic tools that are used to investigate representational and argumentation strategies.

Following the three-dimensional analysis in the DHA, I started by identifying the topics that are present in tweets featuring the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*, which included two main categories: social processes and social actors (see section 5.1.3). Then, I identified discursive strategies and their linguistic realisations. However, due to space restrictions, my investigation of the strategies reviewed in Chapter 4 (see section 4.1.2) is

restricted to the first three strategies, since the main objective of this research is to carry out representational and argumentative analyses of the hashtag under study. Nomination and predication strategies are examined to answer the first research question that seeks to investigate the discursive construction of social actors. In addition, there is a strong focus on argumentation strategies where argumentation schemes, i.e. the topoi used in a hashtag, are investigated to answer the third research question. Since several studies have proved the DHA to be useful in carrying out a discourse historical analysis of political topics on various social media platforms (see section 1.2), I believe that discourses of inequality, such as the anti-migrant discourse found with this Twitter hashtag, can be usefully examined using the DHA as both a theoretical and an analytical approach that provides systematic tools for a social critique of discourses of dominance and inequality. However, it must be noted that I am focusing on the analytical categories of the DHA, particularly the three strategies of nomination, predication and argumentation rather than conducting a diachronic historical analysis.

5.2.1 Representational Strategies

To answer the second research question, an investigation of how the other was represented proved essential. This was done by examining referential strategies (naming) and predicational strategies (attributions), i.e. specific traits that are “selectively pushed to the fore as a ‘part for the whole’, as a representative depicter” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 46). While nomination is concerned with the labelling of social actors, predication involves “linguistically assigning qualities to persons, animals, objects, events, actions and social phenomena” (p. 55). However, they sometimes overlap as some linguistic realisations such as metaphors can carry both a referential and a predicational function, as Reisigl and Wodak (2001) assert that “reference can already bear the feature of predication” (p. 55).

Representational analysis is vital in examining the construction of the self and the other when studying the discursive construction of migrants. Therefore, regarding the operationalisation of referential and predication strategies in the second level of analysis, I went through the data set and noted down the prominent linguistic devices used to nominate the other (migrants and their allies), based on patterns I noticed, and the frequency of some linguistic devices identified during the coding process. A detailed analysis of the construction of migrants and their allies is presented in Chapter 7 by examining how prominent linguistic devices used to both nominate and predicate social actors are employed. Due to space limitations, and since the focus of the research at hand is on the representation of the other, the discursive construction of the other involved social actors was not investigated. However, all social actors are presented in Chapter 6, where I review the discourse topics (social processes and social actors) and the semiotic resources identified in the coding process.

A comprehensive review of all the examples in the data is not possible due to time and space constraints. Hence, the examples presented in Chapter 6 were selected from the larger data set using the random function in Excel in order to illustrate the prominent linguistic realisations of nominating and predicating employed in the data set for constructing migrants and their allies, relying on Reisigl and Wodak's (2001) selected referential strategies. For example, a strategy of de-spatialisation was realised through extensive use of the term '*ajnabī*', employed 290 times in the data set, and thus the strategy utilised the most in the data set to refer to migrants in Saudi Arabia. Linguistic othering of migrants and their allies was mostly achieved by several other referential strategies that the DHA adapted from van Leeuwen's system network of social actors' representation in discourse. The following is a list of definitions of the referential strategies found in my data set, including the linguistic means used to realise them and some examples. However, for a comprehensive review of all

the strategies, see Reisigl and Wodak (2001, pp. 48–50). The social actors analysed in Chapter 7 are referred to by means of the following ten categories:

1. *De-Spatialisation*: It is a category in which reference to social actors is realised linguistically by means of “de-toponymic anthroponyms (including references based on local orientation)”, such as “Viennese, Africans, foreigner, southerner, Europeans”. It is also realised through “de-adverbial anthroponyms”, such as “outsider, insider”.
2. *Spatialisation*: In this category, reference to social actors is realised linguistically by means of “toponyms used as metonymies and/or personifications (place/state/town for people)”, such as “Germany, Austria, Asia, Africa, America”. It is also realised through “anthroponyms referring to a person in terms of living in a place”, such as “resident, inhabitant, occupier, dweller”.
3. *Actionalisation /Professionalisation*: It is a category in which social actors are referred to by the social activities they carry out through “actionyms/praxonyms and professionyms”, such as “asylum seeker, migrant, refugee, criminal, ‘guest worker’, worker, employee, clerk/official, policeman”.
4. *Militarisation*: The category of militarisation is realised through “militarionyms” used to refer to social actors, such as “warrior, soldier, army, troop, enemy”.
5. *Somatisation*: Somatisation is a category with several sub-categories that name social actors by derogatory references to their physical appearance, or as in the case of this research, “reference in terms of their mental deficiency”, realised through “anthroponyms denoting mental deficiency (including pathologonyms)”, such as “idiot, dope, stupid, fool”.

6. *Relationalisation*: In this category, reference to social actors is in terms of their relationships with one another. This category of reference is realised through “relationyms/sociatives (relational identification)” such as “enemies/opponents, foreign/Jewish fellow, person, guest, neighbour, compatriot, fellow person), blood relative”.
7. *Economisation*: Economisation is a category that is concerned with referring to actors through their role in or contribution to the economy. This category contains four sub-categories. However, only one was dominant in the data set, which is the following:
 - a. *Professionalisation* is one of the sub-categories realised in the data set in which social actors are referred to by their profession. This sub-category is realised linguistically by means of professionyms such as “worker, labourer, employee, official, policeman, workforce”.
8. *Politicisation*: This category contains 12 sub-categories that refer to social actors in terms of the political rights they enjoy or are denied, their political affiliation and political role, among others. The three sub-categories highlighted in this thesis are:
 - a. *Professionalisation*: It is “anthroponyms referring to persons in terms of political professions (political professionyms)”, such as “politician, minister, major, president”.
 - b. *Nationalisation*: It is realised through nationyms, such as “nationals, Germans, Austrians”.
 - c. *Party political alignment*: It is a category in which social actors are referred to by “party names [often metaphors and synechdoches]”, such as “the Reds = Socialists, the Blues = Austrian Freedom of), National Socialists”.
 - d. *Ascription to or denying membership of a national/state organisation*: It is using “anthroponyms referring to persons in terms of membership of a

national/state organisation”, such as “citizen, national, nonpolitical citizen, fellow citizen”.

9. *Social problematisation*: It is a category in which social actors are referred to as social problems. Although one of the five sub-categories refers to social actors as victims, it wasn't a category highlighted in the data, whereas the following sub-categories were clearly identified:

- a. *Criminalisation*: social actors are referred to as criminals through criminonyms, such as “criminal, illegal, dealer, gang, murderer, perpetrator”
- b. *Negative ideologisation*: It is references to social actors by means of “negative ideologonyms”, such as “racist, nationalist, ethnicist, sexist, misogynist, chauvinist, fascist, Nazi, imperialist, right-wing extremist”.

10. *Culturalisation*: Culturalisation is a category that contains four sub-categories, all of which correspond to one's culture, such as ethnicity, language, religion. In the case of this research, the focus is on the subcategory of ethnification.

- a. *Ethnification*: It is reference to social actors through ethnonyms such as “Turks, Romanians, Poles”.

5.2.2 Argumentation Strategies: Topoi

As explained in Chapter 4, my analysis of argumentation strategies relies on the DHA's perception of topoi, which is topic-related and formalised for the specific field and discourse being investigated. A topos is defined as “a formal or content-based conclusion rule or warrant, usually with the form ‘if y, then x’” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009, p. 110). My focus on examining topoi exclusively departs from an interest in the nature of arguments used with this hashtag, i.e. informal, affective assertions, rather than proper arguments, which require an investigation of how persuasion is conceived under this hashtag. Since my perception of

topoi is content-based and field-dependent, my analysis departs from Reisigl & Wodak's (2001) content-related argumentation schemes (topoi). Prior to analysing argumentation schemes (topoi) in Chapter 8, I coded the data for the established topoi evident in each tweet during the second cycle of coding (see section 5.1.3). The aim was to use this list as a systematic tool to locate these reasoning schemes which are recurrent in anti-immigration discourse, such as the one at hand, and then conduct a thorough analysis of how they are constructed in this specific digital media context, i.e. their nature and characteristics, by randomly selecting tweets from the data set that correspond to each topoi identified. The results of this argumentative analysis are presented in Chapter 8.

5.2.3 Analysis of Multimodality

It is my understanding that interpreting discursive events and their communicative functions require an examination of other semiotic resources, besides the written form. The potential of each mode of communication, be it verbal or visual, and how they have been used separately or in combination by Twitter users in this particular context to construct arguments, is vital to this research. In this particular study, the focus is not on the analysis of visual representations as detailed in Kress & Van Leeuwen's (2006) visual grammar, but rather on how they function as visual arguments on their own or to support the verbal component of arguments with help from the multimodal nature of Twitter. Machin (2013) argues that Kress & van Leeuwen (2006) "were not so much interested in individual visual elements and how they symbolised or connoted ideas and values, but in the underlying repertoire of choices, of meaning potentials, that communicators could draw upon" (p. 348). This approach proved useful in examining visual topoi in Chapter 8, in which the theoretical approaches and analytic tools used to analyse verbal argumentation (topoi) in this research are adapted for the analysis of visual arguments with the necessary insights from other

theories and approaches, in this case, Kress & Van Leeuwen's (2006) approach to multimodality. Thus, I draw on Kress & van Leeuwen's (2006) grammar of visual design to account for how the semiotic resources identified in the coding process contribute to the construction of exclusionary arguments in this thesis, and how buried ideologies and power relations are realised in the broader sociocultural context of this research. As Adami (2017) points out, “social semiotics is interested in unveiling ideologies, social values, power roles, and identities as expressed in texts, together with how individuals actively maintain, reinforce, contest, and challenge them through their sign-making choices” (p. 455).

5.3 Summary

In this chapter, I have justified the selection and collection of data and presented the coding process and ethical consecrations related to this study. The data sampling for this qualitative analysis was carefully considered to ensure that it was systematic despite the challenges faced due to the dynamic nature of social media texts. Overall, the selected data, although rather limited, provided a satisfactory sample fit for the research objective, which is to conduct a fine-grained analysis. After that, I focused on reviewing the DHA’s methodological tools as the main analytic tools utilised in this research. However, the semiotic multimodal nature of the data set necessitates the integration of other methodological tools. Thus, I also conducted a brief review of the operationalisation of multimodality in this digital context. To gain insights into the content of the discourse phenomenon being examined, the next chapter, Chapter 6, is an initial analysis devoted to the identification of topics and semiotic resources throughout the data set. Chapters 7 and 8 then go on to conduct an in-depth qualitative analysis of representational and argumentative strategies, respectively.

Chapter 6: Topics and Semiotic Resources for #SaudiArabiaFortheSaudis Tweets

In this chapter, I examine the topics and semiotic resources of the 836 tweets related to the hashtag #*SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* that were coded at an earlier stage. As explained in the methodology chapter, the entire data set was coded for the prevailing topics and various types of semiotic resources employed, such as videos, images and hyperlinks, with the aim to provide a general indication of the content of the tweets. It is important to note that this chapter is largely a descriptive chapter, where I provide an overview of the prevailing topics and semiotic resources in order lay the groundwork for subsequent analyses. Overall, the purpose of this review is to establish patterns and describe the essence of the social practice being investigated. This overview is essential, as the argumentative analysis in Chapter 8 will reveal how the key topics reviewed here were exploited to construct various migrant-related arguments. In addition, quantitative information generated by ATLAS.ti, such as *institutional favouritism* being the most frequent code in the data set, provides insights into the core issue that has contributed to antimigrant sentiment under the hashtag, which is unemployment. Similarly, the choice to focus on Arab migrants in the representational analysis of all groups of migrants present in the data was based on information revealed in this overview. As explained in the methodology chapter, the established patterns in this entry-level analysis, such as the number of videos associated with Arab migrants compared to non-Arab migrants, informed the subsequent representational and argumentative analyses. Also, this overview revealed that screenshots are the second most utilised semiotic resource after hashtags to advance arguments that delegitimise migrants, and by looking at the patterns established by the code co-occurrence function in ATLAS.ti, tweets tagged with the code *Arab migrants* were also tagged with code screenshots the most. This information led me to examine closely the types of screenshots associated with Arab migrants to inform my in-depth representational analysis of them as the most antagonised group of migrants. This overview is also useful in

providing the reader with general insights into the nature of the tweets associated with social actors, actions and semiotic resources that are not the main focus of the following analysis chapters. All topics and semiotic resources coded are defined and illustrated with examples below.

6.1 Exploring Overall Topics in #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis Discourse on Migrants

As explained in Chapter 4, I identified the main topics in the data set by assigning one or more codes to each tweet. Although topical analysis was performed on the original tweets without considering the topics of subsequent replies, some tweets were assigned more than one code for topics, as the text in those tweets is complemented by some semiotic resources, such as videos, screen captures and hyperlinks, that were also analysed for topics. As explained in the methodology section, to identify topics, I adopted Herrera's (2020) classification of topics into social processes and social actors. While it was common to code more than one social actor in a tweet in Herrera (2020), it was far less common for a tweet to have more than one code for social processes. However, some tweets in my data set communicated their meanings entirely through Twitter affordances such as videos; consequently, the number of codes related to social processes in this case depended on the number of themes that emerged from the discussions in these videos.

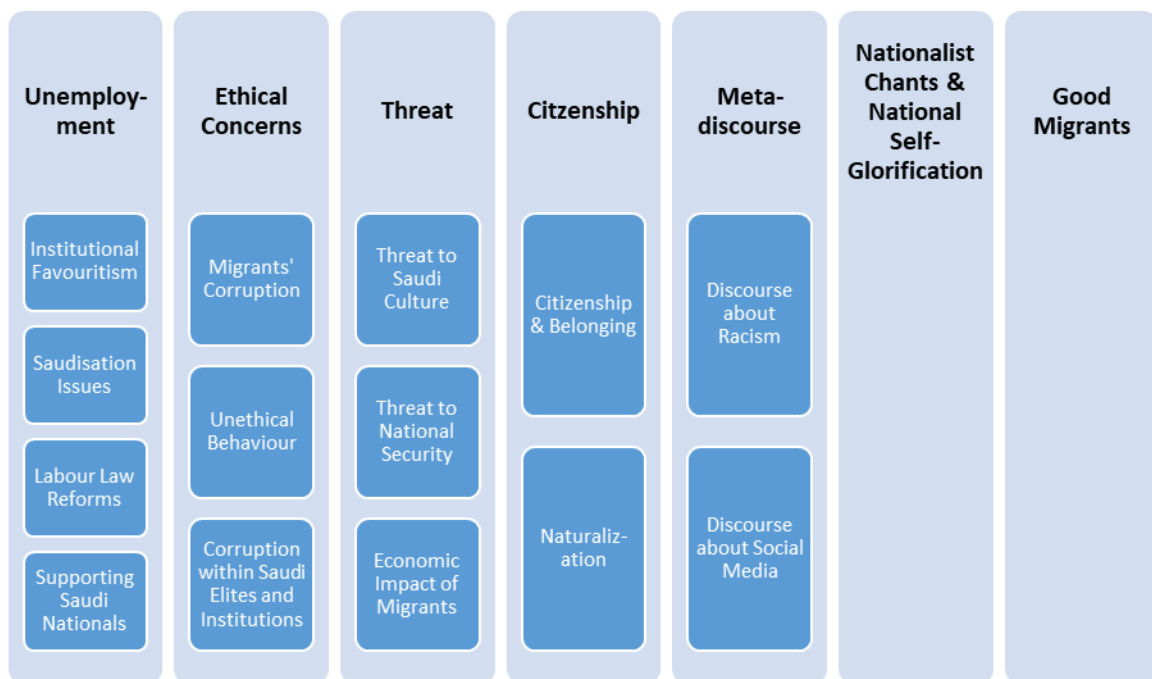
5.1.1 Social Processes

Analysing social processes (see section 5.1.3) serves to reveal the themes that are expected to characterise the tweets that comprise the data set. Such analysis will pave the way for illustrating how the main themes (social processes) identified in these tweets were employed in constructing various arguments. For example, in the category of *threat*, below, tweet number 8 relies on the topic *threat to Saudi culture* to construct an anti-migrant argument that is headed by the topos of authority and history. Below, I provide an illustration

of each of the 16 codes related to social processes that were identified in the methodology chapter, with one or more examples from the data set for each code. The purpose of this illustration was discussed earlier in the overview of this chapter. Figure 5 below illustrates the categories and codes for the prominent topics found in the data set. Additionally, a quantitative summary detailing the frequencies of the social processes identified in the dataset can be found in Appendix B.

Figure 5

Codification of the discourse topics found in the data set



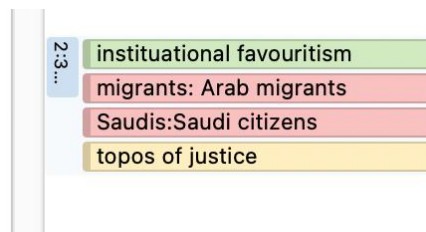
Unemployment

Institutional favouritism is the most frequent code in the data set that is related to social processes. It appears in 121 tweets out of the total data set of 836. The code *institutional favouritism* includes all tweets that discuss documented or claimed institutional bias against Saudis, mainly within the private sector where policies and overall hiring procedures are perceived to be unfair as they reveal a preference for foreign workers over

Saudis. The prevalence of this code can be attributed to Saudis' frustration with unemployment, which is the essence of the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*. A claim frequently made in this code is the exclusionary practices against Saudis at the hands of foreign employees who hold high positions in different institutions within the private sector, and as a result tend to employ more foreign workers while not only disregarding Saudization laws but also violating ethical principles.

Example 1

[A foreigner hires you, and a foreigner evaluates the employees, and the result is a Saudi woman holding a university degree with a salary of 7,000 and a Lebanese woman with a high school diploma and a 20,000 salary
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



The above tweet is coded as *institutional favouritism* as it foregrounds the claimed discriminatory practices against Saudis in the private sector, in this case the unjustified wage gap between Saudis and foreigners, which is not based on workers' qualifications or competence but rather attributed to nepotism. It is believed that that the appointment of foreigners and the higher wages they are paid in the private sector is due to having foreigners in top management who probably share the same country of origin or the same sociocultural origins as their foreign employees (see section 2.2.1).

The code *Saudization issues* was identified in 101 tweets. Tweets related to Saudization are those that discuss Saudization policies and reforms, most of which are criticised with propositions for the Ministry of Labour and the minister to rectify the current situation with regard to Saudization.

Example 2

*[#ThePeopleInterrogateTheMinisterOfLabour
Why are you talking about the nationalisation of
professions such as vegetable salesmen,
telecommunications and drivers and do not refer to
administrative jobs?
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]*



The user in the tweet above criticises the implementation of Saudization. A frequent complaint that is found in the tweet above and in this code as a whole is the ministry's attempts to nationalise vocational jobs, entry and mid-level positions while senior positions are reserved for foreign workers.

Only 20 tweets were tagged with the code *labour law reforms*, which are essentially tweets that criticise recent reforms enacted or suggested by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development, formerly known as the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. I also use this code to tag tweets with propositions relating to laws that need to be enacted and those that need to be reformed. I also use the code *migrants' corruption* to tag this tweet, as the video in the tweet contains statements that accuse migrants of being corrupt.

Example 3

*[#ThePeopleAreAgainstTheGreenCard
The green card is a foreign cover-up for
foreigners, which means an increase in
unemployment and crowding Saudis out of job
opportunities
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]*



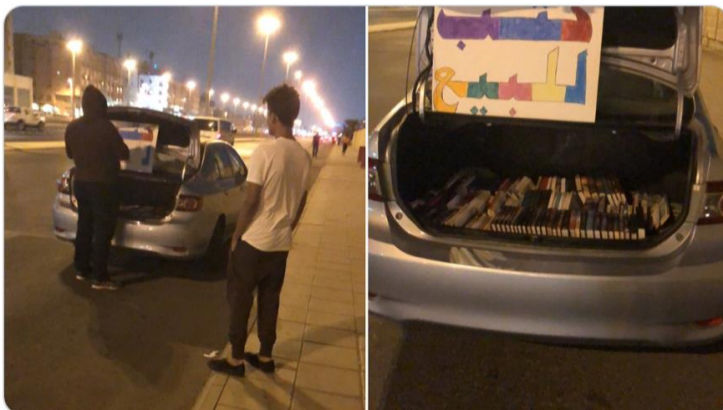
The tweet above employs the evaluative hashtag

#ThePeopleAreAgainstTheGreenCard to protest against the green card system that was announced at the time of the tweet and was introduced later in June 2019 as part of Saudi Arabia's 2030 Vision. The green card grants foreign residents privileges that previously were strictly reserved for Saudis, such as owning a business and property in Saudi Arabia without the need for a Saudi sponsor (see section 2.1.3). The textual tweet is a citation of the journalist in the video who is a TV guest discussing the Green Card Residence Permit. The guest thinks that this permit will contribute to rising unemployment rates among Saudis since it will allow migrants to own businesses and thus favour hiring their compatriots.

Another topic related to the category *unemployment* is the code *supporting Saudi nationals*. The 42 tweets tagged with this code are tweets related to supporting businesses owned by Saudis, paying medical bills for Saudis, advertising jobs exclusively for Saudis, offering guidance and career counselling to Saudi employees and those seeking jobs. For example, the tweet below invites other Saudis to support the Saudi man shown in the attached photos selling used books, and it includes his location in the tweet so that people can go and buy from him.

Example 4

[A young Saudi man who is a university graduate works selling used books on Jeddah at Al-Faisaliah Walkway. I wish we could support him #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



- images:photograph
- Saudis:Saudi citizens
- supporting Saudi nationals
- topos of advantage

Ethical Concerns

The code *migrants' corruption* comprises 114 tweets in the total data set. This code is assigned to tweets that mostly expose and document criminal activities, such as bribery, theft, forgery, embezzlement, drug trafficking and assault among other illegal activities perpetrated by migrants in Saudi Arabia. Such illegal activities of migrants are exposed by the Saudi authorities and reported by various Saudi media outlets, which these tweets usually cite. Nonetheless, I also use this code to tag all tweets that make claims for illegal activities carried out by migrants.

Example 5

*[The Ministry of Commerce arrests Yemenis in Hail selling worn-out tyres.
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
Labourers with the highest disregard for human life]*



3	institutions:ministries
	migrants: Arab migrants
	migrants' corruption
	topos of threat
	videos

The tweet above reports a criminal activity committed by some Yemeni migrant workers, which is swindling people into buying worn-out tyres. The video posted is taken from the official Twitter account of the Ministry of Commerce that filmed a raid on the car workshop. The video posted by the ministry is followed by a detailed post that contains the names of those scammers, the laws they violated and the legal action they will face. While the Ministry of Commerce's Twitter account states that those involved in this illegal activity

are two Yemenis and one Saudi, the user chooses to foreground and then generalise the criminality of the Yemeni migrants, while completely disregarding that of Saudis.

The code *unethical behaviour* was used 89 times. It mostly involves claimed misconduct by non-Saudis and/or naturalised citizens, which is sometimes presented with evidence to support those claims. The unethical behaviour varies from littering in parks, to dishonesty and foreign managers' controlling and abusive behaviour. However, tweets that include screenshots of non-Saudis slandering Saudis prevail with this code. The user in the tweet below accuses Arabs of hypocrisy and dismisses the sentiment of Arab brotherhood often alluded to in tweets containing the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* (see section 2.1.2). The tweet points out that Arabs exploited this sentiment when Saudi Arabia became an affluent country for their own gain and mentions their unethical behaviour, which is the offensive slurs some of them use to insult Saudis, this being mainly associated with their poverty prior to the discovery of oil (see section 7.1.3 for more context).

Example 6

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis, they call us the barefooted, the naked, goat herders, not fit for life, and they disowned us, and when we landed a fortune, they became brothers and partners, to hell with you!]



There are 55 tweets tagged with the code *corruption within Saudi elites and institutions* that include direct accusations of neglect and corruption within Saudi institutions and elites. While these tweets generally criticise Saudi businessmen and elites for enabling the discriminatory practices against them in the private sector, several tweets nominate particular social actors and institutions such as the Minister of Labour and the Ministry of Labour.

Example 7

*[The silence of the Ministry of Labour about the dismissal of Saudis and the appointment of foreigners raises questions about the ministry
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis O Ministry of Labour @kabalkhail22]*

قمت بإعادة تفريد

[A Lebanese finance manager working in Riyadh offers exclusive jobs for four nationalities only, none of which is Saudi, and the salary is up to 11,000 Riyals. The job doesn't require you to be a BA holder.]

- corruption within Saudi eliets ...
- image: screen shot (web)
- institutions:ministries
- mentions:direct address
- migrants: Arab migrants
- migrants:other migrants
- public figure:politicians
- Saudis:Saudi citizens
- topos of justice
- topos of responsibility

The above tweet comments on a screen-captured tweet by another user in which he/she documents one of the discriminatory practices against Saudis found in a post by a Lebanese finance manager who offers jobs to specific nationalities while excluding Saudis. The screenshot translates as ‘*A Lebanese finance manager working in Riyadh offers exclusive jobs for four nationalities only, none of which is Saudi, and the salary is up to 11,000 Riyals. The job doesn't require you to be a BA holder.*’ Such illegal and unethical behaviour when advertising a job leads to direct criticism of the Ministry of Labour for not taking action against these discriminatory practices that Saudis face. Moreover, the tweet indirectly suggests that the ministry is corrupt in this situation, as it ‘*raises questions about the ministry*’. In an attempt to interact with the Ministry of labour, which is being questioned in the tweet, the official spokesman of the ministry, Khaled Aba Al-Khail, is directly addressed by his Twitter username to make the tweet more visible to him.

Threat

The code *threat to Saudi's culture* was applied to 27 tweets in total. I use this code to tag tweets that are evaluations of what is perceived to be a threat to the country's traditions and national identity. Many of the tweets seem to focus on the behaviour of individual migrants that users consider inappropriate or contrary to the norms of Saudi Arabia, as well as cautionary tales that predict disaster if the presumed cultural threat from migrants is ignored. I also use this code to tag tweets that criticise migrants and naturalised citizens for disseminating their cultural norms in Saudi Arabia, and tweets that propose solutions to the claimed threat, such as measures to be taken to preserve Saudi culture.

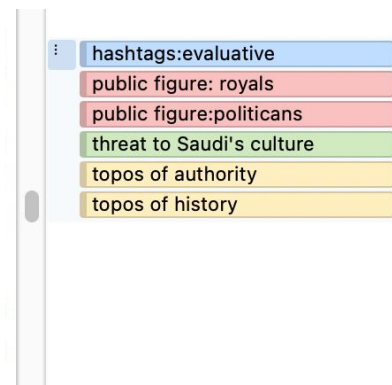
Example 8

[Omar bin al-Khattab used to address the pilgrims after completing their rituals, saying: "O people of the Sham! (Go back) to your country. O people of Yemen, (Go back) to your country."

He made that statement to dissuade people from various races from settling in Hijaz for many reasons, including maintaining the habits and traditions of the people of Hijaz, as well as preserving their livelihood.

#BornInSaudiArabiaThankYouCrownPrince

#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



The tweet above is a solution proposed by the user to preserve Saudi culture, particularly in the Hijaz region. To give credibility to this solution, an authority figure who is a senior companion of the prophet and the second Caliph in Islam is cited. The user suggests that all non-Saudi nationals residing in the Hijaz region should be sent back to their countries of origin to preserve Hijazi culture. The formation of such an argument is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

There are 28 tweets tagged with the code *threat to national security* in which migrants and naturalised citizens are framed as sources of concern and fear, and as national security

threats. There are very few tweets that are screenshots or videos of identified individuals in which they wish destruction upon the country (i.e. terrorist attacks). The remainder of the tweets contain speculation and cautionary tales related to foreigners working in what are perceived by some as sensitive positions that can be exploited to access information that would jeopardise homeland security. The tweet below shows a list of Yemeni nationals who are described as terrorists disguised as business owners. The tweet implies that Yemenis in Saudi Arabia are a source of threat and danger to national security. Highlighting their nationalities contributes to evoking stereotyped images about Yemenis, in this case related to terrorism.

Example 9

[Breaking news

State Security announces two entities and 11 names of financiers and supporters of al-Qaeda and ISIS, most of them are Yemenis who have business activities in Saudi #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]

الجنسية	الاسم	م
يمني الجنسية	نايف صالح سالم القيسي	1
يمني الجنسية	عبدالوهاب محمد عبدالوهاب الحميقاني	2
يمني الجنسية	هاشم محسن عيدروس	3
يمني الجنسية	نشوان العدني	4
يمني الجنسية	خالد عبدالله صالح المرفدي	5
يمني الجنسية	سيف الرب سالم الحيشي	6
يمني الجنسية	عادل عبده فاري عثمان الذهباني	7
يمني الجنسية	رضوان قنان (رضوان محمد حسين قنان)	8
يمني الجنسية	والي نشوان اليافعي	9
يمني الجنسية	خالد سعيد غابش العبيدي	10
يمني الجنسية	بلال علي الوافي	11

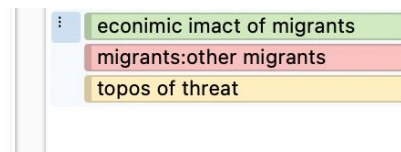
image: screen shot (web)
institutions: ministries
migrants: Arab migrants
threat to national security
topos of threat

Thirty-three tweets were tagged with the code *economic impact of migrants*. Tweets related to this code discuss the impact of migrants on the economy of the host country, which is Saudi Arabia, and presume that migrants are a burden on the country, taking over its jobs

and not contributing to its budget or stimulating the local economy. As in most tweets related to this code, the tweet below causally links economic failure to the presence of a foreign work force, which he/she metaphorically describes as foreign occupation to create an image that they are a military force taking over our economy (see section 7.1.4)

Example 10

[And it will not be #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis as long as everyone continues to ignore the causes of our economic and development stumbling, the most prominent of which is the foreign occupation of our national economy]



Citizenship

The 76 tweets related to the code *citizenship and belonging* establish who should be recognised as a citizen and what it entails. According to these tweets, citizenship entails that the country's jobs and resources should be restricted to its citizens. The tweets demarcate the rights of citizens from other social groups, such as children born to Saudi mothers or migrant workers based on a nativist ideology. Thus, I also tagged tweets that criticise the government for enabling children born to Saudi mothers, or those born and raised in Saudi and even naturalised Saudis, to represent the country in media and sports, for instance, based on this nativist logic.

Example 11

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

In a person like him, we take pride. This is an example of our people's talents that must be cherished and supported, instead of highlighting foreigners' talents and enabling them to represent the nation under flimsy pretexts: The Saudi student, Mohammed Al Shanbari, is the world champion of mental mathematics in South Africa 2017 for the third time in a row.]

citizenship and belonging
emojis
images:photograph
migrants:other migrants
Saudis:Saudi citizens
topos of definition

Translate Tweet



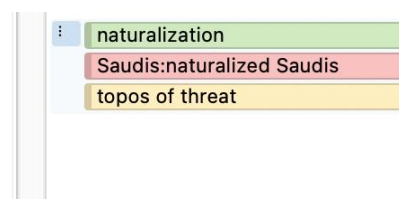
The tweet above explicitly illustrates who should and should not represent the country. The part of the tweet stating *‘instead of highlighting foreigners' talents and enabling them to represent the nation under flimsy pretexts’* is a reference to the committee formed by the Ministry of Sports to search for talented footballers in the kingdom. The committee announced that it would not only welcome young Saudi nationals, but also Saudi-born non-nationals who reside in the country, and they would have a chance to demonstrate their football skills to the committee. In December 2017, six of these talented youngsters joined the Saudi national team in the 23rd Arabian Gulf Cup, which is a football tournament. This tweet suggests that such talents should not be celebrated and should not represent the country because of their origins; rather, native Saudis should, such as the student referred to in the

tweet above. The student's surname is a marker of his belonging, as it indicates that he is a descendant of a Saudi tribe. Thus, belonging to the country and being worthy of representing it is based on a nativist principle. The boy's attire is also a marker of his assumed native identity. Such remarks are used in the construction of the topos of definition (see Chapter 8).

The second code in this category is *naturalisation* and was identified in 73 tweets of the total data set. The code *naturalisation* marks tweets that are dedicated to opposing any calls for naturalising citizens, whether coming from Twitter users, journalists or some members of the Shura Council who have been pushing to amend the nationality law to ensure that Saudi mothers like their male peers can pass on their nationality to their children. Thus, I use this code to tag all tweets that comment on newly approved laws regarding naturalisation or bills passed in support of naturalisation. Moreover, this code includes tweets that attack and antagonise the phenomena of naturalisation and naturalised citizens, respectively. The tweet below relies on hyperbolic statements to create a sense of threat and urgency when addressing the phenomenon of naturalisation and demands revoking the Saudi citizenship of those who advocate naturalising certain groups in Saudi society.

Example 12

*[Anyone who sympathises with or demands naturalisation for any person should have their citizenship revoked and be expelled from the country. Enough, the current situation does not tolerate sympathy or inaction. Most of those who make such demands are naturalised basically
Let #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis be in word and deed]*



Metadiscourse

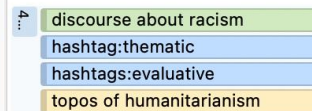
As explained in Chapter 3, metadiscourse is ‘talk about talk’ (Craig, 2008, p. 1) and tweets tagged with the code *metadiscourse: discourse about racism* are those in which users, both who support the hashtag and those who are against it, criticise each other's arguments and explain what racism is from their point of view. Tweets tagged with this code number 68

in total. One distinctive feature of these tweets is that they function as a strategy to deny racism by calling others racist or ignorant and to claim that terms that others find offensive are not problematic metadiscourse.

In a similar vein, the code *metadiscourse: discourse about social media* is related to tweets that focus on discussions among hashtag users about how Twitter and this hashtag in particular contribute to the success of their online campaigns. It points to blocked accounts of those who frequently contribute to the hashtag and post Twitter activity analytics, such as profile clicks, impressions and engagement average, to encourage others to participate in the hashtag; however, this code is limited to just 16 tweets.

Example 13

[Can we not be patriotic without being intolerant? Is that impossible to do? These alleged “patriotic campaigns”: #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis and #AlHijazIdentity are racist and bigoted. We don’t have to be racist to love our country.]



- discourse about racism
- hashtag:thematic
- hashtags:evaluative
- topos of humanitarianism

Example 14

While the first example above, written in English, criticises the racist discourse under the hashtags *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* and *#AlHijazIdentity*, the second tweet, in Arabic, denies racism by positively constructing his/her discourse as demanding rights and presents him/herself as a victim of racist questioning.

*[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
You demand your right, you are a (racist)..!
You stay silent, you are a (Saudi hero)..]*



- discourse about racism
- Saudis:Saudi citizens
- topos of reality

Example 15

[The Saudi campaign under the hashtag #BahrainNaturalizesAtTheExpenseOfOurUnemployment yielded a positive result. The Saudi Minister of the Interior has gracefully acted in response to the issue, and the Bahraini Minister of the Interior is responding. #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



The tweet above points out that a Twitter hashtag they started has allegedly made their political voices heard and has brought the attention of the respective politicians to the matter at hand. The hashtag #BahrainNaturalizesAtTheExpenseOfOurUnemployment is a protest against Bahrain granting Bahraini citizenship to non-Saudi businessmen in Saudi, who by becoming GCC citizens enjoy equal treatment with respect to the right of residence and movement among GCC States and thus Saudi Arabia, along with all the business advantages that they would also enjoy. The argument made in regard to this issue is that non-Saudi businessmen will take advantage of this situation and this will continue to disadvantage Saudi employees in the private sector.

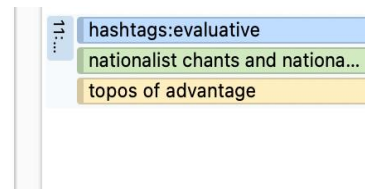
Nationalist Chants and National Self-glorification

Seventy-four tweets were identified with the code *nationalist chants and national self-glorification*. This code was linked to tweets that employ nationalist slogans that conceptualise Saudi as a superior nation and express national self-glorification, often via

written texts or videos of popular patriotic songs mostly written in vernacular poetry. In addition, this code is linked to videos of Saudi monarchs and members of the royal family performing the Saudi national dance called *al`arda*. This dance a folkloric one in which men dance with their swords and chant vernacular poetry that mostly glorifies the nation. Moreover, the tweets I tag with this code show a prevalence of the Saudi flag and green heart emojis. Also popular are images of Saudi monarchs, the Saudi flag and Saudi soldiers, among others, as national symbols.

Example 16

*[Saudi needs a Trump of its own
#BuyAmericanHireAmerican
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]*



While the majority of the tweets in the data set are written in Arabic, there are 22 written in English, such as the one above in which the user explicitly expresses admiration for Trump’s policies and employs the hashtag function to intertextually reference a slogan that is adopted and mainstreamed by Trump. The slogan occurs alongside *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* to draw a parallel with the current Saudi campaign that carries the same exclusionary sentiment.

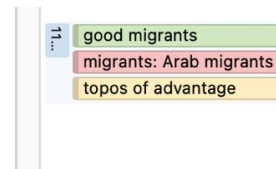
Good Migrants

There are 18 tweets tagged with the code *good migrants*. This code is related to tweets that describe good migrants in Saudi. There are three tweets that describe good migrants generally as those who respect the country’s laws, and two other tweets that applaud an Egyptian migrant who is described as fair and respectful for supporting the hashtag by posting a video in which he defends the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*. However, the rest of the 13 tweets are all dedicated to Sudanese migrants, in which they are portrayed as

ideal migrants mainly for their humility, as the tweet below illustrates. The tweet also praises the Sudanese for their gratitude and respect and thus they are evaluated as worthy, being the only migrants to whom the exclusionary slogan *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* does not apply.

Example 17

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis I hope that the Sudanese will be made exempt for their respect for the laws of the country and its people, for their sincerity, humility and appreciation of the country from which they have benefited]

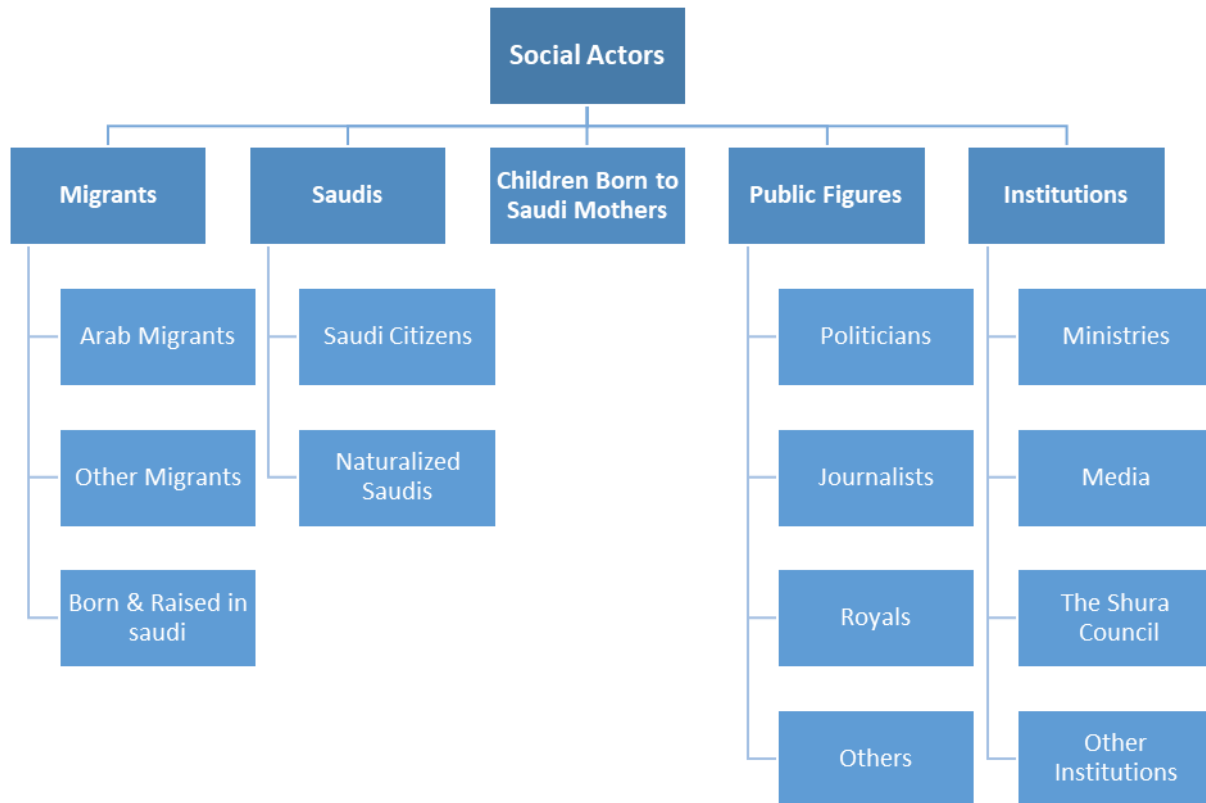


6.1.2 Social Actors

In this section, I provide a review of all the social actors identified earlier in the coding process. However, my primary focus is on investigating the discursive construction of two key social actors: the migrants and their allies, as detailed in Chapter 7. Figure 6 below illustrates the categories and codes used to identify the social actors involved in this hashtag. Due to space limitations, a quantitative summary of the frequencies of the social actors identified in the dataset is provided in Appendix C.

Figure 6

Codification of the social actors involved in the dataset



Migrants

The category migrants includes three codes, *Arab migrants*, *other migrants* and those *born and raised in Saudi*. Regarding the two codes *Arab migrants* and *other migrants*, the former focuses on tweets that are related to Arab migrants in particular, while the latter includes all other nationalities and makes general reference to migrants without specifying their place of origin. The first tweet below was tagged with the code *Arab migrants* as it discusses Yemenis, while the second one was tagged with the code *other migrants* which in this particular tweet refers to the Burmese in Hijaz, as mentioned in the tweet.

Example 18

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis Yemenis refuse to grant citizenship to others while they demand naturalisation in Saudi]



- migrants: Arab migrants
- naturalization
- topos of comparison
- videos

Example 19

*[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
#AlHijazIdentity*

We always wonder about the reasons for the huge increase in the number of Burmese every year. Now it became clear to us that one of the reasons for this increase is that they cover up for those coming for Hajj and Umrah, shelter them and cover up for them, and then demand that their situation be rectified]



- hashtag:thematic
- migrants:other migrants
- migrants' corruption
- topos of burdening
- topos of numbers
- videos

The code *born and raised in Saudi* was linked to 16 tweets that mention migrants born in Saudi Arabia who are usually referred to in the data as *mawālīd*, most of whom have never been to their country of origin and have lived all their life in Saudi Arabia. Four of the 16 tweets sympathise with them and call for their naturalisation as they do not know their ancestral homeland. However, the rest of the tweets demonise them and those who advocate for their naturalisation, as in the tweet below.

Example 20

[What is the purpose of insisting on and demanding the naturalisation of foreigners? and coming up with labels for foreigners to delude them that they have rights? #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis only]



4:136...	emojis
	migrants:born and raised in sa...
	migrants:other migrants
	naturalization
	public figure: others
	topos of definition
	videos

The tweet above is a criticism of an excerpt of a sermon given by a prominent religious figure in Saudi in which he advocates for the naturalisation of those who have lived their whole life in Saudi and do not have ties to their country of origin. There is a latent accusation against those who advocate for naturalizing migrants born and raised in Saudi, which is having an ulterior motive, i.e. a political agenda, an accusation which is common in

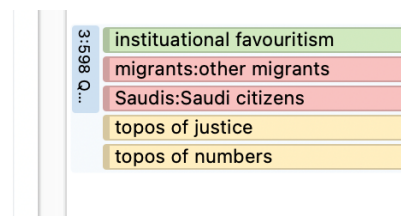
this code, which consequently deters others from speaking up for those born and raised in Arabia (see sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2).

Saudis

The category Saudis refers to two established groups that are frequently mentioned in the data set. These tweets create a damaging binary opposition between so-called native Saudis and naturalised Saudis. The code *Saudi citizens* tags all tweets that refer to Saudi citizens generally. Tweets which usually use different nominational strategies to refer to Saudi citizens, such as ‘*our Saudi doctors, the Saudi citizen, the young Saudi, young Saudi men, our kids, and our grandfathers*’, among others, mainly seek to have their grievances on unemployment heard, and their demands met. In tweets tagged as *Saudi citizens*, there is a clear portrayal of Saudi citizens as victims of institutions, naturalised Saudis and foreigners, and thus this code generally includes criticism of the aforementioned social actors. This code was tagged 442 times in the data set.

Example 21

[The number of Saudis whose salaries are above 10,000 has reached 209,000
While the number of foreigners whose salaries are above 10,000 is 250,000
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



The tweet above once again seems to target foreign workers and to criticise unfair wages, with numbers suggesting institutional favouritism towards foreign workers.

Within the category Saudis, the code *naturalised Saudis* marks tweets about naturalised Saudis, either those referred to generally as naturalised citizens or specific individuals (mostly public figures). The tweets tagged generally describe naturalised citizens as being outsiders and traitors. They are accused of being a group of corrupt individuals who threaten the country’s culture and take advantage of its resources to benefit their country of origin. This code appeared 50 times across the data set.

Example 22

*[In fact, as a Saudi citizen, I am appalled by
-a naturalised person imposing his identity on
me by force, seeking to obliterate my identity
and threatening me with regulations and laws!
- an immigrant with a forged certificate taking
over a job that is the right of a citizen and
threatening me with regulations and laws!
What is happening is strange I swear
#AlHijazIdentity
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
#CorruptionDisruptsDevelopment]*

:	hashtag:thematic
:	hashtags:evaluative
:	migrants:other migrants
:	migrants' corruption
:	Saudis:naturalized Saudis
:	Saudis:Saudi citizens
:	threat to Saudi's culture
:	topos of abuse

In the tweet above, the binary opposition between a native Saudi citizen and a naturalised Saudi is apparent. The presumed native Saudi citizen, a victimised subject who truly belongs to this country, is contrasted with a naturalised Saudi who is an outsider, just like an immigrant. The tweet also claims that the Saudi citizen is victimised by Saudi institutions, particularly by what they perceive as the unfair anti-racism law that has been proposed by the Shura Council in the kingdom.

Children Born to Saudi Mothers

This code was linked to 15 tweets that discuss matters related to children born to Saudi mothers and foreign fathers, mostly attacking these women who chose to marry non-Saudis and those who advocate for naturalizing them, as in the example below. This tweet objects to the hashtag *#ChildrenOfSaudiWomenAreSaudis*, via which they qualify as foreigners who should show gratitude for what is already offered to them and not seek citizenship in a country other than their own.

Example 23

[It is not true that #ChildrenOfSaudiWomenAreSaudis, but rather foreigners, and they should thank the kingdom's government which treats them as Saudis. This is the state's law, and if one does not like it, one should go to his/her father's hometown, and it will remain #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]

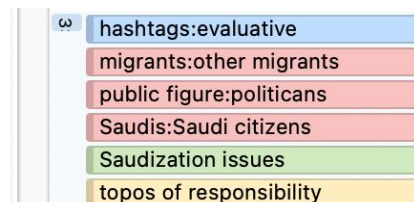


Public Figures

The code *public figures (politicians)* was used to tag all current or former politicians who were mentioned across the data set. Within a tweet, a politician can be mentioned, directly addressed or both, particularly when the tweet involves criticism of their negligence or a complaint regarding various issues such as Saudization policies. While the majority of these tweets question or criticise politicians in the discussion, a few are praised for doing their job well. One such politicians is Ghazi Al Gosaibi, who is praised for his positive contribution to Saudization as he pushed for the employment of Saudi men and women in the private sector when he served as Minister of Labour from 2004 until his death in 2010. It is also worth noting that not only Saudi politicians were tagged but also any foreign ones mentioned in their discussions, such as the former American president Trump and the French president Emmanuel Macron. The code *public figures (politicians)* was found 77 times in the data set.

Example 24

[#ThePeopleInterrogateTheMinisterOfLabour why do foreigners control the private sector and when will they be replaced by national competencies, and what are the steps taken #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



The user mentions the Minister of Labour at the time, Ali al-Ghafis, in the hashtag *#ThePeopleInterrogateTheMinisterOfLabour* in which he is criticised for the lack of implementation of the Saudization policy for which the Ministry of Labour is responsible. The tweet demands transparency from the minister regarding the steps taken by the ministry in relation to the long-standing issue of foreign workers dominating the private sector (see section 2.2.1).

Journalists were also identified as public figures and 58 tweets were coded as such. The journalists tagged are usually those mentioned in tweets that comment on a journalist's appearance on a TV show, his/her published articles or cartoons among other discussions where journalists are evaluated negatively or positively in a tweet depending on the stance they take. While journalists who call the hashtag racist or those who publish articles advocating for the rights of children born to Saudi mothers are attacked, others are praised for protesting against it and even for their racist remarks when attacking foreigners and/or naturalised citizens. However, some journalists only highlight the plight of unemployed Saudis and criticise the system.

Example 25

[Our distinguished colleague #MuniraAlMeshkhes said everything we wanted on the Ya Hala programme about the concerns of citizens and the absence of the real role of the Shura Council in dealing with the most important vital issues. Munira appeared as a university professor giving a lecture in front of students who listened carefully to her #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



hashtags:nominative
institutions: The Shura Council
public figure:journalists
Saudis:Saudi citizens
Saudization issues
topos of advantage
topos of finances
videos

This tweet above is written by a journalist who starts by praising their colleague, the journalist Munira Al-Meshkhes who was a guest on the TV show Ya Hala. Munira, who is known for being a supporter of the hashtag #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis, is named in the tweet above using a hashtag that contains her name and surname. A video was attached to this tweet, in which she defends Saudis against stereotypes imposed upon them, such as looking down on lower-level jobs, and argues that the issue for Saudis is that Saudization of high position jobs is absent and reserved for foreign workers when the competent qualified Saudis are told to work in low-level positions instead.

A code also used to identify public figures is *royals*, which was tagged 45 times across the data set. It includes Saudi monarchs who are mentioned in tweets individually, such as King Abdulaziz, the founder of Saudi Arabia, or collectively such as “*our wise leadership*” which is a popular phrase in the country used to nominate the royal family. While names are communicated textually in tweets, in some cases semiotic recourses are employed

to communicate names either visually, via images of monarchs, or hypertextually, using nominative hashtags. Monarchs and royals are usually mentioned as authoritative figures to advance an argument within a tweet. They are also mentioned in tweets that revolve around national self-glorification. Crown prince Mohammed Bin Salman is a prominent name with this code. He is often quoted to advance arguments, and although he does not have a Twitter account, he is occasionally addressed in the text of a tweet or via nominative hashtags to resolve unemployment issues, such as unlawful dismissals of employees as he is seen as anti-corruption leader.

Example 26

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis this number is in less than a month, although this is commendable work, yet it is evidence of corruption that has accumulated over the years and led to this result. A positive outcome of the reform led by #CrownPrinceMohammedBinSalman, may Allah protect him]



emojis
hashtags:nominative
image: screen shot (web)
institutions: others institutions
migrants:other migrants
migrants' corruption
public figure: royals
topos of advantage
topos of numbers

The tweet above mentions the Saudi crown prince using a hashtag to nominate him. The crown prince is being praised for the anti-corruption campaigns he leads as a part of his reform of Saudi Arabia. The screenshot reads ‘*Council of Engineers: 2,799 forged engineering and technical certificates were seized from expatriates of different nationalities.*’

The last code tagged for public figures is *others*, which only contains 37 tweets. This code is related to other influencing individuals who are active in different non-political

domains, such as religion, the arts and business. This code identified poets, singers, social media influencers, senior academics, university presidents, prominent businessmen and clerics as public figures, among others. Clerics for example have always enjoyed respect and support from Saudi society, and although they may not have influence on policymaking in the kingdom, they do influence Saudi public opinion. Thus, those clerics with the hashtag who advocate a right to Saudi nationality for those born and raised in Saudi Arabia, for instance, face accusations of having a deviant political agenda, as seen earlier in this chapter. The majority of the social actors tagged with this code are attacked and criticised for a variety of reasons such as calling for naturalisation, misrepresenting Saudi culture, stereotyping Saudis as lazy and incompetent employees and their racist remarks vis-à-vis Bedouin Saudis.

Example 27

*[#BlacklistOfOffensiveMediaPersonalities
Bader Saleh, the Yemini, no degree, no valuable work
experience. He used to work in coffeeshops, suddenly
found himself in front of the camera to pass to our youth
his experience on flirting with girls
#SaudiFirst
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]*



emojis
hashtag:thematic
hashtags:evaluative
institutions:media
migrants: Arab migrants
public figure: others
topos of culture
unethical behaviour
videos

The subject of discussion in the tweet above is the comedian Bader Saleh, as named in the tweet. He is shown in the video doing his stand-up act that was considered inappropriate as his material clashes with Saudi's religious and cultural values. In the tweet, he is negatively evaluated after being nominated by his geographical origin, 'the Yemini', and his

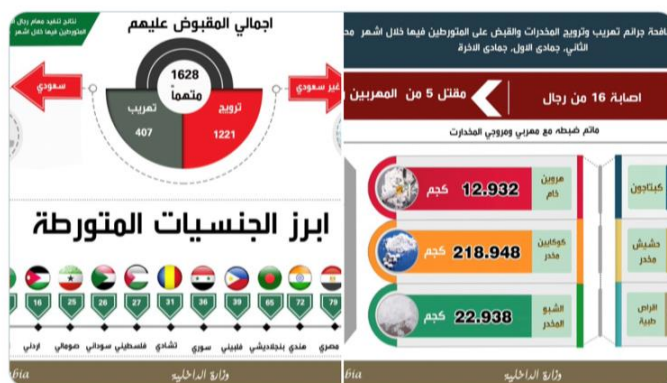
negative image is further intensified by the hashtag in which he is labelled an offensive media personality. This tweet is discussed in detail in Chapter 7.

Institutions

The category *institutions* covers all tweets that involve discussions related to various Saudi institutions. *Ministries* are among the codes identified as institutions and are mentioned 61 times in the data set. The Ministries of Justice and/ or the Interior are usually mentioned when their reports, infographics of crimes, are used in a tweet. The Ministries of Labour, Commerce and Investment are all criticised for favouring non-Saudis and are warned against the consequences of certain nationalities controlling the market. The Ministry of the Interior is sometimes directly addressed and mentioned to report unethical or illegal activities by foreigners. Similarly, the Ministry of Health is often criticised for its pre-employment screening, which seems to neglect verifying the credentials of doctors who apply to work in Saudi hospitals, resulting in hiring doctors with allegedly forged medical degrees.

Example 28

[*Foreigners smuggle and sell drugs twice as much as Saudis. And Yemenis are at the top of the list of foreigners. Source is @MOISaudiArabia #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*]



- images:infographics
- institutions:ministries
- mentions:direct address
- migrants: Arab migrants
- migrants:other migrants
- migrants' corruption
- Saudis:Saudi citizens
- tops of numbers
- tops of threat

The tweet above shows infographics of the nationalities involved in smuggling and selling drugs, and information on the types and quantities of drugs seized by the Saudi authorities. The tweet mentions the Ministry of the Interior's Twitter account as a reliable source for the evidence included in the tweet, which is infographics.

The code *media*, which is one of the codes within the category *institutions*, is specifically used to tag tweets that discuss media outlets in Saudi. This code was tagged 23 times in the data set where newspapers are criticised for enabling writers to pursue their personal interests rather than the public interest, such as articles written in support of naturalisation and population control. Saudi TV channels, both state-owned and privatised are also criticised for hiring non-Saudis who allegedly not only misrepresent native Saudis, but also neglect their concerns, as the tweet below suggests.

Example 29

*[The irony in the kingdom is that a programme about unemployment and Saudization in the kingdom on the state-run Al Eqtisadia channel is presented by a Lebanese broadcaster, as if we do not have thousands of unemployed men and women media graduates.
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
#SaudiFirst]*



emojis
hashtags:evaluative
images:photograph
institutional favouritism
institutions:media
migrants: Arab migrants
Saudis:Saudi citizens
topos of responsibility

Another institution mentioned sparingly in the data set is *the Shura Council*. This code was used to tag 16 tweets. The Shura Council, which is known in Arabic as *Majlis Al-Shura*, translates as Consultative Council and is an advisory body that advises the king on

issues related to the national and public interest, such as health, education and social affairs, among others. Its 150 members are appointed by the king and serve a four-year term. Tweets tagged with this code criticise the Shura Council for not dealing with issues of public concern, such as the rising cost of living and unemployment. They are also criticised for pushing to amend the nationality law to enable Saudi women married to non-Saudis to pass on Saudi nationality to their children.

Example 30

*[What do you think about members of the Council who are working hard to draft laws against the people of the country because they refused naturalisation and having foreigners replace Saudis in jobs, and because we said #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis you proposed anti-racism draft legislation, and what do you call this? Isn't it racism, exclusion and violence?
@ShuraCouncil_SA]*



discourse about racism
institutions: The Shura Council
mentions:direct address
migrants:other migrants
public figure:politicians
quoted tweets
Saudis:Saudi citizens
topos of responsibility

The Shura Council is directly addressed in this tweet using their Twitter account. The council is criticised for drafting an anti-racism bill that has been on the table for years and not approved yet. The draft law is criticised as the user claims it will be used to silence Saudis who refuse naturalisation and demand the Saudization of jobs by falsely accusing them of racism. The tweet then accuses the Council of being selective when it comes to combating

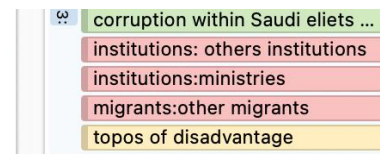
racism as they seem to neglect discrimination against niqab-wearing women in workplaces in Saudi Arabia by including a quote tweet that translates as: ‘*Chairman of Human Rights Commission: we receive complaints about the refusal to hire women because of the niqab.*’

Within the category *institutions*, the code *other institutions* is the one most tagged. It is mentioned 105 times across the data set. It includes all the institutions mentioned in the data set that are not related to the media or politics. This code tagged tweets with discussions about municipalities in various regions, universities, telecommunication companies and cultural centres, among other institutions. Since unemployment is a central debate in this hashtag, the majority of the institutions mentioned in this code are criticised for their exclusion of Saudis and for some unethical practices, such as posting jobs that specify the nationality of the applicant.

Example 31

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

Saudi universities contract with expatriates, most of whom have degrees from universities that are not recognised by the Saudi Ministry of Education.]



The tweet above criticises Saudi universities for allegedly hiring foreign faculty with degrees from universities that are not recognised by the Saudi Ministry of Education and insinuate that foreign faculty members at Saudi universities lack adequate competence. Such accusations along with fraudulent qualifications are common in the data set in relation to migrant workers.

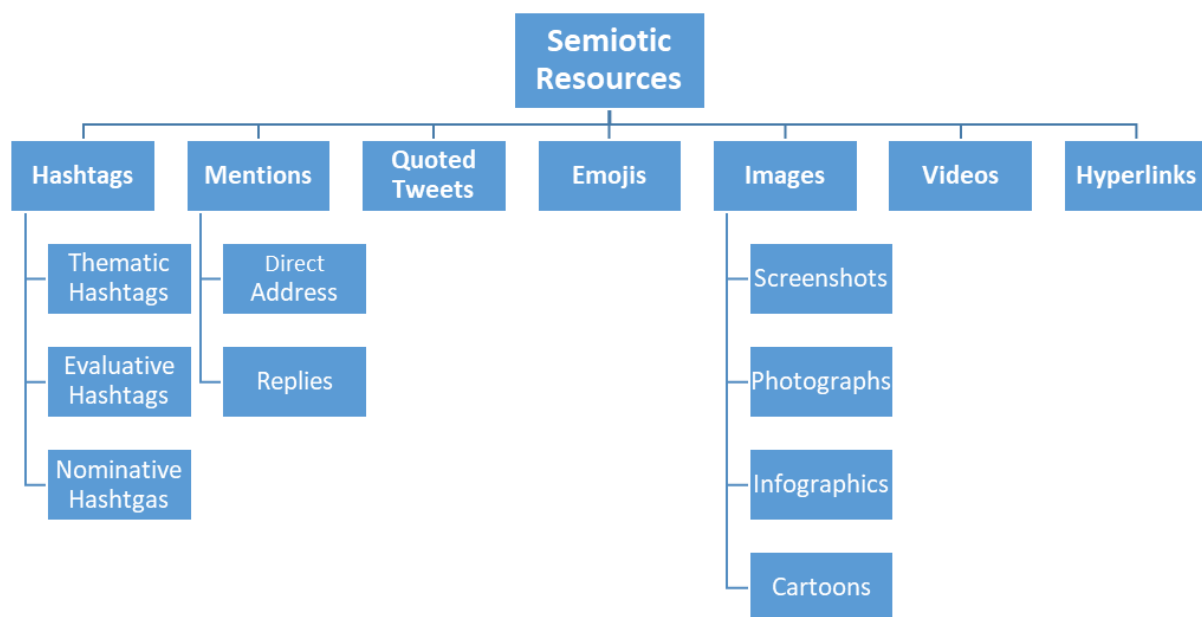
5.2 Exploring semiotic resources in the data set

Since Twitter users are limited to 280 characters in each tweet, they resort to the platform’s multimodal communicative affordances, such as emojis, images and hashtags to communicate meaning. Thus, a tweet is better analysed by taking into consideration all its

meaning-making resources. The following section sets out to give an overview of the affordances of Twitter and illustrates these with examples of how such affordances were employed by Twitter users who posted the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* to represent the other and advance their arguments. Figure 7 below shows the 13 codes used to identify the semiotic resources in the data set, which are illustrated further with examples below. Appendix D contains a quantitative summary detailing the frequencies of the semiotic resources identified in the dataset.

Figure 7

Codification of the semiotic resources found in the data set



Hashtags

Except for the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*, all other hashtags included in each tweet in the data set were coded for their function, whether thematic, evaluative or nominative. *Thematic hashtags* were not only the most prevailing type of hashtag but also the most frequent code identified in the data set as a whole, being related to semiotic resources with a total of 267 thematic hashtags. The code thematic hashtag is used to tag the main topic

of a tweet and functions as an organizing tool where tweets posted about the same topic are grouped together under one thematic hashtag, and that is then searchable by those who share similar values to others. This is in line with Page's (2012) finding that 'hashtags are primarily used to make the topic of a tweet visible, rather than to emphasize stance' (p. 187). Similarly, Kehoe & Gee (2011) point out that hashtags primarily have a topic-identifying function that is the 'aboutness' of a post.

Example 32

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

This is how #AlHijazIdentity is manipulated and fabricated by disseminating false concepts and instilling fake stereotypes of Saudi Arabian Hijazi heritage in the minds of children and exploiting their unawareness and lack of knowledge of the subject to form a popular base that supports the fabrications of a Hijazi identity]



hashtag:thematic
threat to Saudi's culture
topos of culture
topos of threat
videos

Example 33

[Minister of Finance: Excluding some nationalities from #TheNewFees, an announcement will be made soon. The Saudi pays and the foreigner doesn't #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



hashtag:thematic
image: screen shot (web)
institutional favouritism
migrants:other migrants
public figure:politicans
Saudis:Saudi citizens
topos of justice

The first example above is of a prominent thematic hashtag identified in the data set, which is #AlHijazIdentity. It essentially points out what are considered false representations of a Hijazi identity by naturalised Saudis and other non-Saudis who reside in the Hijaz province of Saudi Arabia. Tweets tagged with this hashtag usually blame Saudi institutions such as the Ministry of Media for presenting them as representative of that culture. Similarly, in the second example shown above, the hashtag is employed to point out the main topic of the tweet, which is #TheNewFees, referring to the fees to be imposed at the time on expats and their dependants in July 2017.

The second most identified type of hashtag in the data set is *evaluative hashtags* with a total of 195 identified as such. This code refers to those hashtags containing evaluative statements relating to the text posted (Page, 2012).

Example 34

*[#NoToNaturalizingTheChildrenOf Foreigners
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
#NaturalizationIsASecurityThreat
What if they were to be naturalized? Because we exposed their tricks and fraud and the goals of those who support them. They pray for our country's demise, destruction, devastation and wars and wish upon us perishing, epidemics, poverty, destruction and annihilation. They are the enemy, so beware of them]*

children born to Saudi mothers
hashtags:evaluative
naturalization
threat to national security
topos of threat
unethical behaviour

Example 35

*[#NoToNaturalization
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
A hashtag that Saudis must use to raise their voices and express their opinions to reach the decision-makers and the Shura Council]*

discourse about social media
hashtags:evaluative
institutions: The Shura Council
naturalization
Saudis:Saudi citizens
topos of advantage

The hashtag feature above was employed once in the second example and twice in the first to indicate a negative evaluative stance linked to the naturalisation process and naturalised citizens alike. Such strong evaluative statements are further intensified by the accompanying text. The first tweet for instance negatively evaluates the children of Saudi women born to non-Saudi fathers by expressing their apprehension at naturalizing them because they presume that they bear Saudis ill will and have no loyalty to the country. Finally, they are explicitly referred to as the enemy and implicitly qualified as hypocrites in the last line, a qualification which reveals itself intertextually in the Quranic verse that warns against hypocrites ‘*They are the enemy, so beware of them.*’ Such evaluative hashtags tend to bring together those who share the same beliefs and attitudes in relation to migrant-related issues, i.e. naturalisation in this case. The second tweet above explicitly urges other Saudis to challenge those who advocate for naturalisation in the Shura Council and to voice their

concerns and objection to such calls for naturalisation by using the hashtag

#NoToNaturalization.

While social actors are normally nominated in a tweet text or by using the @username designation, sometimes they are tagged with a hashtag. Thus, following Herrera (2020), hashtags that name the various social actors involved in a discussion are classified as *nominative hashtags*. Unlike thematic and evaluative hashtags, few nominative hashtags are found in the data set. They were identified 68 times across the entire data set.

Example 36

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

#MonaBaalabki

Please do not trust immigrant pharmacists, especially the Levants and the Lebanese. They profit from the lives of their children, so imagine ours?]



hashtags:nominative
image: screen shot (web)
migrants: Arab migrants
migrants' corruption
topos of threat

The hashtag #MonaBaalabki was used to name a Lebanese lecturer working at one of Saudi Arabia's universities who turned out to be awaiting trial in Lebanon. She was head of the pharmacy department at one of Lebanon's hospitals and facing accusations of stealing cancer medicines and selling them in the market after replacing them with fake and expired ones. After her licence was revoked, she fled to Saudi Arabia to work as an academic lecturer at Northern Border University. This caused rage on Saudi Twitter after the news became known, so the Minister of Education at the time ordered an investigation into the case and her

contract was eventually terminated by the university. The hashtag was used to link all tweets concerning her case at the time, which as seen in the tweet above was exploited to add this type of criminality to the repertoire of stereotypes about people from the Levant, and thus stigmatise that community.

Mentions

The code *direct address* tags tweets that include discussions about various social actors such as the public figures mentioned earlier in this chapter, i.e. journalists, politicians and royals, among others. In addition, the various institutions mentioned in those tweets are tagged as well. All of the social actors in the data set that are tagged with the code *direct address* are ones that have public Twitter profiles and are addressed directly via the @sign followed by the recipient's username. This formal feature was identified 126 times across the data set. The purpose of a direct address in the data set depends on the addressee and the topic under discussion, but it is mainly used to criticise the addressees and demand action.

Although Twitter's notifications tab will notify the addressed user of a mention of his/her name, the likelihood of frequently addressed social actors, '*politicians*' and '*ministries*', responding to criticism directed towards them by Twitter users is slim to none. However, this one-sided conversation might gain the support of others using the hashtag who are invested in the same cause, and this could consequently make the issue addressed to those officials be heard. Direct addresses using this hashtag are also used to communicate with the in-group. Those with anti-migrant sentiments and those who defend them are informed by different morals, however, both those tweeting intuitively immoral arguments and those who hold moral values use this Twitter function to "create a strong sense of the 'we' in dialogue and cooperation, mutual purpose and mobilisation, even where we see that there is little evidence of actual interaction nor mobilisation beyond ephemeral tweets" (Bouvier, 2020, p. 7). This contrast can be seen in the tweets below.

Example 37

[We at rwadnet website support Nasser Khames as his voice is the voice of truth and the cry of a harbinger as foreigners killed the ambition of our youth
@nasser_khames
#WeAreAllNasserKhames
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]

Translate Tweet



- hashtags:evaluative
- image: screen shot (web)
- mentions:direct address
- migrants:other migrants
- migrants' corruption
- public figure: others
- Saudis:Saudi citizens
- supporting Saudi nationals
- topos of threat

Example 38

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
How beautiful are your words Dr Tawfiq Alsaif
@t_saif]



- emojis
- mentions:direct address
- migrants:born and raised in sa...
- naturalization
- public figure: others
- topos of humanitarianism
- videos

Both social actors included in the tweets above are mentioned twice textually, by their names in the tweets and by addressing their Twitter accounts, in an attempt to link the tweets to them. In the tweets above, support is shown in the form of direct address, which makes the tweets visible to the respective social actors. In the first tweet, the cartoonist Nasser Khames is shown support, despite his offensive cartoon that was published in Alhayat newspaper. Support is shown to him by various Twitter affordances. In addition to the mention of his name in the text and a direct address, he is also shown solidarity via the hashtag *#WeAreAllNasserKhames* to defend him, as he was criticised on Twitter for his insulting cartoon of foreign labourers shown in the tweet above. The cartoon depicts foreign labourers as rats attacking Saudis (the written text on the rat reads ‘foreign labour’) who are juggling low wages and lack of opportunities, as written on the dumbbells. On the other side of this moral divide, the second tweet shows admiration and respect for Dr Alsaif who is a writer of political science. Admiration and support are shown via a direct address and a heart emoji. In the attached video, Dr Alsaif advocates for the right to Saudi citizenship for those who were born and raised in Saudi, a matter that is strongly denounced in the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*.

Example 39

*[For all those who brag about their patriotism. For every decision-maker involved in nationalizing jobs in the kingdom. For anyone who has a brother, sister or relative who is unemployed. Show us what you are doing
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
@MLSD_SA
@Ahmed_S_Alrajih]*



- corruption within Saudi eliets ...
- hyperlinks
- image: screen shot (web)
- institutions:ministries
- mentions:direct address
- migrants: Arab migrants
- migrants' corruption
- public figure:politicians
- Saudis:Saudi citizens
- topos of responsibility

As explained earlier, direct addressing in a hashtag is mainly used to criticise ministries and ministers for their claimed negligence. The screenshot in the tweet above is of a post by a recruitment agency in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in which the job advertised unlawfully discriminates against Saudis by restricting the offer to Lebanese and Jordanians. There is also a hyperlink in the tweet that directs the viewer to the original advert. Using the same strategy, which is direct address, the user mentions two social actors within this tweet, both the Ministry of Labour and Social development and its minister, Ahmed Alrajhi, who are blamed for failing to execute Saudization laws and for their ineffectiveness in combating corruption, such as in the job advert attached to this tweet.

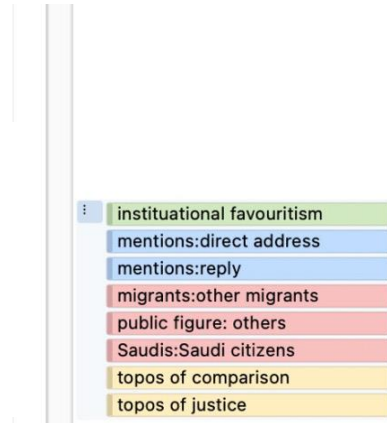
The code *replies* was tagged 34 times across the data set. While this feature allows users to form a thread, which is when a twitter user posts more than one tweet, and those tweets are clustered together by the reply function to form it, the majority of the replies identified are within the same community of supporters where like-minded people comment on each other's posts using the reply feature on Twitter. Many of these tweets contain replies to two or more Twitter users who are usually active participants using this hashtag and commenting on other migrant-related topics. However, there are very few instances where the reply is directed towards a Twitter user with an opposing view on migrant-related issues, as in the example below.

Example 40

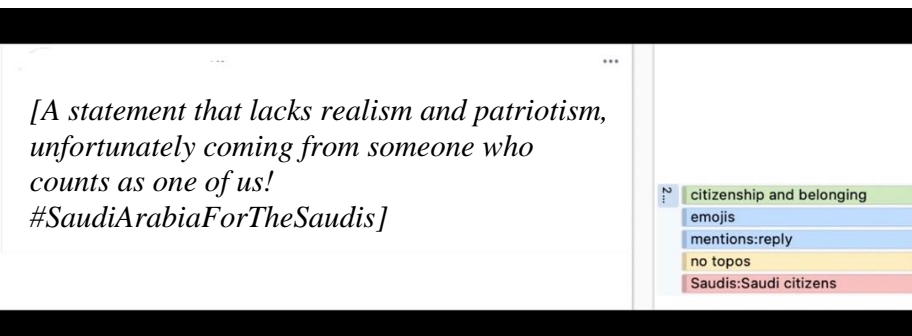
[One of the economists points out that most of the leadership positions in the private sector belong to non-Saudis, as if it is a charge that calls for defence and justification.]



[In all countries of the world, all jobs are for its citizens and foreigners are recruited when there is a shortage. Here, all jobs are for foreigners and then we try to Saudize them. SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



Example 41



The replies in the tweets above are responses to opposing views on Saudization issues by other Twitter users. The first tweet is a reply to a tweet that reads ‘*One of the economists points out that most of the leadership positions in the private sector belong to non-Saudis, as if it is a charge that calls for defence and justification.*’ While the reply to the first tweet argues that foreigners should be recruited only to fill labour shortages, the reply to the second tweet makes a rather dramatic shift. The hyperbolic statement accuses the recipient of the reply of not being a patriot merely because he/she tweeted the following ‘*competence should be prioritised over Saudization*’. This hyperbolic statement in the tweet is an example of how concepts like patriotism and nationalism are manipulated to scare those who defend migrants

into silence by accusations of being traitors. In addition, in order to cultivate privilege based on nativist principles, patriotic sentiments are exploited. However, both tweeted replies above chose to mark their replies with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*. When a tweet reply is marked with a hashtag, the hashtag assigns a topic to that reply and will attract the attention of the potential audience who most likely go beyond one's followers list but hold the same values as that of the Twitter user who tagged his tweet with a given hashtag (Zappavigna, 2018). So, while the @ sign before a username in the examples above indicates the Twitter users addressed, the hashtags they employed function to call upon all Twitter users with anti-migrant sentiments who will likely view the original tweet because of this tagged reply by one of their in-group members and might then engage in an argument with the person who initiated the tweet.

Quoted Tweets

As explained in Chapter 3, the quote tweet function is when a Twitter user retweets someone else's post and comments on the content of that post. The quoted tweet will be embedded within his/her post and thus his/her prospective audience will have access to the original tweet and consequently to a frame of reference on the comments he/she is making in relation to that quoted tweet. Garimella et al. (2016) point out that this feature "helps to put a user's opinion in context whereas a normal reply or mention would lack the context of the original tweet" (p. 202). The code *quoted tweets* was used to tag 38 tweets and the functions of those quoted tweets vary. However, the quoted tweets tagged in the data set were mostly in reference to content posted by the in-group to interact with each other. Those Twitter users whose posts are in line with their ideology are quoted to reinforce false claims or generalised statements made about the out-group sometimes using other Twitter affordances, such as hashtags, videos and emojis, amongst others, to comment on the content of the quoted tweet.

Example 42

[And when we say #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis, we see some idiots talk about Arab brotherhood and other terms that were not created for Arabs, we need to regulate the relationship with residents, to define the citizen and the guest]



[a worker of Egyptian nationality recounts the experience of his work and his companions in the kingdom and says: Our concern was to suck the bounties of this country in a soft way and by any means. He adds, we used to throw rubbish in the streets]

migrants: Arab migrants
quoted tweets
Saudis:Saudi citizens
topos of abuse
unethical behaviour

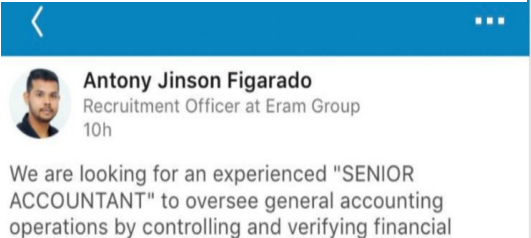
In the tweet above, stereotypes about Arab migrants are perpetuated and backed up by the embedded quoted tweet, which translates as ‘*a worker of Egyptian nationality recounts the experience of his work and his companions in the kingdom and says: Our concern was to suck the bounties of this country in a soft way and by any means. He adds, we used to throw rubbish in the streets*’, and this quoted tweet includes a video of a migrant worker portraying GCC citizens in a derogatory manner.

The code *quoted tweets* is also used in the data set for forwarding (Garimella et al., 2016), i.e. to forward posts to other accounts to get their attention to the matter posted in the quoted tweet. Quote tweets are quite helpful when forwarding a post as it ensures that it is read verbatim and not taken out of context (Oschatz, Stier & Maier, 2021). Thus, in the example below, the user forwards a quoted tweet of a job advert that violates Saudi market laws by specifying that they require non-Saudi applicants only. The user directly addresses the Ministry of Labour by mentioning their Twitter account in an attempt to report this violation and require that action be taken against such corruption.

Example 43

[A non-Saudi accountant is required with a salary of 15,000 riyals. It is to be reported to the Ministry of Labour.
Enough racism against the citizen
@MLSD_SA
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]

[Eram Group firm requires an accountant, but the most important thing is that they are not Saudi (For immigrants only)!!! What I know is that every country restricts some professions to citizens only! Except for Saudi Arabia, jobs are restricted to immigrants. And the salary is 15 thousand and they say the salary of the Saudi employee is high!]



Antony Jinson Figarado
Recruitment Officer at Eram Group
10h

We are looking for an experienced "SENIOR ACCOUNTANT" to oversee general accounting operations by controlling and verifying financial

- institutional favouritism
- institutions: others institutions
- institutions: ministries
- mentions: direct address
- migrants: other migrants
- quoted tweets
- Saudis: Saudi citizens
- topos of justice
- topos of responsibility

The users also employ the quote tweet function to comment on posts by news outlets and journalists on migrant-related matters. While some commentary reaffirms and/or expands on the content of the quote tweet, as shown in the examples above, others counter that content as in the two quote tweets below. The first tweet below comments on the 2019 royal decree to naturalise exceptional talents in Saudi. Using the affordance of a quote tweet, the author's comment frames the original tweet which reads '*Breaking News: Naturalisation door will be open for competencies in Islamic scholarship, medicine, science, culture, sports, and technology. #SaudiNaturalisesExceptionalTalents*' in a way that implies that those to be naturalised are a threat and have a hidden agenda to inflict harm on Saudi society.

Example 44

[Islamic scholarship competencies?!? Does it make sense that we have no Islamic scholarship competencies!! There is something extremely dangerous that awaits us #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]

[Breaking News: Naturalisation door will be open for competencies in Islamic scholarship, medicine, science, culture, sports, and technology. #SaudiNaturalisesExceptionalTalents]

Show this thread

82...
 naturalization
 quoted tweets
 threat to national security
 topos of threat

Quote tweets can “explicitly and directly challenge and contest the opposing side’s frame – as well as those who promote those frames” (Stewart et al., 2017, p. 15). This can often be done by ‘publicly ridiculing or shaming the quoted person through a negative or even hateful comment’ (Garimella et al., 2016, p. 201). In the quoted tweet below, the author of the tweet comments on a video of a journalist in which he defends those born and raised in Saudi Arabia. The quoted tweet reads ‘*to all those born in Saudi, you are a part of the social fabric of Saudi, do not be affected by the extremist views of racists. Words by the media person #KamalAbdulQader*’. The comment discursively intensifies the anti-migrant sentiment mainly, but not exclusively, through the statement ‘*write down one racist for the sake of her country*’ that the author of the tweet uses to represent herself as a patriot defending the country rather than a racist, and by the accompanying hashtag that was repeated four times to strongly challenge the narrative in the quoted tweet.

Example 45

[Write down one racist for the sake of her country

#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]

[to all those born in Saudi, you are a part of the social fabric of Saudi, do not be affected by the extremist views of racists. Words by the media person #KamalAbdulOader]



discourse about racism
migrants:born and raised in sa...
public figure:journalists
quoted tweets
Saudis:Saudi citizens
topos of definition

Emojis

Emojis are pictographic systems used to enhance or substitute for text and are generally associated with informal friendly messages (Danesi, 2016). However, in political communication, emojis-based communication just like other modes is not free from cyber harassment and aggression (Wagner et al., 2020). Various emojis were identified in the data set, such as the clapping hands and thumbs-up emojis, which were used to express agreement and amplify the ideological tendencies of like-minded users. A red double exclamation mark emoji along with a thumbs-down were used to criticise Saudi institutions mostly, while an octagonal stop sign was used to perpetuate the migrant as a threat narrative. There are 166 tagged emojis in the entire data set and all employed to emphasise a message communicated textually and/or with other affordances of Twitter such as videos and images.

Example 46

*[Bottom line:
#SaudiArabiaForThe
Saudis]*



citizenship and belonging
emojis
topos of definition

A prominent emoji used in the data set is the Saudi flag. Along with the brief text ‘*bottom line*’, different modes of semiotics such as the flag, the two green hearts emojis and the #*SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* hashtag work together to convey meaning in the tweet above.

The meaning of an emoji can be decoded by looking at the context of the tweet. While the flag emoji can be used to name a country, the hashtag’s anti-migrant stance means the flag emoji is unsurprisingly employed as a multimodal marker to express a national symbol that is framed by those users in a way that communicates out-group prejudice. The flag with the accompanying hashtag and text clearly communicate their position against migrants, that they are not welcome here. The significance of the nation-state is represented by the Saudi flag and by the green hearts that signify the colour of the Saudi flag. Kariryaa et al. (2020) found that political parties that endorse a nationalist ideology tend to use the flag emoji with greater frequency in political communication on Twitter than others and point out that “Flag emoji provide an easy to use tool to represent the nation and through it express nationalistic thought” (p. 383).

Images

The most frequent type of image found in the data set is *screen shots*, which usually complement or give context to the text. Screen shots were identified 220 times in the data set and employed for various purposes. For example, screenshots of news websites are used to criticise the content of news such as changes in labour market laws that users disapprove of. Screenshots of news on crimes committed by migrants are widely instrumentalised to perpetuate stereotypes against migrants. In addition, there are screenshots of social media pages or websites with content they support. This type of image is also used to hold some private companies to account by screen-capturing their job adverts that violate the law; however, the majority of screenshots are of personal accounts and groups on various social media platforms that belong to migrants working in Saudi Arabia, on which they disparage

Saudis. Users who post screenshots of migrants slandering Saudis sometimes tag official accounts such as the Ministries of Labour and the Interior and their employers to take action against them.

Example 47

*[Savola announces jobs for Egyptians only!!
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]*

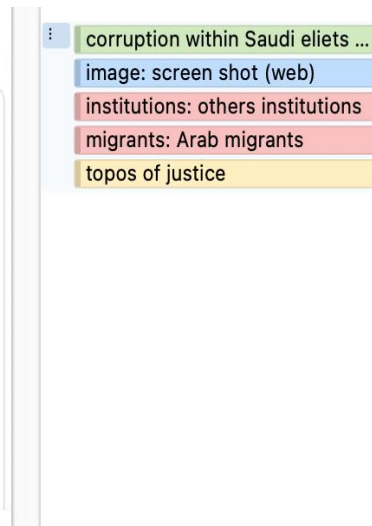


Jobs for Ever
Online Recruitment Services

Egyptians Only
Application Specialist within the IT department of Savola Foods to support the sales application.
Job requirements:

- ☐ 1-2 years IT Applications experience in Supporting sales cycle"
- ☐ Customer Oriented preferred to deal with sales team.
- ☐ Good experience in MS SQL data base (2008.,2010,2012)
- ☐ Good experience in MS visual studio . net
- ☐ Supporting Sales Buzz application is preferred " at least one year".
- ☐ Knowledge of Oracle database is a plus.
- ☐ Knowledge of Oracle ERP is a plus.

send your CV to HRAfia@savola.com

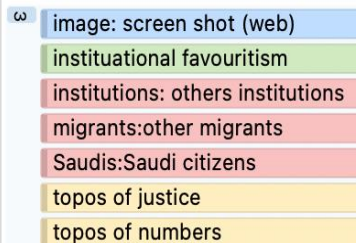


- corruption within Saudi eliets ...
- image: screen shot (web)
- institutions: others institutions
- migrants: Arab migrants
- topos of justice

The first tweet above posts a webpage of a job advert that violates labour laws by specifying the nationality of the employees wanted. The second tweet comments on statistics released by the General Organization for Social Insurance as reported on a news website that reveals a huge pay gap between Saudis and foreign employees in the private sector, as Saudis' pay is increasingly lower than that of foreigners. Both tweets provide evidence of the corruption within the private sector, which is an issue that is noticeably addressed in the data set using screen captures.

Example 48

*[Half a million jobs with a salary of more than 10,000, more than half of them are for foreigners while half of Saudis have a salary of less than 3,000. The solution is to replace and deport foreigners
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]*



Photographs are the second most frequent type of image identified in the data set.

There are 71 photographs marked in the entire data set. Photographs are mostly utilised to support claims of migrants' corruption and unethical behaviour, along with photographs that support claims of ministries' neglect and corruption. Photographs that document Saudi's past, Saudi monarchs, soldiers and the Saudi flag also exist in the data set with lower frequencies in this type of image. In addition, two photographs were utilised to support some Saudi local businesses.

Example 49

[With Ramadan approaching, three Yemenis were arrested with a truckload of 14 donkeys. It is strongly suspected that donkey meat will be distributed to restaurants for Muslims to eat and Yemenis will profit. Oh God, purify our country from these Gog and Magog of economy. #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis #FeesForYemeniDependentsExemption]



emojis
hashtag:thematic
hyperlinks
images:photograph
migrants: Arab migrants
migrants' corruption
topos of threat

The tweet above shows two photos of the alleged crime as evidence that is further strengthened by the link to documented news provided in the tweet. A photograph is employed to perpetuate the stereotype that Yemenis are criminals. This photograph paves the way for delegitimisation of the demands for exemption from residence permit fees for Yemeni dependents in Saudi in the tagged hashtag *#FeesForYemeniDependentsExemption*. Although the link to the news states that they are three illegal Yemenis and a Pakistani driver, only the Yemenis' criminality is highlighted and intensified by the user making use of intertextual sources to negatively construct Yemenis. They are described as *Ya 'jūj wa Ma 'jūj*, which translates as "Gog and Magog", an intertextual reference to primitivity and corruption inspired by the Quranic verse *'They pleaded, "O Zul-Qarnain! Surely Gog and Magog are spreading corruption throughout the land. Should we pay you tribute, provided that you build a wall between us and them?"* (18:94).

An *infographic*, which was defined in Chapter 5, is another type of image that is used rather sparingly in the data. Only 14 tweets were tagged with this code. The 14 infographics

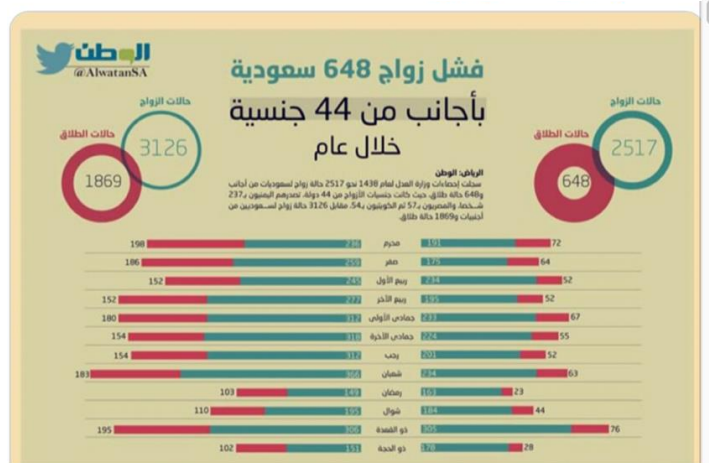
found in the data set report the numbers of migrants in Saudi in different years and different cities, the numbers of crimes committed by migrants and the number of migrants in the private sector. In addition, some infographics include nationalities of those who have committed crimes, which contributes to stoking up hatred against particular social actors.

Example 50

[The failure of the marriages of 648 Saudi women to foreigners within a year. Except for citizens of the Gulf countries and a few nationalities, the majority of other marriages are of a foreigner to one of his fellow female compatriots who has previously obtained citizenship. This marriage means recycling and then they come to demand citizenship for their children.

#NoToNaturalization

#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



hashtags:evaluative
images:infographics
migrants:other migrants
naturalization
Saudis:naturalized Saudis
Saudis:Saudi citizens
topos of abuse
topos of numbers

The infographic in the tweet above is a visual report of divorce cases for both Saudi men and women married to non-Saudis in 2017. The user makes use of the infographic above to construct a topos of abuse (abuse of law) to delegitimise calls for naturalizing children born to Saudi women married to non-Saudis. A detailed analysis of the function of this infographic is provided in Chapter 8.

Cartoons

Only two tweets were tagged with the code *cartoons*. El Refaie (2009) points out that cartoons are based on some real-life experiences of the addressed audience, and that they generally aim to expose ‘something bad or shameful rather than to highlight the positive’ (p. 176). The cartoon below embodies an issue that is extensively discussed using this hashtag. It exposes the inequitable treatment that Saudi employees receive in the private sector compared to foreign employees. The subject of criticism here is Saudi businessmen who are accused of perpetuating the stereotype of the Saudi employee as a “lazy citizen without sufficient work ethics” (Al-Waqfi & Forstenlechner, 2010, p. 366). This stereotype is conveyed textually in a speech bubble that translates as ‘*The Saudi doesn’t work efficiently.*’ This preferential treatment of foreigners is depicted in the batteries, which stand as a visual metaphor for better working conditions, such as higher salaries, better job security and training opportunities that Saudi businessmen offer their foreign employees, while they deny Saudis these. The author of this tweet confirms the reality of this cartoon with the evaluative hashtag *#Exactly* and then continues to clarify that the majority of Saudi businessmen in the private sector act in a similar manner to that portrayed in the cartoon.

Example 51

[#Exactly, except for a few
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



Videos

Videos are extensively employed in the data set, 132 tweets were coded as *videos*. Those videos include TV interviews of guests discussing Saudization and migrant-related issues, individuals criticising the private sector and narrating their own experiences working there, clips of national songs and clips made with content that warns against demographic change within the country. Also popular are videos reporting migrants' crimes and clips of migrants insulting Saudis on various social media platforms, which instigates hatred towards them as an out-group. There are also videos posted by some users to comment on the hashtag itself and to criticise some journalists and other individuals who oppose the hashtag.

Example 52

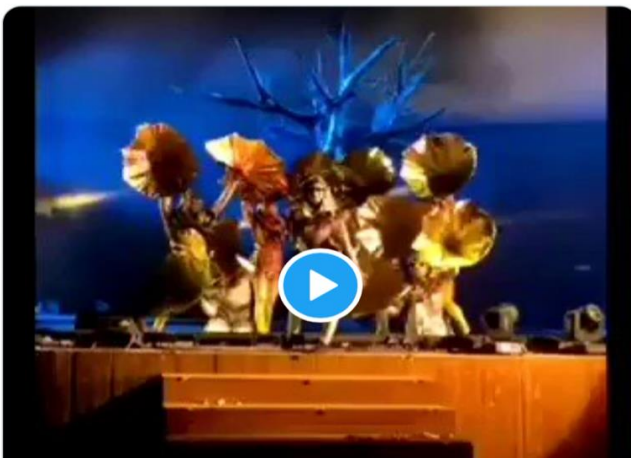
*[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
Can you imagine that these are all
foreigners in one city, and they are all
young? Isn't the country in danger with their
presence?]*



3:286 Q...
migrants:other migrants
threat to national security
topos of threat
videos

Example 53

*[The one who stabbed turned out to be a
Yemeni resident. I think about the punishment,
what should it be? We told you
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis. It is necessary to
limit the residency permit to a period of two
years, not the maximum, and reduce the
number of residents, and no one shall be
granted residency in the country unless they
possess distinguished degrees and exhibit good
conduct]*



8:27...
emojis
labour law reforms
migrants: Arab migrants
migrants:other migrants
migrants' corruption
topos of culture
topos of disadvantage
videos

The first video above shows a group of applicants, Saudi-born footballers, in the Hijaz region entering the arena allocated by the Ministry of Sports to demonstrate their football skills to the committee concerned. This visual resource along with the comment on the video by the poster of this tweet creates a dramatised scenario in which those young athletes are a threat to the nation. This video was utilised to construct a topos of threat, which is detailed in Chapter 8.

Furthermore, social actors tend to be recognised along with their names or nationalities when negatively qualified, as in the second example above where the nationality ‘*Yemeni*’ is employed in reporting the man in the video who stabbed three performers on the stage during a live performance in Riyadh in 2019, which consequently contributes to damaging the image of all Yemenis. To conclude, migrants are demonised and portrayed as a threat to public security by massifying them in the first video and rendering them as potential suspects, particularly because men are more associated with violence than women are, and by criminalising them in the second video above.

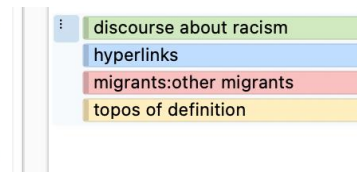
Hyperlinks

Hyperlinks are “technical affordances that allow connecting content and drive user’s attention, moving them from one place to another on the web” (Casero-Ripollés & Micó-Sanz, 2022, p. 1). Only 21 tweets were tagged with the code *hyperlink*, the majority of which are included in tweets that comment on news articles which mostly report crimes committed by non-Saudis, and the hyperlinks included takes the reader to the original source to closely examine those reported crimes. Such usage of hyperlinks provides users with yet another multimodal form of legitimizing discriminatory discourse (Bennet, 2018).

Example 54

[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis discusses primarily the problem of unemployment and also some of the ill-mannered demeanours that we saw from “some” residents]

youtu.be/_mCP2_7_T_c



In the tweet above, the user explains what the hashtag #*SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* is about in their opinion and includes a hyperlink that leads to a six-minute YouTube video posted by the same user in which s/he uses YouTube to further discuss the statement, thus providing the viewer with substantial and more descriptive information related to the text of the tweet itself. Therefore, like other Twitter affordances, the hyperlink in the tweet above seems to be ideologically driven in assisting to interpret and justify anti-migrant sentiment online.

6.3 Summary

This chapter has explored the topics in tweets containing the hashtag #*SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* and its semiotic resources in order to help investigate the construction of migrants in Saudi and to some extent the construction of relevant social actors in this discussion. As stated earlier in this chapter, this entry-level analysis is valuable in guiding the representational and argumentative analyses in Chapters 7 and 8, respectively. The examination of these topics and semiotic resources came after the identification of the overall content of, and the semiotic resources found in, the data set in the methodology chapter by the systematic coding of a total of 836 tweets. The salient discourse topics that were identified earlier in Chapter 4 were closely examined in this chapter by summarizing what each topic entails with examples from the data set that were selected randomly to illustrate how these 30 recurring topics that emerged from the coding are linked to the

#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis debate. Following Herrera (2020), discourse topics were classified as social processes and social actors. I identified 16 codes related to social processes while 14 codes were tagged to identify the various social actors involved in this online discussion. Herrera (2020) examined the social practice of dual screening in Chile. She analyses tweets in which users debate issues discussed on political TV shows in the Chilean context. While I draw on Herrera's (2020) classification of discourse topics, this research examines a rather different phenomenon, which is migration in a different context that has naturally led to different topics being identified and consequently different findings.

Regarding social processes, *institutional favouritism* was the code recurring the most related to the category *unemployment*. This code was linked to tweets that discuss discriminatory practices against Saudis in various institutions. Among the codes linked to unemployment are *Saudization issues* and *supporting Saudi nationals*. While the former code mostly criticises the poor implementation of Saudization policies, the latter is related to tweets that support local businesses or offer free career consultations and job opportunities for Saudi job seekers.

The most prominent topic related to the category *ethical concerns* is *migrants' corruption*, followed by *migrants' unethical behaviour*. The last topic coded in this category is *corruption within Saudi elites and institutions*, which is linked to tweets that criticise and nominate social actors, accused of enabling discriminatory practices against Saudis.

The category *threats* includes the topics *threat to national security*, *threat to Saudi culture* and *economic impact of migrants*, all of which are commonly found in right-wing discourses and exploited by the users in this online debate. Another category related to social processes is citizenship, which includes two topics, *citizenship and belonging* followed by *naturalisation*, in which the tweets tagged with this code oppose the phenomenon of naturalisation and antagonise naturalised citizens and their allies. Metadiscourse is another

category related to social processes in which *discourse about racism* and *social media* were among the topics investigated. *National chants and national self-glorification* along with the *good migrants* were the last two topics explored in this chapter.

The 14 social actors identified in Chapter 4 were examined closely by looking at tweets from the data set in which these social actors were mentioned. The categories identified include *migrants*, *Saudis*, *naturalised citizens*, *children born to Saudi mothers*, *public figures* and *institutions*. As the analysis shows, all social actors within the category of migrants along with children born to Saudi mothers were antagonised and criminalised. The category Saudis revealed a binary construction of ‘us’ versus ‘them’. Saudi citizens are perceived to be those so-called native Saudis who have the country’s best interests in mind and who are victimised in the *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* discourse, whereas naturalised Saudis like migrants are antagonised and their loyalty to Saudi Arabia is questioned. Regarding public figures, the majority of politicians and other public figures were criticised for various reasons, but mainly for failing to lift systematic injustices against Saudis in relation to employment. However, journalists were either critiqued or applauded based on their migrant-related views. Royals were mentioned in the data as authority figures supporting arguments made either within a tweet or as national figures in self-glorifying tweets. Like the codes *politicians* and *public figures*, all four types of institutions tagged in the category *institutions* were criticised as well for the unemployment situation in Saudi. However, the criticism directed towards the Shura Council was focused on opposing their efforts to pass bills that support the naturalisation of children born to Saudi mothers married to non-Saudis. The overview of the social actors mentioned in this online discussion facilitates the analysis of how relevant social actors are discursively constructed, particularly the representation of the other that will be examined in the next chapter.

After the codification of the semiotic resources found in the data set in Chapter 4,

these semiotic features were examined closely in this chapter. While they are sometimes used independently by Twitter users to construct meaning, the interplay of the linguistic and semiotic features of discourse in the data set facilitates shaping attitudes. The analysis of semiotic features will reveal how the technological affordances of Twitter were exploited to create meaning and thus will prove useful in the representational and argumentative analyses of the *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* discourse in the next two chapters. The most frequent semiotic form found in the data set was *thematic hashtags*, which are used to tag the main topic of a tweet. The majority of the thematic hashtags identified were linked to the topics *migrants' corruption* and *Saudization issues*, with 33 hashtags each. The second most frequent semiotic feature was *screenshots*, which were mostly used to criticise institutions and report the corruption or unethical behaviours of some migrants.

As the analysis shows, the semiotic forms explored, be they imagery, language or sound, all contributed significantly to the negative construction of the other. For example, the topic *migrants' corruption* was semiotically realised the most through imagery. Also, of the 130 videos coded in the data set, the topic of *migrants' corruption* was the one that utilised videos the most. Thirty videos were used to warn against this claimed corruption. Such videos along with most of the semiotic features employed aim to trigger fear that consequently justifies the discriminatory and exclusionary discourse used with the hashtag. To conclude, text works in combination with the semiotic resources afforded by Twitter for meaning-making. Although tweets and semiotic resources can be utilised to contest xenophobia and racism, they are mainly used to disseminate and propagate racist and in some cases extreme discourses. Constant exposure to mediated forms of racist discourse can contribute to the normalisation of such discourses.

Chapter 7: Constructing the Other through Referential and Predicational Strategies

In the previous chapter, I defined the fourteen social actors present in the data set and illustrated with examples how each social actor was relevant to the ongoing construction of migrants with this hashtag. In this chapter, I seek to address my second research question, which relates to how the main social actors are discursively constructed with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*. Tweets with this hashtag contain representations of migrants in Saudi Arabia, which I labelled as *'the other'*, and representations of those who defend those migrants, which I labelled as *'the allies'*. The following section investigates the referential and predicational construction of migrants and their allies in Saudi. The analysis will only focus on prominent strategies that emerged from the data (see section 5.2.1) and which contributed to creating this polarisation between 'us' and 'them' and conveyed a particular narrative in which migrants in Saudi Arabia and those who support them are portrayed negatively. Ideally, a summary of the quantitative findings for this chapter would be presented below. However, due to space constraints, I have included the results of the codification of the prominent strategies of reference related to the "other" (the migrants) and the "other within" (their allies) in Appendix A. While the entry-level analysis in the previous chapter aimed to summarise the texts and point out their gist, this chapter conducts an in-depth analysis that focuses on key patterns found in the texts during entry-level analysis. As explained in the methodology chapter (see section 5.2.1), the examples in this chapter illustrate prominent linguistic realisations of nominating and predicating found in the data set for constructing migrants and their allies. It should be noted that while I presented screenshots of tweets in the previous chapter, I do not include them in this chapter as it focuses on linguistic realisations rather than semiotic or multimodal resources.

7.1 Representation of the Other (Migrants)

7.1.1 De-spatialisation

An ‘us’ versus ‘them’ dichotomy does not only contribute to the construction of opposing in- and out-groups but also to associating negative traits with the other and positive ones with the self, because the latter relies on the former as the studies reviewed in Chapter 1 show. While a range of strategies are employed for constructing migrants from all backgrounds, the linguistic othering of migrants is mostly achieved by the de-spatialisation strategy, which I reviewed in Chapter 5 (see section 5.2.1). The first prominent category of references to migrants in the data set is the de-spatialisation strategy realised by the extensively used detoponymic anthroponym *أجنبي* *ʿajnabī*³. I coded how many times the term *ʿajnabī* occurred in the data with all its lemmatisation, i.e. taking into consideration plurality, definiteness and gender. It was employed 290 times in total. The English equivalent of the word *ʿajnabī* is ‘foreigner’, and its plural collective form, which prevails in the data, is الأجانِب *alʿajānib* ‘the foreigners’. The prefix *al* which proceeds the noun *ʿajnabī* ‘foreigner’ or أجانِب *ʿajānib* ‘foreigners’ in the data corresponds to the definite article ‘the’ in English, but it is not as marked in Arabic as generic definiteness is common in Arabic and Arabic only expresses genericity with definite nouns (Alzamil, 2019).

The term *ʿajnabī* is derived from the root *junub*, meaning someone who is not kin, a stranger, and its verb is *januba*, which translates as ‘to be distant or to avoid’ (Wehr, 1976; Omar, 2008). However, *ʿajnabī*’s contemporary dictionary meaning is ‘foreign or alien, someone who does not enjoy citizenship in a given country’ (Omar, 2008). According to Rosenthal (1997), before the term *ʿajnabī* was coined, Arabs used the word *gharīb*, whose

³ While I use the word *ʿajnabī* throughout my data analysis as the equivalent of foreigner, other transliterations of the word are found in my in-text quotations, such as *agnabi* and *ajnabi*. However, this spelling inconsistency does not affect the meaning.

English equivalent is 'stranger', and it was used to refer to "everybody who left his original place of residence and went abroad" (p. 4). Thus, he suggests that foreignness is a result of nationalism, as foreigner's most common meaning in contemporary Arabic usage is an individual who is not a citizen. He explains that "territoriality of some sort was always felt more strongly in connection with *agnabi*, and this made it quite suitable for the modern usage" (p. 40). This sense of territoriality could be attributed to the established spatiality and proximity within the root of the word mentioned above and its derivations. The word *junub* in the Qur'anic verse *al-jar al-Junub*, your neighbour who is not kin (Wehr, 1976, p. 139), seems to suggest that while he/she is a neighbour within close proximity, he or she is still a stranger.

Rosenthal (1997) further argues that the connotation of the "other" found in the roots of other languages such as English is absent from the Arabic root of this word. However, I find the word absent to be rather inaccurate, and Badran's (2003) assessment of its connotations to be more convincing. She advances that the root of the Arabic word *ajnabī* (masculine form) and *ajnabīya* (denoting a female foreigner) conveys less distant othering. Her hedged claim is rather more consistent in my opinion with the word's root found in the dictionary I consulted (Ibn Sīdah, 1996), which is a well-received pre-modern lexicon prepared by the prominent lexicographer Ibn Sīdah (d. 458/1066). Badran (2003) highlights that such an etymology "ostensibly connotes a less hierarchical version of coexistence" (p. 96). This is apparent in the customary usage of the word foreigner or foreigners in Arabic to refer to someone visiting one's house (Ibn baz, n.d.). He explains that it is used in the sense that they are not close to you or came from a distant location. Thus, the inherent otherness of '*foreigner*' in English is not absent in Arabic but rather diminished to some extent as a result of the semantic shift when translated, i.e. the semantic meaning is quite plausible in Arabic.

However, a term like '*ajnabī* can denote various referents depending on its context. Thus, while the term '*ajnabī* came to be used in modern nation-states to refer to non-citizens,

it is used in religious discourse to denote any foreign man alien to a woman by blood and marriage, i.e. someone who she can potentially marry (Al-Suyuti, 2021). In addition, while *'ajnabī* generally means non-citizens, foreignness can have different referents in different contexts. Silverstein & Sprengel (2021) found that *'ajnabī* in Egypt often refers to those from privileged nations, while other less privileged ones are not called *'ajānib* 'foreigners'. They add that, in Egypt, the word *'ajnabī* signifies those who belong to powerful nations and is to some extent equated with lighter skin. Furthermore, the nationality law of Jordan differentiates between foreigners and Arabs as predefined categories when applying for Jordanian citizenship, and while the former denotes any person who is not Jordanian, the Arab category refers to a person whose father is Arab and is a national of one of the member states of the League of Arab States (Gandolfo, 2012). This suggests that foreignness seems to be associated more with non-Arabs in Arab countries. However, this understanding of foreignness has little relevance in the context of this research. The term *'ajnabī* in the tweets below mostly occurs in its masculine form *'ajnabī* as a synecdoche representing all non-Saudis in the kingdom, regardless of their ethnicity, unless specified or implied within the tweet.

Finally, while the legal definition maintains that *'ajnabī* is a person who is non-Saudi according to the laws of Saudi Arabian nationality (Ministry of the Interior, n.d. -a), the usage of the term in the data collected does not correspond to the legal one but transcends it to include naturalised citizens. This serves to alienate them, as will be elaborated later in this chapter. Thus, the term *'ajnabī* in the data seems to evoke a lack of belonging (Van der Valk, 2000). Moreover, while the legal definition of *'ajnabī* includes all who do not have Saudi citizenship, certain groups of people seem to be the targets of racism and hostility with this hashtag rather than others. As Reisigl & Wodak (2001) point out, the word foreign or alien in

such contexts “is almost always restricted to a much more specific and discriminatory meaning extension of the term” (p. 62).

De-spatialisation using the term *ʿajnabī*

As established earlier, the term *ʿajnabī* is the term most frequently used to nominate migrants in the data. Whether in its singular or plural collective form, it is important to note that this strategy of de-spatialisation, although the dominant one, almost always occurs in combination with other strategies, such as professionalisation and criminalisation.

(1) *The foreigner cannot steal when there is a Saudi in a leadership position, so he is being fought and expelled from work and replaced by a **foreign** thief #Fact*

In the example above, the de-toponymic anthroponym *أجنبي* is employed twice. The first is *al ʿajnabī* with a definite article, and the other one observed here is *ʿajnabī* but with an indefinite article. Indefinite articles in Arabic differ from those in English in that no article is attached to the noun. It is worth noting that the strategy of de-spatialisation occurs here in combination with the strategy of criminalisation, which is a sub-strategy of social problematisation. Migrants are blatantly criminalised using the criminonym *حرامي* *ḥarāmī*. This predicative adjective, which means ‘thief’, is located in the prepositional phrase ‘by a foreign thief’. The predicate ‘cannot steal when there is a Saudi in a leadership position’ presupposes the ‘all migrants are thieves’ prejudice.

(2) *Saudi writer: 73,000 **foreign** general managers in the kingdom*

The de-toponymic anthroponym *ʿajnabī* in the tweet above is juxtaposed with the professionym *مدير عام* *mudīr ʿām*, which means ‘general managers’. Professionalisation (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 50) is a rather prominent strategy in the data as an unemployment discourse prevails in this context (see section 5.2.1). They are also referred to by quantification. While the lexical choice *ʿajnabī* serves to alienate migrants working in Saudi

Arabia, foregrounding their professions along with quantifying them contributes significantly to strengthening the prejudice that 'migrants steal our jobs' because numbers tend to be persuasive in themselves. More importantly, both examples above claim to highlight an exclusionary practice that exists in the private sector in the Gulf (see section 2.2.1), which is Saudis' exclusion from holding leadership positions in favour of non-Saudis. While such institutional exclusionary practices do exist (see section 2.2.1) and have negative consequences for Saudis' job security, criticism of the private sector is accompanied by an attack on migrants whose experience and competence are not taken seriously but are portrayed as corrupt thieves.

(3) *Saudi doctors are unemployed, and Saudi students face many obstacles to enrol in medical college, and **the foreigner** practises medicine like a refrigeration technician...*

(4) *A Saudi female citizen with a master's degree in nanoscience sells food on the street, and **the foreigner** with a forged scientific certificate is a manager in a factory or a company, so where is Saudization, and for how long are we going to see such cases?*

As explained in example (1) above, the singular noun *al 'ajnabī* 'the foreigner' is used in its masculine grammatical form but functions as a collective singular, as a synecdoche representing all foreigners, as Arabic expresses generic meaning with all types of nouns, singular or plural, with the definite article *al*. There is a presupposition that all foreign doctors and managers have forged their degrees. This criminalisation is realised in the explicit predicate '*practises medicine like a refrigeration technician*' and the prepositional phrase '*with a forged scientific certificate*'. In addition to the reference realised through de-spatialisation, the other is referred to here by means of professionalisation, '*a manager*'. The

juxtaposition of the positive attributive predicate '*Saudi with a master's degree*' and the negative '*a foreigner with a forged certificate*' serves their portrayal of migrants, which is predominantly negative and stereotypical; migrants are reduced to the unethical behaviour or criminality of a few. In both examples above, migrants are blamed for Saudis' unemployment, and such blame is manifested in the derogation of the other. Positive self-presentation of Saudis as competent and ethical relies heavily on negative presentation of the other as not only lacking in competence but also being involved in illegal actions, so while the self is idealised, the other is blatantly criminalised.

7.1.2 *Spatialisation, Actionalisation and Professionyms*

After the de-spatialisation strategy realised by the abundant usage of the reference '*ajnabī*' with all its lemmatisations, several other referential strategies overlap when employed in constructing migrants in Saudi Arabia. The terms *مقيم* *muqīm* (singular) or *مقيمين* *muqīmīn* (plural) and *وافد* *wāfid* (singular) or *وافدين* *wāfidīn* (plural) along with *عمالة وافدة* '*amālh wāfidh*' (plural) or *عمالة* '*amālh*' are equally prominent references in the data.

The word *wāfid* (singular) or *wāfidīn* (plural) stems from the root *wafd* (n) and its verb means 'to arrive'. The term *wāfid* means "arriving or newcomer and its literal meaning is a person who arrives somewhere" (Wehr, 1976, p. 1083). On the other hand, the terms *muqīm* (singular) and *muqīmīn* (plural) from the root *qaum* (n) meaning people or fellow tribesmen translate as "resident, remaining, staying, lasting, and permanent" (Wehr, 1976, p. 802). Thus, the term *muqīm*, which is equivalent to 'resident', seems to have a sense of neutrality when labelling non-Saudis living and working in the Kingdom as its basic meanings established in the dictionary evoke permanence. Moreover, unlike the word *wāfid*, the everyday usage of the word *muqīm* has not acquired negative connotations and seems to

give a sense of inclusion. T. Al-Rashoud⁴ (personal communication, 20 November 2021) and Al-Khonaini (2020) both used the term resident to refer non-Kuwaitis in Kuwait in their articles rather than *wāfid*.

Based on my observations when reviewing official websites, such as that of the Saudi Ministry of the Interior, the notion of transience evoked by the term *wāfid* is quite noticeable. For instance, the Ministry of the Interior's website, under the heading 'General Department of Expatriate Affairs' 'الإدارة العامة لشؤون الوافدين', uses the term *wāfidīn* 'expatriate', which is the plural of *wāfid*, as an umbrella term to include all non-Saudis. However, in a subsection the terms *muqīm* and *wāfid* are used separately. *Wāfid* presumably refers to all non-Saudis who enter Saudi Arabia, such as those who visit only to perform Hajj⁵. However, a *wāfid* only becomes a *muqīm* when he/she has a residency visa (Ministry of the Interior, n.d.-b). It is worth noting that the word *wāfid* is translated on the same website not as 'expat' but as 'alien' in the following sentence ' عند حصول أي وافد مقيم في المملكة على تأشيرة خروج وعودة أو خروج نهائي، ' فيجوز له البقاء لمدة شهرين '، 'A resident alien who gets a re-entry visa or final exit visa may stay for two months in the kingdom'. Similarly, the GOV.SA website which is the National Unified portal for Government services translates the subheading 'شؤون المقيمين والزوار' as 'Residents and Visitors Affairs' (Unified National Platform, n.d.-a) which not only shows the inconsistency of the terms used to refer to those who enter Saudi Arabia but also reveals their transience. *Wāfid* is replaced here by زائر *zā'ir*, which means 'visitor'; both terms indicate temporariness. Consequently, the Arabic term *wāfid* is translated on official websites above as

⁴ Al-Rashoud (2021) wrote an article in Arabic in which he used the word 'wāfid' to label non-Kuwaitis in Kuwait. The Kuwaiti editor replaced the word 'wāfid' with 'muqīm', as he considered it a more appropriate alternative to the word 'wāfid' which seems to have acquired negative connotations in Kuwait recently. A link to the article can't be provided as it is a part of an edited volume not yet published.

⁵ The annual pilgrimage made by Muslims to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

‘expat’, ‘alien’ and ‘visitor’, respectively. This lack of standardisation of the terms used to refer to non-Saudis at the institutional level can be explained by Fatani’s (2009) observations upon examining translation efforts within official institutions in Saudi. She concluded that none of the institutions examined had translation divisions or departments, and that they depend on bilingual employees for translations or outsource translation projects to other translation offices that are licensed. Moreover, I would also note that the meanings of such terms on official Saudi websites and in the dictionaries consulted above differ from the meanings established with the hashtag. This is similar to KhosraviNik’s (2010, p. 11) finding in the UK context where he argues that regardless of what words are used to represent refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in British newspapers, technically, in formal documents and dictionaries, ‘they seem to function in ideologically different atmospheres in the British press discourse’. In addition, one must be cautious about equating legality with morality.

The English word ‘expat’ used to translate the word *wāfid* on the official website of the Saudi Ministry of the Interior seems a suitable equivalent in that context. However, the English equivalent of the word *wāfid* in the hashtag seems closer to the word ‘immigrant’ rather than ‘expat’, as the former corresponds to not only its established meaning in the dictionary and its contemporary usage, but also to the negative connotations it has recently acquired (Al-Sabah, 2020). However, the latter tends to have positive connotations and to be reserved for migrants from affluent nations (Kunz, 2016), which is not the case with this hashtag. Therefore, the words immigrant and expatriate are not truly English equivalents to the ideologically loaded word *wāfid* in the hashtag.

The term عمالة وافدة *‘amālh wāfidh* in the data set has the English equivalent ‘immigrant workers or immigrant labourers’, and as Saraswathi (2020, n.p.) suggests, it is a ‘blanket term for dark-skinned expatriates from the global south’. Kareem (2021) points out

that migrants in the Gulf usually refer to themselves as *mughtaribīn*, which means diasporic rather than *wāfidīn* or *muqīmīn*. Notably, this term that is preferred by migrants themselves was not employed in the data by users to refer to migrants in Saudi Arabia. To summarise, the terms *'ajnabī* or *'ajānib* along with *wāfidīn* and *muqīmīn* in my data all seem to be used interchangeably to refer to all migrants working and living in Saudi Arabia, while the terms *'amālh wāfidh* or *'amālh* seem to be exclusively associated with South Asian migrants.

The term *muqīm* is a reference made with regard to spatialisation, while a strategy of actionalisation is employed and realised through the actionyms *wāfid* and *'amālh wāfidh*. Finally, the term *عمالة* *'amālh* 'labourers' falls under the strategy of professionalisation and is realised by professionyms such as workers or labourers (see section 5.2.1 for definitions of strategies). All references are highlighted below:

- (5) *Writer Saleh Al-Zahrani: experience certificates are the easiest thing for a **resident**. He can fabricate it in many ways and for any field of work!*
- (6) *All Gulf states are filled with **immigrants**, but you do not see the citizen unemployed because the priority is for the citizen except for our country. **The immigrant** is working, and the citizen is unemployed.*
- (7) *When it comes to foreigners, we should only leave room for cleaning **labourers**.*
- (8) *Three million **immigrants** are threatening the identity of the capital.*

As explained above, the terms resident, immigrant and foreigners in the examples (5), (6), (7) and (8), and in the collected data on the whole, are employed interchangeably to refer to all migrants in Saudi regardless of their legal status or ethnic or geographical origin. However, just like the term immigrant, they can carry positive or negative connotations (Newton, 2008; Baker et al., 2008) based on the context and co- text; for example, what used to be a relatively neutral term, *wāfidīn*, lost its neutrality (see discussion of the term above).

In example (8), the seemingly neutral term on its own acquires negative connotations via the preceding definite quantifier '*three million*', along with the negative predicate '*are threatening the identity of the capital*'. Evoking the topos of numbers in this tweet along with Saudi values allegedly being at stake, even though such values vary among Saudis themselves, creates a sense of urgency for change.

Similarly, the term *muqīm* carries negative connotations in example (5) by virtue of the negative predicate '*can fabricate it*', as it contributes to creating prejudiced stereotypes against this out-group, in this case criminality is associated with the term *muqīm* 'resident'. In example (7), the kind of foreigners who are welcome to stay are specified as '*cleaning labourers*', who are usually South Asian workers (Lowi, 2018) doing jobs that are looked down on and pay below the minimum wage, so Saudis are not interested in them. Finally, example (6) is a direct criticism of the systematic exclusion of Saudis from the private sector where they have less access to jobs than non-Saudis (see section 2.2.1), so such a tweet shows citizens demanding accountability from those in charge.

7.1.3 Place of Origin: Nationalisation and Ethnification

Nationalisation

One of the features most highlighted when constructing the out-group in the data is either their ethnic or geographical origin. When migrants are referred to in terms of their origin, it contributes substantially to homogenizing the other and evoking prejudiced traits that are exclusively attributed to them. Thus, the following section shows the contrast in references and predications assigned to Arab migrants, non-Arab migrants and, finally, specific groups of Arab migrants who are negatively constructed.

(9) *One of our rights is to demand the employment of the Saudi instead of the foreigner. Amend the regulation of the private sector. Any company that does not*

*employ 90% Saudis should have the state's financial funds withdrawn from them and let **Tony** and his cohort help him out.*

(10) *When the Saudi is fired from his job due to the fictitious economic crisis while **Tony, Shawqī, Kumar and Alberto** remain on top of their jobs, it is my right as a citizen...*

(11) ***Bura ʿī:** Hey **Baṣṭawīsī***

: what? What's going on?

***Bura ʿī:** Television and sports in Saudi*

***Baṣṭawīsī:** What's wrong with them?*

***Bura ʿī:** They became like the Saudi Ministry of Labour, they adore us as if we were their children, no, no, they love us a bit more.*

***Baṣṭawīsī:** on my way, I will bring the whole population with me.*

The proper noun *Tony* is not an individualised reference to a particular social actor as the translation might suggest. On the contrary, *Tony, Shawqī* and all the proper nouns highlighted in examples (9), (10) and (11) above are nationalising references. *Tony* is a metonymic reference in which the proper noun denotes migrants from Lebanon⁶. The nationymic referent Lebanese in example (9) is replaced by *Tony* as a referent for all Lebanese. In example (10), *Tony* is mentioned again to refer to the Lebanese, while *Shawqī* denotes Egyptians. Similarly, *Kumar* represents Indians, and *Alberto* denotes Westerners. The tweets above rely on a nativist job discourse, which is common in anti-migrant discourse (Richardson & Wodak 2009a). The users mainly direct the blame at the private sector and other official institutions for failing to implement the Saudization programme, failing to

⁶ I rely on my contextual knowledge and my own experience as someone immersed in this community of practice (i.e. Saudi Twitter users) to interpret the metonymic references in this tweet.

comply with its regulations and not taking drastic measures to tackle this corruption.

However, the tweets seem to suggest a causal relation between unemployment and the immigration of work migrants. What is being implied is that the alarming unemployment rate in Saudi Arabia could be lowered by reducing or expelling migrant workers, while as Fakeeh (2009) argues, Saudization ignores the deeper issue, which is employability, and focuses on unemployment as a symptom.

In example (11), the user creates a satirical scene in which two Egyptian characters interact. The user employs the proper nouns *Bura ʿī* and *Baṣṭawīsī*, which are commonly known to be Egyptian names in this dialogue to serve as an allegory for the wider social context. Hariman (2021) emphasises the role of allegory in populist discourse. He points out that “allegory seems to work very well as a strategy for bonding the populist electorate to a leader” (p. 22). Although the allegory within this tweet essentially criticises the Ministry of Labour, the General Sport Authority and the Ministry of Media, it is not free from prejudice against Egyptians. Allegory often serves to perpetuate stereotypes, such as manifesting racialised linguistic competence related to black people through humour (Weaver, 2010). In a similar manner, while non-standard orthography is expected in the data due to the semi-public nature of Twitter, this tweet orthographically incorporates Egyptian dialect to enhance the prejudice against Egyptians already established in the tweet by the nationalising references *Bura ʿī* and *Baṣṭawīsī*. That is, the whole tweet was written in Egyptian dialect rather than Saudi dialect or modern standard Arabic, as is the case for the majority of the tweets in the data set. Thus, this allegorical narrative is characterised by an overtly hyperbolic satirical tone and was written in a colloquial register, employing Egyptian dialect that resonates with the intended audience who share an understanding of the dialect and the message behind it. The argument being communicated is not based on factual information but rather on fear evoked through this allegorical narrative in which Saudis are unjustly treated

by governmental institutions, and this unjust treatment is manifested through tweets expressing feelings of frustration and anger regarding unemployment. This frustration with the system is further extended to migrants, and in this particular tweet, to Egyptians who are constructed as the second antagonised out-group after Saudi institutions. This narrative contributes to enhancing the argument that Saudis are victims of the system and the other, respectively, and must stand up against such grievances. In summary, this tweet is cautioning Saudis about what lies ahead of them in terms of the unemployment situation by ridiculing Saudi ministries and migrants through instrumentalising what Charteris-Black (2019) calls “reasoning through humour” (p. 2).

- (12) *Bring us our Saudi doctors from the hospitals of Europe, America, and Australia, and expel **almṣāryh** [the Egyptians] and **’ashawām** [Levant people] butchers and forgers.*
- (13) *If we say that #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis cried **almṣāryh** [Egyptian people] and **aswāryh** [Syrian people] started with envy and racism and ... you [being] envious, priority is given to citizens, and enough [of] envy.*
- (14) *It’s called Saudi, not **’um adunyā** [mother of the world]!*
- (15) *Look at the level of audacity of **’abū yaman** [Yemenis], they claim that they are the ones providing for the Saudis.*
- (16) *... **’abū yaman** should establish their projects in their homeland **alyaman ata ’īs** [the miserable Yemen] because Saudi...*

Referring to foreigners such as Egyptians, Syrians and Yemenis via the nation to which they belong can sometimes, by its very nature, be used as a slur. Such slurs are linguistically realised as nationymics. The anthroponym مصري *maṣrī*, which is the masculine form used to refer to Egyptians, is in many cases a negative-evaluative word employed to

denote Egyptian migrants derogatorily. Similar to the contemptuous slang used to label people of Polish descent (Dundes, 1971), the standard plural form *miṣryūn* or *maṣryīn* ‘Egyptians’ and *sūryūn* or *sūryīn* ‘Syrians’ are altered to slang plural forms ⁷ *mṣāryh* and *swāryh* where the former denotes Egyptians, and the latter denotes Syrians. While some might argue that such labels, along with *’ashawām*, which denotes people from the Levant region (Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Jordan), are merely informal, I believe that they are potent loaded terms, and their deviated plural forms *mṣāryh* and *swāryh* originated as terms of ridicule and contempt used to label an out-group negatively. While their connotations are context-dependent, *mṣāryh* and *swāryh* are used as slurs in the examples above rather than as statements of being, and while such terms may define them, they simultaneously devalue their identity. While those who use the pejorative plural forms *mṣāryh* and *swāryh* would usually argue that those labels are being used in a denotational sense, i.e. pointing out geographic origin or nationality, Heyd (2014) argues that labels of race and ethnicity “can be expected to contain at least a residual connotational aspect”, and further maintains that such connotations can be overt as they are embedded in the label explicitly, as in “white trash”, or “relatively implicit/covert and only accessible in situated discourse” (p. 42).

Nationalities are widely used in negative contexts when talking about migrants in the Gulf. Al-Sabah (2020) points out that labels such as *هندي hindī* “Indian”, *فلبيني filibīnī* “Filipino” and *مصري maṣrī* “Egyptian” are used as “unconscious vehicles of discrimination and exclusion” in Kuwait. Similarly, Dakkak (2022) illustrates that *hindī* is used as a pejorative term to refer to all south Asian migrants in GCC countries. Ahsan Ullah et al. (2020) note that one of the respondents in their study about migrants in GCC countries

⁷ Such plural forms do not exist in Modern Standard Arabic or Classical Arabic. *Maṣryīn* or *miṣryūn* and *sūryīn* or *sūryūn* are the only plural forms in these forms of Arabic to denote Egyptians and Syrians, respectively.

reported that one demeaning behaviour she experienced was being called *Bangladeshi* by her employers, rather than her name. The practice of using nationalities as slurs is not confined to GCC countries though, Şafak-Ayvazoğlu et al. (2021) report *Syrian* being used as a pejorative term by Turkish people to harass Syrian refugees. Unfortunately, it is not only beyond the scope of this study to trace the history of the aforementioned pejorative labels in GCC countries and Saudi Arabia in particular, but most importantly, there is no scholarly work available that covers such labels as far as I am aware. To examine the connotations, semantic meanings and change of such labels in depth, a corpus along with polls and interviews to elicit in-group members' attitudes are critical before embarking on a more detailed analysis of such terms in the future, which is beyond the scope of this research.

The negative construction of the other with the pejorative nationymic terms *almṣāryh* and *'ashawām* in example (12) above is strengthened through the metaphorical criminonym *جزارين jazārīn* 'butchers' and the criminonym *مزورين muzawirīn* 'forgers', against which the positive construction of Saudi doctors working in Europe, America and Australia, which implies their competence, is juxtaposed. In example (13), the negative predicates 'cried' and 'started with envy and racism' along with the attributive adjective 'envious' reinforce the stereotypical images associated with the respective social actors. In example (14), a reference to Egyptians is made through the metaphor *'um adunyā*, which is a well-known phrase in the Arab world used to label Egypt, and its denotative meaning is 'the mother of the world', which implies Egypt's ancient history and achievements (Kotb, 2014; Burgat, 2020). The phrase *not 'um adunyā* which means 'not Egypt' clearly marginalises and excludes Egyptians. This metaphor, *not 'um adunyā*, is employed to symbolise the large numbers of Egyptian migrants in Saudi and to blatantly suggest their lack of belonging. As Van der Valk (2003) points out, irony and hyperbole are often employed in migrant-related discourse.

Like *mṣāryh* and *swāryh*, the anthroponym ‘*Yemeni*’ in (15) and (16) is also blatantly used as a slur when changed into ‘*abū yaman*’. This collective singular is a tool for discriminatory labelling. The usage of the term ‘*abū yaman*’ to denote Yemenis is similar to using the pejorative word *zaalamat*, derived from the Levantine word for man, *zalameh*, which is used by GCC citizens to label Levantine Arabs (Bristol-Rhys & Osella 2016). This labelling is strengthened with the help of various semiotic resources available on Twitter, such as videos and quoted tweets employed to report Yemenis’ crimes and unethical behaviours. In example (16), there is a blatant derogation of Yemenis via the term ‘*abū yaman*’ and exclusion in the deontic use of the modal ‘*should establish their projects in his homeland*’, which implies that they are not welcome, even as investors. The use of the auxiliary “*should*” in a deontic sense reveals a common trope in antimigrant discourse where migrants are told to go back to their countries if they criticise something or complain about a particular situation. In this example, the supposed solution to unemployment is to have Yemenis establish projects in Yemen. Such a solution presupposes an argument that prevails in the data, which is that Twitter users focus on one negative aspect while ignoring the reality within the capitalist system. Yemeni employees who allegedly steal Saudis’ jobs are getting a wage, which means they spend money that allows other Saudi businesses to sell them products and services, which in return benefits the Saudi economy. Yemen has been known as *alyaman asa ‘īd*. This compound nominal translates as “Happy Yemen” because of its “prosperity during the ancient Arabian civilisation” (Basso, 2016, p. 9). However, the predicated positive attribute ‘happy’ has been replaced by a negative one, which is *ata ‘īs* meaning ‘*the miserable*’ to sarcastically nominate Yemen. This word play adds to the debasing features attributed to Yemenis.

- (17) *Yemenis and Syrians spread like wildfire in firms, factories, restaurants, supermarkets and auto shops*

- (18) Look how **Egyptians** and foreigners view Saudis... (a video of an Egyptian migrant insulting Saudis).
- (19) We know by heart that there is no shame in doing any job, but we don't want to see an engineer who is unemployed, and you tell him to go sell tea because your job is taken by a **Lebanese**
- (20) #WeRefuseTheRecruitmentOf**EgyptianTeachers**. We are not that dependent and why would we recruit the stranger when the honest, dedicated national is available...

Several references are made through the strategy of nationalisation in the examples above. All are realised by means of nationyms such as ‘Yemenis’ ‘Syrians’ ‘Egyptians’ and ‘Lebanese’. The first two nominalisations are juxtaposed with a threatening natural disaster metaphor that is evoked by the negative verbal predicate ‘*spread like wildfire*’ in example (17), implying uncontrolled numbers of the two nationalities mentioned. Similarly, the nationym ‘Lebanese’ in (19) is negatively constructed by the predicate ‘*taken by a Lebanese*’, where ‘*a Lebanese*’ functions as a particularizing synecdoche here. It serves “stereotypical generalisation and essentialisation that refer in a levelling manner to a whole group of persons” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 57). An institutional injustice regarding the unemployment crisis is alluded to at the beginning of the tweet, where the user argues against the stereotypical image portrayed by some that Saudis refuse to take up blue-collar jobs, because they feel it is beneath them (Cordesman, 2003; Mababaya, 2001). The user claims that Saudis have always worked in blue-collar jobs and have recently replaced 1.5 million migrants who returned to their own countries (“Saudis Try Once ‘lowly’ Jobs”, 2018; Khanna, 2021). As Madhi & Barrientos (2003) argue, it is a matter of unfair low wages rather than the social stigma attached to vocational jobs that restrains Saudis from taking these jobs,

particularly in the private sector. Regardless of alluding to the incorrect stereotype often perpetuated by Saudi officials, the user has managed to blame Lebanese migrants for taking the jobs of his co-citizens through the predicate 'taken by a Lebanese'. In example (20), frustration with unemployment reveals itself in problematizing the other indirectly. However, although this problematisation is indirect, it can be inferred from the positive-self representation. The syntactic conjunction of the adjectives الأمين *al'amīn* 'the honest' and الحريص *alḥrīs* 'dedicated' to describe the self with a nation-related reference which is الوطني *alwaṭnī* 'the national' indirectly implies that Egyptian teachers lack the aforementioned qualities that nationals have. Moreover, Egyptian teachers are referred to by their profession and by the evocative xenonym الغريب *algharīb* 'the stranger', which serves to blatantly classify social actors as those who do not belong. Problematizing Egyptian migrants is also observed in example (18) where it is achieved visually, through a video included in the tweet where one Egyptian migrant says that he throws rubbish everywhere and he is only in the Gulf for the money and views all GCC citizens as uncivilised who should be exploited before their oil runs out. The unethical behaviour of one Egyptian migrant is utilised to draw general conclusions. Not only are all Egyptians accused of being racists and unethical, but also all foreigners as seen in the nomination 'foreigners' above. The implication is obvious, that this visual evidence is typical of all foreigners who are greedy and untrustworthy, just like the one in the video. The resolution is equally clear, that foreigners should not be employed.

(21) *A Syrian denies the role of Saudi, he even curses and denies the support they got, even Saudi students got kicked out for their sake, but they are ungrateful.*

(Facebook shows his profession is an engineer).

(22) *Bader Saleh, the Yemini, no degree, no valuable work experience. He used to work in coffeeshops, suddenly found himself in front of the camera to pass on to*

our youth his experience of flirting with girls

#BlacklistOfOffensiveMediaPersonalities (video attached of his stand-up bit).

While negative presentation based on nationyms is mostly generalised, as in examples (17), (18), (19) and (20) above, there are significant individualised references. This is mostly achieved with the help of the multimodal affordances of Twitter. In the two examples above, the two social actors are referred to by nationyms. Via screenshots of his Facebook account, the first specified social actor in example 21 is referred to as ‘*Syrian*’, but his proper name and profession (engineer) are revealed in his screen-captured Facebook page. He is evaluated negatively through verbal predicates allocating negative actions to him, such as ‘*curses*’ and ‘*denies*’, although there is no cursing involved in his criticism. The deictic *هؤلاء ha’ulā`a* ‘*these*’ is strategically used with the aim of generalizing the attributive adjective ‘*ungrateful*’ to all Syrians. In the Facebook post, the migrant was saying that he pays for schools and healthcare in Saudi. Gratitude to the host country and its people is widely expected of migrants and criticism or complaining is regarded as a sign of ingratitude (Jehonathan, 2022). The user portrays him and all Syrians as ungrateful because state schools in Saudi are free for both Saudis and non-Saudis. Although this is true, there is a ratio allocated for accepting non-Saudis in state schools. According to the Ministry of Education (n.d., para. 1), “Children of non-Saudis are accepted according to the percentage issued by Cabinet Resolution No. 65 of 5/3/1409 AH, which is set at 15% for the three stages.” This could force migrants to enrol their children in private schools, which they sometimes cannot afford (“Expatriate Children,” 2010). Although some nationalities are excluded from the aforementioned acceptance percentage, such as Yemenis and children of GCC citizens among other categories, this exception is not extended to Syrian nationals. However, according to the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2015, para. 1), “the state school system has accepted more than

100,000 Syrian students” in its efforts to support Syrians who come from a war-torn country and points out that free medical care is provided to Syrians who have been given legal residency status. This suggests that other Syrians, although treated free of charge in critical cases (Unified National Platform, n.d.-b), rely on the mandatory health insurance that is supposed to be provided by employers, but who sometimes fail to do so. Consequently, migrants including Syrians who are denied this right by their employers have to resort to formal channels provided by the government to file a complaint (Abdullah, 2021). According to the Council of Health Insurance (2017), it can take up to 15 working days to respond to complaints. In summary, although the Saudi government has offered free healthcare to many migrants in public hospitals, guaranteed the right of free healthcare for critical conditions to all and enacted a law that compels employers to cover their employees with health insurance, the realities are often overlooked. Employers sometimes do not insure their employees, or if they do, they deduct their insurance premium (Council of Health Insurance, 2017). The predicate *‘Saudi students got kicked out for their sake’* is a reference to the royal decree in 2012 that instructed Saudi universities to accept 3,000 Syrian students per year free of charge in sympathy with Syrians fleeing their country amidst the war launched by the Syrian regime (*“KSA allocates scholarships”*, 2010). The 3,000 places reserved for Syrian students are presumed to be at the expense of Saudi students, i.e. taking away their university places.

Regarding example (22) above, the usage of the proper name *‘Bader Saleh’* is immediately followed by his geographical origin, *‘the Yemeni’*. Bader Saleh is a Yemeni stand-up comedian born and raised in Saudi Arabia. He is delegitimised by the belittling predicates *‘no degree’*, *‘no valuable work experience’* and *‘used to work in coffeeshops’*, all of which are irrelevant to his stand-up comedy career. His negative construction is boosted with the hashtag that refers to him by his profession, *‘media personality’*. The assumed conservative nature of his/her audience let the user exploit the hashtag function to qualify him

through the adjective '*offensive*', along with the predicate '*passing on to our youth his experience in flirting with girls*', which functions as an accusation of him violating the social and religious norms of Saudi society. The emphasis on the affixed first-person plural possessive *-nā* in *shabābunā* 'our youth' to construct the in-group implicitly sets boundaries and excludes the other. It constructs Saleh as the enemy within (Fekete, 2004), one who is threatening Saudi culture through his comedy presented to Saudi youth. In both examples above, nationalisation is key to the construction of the respective social actors and serves in creating generalised views about them, which will consequently have many negative implications.

The Othering of Arab Migrants

Differences in threat perceptions are also evident. Arabs, except for Yemenis, are depicted as a threat to white-collar jobs. The socioeconomic position of Saudis is shown to be negatively affected by Arab migrants. In addition to being a threat to white-collar jobs, they are also consistently shown as corrupt and incompetent employees. Such claims are extensively generalised and employed in various ways in the referential and predicational strategies used to delegitimise them. Unlike Arabs, the problematisation of Burmese, Africans and South Asians is not job-related. Burmese' and Africans' illegality is highlighted and they are represented as criminals in addition to being a threat to the demographic future of the country, particularly to Hijaz province where they normally reside. This is evident in the hashtag *#AlHijazIdentity*, which is tagged in every tweet that refers to them. Similarly, South Asians' supposed criminality is also highlighted. South Asian workers like Bangladeshi migrants are often represented as a threat to the wellbeing of native citizens as they are mostly portrayed as criminals through videos and infographics. However, south Asians, particularly Indians who comprise the largest expatriate group in the country with a total of 4 million (Unified National Platform, 2021), are rarely mentioned in the data. As elaborated

above, this is because this group of migrants represents poorer foreigners who perform manual labour and mostly hold jobs that Saudis are reluctant to do. Thus, they are not targeted in the hashtag, which focuses on unemployment discourse.

According to Partrick (2009), there was a shift in the GCC states to recruit non-Arab workers instead of Arabs after the 1990 Gulf crisis. This is partly because non-Arab foreign workers are paid lower wages but most importantly because they belong to a different culture and thus are deemed politically safer. Similarly, Longva (2005) argues that foreign Arab workers are sometimes villainised because they share a language and a similar cultural tradition. Moreover, their white-collar jobs, such as teachers, media persons and university professors, mean they may pose an ideological threat to the GCC, whereas non-Arab workers are perceived as a threat to morality because of their different cultural-religious background (see section 2.1.2). Table 2, below, shows the differences between referential and predicational realisations related to Arabs and those related to Burmese, Africans and South Asians.

Table 2

Referential and predicational realisations related to Arab migrants and non-Arab migrants

Strategy	Non-Arabs	Arabs
Nomination	<p>مجموعة من العمالة الأفريقية المخالفة</p> <p><i>majmū‘ah min al‘amālh al‘afrīqyh almukhālīfh</i></p> <p>a group of illegal African labourers (realised by professionym, negative qualitonym and enthononym)</p>	<p>لبناني ومصري</p> <p><i>lubnānī wamaṣrī</i></p> <p>a Lebanese and an Egyptian (nationyms)</p>
	<p>وافد</p> <p><i>Wāfid</i></p> <p>an immigrant (actionym which portrays the man in the video in terms of movement, immigrated to Saudi Arabia)</p>	<p>كثير من المهندسين المصريين</p> <p><i>kathīr min almuhandisīn almaṣryīn</i></p> <p>many Egyptian engineers (nationym and professionym)</p>

	<p>البرماوي <i>albar̄māwyīn</i> Burmese (nationym)</p> <p>٣ أثيوبيين <i>3 'athyūbyīn</i> Three Ethiopians</p> <p>عمالة أجنبية <i>'amālh 'ajnabiyh</i> foreign labourers (actors identified through a professionym)</p>	<p>مصريين <i>maṣryīn</i> Egyptians (nationym)</p> <p>مصر <i>maṣr</i> Egypt (toponym used as metonym)</p> <p>أردني <i>'ur̄dunī</i> a Jordanian (nationym)</p> <p>وزير أردني <i>wazīr 'ur̄dunī</i> a Jordanian minister (professionym)</p> <p>المنظمين لدى مركز الملك فهد <i>almunaḍḥimīn lada markaz almalik fahad althaqāfī</i> stewards at King Fahad Cultural Centre (professionym)</p> <p>لبناني <i>Lubnānī</i> a Lebanese (nationym)</p>
<p>Predication</p>	<p>تستغل عداد المياه وتسرقها لغسيل السيارات <i>tastaghil 'adād almiyāh watasriquhā lighasīl asyārāt</i> exploit the water-supply pipe and steal from it to wash cars</p> <p>مخالف لنظام الإقامة والعمل ويعمل في نادي مكة الأدبي <i>mukhālif liniḍḥām al 'iqāmah wl 'amal wy 'amal fī nādī makah al 'adabī</i> violates labour and residency laws and works at Mecca literary club</p> <p>يتسترون على القادمين للحج والعمرة <i>yatasatarūn 'ala alqādimīn lilḥaj wl 'umrah</i> cover up for those who overstayed their Hajj and Umrah visas</p>	<p>خريج جامعة خردة! <i>khrīj jāmi 'ah khurdah</i> graduates of junk universities</p> <p>شهاداتهم مزوره <i>shahadatuhum muzawarh</i> have forged degrees</p> <p>موظفين في موارد بشرية <i>muwaḍḥafīn fī mawārid bashariyh</i> employed in the human resources department</p>

	<p>سرقوا مبلغ مالي منه عند خروجه من البنك <i>saraqū mablagh māli minh 'inda khurūjih min albank</i> stole a sum of money from him as he left the bank</p> <p>تزور البصمات لتفعيل شرائح الاتصال <i>tuzawir albaṣmāt litaf'īl sharā'ih allitiṣāl</i> faking fingerprints to activate SIM cards</p> <p>تقوم بأعمال تخريبية بأحد الشركات ... <i>taqūm bia 'a māl takhrībyah bi'ahad aṣharikāt</i> performing acts of vandalism in one of the companies...</p> <p>قذره <i>qadhīrah</i> filthy</p>	<p>تحتكر الصيدلة لدينا <i>taḥtakir aṣydlh lādīnā</i> monopolise our pharmacies</p> <p>يعرض وظيفة للأردنيين في بترورابغ <i>ya 'aruḍ waḍḥīfah lil 'urḍunyīn fī btrūrābigh</i> offers jobs for Jordanians at Pertorabigh</p> <p>يعلن عن وظائف للأردنيين في السعودية <i>yu 'alin 'an waḍḥā'if lil 'urḍunyīn fī asu 'ūdiyah</i> announces jobs for Jordanians in Saudi Arabia</p> <p>جميعهم من الجنسية السورية <i>jamī' aūhum min aljīnsyah asūryah</i> are all Syrian nationals</p> <p>براتب ٩٠٠ ألف <i>birātīb 900.00</i> with a salary of 900.00</p>
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While almost all Arab migrants are blamed for unemployment, Yemenis are an exception. They are highly problematised in the data and almost exclusively portrayed as criminals. In terms of referentiality, the main reference to Yemenis is made in the form of nationyms, realised through the singular and plural collectives ' *Yemeni*' and/or ' *Yemenis*'. Multimodality plays a vital role in reporting their crimes.

(23) *The one who stabbed turned out to be a **Yemeni** resident...*

(24) ***Four Yemenis** formed a gang to steal from Muslims praying in mosques.*

Nominalisations denoting Yemenis in example (23) combine the nationym ' *Yemeni*' with the spatialising anthroponym *muqīm* ' *resident*' in reporting the stabbing, and a video of

the incident was included in the tweet to further boost the negative image already evoked. In example (24), Yemenis are also nominated in the form of aggregation. The definite quantifier *'Four Yemenis'* is used here once again to report a crime, with CCTV footage included. Using 'nationyms' serves to stigmatise them more than others, particularly by evoking the stereotype that Yemeni migrants are criminals. The prepositional phrase *'from Muslims praying in mosques'* fuels the anti-migrant sentiment against Yemenis by highlighting the fact that such crimes were committed at sacred sites, where they as Muslims themselves should have been deterred by the holiness of the mosques. While certain ethnic groups or nationalities are usually associated with specific crimes, Yemenis are held responsible for all sorts of crimes, such as drug dealing, sexual harassment, murder and fraud. The following is a sample of the negative predicates assigned to Yemenis:

- *loaded a truck with donkeys suspected to be distributed as meat to restaurants.*
- *killed and stole 36 million...*
- *are at the top of the list for drug dealing...*
- *who sexually assaulted a female citizen.*

Ethnification

While the dominant reference to Arab migrants whether collectively or individually is based on their geographical origin, as shown above, Arab migrants are referred to collectively across the data by means of ethnification through the ethnonym *Arab*. However, Arabs were not represented as a homogenous group. Referential strategies served in breaking up Arabs into several reproduced Arab identities. Such an observation is in line with KhosraviNik & Sarkhoh's (2017) findings. When investigating Arabism and anti-Persian sentiments online, they found that "Ahwaz Arab", "Sunni Arab", "Shiite Arab" and "Gulf Arab" were discursively distinguished from a general reference to "Arabs" to achieve a binary opposition

of “good Arab” versus “bad Arab” (p. 3624). Although Saudis are Arab, they constantly distinguish themselves from the ‘bad Arab’ in a similar dichotomy of the good versus bad Arab found in KhosraviNik & Sarkhoh (2017). The following examples highlight how Arabs are nominated in the data.

- (25) *This is the **Arabists'** views of us!! Our vision should be as far away as possible from... [there is a screenshot of an Egyptian worker's Facebook page calling Saudis a 'bunch of losers', they 'have no history', 'crawled out of their burrows in the last 30 years', 'faggots' and 'Nazis' among other similar Facebook posts].*
- (26) *#**ArabistsOfRemnantOfColonialism** get upset if we say
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*
- (27) ***90% of Arabs** working in Saudi are less competent than our female and male youth...*
- (28) *Saudi people are not to be blamed for their hatred towards **Arabs of the north** and Yemenis*
- (29) *this is yesterday at #Alkhobar seaside promenade. One female from **Arabs of the North** stood up and let her boy relieve himself on the palm tree.*
- (30) *The Sudanese are still the most loyal and just of all our **Arab brothers**, of course regarding the **Arabs of the North**, I don't really need to tell you about their love for Saudi Arabia.*
- (31) *Yes, we support the slogan Saudi for Saudis but that doesn't allow you to assault those who work legally. Be they **our Arab brothers** or non-Arabs.*
- (32) *to **our Arab brothers**, our fear for our land and our entitlement to its wealth is not an assault on you. We wish you safety and prosperity in your homelands*
- (33) *What I have noticed is that **some Arab brothers** look down on us as Saudis...*

(34) *Except for #TheEgyptian and #TheSudanese, **the rest of the Arabs** are spiteful, corrupt and thieves... [multiple screen captures of Arab online groups insulting Saudis]*

(35) *30 million **jaraby** [despicable] foreigners...*

(36) *Billions of aids for the **jarab** [despicable] states ...*

(37) *I wish that my government would expel the **jarab** [despicable] **Arabs***

Historically, the term Arabs of the North refers to the Alisma'ilyah or Aladnaniyah tribes whose homes are in the north of the country of Yemen and include Hijaz and Najd, both parts of Saudi Arabia now and beyond that to the outskirts of Sham (Levantine countries) and Iraq (Al-Fayoumi, 1994). However, the term has changed profoundly in terms of its geographical and historical origin. Nowadays, on social media generally and in this hashtag in particular, it is used to refer to people from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Egypt. Al-Sheikh (2016) argues that this term is usually used to refer to the aforementioned Arabs who look down on Arabs on the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, negative connotations implicit in the term have been imposed. They antagonise Arab migrants by posting screenshots of some of the social media posts posted by some Arab migrants working in Saudi Arabia, in which they insult Saudis and talk about them in a derogatory manner, as seen in the video in example (18) earlier. Also, example number (25) is loaded with screenshots of Facebook posts by some Arabs calling Saudis a '*bunch of losers*', they '*have no history*' and '*crawled out of their burrows in the last 30 years*', among other insulting comments. The Egyptian in the video, along with the insulting posts in example (25) and across the data, perpetuates the stereotypical image of an ignorant, narrow-minded GCC citizen who is undeserving of his/her wealth. They seem to adopt the orientalist narrative of Arabs as camel-riding uncivil individuals, only to apply it to GCC citizens exclusively. The issue with

modern Arabs as Massad (2007) puts it is that they want “to prove to all Arabs and all Europeans that Arabs (or at least those among them not inhabiting the Gulf) are just like Europeans in civilisational and cultural terms, even though Europeans insist on treating Arabs as less than they” (p. 417). Non-Gulf Arabs’ view of Gulf-Arabs as inferior has always existed. The renowned Syrian poet and diplomat, Nizar Qabbani, portrayed Gulf-Arab men in pejorative terms in his poem 'Love and Petroleum' written in 1958; it starts with ‘When will you understand? O, unbridled camel of the desert whose face is nibbled by smallpox...’, and he goes on to write ‘Your petroleum with which your cloak reeks, your cars which you lay, numerous’, with another mention of camels at the end of the poem and references to their pre-oil poverty in ‘cracked feet’ and ‘holes in your tent’ (Loya, 1975). Gulf-Arab men are thus shamed for their pre-oil poverty, but also for their post-oil wealth as they are portrayed as undeserving rich, as seen in ‘will you understand you bloated?’. Saudi symbols of heritage and culture, such as camels, tents and the cloak, are often ridiculed, as seen in the poem and in several other posts across the data set. According to Loya (1975), Nizar assumed a female identity in the poem shown above. Loya (1975) provides the following quote in which Nizar justifies using a female voice in many of his poems by arguing that they are unable to speak for themselves in those societies: “The Near East needs a man like me to put on women's clothes and borrow her eyelashes and bracelets in order to write about her” (p. 492). However, I argue that by being presented with no agency, Gulf-Arab women in the poem *Love and Petroleum* are also in a way treated pejoratively. The poem is thus not just racist but also sexist as the poet completely ignores female agency and presents himself as the saviour of women, “The Near East needs a man like me”. There are also other poems written by Nizar containing similar pejorative references to Gulf-Arab men, such as the following: “O Palestine, you are still thirsty, while the desert sleeps in the possession of oil, the cloaks are all of silk, and the nights are cheap and given to lust” (Al-Shahham, 1989, p. 260). Al-

Shahham (1989) points out that while Nizar criticises all Arab men, he is particularly harsh in his criticism of Gulf-Arab men. He tends to portray them as filthy rich who allegedly waste what he calls “oil money” on women and material possessions while failing the Palestinian cause (Al-Shahham, 1989), an accusation frequently used against GCC states. Again, the culture of GCC states is reduced to backwardness and corruption.

More recently, similar derogatory remarks came from Lebanon’s Foreign Minister, Charbel Wehbe, who was a guest on a TV show along with a Saudi political analyst. During the show, he referred to the Saudi guest as a Bedouin, saying "I am from Lebanon, one of the Bedouin people is insulting me”, to which the kingdom responded by summoning the Lebanese ambassador to strongly condemn the offensive comments (Saudi Arabia summons, 2021). The multiple screenshots of webpages with videos and other posts by Arabs insulting Saudis function as a reminder of former hostilities, though such videos and screenshots seem to indicate that the hostilities linger on. Reminders of geopolitical tensions with Arab countries are established in tweets that discuss Arab migrants. Their aim is to instigate hatred and hostility towards them, so that calls for their deportation seem justified.

The negative lexical items employed in constructing Arabs in the examples above are either exclusionary or inclusionary. On the one hand, the reference '*Arabists*' is exclusionary as it completely denies the 'Arabness' of the respective social actors. Similarly, the reference '*remnant of colonialism*' is a derogatory one that refers to the colonial era of some Arab states. On the other hand, a more sympathetic reference to Arab migrants occurs when they are referred to in terms of a kinship relationship, which is realised through a first person reference to '*our Arab brothers*'. This more sympathetic reference can be best explained by Craig’s (2007, p. 3) statement that ‘Arab unity is dead, but also alive’. He points out that Saudi airports have two categories, one for Saudis and the other for non-Saudis, 'yet even there in conversation the word for foreigner (*ajnabi*) is applied hesitantly to the citizens of

another Arab state' (p. 3). While there is an assumed shared 'Arabness' in the references '*our Arab brothers*' and '*some Arab brothers*', Arabism in the Gulf is primarily displayed through financial assistance and support for the Palestinian cause, with the concept being limited to a common language (Partrick, 2009). In addition, there is a clear emphasis on the existing territory of the separate states, rather than the ambiguities of an Arab or Islamic 'nation' (umma)' (Partrick, 2012, p. 59) (see section 2.3).

To soften the impact of his/her statement, the user in example (33) employs hedging, through the quantifying determiner '*some*' and the kinship relationym '*brother*', in combination with the ethnonym '*Arab*' in the phrase '*some Arab brothers*'. Negative predications are assigned to '*the rest of the Arabs*' in (34) to make a generalisation that, except for the Egyptians and the Sudanese, Arabs are '*spiteful, corrupt and thieves*'. The last three examples contain a derogatory reference, *jarab*, which rhymes with Arabs. It is employed by means of word play on the proper name Arab. Its denotative meaning is 'an itchy skin condition called scabies', but its connotative meaning is 'despicable'. In addition to referentiality, a series of negative verbal clauses assigned to Arabs are contrasted with the positive portrayal of the self in the following tweet:

(38) *They **insult** us and our country*
*They **harassed** us and **harmed** us, and we put up with them*
Refugees, we were generous with them and welcomed them
*All of this and they are **ungrateful***

The construction of us versus them is potent in this tweet. Negative portrayals of Arab migrants along with the negative adjective '*ungrateful*', which is used significantly in the data in reference to Arab migrants, are juxtaposed with a positive construction of 'us', as in the verbal clauses '*put up*' and '*welcomed*' in addition to the evaluative adjective '*generous*'. This

contrast helps in legitimizing the hashtag and delegitimizing Arab migrants. Arab migrants are represented as guests who have abused Saudis' generosity by the following negative predicates: *'insult'*, *'harass'* and *'harm'*. This hospitality and ingratitude logic are notable in the data and are evoked by users through Twitter affordances, such as posting videos of migrants stealing, littering or insulting Saudis. Wagner & Childs' (2006) qualitative study of skilled migrants', public-sector recruiters' and skilled migrant placement officers' experiences with the public sector in Australia revealed that migrants are expected to be grateful for being given the opportunity to live in Australia and should not complain but rather appreciate any job offer regardless of being over-qualified for it. Similarly, Jehonathan (2022) demonstrates that some migrants in Australia hold back from reporting the racism they encounter because of this sense of gratitude. Derrida (2001) emphasises the conditionality of the hospitality offered to migrants, as guests are not granted the full rights that citizens enjoy, and the social and political realities contradict the hospitality metaphor that essentially entails extended generosity rather than conditionality (Rosello, 2001).

7.1.4 Militarisation

Negative-other presentation is partially achieved through the topological strategy of militarisation. Militarisation is used here as a shared field of reference to refer to migrants and qualify them. Thus, metaphor will be the focal point in the analysis of militarisation as it occurs in the data with appreciable frequency. The verb *iħtala*, which translates as 'seized' or 'occupied' for instance, is notably used in the data as its linguistic realisations are often found in both nomination, e.g. *muħtal* 'occupier', and predication. Naturally, all highlighted metaphorical expressions were assigned the corresponding source domain of war. As argued by Arcimaviciene & Baglama (2018), the usage of the war metaphor in the examples below and by the media generally can be attributed to the fact that it is "deeply entrenched in the

collective unconscious” as thus sounds familiar to the audience and does not require any effort on their part to decode the meaning (p. 5). Conventionalised metaphors such as the war metaphor “can still be considered as the most ideologically grounded one” (Arcimaviciene & Baglama, 2018, p. 5). Santa Ana (2002) argues that “when alternative metaphors are rarely used to understand a social issue, then a single dominant metaphor becomes naturalised, that is, it is taken to be the one way to think about the issue” (p. 53).

(39) *There are neighbourhoods in Riyadh and Jeddah **colonised** by foreigners and woe to any Saudi who thinks about entering those neighbourhoods...*

(40) *...at the hands of foreign gangs that gave themselves the right to exclude and harass Saudis and **wage a systematic war** against them by all kinds of means and in their own country.*

(41) ***The incursion of foreigners** in such numbers into the private and public sectors is tantamount to the **colonisation** and depletion of our economy.*

The verbal phrase ‘*colonised by foreigners*’ is the lexical choice employed by the user to refer to a place with a majority of foreign residents. The basic meaning of the word *musta ‘marah* ‘colonised’, from the root *ista ‘mara* ‘colonise’, is subject to foreign power or ruled by foreign settlers. Similarly, the verbal phrase *shana ħarb* ‘waged a war’ in example (40), which according to the dictionary means to conduct a raid or an invasion or to launch an attack on someone/something, just like *musta ‘marah* in example (39), clearly corresponds to the source domain of war. The metaphorical expression *musta ‘marah* above evaluates migrants negatively by evoking feelings of fear towards them. This metaphor clearly implies huge numbers of those migrants who are constructed as a threat. The threat is described in ‘*woe to any Saudi who thinks about entering those neighbourhoods*’. This statement leaves little room for speculation as it alludes to migrants’ violent nature or criminality, which is

directed toward Saudis in the tweet. This amoral image evoked by this migration as an invasion metaphor, which is a subset of the domain of war (Santa Ana, 2002), ignores local norms of spatial segregation in the GCC. The majority of migrants, particularly from South Asia, are spatially, and thus socially, segregated and live far away from city centres, as they cannot afford better housing (Hamza, 2015). Examples (40) and (41) focus on unemployment and institutional exclusion in the private sector. The blame is shifted and reduced to the mere existence of migrant workers. This exclusion is evoked by the strong emotional appeal of the metaphor *shana ħarb* ‘wage a war’, which along with the verbs ‘exclude’ and ‘harass’ gives legitimacy to the dichotomy ‘us’ as Saudis versus migrant workers. Similarly, the topos of number and the topos of burden are manifested in example (41) through the metaphorical expressions *tawaghul*, from the root *tawaghāl* ‘to penetrate deeply into a region’, and *isti‘mār*, from the root *ista‘mara* ‘to colonise’, in the phrases ‘*the incursion of foreigners in such numbers*’ and ‘*colonialisation and depletion of our economy*’, respectively. Both metaphorical expressions suggest uncontrolled movement and create feelings of panic and urgency to fight back; such evoked feelings stem from the images created by this war metaphor, in the sense that the in-group mirrors the feelings of panic that people being invaded during a war normally experience. The phrase ‘*incursion of foreigners in such numbers*’ creates a sense of threat and emergency through quantification; however, migrants are quantified in an ambiguous hyperbolic manner in ‘*such numbers*’. Moreover, the metaphorically used noun ‘*colonialisation*’ in which migrants are constructed as a threat to the Saudi economy is validated by providing official statistics of foreigners’ remittances, which suggests that they do not benefit the Saudi economy, but rather their home countries, and thus measures should be taken against them.

(42) *The audacity of the Egyptian, just a driver and crowding out Saudis at Careem⁸ and tarnishing their reputation in their homeland!!! I can only imagine what the situation is like in the private sector and the **ferocious war** that Saudis are **fighting** against these **colonisers**.*

Another reference to private sector issues is made here (see section 2.2). The user starts by referring to the video included in the tweet, in which there is an Egyptian Careem driver, recorded by the passenger, advising her to avoid Saudi Careem drivers, accusing them of sexual harassment. The user goes on to claim that since such inappropriate behaviour (sexual harassment accusations against Saudis) is coming from a foreign driver here, then Saudis must be facing more harassment from foreigners in the private sector, where they hold higher and executive positions. The negative construction of the other here is once again achieved metaphorically through the generic reference *musta 'mirīn 'colonisers'* to define them in a primarily antagonistic way. The use of the deictic pronoun *ha'ulā'a 'these'* reinforces their otherness and the attributive adjective *ḍarūs 'ferocious'* is used to intensify this metaphorical war when referring to migrants working in the private sector. The video is used to make generalisations and suggests the necessity to expel migrants, particularly those holding executive positions based on the video that proves their prejudice against Saudis; and it fuels anti-migrant sentiment through employed migrants as an invasion metaphor, which not only delegitimises them but also justifies any measures taken against them.

(43) *I was **exiled**, and the strangers **settled** in my country, and they **destroyed** all my beloved things.*

⁸ Careem is a rideshare company. It is a subsidiary of the American company Uber.

(44) *And the Saudis belong to Saudi Arabia. The sons of the kingdom are deprived of its resources. And the foreigner became the beneficiary. He is out and about, and the son of the country, the rights holder and the landowner, is not only marginalised but also deprived. They **took over jobs and looted the wealth of our land**. Even at the Masjid al-Haram (Holly Mosque in Mecca) they disturbed us. We became miserable regardless of our entitlement.*

In tandem with the example above illustrated, migrants are predicated with attributions that reinforce their presumed threat through military metaphors. The highlighted metaphorical attributions, *nufīt* ‘exiled’ from the root *nafā*, *istawṭana* ‘settled’ and *damarū* ‘destroyed’ from the root *damara* in example (43) and *iḥṭalū* ‘took over’ jobs and *nahabū* ‘looted’ the wealth of our land, all contribute to the construction of the metaphor immigration as invasion. The hyperbolic statement in (43) has intertextual relations to a very popular emotional Arabic song. The presuppositions of those metaphorically structured views are explicit, that migrants are a threat like an invading army that destroys a country and thus must be dealt with. This portrayal of migrants as a threatening invading force is strengthened by the appeal to people's emotions in the attached video that shows photos of the city of Mecca filled with rubbish, while simultaneously the same line *'I was exiled and the strangers settled in my country, and they destroyed all my beloved things'* is being played on repeat. The references to Mecca in the videos in (43) and (44) have ideological significance as they blatantly delegitimise migrants by implying their presumed true nature to be destructive and to have no respect even for the most sacred place for Muslims. Example (44) seems to indirectly blame the government and its institutions for unemployment issues by tapping into a nativist job discourse and putting emphasis on lexical choices such as *'the sons of the kingdom'*, *'the son of the country'*, *'the rights holder'* and *'the landowner'*. The ‘us’ versus

‘them’ comparison in this tweet portrays Saudis as victims at the hands of the system and migrant invaders who are negatively constructed through the metaphorical expressions ‘*took over*’ and ‘*looted*’.

7.2 Representing the Other Within

The social actors involved in this category include those excluded based on a nativist principle, naturalised Saudis, whether cultural and political elites or ordinary people, and those considered to be native Saudis whether elites or ordinary citizens who defend migrants.

Belonging to Saudi Arabia is not defined by legal citizenship. It is rather based on a nativist logic. Guia (2016) argues that nativism “always divided insiders, who belonged to the nation, from outsiders who were in it but not of it” (p. 9). Similarly, in his typology of imagined enemies, Mudde (2007) differentiates between four types of enemies. First are enemies within the nation and the state (native Saudis defending migrants in this thesis). Second, those outside the nation but within the state. The third category is those within the nation but outside the state, and finally those outside both the nation and the state. While ethnic minorities are the usual suspects in the category of within the state, outside the nation, in other contexts, it is the immigrant community (Mudde, 2007); and in the context of the data at hand, it is naturalised citizens as the definition of the enemy within differs in each context. For example, (Fekete 2004) advances that despite being European by birth or by naturalisation, Muslims are the enemy within because of their adherence to Islam, among other factors.

7.2.1 Naturalised Citizens

The most prominent category of reference found in the data related to the construction of naturalised citizens is the attributive adjective *mujannas* (singular) and *mujannasīn* (plural), which is frequently used in the data to mean ‘naturalised’. However, the correct

Arabic term in the dictionary that translates as ‘naturalised’ is *mutajannis* (singular) and *mutajannisīn* (plural). I believe the choice of words is due to a lack of knowledge of Arabic, rather than being a deliberate choice, and *tajnīs* is the equivalent to ‘naturalisation’ (Omar, 2008). The term *mujannas* or *mujannasīn* is problematic as it is employed as an exclusionary term to a large extent. Moreover, under the new penal system, addressing others with racist remarks such as "naturalised", "slave" or "remains of pilgrims" can result in imprisonment and/or a heavy fine (Shar, 2022).

(45) *Look for the person who came up with this idea, you will find him to be naturalised, son of a migrant on a deck's ship. The truth is that if such a bill comes into force...*

(46) *The dominant naturalised lobby work for their countries of origin and its people...*

Through political actionalisation realised mainly by the politonym *mujannas* 'naturalised', a narrative of belonging is created and perpetuated. In this narrative, the real people are defined and rights and access to decision-making are constantly advised to be granted to this group based solely on that imagined definition. Such a definition of who the real Saudi people are automatically suggests the existence of an internal other, in this case, Saudis by naturalisation. The reference naturalised implies connotations of belonging elsewhere, and the negative connotation is reinforced by the predicated attributes that follow, which are essentially accusations of not being loyal to Saudi Arabia but instead constituting “a fifth column of their kin state” (Mudde, 2007, p. 72) among other negative stereotypes such as the ones found in the following predicates:

- *work for their country of origin and its people*
- *provide jobs for them and exclude the Saudis*

- *view Saudi as just a bank to pump their pockets*
- *they wish us homelessness and the demolition of our state and their archive is a witness*
- *they occupy positions in which they control the future of the public*

In example number (45), there is a screenshot of official news that the Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Investment is considering allowing full foreign ownership of businesses. The user responds by claiming that this proposed bill must have been suggested by a naturalised Saudi since it will contribute to more marginalising of Saudis in the market. The reference *mujannas* 'naturalised' is followed immediately by another exclusionary one, through the relational anthroponym '*son of a migrant*'. The metaphor realised in the prepositional phrase '*on a ship's deck*' further alienates those Saudis by the constant reminders of their origin. The reference '*The dominant naturalised lobby*' along with the predications listed above villainises naturalised Saudis, who are depicted as taking advantage of the country's hospitality and harassing native Saudis in the workplace. Accusations of lack of belonging are supported with the statement '*their archive is a witness*', which is using a handful of stories, videos or tweets in which some naturalised Saudis have actually expressed vile thoughts towards Saudi to rationalise and generalise prejudices against them all.

(47) *Writer Munira Al-Meshkhes:*

*All businessmen **who acquired citizenship** send half of their...*

While referred to by means of professionalisation '*businessmen*', they are immediately labelled as naturalised through the evaluative attribution realised in the form of the relative clause '*who acquired citizenship*'. They are quantified as '*all*' to generalise the following negative predicates within the tweet:

- send half of their fortune to their country

- their resources are allocated to their countries of origin and not to us
- only their compatriots work for them
- they only employ Saudis in low-level jobs

*(48) She said nothing but the truth, for **the majority of those naturalised**, their wealth goes to their country of origin*

While some of the accusations made above regarding exclusionary practices against Saudis in the private sector are valid, these practices are not confined to firms owned by naturalised businessmen as the tweets imply. Exclusionary practices seem to be a by-product of private sector policies (see section 2.2.1). Goby (2015) demonstrates that within the Gulf states, it is unfortunately the norm in the private sector to hire foreign labour from a single country, which paves the way for favouritism based on national origin, and this contributes to exclusionary practices affecting locals in the Gulf. However, migrants sustaining ties with their country of origin are often criticised. It is deemed a threat to the economy and national security, and most importantly they are constructed as disloyal and economically unproductive (Bouras, 2014). In this tweet, there is a link between naturalised businessmen spending their money abroad and the poor economic conditions of unemployed nationals, while disregarding the economic realities and issues within the private sector in Saudi. While those of foreign origin are accused of spending their money in their home countries, they are at other times accused of being untrustworthy for not staying in their home country to develop it, such contradictory statements are features of stereotypes in general (Riggins, 1997). The prominent reference *mujannasīn* (plural) in example (48) above is also juxtaposed with the quantifier 'the majority of naturalised' to accentuate the prejudice created against the identified group, which in this case is that they have no sense of belonging to Saudi Arabia.

(49) *Naturalised of Yemeni descent and naturalised of Egyptian descent are demanding population control of Saudis!!*

(50) *there are **many naturalised** people who are leaders in the Muslim brotherhood movement*

(51) *#AlHijazIdentity*

#SaudiArabiaforTheSaudis

*O advocates of naturalisation! **This naturalised woman** colluded with her compatriot to kill her husband, flagrantly in the month of Ramadan.*

Shame on you!

Similarly, in example (49) there is a screenshot of two tweets by Saudi journalists discussing population control of Saudis. The prominent reference *mujannas* (male) and *mujannasah* (denoting a female naturalised citizen) are combined with the prepositional phrases ‘*of Yemeni descent*’ and ‘*of Egyptian descent*’, respectively. Both phrases discursively alienate the two social actors mentioned by associating them with their countries of origin. Discussing Saudi matters like fertility rates among other things is frowned upon if discussed by naturalised citizens, mainly because they are seen as outsiders and as not having Saudi Arabia’s best interest at heart, and because they are expected only to be grateful and passive, unlike their counterparts, the real Saudis who can be strong and active (Bouras, 2014). Boréus (2013) argues that references such as ‘Swedish citizens with a foreign background’ confirm that ‘it takes more than citizenship to become Swedish’ (p. 299). The prominent reference *mujannasīn* in example (50) is juxtaposed with the quantifier ‘*many naturalised*’,

which is accompanied by the negative predication '*are leaders in the Muslim brotherhood movement*', which blatantly suggests negative connotations of treason.⁹

In example (51), *mujannasah*, a reference used to denote the woman mentioned in the screen-captured news report about the incident, is immediately followed by the predicated negative attribute '*colluded with her compatriot to kill her husband*'. The act of killing is accompanied by the adverbial phrase '*flagrantly in the month of Ramadan*', which instrumentalises an argument that resonates with the intended audience. Legitimation becomes successful when it speaks to a certain set of socially constructed values and norms that the recipients have; and if a legitimation strategy does not have or does not reference these values and norms, then it will probably fail (Bennett, 2022). Ramadan is a holy time for Muslims, for spiritual discipline as they fast, do good deeds and are generous, whereas '*this naturalised woman*' was not even deterred by the holiness of this month. The act of killing is reduced to her being a naturalised citizen.

(52) *Mr. Khalifa Al-dossary is an example of a loyal citizen. There is no comparison between one who is concerned for the homeland and the citizen, and those who promote with articles and questionnaires and appear on screens to naturalise their fellow foreigners...*

⁹ Al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn, which translates as the Muslim Brotherhood, is a religiopolitical organization that was founded in 1928 in Egypt and grew rapidly to have affiliations outside Egypt in Sudan, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and North Africa. After politicizing the movement in the late 1930s, several assassinations and violent incidents were linked to it. In the 1970s, the movement rejected violence and later started to present itself as a political party that adhered to Islamic doctrines and participated in parliamentary elections in Egypt. However, in 2014, countries including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates officially designated the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization.

(53) ...and let us not forget **the ones** whom we found after naturalisation
*challenging our homeland by participating in hostile campaigns against the
 kingdom ...*

In example (52), the highlighted deictic word *ulāa'ika*, which translates as 'those', is a collectivised reference to an antagonised group which is naturalised citizens, in particular to Shura Council members who are naturalised Saudis. Van Dijk (1984) argues that demonstratives of distance such as 'those' are one of the prominent markers for establishing a binary categorisation of us vs them. Jarbou (2010) demonstrates that the referentiality of demonstratives in Arabic 'depends on the perceptions and intentions of [the interactants and is not merely stimulated by the actual distance between [the] interactants and referents. (p. 3080). Similarly, Rabadi (2016) points out that demonstratives in Arabic are ambiguous words; their meaning can be defined according to their context.

The usage of the distal Arabic pronoun *ulāa'ika* implies othering in this context. There is an explicit dichotomous portrayal of patriotic Saudis and traitorous Saudis in this tweet, as this example makes a comparison between Shura Council members who are naturalised Saudis and another Shura Council member, Al-dossary, who by virtue of his surname (a prominent Saudi tribe) is recognised as a native Saudi. A video of Al-dossary discussing the difficulties pensioners face with the increasing cost of living is compared with naturalised Shura Council members who often call for the naturalisation of the children of Saudi women married to non-Saudis. The demands of Al-dossary to raise retirees' pensions is seen as a patriotic act and attributed to the fact that he is a native Saudi rather than any other quality Al-dossary possesses or any other factor. Naturalised Shura members' demands are seen as a conspiracy to bring more foreigners into the country rather than an attempt to grant Saudi women the same rights that Saudi men married to non-Saudi women enjoy. Naturalised

citizens still carry the stigma of being outsiders, even though they are legally Saudis, as seen in the predicate *'to naturalise their fellow foreigners'*. In example (53), naturalised citizens are predicated by the negative attribution *'challenging our homeland by participating in hostile campaigns against the kingdom'*, which as seen in examples (50) and (52) above carries negative connotations of treason.

(54) *#TubaTerekli a Turkish who acquired Saudi citizenship and works*

(55) *Al Amoudi and his like, what is their charitable work in the kingdom? And how many Saudis has he hired or granted scholarships to? Or they just flood the country with...*

(56) *Suhura council member of Arab of the North /Thoraya Obaid ... her concern is to naturalise the children of naturalised women....*

(57) *The aim of such organised campaigns for population control of Saudis is to make Saudi Arabia's fertility rate reach 1.3. That's what the naturalised Badkook and his cohort wish for...*

(58) *...confronting all the suspicious calls of naturalised people, such as the Uzbek rat who wants to open up our country to all vagabonds and mercenaries. We say to everyone covetous of our land and its resources #SaudiArabiaForThe Saudis, you rascal.*

Negative portrayals of naturalised citizens are mostly generalised, and it is the discursive qualification of the phenomenon of naturalisation itself that is dominant in the data. Nonetheless, a significant number of individualised references exist. In the examples above, nominalisation is realised by the proper names Al Amoudi, Badkook, Tuba Terekli and Thoraya Obaid. Badkook is also referred to by the attributive adjective *'the naturalised'*, while Thoraya Obaid is referred to using the political professionym *'Suhura Council*

member', and her place of origin is emphasised to delegitimise her political demands for naturalizing children born to Saudi mothers. The animal metaphor '*the Uzbek rat*' is used to refer to a particular Saudi journalist, and his place of origin is used as an attributive adjective in a demeaning metaphorical reference. The othering of the businesswoman Tuba Terekli is achieved through the nationym 'Turkish' and reinforced by the relative clause '*who acquired citizenship*'. It is worth noting that in this context, surnames and sometimes names are markers of non-belonging. The name Tuba is known to be a Turkish name. Even for those born in Saudi, their toponymic anthroponyms, such as their surnames that denote a place of origin as in '*Terekli*', mean their exclusion as Saudis. The fact that the parents of some naturalised citizens migrated to Saudi soon after its foundation or even earlier still has no bearing on their status. Their identities, morals and loyalty are always called into question merely because of their origin.

Noun phrases '*his likes*' and '*his cohort*' in '*Al Amoudi and his likes*' and '*Badkook and his cohort*' are instrumentalised to create conspiracy narratives against the natives, 'the real people'. The constant attacks on some of the previously mentioned public figures can be explained by their political mobilisation. Mudde (2007) stresses that minority mobilisation causes certain groups to be targeted more than others. He goes on to explain that Chinese minorities in Europe, although they have lived there for centuries, are associated with crimes and are not fully assimilated, yet they are never targeted because of "their low level of political mobilisation and the absence of collective claim making on the majority population" (p. 73). The aforementioned social actors, particularly Badkook, the Saudi journalist, and the Shura Council, actively discuss political and social issues in Saudi, and thus are often attacked. While Thoraya Obaid is criticised for calling for the naturalisation of the children of Saudi mothers, the businessman, Al Amoudi, is attacked for his appearance in a video in which he talks about his charitable work in his hometown, Hadhramaut, a governorate of

Yemen, and granting some of the youth there scholarships. This again shows that maintaining ties with one's home country may be viewed as sign of lack of assimilation and even treason, as discussed in example (47) earlier.

7.2.2 *Saudis Defending Migrants*

Devlin and Grant (2017) examined Irish Facebook users' comments on an article concerning the 2016 refugee crisis in Europe, they found that individuals who sympathise with refugees, migrants and asylum seekers are portrayed as naive by ethnonationalists. They attribute “almost traitor-like qualities” to them for defending the out-group and they are thought of as people “removed from reality and whose actions will lead to the erosion of Irish and European values” (p. 611). In line with their findings, many are reluctant to defend migrants referred to with the hashtag because of similar accusations. Not only would defending migrants online or calling out the hashtag racist supposedly make one a traitor, but also staying neutral by saying nothing causes one to be perceived as endorsing those 'corrupt foreigners' against one's own people. Overall, those who sympathise with migrants, whether from the cultural elites or commoners in the data, are discursively constructed as naive or traitors.

(59) *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis. Every time it stops trending, we are supposed to make it trend again. **Those** who say racism, swear to Allah it is not racism you **foreigners' slave**, you, and him! This is a right we are demanding. Later, if your son, daughter, sister, brother, or even you couldn't find a job, and your boss is a foreigner who is bossy, you will know what we mean. **Stupid retards***

(60) *Look how Egyptians and foreigners view Saudi. This video is dedicated to **kowtowers to foreigners and those who defend them** [there is a video of an Egyptian man insulting GCC citizens]*

- (61) *The patriotism of the Sudanese brothers has done justice to the Saudi citizen, while there are **traitors** inside programmed by Arab-nationalism to kneel down*
- (62) *Here you go **sheep of Arab-nationalism**, the number of non-Saudis in the capital is double the number of Saudis...*
- (63) *My dear Saudi (male), and my dear Saudi (female), do not allow any **kowtowers to foreigners** of those corrupt movements to lecture you about racism*
- (64) *And when we say #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis, we see **some idiots** talk about the Arab brotherhood and other terms that were not created for Arabs [there is a video of an Egyptian man insulting GCC citizens].*

The discursive construction of those who support migrants as being submissive, stupid and untrustworthy is quite notable in the selected tweets above and it is linguistically fulfilled via the explicit predication of such negative traits along with negative derogatory references. The first reference to those who defend migrants is made using a slave-master metaphor to discursively construct them as submissive. The metaphor, which in English translates as '*foreigners' slave*', is expressed in a possessive form. In English, an apostrophe, or the preposition of, is used to indicate a possessive construction. However, expressing possession in Arabic is achieved through what is called a genitive construct, *iḍāfa*, in which two nouns are placed one after the other (Al-Shaer, 2014). The first noun is the noun being possessed, *Muḍāf*, and the second noun refers to the possessor, *Muḍāf Ilaihi*. In this case, the possessive form *'abīd al'ajānib* denotes a possessed *'abīd*, referring to those defending migrants, and a possessor which is *al'ajānib*, meaning 'the foreigners'. Besides the slavery metaphor, characteristics of submission and servility are again attributed to them through the animalistic metaphor used to nominate them, *ghanam al'umamyah* which is 'sheep of Arab-nationalism'. This metaphor is realised in a negative ideologonym and insinuates that those

who stand up for migrants are stupid, easily manipulated and herded like sheep, and thus accused of blindly following a political movement that is deemed corrupt, i.e. Arab nationalism. Similarly, the reference *munbatih lil'ajānib*, which translates as 'kowtowers to foreigners', and the predicate '*programmed by Arab-nationalism to kneel*' reinforces the aforementioned characteristics of naivety and servility. Naivety is also evoked by means of somatisation, using anthroponyms such as 'idiots' and 'stupid retards' that denote mental deficiency.

The anti-migrant sentiment in example (59) is job-related, and institutional exclusionary practices against Saudi employees in the private sector are alluded to in '*your boss is a foreign who is bossy*' (see section 2.2.1). The video of the Egyptian man in example (60) insulting GCC citizens seems to be widely circulated with the hashtag to agitate the intended audience against foreigners and to deter those who defend them or sympathise with them from doing so. The video was first analysed in example (18) in the nationalisation section. The video is employed for a third time in example (64) to generalise the stereotype of Arabs being resentful of GCC citizens and looking down on them (see section 7.1.3), and thus such humiliation should evoke feelings of dignity Schaefer (2020) among Saudis who defend them and do not reciprocate this hatred as shown in the video. In the examples above, Saudis who defend migrants are portrayed as brainwashed by a particular political movement, i.e. Arab nationalism, as seen in (61), (62), (63) and (64), respectively. Arab nationalism as discussed in (section 2.3) asserts that Arabs are a nation and emphasises the bonds between them, bonds which are strongly denied in example (64) where the user emphasises that the notion of a brotherhood is '*not created for Arabs*'. The examples above, particularly number (62), feed into the moral panic of the public, which means "the identification of a perceived threat by the in-group" (Devlin & Grant, 2017, p. 601). The in-group in this example creates an out-group, which is migrants, and through statements like '*the number of non-Saudis in*

the capital is double the number of Saudis’, they are perceived as a threat to Saudi Arabia’s national security, among other implied conclusions such as stealing the jobs of the citizens. The other within (native Saudis defending them) is shamed for dismissing such fears by defending migrants.

(65) *In the past, **they** claimed that Makkah and Madinah had a mix of people from different backgrounds, aiming to plunder its land and its identity...*

(66)***an Arab-nationalist** who does not believe in the idea of a homeland and its borders.....*

*Here, **the Arab-nationalist** Ziad Al-Drees raised (the slogan of racism) against all those who say # SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*

(67) *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis is the slogan of free patriots, and it is hated by the **Arab-nationalists, the beneficiaries, and the mercenaries' beggars***

(68) *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis but **the Arab-nationalist dinosaurs** are objecting. Saudi is for everyone, and the land is the land of God...*

Naivety and treason are also realised via a variety of other strategies such as collectivisation as in ‘*them*’. ‘*They*’ in example number (65) refers to Saudi cultural elites, as this tweet is commenting on a screenshot of a tweet written by one in which he says that ‘Saudi Arabia is a mix of different races’. Stating a fact about two Saudi cities being diverse prompted accusations of treason, and explicit expression of sorrow and outrage towards these people is found in ‘*aiming to plunder its land and its identity*’, which evokes the public’s fear of losing their identity and hints at the political stability of the country if it becomes diverse. Tweet number (66) is another reference to Saudi cultural elites. In the tweet, there is a video of Ziad Al-Drees criticizing the hashtag. He is referred to by means of the negative ideologonym ‘*Arab nationalist*’ twice as a signifier of his presumed disloyalty. This is

emphasised by the predicate '*does not believe in the idea of a homeland and its borders*'. The negative ideologonym '*Arab-nationalists*' is employed again in example number (68) in combination with an animal metaphor '*Arab-nationalist dinosaurs*'. This metaphor implies that those accused of being Arab nationalists are old-fashioned and holding on to an outdated corrupt political movement. To add more, the phrase '*Saudi is for everyone, and the land is the land of God*' is a predicational identification in terms of negative linguification, as the word '*Saudi*' in it is written in a non-Saudi dialect to strip Saudi citizens who say that Saudi is for everyone of their Saudiness through this orthographical feature.

A dichotomy between patriot and traitor is constructed in example (67), in which those who support the hashtag are patriots, whereas those who criticise it are traitors; and through the strategy of social problematisation, they are negatively constructed by means of negative qualionyms such as, '*beneficiaries*' and '*the mercenaries' beggars*'. The qualionym '*beneficiaries*' along with the negative ideologonym '*Arab-nationalists*' emphasise their treason by implying that they conspire against Saudi Arabia with a third party. This dichotomy is blatant in example (66) in which once again they call those advocating for the hashtag patriots whereas Al-Drees, who calls the hashtag racist, is accused of being an Arab-nationalist.

(69) *Anyone who sympathises with or demands naturalisation for any person should have their citizenship revoked and be expelled from the country. Enough, the current situation does not tolerate sympathy or inaction. Most of those who make such demands are **naturalised** basically...*

(70) *Anyone who stands with the immigrants against the sons and daughters of the country is **either naturalized, or has mixed blood, or married to a foreigner who is exploiting him to hire her compatriots.***

The politonym '*naturalised*' is instrumentalised to once again create a blatant dichotomous depiction of patriotic Saudis versus traitorous Saudis, in which those who defend migrants or call for naturalisation are either portrayed as naive or traitors and their Saudiness is always questioned. There is a reliance on hyperbolic statements '*enough, and the current situation does not tolerate sympathy or inaction*' and calls for radical measures such as revoking one's citizenship for being pro-naturalisation or for defending migrants as seen in example (69). Such hyperbolic statements create and maintain a sense of urgency that is needed to transform such fears into anti-migrant sentiments. Example (70) explicitly constructs and summarises the two evils that Saudis face, the other, 'the migrants', and their allies, 'the naturalised citizens and natives defending migrants'. Real Saudis are constructed through the genitive construct *idāfa* discussed earlier. In this possessive construction *abna' wa banat albilād* '*the sons and daughters of the country*', the first two nouns *abna'* '*sons*' and *banat* '*daughters*' belong to the third noun *albilād* '*the country*'. This emphasises their belonging to the country while simultaneously nominating the other in a rather unwelcoming term, which is *wāfidīn* '*immigrants*' (see section 7.1.2). The other within is attributed the negative predication of '*has mixed blood*' which functions as a synecdoche representing those born to foreign mothers or fathers, emphasising the nativist ideology via which they advance their arguments. Naivety is again highlighted in the predicate '*married to a foreigner who is exploiting him to hire her compatriots*'. Such predications introduce a discriminatory hierarchy of citizens based on the concept of nativism, and suggests that all those naturalised, or those born to foreign mothers or fathers are not loyal. Such a portrayal also presupposes that no native Saudis would call for naturalisation, and if they do, they have no agency as they are represented as naive in the phrase '*exploited by his foreign wife*'. Devlin and Grant (2017, p. 609) argue that "Othering occurs by positioning the 'other' as ignorant, someone who does not have the cognitive capacity to understand what they are talking about." The

assumption made by the tweets is that no native Saudi has a moral compass and his/her sensitivity to injustices towards others equates with failing their own compatriots, especially when the former report their own experiences of injustices exercised by some migrants. Accusations of treason and conspiracy against the country, along with accusations of not being a native Saudi, are common in addressing those who sympathise with migrants or who are pro-naturalisation.

7.3 Summary

This chapter has explored the anti-migrant discourse in the examples discussed above, which is mostly triggered by exclusionary practices against Saudis in the labour market and fuelled in tweets with the hashtag by various screenshots and videos in which negative insulting phrases are frequently attributed to Saudis. However, unemployment issues were rarely conceptualised as being the result of poor execution of labour market laws, but instead as a result of the mere existence of migrants in the country. Tapping into the ordinary citizen's frustrations with unemployment along with fears of losing one's identity has led to the scapegoating of migrants, naturalised Saudis and those defending them. Thus, this chapter has explored how the aforementioned social actors were constructed with the hashtag.

One of the most accentuated features when referring to the migrants in the data after de-spatialisation, spatialisation, actionalisation and professionyms is their ethnic or geographical origin. Using ethnonyms or nationyms to name someone usually occurs in combination with other strategies such as criminalisation and problematisation, which serves to evoke negative stereotyped images of the out-group. Naturalised citizens are excluded because of their presumed lack of belonging, which here is based on a nativist ideology. To be included, one must be Saudi by birth and via nativism, users delegitimise naturalised Saudis. However, they attack both native Saudis who support migrants and naturalised Saudis

and promote anti-migrant sentiments by drawing on prejudiced narratives against GCC citizens and old insecurities such as Arab nationalism.

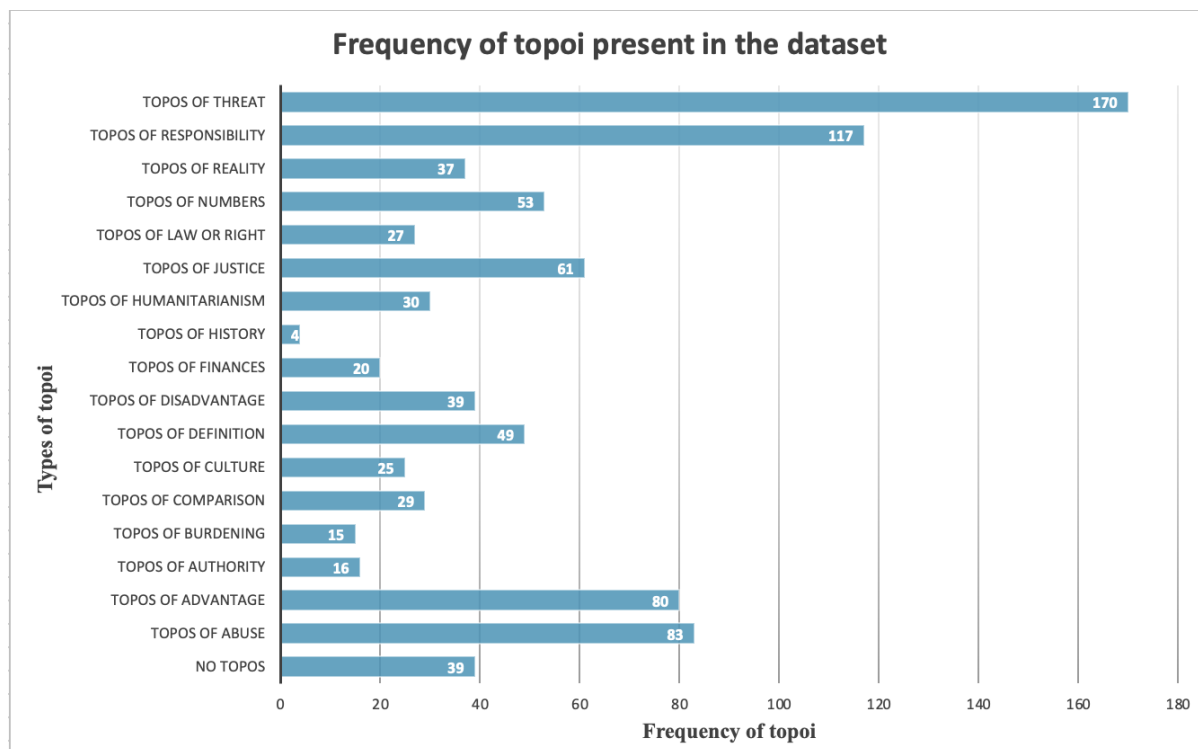
Arab nationalist is a key delegitimatory reference to the other within. Through Twitter affordances, those prejudiced narratives against Saudis and other GCC citizens are circulated with emotionally charged language. The construction of the other within here centres on their political deviance as the only factor to explain their sympathy towards migrants and the children of Saudi mothers born to foreign fathers, thus they are always evaluated as traitors. Overall, this chapter draws on an 'us' versus 'them' dichotomy in which positive attributions to the self are abundant while the other is repeatedly negatively portrayed by the various strategies reviewed above. The next chapter will focus on the analysis of the argumentation strategies employed in the data.

Chapter 8: Analysis of Argumentative Strategies in the Discourse of #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

This last chapter of data analysis addresses the third research question, which seeks to investigate the argumentative strategies underpinning *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* discourse. The analysis of argumentation strategies in this chapter will rely solely on the list of topoi used in the discourse-historical approach through which negative or positive construction of the other is justified (see section 5.1.3.2). Topoi as an argumentative feature in this online discussion will be realised in various forms as Twitter users leverage the technological affordances of the platform to advance their arguments. Thus, this chapter will analyse the different types of topoi used to legitimise the self and delegitimise the other, whether realised textually, visually or hypertextually, as identified in the entry-level analysis of semiotic resources presented in Chapter 6. The analysis aims to give a better understanding of the nature of the argumentation schemes employed in this particular context to justify exclusionary discourse, such as the specific semiotic resources and rhetorical devices employed to enhance the persuasiveness of the discourse at hand.

Figure 8

Frequencies of topoi present in the data set



The analysis I present below is based on randomly selected tweets from each topos identified in the coding stage (see Fig. 5 above). As explained in the methodology chapter, tweets that had no argumentation scheme present were tagged with the code *no topos*. I examine almost all the topoi on the list, starting with those most frequently occurring. The definition of each topos in all the tables in this chapter follows Reisigl & Wodak (2001, pp. 75–80). In this chapter, I also include screenshots of tweets when visual arguments are involved in the analysis at hand.

8.1 Analysis of Topoi in #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis

The topos of threat dominates the data set and accounts for 19% of all topoi identified; it is quite a common topos in populist discourses (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). The topos of threat in the data set is centred around migrants being a threat to Saudi culture and

the country's national security, but mostly posing a threat to Saudis' jobs and wages. A visual example is employed below to communicate the argument that migrants represent a threat to Saudis' jobs.

Example 1



The topos of threat can be inferred from the photos shown above. Bennett (2019) points out that when less information is provided in a tweet, the recipient of a discourse will make use of socially constructed knowledge to interpret an argument. Also, he emphasises that the exposure to such exclusionary discourse over a period of time will necessarily prepare one to organise their argumentation schemata in line with the rationale of the racist party. Similarly, Richardson & Wodak (2009a) argue that "as with verbal arguments, if we are to assess visual argument properly, we need to make an accurate extraction of the premises left implicit – that is, we should aim to offer a ‘maximally argumentative interpretation’ of the ways in which a standpoint is advanced, supported or defended visually" (p. 50). Thus, I resort to my knowledge of the community of practice as someone who is familiar with its distinctive codes and patterns for the interpretation of all the resources employed to advance an argument in this chapter, be it visual or otherwise. By highlighting the migrants in the two photos, who are not wearing the traditional Saudi clothes that Saudi men like the minister and

the students in the pictures are wearing, the user is communicating their otherness. Their clothes are cultural markers used to insinuate their countries of origin. Marking migrant teachers with a red circle is intended to emphasise their presence, which is implicitly juxtaposed with the total absence of Saudi teachers. Such images thus imply that those migrants are a threat in the sense that they have taken the jobs of Saudi teachers. While the photos suggest that migrant teachers outnumber Saudis or that they represent the majority in schools, there are many other photos where only Saudi teachers are present and foregrounded in similar visits. However, the user selectively chooses whom they want to foreground based on political convenience. More importantly, the user disregards the reality that migrant teachers only work in private schools in Saudi Arabia where both Saudi and migrant teachers are massively underpaid and thus the majority of those who teach in boys private schools tend to be foreign teachers.

Example 2



Similarly, the topos of threat is advanced visually in the video above. The video is one among many others showing young Saudi-born non-national talented footballers lining up in different Saudi cities to demonstrate their football skills to a committee formed by the Ministry of Sports to spot football talents, and exceptional talents will have the opportunity to represent the Saudi national team. The video above as a visual resource does not in itself necessarily suggest a certain meaning; rather, meaning is constructed by the user and interpreted in line with his/her motivation (Danesi, 2016). Consequently, the user depicted the young non-Saudis in the video as a hostile crowd, rather than young applicants or young football talents, so as to construct them as a threat to the community. In addition, the visual and verbal resources he/she employed in the tweet work together in rendering them as a threatening mass. The comment in the video employs exaggeration as a rhetorical device typically employed in anti-migrant discourse by assuming that Saudi Arabia's very existence is threatened by those young men located '*in one city*'. The visual representation reinforces this fear, as the video does not show the end of the queue, but rather what seems like an endless number of young men in an indistinguishable threatening mass. Similarly, the video enhances the atmosphere of threat initiated by the comment by positioning the viewing audience as if this demonised crowd is coming towards them (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The video works as a visual rhetorical strategy to construct fear by demonizing those young migrants. As KhosraviNik (2010) argues, the assumption of unanimity is a central quality observed in negative other representation, where it is assumed that the skills, education, place of origin, social class and economic status of the young men in the video are the same. Below is the argumentation scheme related to the topos of threat.

Table 3*Topos of threat*

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<p><i>Topos of threat</i></p> <p>Conclusion rule: 'If there are specific dangers or threats, one should do something against them.'</p>	
<p>1. If foreigners are taking native workers' jobs, then they should be stopped.</p>	<p>1. The <i>Minister of Education's</i> visit to schools today. The pictures speak #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis [Two images shown above]</p>
<p>2. If young foreigners pose a threat to the country's security, then the government must do something about it.</p>	<p>2. #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis Can you imagine that these are all foreigners in one city, and they are all young? Isn't the country in danger with their presence? [The video is shown above]</p>

The topos of responsibility is the second most prevalent topos in the data set after the topos of threat, accounting for 13% of the total topoi identified. It is often employed in the data set to represent politicians and decision-makers as woefully silent in regard to injustices against Saudis and callously biased in favour of migrants in job-related issues. This is expected since unemployment is the most prominent discursively constructed phenomenon in the data set. Decision-makers' ineffectiveness in attending to the public's needs is frequently used to justify their online campaign, '*taking matters into our own hands*', so as to produce desired outcomes in relation to Saudis' unemployment. This topos is also frequently realised in their demands of accountability. The three examples below draw on the topos of responsibility, as shown in the following table.

Table 4*Topos of responsibility*

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<p><i>Topos of responsibility</i></p> <p>Conclusion rule: ‘Because a state or a group of persons is responsible for the emergence of specific problems, it or they should act in order to find solutions to these problems.’</p>	
<p>3&4. Because Saudi ministers are excluding citizens and responsible for their unemployment, then they should be held accountable, and someone should work to rectify the situation.</p>	<p>3. #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis <i>The Minister of Labour strives to solve the unemployment of the third world at the expense of the country's citizens. The Sports Minister excludes citizens to replace them with immigrants. They just want the Saudis, at the border, to protect their foreigners to display their talents.</i></p> <p>4. <i>Saudis in all medical fields have proven their superiority. Why do you keep deliberately disrupting them and leaving the door open for foreign occupation? They are in a predicament with Saudis and their unemployment, yet they are ready to give all these job opportunities to foreigners, with benefits and allowances.</i> @HRSD_SA#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis</p>
<p>5. The authorities are putting the lives of Saudis at risk because of their poor pre-employment background and credentials checks so they should find a solution to this threatening practice.</p>	<p>5. #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis #SaudiArabiaFirst. <i>What angers us most about the issue of foreign domination is the tampering by foreign doctors with forged certificates or practising medicine illegally in our hospitals. Who stands behind this negligence and leniency and these misfortunes and exposes citizens to health risks!! @SaudiMOH @tfrabiah</i></p>

The first tweet above reveals antagonistic representations of those ministers and migrants who are generically referred to as foreigners; both groups are alluded to as joint forces uniting against Saudi citizens. The tweet constructs the Minister of Labour and the Sports Minister as untrustworthy, as the other within, who stand against the interests of their fellow citizens by empowering foreigners at their expense. This is evident in the possessive determiner ‘*their*’ in ‘*their foreigners*’, a phrase which attributes ownership and implies that

the two ministers mentioned above uphold the role of protective figures looking out for the best interests of migrants in Saudi, who are pejoratively referred to as third world nationals. The phrase ‘*to protect their foreigners to display their talents*’ is an intertextual reference to an official statement published by the Ministry of Sports, formerly known as the General Sports Authority, on its official page on Twitter in which it announced the formation of a committee to explore talented non-Saudi footballers with exceptional capabilities. The recontextualisation of the statement serves to make an argument that relies on appeals to emotions of resistance and standing up to citizens’ opponents. It constructs Saudi soldiers as the ones sacrificing their lives to protect the country when their loyalty and dedication are rarely reciprocated by decision-makers in Saudi who are only concerned with the employment and well-being of migrants. The first two examples above (3, 4) draw on the closely related topos of justice by demanding equality in relation to employment as certain individuals (non-Saudis) are being privileged over other individuals (Saudis). This can be seen in example (4) above, where the user directly addresses the official account of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development responsible for employment, and decision-makers are predicted as the ones granting non-Saudis special privileges and access to resources that Saudis are denied: ‘*they are in a predicament with Saudis and their unemployment, yet they are ready to give all these job opportunities to foreigners, with benefits and allowances*’. The topos of responsibility is manifested in the house metaphor employed in this example, in the sense that opening a door means allowing or inviting people in. The house metaphor is paired with a war metaphor, *Ihtilāl ‘ajnabī* ‘foreign occupation’, which is derived from the verb *ihtala*, which translates as ‘seized’ or ‘occupied’. Thus, this metaphor portrays foreign labourers as invaders and occupiers, while decision-makers are the enablers of such foreign occupation by not limiting the recruitment of foreign labour.

The argument advanced is that if decision-makers in Saudi are responsible for jeopardizing Saudis' jobs with their discriminatory policies vis-à-vis Saudis, then Saudis must speak up to defend their jobs from those invaders and their enablers.

Example 5

*[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
#SaudiArabiaFirst.*

What angers us most about the issue of foreign domination is the tampering by foreign doctors with forged certificates or practising medicine illegally in our hospitals. Who stands behind this negligence and leniency and these misfortunes and exposes citizens to health risks!! @SaudiMOH @tfrabiah]



The topos of responsibility is also invoked in tweet (5) above where the user calls upon the Minister of Health in Saudi Arabia to rectify the issue advanced in the tweet. This call for accountability is seen in the direct address to both the ministry's and the minister's accounts. There is an implied topos of threat as well, which is amplified by three screenshots of news headlines of different cases of corruption and malpractice within the health sector. A hyperlink to one of the articles is also provided. The authorities are being warned against the potential danger of hiring foreign doctors by including three news headlines that report them as actors in various crimes, such as forging medical degrees and committing medical errors resulting from malpractice. Once again, the officials in question are represented as enablers, this time of perpetrators who pose a physical threat to Saudis. The double exclamation marks employed as semiotic resources imply a sense of urgency and threat that is further augmented

by juxtaposing the doctors' geographical origin with their criminality in two of the headlines included, as exemplified in '*An Arab doctor flees the kingdom*' and '*relevant authorities capture a doctor of Asian nationality ... who worked with a forged degree*'. In addition, criminality occurs in combination with a strategy of actionalisation realised through the actionym '*immigrant*' in the headline '*Immigrant whose profession is a painter practised dentistry*.' Juxtaposing criminality with both actionyms and geographic origin is prevalent in the data set (see section 7.1.3) and necessarily creates stereotypes harmful to foreign doctors in Saudi Arabia based on the Arabia and its people, which they conceal for material profit. Thus, migrants' ingratitude and disparaging of Saudis is often highlighted here as a plausible argumentation scheme employed in the discursive legitimisation of the nationalist discourse at hand. This topos is almost exclusively associated with Arab migrants who are represented as ungrateful spiteful profit-seeking Arabs only here to profit from the kingdom's oil (see section 7.1.3). The table below shows the claims advanced in examples (6–10) along with the topos of abuse used to justify the claims.

Table 5

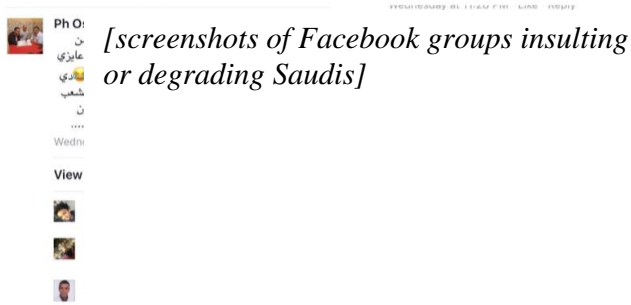
Topos of abuse

Claims	Extract (Translated)
<p><i>Topos of abuse</i> Conclusion rule: 'If a right or an offer for help is abused, the right should be changed, or the help should be withdrawn or measures against the abuse should be taken.'</p>	
<p>6-9. Since migrants are abusing Saudi Arabia's generosity by insulting its people and carrying out illegal activities, then action must be taken against them</p>	<p>6. <i>Yes #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis We have been courteous long enough and all you hear from them is sarcasm and mockery of our youth, while in their country they are unemployed, crushed, marginalised and worthless.</i> [Image shown below]</p> <p>7. <i>#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis Oh man they are hubristic and snobs over nothing. Indeed: A courtesy lent to an upright person wins you his favour forever but, to</i></p>

	<p><i>a lowly person, will only yield ill-treatment.</i> [Image shown below]</p> <p><i>8. Mobily's Egyptian sales manager, Khaled Riyad, travelled on the company's account (generated from Saudis' bills) all taken care off by them to Russia. Finally, he wore the Egyptian shirt and rooted for Egypt against Saudi Arabia. The question is why Mobily does not participate in reducing unemployment or make plans to develop human resources.</i> #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis [Image shown below]</p> <p><i>9. Buildings in the Al-Rawda neighbourhood in Jeddah in the latest fashion. The rents for the apartments range between 65–100,000, and 90% of the tenants are foreigners. You can imagine the number of high-paid workers in the private sector or perhaps those engaged in commercial concealment. Rents this high can only be paid by high-income individuals.</i></p>
<p>10. Since migrants are trying to abuse the law to gain citizenship, naturalisation laws should be restricted.</p>	<p><i>10. The failure of the marriages of 648 Saudi women to foreigners within a year. Except for citizens of the Gulf countries and a few nationalities, the majority of other marriages are of a foreigner to one of his fellow female compatriots who has previously obtained citizenship. This sort of marriage means recycling and then they come to demand citizenship for their children.</i> #NoToNaturalization #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis [Image shown below]</p>

Example 6

*[Yes #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
We have been courteous long enough and all you
hear from them is sarcasm and mockery of our
youth, while in their country they are unemployed,
crushed, marginalised and worthless.]*



Example 7

*[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis Oh man they are
hubristic and snobs over nothing. Indeed: A
courtesy lent to an upright person wins you his
favour forever but, to a lowly person, will only
yield ill-treatment.]*



In the first two tweets above, (6) and (7), the users circulate the same screenshots of Facebook comments by a group of Egyptian migrants who work as pharmacists in Saudi Arabia reacting to the Saudi government's announcement to increase the Saudization rate in pharmacies, particularly in the private healthcare sector. It is worth noting that Saudi nationals comprise less than 20% of the pharmacists employed in Saudi Arabia whereas Egyptian migrants account for 57% of the foreign pharmacists working in the kingdom (AlRuthia et al., 2018). The screenshots include demeaning comments that qualify Saudi pharmacists as incompetent and lacking adequate knowledge to prescribe the right dosages to patients. This is apparent in the negative predicate '*they surpassed Mark Zuckerberg's genius*' found in the screenshots, which is used to mock Saudi pharmacists, among other equally offensive predicates. Moreover, although tending sheep is common across the Arab world, including in Egypt and not exclusive to Gulf Arabs, the term '*shepherders*' is employed in the screenshots as a racial slur to qualify Saudis exclusively (see section 7.1.3), thus falling into the trap of an orientalist narrative set for them, rather than attempting to counter that narrative. Such insulting comments, particularly when coming from members of a community that accounts for 57% of Saudi Arabia's foreign pharmacist workforce, necessarily facilitate the construction of this topos since they will be regarded as people abusing the generosity of the host country and its people, regardless of their privileged position as the majority of the pharmacist workforce. In example (6), the use of the first person plural possessive pronoun '*our*' in '*our youth*' is realised in the object pronoun that

takes the form of the suffix *-nā* attached to the noun *shabāb* ‘youth’. The first person plural possessive ‘*our*’ is an ideological device which marks the in-group and promotes hatred against those insulting victimised in-group members, and it serves to represent those attacking migrants as the defenders of the homeland and being spokespeople for the in-group. Abusing Saudi Arabia’s generosity is patent in the predicate ‘*they are unemployed, crushed, marginalised and worthless*’, which describes their presumed destitute situation prior to working in Saudi Arabia, to which they responded by belittling the host country instead of being eager to reciprocate this generosity extended to them by showing respect and gratitude. In example (7), the topos of abuse is invoked by using the same screenshots. The user responded to the insults by qualifying those who wrote them as ‘*hubristic*’ and ‘*snobs*’. In addition, there is an intertextual reference to a popular verse written by Al Mutanabbī, who is regarded as one of the most recognised and prominent poets of the Arabic language. This intertextual element is employed by the user to embody the abuse he/she observed in the screenshots by qualifying those insulting Saudis in the posts as lowly people, ‘*a courtesy lent to a lowly person, will only yield ill-treatment*’, and this helps in stereotyping all migrants as ungrateful materialistic people. The screenshots used in both tweets are emotionally triggering to the audience as argumentative devices due to the perceived intensity of the insults and their frequency in discriminatory discourse against Saudis in particular and Gulf Arabs in general.

Similarly, the main argument advanced in examples (8) and (9) above is that while Saudis are deprived of jobs and opportunities that they deserve, migrants not only enjoy better life conditions but also abuse the generosity extended to them by the host country. However, a sense of rage is often expressed not only against those who insult Saudis, as seen in examples (6) and (7) above, but also extended to those who refrain from doing so but criticise services or facilities in the kingdom that Saudis criticise themselves (see example 21

in Chapter 7). In examples (8) and (9) above, migrants enjoying a luxurious lifestyle and maintaining connections with their home countries are equated with abusing the generosity of the host country.

Example 8

[Mobily's Egyptian sales manager, Khaled Riyad, travelled on the company's account (generated from Saudis' bills) all taken care off by them to Russia. Finally, he wore the Egyptian shirt and rooted for Egypt against Saudi Arabia. The question is why Mobily does not participate in reducing unemployment or make plans to develop human resources.]



In example (8), professionalisation and nationalisation strategies in the phrase ‘*Egyptian sales manager*’ are foregrounded in the negative construction of the social actor involved. Negative predication such as ‘*travelled on the company's account (generated from Saudis' bills)*’ and ‘*wore the Egyptian shirt and rooted for Egypt against Saudi Arabia*’ reveal the topos of abuse which is assumed in the claim that the sales manager hasn’t paid for the trip himself but rather took advantage of his senior position as company sales manager. Furthermore, he is qualified as someone who abused the country’s generosity extended to him merely by employing him in a rather senior position while supporting his own country

during their 2018 World Cup match against Saudi Arabia. Migrant workers are often accused of failing their own countries by leaving to pursue a better life for themselves and their families, yet they are criticised when sustaining material or emotional connections to their homeland, as seen in the tweet above. The social actor involved is constructed as an ungrateful traitor who abused the generosity of the host country by maintaining emotional ties to his country of origin by supporting the Egyptian national football team against Saudi Arabia. A similar example of such criticism was discussed earlier (see example 48 in Chapter 7). Although the target of criticism in that tweet was naturalised Saudis, for whom demands of loyalty are deemed crucial given their permanent status, migrant workers in tweets (8) and (9) were also faced with similar expectations in spite of their transient status as migrants on work visas.

Similarly, in example (9), the migrants' economic status revealed in living in very expensive luxury flats is seen as inconsistent with the image the user has about where migrants ought to live, and thus speculates that such a standard of living could be a result of being involved in violating anti-fraud laws in the kingdom. Thus, not only is showing gratitude demanded to rule out accusations of abusing the country's generosity, but there is also a general assumption, as seen in examples (8) and (9) above, that migrant workers are people who should have less and should struggle to live and get by in the host country. If they do happen to lead a successful comfortable life, this is not attributed to hard work or merit; rather, abuse of some sort is assumed.

The infographic in the tweet above is a visualisation of divorce statistics for 2017, for both Saudi men and women married to non-Saudis. However, the user commenting on the figures and the infographic itself, which was created by Alwatan newspaper, seems to only foreground the divorce rate of women, which is 648 cases, compared to 1,869 among Saudi men married to non-Saudis. The text in bold in the centre of the infographic translates as *'The failure of the marriage of 648 Saudi women to foreigners from 44 nationalities within a year.'* This foregrounding of women's divorce is discursively intensified by the image of a woman in an abaya, which is considered traditional women's public attire in Saudi. The infographic not only noticeably foregrounds women's divorce cases, which is significantly lower than that for the men as reported above, but also describes them as a failure, a description that is not extended to their fellow Saudi men whose divorce from non-Saudis is merely quantified and labelled as *'divorce cases'*. According to Dick (2015), omission and bias regarding which information to report and which issues to be visually present in an infographic was common in his study of infographics in UK news, and it was attributed to the ideological stances of their respective publishers. He further clarifies that bias can be seen in positioning a graph or a text in a way that is misleading, and hence the viewer's visualisation of the information is more likely to be biased. Since Saudi men confer nationality on their children, while women cannot, foregrounding their statistics is ideologically driven and has been utilised to protest against the recent calls to naturalise children born to Saudi women as the hashtag *#NoToNaturalization* in the tweet above clearly states. While misleadingly reporting the statistics, the user applies a commodity metaphor, 'recycling', on to those marriages between naturalised Saudi women and their foreign spouses, insinuating that these marriages are 'marriages of convenience' (topos of abuse). It is a recycling metaphor in the sense that a woman who is already naturalised marries a man from her country of origin only to demand

that her children who are foreigners shall be naturalised as well. The similarity to recycling that is being established here is that these marriages are attempts to convert foreigners into Saudis like recycled objects that are converted into something else. Such a dehumanizing metaphor consequently has a rather strong ideological implication, which is to suppress any sympathy towards children born to Saudi mothers and their demands for naturalisation by framing it via a topos of abuse.

The topos of advantage is another topos found in the data set. Again, with employment at the heart of this online discussion, the topos of advantage or usefulness is used to promote Saudis, their ethics and traditions, and to present Saudi employees as serving the interests of their fellow Saudi citizens. This topos tends to delegitimise the other, whether explicitly or implicitly, as seen in the tweets below.

Example 11

[When you go back to the store after an hour and a Saudi serves you.
#SaudizationOfJobs
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



In example (11), the user posts two photos of when she/he was served by a foreign salesman contrasted with when she/he was later served by a Saudi. With the sub-hashtag #SaudizationOfJobs included within the tweet, the user mentions one prominent account that is active in supporting this exclusionary campaign to make his/her tweet more visible. The 'us' versus 'them' distinction is particularly salient here; the visual examples provided here construct the main argument, rather than the linguistic form. The top image shows a chocolate box that is left unwrapped with the printed receipt tossed inside the bag, whereas the bottom image shows the box wrapped nicely, and no sign of the receipt in the bag. There

is a yellow x edited by the user and placed on the top image to indicate her/his dissatisfaction with the service provided by the foreign employee, as the text in the photo reads '*when you buy from a foreigner*', whereas a green heart is positioned on the box allegedly wrapped by a Saudi employee. The text on the bottom photo, which reads '*when you buy from a Saudi*', is juxtaposed with a green heart emoji, both hearts in this photo are expressions of banal nationalism (Billig, 1995). The green heart is used one more time in the tweet at the end of the sentence '*When you go back to the store after an hour and a Saudi serves you.*' Such expressions of banal nationalism are used to remind the audience visually of this imagined community through the use of the colour green, which is the colour of the Saudi flag. The argument is developed via the topos of usefulness or advantage. It can be inferred from the sub-hashtag *#SaudizationOfJobs* along with pictures portraying Saudi workers as devoted to their jobs that these should be restricted to Saudis. This argument is fallacious as it makes false generalisations that all Saudis are devoted to their work while migrant workers are not.

The second tweet (12) in Table 6 below employs the topos of 'pro bono nobis' (to the advantage of us) which is realised via predications in the noun phrases '*are the cleaners, the construction and hard labour workers*', '*they are the only ones we need and exclude*'.

Migrants with specific jobs such as cleaners and construction workers are deemed necessary and worthy of respect because they are doing hard low-paid jobs that Saudis are unwilling to do. Unfortunately, this respect is not translated into campaigns to rectify their political reality and the inhumane work conditions to which many of these migrant workers are subjected. This topos explains the lack of negative representations of South Asian migrants in the data and the focus on problematizing Arab migrants (see sections 2.1.2 and 7.1.3).

The argumentation scheme that is related to the topos of advantage or usefulness is explained in the following table.

Table 6

Topos of advantage

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<p><i>Topos of advantage</i></p> <p>Conclusion rule: ‘If an action from a specific relevant point of view will be useful, then one should perform it.’</p>	
<p>11. If employing Saudis will make customers satisfied because of their excellent work ethic, then the Saudization of jobs must be executed.</p>	<p>11. <i>When you go back to the store after an hour and a Saudi serves you.</i> <i>#SaudizationOfJobs</i> <i>#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis</i> [An image is shown above]</p>
<p>12. Since cleaners and construction workers have been proven indispensable, we must keep them.</p>	<p>12. <i>Those who deserve respect among foreigners are the cleaners, the construction and hard labour workers, they are the only ones we need and exclude from our campaigns against foreigners. #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis</i></p>

The topos of justice in the data set usually occurs in combination with the topos of responsibility, as seen in examples (3) and (4). However, while there is a topos of responsibility conveyed in tweet 13 below, as calls for accountability are implied, the key topos is the topos of justice which is communicated with a combination of visual and textual elements evident in the included cartoon. Frustration with the ministry’s implementation of Saudization policies is apparent at the semantic level where irony is expressed in the statement ‘*The Ministry of Labour is doing a tremendous job*’, and further intensified through the unconventional spelling of the word ‘*tremendous*’, with repetition of the vowel *a* that comes after the consonant *b* when the conventional spelling requires one vowel ‘*jabarah*’. As Darics (2013) points out, letter repetition can be used as a non-verbal cue to signal affect and emotional involvement, in this case to signal irony and sarcasm. The topos of justice is best exemplified in the included cartoon where a list of jobs available for Saudis is contrasted with one for foreigners. The foreigners in this particular cartoon are specified as Jordanians in the red heading that reads ‘*jobs for Jordanians in Saudi*’. Jordanians are predicated with

privileged access to white-collar jobs, which is enabled by the Saudi Ministry of Labour ahead of locals. Examples of some of the jobs listed are Information Technology, medical jobs, consulting jobs and administrative jobs. Such jobs available for Jordanians are juxtaposed with blue-collar jobs, such as cashier, ice-cream seller, tea seller, perfume seller and security officer. The two men are identified by their formal attire. The facial expression of the man in the suit reveals contentment with his favoured position, whereas the Saudi man's dissatisfaction is apparent in his gaze. Such injustices are constantly called out in the data set and those responsible for the situation, such as the Ministry of Labour in this tweet, are criticised and told to address this inequality.

Example 13

Below is the argumentation scheme that is related to the *topos of justice*.

Table 7

Topos of justice

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<i>Topos of justice</i>	
Conclusion rule: 'if persons/actions/situations are equal in specific respects, they	

[The Ministry of Labour is doing a tremendous job, must be thanked for their crazy decisions. Wish they didn't work, at least we had hope #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis not for foreigners]

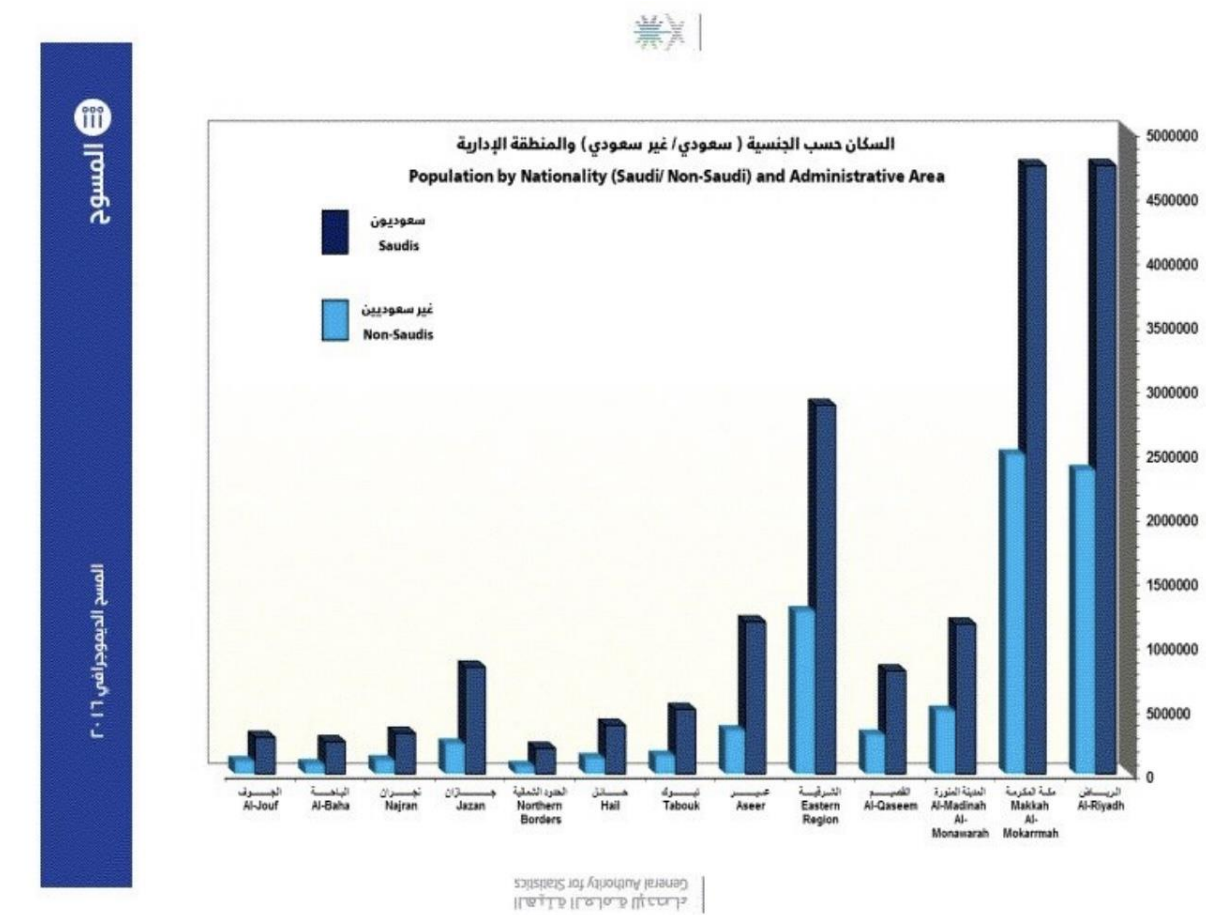


should be treated/dealt with in the same way.'	
13. If migrants are privileged with good jobs while Saudis are not, then the Minister of Labour must do something to fix this exclusion and imbalance.	13. <i>The Ministry of Labour is doing a tremendous job, must be thanked for their crazy decisions. Wish they didn't work, at least we had hope #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis not for foreigners</i> [Image shown above]

The topos of numbers usually occurs in combination with other topoi, such as the topos of burden or threat, to boost persuasion by implying objectivity through the statistics and numbers provided. The vague quantification in "*with the continuation of random recruitment*" and "*high percentages*" of refugees' fertility rates constitute the topos of numbers and draws on the topos of threat, as shown in example 14 below. The adjective '*random*' implies weak labour laws. This suggests that the authorities are not doing enough to deal with the situation. "*We will be a minority*" is the claim that is explicitly stated, the warrant consists of two parts, the random recruitment of migrants along with refugees with a high birth rate settling in the country, and the statistical infographic template provided in the quoted tweet is used to support the claim made in the original tweet. Although the quoted tweet is from a non-official news platform, it includes an infographic template of the population by nationality in Saudi's administrative areas, which was released by the General Authority for Statistics in 2016. This infographic template is an attempt to lend legitimacy to the argument made by appealing to the impersonal authority of facts (van Leeuwen, 2007). However, this topos is fallacious as it incorrectly presumes that those migrants are settling in the country, when in fact they disregard those migrants go back to their own countries when their employment contracts end. In addition, the template merely shows the number of non-Saudis without specifying the number of refugees compared to migrants, and it does not

provide details on recent birth rates among refugees compared to Saudis. In addition, the two columns clearly show that Saudis significantly outnumber non-Saudis in all the listed cities.

Figure 9 for Example 14



The table below contains the claim and the *topos of numbers* that functions to justify it.

Table 8

Topos of numbers

Claim	Extract (Translated)
Topos of numbers	
Conclusion rule: ‘If the numbers prove a specific topos, a specific action should be	

performed/not be carried out.’	
14. If the recruiting of migrants continues to happen randomly, and refugees with their high birth rates settle in Saudi, Saudis will soon be a minority and therefore people must speak up so that the government will put an end to this situation.	14. <i>With the continuation of random recruitment and refugees who reproduce at high percentages staying, we will be a minority in our country within two decades, maximum.</i> #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis [Image shown above]

The topos of definition is often employed to safeguard an exclusive national identity that is rooted in tribalism. The first example, (15) below, is a prime example of the topos of definition which is communicated visually here. The thematic hashtag #SaudiArabiaNaturalizesTalents included in the tweet functions as a useful instrument to express opinions in relation to a highly debated issue in 2019. The hashtag is debating the royal decree that grants Saudi citizenship to exceptional talents in various pre-defined fields such as medicine and sports, among others. The two images below appear in combination with what seems like a neutral statement, ‘*after acquiring citizenship*’, and the exclusion of others is advanced in a sarcastic manner. The argumentation scheme embedded in the visual elements above taps into a familiar existing social representation of naturalised Saudis. The two images above are of two famous Egyptian actors playing the role of Gulf Arabs. The images are employed to communicate the message that like these two Egyptian actors, those soon to become citizens by naturalisation are merely impersonators of Saudis in the sense that although they wear the traditional headdress common in Saudi Arabia and other GCC states, known as the ghutra and igal,¹⁰ their manner of speaking is a marker of their non-belonging.

¹⁰ *Ghutra* is the white headscarf that is normally folded into a triangle and *igal* is the double black cord that holds the ghutra in place, both are worn with a long-sleeved ankle-length robe known as a *thobe*.

There are certain signifiers of difference available to the in-group, such as surnames, accents and in this case improper styling of the traditional headdress. Improper styling of traditional headgear is seen as a violation of the expectations that Saudis have about their national identity. “The interpretation of the meaning of this image and every other resource is derived from a source’s materiality and the history of its social uses” (Adami, 2017, p. 467). Khalaf’s (2005) infographic study set in the UAE revealed that nationals held that their national dress should be restricted to people from GCC states and not be used by foreigners trying to pass themselves off as nationals and who might misrepresent this national symbol by not wearing it properly. Although the styling of the ghutra varies across GCC states, these are minor differences and this standardisation of the national dress in the Gulf is an attempt to construct an in-group of GCC nationals as ethnically and culturally homogenous pure Arabs with a shared history and Bedouin heritage and tradition (AlMutawa, 2016). Khalaf (2005) further points out that national attire in GCC states signifies authenticity, privilege and superiority over other members of society. Similarly, Cooke (2014) argues that “Gulf Arabs perform nationality and privilege through tribal dress. Men’s national dress has become a sign of cultural authenticity and connectedness to past traditions” (p. 125). Thus, such attempts, if made by newly naturalised Saudis to access the in-group, face mockery and are seen as a distortion of authentic Saudi identity. This user’s unwillingness to recognise those soon to be naturalised as Saudi citizens, despite their legal status, can be attributed to his/her conception of these individuals as people who “lack a historical connection to the land, which is reflected in their demeanour” (Akinici, 2020b, p. 1786). There is also this questionable loyalty of those soon to be naturalised, which stems from the deeply rooted conception that naturalisation is sought for material gain, when they allegedly have no connection to the host country and thus hold malevolent intentions towards it (Eldemerdash, 2015). In this example, this national headdress is another example of Billig’s (1995) ‘banal nationalism’ whereby this headwear

that is worn on an almost daily basis by the majority in Saudi is seen as a significant boundary marker for maintaining their distinct national identity. That is to say, the national imagination is seen in this headwear, a form of differentiation from the other.

While the topos of definition is realised visually in the first example (15), it is advanced textually in the second (16). The second tweet below has a distinctive formal feature; it is among the very few tweets in the data set written in English. There is an intertextual relationship established by the user's reference to *Muna AboSulayman*, a Saudi female TV presenter and journalist, in his reply to another user defending her tweet in which she wrote, "*every now and then the air conditioners break down ... every now and then [we have to] change a compressor. I do not understand why things break down quickly in Saudi. My whole life revolves around maintenance*". In this tweet, the user clearly makes a racist remark in his/her definition of who is a real Saudi. He/she draws a distinction between native Saudis and naturalised Saudis. This distinction is based on a nativist principle, where her surname is a marker of her non-belonging. According to this user, individuals with surnames like *Alkhalidi*, which is one of the main tribes in Saudi Arabia, are the real Saudis, and thus entitled to free speech and criticism based on this nativist exclusionary categorisation of Saudis into native and non-native citizens. Meanwhile, individuals like *Muna*, with surnames that indicate foreign ancestry, are denied the same right of criticizing Saudi-related issues as they are and will always be recognised as foreigners according to this definition. Exclusion and inclusion based on surnames was addressed earlier (see example 52) in Chapter 7. The phrase '*the so-called "AboSulayman" family*' further highlights her otherness, which is intensified orthographically via the use of expressive quotation marks around the surname to add emphasis to the word and cast doubt on this element within this phrase. This topos is defined and reconstructed in Table 9, below.

Example (17) in Table 9, below, frames the employment of migrants in Saudi Arabia around a purely charitable discourse realised in the statement ‘*We are a state, not a charitable organisation*’, which implies that they are not recruited on merit. The user not only dismisses their competence but also fails to take into consideration the complex sociopolitical factors that could explain the recruitment of migrants in Saudi Arabia from developing countries. To emphasise the concept that Saudi Arabia does not hire migrants based on merit, the user recontextualises fragments from the Quranic verse highlighted in bold below:

{ Prohibited to you are dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allāh, and [those animals] killed by strangling or by a violent blow or by a head-long fall or by the goring of horns } (Quran, 5:3).

The verse above lists some of the prohibited foods in Islam, among which are *almutaradyatu* and *alnaṭīḥatu*, which are the two lexical choices via which migrants are qualified in the tweet. *Almutaradyatu* is an animal killed because of falling from a height and *alnaṭīḥatu* is an animal killed due to being gored to death by another animal. *Almutaradyatu* and *alnaṭīḥatu* are two adjectives denoting a deleted agent, a female sheep; the specification of a ewe in this verse is merely because it was the most common kind of meat consumed by people then (Al-Khazin 2004, p. 213). So, the suffix *tu* at the end of these words, known as *al marboota*, is a feminine marker attached to adjectives and nouns in Arabic.

Almutaradyatu and *alnaṭīḥatu* are two attributive adjectives often used metaphorically to evoke the uselessness of someone or something. This animalising metaphorical reference is employed in the example above to convey the image that migrants are as useless as dead animals. Such a portrayal dehumanises migrants as the two attributive adjectives equate them with dead animals. This animal metaphor is evoked once again in the verbal phrase *يتبطحون عندنا* ‘*yṭbṭḥūn ‘indanā*’ ‘*lounge about*’, which emphasises their uselessness and implies the necessity to do something about this situation. The topos of definition is also realised in the

animalising metaphors discussed above, assuming that since somebody is referred to by an animalising metaphor, then they must carry the qualities contained in that reference.

Moreover, there is an implicit fallacious generalisation inherent in this metaphor. As Reisigl & Wodak (2001) argue, there is a close relationship between reference and argumentation; thus, the implicit conclusion rule in the animalistic references above is that if someone proves to be useless, then one should do something about it, i.e. one should only recruit migrants who are competent and will contribute to society.

Example 15

[After acquiring citizenship #SaudiArabiaNaturalizesTalents #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



Table 9

Topos of definition or name-interpretation

Claims	Extract (Translated)
<i>Topos of definition or name-interpretation</i>	

Conclusion rule: ‘If an action, a thing or a person (group of persons) is named/designated (as) X, the action, thing or person (group of persons) carries or must carry the qualities/traits/attributes contained in the (literal) meaning of X.’	
15. Since naturalised citizens cannot wear the Saudi headdress properly, they remain foreigners.	15. <i>After acquiring citizenship</i> #SaudiArabiaNaturalizesTalents #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis [Image shown above]
16. Since "AboSulayman" indicates a foreign surname, then one who carries it will always be foreigner.	16. <i>Alkhaldi tribe is one of the main components of Saudi society? Which is more than I can say about the so called "AboSulayman" family. So, he is more Saudi than she could ever be.</i> #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis.
17. Since Saudi is a country and not a charity, so only skilled migrants should be allowed into the country.	17. <i>We are a state, not a charitable organisation, so Saudi Arabia is supposed to employ competent people who contribute to the country, not the falling and the gored who lounge about.</i>

The topos of disadvantage is used to support the claim that the majority of migrants in Saudi Arabia lack competence, contribute nothing to society, financially or otherwise, and, most importantly, hinder its development.

There is an apparent division of migrants into 'good migrants' versus 'bad migrants' in example (18) below. Wodak (2008) argues that the “inclusion/exclusion’ of groups, people, nation-states, and migrant groups, changes due to different criteria of how insiders and outsiders are defined in each instance. In this way, various topologies, or group memberships, are constructed, which sometimes include a certain group, and sometimes do not, depending on socio-political and situational contexts and interactions” (p. 56). Here, the discriminatory hierarchy of foreigners is based on a specific aspect of a migrant’s status, i.e. coming from a poor country serves as a criterion for his/her exclusion, as they are perceived to be incompetent since they hail from allegedly '*backward countries*'. Whereas for migrants from affluent countries described as '*advanced*' in the tweet, it is insinuated that those migrants are

competent, qualified for jobs and thus included. An argument that apparently privileges all migrants coming from affluent countries regardless of their qualifications is discriminatory towards others such as Indians and Egyptians. However, Wodak (2007) maintains that “inclusion and exclusion are not to be considered static categories: the person who is excluded today may be included tomorrow, and vice versa” (p. 676). There is also a topos of responsibility which is not directly expressed here but rather implicitly referred to, whereby decision-makers are addressed in the phrase *'If you're ruining things and don't want to employ Saudis'*, in order to hold them accountable for Saudis' unemployment due to siding with incompetent migrants at the expense of Saudi citizens. This statement is accompanied by an apparently derogatory remark realised in the visual animalising metaphor where decision-makers are depicted as dogs dressed up in traditional clothing, as shown in the photo below. It is important to note that calling someone a dog in the Arab world is a very serious insult as dogs are associated with filth (Reynolds, 2007; Campbell, 2015).

Example 18

*[#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
If you're ruining things and don't want to
employ Saudis, at least bring us foreigners from
advanced countries like Japan, the US, China
and Germany to serve the country and develop
it, do not bring them from backward countries
like India, Pakistan, Egypt and the Levant
countries !!!]*



Table 10

Topos of disadvantage

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<p><i>Topos of disadvantage</i></p> <p>Conclusion rule: 'If one can anticipate that the prognosticated consequences of a decision will not occur or if other political actions are more likely to lead to the declared aim, the decision has to be rejected.'</p>	
<p>18. If allowing migrants from poor developing countries to come to Saudi to work hasn't contributed to developing Saudi Arabia, then one should change the situation and stop recruiting them with.</p>	<p>18. <i>#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis</i> <i>If you're ruining things and don't want to employ Saudis, at least bring us foreigners from advanced countries like Japan, the US, China and Germany to serve the country and develop it, do not bring them from backward countries like India, Pakistan, Egypt and the Levant countries !!!</i> <i>[Image shown above]</i></p>

The topos of humanitarianism in the data set appeals to universal human values of compassion and justice; however, there is also a reliance on religious texts (Quran and Hadith) as moral ground to argue against this exclusionary hashtag and the prejudiced opinions found with the hashtag. This topos is constructed in example (19), in Table 11

below, by the text between quotations which is an overtly established recontextualisation of the Hadith ‘None of you shall become a true believer until he desires for his brother what he desires for himself.’ The user appeals to the most respected authority after the Quran, which is the prophet’s sayings (Hadith), to denounce the hashtag and emphasise the values of compassion, solidarity and generosity implied in the saying. This prophetic saying along with the emphasis on means of living being ordained by God prior to the creation of heaven and earth all have strong significance as it is part of the audience’s repertoire of religious knowledge, and thus used to delegitimise the other through such religious references. While this prophetic saying is deployed here to argue against the exclusion of migrants, it is recontextualised rather selectively in another tweet to exclude migrants through the topos of burden, as shown later in this chapter.

The topos of humanitarianism is employed in examples (20) and (21), below, to argue against the prejudiced proposals made with the hashtag. The two tweets below, which are written in English, imply that such prejudiced proposals conflict with the values of humanity. In example (20), the user highlights humanitarian reasons for supporting refugees and migrants by explaining migrants’ unfortunate circumstances, such as fleeing war. An appeal to people’s emotions is evoked by emphasising the importance of long-term residence, implying that those migrants do not know or have connections to their home countries and consider Saudi Arabia their home. The topos of humanitarianism is also evident in the third example (21) in the explicit usage of certain lexical items such as ‘*bigots*’, ‘*so-called “patriotic campaigns”*’, ‘*racism & bigotry*’ and ‘*racist*’ in the statements he/she makes to denounce the prejudiced opinions with the hashtags #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis and #AlHijazIdentity.

Table 11

Topos of humanitarianism

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<p><i>Topos of humanitarianism</i></p> <p>Conclusion rule: ‘If a political action or decision does or does not conform to human rights or humanitarian convictions and values, one should or should not perform or make it.’</p>	
<p>19–21. If Saudis adhere to basic human rights and Islamic values of solidarity and humanitarianism, then prejudiced proposals accompanying the hashtag should be rejected.</p>	<p>19. <i>#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis Earth is the land of God, and the servants are the servants of God, and wealth and means of living are in the hands of God, Glory be to Him. Why envy? You will collect your means of living and it was destined for you before heaven and earth were created. If all the people of the world lived in Saudi Arabia, your means of living that God has ordained for you would be the same, and would not change, neither with their presence nor with their absence. “Desire for your brother what you desire for yourself”</i></p> <p>20. <i>#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis Some people lived in Saudi Arabia their whole life and some of them also came here because they suffering from wars</i></p> <p>21. <i>Why can't we just be patriotic without being bigots? Is that an impossible equation? These two so-called “patriotic campaigns”: #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis #AlHijazIdentity Are full of racism & bigotry. We can still love our country without sounding racist</i></p>

The topos of comparison, which comprises around 3.24% of the topoi identified, relies mostly on mitigating exclusionary proposals made with the hashtag by referring to diverse exclusionary behaviours observed in other countries to justify similar practices in Saudi Arabia. There is also the implication that we are not as bad as those countries we are referencing. Klein (2012) argues that “racist movements are able to digitally launder hateful rhetoric through internet channels in order to produce a loose form of accepted ‘public

discourse” (p. 443). He explains the theory of information laundering as “the digital process by which racist rhetoric and extremist agendas cycle through the information currencies of search engines, political blogs, news boards and social networks on a daily basis, producing a more legitimized hate speech” (p. 445). Similarly, Kallis (2013) warns against mainstreaming extremist thoughts and argues that the diffusion dynamic of such exclusionary and extremist ideas is not constrained by the national political and social contexts from which they arise. Rather, with the help of mass media and social media, such ideas might find fertile grounds elsewhere as they “may have an empowering/mobilizing effect on other political and social constituencies in other parts of the world” (p. 57). This digital laundering of hateful rhetoric is evident in the two tweets below. The topos of comparison is used in both tweets, as shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12

Topos of comparison

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<p><i>Topos of comparison</i> Conclusion rule: ‘If other countries have suggested similar exclusionary procedures, then one can perform the same ones’</p>	
<p>22. If the UK has launched such campaign against foreigners to save their jobs, then it is only normal that we do the same.</p>	<p>22. <i>#Britain’sJobsForTheBritish</i> <i>It is a campaign launched in Britain several years ago by the British as they have had enough of immigration and the accumulation of foreign workers, as they took their jobs. This was one of the main reasons for Britain’s exit from the EU.</i> <i>#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis</i> [Image shown below]</p>
<p>23. If Lebanon is not welcoming Syrian refugees because they take over their jobs, then they should not be upset when we call for the deportation of Lebanese taking over our jobs.</p>	<p>23. <i>A citizen tweets with agony: This banner is lifted in public in #Lebanon and when Saudis chant: (#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis) they accuse them of racism! My resident brother: just as you don't accept that the Saudi takes your place in your country,</i></p>

	<p><i>also the Saudi has the right to work in his own country.</i> [Image shown below]</p>
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Example 22

[#Britain'sJobsForTheBritish

It is a campaign launched in Britain several years ago by the British as they have had enough of immigration and the accumulation of foreign workers, as they took their jobs. This was one of the main reasons for Britain's exit from the EU.

#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]



Example 23

[A citizen tweets with agony: This banner is lifted in public in #Lebanon and when Saudis chant: (#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis) they accuse them of racism! My resident brother: just as you don't accept that the Saudi takes your place in your country, also the Saudi has the right to work in his own country.]



As Wodak (2017) explains, this topos “employs moralization by analogy” (p. 42). The topos of comparison is used to justify exclusionary discourse by “by naming other countries who have also suggested similar exclusionary procedures” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 175).

In example (22), the user employs moralisation by using the topos of comparison. He or she recontextualises anti-migrant arguments adopted globally, such as the slogan *'British jobs for British workers'* used by right-wing parties in the UK, to normalise and justify the very same exclusionary campaign in the context of Saudi Arabia. The fact that such a campaign was launched in a democratic country that stresses tolerance as a core democratic value lends more legitimacy to the Saudi campaign. The slogan *'British jobs for British workers'* is made visible in four photos included within the tweet, two of which are newspaper headlines written in bold, while the third one is found on a pamphlet. Finally, the slogan is shown on a poster held up in a protest. The comparison relies on making references to anti-migrant policies or sentiments across the world (in this case the UK) which they unsurprisingly approve of. As Doerr (2017) argues that racist linguistic and visual elements online reach multilingual audiences through transnational network publics, resulting in an “ethno-nationalist bond of solidarity that connects far-right activists and populist-right political audiences across languages and national contexts” (p. 18). The user emphasises the importance of such campaigns and validates the anti-migrant sentiment in Saudi by stating that the British have also had enough of migrants stealing their jobs, to the point that they took the decision to leave the European Union.

Example (23) is a recontextualisation of a sub-hashtag within this hashtag that demands the deportation of Lebanese, to which many Lebanese have responded by calling it a racist hashtag. The user cites an example from Lebanon where many Syrian refugees fled. The banner in the picture reads *'sorry my Syrian brother worker... I am more deserving of work in this country than you are'*. The user starts by denying racism in the phrase *'they*

accuse them of racism!' According to van Dijk (1991), words such as 'accuse' are one of the common strategic moves used to deny racism. The comparison is employed here to delegitimise Lebanese voices that call Saudis racist for using this hashtag by pointing out the same blatant discriminatory remark practised in their home country against Syrian refugees. The user employs a visual image of Lebanese racism and centres the issue around unemployment discourse, '*the Saudi has the right to work in his own country*', to deflect accusations of racism. Van Dijk (1991) further emphasises that the mitigation of racism can occur in the text using euphemisms, as in the use of '*brother*' in the phrase '*My resident brother*' which is a recontextualisation of the same word used by the Lebanese to mitigate racism against Syrian refugees in the image included.

Another topos observed in the data set is *the topos of law or right*. The denial of racism in example (24), below, draws strongly on the topos of law. This topos turns to the nationality law to maintain the argument that if Saudi law specifically provides a definition for who is Saudi by naturalisation, then this legal definition legitimises using the term '*naturalised*' to refer to Saudis by naturalisation and they shouldn't be offended by this term since it is legal. The user's denial of racism is also evident in his/her accusations of Saudis who call out the racism contained in the term '*naturalised*' of being oversensitive. This is achieved by predicating them with a disease metaphor, as seen in '*suffer from excessive sensitivity*' and '*the problem lies within the weakness of the naturalised person's immunity towards it*'. It is important to note that the definition of Saudis by naturalisation in the nationality law does not exceed prescribing the conditions under which a person is recognised as a national. Thus, the term '*naturalised*' is not normalised as claimed in the tweet to refer to Saudis by naturalisation in any other situation, just as Saudis by birth are not labelled as such. In addition, all naturalised Saudis are not only equal to Saudis by birth but indistinguishable from them when it comes to their rights as citizens. Thus, the racism lies in the fact that

Saudis by naturalisation are rendered into a mere process realised in the term ‘*naturalised*’ as naturalisation is a legal process to acquire citizenship rather than a state of being (see section 7.2.1).

Table 13

Topos of law

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<i>Topos of law</i>	
Conclusion rule: ‘If a law or otherwise codified norm prescribes or forbids a specific politico-administrative action, the action has to be performed or omitted.’	
24. If the nationality law provides a definition for Saudis by naturalisation, then we are right and legitimate in calling them naturalised.	24. To all those who suffer from excessive sensitivity towards the word (<i>naturalised</i>) and consider it racist, I say to them that Article 3/b of the nationality system provides a definition for the phrase (Saudi by naturalisation) as everyone who acquired it in accordance with its special provisions, and therefore this word is 100% legal, and the problem lies within the weakness of the naturalised person’s immunity towards it?

A further topos found in the data set is *the topos of culture*. This topos is mainly used to argue that crime and other types of inappropriate behaviour are an integral part of the cultural background of migrants who pose a threat to Saudis. This argumentation scheme is explained in the following table.

Table 14

Topos of culture

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<i>Topos of culture</i>	
Conclusion rule: ‘Because the culture of a specific group of people is as it is, specific problems arise in specific situations and specific actions should be performed to prevent these problems.’	

25. If the cultural habits of migrants are littering and lacking personal hygiene, then government officials should supervise parks and impose heavy fines for their offences.

*25. This is yesterday at #Alkhobar beach sidewalk. One female from “the Arab of the North” stood up and let her boy relieve himself on the palm tree. I walked up to her and said there is a toilet, she told me “‘Seriously, there are toilets here”.’ I hope public places here are supervised and subjected to heavy fines in order to discipline such specimens, this is besides Hookah and barbecuing on grass!
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis
[Image shown below]*

Example 25

*[This is yesterday at #Alkhobar beach sidewalk. One female from “the Arab of the North” stood up and let her boy relieve himself on the palm tree. I walked up to her and said there is a toilet, she told me “‘Seriously, there are toilets here”.’ I hope public places here are supervised and subjected to heavy fines in order to discipline such specimens, this is besides Hookah and barbecuing on grass!]
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*



The tweet above employs the pejorative term '*Arab of the North*', which has been discussed in Chapter 7. Here, the writer of the tweet in a reply to two accounts discussing migrant-related issues includes a photograph in her/his tweet in which there is a woman kneeling down by a child whom the user claims is a migrant woman and refers to her in a derogatory manner '*from the Arab of the North*'. The user claims that the woman let her boy relieve himself in the park. The phrase '*Seriously, there are toilets here*' is written in a Levant dialect to further highlight her belonging to the out-group being antagonised in this tweet. The topos of culture is employed to show the alleged cultural habits of Levant migrants, such as a lack of personal hygiene implied by her son relieving himself on the grass, and other behaviours that are considered littering, such as barbecuing on grass and hookah smoking. The image of the woman kneeling is used as evidence for the claim made, although the image cannot possibly prove the incident nor the nationality of the woman or the boy. Once again, the problematisation of migrants is not based on race or religion, as the depiction of the other does not employ essentialised biological characteristics here. Instead, as noticed in this tweet and other examples discussed earlier in the chapter and in the thesis as a whole, the problematisation of foreigners usually occurs along with their nationality, which serves to invoke certain stereotyped images of people from a specific geographical origin.

The topos of finances, which is one of the topoi identified in the data set, focuses on the allegedly negative socio-economic consequences associated with migrants. To exaggerate some of the real problems of migrants, statistical examples are employed to give credibility to the claims made in example (26) below.

Table 15

Topos of finances

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<i>Topos of finances</i>	
Conclusion rule: "If a specific situation or action costs too much money or causes a loss of revenue, one should perform actions that diminish the costs or help to avoid the loss."	
26. If migrants only benefit themselves by sending money earned to their home countries, then we should amend the labour laws and replace them with Saudis who would invest the money in Saudi Arabia.	26. <i>The incursion of foreigners in such numbers into the public and private sectors is tantamount to the colonisation and depletion of our economy and resources. The size of remittances of foreigners amounted to 141.6 billion Riyals in 2017, and it is expected to increase in 2018 unless expatriate labour is removed and replaced by Saudis.</i> #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis #SaudiFirst [Image shown below]

Example 26

[The incursion of foreigners in such numbers into the public and private sectors is tantamount to the colonisation and depletion of our economy and resources. The size of remittances of foreigners amounted to 141.6 billion Riyals in 2017, and it is expected to increase in 2018 unless expatriate labour is removed and replaced by Saudis.
#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis]

التحويلات الشخصية (غير السعوديين) - مليار ريال			
التغير %	2018	2017	الشهر
(% 18)	10.39	12.62	يناير
% 19 +	12.80	10.77	فبراير
% 0.4 +	12.80	12.75	مارس
% 3 +	11.72	11.41	أبريل
--	--	13.04	مايو

Although some statistics are true, one must be cautious and fair when interpreting them, especially when they are used in a selective and inconsistent manner. For instance, the

top row reporting January's personal remittances shows that there is an 18% decrease in 2018 compared to 2017. In addition, March shows only a slight increase of foreign remittances, only 0.4% in 2018. However, regardless of these numbers, there is a total disregard for any economic virtues brought by those migrants to the Saudi economy in this tweet.

As Bennett (2019) emphasises, one should not only pay attention to “what is manifest in a text but also at what is not immediately visible, i.e. additional information that could be present but is omitted and mitigates the strength of the truth claim made in a piece of discourse” (p. 247). A topos of threat is apparent in the metaphorical military expressions ‘*incursion*’ and ‘*colonisation*’ examined earlier in Chapter 7, along with the vague quantification in “*in such numbers*” that implicitly intensifies the sense of threat. The implied conclusion rule is that if something is penetrating and colonizing, in vague exaggerated numbers, then it is dangerous and threatening and something should be done about it. The perception of the social groups involved is affected by the metaphors employed and emotions of fear and hate invoked by those metaphors. While some metaphors are more radical than others, military metaphors are deeply rooted in the collective unconscious and consequently do not need decoding on the part of the audience, which makes them rather effective in delivering the intended meaning. The conclusion for both the topos of threat and finances is explicitly stated ‘*unless expatriate labour is removed and replaced by Saudis*’.

The topos of authority in the data set was used to lend legitimacy to users’ positions. In the tweet below, the argumentation scheme is based on a quote. Quotes usually serve as an appeal to authority, to the personal authority of a role model in this example (van Leeuwen 2007, p. 95). The intertextual reference to the quotation of Omar bin al-Khattab is used to legitimise exclusion and discrimination by appealing to the authority of religion in the intended audience. This is because it is represented by a religious figure like Omar, given his position as a senior companion of the prophet and the second Caliph in Islam, and thus more

convincing to a conservative Muslim audience that places much value on religion and religious figures. However, it falsely relies on this quotation as a lesson from history (*topos of history*) to explain how to handle immigration. The user here recontextualises the quote by giving his/her own interpretation of the quotation without referring to any commentary or explications of such statements from religion or history scholars, and ignoring the fact that even the most respected figures in Islamic history are capable of making judgement errors. This historical account is selectively employed and recontextualised by the user to serve his/her negative construction of present-day migrants in Saudi Arabia who have been settled in Hijaz province for years as threatening its identity and stealing the jobs of its people, and to legitimise prejudiced proposals for how to handle migrants in Hijaz.

Table 16

Topos of authority and history

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Topos of authority</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Conclusion rule: ‘X is right or X has to be done or X has to be omitted because A (= an authority) says that it is right or that it has to be done or that it has to be omitted.’</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Topos of history</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Conclusion rule: ‘Because history teaches us that specific actions have specific consequences, one should perform or omit a specific action in a specific situation (allegedly) comparable with the historical example referred to.’</p>	
<p>27. If sending foreigners back to their countries is something that has been done in our history by Omar bin al-Khattab, then one should perform this action to avoid certain consequences.</p>	<p>27. Omar bin al-Khattab used to address the pilgrims after completing their rituals, saying: "O people of the Sham! (Go back) to your country. O people of Yemen, (Go back) to your country." "He made that statement to dissuade people from various races from settling in Hijaz for many reasons, including maintaining the habits and traditions of the people of Hijaz, as well as preserving their livelihood. #BornInSaudiArabiaThankYouCrown Prince #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis</p>

Another topos identified in the data set was *the topos of burden, which* is evident in the tweet below through the metaphorical phrases ‘*tafaḥa alkayl*’ and ‘*balagh asaylu alzubā*’. These are two common Arabic metaphorical expressions used to describe an unbearable situation. The denotative meaning of the former is ‘*the vessel has overflowed*’ and for the latter ‘*the torrent reached the hole*’. The word ‘*alzubā*’ ‘holes’ is the plural of ‘*azubyah*’, which is a hole that people dig to hunt predators, and it is only dug in an elevated place like on a hill, so that the torrent does not reach it and wash it away, and when it does reach it, it sweeps away everything around it. This image, along with that of a vessel that is filled until it overflows, does not require decoding on the part of the audience, as its figurative meaning comes to mind easily due to the extensive use of these expressions in everyday life. Both metaphorical expressions can be translated as ‘*enough is enough*’. The topos of burden is further sustained by the quantifier ‘*more than a million*’, which is part of the topos of numbers implying the severity of the situation and intensified by the phrase ‘*for how long...!!*’ This suggests that this situation has been going for a long time. In addition, this sense of urgency to deal with this burden is achieved orthographically by the two exclamation marks at the end of the phrase. The phrase ‘*for the benefit of the people of my country*’ works to mitigate against any accusations of racism by implying that they are disadvantaged by this burden, and the number of unemployed Saudis included in the tweet is intended to make the statement welcoming racism for the benefit of the people more acceptable. Migrants are seen as hindering the employment of Saudis. The reference to the prophetic saying in ‘*desire for your brother what you desire for yourself*’ was seen earlier in this chapter where it was employed to construct the topos of humanitarianism. This intertextual reference is also deployed here and recontextualised, albeit differently. The recontextualisation deviates from the originally intended meaning of the text and imposes a nativist interpretation that emphasises the cliché charity begins at home narrative, which is apparent in the exclusionary

statement ‘*It remains #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*’ that is being equated with the prophetic saying. The user assumes that this sense of brotherhood should be restricted to fellow citizens. The implied conclusion in this topos is that since the country is overwhelmed with migrants, then action must be taken to reduce their numbers.

Table 17

Topos of burden

Claim	Extract (Translated)
<p><i>Topos of burden</i></p> <p>Conclusion rule: ‘If a person, an institution or a ‘country’ is burdened by specific problems, one should act in order to diminish these burdens.’</p>	
<p>28. If Saudis are burdened by migrants who take away their jobs, then action should be taken to ensure that migrants’ employability does not come at the expense of Saudis by reducing the number of migrant workers.</p>	<p>28. <i>And on the principle: desire for your brother what you desire for yourself. It remains #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis and if this is racist, then I welcome this racism for the benefit of the people of my country. Enough is enough, and there is no patience left in the heart. More than a million unemployed for how long...!!</i></p>

8.2 Summary

The aim of this chapter was to shed light on the argumentation strategies present in the data set using illustrative examples of the various context-specific characteristics of anti-migrant discourse. Topoi were used as ready-made formulas to facilitate the process of identifying arguments. I rely on Reisigl & Wodak’s (2001) list of topoi to identify these argumentation schemes that are typical of antimigrant discourse. Except for the topos of humanitarianism, all topoi were employed to justify discriminatory propositions in this online discussion and delegitimise the other, while legitimising exclusionary acts against them. The findings revealed by the analysis show that these tweets mostly possess the common characteristics usually associated with exclusionary discourse.

Prejudiced positions were mostly justified through the topos of threat, by disseminating emotions of fear and panic. This is achieved by taking advantage of the semiotic resources available to them, such as using videos and images to visualise this fear of losing jobs to migrants and fear for the country's national security, with a rhetoric saturated with alarmist content.

The topos of responsibility was the second most employed topos in the data set. This topos was concerned with politicians and institutions' negligence as well as favouritism towards migrant workers. Demands for accountability are observed in the usage of direct address that allow direct communication between public and the politicians and institutions involved. Demands for accountability, particularly those related to Saudis' unemployment, are accompanied by problematizing and delegitimizing migrant workers in Saudi Arabia.

The third prominent topos is the topos of abuse, which in this particular context does not focus on abusing the country's welfare system, as is often observed in anti-migrant discourse, but rather on migrants abusing its generosity by slandering people on various social media platforms for leading a luxurious life. The delegitimation of exclusionary discourse against migrants in this topos relies on evoking feelings of anger through arguments that have a strong resonance and influence in Saudi society, i.e. they look down on Saudis and use derogatory terms to refer to them, which are often realised in the screenshots included in tweets. A further topos observed in the data set is the topos of advantage or usefulness, which highlights the advantages of employing Saudis while simultaneously constructing migrant workers negatively. In addition, this topos makes it clear that this hashtag excludes all migrants and evaluates them as useless, and the only migrants who prove to be useful are those doing work Saudis will not do.

The topos of justice focuses on the topic of institutional favouritism and thus is mostly juxtaposed with the topos of responsibility as the authorities face demands for accountability

and for measures to be taken against the injustices that Saudis experience in relation to employment. The topos of numbers is mostly employed with other topoi such as the topos of threat or finances. This topos clearly relies on numbers and statistics to support prejudiced opinions, while disregarding the bias usually contained in these selected numbers. Another topos identified is the topos of definition, which in this context corresponds to a nativist principle that is deeply rooted in tribalism. Saudis who do not carry the right surname or manifest their presumed Saudiness in the ways expected by society are considered outsiders, regardless of their legal status as Saudi citizens. The topoi of disadvantage, burden and finances are closely related, they all construct migrants as useless people who do not contribute financially to society and only benefit their home countries. The topos of culture, with the help of the semiotic resources available, facilitates the stereotyping of migrants as a violent, uncivilised mass of people.

The topos of comparison was employed to legitimise prejudiced proposals with the hashtag by arguing that similar proposals and harsher exclusionary acts exist elsewhere in the world. However, the topos of authority, which overlaps with the topos of history in this data, appeals to the authority of respected figures in history or in today's world to legitimise their racist positions. Similarly, the topos of law relies on the authority of the law to deny or allow something. The topos of law was employed mostly to argue against naturalisation. Finally, the topos of humanitarianism, which is the only topos employed to argue against the exclusionary discourse used with this hashtag, relied on both universal human values of compassion, justice and solidarity and similar Islamic values of fraternal love and compassion. These values are manifest in the religious texts those users quote to persuade an audience that claims to strongly adhere to Islamic values and traditions.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The present study has examined tweets with the *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* hashtag and how they discursively construct migrants over a period of five years. The study draws on the discourse-historical approach (DHA) as the main theoretical and methodological framework. It is important to note that the central focus of this thesis is on argumentation, thus relevant approaches such as multimodal discourse analysis and critical metaphor analysis were reviewed only to account for how metaphors and all nonverbal modes of communication were employed to advance arguments. Initially, I started with an entry-level analysis in which I conducted a thematic analysis to identify common themes used with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudi*. The aim was to determine the prevailing discursively constructed topics that are present in tweets featuring this hashtag in the data set, which were used as a starting point to talk about migrants (the discursive construction of migrants). The argumentative analysis reveals how argumentation schemes were built on the main topics identified. The analysis revealed 16 main topics. This entry-level analysis also identified the prominent semiotic resources that were deployed by tweet authors to either endorse or challenge anti-migrant stances. After that, an in-depth analysis was conducted using the DHA's discursive strategies (Reisigl and Wodak, 2016), with a particular focus on representational and argumentation strategies (topoi). The argumentative analysis focused on the topoi that the authors of tweets utilised to advance their standpoints about migration in Saudi Arabia, whether that it was to lend legitimacy to the exclusionary discourse in the hashtag or oppose it. It is through topoi that the positive and negative attributions assigned to migrants and in the representational analysis were legitimised.

9.1 Summary and Discussion

The construction of antimigrant discourse used with this hashtag was built on a wide range of topics. Unemployment was the central theme discussed with the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis*. Saudis mainly used this hashtag to discuss and sometimes expose and document the private sector's exclusionary practices against them, along with discussions related to the Ministry of Labour's announcements, reforms and policies. However, the hashtag that seemed to function as an outlet for Saudi citizens, who find no other alternatives to have their voices heard by politicians and institutions regarding unemployment issues, gradually turned into a place that hosts and perpetuates antimigrant sentiment. Migrant workers were blamed for the unemployment rate, low wages and other socio-economic issues in the kingdom. To start with, similar to the "Austria first" petition (see Reisigl and Wodak, 2001 for an extended discussion), the title of the hashtag itself *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* seems to give the audience a false sense of losing their country to "the other". The title also constructs a classic "us" versus "them" dichotomy. Threats to Saudi culture and national security, as well as the economic impact of migrants among other common right-wing discourse topics, were invoked with this hashtag.

As stated earlier, the lack of employment opportunities for Saudis and being discriminated against in the labour market fuelled the anti-migrant discourse expressed with this hashtag. Saudis feel that the impunity given to foreign workers in executive positions and other senior management positions is more egregious because their fellow Saudis, the more powerful ones, are the ones enabling discriminatory acts against Saudis. Thus, politicians and other officials in the data, particularly the Minister of Labour, faced demands for accountability. The 13 codes used to identify semiotic resources in the data set were necessary as an entry point to the representational and argumentative analysis. Occasionally,

some tweets consisted only of hashtags denoting the user's viewpoint on migrant-related issues and images were used in combination with text to advance an argument. In addition, videos, screenshots and infographics were all employed in the discursive construction of migrants.

9.1.1 Representational Analysis

The representational analysis prioritises nomination and predication strategies as they reveal how migrants, and other social actors involved, are nominated and evaluated, be it negatively or positively. While there are various social actors identified in the entry-level analysis, only migrants and their allies, that is naturalised Saudis and so-called native Saudis who defend migrants, were the focus of the representational analysis. The detoponymic anthroponym *ajnabī* “foreigner” is a term used for all migrants, and this term most often appears alongside other strategies such as criminalisation and professionalisation. Politonyms were also frequent in the data set, such as *mujannasīn* “naturalised”, which was employed to refer to Saudis of foreign origin. Arab migrants and non-Arab migrants were typically referred to collectively or individually by their geographical origin; however, Arab migrants were mostly identified through ethnification with the ethnonym Arab.

The emigration of Europeans, Australians and Americans, that is whites of European descent, was not introduced into the debate except for two examples, in which they were perceived as competent and worthy of holding high-status positions. Their absence from the data set can, in my opinion, be attributed to their much smaller ratio to Saudi nationals when compared to other migrant groups. However, the mainstream perception in GCC countries is that Western expatriates are synonymous with highly skilled elites (Alloul, 2021). As Walsh (2014) argues, whites of European descent have historically been privileged in GCC countries, and their privileges are visible in the social and economic hierarchies within these

countries. The ethnic group affected by prejudices in this hashtag is Arabs and, to a lesser degree south Asians.

While othering in several European contexts usually targets migrants based on their religion, race or their mere belonging to a different culture, the migrants who are mostly attacked in the Saudi context are those who share the same language and religion as Saudis. Arab migrants are the most problematised group of migrants in the data set. They are mostly portrayed as ungrateful, envious neighbours with ulterior motives. Furthermore, their perceptions of Saudis as inferior Bedouins who obtained undeserved wealth is often highlighted to instigate hate towards them. This is done by circulating individual incidents such as videos or screenshots of social media posts in which an Arab migrant insults Saudis. Generalisations are made about this migrant group based on such individual acts.

In addition, users draw on vilified historical accounts of Arab migrants in the GCC, which are likely to bring about negative expectations towards them. Such selective readings of history means that some events are purposefully left out, especially those that contradict the desired antagonising narrative of Arab migrants. There is also an emphasis on a discourse of the Saudi hospitality offered towards Arab migrants, who reciprocate this hospitality with ungratefulness. To summarise, cultural similarities that should work in favour of Arab migrants have become a barrier to their inclusion. Arab migrants are seen as competitors in the job market, unlike South Asian migrants who pose no such threat, as they mostly occupy low-status jobs that Saudis are not interested in. South Asian migrants in the data set are only associated with crime, rather than being a threat to the country's culture and national security. The problematisation of Arab migrants in the data set can be summarised in the following paragraph by the Emirati businessman Al-Fahim (1995) in his book *From Rags to Riches*:

Because we had a common religion and for the most part, a common language, we felt we were dealing with friends not foes. In the case of our neighbours, we shared

the same Arab perspective on life and the world. Or so we believed. Unfortunately, we found to our dismay that it took more than such commonalities to build a solid foundation for trustworthy relationships (p. 160).

In many cases, Arab migrants are referred to by nationonyms such as Egyptian, Syrian or Yemeni, which, depending on the context, can themselves be racist remarks. As Taylor et.al (2015) assert, within GCC communities there is a hierarchy of Arabs where Lebanese are at the top and Egyptians and Yemenis are at the bottom of the social ladder. Also, Birks and Sinclair (1980) report that “many GCC nationals feel a detachment from Palestinians and Jordanians, a lack of respect for Yemenis, and mistrust and dislike of Egyptians” (p. 116). It is important to note that the Sudanese are the only Arab migrants not targeted by the hateful rhetoric with the hashtag. Going back to the hospitality discourse, Sudanese migrants were praised for their work ethic; however, they were mostly applauded for their humble attitude and gratitude to Saudi Arabia as a host nation.

Arabness in the hashtag is not determined by ethnicity, language or sharing the characteristics of culture, but rather an appropriate lineage which is mostly associated with tribes within GCC states. In the negative construction of Arab migrants, there is a constant reference to GCC states as a collective entity exploited by Arab migrants who do not reciprocate the generosity of those states but rather look down on them as an inferior other. This perception of GCC states as a single entity stems from the fact that those states not only share similar political forms and histories, but also share an oil-rich history and similar relationships with their ruling elites (Limbert, 2014).

Saudis defending migrants are portrayed as naive, as seen in the anthroponyms “*idiot*” and “*stupid retards*”, or submissive as in the metaphor ‘*abīd al’ajānib*’ “foreigners' slaves”. Another negative reference is achieved through negative ideologonyms in which they are mostly constructed as traitors with ulterior motives. Their Saudiness is also

called into question and thus they are perceived as having “mixed blood”, i.e. Saudis born to foreign mothers. They also face accusations of being members of a political movement that is deemed corrupt in Saudi. A narrative of belonging is produced and perpetuated through political actionalisation, realised by the politonym *mujannas* “naturalised”. While the state effectively enforces equality in terms of citizenship entitlement, Twitter users’ perception of belonging disregard the legality. To those users, naturalised citizens’ identity does not fit their claimed national narrative, and they are perceived as a threatening internal other.

Consequently, there is a sense of urgency created to act against this threat.

The tweets in the hashtag create the impression that national security, identity and culture are endangered by migrants and naturalised Saudis. Users, whether pro- or anti-migrants, are all engaged in the discursive construction of the nation. The forming of this collective national identity is interrelated with the negative construction of the other, i.e. the migrants, their supporters and naturalised Saudis. The negative construction of the other is essential in constructing Saudi identity as it distinguishes itself as unique and distinct through this othering, and users are constantly demarcating what is Saudi and what is not. The reproduction of nationalism with this hashtag leverages not only the linguistic resources but also the technological affordances of Twitter. Images, videos and other semiotic resources within tweets foster various forms of nationalism that are reminders of the imagined Saudi nation. They perform their belonging to the nation by posting folkloric dances and music, for instance, in an attempt to promote an authentic Saudi identity. This authentic identity distinguishes the native Saudi, who by their definition is the one who has tribal affiliation and pure Saudi heritage, from others whose loyalties are often questioned.

Construction of in-group sameness is emphasised in the discursive formation of a Saudi identity that disregards the diverse cultural traditions throughout the kingdom. The formation of a homogenous self is observed in the analysis of nomination, predication and

argumentation strategies. This formation is seen in argumentative strategies such as *topoi*, particularly that of culture. In addition, predication strategies are vital in identity construction. For example, first person pronouns, metaphors and other linguistic realisations emphasise that national identity in this particular context is defined via heritage and ancestry. Saudi nationalism draws on national pride and collective memory in the analysed data.

The claimed patriotism in the data is often a disguised form of hate towards the other. In my opinion, for the unemployed, nationalism and patriotism operate as means to facilitate demands for social justice. They also exploit nationalism to demand that privilege should be cultivated based on a nativist principle, and thus employment should be based on native entitlement. There is a tendency to view Saudi nationalism as a means to facilitate dissent as a reaction to specific labour laws and reforms. Dissent is employed in the form of populist nativist discourse on Twitter as an alternative to the absence of formal channels where they can voice their grievances regarding unemployment.

9.1.2 Argumentative Analysis

Users create an 'Us versus Them' dichotomy through nomination and predication strategies, and then proceed to justify such discriminatory and insulting labels by creating an imagined homogenous self that is threatened by internal and external enemies. Their justifications exploit the affordances of Twitter to construct arguments that legitimise anti-migrant discourses. Despite the fact that social media are not a valid argumentative environment by the standards of some argumentation frameworks such as *pragmadilectics* (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992), argumentation still exists on social media platforms. However, persuasive mechanisms are truncated, visually based, strongly affective and do not adhere to proper rules of argumentation. Thus, I had to deconstruct how the ready conclusion rules (*topoi*) work in the analysed tweets. The argumentative analysis offers insights into how

the key topics identified earlier were utilised to construct various arguments, and the focus of the analysis is on topoi. Topoi as argumentative devices seemed to be effective in locating arguments and there were various topoi realisations found in the data set. The hyper-intertextual nature of Twitter allowed for the inclusion of other texts that were exploited to advance arguments that reinforce the legitimization of the self and the delegitimizing of the other. Such sources allowed for both textual and visual forms of legitimation. The semiotic resources on Twitter paved the way for new forms of argumentation strategies used to legitimise exclusionary discourse. Hashtags, emojis, hyperlinks, images and other semiotic resources were utilised by Twitter users to develop topoi. Through screenshots, for instance, users recontextualised arguments found within different national contexts such as the UK, France and Trump's antimigrant rhetoric.

The main topos is sometimes advanced visually or in conjunction with linguistic elements in tweets. Arguments were also enhanced by appealing to an authoritative figure or authoritative religious texts that give credibility to their claims. Furthermore, the lexical choices of the users reveal in many cases their underlying attitudes; however, they mostly do not mitigate or disguise their sentiment. They often use emotional language, such as hyperbole and metaphor, in order to stir up their audience's emotions and foster prejudice against migrants. As (Hart, 2011) points out, a metaphor can function as a topos. For example, animalising metaphors were used in the data set to evoke the topos of the uselessness of migrants.

Argumentation schemes (topoi) were identified through Reisigl & Wodak's (2001) list of topoi that characterise antimigrant discourse. The topos most frequently identified in the data set was the topos of threat, via which prejudiced positions were justified and facilitated by Twitter's multimodality that allowed users to share videos and images that construct a visual topos of threat. The second most commonly used topos was the topos of responsibility,

which covered neglect, and favouritism of migrant workers by politicians and institutions. The topos of abuse was a third prominent topic in which abusing the country's generosity is highlighted. Via the topos of abuse, migrants' ingratitude and disparagement of Saudis are often demonstrated. Other topoi that are commonly found in antimigrant discourse were also identified in the data set, such as topoi of justice, numbers and definition, among others. There were few humanitarian arguments within the data set, and they mostly relied on religious texts that promote compassion, justice and other universal human values. Users employ arguments that resonate with the intended audience to legitimise their exclusion of the other.

9.2 Reflections on the Findings

A significant outcome observed in this thesis is that despite the considerable disparities between the cultural, historical and political context of Saudi Arabia and those of other countries in which similar research has been done, the analysis revealed that many of the same strategies have been used when addressing migrant-related issues. This suggests that migration discourse maintains certain properties that persist across diverse contexts.

The findings of this thesis align with the large body of literature on migration discourse in both mass media and digital environments, as discussed in chapter 3. Similarly to right-wing discourses across the globe, Saudis on Twitter are portraying the hashtag *#SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis* as addressing the concerns of young unemployed Saudis whose employment opportunities and wages are jeopardised by the presence of migrant workers, particularly Arabs. They strongly condemn the elites for favouring migrant workers over locals in terms of job opportunities while simultaneously overlooking the exploitation of migrant workers regarding wages. Thus, they ignore the intricate interplay between immigration, wages and unemployment.

In a manner similar to the Singaporean context, frustrations with government policies in Saudi Arabia are often voiced on Twitter, which serves as the primary outlet for expressing concerns and opinions without disrupting public order. Consequently, dissatisfaction with government policies and the various economic issues Saudis are facing, particularly regarding employment and housing, manifests through xenophobic comments scapegoating migrants.

In addition, the Saudi context is related to the Korean one in that it is more tolerant of female migrant spouses than of male migrants marrying Saudi women. This selective acceptance is reflective of the traditional gender roles and patriarchal structures in both contexts. Male migrants are often viewed with suspicion whereas female spouses are more accepted because there is an expectation that as wives, they will be submissive and integrate into the husband's culture, in which he holds the upper hand. Additionally, their roles as caregivers and contributors to family life is a key factor in this acceptance. Moreover, the Saudi context places a strong emphasis on the integrity of familial lineage, which leads not only to societal disapproval of Saudi women marrying non-Saudis but also causes them to encounter more bureaucratic obstacles than their male counterparts.

A parallel can also be drawn between the experiences of migrants from poorer Eastern European nations in Western Europe and those of Arab migrants in the GCC. In both scenarios, the host countries tend to view migrants not as cultural or identity threats, due to their shared ethnicity, traditions and religion, but rather as economic risks. Conversely, migrants from wealthier countries are not typically seen as posing economic threats in either context. Both Eastern Europeans and Arabs are lumped under the term 'migrant', which carries negative connotations, unlike migrants from more affluent backgrounds. Chapter 3 highlighted a similar pattern in the Chilean context, too. Despite their geographical proximity to and shared ethnicity with their Chilean neighbours, Latin American immigrants were

labelled by Chileans as uncivilised individuals from developed countries who came to take away their jobs.

In contrast to the extensive scholarly focus on the concept of 'integration' within migration discourse, the themes of integration and assimilation are rarely addressed in this context. Additionally, due to Arab migrants being the primary antagonised group, the racial tone prevalent in migration discourses worldwide is de-emphasised and played down in the Saudi context.

Another important observation is that while many host countries in the reviewed literature highlight their cultural superiority compared to that of migrants, whose culture is often belittled and urged to assimilate into the host nation's culture, the data revealed that antagonism towards Arab migrants can be partly attributed to the fact that some Arab migrants, particularly those residing in Saudi, portray themselves as culturally superior to Saudis. They label Saudis and their culture as backward and inferior, referring to them with derogatory terms (see section 9.1.1).

Although the hospitality metaphor is not unique to the context of Saudi Arabia, it is conceptualised differently in this context. For example, in the UK and Turkey (Capdevila & Callaghan, 2008; Onay-Coker, 2019), as shown in the literature review chapter, the discourse often centres around the abuse of generosity rather than of hospitality itself, emphasising how the system is exploited rather than focusing on ingratitude for being hosted. The 'guests' are often linked to security threats and economic burdens, such as suggesting that the UK's generosity is being abused by terrorists and smugglers (Capdevila & Callaghan, 2008). The Saudi context is similar in suggesting that migrants are transient and expressing concerns about the strain they place on the economy. However, the context of this study frames hospitality first and foremost as dependant on expressions of gratitude and respect from guests. Hospitality is thus conditional and requires not only assimilation into the host culture,

but, most importantly, not disrupting the cultural and social fabric. Simple acts such as complaining about poor services or facilities are considered ingratitude. Migrants are constantly reminded that they should consider themselves as fortunate recipients of Saudi generosity rather than as individuals contributing to the economy, deserving of rights and fair treatment (see example 9 in Chapter 8).

To conclude, while there are several differences between the results in the Saudi context and findings from equivalent discourses in other settings, essentially the same strategies have been used in both contexts. This observation is particularly striking given Saudi Arabia's unique cultural, historical and political context. Despite these significant contextual differences, certain properties of migration discourse remain consistent across diverse contexts.

9.3 Limitations and Future Research

This thesis has several limitations that I address in this section. One of the main limitations of this study is associated with what KhosraviNik and Unger (2016) call the “a-historicity of the web”, which refers to the fast-changing nature of social media texts. They argue that this dynamic nature will affect the transparency of data collection and consequently its analysis. As I showed in my methodology chapter, I initially intended to collect a sample from 2016 to 2018; however, by the time I started capturing tweets and due to suspended accounts, 102 tweets could not be captured. To compensate for these tweets and ensure that the data set was of sufficient size, I had to collect more tweets from 2019 and 2020.

Another potential limitation relates to translating tweets from Arabic into English. Translating from one language to another is a difficult process, particularly when dealing with metaphorical language as it relies heavily on shared knowledge. It is even more challenging

when Arabic metaphors draw on culture specific notions rather than universal or shared ones. Translations can hardly fully grasp the source text; however, I hope that I minimised that by drawing on my emic cultural and contextual knowledge of the source language.

This research adopted a qualitative approach to this small data set as it fits the aim of the thesis, namely, to conduct an in-depth analysis of the linguistic, multimodal and semiotic features within tweets. However, I believe that this research could have also benefited from the statistical information that quantitative approaches offer. Such statistical information would have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the discursive phenomenon being investigated and thus some interesting outcomes would have resulted from this approach. In addition, the use of a quantitative approach would have ensured that the data were not cherry-picked. Thus, future research could benefit from analysing tweets using two analytical frameworks, for example, that of corpus-assisted discourse analysis (Baker et al., 2008) combined with the Discourse-Historical Approach (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009)

Lastly, since there is no prior research as far as I am aware on migration discourse in Saudi or the Gulf region from a critical perspective, I was faced with a variety of terms and slurs that are specific to the Saudi or GCC context that I could not adequately explore within the thesis' timeframe, particularly due to the lack of pre-existing literature that reviews these terms and traces back their usage in that context. Furthermore, due to time and word limitations, various important aspects of this phenomenon were not fully investigated. Ideally, I would have explored the representation of the other social actors that were identified in the data set; however, I had to focus on migrants and their allies because of space restrictions. Potential future research could focus more specifically on metaphors in anti-migrant discourse on Twitter within the Saudi context, as this was only woven into the representational and argumentation analysis. Future research could also benefit from a comparative analysis of how non-Gulf Arab migrants discursively construct Saudis on social

media platforms, and vice versa. In addition, since the literature on migration discourse in Saudi is so sparse, there is a critical need to establish how it has developed over time by carrying out a longitudinal content analysis of Saudi newspapers and broadcast news. This would provide deeper insights into migrant representation in the broader Saudi context.

9.4 Final Remarks

I refrain from making simplistic, casual arguments, and thus I must point out that I do not claim that the representational and argumentative analyses at hand are a snapshot of Saudi society as a whole. However, they do represent how frustration with the unemployment of Saudi people has shifted to anti-migrant sentiment online that resembles populist discourses around the globe. However, in spite of the fact that this exclusionary and xenophobic discourse on Twitter may not represent mainstream beliefs, it could eventually influence public opinion and policy formation. As Krzyżanowski (2018a) rightfully argues, “the politicisation through public-sphere articulation would often precede the politicisation through policy making and legitimisation, with ideas about, or in most cases against, immigration being first articulated in the public sphere”, in this case on social media platforms (p. 98). Wodak (2007) advances that tolerance is a deeply held ideological value in contemporary capitalist societies, and thus explicit exclusionary politics directly conflict with the liberal values of these societies. In a similar vein, I argue that although Saudi Arabia does not claim to adhere to the values of liberalism, its Sharia law frowns upon all forms of exclusionary politics, which also contradicts the country’s latest efforts to promote moderate Islam and the values of tolerance, peace and coexistence. Moreover, it should be noted that the kingdom is scheduled to see the launch of a new penal system that criminalises hate speech and discrimination based on race, colour, descent, national origin or gender (Shar, 2022). Universal human values, Islamic values and the government’s efforts to combat

racism, along with its 2030 Vision to attract foreign investment, all contradict the antimigrant sentiment that permeates tweets using the *#SaudiArabiaForThe Saudis* hashtag. In conclusion, I have aimed to offer novel insights into bottom-up representations of migrants in a rather novel context. Thus, the primary contribution that this study makes is providing a broader understanding of anti-migrant discourse in the Saudi context, where previous studies on the discursive construction of migrants are non-existent. This study reveals the essence of anti-migrant discourse online in the Saudi context through interpreting how migrants are constructed and how topoi are utilised to legitimise the self and delegitimise the other with the help of Twitter technological affordances. This is done with the intention to hinder the normalisation of such ideologies that are growing in influence and have the potential to jeopardise democratic principles and the kingdom's endeavours to combat racism, while fostering tolerance and peaceful coexistence. Finally, adopting a critical scholarly perspective entails the act of scrutinizing populist ideologies and actively seeking to challenge the normalisation of racist narratives.

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Appendix A

Most Frequent Keywords and Their Corresponding Categories

Representing the Other (Migrants)

Keyword	Category	Frequency	Example
' <i>ajnabī</i> foreigner	Despatialisation	290	<i>The foreigner cannot steal when there is a Saudi in a leadership position, so he is being fought and expelled from work and replaced by a foreign thief #Fact</i>
<i>muqīm</i> (singular) <i>muqīmīn</i> (plural) resident	Spatialisation	96	<i>Writer Saleh Al-Zahrani: experience certificates are the easiest thing for a resident. He can fabricate it in many ways and for any field of work!</i>
<i>wāfid</i> (singular) <i>wāfidīn</i> (plural) immigrant	Actionalisation	189	<i>Three million immigrants are threatening the identity of the capital.</i>
' <i>amālīh</i> 'labourers'	Professionalisation	130	<i>When it comes to foreigners, we should only leave room for cleaning labourers.</i>
Mostly realised by means of nationymic terms such as 'Yemenis' 'Syrians' 'Egyptians' and 'Lebanese'. <i>almsāryh / maşryīn</i> [the Egyptians]	Nationalisation	225	<i>If we say that #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis cried almsāryh [Egyptian people] and aswāryh [Syrian people] started with envy and racism and ... you [being] envious, priority is given to citizens, and enough [of] envy. Look how Egyptians and foreigners view Saudis... (a video of an Egyptian migrant insulting Saudis).</i>
Mostly realised by means of of ethnification through the ethnonym <i>Arab</i>	Ethnification	184	<i>90% of Arabs working in Saudi are less competent than our female and male youth...</i>
Militarisation is used here as a	Militarisation	149	<i>The audacity of the Egyptian, just a driver and crowding out Saudis at</i>

<p>shared field of reference to refer to migrants and qualify them, mostly using the verb <i>iħtala</i>, which translates as ‘seized’ or ‘occupied’. It is notably used in the data as its linguistic realisations are often found in both nomination, e.g. <i>muħtal</i> ‘occupier’, and predication. Also, the verb <i>ista ‘mara</i> ‘colonized’ and the referent <i>musta ‘mirīn</i> ‘colonisers’ were also heavily present.</p>			<p><i>Careem and tarnishing their reputation in their homeland!!! I can only imagine what the situation is like in the private sector and the ferocious war that Saudis are fighting against these colonizers.</i></p>
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Representing the Other Within

Keyword	Category	Frequency	Example
'Naturalised'	Political actionalisation	50	<p><i>this naturalized woman colluded with her compatriot to kill her husband, flagrantly in the month of Ramadan.</i></p> <p><i>Shame on you!</i></p>
'Arab nationalist'	Negative ideologisation	37	<p><i>an Arab-nationalist who does not believe in the idea of a homeland and its borders.....</i></p>
<i>Stupid retards</i> <i>idiots</i>	Somatisation	13	<p><i>and when we say #SaudiArabiaForTheSaudis, we see some idiots talk about the Arab brotherhood</i></p>

			<i>and other terms that were not created for Arabs</i>
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Appendix B

Frequencies of Social Processes in the Data Set

<i>Categories and codes</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Unemployment	
Institutional favouritism	121
Saudization issues	101
Labour law reforms	20
Supporting Saudi nationals	42
Ethical concerns	
Migrants' corruption	114
Unethical behaviour	89
Corruption within Saudi elites and institutions	55
Threat	
Threat to Saudi's culture	27
Threat to national security	28
Economic impact of migrants	33
Citizenship	
Citizenship and belonging	76
Naturalisation	73
Metadiscourse	
Metadiscourse: discourse about racism	68
Metadiscourse: discourse about social media	16
Nationalist Chants and National Self-glorification	74
Good Migrants	18

Appendix C

Frequencies of Social Actors in the Data Set

<i>Categories and codes</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Migrants	
Arab migrants	184
Other migrants	328
Born and raised in Saudi	16
Saudis	
Native Saudis	442
Naturalised Saudis	50
Children born to Saudi mothers	15
Public figures	
Politicians	77
Journalists	58
Royals	45
Others	37
Institutions	
Ministries	61
Media	23
The Shura Council	16
Other institutions	105

Appendix D

Frequencies of Semiotic Resources in the Data Set

<i>Categories and codes</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Hashtags	
Thematic hashtags	267
Evaluative hashtags	195
Nominative hashtags	68
Mentions	
Direct address	126
Replies	34
Quoted tweets	38
Emojis	166
Images	
Screenshots	220
Photographs	71
Infographics	14
Cartoons	2
Videos	132
Hyperlinks	21