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"Guests and Aliens": Re-Configuring New Mobilities in the Eastern Mediterranean After 2011 - With a special Focus on Syrian Refugees

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“Guests and Aliens”: Re-Configuring New Mobilities in the Eastern Mediterranean After 2011 - with a special focus on Syrian refugees

Elif Aksaz and Jean-François Pérouse (ed.)

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This meeting sought to give an account of the issues raised in Social Sciences worldwide by the migrations and mobilities of populations, particularly Syrian, caused by the upheavals taking place in the South and East of the Mediterranean since 2011. Researchers coming from various disciplines of Social Sciences, who are working on migration issues in Europe, the USA, and the Middle-East, in a historical perspective and with an ethnographic approach, participated in the Conference. A roundtable with representatives from different associations and NGOs closed the conference.

A selection of full communications of the conference will be published by Edward Elgar Publishing (*Migration, Mobilities and the Arab Spring. Spaces of Refugee Flight in the Eastern Mediterranean*). This volume presents the abstracts of the conference communications.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

International conference held at Istanbul 9-10 December, 2014. Organised by the Institut Français d´Études Anatoliennes (IFEA) and the Research Network "Re-Configurations. History, Remembrance and Transformation Processes in the Middle East and North Africa" at the Philipps-Universität, Marburg, with the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Acknowledgments

1 IFEA-Istanbul and the Research Network “Re-Configurations. History, Remembrance and Transformation Processes in the Middle East and North Africa” at the Philipps-Universität, Marburg, would like to thank all those who contributed to the organization of the Conference: Anja SCHMIDT, Büşra DEMIRKOL, Chiara DENARO, Gülsüme YILDIRIM, Kadir GÜNEŞ, Martin GODON, Nassima CHARIET, Nilda TAŞKÖPRÜ, Öykü AYTAÇOĞLU, Pascal LEBOUTEILLER, Zuher JAZMATI.

2 The two institutions also extend their thanks to Brigitte JELEN, Isabelle GILLES, Öykü SORGUN, and Anselm GRAGES for the preparation of this book.

Opening Session

Welcome address: Jean-François Pérouse

Jean-François Pérouse

1 I would like to briefly greet all of you on behalf of the IFEA. Also, I would like to thank all of you from Marburg, Barcelona and Istanbul who have contributed to the preparation of this meeting. You all know the conditions of Social Sciences research in Europe today, which sometimes makes the preparation of these kinds of meetings difficult. However, we also know that these conditions will not prevent us from addressing such crucial issues as those we will try to address today.

AUTHOR

JEAN-FRANÇOIS PÉROUSE

Director, Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes, Istanbul

Welcome address: Achim Rohde

Achim Rohde

1 We are proud to present in this special issue of the *Dossiers de l'IFEA* the proceedings of the international conference "Guests and Aliens. Re-configuring new mobilities in the eastern Mediterranean after 2011." The conference was held on 9-10 December 2014 at the French Institute for Anatolian Studies – IFEA – in Istanbul. It was jointly organized by the IFEA and Marburg University's research network "Re-Configurations. History, Remembrance and Transformation Processes in the Middle East and North Africa[1]," with the support of CERAO (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

2 The conference focused on the altering dynamics and results of mobilities within and beyond the MENA region since 2011. Given the background of the Syrian civil war and its ramifications, the conference specifically focussed on Syrian refugees. Moreover, several contributions discussed the broader Mediterranean refugee crisis and its handling by the European Union.

3 This timely conference was possible thanks to a spontaneous and successful cooperation between Re-Configurations and IFEA. It brought together scholars and activists working in Europe, the US, and the MENA region to shed new light on one of the most depressing developments since the start of the uprisings against *anciens régimes* known as the 'Arab Spring.' I would like to express our gratitude and utmost respect to all partners and colleagues who helped make this memorable event possible! Specifically, I would like to thank Elif Aksaz of IFEA whose dedication and organizational abilities were crucial throughout the whole process, and Natalia Ribas-Mateos who initiated and co-organized this conference as a visiting fellow at Re-Configurations. Furthermore, the conference would not have been possible without the untiring help of Chiara Denaro, Anja Schmidt, and Zuher Jazmati, and, on the IFEA side, Nassima Chariet, Öykü Aytaçoğlu, Büşra Demirkol, Nilda Taşköprü, Martin Godon and Pascal Lebouteiller.

4 "Re-Configurations" was founded by the Philipps-Universität Marburg in 2013 with funding from the Federal Ministry for Education and Research. The network provides an institutional framework for an innovative, interdisciplinary, comparative, empirically based, and theory-led investigation of the transformation processes in the

Middle East and North Africa (MENA region). The research program consolidates the regional competencies at Philipps-Universität Marburg by forming stronger links between the disciplines represented in the research network (including religious studies, history, political science, sociology, media studies, literary studies, law, peace and conflict research) and those located in the Centre for Near and Middle East Studies[2].

5 International cooperations constitute a crucial component of our program. The joint conference which formed the basis of this issue of the *Dossiers de l'IFEA* is ample evidence of the productive energy that can be unleashed in such a cross-regional cooperative framework. We hope to continue and build on this very positive experience in the future.

NOTES

1. http://www.uni-marburg.de/cnms/forschung/re-konfigurationen/welcome?set_language=en
2. http://www.uni-marburg.de/cnms/index_html-en?set_language=en

AUTHOR

ACHIM ROHDE

Philipps University, Marburg

Welcome address: Elif Aksaz

Elif Aksaz

1 As you know, the conference has been organized thanks to the collaboration of two institutions: the French Institute for Anatolian Studies or IFEA, which is a French research centre, based in Turkey and directed by Jean-François Pérouse, and the Philipps University at Marburg (Germany), and more specifically the research network in this university called "Re-Configurations. History, Remembrance and Transformation Processes in the Middle East and North Africa," coordinated by Achim Rohde. This French-German collaboration was supported by a well-known international organization, the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

2 The conference is international not only because of the collaboration of these institutions and organizations. The conference exists thanks to the collaborating work of French, German, German-Syrian, Italian, Turkish, and Spanish researchers and students. I would like to thank all of them for their implication.

3 Finally, this is an international conference because it brings together researchers and students on migration from different countries in Europe, in the United States and in the Middle East. It also brings together scholars and members of civil society, notably representatives of associations and NGOs located in Turkey and working closely on and with migrant populations.

4 I would like to specify briefly the scientific and institutional context of this conference from the IFEA's perspective. It takes place in the context of the redevelopment of a research unit within IFEA called "The Migration and Mobilities" (AMiMo for *Axe Migrations et Mobilités*) which brings together scholars working on migrations from Turkey to other countries, from other countries to Turkey, and on internal migrations within Turkey. IFEA has played an important role in the production of scientific knowledge on Turkish migration to France: specialists of this migration have all been researchers affiliated to IFEA at one stage of their scientific career or trajectory. IFEA has also contributed to the study of the internal migration flows within Turkey, especially from rural areas to urban areas, which is a well-documented subject in Turkey. However, French and Turkish Social Sciences have produced little research on migrations from other countries to Turkey, while these population movements, from the Balkans, from Africa or from Europe are not a new phenomenon for Turkish

society. By co-organizing this conference, IFEA also aims to contribute to the development of this research area.

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Welcome address: Natalia Ribas-Mateos

Natalia Ribas-Mateos

1 This work recalls the book *Guests and Aliens* by Saskia Sassen (2000). Each of the essays in Sassen's collection on globalization introduces a new type of complexity and ambiguity to the study of the global, confronting questions of space and the fact that both the local and the global are increasingly multi-scalar. Her work also expands the analytic terrain of the global, demanding new methodologies and interpretive frameworks for the study of globalization.

2 With such a theoretical framework, we can, as Sassen also does, locate an increasingly urban articulation of global logics and struggles, and an escalating use of urban space – like Istanbul – to make political claims, not only by citizens but also by foreigners. Therefore, by emphasising the interplay between global and local phenomena, we can examine new forms and conditions such as global cities, transnational communities, transnational families, new mobilities and diaspora, and transnational networks of humanitarian responses.

3 In such a context, the case of Syrian and Syrian-Palestinian refugees seems to have a distinctive importance. It underlines the diasporic space composed by multiple trajectories which have a particular impact in the Eastern Mediterranean (especially on Syria's neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey) as well as in a wider cartography including the borders of "Fortress Europe" (Greece, Italy, the Moroccan-Spanish borders) as well as Scandinavian countries, Germany, and France where Syrian refugees are also present.

4 Globally speaking, one major impact of the *Arab Spring* is the reconfiguration of mobilities, and with it the accompanying problem of inhospitable politics towards refugees at different levels (international-regional-national-local level), as well as humanitarian responses to this mobility, as in the case of Syrian refugees, one of the biggest mass flight since the second World War. Through the reconfiguration of such new mobilities, there is an urgency to properly map the space of many trajectories – given that the simultaneity of stories so far is the product of those transnational

connections. We do face a difficult mapping as it is constantly disrupted by new arrivals, constantly waiting to be determined by the configuration and re-configuration of historical as well as contemporary relations.

5 Most studies presented here are concerned with specific aspects of cross-border mobility and their impact on specific groups and individuals located in different areas of the Eastern Mediterranean after the outbreak of the so-called Arab Spring. In this particular review, by contrast, my aim is to step back from concrete and localised case studies, and present some reflections on the general challenges, transformations, or sudden changes faced by contemporary mobilities in the Eastern Mediterranean.

6 This conference is an attempt to stimulate discussion about changes in mobilities. The ideas that I present here are elements of a debate and need to be inserted in a much more general context. I examine the tangled question of continuity and change from the point of view of the observation of mobility. Studying the diverse changes in Mediterranean mobility since the upheavals of January 2011 is a topic worthy of particular attention. However, I think an extra effort has to be made in order to understand the transformed conceptions of continuity and change, which are sometimes found in sharp opposition but can also be connected or related. As a consequence, this introduction brings together at least five different debates:

7 (i) The use of categories: Can we keep using the terms *refugee* and *irregular migrant* in the same way we did in the past?

8 (ii) Forms of continuity: Some authors discuss a presumed continuity, stating for example that it is rather unlikely that the revolutions will dramatically change long-term migration patterns."

9 (iii) Challenging borders: Authors researching EU borders have shown a rupture since the Arab Spring, which forced changes in the regulation parameters of the EU's internal borders (see examples in various programmes in Italy after the Tunisian upheaval[1]).

10 (iv) Forms of cross-border circulation: Authors working on the Syrian humanitarian crisis show how cross-border circulation encourages the development of a new humanitarian structure, especially at the Syrian-Turkish borders.

11 (v) Re-scaling: Do cities like Istanbul conform to the kaleidoscope of such post-2011 changes and continuities? Do border zones like the Turkish-Syrian border represent key areas in such a re-scaling?

NOTES

1. One of the most obvious examples is the case of the Saint-Ludovic border where Tunisians were sent back to Italy using readmissions agreements. Different camps were organized in Italy in order to assist migrants in April 2011: first aid and acceptance centers, reception centers for asylum seekers, shelters and centers of identification and expulsion). The Italian government issued a law decree granting six-month residence permits for humanitarian reasons.

AUTHOR

NATALIA RIBAS-MATEOS

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Session 1: Mapping Key Issues post 2011

Mapping Reconfigurations: MENA and Europe post Arab Spring

Challenges for Scholarship and Politics

Achim Rohde

1 In the wake of the Arab Spring revolutions, the Middle East and North Africa are undergoing a profound process of political and social transformations, the results of which are yet unclear. They "will range between everything from stability and regional cooperation to disintegrative conflict."[1] Several reasons have been noted for the less than encouraging results so far of the Arab Spring. Some pointed to failed nation building processes in countries created in a top-down manner by colonial powers and post-colonial state-building elites, and the divisive effects of decades of oppressive rule. After the removal of *anciens régimes*, in this line of thought, some long repressed tensions and unresolved conflicts surfaced in these societies. Others have highlighted processes of state erosion and state failure as crucial for the politicization of ethnic and sectarian identities and the rise of actors like IS.

2 I would like to add a further factor to this list and argue that the destructive mode of the regional reconfiguration currently underway is at least to some degree an effect of neo-liberal reforms introduced to varying degrees in most MENA countries for the last few decades.

3 Starting in the mid-1980s, many MENA states gave up their previous state-centered development policies in favor of large-scale privatizations, cutting of subsidies, incentives for direct investments from abroad etc. The abolishment of the old social contract by the ruling elites and the integration into the world market lead to the demise of local economies, the erosion of state infrastructure, the emergence of crony capitalism and the erosion of salaried middle classes, all of which increased socioeconomic cleavages within MENA societies. Far from fostering democratization, as was often presumed by Western proponents of market-oriented reforms in countries of the global south, they "helped rebuild coalitions of support during the reconfiguration of authoritarian rule in certain states of the Middle East and North Africa".[2]

Unsurprisingly, popular discontent in view of the effects of such 'authoritarian upgrading' was crucial in fueling the Arab Spring revolutions /uprisings.[3]

4 Without claiming a linear comparability, the EU troika's prescriptions for crisis ridden member states resemble the structural adjustment programs designed by the IMF/WB for countries of the global south for decades. Recent years have seen a decrease of the normative power of democratic procedures in EU member states and in the EU itself, as technocrats appear to be on the rise and able to enforce rules that follow the perceived necessities of the market. This erosion of democratic standards in the supposed heartlands of democracy appears to pave the way for the rise of "post-democratic technocracy", i.e. a specific form of anonymous authoritarianism.[4] The rapid pace of social change, the submission of all spheres of life to an economic rationale, and increased feelings of insecurity and loss of control in the era of neoliberal globalization have generated heightened levels of individual and social stress. Combined with a lack of democratic legitimacy of EU institutions and the erosion of democratic standards in EU member states, this has helped bring about a "democracy fatigue" not only in Eastern and Central Europe, but also a rising tide of Euro scepticism and a powerful ascend of populist right wing (e.g. UKIP, Front National, AFD) and neo-fascist (e.g. Golden Dawn, Jobbik) movements and parties.

5 The erosion of democracy and the rise of populist right wing movements in contemporary Europe inevitably raise memories of the rise of Fascist movements in 20th century Europe. Important ideological differences between classic fascist movements and today's populist right and a different historical context notwithstanding, it seems still worthwhile to consider scholarship explaining the rise of fascism in 20th century Europe for understanding current developments, in particular a body of works subsumed under the label *critical theory*, which drew alike on Hegelian dialectics, Marxian theory, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Max Weber, and other trends of contemporary thought, later on including also postmodern thinkers.[5]

6 One central category in Hegelian-Marxist thought and in critical theory is the concept of *alienation*, which describes the destruction or deformation of relations between individuals, between individuals and their work, individuals and the products of their work as well as the estrangement of individuals from their own selves. In an influential recent work, Rahel Jaeggi has revived the concept by distancing it from a problematic conception of human essence underlying older works, while retaining its social-philosophical content. Although approaching the topic through individualized social pathologies such as feelings of isolation, helplessness and meaninglessness, her work provides resources for a renewed critique of alienation on a societal level, including its possible political manifestation in contemporary societies such as the current surge of populist right wing, identitarian and neo-fascist forces in Europe who all aim to restore the authenticity of social and individual life and the sense of meaning and belonging that has been lost.[6] In order to understand this phenomenon and its persistence or re-emergence in contemporary societies of the global north, it is also highly instructive to re-read the works of Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Fromm et al concerning "authoritarian characters", which they considered an expression of alienated societies and a pre-condition for the rise of fascist political systems.[7]

7 With all due caution as to the applicability of theories developed in western contexts to understand developments in the non-West, the concept of *alienation* and the notion of

authoritarian characters seem highly relevant for a critical understanding of contemporary MENA societies.[8] The rise of neo-Salafi movements in the MENA-region and in particular Jihadi groups like IS can be understood as a reaction to and simultaneously an expression of the alienation of populations residing there.

8 Beyond a mere comparative approach, which tends to leave the notion of areas as more or less separate units intact, "post area studies" or "critical area studies" aim at "rethinking area studies epistemologically to avoid thinking in container entities such as 'nation states' or, for that matter, 'regions' and to focus instead on the mobility patterns and communicative processes of human interaction".[9] One crucial characteristic of the contemporary world relevant for any critical understanding of area studies is that "there is no longer a tight coherence between physical and cultural space".[10] As a consequence, scholars started to "move human action and interaction and its role in communicatively constructing space into the center of attention".[11] The relational dynamics between IS style jihadism and European Muslims clearly constitute such a case of entangled history between MENA countries and Europe. We are facing a multiplicity of partly interconnected cultural spaces existing alongside one another and sometimes in conflict with one another in various local environments across regions.

9 Yet, all this does not take place in an empty space or in an ideal setting of equality between all players involved. It is always embedded in and shaped by material and institutional structures, hierarchies, power relations. First, the sheer material destruction and the decreasing accessibility of the field might be a specific feature of the MENA region that is not as pronounced in other parts of the world. This situation impacts on levels of transregional human interaction and communication as well as on mobility patterns. In order to grasp such figurations, our analysis should incorporate a center-periphery perspective, which is conscious of power relations existing between various players. The fact that rigid border regimes are currently being (re-)installed between specific countries and whole regions in multiple parts of the world, calls into question the assumption of an increasingly integrated world system. Thus, there is ample need to investigate how the current transformations in MENA countries are part of a contradictory process of blurring and transcending boundaries, while at the same time reasserting them violently. Moreover, vast differences exist between different kinds of mobility within and beyond the MENA region. These different kinds of mobilities as well as the nexus of increasing mobility and the simultaneously intensifying immobility point to uneven and contradictory patterns of social, cultural and political change unleashed by the globalisation process, which need to be taken into account more systematically, if we want to arrive at something that might be adequately termed "critical area studies".

NOTES

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7. David Norman-Smith, "Authority Fetishism and the Manichaean Vision: Stigma, Steretyping and Charisma as Keys to Pseudo-Orientation in an Estranged Society," *Ibid*, 91-114.
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The Role of Diasporas, Migrants, and Exiles in the Arab Revolutions and Political Transitions

Claire Beaugrand and Vincent Geisser

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The paper develops general features on the basis of results drawn from the first WAFAW international conference on "The role of Diasporas, migrants and exiles in the Arab revolutions and transitions" held on 16-17 October 2014 at the National Library in Tunis, organised by the IRMC (Institut de recherche sur le Maghreb contemporain) and the IREMAM (Institut de recherches et d'études sur le monde arabe et musulman).

1 If the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions of 2010-2011 vividly rekindled the interest of Western social scientists for Arab national politics that were hitherto little known and mostly closed (Camau and Vairel 2014), this scholarly attention generally overlooked the role of migrants and descendants of exiles in these political upheavals. This role was at least threefold. First, protest movements and mobilisations were organised from a distance. Second, politically engaged people have been circulating in and out of their countries of residence: when regimes resisted or resorted to violent repression (like in Bahrain, Egypt or Syria), new waves of emigration took place, while cases of return occurred towards countries where the old regimes fell (as was the case in Tunisia or Libya). Third, everywhere, political changes and people's mobility triggered public debates, controversies, and new legal texts defining the rights and limits of the returnees, of overseas citizens, and of the political participation of binationals.

2 This paper offers preliminary reflections on the shifts in the social attitudes of Diasporas and migrants that were triggered by the so-called "Arab Spring". It first goes back to the reason why the politicisation of Diasporas or migrants stemming from Arab authoritarian regimes has been somehow under-studied. Redressing this lack of historical depth by placing the 2011 protest movements into the context of former

political struggles, the paper then assesses the novelty of the 2011 mass entry into "distance politics." Finally, it analyses the terms of the debate that surrounded the opening of new transnational spaces, after decades when political affiliation was seen in an exclusive and binary way.

I. The Arab revolution's rupture? Rethinking Arab migrations and integration

3 Until recently, the literature on Arab migrants has mainly highlighted the "fundamental rupture" that existed between migrants and politics in their home countries. On the one hand, most of the so-called "host societies" pursued policies of integration, assimilation or multiculturalism, while the countries of origin held the view that political allegiance ought to be exclusive, and thus they equated dual political affiliation with dubious loyalty. As a result, the ties and relations that the descendants of migration and exile retained with their country of origin were reduced to either touristic, exotic and familial dimensions, or thought of in economic terms, and measured in remittances or the involvement of absentees in local development (De Haas 2006). In a nutshell, the "sending" countries were seen as a "product of summer consumption" or a sheer imaginary production with little sociological substance (Oriol 1983). Moreover, confronted with the negative "reception context" of Arab and Muslim migrants in Europe (Portes and Rumbaut 2006), the scientific silence on the political involvement of second-generation migrants and refugees in the "home country" sprung from a moral and ethical imperative: it aimed at proving to holders of xenophobic positions that the "children from a migrant background" were good citizens, thereby deconstructing prejudices regarding supposed forms of hidden allegiance to foreign states.

4 The protest movements that erupted in the Arab world, and spread to the second and later generations of migrants abroad, thus prompted intellectuals to carry out their own "mental revolution": they shifted their focus onto the "*shared public spaces*" between home and host countries, starting and ending points of the migration, as well as onto the past and new forms of activist connections, and the capacity demonstrated by actors themselves to belie, through their concrete social practices, the categories and classifications that tend more often than not to underscore the exclusive character of national affiliations. Migrants, without rejecting *national* belonging, tend to reformulate their own *national tie(s)* in a way that fits their positions at a given time, be it by distancing themselves or critically (re)appropriating loosened ties in a contesting or dissenting way. How then, can we assess the effect that "Arab revolutions" have had on the modes of engagement or re-engagement of migrants? Has there been a qualitative change in the way migrants and their descendants identify with their countries of origin?

II. Activist Legacies and Revolutionary Ruptures

5 The 2011 distance protest movements and rekindled political engagement were far from spontaneous phenomena coming out from nowhere. The socio-political mobilisations observed in the host societies during the Arab revolutions, were less protest "innovations" than heirs of long activist struggles, as in the case of Tunisians,

Moroccans or Bahrainis abroad; repertoires and modes of action had been tested before albeit in different ways. The revolutionary rupture lied in three different novelties.

6 First, we witnessed a phenomenon of *accelerated entry into political engagement or activism* on the part of new Arab generations in Europe, North and South America during the Arab Spring. Second, through a process of *reconversion*, actors who had been politically engaged in their host societies before shifted the focus of their struggles and mobilisations towards their societies of origin. This sometimes took the form of a re-entry into political activism with the aim to share long-acquired experience with newer generations. Third, the diversity of individual paths towards political engagement in the suddenly open Arab political stage converged and created *new improbable spaces of distance mobilisation*. By which it is meant that mobilisations first cut across classes, generations, sometimes even political affiliations, although they did not last in the face of revolutionary setbacks and authoritarian resilience that broke unitary actions and unanimist discourses.

7 These spaces of mobilisation proved to be very fluid and ambivalent, so that the lines between "before/after" the dictatorship or revolutionaries/counter-revolutionaries became blurred. As a result of the transnational surveillance exerted by repressive regimes abroad, migrants themselves had sometimes interiorised authoritarian reflexes and wished for a prompt return to the secure order – like certain Coptic communities in the US for instance – while at the same time espousing revolutionary dynamics.

III. The Uneasy Opening of new Transnational Spaces

8 The Arab revolutions generated crucial questions regarding the definition and criteria for nationality, national language, cultural and religious identities, as well as the status of bi-nationals. Everywhere, revolutionary dynamics went hand in hand with an overplaying of the nationalist card by government and opposition groups alike. As a result, bi-nationals and nationals that were children of migrants were seen as "illegitimate children" of the revolutions and political transitions, to borrow a term from Abdelmalek Sayad (2006). More specifically, when they returned to assume parliamentarian and governmental positions or top-level business jobs (as was the case in Tunisia), they were asked to outdo their local compatriots in terms of credentials and national belonging. Certainly, this reaction can be seen as an ideological legacy of the nationalist propaganda of former authoritarian regimes, which considered any dual affiliation with suspicion. These public controversies also reveal the deep anxiety that surrounds the challenging of existing social hierarchies in this region. More broadly, it is clear that the involvement of the descendants of migrants in Arab revolutions and transitions triggered class struggles and competition over social distinction.

9 Finally, the arrival of Arab migrants and refugees who fled their country in turmoil also forced new Arab and Turkish host societies to think about their own "national identity". If at first, Egypt and Tunisia resorted to a rhetoric of "revolutionary solidarity" by opening their doors wide to fellow brothers or fellow fighters against authoritarianism, over time, security and nationalist concerns prevailed: the official migration policy was made more stringent among deep social tensions, while social practices, more complex, continued to include a mix of rejection and solidarity.

Conclusion

10 This paper has sought to question the historical and sociological preconceived ideas regarding the role of bi-nationals, refugees and exiles in the politics of the country where they are initially coming from: it deconstructed complex phenomena such as the engineering of national allegiances, the public demonstration of dual belonging, the underpinnings of ordinary and ideological definitions of exclusive national identity as well as the public policies of welcoming and facilitating return. Moreover, it tried to shed light on the social practices of individuals that belie the normative and rigid vision of the (re)construction and fragilisation of the nation-state in the aftermath of the revolutions.

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Mobilities post-2011 in the Eastern Mediterranean: Transformations over Time or sudden Change?

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I. Discussing social change

1 Global Shifts, configuration, reconfiguration,[1] change, rupture, regression, revolution, protest: they are all terms we often hear when trying to interpret what has happened during and after the "Arab Spring." What we normally see would be very similar to a media report or to a quality paper on political science – looked at on a regional scale, sub-regional scale or as a particular case study –, and normally nationally-framed. In this paper I attempt to look at such transformations through a different lens, even if at the end the issues are still complex and I am obliged to leave a very wide open door for them at the conclusions.

2 Firstly I acknowledge problematization by considering a particular cross-cutting theme, mobilities.[2] A very particular topic that has been perceived as peripheral in the post-2011 developments in the MENA region, is, as Geisser and Beaugrand also note in their contribution (2016) while apropos protest movements: "while Arab politics were brought back into the scientific spotlight, refugees, exiles, migrants and their descendants received little attention despite their significant role in the protest movements that toppled dictatorial regimes (in Tunisia and Egypt), contributed to weaken them (Yemen, Bahrain, Syria) or forced them to reform from within (Morocco, Jordan)".

3 Secondly such problematization is constructed by examining a schema which integrates change or permanency simultaneously. Thus, instead of supporting change or supporting non-change (continuity, immobility etc.), I will put forward how continuity and change are interrelated, and multiply as defined in social relations (Scholte 1993). This double force can be very well related to globalization analysis, giving attention to the complex interplay of continuities and changes, for example,

when considering the role of the nation-state, and how we think about the continuity of its old roles. This applies also to its erosion (in the manner that Sassen has described in her most recent literature) when considering the role of territoriality and borders,[3] new inputs (economic privatization, the importance of agency on migration, etc.) old inputs (colonial borders, the legal conception of who is a guest or an alien, using old forms of inclusion-exclusion as well as re-interpreting them: e.g., regional treatment of the foreigner and the asylum seeker), or how such inclusion-exclusion dynamics can be read within a debate on conceptions of hospitality and conceptions of conditionality and temporality.

4 Furthermore, to understand such an interplay of changes, I mainly focus on the following instances: (i) the blurring of migration categories, (ii) the spatial challenge of changes vis-à-vis a multi-scaling interpretation: regional concentration, the reinforcement of Fortress Europe and the diversification of mobility routes, the selection of border zones as key research areas (adding that intensified border violence seems to be a key issue in the post-2011 mapping) and the vision of the metropolitan scale as key spaces of cosmopolitan life (e.g. the metropolitan area of Istanbul), (iii) cross-border circulation (concerning humanitarian aid and the humanitarian corridors) and (iv) border clashes, which are posited between state centered notions (*watan-daula*) and postcolonial geopolitical borders, the impact of global economic processes and the particular impact of the "Arab Spring".

5 In this last respect, the Arab Spring has not only had an impact on the increase in already high numbers of refugees (as in the cases of Syria and Yemen, which had civil wars prior to 2011) but also in the exit of migrants especially in the case of Libya, Tunisia and Egypt and some student immigration as part of political activism (as in the case of Tunisia and Egypt on the topic of micro-blogging) (Thiollet 2013: 133). Such an impact is also expressed in a transnational politics of belonging. Geisser and Beaugrand's contribution provides us with some examples: children of economic migrants, Arab intellectuals in exile, youth who came temporarily to complete their studies in the West, illegal residents and businessmen, all calling for the triumph of democracy. Such a connection between migration and the Arab Spring can also be seen in Europe. For instance, Rohde's (2016) research concerns jihadists in Hamburg, a phenomenon explained on one hand as part of a youth subculture and on the other as political frustration apropos non-intervention in Syria and the global propaganda[4] displayed by the Islamic State.

6 Therefore, through theoretical, empirical and interdisciplinary research, there is a need to open new doors to explore the processes of re-configuration, taking into account the different repositioning of actors in a local, regional and global space. In short, after examining this body of research it is vital to dissect the interscalar context of mobilities after the upheavals of 2011 across North Africa and the Middle East through adoption of a challenging multidisciplinary perspective.

II. Observing Rights as a Barometer

7 As in her classic Guests and Aliens (1999), Sassen sought to trace in Europe's past immigration histories, highlighting the role of the foreigners as rights-bearers; I have aimed at understanding the role of post-2011 mobilities in shaping rights, and as a barometer for measuring a shift. We have thought of it in the context of social

transformation and how migrant categories, migration patterns, borders and cross-border circulation are the main axes of such an analysis. Thus, how do we locate change post-2011? We have found at least five angles to such answer, which do posit new questions:

Change, rupture, continuity?

8 How are "freedom and dignity" slogans really translated into migration changes? Can we trace migrant's mobilizations from the starting point of the Arab revolts? How have migration patterns changed since the 1990s? Can we really talk about a before and after of mobilities in the aftermath of the "Arab Spring"?

Contesting borders

9 Borders, or more exactly, border zones, in the region are not only spaces of violence – as was shown through the description of Kosmopolous (2014) of the spectacle of institutional pushbacks and the scenarios represented by black masks and anti-riot gear of Greek border guards, but also spaces of contested conditions between migration networks clashing with a wide range of EU border control mechanisms. This conflict highlights the interplay of multiple factors and multiple actors, which make out an interesting field of globalization, connections between the "Arab Spring" and borders.

New political identities

10 Is there a clear connection between the Arab Spring and the reinforcement of Fortress Europe? Is there a clear connection between the Arab Spring and the demand for freedom of mobility and dignity of migrants? Can we discuss a transformation of the political identity of refugees, and more particularly a new claim of a political identity in the way that Denaro (2016), Özden (2014) and Ruiz de Elvira (2016) mention in their own contributions? Ruiz de Elvira (2014) makes us think that we should contemplate policies in a wide sense and to look closely at actors who claim to be apolitical (*gheyr siyasi*) but are de facto political, especially seen in her own case study of the politicization of assistance to Syrian refugees, when she addresses the question how doing charitable work can also mean resistance.

Placing mobility in the architecture of membership

11 Are we witnessing a repoliticization process of migrants as political actors? In that respect Özden (2014) criticizes the image of the refugee as a victim of war (which victimizes and infantilizes them) and defends an image reinforced by their political identity and cultural production, fighting for their visibility and their right to the city of Istanbul.

12 Such a question takes us back to how mobilities interfere with enclosure of the EU and to their architectures of membership (described by Sassen's contribution, 2016), revealing a grey zone between the powerless and the empowered, especially in metropolitan areas and European borders, both spaces of persecution. Enclosure has

been previously thought to be contrary to mobility, but various authors show how agency is constructed by facing different deadlock, impasses and bottlenecks.

13 Do we persist with the old question of discrimination of the alien coexisting with "the right to have rights" (see Sassen, Schwarz, this issue), confirmed by the withdrawing of immigrant rights by national legislatures? In such a framework of membership Sassen (this issue) asks herself if the ideological renationalizing of citizenship can coexist with the Europeanizing of membership and complex transnational identity politics. Are the States reinforcing power in deciding who is in and who is out, as well as the possible degrees of the foreigner (alien, guest, citizen, denizen etc.), reinforcing their power to decide who comes in and who is pushed back out across the border? Where is the global left then?

New circulations

14 The Arab Spring impact on mobilities is clearly characterized by a mixture of flows (Thiollet 2013), and thus it is even more pertinent to refer to mobilities. We also have to add to it another impact, as the complex context of the humanitarian crisis which has resulted in complex cross-border corridors of goods, where international and local NGOs play an important role, and a different one from what we have been used to see in other regional crises.

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NOTES

1. Theorization on the concept of reconfigurations can be also included here. See for example, Rohde's contribution. His approach on the MENA region takes a particular focus on four research fields: history from below (authoritarian rule periods, society and actors, labour conflicts, everyday resistance etc.), re-configurations of cultural memory (remembrance, study of the silent), political transformations and transitional justice (legal context and judiciary role in transitions), and transregional entanglements (by including internal and external factors). Drawing on theoretical resources of transregional comparisons in area studies Rohde searches for adopting political-economy perspectives and critical theory into "critical area studies" in order to help us conceptualizing the contradictory expressions of current globalisation.
2. By using mobilities this work aims to overpass the binary dichotomy of the separated spheres of forced migration (which was used in classic refugee studies) and volunteer migration (with the importance of the idea of agency and autonomy in such a framework). Furthermore, we talk about mobilities not only because we acknowledge a paradigm shift (Sheller and Urry 2006) but

also because general migration categories have become limited in order to encompass a wide spectrum of forms of mobilities.

3. The border focus is mainly understood in a wide relational sense were border processes are connected to and disconnected from both territoriality and sovereignty–meaning nowadays tighter control, enhanced security and developing technological surveillance.

4. Another case he enumerates is of the small northern town of Celle, Germany, which saw clashes between the Yezidi community and Chechen refugees, and between Muslim/non-Muslim refugees in Hamburg, apparently also triggered by events in Syria/Iraq. Furthermore in the case of Berlin and Hamburg, Salehi (2014) describes the situation of Sub-Saharan Africans coming from Libya via Lampedusa, who after having received asylum in Italy found out that their permits in Germany did not allow them to work.

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Session 2: Syrians in Turkey

Understanding Migration Management and its Impact on Syrian Refugees in Turkey

Michelle Dromgold

1 Turkey is traditionally characterized as a "sending" country of migration, particularly due to the large number and high profile of labor migrants and refugees in Europe in the 1970s-1980s-1990s. However, in reality, Turkey is also a transit country and a country of immigration and asylum. In 2010, for the first time, net immigration to Turkey surpassed net emigration from Turkey (İçduygu *et al* 2014: 1). Today, Turkey's migration policies are changing to reflect these new migration patterns as well as to align with EU migration policies that must be met to complete Turkey's EU accession process. At the same time, Turkey is now facing its highest influx of immigration in the Republic's history as Syrians are welcomed in Turkey as "guests" under the legal clause of "temporary protection". As a result, Turkey is responding with a new means of *managing* migration.

2 Despite Turkey's new adoption of migration management discourse as evidenced in new migration policy (Law No. 6458) and the establishment of a Directorate General for Migration Management, this paper questions the extent to which Turkey's migration management is a distinct phenomenon from migration control. It further critically analyzes whether this new migration management in Turkey is currently fostering effective cooperation among the management system's various actors and in doing so, meeting the needs of Syrians in the country. These aims are outlined in the paper's two subsequent parts. First, I outline the influencing factors on Turkey's reform of its migration policies, noting that the reform has not resulted from internal initiatives, but instead reflects global discourse and EU pressure to conduct such reforms. Simultaneously, I problematize the extent to which the new discourse of migration *management* actually differs from migration *control*. Due to the importance of decentralized and diverse actors in the new migration management system, I overview the actors involved in the management of Syrians in Turkey in the second part of the paper, and conclude that Turkey's current migration management does not yet result

in an effective response to Syrian "guests" in Turkey and their needs; instead the decentralization of the new migration regime threatens to squander resources and does not necessarily translate into more efficient responses. I argue that Turkey's current migration *management* is not yet an effective response to Turkey's new migration patterns and the reality of the estimated 1.5 million Syrians residing in Turkey.

I. Migration Reform

3 Today's governments – together with the UN, IOs, NGOs and migrant networks – seek to *manage* migration. In the absence of a global regime for international migration, filling the gap between national governance and international policies today remains largely a responsibility of NGOs and migrant networks. Therefore, national governments, IOs, NGOs and migrant networks are all important *actors* in managing today's global migration. Due to the diversity of these actors and the various practices and discourses that they advocate regarding migration, understanding *how* these actors attempt to manage migration requires examining each actor, their practices and discourses at all managerial levels.

4 Turkey, like many other countries, has also now adopted the discourse of "migration management" as part of a larger global shift and as a result of Europeanization efforts away from migration control. With a new decentralization and delegation of management among various actors, it remains unclear to what extent today's "migration management" constitutes a break from traditional migration control or offers a more effective and appropriate response to today's migration patterns.

II. Turkey's management of Syrian migration

5 Turkey's migration reform also comes at a time when Turkey is being forced to respond to immigration in a new way. Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in the spring of 2011 on its southern border, Turkey has become "the third largest receiver of Syrian refugees after Lebanon and Jordan" (İçduygu *et al.* 2014: 4), and has been welcoming Syrian nationals since its announcement of an open door policy on immigration and the guarantee of "temporary protection" in October 2011 (Kirişci 2014: 1). Under Article 91 of the Law 6458, temporary protection is granted "for foreigners who have been forced to leave their country, cannot return to the country that they have left, and have arrived at or crossed the borders of Turkey in a mass influx situation seeking immediate and temporary protection" (Law No. 6458, Article 91). As such, under "temporary protection," Syrians' admission to Turkish territory is unobstructed, forced returns are not permitted and basic needs, including shelter, food and medical support, are being granted (RSN 2014).

6 As the highest immigrant influx in Turkey's history, the immigration of Syrians and the Turkish government's facilitation of an "open-door" policy in response are unprecedented in Turkey's history (Kirişci 2014: 8), yet are in line with today's international standards (RSN 2014). According to the UNHCR 2014 Syria Regional Response Plan on Turkey, as of May 2014 there were "roughly 220,000 Syrian refugees housed in 22 camps along the Syrian border with another 515,000 registered urban

refugees" and the total number of Syrian refugees in Turkey is estimated at 900,000; by the end of this year, this number is expected to approach 1.5 million (UNHCR 2014 Syria Regional Response Plan: Turkey, in Kirişci 2014: 1,10).

7 The Turkish national government has, as discussed above, issued a new national Law on Foreigners and has established a General Directorate on Migration Management. However, due to the reality of decentralized migration management in Turkey, other provisions and projects are also being implemented at other levels of governance and among national and international governmental organizations, civil society organizations and migrant networks. Therefore in understanding the reality of migration management in Turkey, the role of all these various *actors* is outlined in the full version of this paper. The main actors active in Turkey's migration management of Syrian immigrants can be evaluated from the national, international, civil society and local levels. Therefore, the full paper outlines the discourses and practices of the Turkish government and its new Directorate General of Migration Management, as well as those of the UNHCR and IOM, ASAM, selected NGOs and migrant networks.

Conclusion

8 The full version of this paper provides an overview of the current actors involved in managing migration of Syrian nationals in Turkey and attempts to show if and how these organizations cooperate and compete with one another in their work with Syrian refugees. This initial analysis will be expanded with in-depth interviews with many of these actors in Turkey's migration management in the coming months; the results will be compiled in my Masters thesis next summer.

9 Particularly as Turkey adopts new migration policies that rely on the notion of "migration management," it is important to examine the extent to which these reforms are being implemented. In outlining a few of the actors involved in Turkey's "migration management," the complexity of Turkey's new "migration management" regime is evident. With a decentralized approach and the Turkish government's reliance on NGOs, civil society organizations, and migrant networks as main actors in responding to Turkey's influx of Syrians into its borders, we are able to recognize the cooperation and interworkings as well as competition of the national, supranational and main civil society organizations. However, the aid and advocacy efforts of national (and local) NGOs seem disconnected from this higher-level network of cooperation, indicating that response efforts are not coordinated to the maximum and that aid is consequently not applied as effectively as it could be. As a result, the overall response to Turkey's Syrian "guests" remains under-effective and, while an important step towards its EU accession process and its harmonization with global standards, Turkey's new policies and migration *management* regime do not yet constitute an effective or holistic response to Turkey's new migration patterns and the reality of the needs of the estimated 1.5 million Syrians residing in Turkey.

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Keywords: Syrian refugees in Turkey, immigration policies, readmission agreements

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Euro-Mediterranean Relations in the Field of Migration Management: Contrasting the cases of Morocco and Turkey

Hafsa Afailal

1 The Mediterranean is a symbol of life, conflicts, peace and history. It is blue for some and white for others.[1] It is a place that throughout human history has witnessed vast diversity, mobility and instability. At the intersection of three continent – Asia, Africa, and Europe – the Mediterranean has always been synonymous with craftsmen, intellectuals, artists, and travelers' mobility and encounters. Conquests, colonization, and forced migrations – from the expulsion of Jews from Spain to the displacements caused by wars with the Russian and Ottoman Empires – have marked the history of mobility in this place.

2 In the modern period, the region has known important developments, wars, colonization, decolonization, conflicts, peace processes, unions, cooperation, trade, and transformations of life patterns, causing increased inter-regional and extra-regional mobility. In the 1960s, Europe, once considered a land of emigration to the New World, became a region of immigration for people coming from many countries. The 1970s initiated a new era of European migration policies that put an end to the so-called "sheltering of the workforce" that had existed until then. These new policies have been marked by the closing of borders, the enlargement of the Schengen area to southern European countries such as Spain, Italy and Portugal, as well as the adoption of new security measures to control the entry and mobility of people and goods within the borders of the European Union (EU).[2] In this sense, Mediterranean third countries began to play a central role in this strategy to prevent the "uncontrolled irregular" migration from neighbouring countries (Sempere Souvannavong 2011).[3]

3 Therefore, a long cooperation process began and developed between the European Union and the Mediterranean third countries. The migratory issue has had and still has a very important place in these cooperative processes. For the EU, instability in

neighboring countries provokes a great influx of immigrants to its territory.[4] Therefore, the cooperation to strengthen the security and stability in these countries aids in the reduction of migratory pressure on the countries in the EU (Lorca, Lozano and Lajara 1997).

4 Since 2002, the externalisation of the border resulted in the EU border control being subcontracted to non-member countries of the Union. Not only have EU borders expanded since then, but the outsourcing process extended the areas in which security forces can intervene. Frontex led the implementation and transmission of new strategies to neighboring countries to control the border.[5]

5 Morocco and Turkey benefit from a privileged position, leading the list of the Mediterranean third countries that are EU partners. In the last few years, each country has independently developed greater collaboration and cooperation with the EU in different areas, especially with regards to issues related to migratory flows. This has happened through the signature of agreements with Frontex and through the "EU Mobility Agreement" in the case of Morocco and the "EU Readmission Agreement" in Turkey's case.[6][7]

6 These two distant countries have a long history of emigration, transit, and immigration, in addition to an increased interest in emigration. Moreover, remittances from nationals living abroad are an important source of capital input and an economical pillar in both countries.

7 Both Morocco and Turkey have declared that their new policies were prepared with more consideration of the international legislation and with a new approach based on the respect of human rights as part of their general vision for a global respect of human rights.

8 The new and growing cultural diversity in these two countries as a result of immigration represents one of the most important challenges of migration policies, and puts a strain on national policies for managing national diversity in both countries. The terms *guest*, [8] *transit* or *passengers*[9] are nothing more than excuses to deny the receiving country's character as a mixed nation. An immigration policy demonstrates its effectiveness when it has a higher interest to include diversity, reconciliation, and the respect for differences as key factors to increase citizen satisfaction.

9 In this respect, Morocco and Turkey both deny their "guests" permanent status and need to open a more structured discussion of this new cultural diversity, added to the existing diversity; furthermore both countries also need to develop new national policies in different areas in order to deal with this diversity.

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NOTES

1. Reference is made to the blue sea to citizens from Western European countries and the White Sea to the citizens in countries to the south and east of the Mediterranean. In Arabic is used the expression The White Sea of the middle [*al-Baḥr al-ʻĀbyaḍ al-Mutawāsiṭ* – البحر الأبيض المتوسط], in Turkish*Akdeniz*[White Sea] as opposed to*Karadeniz*[Black Sea].
2. It was signed by several European countries in Luxemburg, in Schengen city, on 1985, and it consists of the lift of internal borders among the signatories of the agreement. The citizens of the signatory countries, the residents of those countries, besides the people with the Schengen visa can travel freely throughout all the States that implement the Convention.
3. The Mediterranean Third Countries or MTC are the partner countries as the countries of Maghreb, of Mashrek and Israel. These countries are linked to the European Union through agreement of cooperation, which include trade, industrial cooperation and technical and financial assistance.
4. After the Arab spring, the arrival of a large number of people put the frontiers of the EU into crisis. Residence documents granted by Italy have been rejected by other Schengen countries, creating -in consequence- a major debate over the Union's borders.
5. European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the EU.
6. "EU Mobility Agreement" provides for a series of initiatives, which are designed to ensure that the movement of persons is managed as effectively as possible.
7. A readmission agreement is an agreement by which the signatory States are committed to readmit its citizens (nationals), including the people who have transited throughout its territory, detained illegally on EU territory.
8. Here is made a reference to the Turkish word *misafir* meaning "visitor" or "guest" and it is commonly used in the media or in political speeches referring to foreign students [*misafir öğrenciler*] or refugee, asylum seekers and Syrians immigrants. This word refers to the temporary nature of the stay of these people in the Turkish territory.
9. Here is made a reference to the Arabic word *Abir to sabil* - *عابر السبيل* which literally dignifies "the passenger along the way," a word commonly used in Moroccan society to designate sub-Saharan migrants. Refers to transit nature that does not belong to a logic of permanence or long term staying.

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Keywords: Frontex agency, immigration policies
Geographical index: Maroc

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Session 3: Urban Futures

The “good” and the “bad” Arabs in Istanbul Streets since the End of 2012 (Beyoğlu: Tarlabaşı and Taksim Square)

Jean-François Pérouse

1 We have preferred here to focus shortly on a very local field experience. The matter we wanted to deal with is related to daily interactions between so-called “Syrian refugees” – who represent a coherent sociological category only for people seeing them from afar – local dwellers and foreign tourists. Two places, which are very close to each other and in a way connected, have been selected for these observations: on one hand the central square of Taksim, the heart of international tourism in Istanbul; and on the other hand Tarlabaşı, an old and highly degraded area partly subject to urban regeneration projects, and at the same time corroded by the expansion of hotel businesses especially targeting people from Gulf countries.

REAR PART OF TAKSIM SQUARE. GEZI PARK CAN BE SEEN ON THE LEFT
JEAN-FRANÇOIS PÉROUSE

2 Situated in the heart of the old Levantine, minority, and European sector, Tarlabaşı has become in the last twenty years an iconic theater of the multifaceted foreign presence, and especially of the Kurdish presence in Istanbul. This area is branded as such both by a certain literature (see the novel *Ağır Roman*, 1995), by the cinema, television series, media, and dominant political discourses. But, due to its very favorable location inside the huge metropolis – near one of the busiest centers of consumption and cultural economy of the metropolis – Tarlabaşı has become since the end of the 2000s the target of real-estate speculators, both big and small, who seem to feed off the stigmatization process to justify the urgency of their intervention, presented as a necessary clean-up or a salutary rescue.

A STREET IN TARLABAŞI DISTRICT
JEAN-FRANÇOIS PÉROUSE

3 Interactions between Turkish Kurds, who immigrated to Istanbul in some cases many years ago, and Syrian Kurds, have been locally observed during at least two years. At the same time, interactions between Arab-speaking Syrian refugees and Arab-speaking tourists from around the Gulf have also been observed. Social distance – even among Syrian refugees, who do not form a coherent group – seems to remain stronger than "natural" affiliations imagined/designated by outsiders.

I. "A good Arab is a good tourist"

Table 1 : Arrival of Arab tourists in Turkey (%) Istanbul

Country	2000	2001	Increase (%)
Tunisia	68,817	72,143	4,83
Algeria	57,094	62,866	10,11
Libya	43,690	55,955	28,07
Egypt	27,048	30,364	12,26
Jordan	20,753	24,063	15,95
Saudi Arabia	19,102	19,102	35,93
Syria	13,057	13,963	6,94
Lebanon	12,092	17,567	45,28
UAE	3,089	3,535	14,44
Yemen	271	1,624	499,26
Bahrain	245	1,985	710,20
Qatar	43	548	1679,07
Kuwait	643	7,971	1139,66

THE OLD ARAB MIGRATION PATTERNS IN TURKEY, WHICH HAVE BEEN RESHUFFLED THE LAST TWO YEARS

Anadolu Ajansi (22/02/2002) & Delos, 2004

SUITCASE TOURISM SPOT IN FATIH DISTRICT, 2014
JEAN-FRANÇOIS PÉROUSE

4 In 2013, according to official figures, 17% of the foreigners welcomed as "tourists" during that year in Istanbul were coming from "Arab" countries.[1] Without doubt, the definition of *Arab country* could change according to sources but the main criterion – especially regarding our concern here, daily street-interactions – is the perceived speaking language. The definition of "tourist" is also subject to discussions; the only definition is statistical. A tourist is a foreigner who has entered Turkey with a touristic visa – and is registered as such –, regardless of his intentions or occupations. That is the reason why there is a contradiction between the general representations of the foreign tourist and the statistical reality; sometimes a striking contradiction. In this respect, when looking deeper into the phenomenon of "Arab tourism" in Istanbul in 2013, we see that the first group in quantitative terms is composed by Libyans, and the second group by Syrian citizens. These two groups clearly do not correspond to the current image of the foreign tourist in dominant representations. While they come without any consumer purchasing power, registered Syrian tourists are clearly unexpected tourists.

5 In other terms, notwithstanding the statistical definition of a tourist and the manifold faces of tourism in Istanbul, for most Istanbul hotel, restaurant or bar keepers – a good Arab is a Saudi,[2] an Emirati or a Qatari one, all supposedly prodigal clients[3]. After the Gezi "unrest" in June 2013, "rich Arabs" have even been displayed by mainstream Turkish newspapers as the "savers of Istanbul tourism".[4] Besides, an Arab tourist in Istanbul could also be an Arab commuter, coming mostly from Libya, Iraq or Tunisia, as part of the suitcase-trade-tourism; again, he is generally perceived as a good purchaser. Keeping this perception framework in mind should help us understand the way Syrians are perceived in actuality.

II. Street interactions

6 For about one and a half year Taksim square has been a huge pedestrian stage – still waiting for a design-implementation – where interactions or at least temporary proximity between people coming from different countries and different socio-economic backgrounds are intense. On the nude slopes of the old "Gezi Park" just below the nude square, numerous families of Syrians are sitting and waiting, looking at the metropolitan scene; at least when the weather allows it. In the same spot, "rich Arab tourists" are frequently moving on, going about with their family, coming out of their hotels mostly located in the Talimhane area; or, depending on the hour, coming back to their hotel.

CEMILE, AND HER FOUR CHILDREN, CAME FROM ALEPPO. PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN UNDER THE TARLABAŞI BRIDGE

JEAN-FRANÇOIS PÉROUSE

7 Most of the time, when Syrian refugees – asking in Arabic for some help or money – meet a "rich Arab tourist" in Taksim Square or in the narrow streets of Tarlabaşı, the interaction does not last for a very long time. Either some small change is given in order to enable escaping or even nothing... The "rich tourists" are trying to flee, in order to avoid any longer interaction, like other foreign tourists and most of the "local" inhabitants. The supposed "cultural" proximity does not function in any way.

8 Despite all these global categorizations in terms of ethnic identity – like "the Arabs" –, class differences remain the most determining factor to explain the basic logics of street-interactions. That is why the often-underestimated Syrian middle and upper-middle-class – that is usually acting in Turkey like the other tourists towards their compatriots – seems rather invisible in daily life interactions for Turkish people.

9 There is another form of interaction between Arabs, related to the employment of poor Arabs as "street attendants" (or *değnekçi*) for the supposed "high purchasing power" Arab people, in order to encourage the latter to enter into some shops, restaurants or entertainment spots. These interactions take place especially in the huge pedestrian İstiklâl avenue that is considered as one of the preferred places by the good "Arab tourists" (according to a recently issued sector report). This interaction, made possible by the supposed common speaking language, results from a clear class-based division of roles. Otherwise, the relationship here is reduced to a relationship between an "intermediary" service provider and a potential client.

III. "They are not true Kurds, they have been *Arabized*"

10 As we know, a part of the Syrian citizens we can meet in the streets of Beyoğlu are Kurdish people, mostly speaking Kurdish language, but if necessary even Arabic and now Turkish (their often numerous children have learned very quickly). Towards these Syrian Kurds, the reactions we have witnessed are reactions of rejection or at least of great indifference, even from Turkish Kurds who mostly regard with suspicion these Kurds, accused to have been *Arabized* (if we quote one of our interviewed street-contacts). Consequently, for average street-Turks, there is not a double stigmatization of these Syrians (I mean from Kurdish origin), both as Syrians and as Kurds. What is going on is rather an unexpected stigmatization – a way of creating a distance – on the part of their supposed "relatives" (and natural allies).

11 As an unexpected result, and as a recently issued (November 2014) report written by Murat Erdoğan has underlined, some non-Kurdish Turkish-citizens are looking more positively at their "own" Kurds (which means Turkish-citizen Kurds), in comparison to the poorer group of Syrian refugees they meet in the streets... In other words, the introduction of newcomers into the daily-life interactions system has transformed previous relationships of "dissimilarity". With the appearance of new others, old distances have been reshaped into unexpected proximities. The borders of otherness have suddenly shifted.

To conclude

12 Through this case study, we can see the contradictions between the general discourse of Istanbul policymakers – promoting the city as an international metropolis – and the daily management of "unexpected foreigners". There is obviously an unsaid hierarchy between foreigners that lies behind all their interactions on the urban scene. Besides, these field observations lead to reconsider all the "identity-based" categories that journalists, politicians and even scholars are currently using regarding Syrians refugees, and that contribute to shape general perceptions. In going beyond the rough national and mono-language-based "cultural" categories of differentiation that are mainly shaping perceptions and common discourse on refugee issues, the cruelty of class differences springs out with salience. Being a good consumer makes you quite invisible in current Istanbul, makes you both less Arab and less Kurdish.

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NOTES

1. Tevfik Güngör, "The number of people coming from Arab countries is increasing very rapidly", *Dünya*, 5 May 2014, p. 2. Along with Istanbul, the provinces of Yalova (for thermal tourism) and Bursa (thermal, mountains and "cultural" tourism), south of Istanbul, are providing a complementary offer. See also: "'Mönüyü getir' esprisi Araplarla gerçek oldu", *Radikal*, 14 october 2012, p. 34. http://www.turkiyeturizm.com/news_detail.php?id=42072#.VGNNJsnp9n4. ("Dört kişilik bir aile minimum 400-500 TL ödeyip kalkıyor").
2. In 2013, the third of the "Arab national group" is the Saudi one.
3. See : "Arap turistin gözdesi" *Milliyet*, 11 November 2014, p. 1. http://www.milliyet.com.tr/bursa-arap-turistlerin-gozdesi-bursa-yerelhaber-472013/.
4. See : Yücel, Aysel, "Arap turistler geri geldi, , satışlar normale döndü," *Dünya*, 19 July 2013, p. 2. URL: http://www.dunya.com/guncel/arap-turistler-geri-geldi-satislar-normale-dondu-198276h.htm.

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“Syrians go Home”: the Challenge of the Refugee Influx from the Syrian civil War in Turkey

Andrés Mourenza and Imanol Ortega

Introduction

1 Historically, Turkey has been a country both of emigration and immigration but also a country of transit and settlement. In recent years, Turkey has become a real transit area to the West. The control of this migration, often irregular, is also a center of concern of Turkish authorities, often encouraged by the European Union (EU). The internal dynamics of the country with several military interventions in its contemporary history, the constant instability of the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region with continuing conflicts and wars, as well as political or economic interests have led to the emergence of different migratory movements at different times to and from the country. Some of these movements have been regular while others have had an irregular character (Kaya and Kentel 2005).

2 The migration of Turkish workers to Europe, especially Germany, and the migration of refugees from the late 1970s which continued during the 1980s and until today, are the major migration flows from Turkey to different parts of the world. The main movements of migration to Turkey include Bulgarian immigration to Turkey between 1923 and 1990 that peaked in 1989; immigration of asylum seekers and refugees from Iran, Afghanistan and Iraq in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s; persons subject to human trafficking and entering clandestinely in the country, and irregular immigrants (İçduygu 2003).

3 Until the early 2000s, three documents constituted the three legal pillars of immigration policy in Turkey: the Settlement Act (*Yerleşim Yasası* YY, 1934), the Geneva Convention on Refugees (*Mülteciler Cenevre Sözleşmesi* MCS, 1951) and the regulation of the Right of Asylum (*İltica Hakkı* İH, 1994). In the context of Turkey’s acquit to fulfill the

Copenhagen Criteria and in order to shape its candidacy for full membership to the European Union (EU), Turkey initiated "real efforts" in order to make changes in immigration laws and policies. There are nevertheless areas where a gradual realignment towards EU practice is occurring. Turkey, as part and parcel of pre-accession requirements, must harmonize its legislation in areas identified in the EU "Accession Partnership" document.[1] In this sense, Turkey has approved several bills related to immigrants. In 2002, trafficking and smuggling of human beings were defined as crimes and legislation was introduced as well as severe penalties for traffickers. Another example: a new law on work permits to foreigners was introduced in 2003 in order to regulate any possible illegal activity in that area. Turkey is still establishing regulations regarding the signing of readmission agreements with the countries of origin of immigrants (Çağaptay 2006: 82). One such area is asylum and the lifting of the "geographical limitation". After a long period of resistance, Turkey accepted the elimination of the geographical limitation in 2004 in its national program for the adoption of the Accession Partnership document.

4 Since the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, the kemalist elite wanted to achieve the union of all groups of people who had Turkish descent as they intended to safeguard and promote their interests. In order to accomplish this goal, they gave priority to accepting immigrants who were "either Muslims or were officially Turkish", or belonging to ethnic groups that (it was believed) could easily melt into Turkish identity such as Albanians, Bosnians, Circassians, Pomaks or Bulgarian Muslims and Tartars of the Balkans, better known as *macırlar* or refugees, a term used to refer to an estimated 10 million Ottoman Muslim citizens who emigrated to Anatolia from the late 18th century until the end of the 20th century (Kirişçi 2003: 3). Meanwhile, from the perspective of Erik-Jan Zürcher (2005: 189-190), the first phase of the formation and consolidation of Turkish nationalist ideology was based on a secularization of the society's cultural life through the transformation of the Turkish language and the construction of a historical thesis trying to prove that "Anatolia was a Turkish territory since ancient times (...) thus extending the roots of the citizens of the Republic in the territory they inhabited", which was later continues with a secularization of political institutions, all based on ideological principles provided by the "Six Arrows" [*Altı Ok*].[2]

5 According to the Settlement Act enacted in 1934 (and repeated in 26/09/2006), only people of Turkish descent and culture could migrate and settle in Turkey. As Sema Erder (2003: 158) points out, although the law is very ambiguous in what is meant exactly by ethnic identity and Turkish culture, Muslims and communities in the Balkans who speak Turkish have benefited from this law to enter in Turkey.[3] Among those who immigrated there in the period between 1923 and 1997, Bulgarians were the largest group established in the country. These Bulgarian immigrants, called *göçmen* (emigrant) in Turkish, have received many opportunities from the *Devlet*, the Turkish state. An example of this can be found in 1989 when the Bulgarian government's policy with ethnic Turks led over 300,000 Turks and Pomaks to immigrate to Turkey. That mass exodus, known as the "big excursion" [*büyük gezi*], was motivated by a desire to escape a campaign of forced assimilation. After the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (URSS) in 1990, a third of these Bulgarian immigrants returned home while the others remained and acquired Turkish citizenship. However, following the entry of Bulgaria into the EU in 2007 many more Bulgarian immigrants returned home to claim Bulgarian citizenship (Markova 2010: 211-212).

6 The second pillar of Turkey's migration policy is the MCS refugees and asylum of 1951 and its Protocol in 1967. Throughout history, Turkey has always been a country of asylum, as a result of its proximity to unstable areas of the world. Since then, the flows of asylum seekers arriving in Turkey have continued. During the Cold War, the country hosted large numbers of refugees from the communist countries of Eastern Europe and the URSS who were attempting to settle in third countries. Since the 1980s, it is also a country sought out mainly by asylum seekers and refugees from neighboring Middle East countries. Another important groups of asylum seekers from Europe were the 20,000 Bosnian Muslims who were granted temporary asylum during the war in the former Yugoslavia between 1992 and 1995. Most asylum seekers and refugees come from Iran, Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan (Pope and Pope 2000: 328-329). This flow of non-European asylum seekers to Turkey is not a new phenomenon. In fact, between 1988 and 1991 there was a massive influx of Kurdish refugees into Turkey from Iraqi Kurdistan.

7 However, what Kemal Kirişçi considered a duality in the process of political asylum in Turkey is that it is not clear what governs the status of asylum seekers from outside of Europe. If refugees from Iran or Turkic countries (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) could easily enter Turkey, this cannot be said for the massive influx of Kurdish (most of them from Iraq) refugees who entered Turkey in 1991. After this flow, Turkey began to change its policy and refused entry to many Iraqis who wished to come to Turkey. In 1994, the Turkish government introduced a regulation on the right of asylum, which resulted in a strict regulation of access to the procedures for requesting asylum. This arrangement required Turkey to introduce major changes to its asylum policy. In particular, it meant making it possible for refugees to integrate Turkish society as opposed to relying solely on resettlement and repatriation.

8 A key implication of this policy is a reconsideration of Turkey's definition of national identity and even national security. Individuals and groups who previously have not been seen as organically tied to "Turkish descent and culture and who have often been seen as potential threats to Turkish national security will need to be viewed from a very different perspective" (Kirişçi 2003: 61). In addition, ethnic, nationalistic and religious minorities claiming a link to Turkey who are not Sunni Muslims, that is, everyone from Armenians and Assyrians to Greeks and Jews, as well as unassimilated Kurds and Alevis, will find it difficult to immigrate. Such a policy will not be in harmony with the emerging EU "common" immigration policy, which increasingly emphasizes civic connections to host territory, employment prospects, and cultural diversity rather than a prospective immigrant's ethnic or national origin as grounds for immigration (Özbudun 2012: 71-82).

I. The historical context of contemporary relations between Turkey and Syria

9 The Syrian refugee crisis is now almost entering its fourth year. In this regard, in a press conference last August, deputy Prime Minister, Beşir Atalay, and the President of the Turkish Prime Minister's Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (AFAD), Fuat Oktay, jointly declared there are now an estimated 1,104,000 Syrian refugees in Turkey; 220,000 are hosted in camps, and of the remaining 880,000 only 60% are

registered with the authorities. In October 2014, AFAD estimated the country's Syrian population at 1.6m.[4] According to Ahmet İçduygu, if we look both at official and unofficial figures, there were between 1.3 and 1.5m Syrian refugees in November 2014, of which 1/3 were not registered and only 25% were living in refugee camps; the rest were "urban refugees".[5]

10 Returning to relations between Turkey and Syria, they have traditionally been problematic, especially during the Cold War when Turkey was politically and militarily aligned with the West. Syrian-Turkish relations fit very well Christopher Hill's (2002: 119-120) statement that there are "two sides to the politics of foreign policy [the international system and bureaucratic-domestic politics] impacting on policy-makers. It is the interplay between the two which constitutes our large, illusive but fascinating subject". The international system has been crucial in determining the contours of bilateral relations between these two countries both during and after the Cold War. To all this was added the long-standing Syrian claims on the Turkish province of Hatay and the water dispute over resources of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (Özkan 2012: 122; Olson 1997). With the fall of the USSR, mutual misunderstandings continued because of the emerging network of alliances between Israel and Turkey on the one hand, and the Syrian government with the Turkish-Kurdish guerrilla of the Kurdistan Workers' Party [*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan*, PKK] on the other.

11 However, a normalization of relations occurred with the signature of the Adana Agreement in 1998 and the establishment of formal channels in military and security matters. During this period interactions developed in the diplomatic and military spheres. Within this general framework however, Syrian-Turkish relations were influenced by historical memory and the ways in which the two states defined themselves and thus each other, despite systemic influences such as the end of the Cold War. Indeed, "the increasingly hostile policy of the USA towards Syria, the Iraq War of 2003 and subsequent developments in Iraq, have been filtered through a domestic kaleidoscope (Aras and Köni 2002: 48). In the period between 2003 and 2011, Turkish-Syrian relations went through a golden period characterized by constant high level meetings (important events stand out, such as the visit of Turkish President Necdet Sezer in 2005 (Hinnebusch and Özlem 2014: 2), the gradual increase in trade (with the signature of the Trade Partnership between the two countries in December 2004 during the first official visit of *premier* Erdoğan, the creation of the Council High Level Strategic Cooperation (HLSCC), the Visa Waiver Agreement, and Turkish mediation in Syrian-Israeli peace talks. Finally, the implementation of the Free Trade Agreement brought a number of extra benefits as a commercial platform for other markets in the region, as well as increased border trade, and a steady tourist flow to Turkey (Moubayet 2008: 3).

12 Until then, Turkish-Syrian relations did not face major problems beyond the geopolitical tension caused by Turkey's supposed intention of attracting Syria under its area of influence, and replacing Iran as a priority partner in the region (Muhammed, 2010: 91). However, the Arab Spring changed the plans of both governments. As Meliha Benli Altunışık and Özlem Tür (2006: 246) analyze:

> ideational factors are constantly redefined and re-evaluated. This has been to some extent true for Syrian-Turkish relations, where actors, faced with a shifting regional and international systemic environment revisited their perceptions of each other and reconstructed their foreign policy behavior. The sustainability of

such a policy change, however, is a factor of both domestic and systemic transformations.

13 Finally, at the beginning of March 2011, mass protests spread across Syria, triggering a brutal crackdown from the government and leading to an internal armed conflict and humanitarian catastrophe. More than 190.000 people died and some 10.8m people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance inside Syria, including approximately 6.45m internally displaced people. The United Nations' Refugee Agency, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that around the end of October 2014, over 3.2m Syrian refugees had been registered though the real number of refugees is undoubtedly higher.[6]

II. Data and the problematic of Syrian refugees in Turkey

14 According to the Turkish General Directorate of Migration Management [*Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü*, GDMM] at least 1.6 million refugees from Syria reside in Turkey. Temporary protection status was initially conferred on refugees from Syria in October 2011. That temporary protection regime was subsequently confirmed in an unpublished Ministry of Internal Affairs circular issued in March 2012. According to Şenay Özden (2013: 5), the directive met international standards, in particular guaranteeing all Syrian residents (including Palestinians resident in Syria) access to Turkish territory and protection for access to basic services. But this circular, as well as the meaning of "basic services", was not communicated to Syrian refugees or civil society organizations working with them. In some cases, public officials also seemed unaware of the rights to which refugees from Syria were entitled. For example, some Turkish border guards refused to let Palestinian refugees from Syria access Turkey, despite the temporary protection status that had been conferred to them on an equal basis to Syrian nationals. In the policy towards Syrian refugees, we clearly see an interplay between the "liberal factor-humanitarian approach and the [realistic] immigration policy objectives [aligned with foreign/domestic politics] of Turkish foreign policy after the Arab Spring".[7]

15 Turkey has built some 22 well-resourced refugee camps, accommodating over 220,000 refugees and provided them with food and access to essential services. However, the camps are operating at full capacity, which leaves the vast majority of Syrian refugees outside of the camps and having to fend for themselves, according to Amnesty International. Camp conditions are reported to be acceptable. Although most international and national Non-governmental organization (NGOs) have not been granted access to the refugee camps, Syrian refugees and other credible sources affirm that material conditions are good. Beyond shelter, all the camps reportedly have medical centers, schools, recreational facilities and vocational training programs. Refugees are able to obtain permission to leave the camps on the condition that they return at night. On the other hand, some studies have reported on camp residents' complaints, which include allegations of food poisoning from the meals provided; the uneven distribution of goods such as soap, toothpaste and baby food; and the unsuitability of the tents for winter weather conditions (Özden 2013: 6-7).

16 The Turkish government declared: "(...) we still have vacant places in our camps. Do not allow scenes like begging. Civil society organizations there can also help these [people].

But if you send them to camps, we have vacant places. We can build new camps too, we are looking for venues. We do not want such scenes for our Syrian brothers". Yet, the social conditions of some of the refugees are desperate: some have been begging on Istanbul streets, and thus these Syrian "guests" have become increasingly visible, including women and young children with their passports in outstretched hands not only in tourist areas but also in the mainly conservative neighborhoods of Fatih or Eyüp, tapping on car windows in the overwhelming city traffic, while a growing number is living in derelict abandoned buildings or sleeping in parks such as Gezi Park, the scene of the large protests against the government in 2013. They are also agents of gentrification in the central neighborhood of Tarlabaşı.

17 As a result of the above, hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees across Turkey are likely to be destitute or at serious risk of destitution, with inadequate access to housing, education and healthcare. The refugees have also reported (40) cases of abuse by Turkey's borders guards, deaths (17) and injuries by use of live ammunition and torture and other ill-treatments (31 individuals).[8] Indeed, some are so desperate that they are considering returning to war-torn Syria, especially Syrian Kurds.[9] The majority of Syrian refugees in Turkey now live outside the camps. The border provinces with the highest numbers of Syrian refugees are Hatay, Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa, and an estimated 330,000 live in Istanbul. According to UNHCR, as of 2 October 2014, a total of 896,702 Syrian refugees (both inside and outside camps) had been registered in Turkey. Another source from UNHCR cites the number of residents in refugee camps across 10 provinces as 222,102.[10]

18 It is also claimed that "some business owners have been employing Syrian refugees as a cheap labor force" whilst the government does not issue work permits to these people. On the other hand, it is felt that "the hospitality of locals is starting to wear thin".[11] If at the beginning the Turkish population considered Syrian immigrants as their guests [*misafir*] under a government's policy of "open gates", the most recent developments (with several protests and xenophobic behavior against Syrian refugees) are consistent with the traditional and negative view that Turks have maintained over Arabs as subjects of the Ottoman Empire and the attempt, since the founding of the Republic, to break away from the association with Arab Muslims.

Conclusions

19 To conclude, as recommendations to the international community, we could

> significantly expand the number of resettlement places, humanitarian admissions and other admission programs for Syrian refugees, over and above annual resettlement quotas; expedite resettlement and admission processes to reduce the time it takes between cases being submitted and refugees leaving for the resettlement country; facilitate family reunification for refugees who have family members living abroad, applying a broad definition of family members to include extended or non-nuclear family; fully fund the UN's Regional Response Plan for the Syrian crisis.[12]

20 Meanwhile, Kemal Kirişçi (2003b) considers that there are five major challenges currently facing Turkey in its response to the Syrian crisis:

> sustaining the Turkish response to an ever-growing number of refugees in light of widespread human rights abuses and the ongoing conflict in Syria, establishing prompt, thorough, independent and impartial investigations into reports of abuses

at the border and ensure that any Turkish officials found to be responsible for ordering or carrying out abuses are held accountable and that victims and their families are granted access to an effective remedy;
giving clear instruction to border guards that any use of force must adhere strictly to international standards on the use of force and firearms, in particular the requirements of necessity and proportionality, implement a training of police and military personnel, as well as other agents of the state operating in the border areas with Syria, to ensure they can identify and assist all persons in need of international protection and allow them to enter Turkey and allow all civilians seeking to leave Syria to enter through official border crossings regardless of whether they have valid passports or urgent medical needs;
mobilizing international solidarity to support the state's efforts effectively implementing Turkey's innovative "zero point delivery policy";
addressing security issues resulting from both the violence in Syria and the presence of an ever-increasing number of Syrian refugees in Turkey, and finally recognizing that humanitarian action cannot take the place of political action to resolve the broader crisis and maintain sufficient, appropriately located, secure, and regular border crossing points open for Syrian refugees fleeing the conflict.

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Keywords: Syrian refugees in Turkey, Turkish immigration policy, readmission agreements, Syrian-Turkish relations

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Session 4: Understanding mobility-enclosure to the EU

The Reconfiguration of Mediterranean migratory Routes since the war in Syria. A focus on the "Egyptian route" to Italy

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1 Since March 2011, the civil war in Syria caused the departure of among 3.2 million people, and the presence of over 7 million Internally Displaced Persons in the country. Egypt is the fifth receptor country in the MENA region, after Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq, hosting more than 138,000 Syrian refugees.[1]

2 This situation has contributed to re-drawing the escape and movement paths through these countries and across the Mediterranean Sea, which has been configured as a fundamental corridor to reach Europe, crossed by several migratory routes. The Fortress Europe, as underlined by Castles,[2] is today "virtually impossible" to reach, due to the process of strengthening borders, implemented since the 1990s through the conception and use of multiple normative instruments, such as bilateral agreements with neighbouring southern-shore Mediterranean countries, and technical tools, such as the creation of the Frontex Agency, or the edification of border fences to impede movements.[3] One of the fundamental results of this process has been the transformation of a huge number of asylum seekers into "irregular migrants", who are forced to entrust smugglers and risk their life at sea.[4] The Mediterranean Sea, which for centuries has been a "key space" and a "point of connection" between countries and cultures, characterized by movements of people in continuous evolution, has been currently identified as the most dangerous border in the world, where since 2000 more than 23,000 people have lost their lives, of which more than 3,300 only in 2014.[5]

3 Three fundamental routes, whose opening and closure dynamics are strictly interconnected, compose the central Mediterranean migratory axis: the Tunisian route, which is almost closed, the prevalent Libyan one, still active, and the Egyptian route to Italy. The latter is the longest and most dangerous route because, besides the 1,500 km that it crosses, it includes 2 or 3 transhipments in high sea and these characteristics

have primarily determined this argument's choice. Another interesting aspect is the re-opening process of this route, which after the Syrian crisis has been travelled by more than 9,000 people in 2013 and more than 4,000 in only 2 months of 2014, determining a growing trend.[6] Moreover, I have found it useful to focus on this route in order to bring some insights on current EU politics aimed at externalizing the asylum issue. An interesting case study to analyse, on the one hand, is the border patrol's mechanisms and the dissuasive praxis of "irregular" migration by sea and, on the other hand, the rescue and reception practices implemented by Italy.

4 Thus, starting with an historical analysis of the route during the decade 2004-2014, I have attempted to individuate some environmental characteristics, which could have determined its re-opening process: primarily the large presence of Syrians and Palestinians from Syria in Egypt, and the sudden worsening of their life conditions after Al-Sisi's coup and election; secondly the process of reconfiguration of the main Egyptian borders, such as the Libyan and Palestinian ones, but also the "Alexandria airport", which have already caused some fluctuations in route dynamics in 2004, 2007 and 2009.[7] In fact, it seems that the Egyptian route has been most travelled in conjunction with the crackdowns on border controls realized by Libyan governments, as a repercussion of bilateral agreements with Italy.[8]

5 Moreover, coherently with Sassen's conceptualization of migrations as "patterned" phenomena, which need to be defined and understood in a specific context determined by space and time, I have explored the two routes' extremities, namely Egypt and Italy, by focusing on their socio-political contexts and on their multiple configurations as departure, destination and transit spaces.[9] On the one hand Egypt, whose path toward democracy is being strongly challenged by the consequences of the military coup; on the other hand Italy, which is characterized by "diminishing welfare", which inevitably has repercussions on refugees' rights, a "permanent state of emergency" concerning migration issues and a very problematic hosting system for migrants.[10]

6 One of the main useful characteristics of contemporary Egypt, in order to interpret its changes, seems to be the multi-dimensionality of its migratory context, which is determined by the presence of incoming, transit (in particular asylum seekers), as well as outgoing movements of people.[11] Moreover, some socio-political features of Egypt have been taken into account, such as some restrictions concerning society's essential freedoms, which led to the detention of some lawyers and journalists, and the growing power of the Government to control NGO's actions.[12]

7 The migratory pressure of Syrians, accentuated by Palestinians, also caused the reopening of a channel to Italy for unaccompanied minors. Egyptian unaccompanied minors' migration has not been analysed enough by scholars, although it is quite an old phenomenon, which increased after the bilateral agreements between Italy and Egypt, when the condition of unexpellibility of minors according to International Law was implemented while at the same time the expulsion of Egyptian adults grew.[13] Starting with the "driven nature" of unaccompanied minors' migration, where the family has a fundamental role, I have focused also on the "central role" of minors themselves in the departure's decision process, which could sometimes constitute a form of empowerment and re-definition of their identity in an autonomous way, and also an instrument for seeking new life opportunities, which can also be interpreted as an emancipation from the family.[14]

8 One of the fundamental answers given by the Italian Government to the seaborne migration phenomenon has been the Mission *Mare Nostrum*: it has been operating for one year, starting at the end of October 2013, as a "humanitarian-military" mission, which goes to rescue migrants as far as 90 miles from the Italian coasts.[15] One of its innovative characteristics has been "massive disembarking" and the operation of more than one rescue by every ship: it has probably generated a kind of domino effect on the Italian reception system, which was already affected by the consequences of the well-known "North Africa Emergency" (2011-2013). It has permitted the standardization of an extra-ordinary praxis and the naturalization of a "state of exception" concerning the reception and hosting system that in some cases was in open contradiction with both Italian and International Law.[16] One indicator of this "detachment" has been the succession of ECHR's decisions, concerning the suspension of some Dublin II & III regulation transfers to Italy: they were strongly questioning the Italian configuration as a "safe country", and were denouncing the "systemic inadequacy" of the Italian reception and hosting system for asylum seekers.

9 At the moment, the old right to asylum seems to be uncomfortable, inconvenient and high-priced, because it threatens some basic characteristics of Western countries: first, the harsh limitation imposed on freedom of circulation; second, the strong connection between welfare services and citizenship; and third, the "diminishing welfare process", due to the economic crisis. Especially in Southern European countries, the externalization of the process of asylum that aims at keeping asylum seekers far from the places where they could find protection is flanked by the progressive "emptying" of the content of asylum, and the asylum seekers' "second escape" toward Northern countries could be interpreted as a struggle to fill it up.[17] On the other hand, even the escape of unaccompanied minors could be interpreted as a struggle to re-conquer the autonomy, which they gained at their departure and was deeply called into question by the extra-ordinary hosting system.

10 Perhaps the main connection that can be made between asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors is precisely the "inconvenient" nature of their movements, which are strongly challenging the contemporary logic of border controls, clashing against both "asylum right" and "child protection right", and revealing itself in all its ambiguity.

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Geographical index: Egypt, Italy

Keywords: internally displaced persons, Frontex agency, Syrian refugees in Egypt, Palestinians refugees in Egypt

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German Refugee Policy in the Wake of the Syrian Refugee Crisis

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> We become aware of the existence of a right to have rights (and that means to live in a framework where one is judged by one's actions and opinions) and a right to belong to some kind of organized community, only when millions of people emerge who had lost and could not regain these rights because of the new global political situation.
> Hannah Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951: 296-297)

Introduction

1 At the Symposium on Refugee Protection, on June 30, 2014 in Berlin, Germany's President Joachim Gauck exhorted the audience to remember Hannah Arendt and her demand for a *right to have rights*, which she formulated against the background of the statelessness and vulnerability of millions of refugees after the Second World War. Regarding German and European refugee policy, Gauck stated:

> We could do more. We could do many things better. We have to do it in respect of the rights we have and are committed to. Most of all, we should do it together, as Europeans.

2 These statements by Germany's highest political representative read like a remarkable commitment to refugees' rights. Indeed, Germany – the EU's biggest economy – is also the EU member state that recently accepted the highest absolute number of refugees from Syria, many of them through two special admission programs on the federal and state levels. However, taking a closer look at these programs, it becomes salient that they are designed as temporary exceptional measures for a limited number of refugees to bypass the usual Dublin III procedure, which largely prevents Germany from directly

dealing with the refugee flows from Africa and the Middle East – a position that offers much leeway when it comes to policy-making and would indeed allow "to do more".

3 In the following, I will first outline the programs mentioned above, then take Hannah Arendt's thoughts regarding refugees' rights as a point of departure to shed light on their implicit "moral economy" (Thompson 1971; Fassin 2005). It becomes salient that German refugee policy is in practice far from a rights-based admission that would be central for the acclaimed *right to have rights* to be implemented. Instead, when other host states in the region are obviously overburdened, Germany might jump in by offering refugees the role of objects of humanitarian benevolence.

I. Germany's Temporary Special Admission Programs

4 Against the background of the Syrian refugee crisis, the German government implemented a series of programs of admission which can be understood as an exception from the regular Dublin III routine in order to ease the way for certain categories of Syrian refugees to Germany. The *contingent refugees* admitted in these programs enjoy several benefits in comparison to regular Syrian asylum seekers who made it to Germany on their own, and were not "invited" in this framework: for example, *contingent refugees* immediately receive a residency permit and a work permit for two years and do not have to go through the regular asylum procedures (Lütticke 6/10/2014).

5 In March 2013, the Federal Ministry of the Interior announced that Germany would take in 5,000 Syrian refugees. At first, this only applied to refugees living in Lebanon, in the following declarations it was extended to refugees in other host states. In December 2013, the Permanent Conference of the Ministers of the Interior decided to extend this program and take in another 5,000 refugees. Finally, in July 2014, the conference approved the admission of another 10,000 Syrian refugees, adding up to the number of 20,000 Syrian refugees in total. Applications were possible through the UNHCR, and they soon exceeded the number of available places. Priority was given to persons who a) deserved special protection (children with parents, endangered women, religious minorities, as well as a maximum of 3% severely ill), b) had "relations with Germany" be it via family, knowledge of the German language, previous visits or relations with Syrian institutions, and c) persons who wanted to further qualify themselves in order to later contribute to the reconstruction of Syria. The first group of 107 highly vulnerable refugees arrived in September 2013 (UNHCR 2013a).

6 Already in this federal program, refugees "who have relatives in Germany that are willing to support them shall be considered with priority" (UNHCR 2014). Germany-based relatives of refugees could apply for this program via an online form of the UNHCR.

7 In addition to this *Bundesaufnahmeprogramm* (Federal Program of Admission), 15 of Germany's states (with the exception of Bavaria) set up their own programs (*Länderaufnahmeprogramme*, State Programs of Admission) that all differed in central aspects regarding the details of admission.

8 A particularly striking common feature of these programs both at the Federal and State levels is the role attributed to the family: both programs on the one hand allowed Syrian residents in Germany to invite their relatives and friends, and thereby eased the

procedure of visa applications and flights. However, whereas in the Federal Program those with relatives in Germany were merely given priority, in the State Programs it was a prerequisite that relatives (or, in some countries, other private persons) sign an agreement to cover all expenses of their "guests", who – unlike regular asylum seekers – were in some states even excluded from health insurance (at least until they were granted asylum officially), which without a doubt could have caused the economic ruin of some of the families. Local migration offices would control the financial situation of those inviting their relatives. As a result, it was mainly affluent families who were allowed to invite their relatives or friends; in most states, it was accepted that third persons would sign this declaration (but this, in turn, raises the question whether new dependencies are created). Moreover, only Syrian with either German nationality or a regular permanent residency visa could apply to invite their relatives; Syrian-Kurdish refugees, which had been denied Syrian citizenship by the Assad regime, were therefore excluded, except in two states. The invitation of relatives already registered in other EU member states was not possible.

9 On the ground, the implementation of both the Federal and the State programs of admission have been obstructed by many administrative obstacles (Pro Asyl 2014).

II. Discussion: A Right to have Rights?

10 One central argument in Hannah Arendt's (1948, 1951) critique of the concept of human rights was that they are implicitly based on the assumption of "the human" as an abstraction, and therefore as a being without a social context and community. The tragic paradox of human rights according to Arendt lies in the fact that it is refugees and / or stateless persons who empirically come closest to this abstraction of "the human being" bereft of social relations, presupposed in the concept of human rights, as they are expelled from their political community of origin – and that precisely because of this expulsion they are at the same time the ones who are most unlikely to benefit from the concept of human rights. Instead, everything – that is, their "right to have rights" (Arendt 1951) – depends on the condition of them being admitted to a new nation state, which could effectively grant them these rights (Schulze Wessel 2013; Brumlik 2014).

11 The priorities of the German *Federal* and particularly *State Programs of Admission* apparently take a different view in the way they address refugees: they practically conceptualize them as *guests*, therefore presupposing social relations. Preference is mostly given to people who can obviously guarantee to be connected to a social community pertaining to the private realm, like their relatives in Germany – relatives who can moreover economically afford to invite them and provide for their upkeep. Those who have no such links to Germany are left out, at least from the State Programs. In public debates, the States programs can be presented as a reaction from German administrations to the pleas of Syrian residents to ease the way for their relatives. Contingent refugees in Federal and State Program enjoy, without a doubt, many benefits in comparison with regular asylum seekers.

12 However, the programs contain certain protection gaps that reveal that the argument that this situation is unbearable seems in this case to be "privatized" and directed against the families of the Syrian community in Germany, the families of those who are still in Syria or in the neighboring host countries. The "moral economy of immigration

policies" (Fassin 2005) implied in the State Programs could be summarized as: "If the situation is so bad, then why should those families not throw in their lot?" The consequence is a certain familiarization and privatization of refugee policy. Far from granting a right, it entails the open acknowledgment that the chance of getting a visa – a prerequisite to claim the right to asylum – is unequally distributed: If one's family is economically well off and has an effective network to mobilize non-relatives to give financial guarantees, one is more likely to be saved. Family networks, which in many cases already play an important role in processes of migration and flight, but in domestic discourse on migration policy are often problematized as obstacles to "integration," now become official addressees. In that sense, these programs might indicate a certain neo-liberalization of refugee policies, in the sense that the family is to provide for the individual instead of the state – a tendency that runs counter to an actual liberalization of refugee law. In both cases, refugees are not exercising a right, but are treated as objects of exceptional benevolence.

Conclusion: Recognition of Suffering, no Recognition of Rights

13 The programs described in this paper might allow tens of thousands of refugees and dozens of refugee students from Syria to bypass the Dublin III obstacles on their way to a safe environment in Germany. They were announced as measures to alleviate the pressure in the host countries most affected by the Syrian refugee crisis. The humanitarian principle to take in those who need it most finds its repercussion in the preference that the Federal Program gives to people who need special protection. But apart from that, all other mechanisms of selection in these programs seem to function as filters that guarantee that mainly those who are taken in, are those who are best connected and have a clearly defined social role. Therefore, they also provide a certain filter in the international refugee flow, which guarantees that Germany receives refugees with a higher employability rate, since they are not only already embedded in a network, but their family is also economically affluent enough and therefore likely to have received higher education. The fact that Germany at the same time rejected to co-finance Italy's *Mare Nostrum* project indicates that it reserves the right to select who can claim the right to asylum.

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Keywords: refugees in Germany, refugee policy

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Migrants or Expelled? Beyond the 20th Century Migration Modes

Video-conference

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1 Available on Archive.org: https://archive.org/details/Sassen12214Hd

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Session 5: Research on border zones: new mobilities and transnational networks of humanitarian response

The Field before the Battle. Palestinian Mobilities and the Gaza-Israel-Egypt triangular Border before (and after) the 2011 Egyptian Uprising

Lorenzo Navone

1 The border that separates Egypt from the Gaza Strip is about 10 kilometres long and it constitutes the northwestern side and the natural extension of the Israeli-Egyptian boundary. This frontier, still lesser studied by social sciences (Hanafi and Sanmartin 1996), has become a subject of increasing interest over the past few years since it is crossed daily by sub-Saharan migrants heading towards Israel through the Sinai peninsula (Anteby-Yemini 2008). The border takes the form of an almost straight line that crosses a large, flat desert region, which is scarcely populated, connecting the Mediterranean Sea with the Gulf of Aqaba, on the Red Sea. This line traced in the desert is partially fortified and partially covered by electrified wire meshes and barbed wire. Constantly watched over by surveillance cameras, the border is under the control of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) and the Egyptian police. The aim of this essay is to describe the fragmentation of social space as a result of this "triangular" border, and its effects on Palestinian mobility before and after the 2011 Egyptian uprising.

2 Between 2009 and 2011, I spent several months in the field on the Egyptian side of the border, next to Al Arish and the Rafah border crossing in the region of northern Sinai. My ethnographic account is the result of on-site interviews, informal conversations with people in the border area and participant observation of significant events in this liminal space: people organizing their trips to the frontier, getting close to the border crossing, passing the Egyptian checkpoints and spending nights on the roadside in front of the Rafah terminal. My experience on the ground and the direct observations I made show the limits of the metaphor of the border as a "membrane" between two opposite thrusts: *Crossing borders* and *reinforcing borders* (Vila 2000). I believe, with Henri Lefebvre, that space is not only the theatre, the setting, of actions and conflicts: "its

role is less and less neutral, more and more active, both as instrument and as goal, as means and as end" (Lefebvre 1991: 411).

3 The main theoretical assumption of my presentation is the idea that "(social) space is a (social) product: [...] the space thus produced also serves as a tool of thought and of action; that in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power" (*Ibid.*: 26). Accordingly to this statement, the frontier is not just a line established by a political, military or diplomatic agreement; the border rather, constitutes itself as a sociological fact, produced by human action and perception (Simmel 1998: 531), and – on the other hand – as a system of power relations that determines and *produces* the subjects it targets (Foucault 2009: 38).

I. The field before the battle

4 Following Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005, the Palestinian Authority (PA) has gradually assumed control of its side of the Rafah Border Crossing. After the landslide victory of Hamas (2006) and the failure of negotiations for a national unity government, a civil war erupted in the Gaza Strip between Fatah and Hamas (2007), Fatah officials had to flee from Gaza, and the EU observers mission (EUBAM Rafah) withdrew from the terminal. At the same time, Israel enforced a blockade on the Gaza Strip and Egypt literally "closed the door", leading to the complete isolation of the Gaza Strip and its inhabitants.

5 Between 2007 and 2011, I observed that the Rafah border crossing – the only "external border" of Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) – was sporadically and randomly open to the transit of people three or four days a month, beyond the juridical and technical framework established by the Oslo Accords. On the Egyptian side of the border, the opening was announced about a week before by the national media: the days of the opening were unpredictable, as well as the exact time intervals between one opening and the next. The requirement for the crossing was to own a Palestinian passport, with an exception for "VIPs" such as diplomats, members of international organizations or NGOs, international investors, and so on. During the opening days of the border crossing, hundreds of Palestinians gathered on the road towards the terminal, forming a long queue of people, cars and luggage: this was the context of my fieldwork.

6 The "border device" filters, selects, directs, and governs people according to rituals of rejection, slowing down, waiting and expulsion which correspond with the accounts of the events experienced by the speakers I met in the area. The *spatialisation* of the border, its activation in space and time, is not (only) the mere effect of the boundary but rather a political display of the frontier itself: the more the citizenship is fragmented and ordered following hierarchies, the more the border creates a spectacle of its actions (De Genova *et al.* 2014: 13). This result is decisive in terms of the organization of space and of people's lives.

7 Despite the dramatic and self-evident materiality of the frontier that I studied, I believe that its function cannot be reduced to a binary logic, which clearly discriminates between states and territorial sovereignty, between inside and outside (Walker 2006). I believe, rather, that the border works as a device that constantly fractalizes and fragments identities, citizenship and rights, continuously defining scales between these

two polarities. Contemporary borders, therefore, work in space-time: filtering, selecting, conducting and governing people.

II. The field after the battle

8 The transformations triggered by the revolutionary processes in Egypt are still ongoing, therefore it is too early to draw conclusions from an extremely fluid and ever-changing situation. Did the transformations in the Egyptian political sphere reconfigure the functioning of the border between Egypt, Israel and the Gaza Strip, and how? Can we identify elements of continuity and/or fracture compared to the pre-revolutionary period? Did the 2011 revolutions affect Palestinian mobility towards and from the Gaza Strip?

9 The political framework has definitely changed since the fall of Mubarak's regime, and the interface between Egypt and the Gaza Strip is ever more turbulent:

- The Northern Sinai Governorate [*Shamal Sina'*], the region where the border crossing and the terminal are physically located, has now become a war zone, a theatre of a low intensity conflict between the Egyptian Government and Israel on one side, the Bedouins from many *Kabilas* and jihadi militias [*Ansar Bait al-Maqdis*] on the other.
- Since 2007, the Gaza Strip has been under a heavy economic blockade from Israel and Egypt. Since 2011 it has also suffered two large-scale military operations – "Pillar of defence" (2012) and "Protective edge" (2014) – whose consequences are: on the one hand, even more reliance on international aid, on the use of the Rafah terminal for relief and supplies, and on smuggling *under* the border for all the rest, on the other hand, the need for a reconciliation process between Hamas and Fatah (and the PA) for the administration of the enclave and its reconstruction.
- Egypt is still politically unstable. Since the 2011 uprising until now, protests, mass arrests, tortures, kidnappings and killings have been happening almost on a daily basis (HRW 2014), while the national economy is going through a terrible crisis.

10 Given the new situation, northern Sinai and the Rafah area are almost inaccessible to journalists and researchers, whether they are Egyptian or not. However, based on the information available, we can point out some significant elements:

- A progressive multiplication of decision-makers gravitating around the border.
- On the other hand, the Egyptian government has militarized the entire border region in order to combat ABM.

11 The new *spatialisation* of the border, and the increase in the number of decision-makers in the area, have probably resulted in a much more vulnerable condition for Palestinians who intend to cross the Rafah border. In this sense, the two main questions "How does the border work?" and "Who decides?" still remain open. My hypothesis is that a process of reinforcement of the border is in action, resulting in a less porous border and a more effective filter. Considering the current reconfiguration of the frontier as an "extended" border, the Rafah (Egypt) – Rafah (Palestine) border, as a single point in a large surface, now seems less relevant "on the ground".

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INDEX

Keywords: border, Palestinian refugees, Arab Spring
Geographical index: Egypt, Gaza Strip, Israël

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The Role of Transnational Networks and Cross-border Circulation in Palestinian Migration in a Conflict Situation

Kamel Doraï

The Syrian conflict has profound consequences for the Palestinian population in Syria. Palestinians in Syria were enjoying access to education and to the labour market without particular discrimination before 2011. The conflict, which began in 2011, rejected the Palestinians in Syria to their stateless status and forced more than 70,000 of them to seek asylum in neighbouring countries, like the Palestinians from Iraq following the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003. The current Syrian conflict is part of a longer regional history, which has seen the involvement of refugees, often as victims, sometimes as protagonists, in the different conflicts of the post-1945 Middle East.

While studying Palestinian migration and its impacts, this contribution discusses the temporality structuring migration flows and thereby, it questions the dichotomy traditionally established between “forced” and “voluntary” migration. Forced migrations have usually been described as “spontaneous” migrations and analysed in terms of political and security constraints. However, even refugee movements resulting from conflicts are often fashioned by previous migration flows and correlated network structures that are re-mobilized during the humanitarian crisis.

The Syrian conflict has caused the forced displacement of many refugees. In November 2014, UNRWA estimated the total number of Palestinian refugees displaced inside Syria at just over 250,000 (half of the total registered in Syria), a large part originating from the Yarmouk camp in Damascus. About 12% of registered refugees have left the country to go mainly to Lebanon (50,000), Jordan (6,000) and Egypt (9,000). About 250,000 are still in Syria, in safer places, but without any guarantee on the long term.

According to figures published by UNRWA in October 2014, 42,000 Palestinians from Syria have entered Lebanon since the beginning of the crisis. These figures should be taken with caution, as they are not the result of a census on the presence of Palestinian

refugees from Syria in Lebanon. As long as the border was not closed for them, many Palestinians were going back and forth between Lebanon and Syria, depending on the evolution of the situation in the camps and / or cities of habitual residence in Syria. Some families are *de facto* divided between the two countries by the crisis. Some Palestinians, whose family members resides permanently in Lebanon, find asylum with relatives, some outside the camps, and are not supported by UNRWA.

This article is based on my research on the movement of Palestinians refugees since the mid-1990s as well as a field study carried out in December 2013 in South Lebanon, which shows strong relationships between secondary migration and other forms of international migration of Palestinians, and their local effects in Lebanon.

The role of kinship networks in the reception of refugees

The protracted presence of Palestinians in Lebanon has an impact both on the geographical location of the recently arrived refugees, as well as the forms of local solidarity that developed. The Diaspora networks, sometimes structured since the Palestinian exodus in 1948, can play a crucial role when they are reactivated during a crisis period. This role will be examined through two case studies.

Sixty-five years of exile: Diaspora and cross-border mobility

The family of M. settled in Tyre since the early 1950s. Like many families, the exodus of 1948 led to the separation of three sisters, one is settled in Tyre (Lebanon), a second in Aleppo (Syria) and a third in Amman (Jordan). Family relationships between the sisters settled in Lebanon and Syria are strong, materialized by frequent visits in both countries of settlement. The second generation, born in exile, continues and strengthens these ties through marriage. Two girls born in Syria married their cousins in Lebanon, and a daughter born in Lebanon married a cousin in Syria. These matrimonial exchanges strengthened connections between the two branches of the family in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Meanwhile, family members, sometimes more distant, came to southern Lebanon to work on a seasonal basis, as did the Syrian workers at this period. Links are thus constituted in the long term, with an intergenerational dimension. These migrations, for marital or economic reason, helped to create an area of dense and structured cross-border circulation. The latter has been mobilized with the outbreak of the Syrian crisis.

Since 2012, members of the family from Syria began to find temporary asylum in Tyre, accommodated by their relatives. Some were going back and forth according to the changing security situation in Syria. As they have close relatives in Lebanon, obtaining a visa – until recent restrictions were established – was not very difficult. Circulation of Palestinian refugees from Syria was thus facilitated by the establishment of a mobility system based on family networks. Rather than a constraint, dispersal became a resource in a period of conflict.

This network also facilitates accommodation and access to economic opportunities. Access to local resources is made easier and bridges are created among members of the family living in third countries. Some members of the family try self-resettlement

abroad with the help of kinship networks in countries like Sweden, Germany or the United States of America.

Migration to third countries and transnational solidarity networks

A family that I met in December 2013 in the Palestinian informal settlement of Bourgholiyeh, north of the city of Tyre, had a different itinerary. They did not have many relations with their relatives in Lebanon before the Syrian uprising. They were living in the Babila neighbourhood in the southern suburbs of Damascus. The family was forced to flee because of the fighting and destruction that hit the area. The husband, who worked as a labourer in the public sector, was afraid at first to leave Syria because he did not want to be considered as belonging to the opposition. All civil servants in Syria, whether holding Syrian or Palestinian citizenship, must obtain prior permission to leave Syrian territory to go abroad. Therefore, they first moved inside Syrian territory to escape the fighting, hoping that the situation would improve. With the increase of combats in this area between the Syrian government troops and the opposition, as well as the stigmatization of Palestinians accused by the regime of supporting the armed opposition, he decided to send his wife and children to Lebanon and then try to join them.

His choice fell on Lebanon because he has family that lives in the Palestinian informal settlement of Bourgholiyeh. Moreover, when he left Syria, the other countries in the region had already closed their doors to Palestinian refugees. He entered Lebanon legally with his family, but soon found himself unable to renew his residence visa, and found himself in an illegal situation as many Palestinians from Syria. He contacted his relatives who asked him to come and live with them. His family thus initially shared housing with their Palestinian relatives. Subsequently, they offered them to settle on the top floor of a building under construction in the same area. While construction has been banned for a long time in informal settlements by the Lebanese authorities, a temporary relaxation of controls a few years ago allowed many Palestinian families to add floors to existing buildings.

These settlement areas in southern Lebanon had a very high emigration rates during the 1980s and 1990s. These emigrant families who kept strong ties with their places of origin have contributed very significantly to the development of infrastructures and new buildings in these informal settlements, primarily for two reasons:

1. To improve the living conditions of their relatives who stayed in Lebanon and
2. To have a house in which they can come during the summer vacations or during other holidays.

These vacant housing units are used today since the arrival of Palestinian refugees from Syria. Complementarity networks are developing between the different Palestinian groups in exile. These new types of assistance connect Palestinian refugees who remained in Lebanon, those located in third countries and new refugees from Syria recently arrived. This family settled in the Palestinian informal settlement on the top floor of a building under construction. Funds were then gathered from relatives in Europe and the Gulf countries to purchase windows, the front door, and the installation of a kitchen. Other families are in very different situations. Inside one refugee group, some can benefit from a diasporic connexion that helps them circumvent, even partially, many difficulties, while others remain isolated facing trouble. The absence of

a legal framework concerning Palestinian refugees, who are forced to leave their country of residence, as well as the political treatment of Palestinian refugees by different states in the region, highlights the problem of secondary migration during conflict.

The Palestinian case, despite its specificities, raises serious questions regarding the refugee status and secondary mobility. The refugee status of the Palestinians is linked to their country of residence. When they leave their country of residence, they do not fall under the mandate of the UNHCR and can only access limited humanitarian assistance provided by UNRWA. Palestinian refugees tend to be transformed in asylum seekers by conflicts, and most of the time considered as illegal migrants in their country of temporary residence. As they are stateless, they cannot even seek the protection of their country of origin.

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Keywords: statelessness, Palestinian refugees in Syria, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon
Geographical index: Yarmouk camp

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Listening to the Voices of Syrian Women Refugees in Jordan: Ethnographies of Displacement and Emplacement

Ruba Al Akash and Karen Boswall

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Detailed findings can be found in the full paper. Al Akash, R. & Boswall, K., "Listening to the voices of Syrian women and girls living as urban refugees in Northern Jordan - a narrative ethnography of early marriage," *karenboswall.com*. URL: http://www.karenboswall.com/a-narrative-ethnography-of-early-marriag.

1 In the border town of Irbid, in Northern Jordan, five refugee camps host more than a quarter of a million refugees, the majority of whom are women. Outside of the camps, the population of the towns and villages along the border have doubled since the beginning of the Syrian crisis in 2011 bringing the number of refugees in this border area of Jordan to well over half a million. This paper is an ethnographic exploration of the real desires and needs of these Syrian refugee women.

I. Locating the study

2 The UNHCR estimates that by the end of 2014 there will be over 4 million Syrians seeking refuge in the neighbouring countries of Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq and Egypt making this "one of the largest refugee crises in recent history".[1] Jordan currently hosts nearly a quarter of these refugees,[2] 80% in urban non-camp environments[3] in the poorer Northern Governates of Irbid and Mafraq. Over 80% of these refugees are women and children.[4]

3 The majority of the Syrian refugees entering Northern Jordan are from the city of Dera'a, the largest city of the southern Horan plain, and only 30 kilometres from Jordania's second largest city, Irbid. Dera'a is part of the Horan region, made up of three Syrian provinces, Dera'a, Sweida and Quneitra and the Al Ramtha district in Jordan. As a result of the deep historic bonds between Syrians and Jordanians, many Syrians moved to Jordan to stay with relatives when the conflict first began, not considering themselves "refugees". The tradition of on-going hospitability is now becoming a challenge in and around Irbid however. Identified as a "poverty pocket" by the UNHCR at the start of Syrian crisis, the pressures on schools, hospitals, the police, water, electricity, housing, and the fragile job market has brought about increasing tensions between the Jordanian and Syrian populations in and around the city. Rents have increased tenfold in Irbid since the beginning of the crisis.[5] As the likelihood of a quick solution to the conflict and subsequent return of the refugees becomes increasingly unlikely, the regional and historic ties that unify Syrians and Jordanians are making way for points of potential friction between the two communities, and some cultural and social differences are heightened.

II. Methodology

4 Over a period of five months, Jordanian anthropologist Dr Ruba Al Akash and British visual anthropologist Karen Boswall spent time with 15 extended families in Irbid and the surrounding villages to learn about the real experiences of the women and children in particular and ensure the voices of those living outside the camps are heard. In order to gain as objective a representation as possible, the selection process was made through Jordanian individuals with private connections to the Syrian community rather than through international organisations, NGOs or religious groups. Most families were interviewed in their homes, or in the home of one of the community members.

III. Summary of findings from the research

5 There were a number of similarities between the experiences and preoccupations shared by the families and in particular, the women we interviewed. The events prior to leaving Syria, and the experiences in the refugee camps, the relationships with their Jordanian neighbours, and their living conditions were difficult and traumatic for all those we interviewed, as was the level of isolation and the sadness all the women carried. Setting out for the unknown was generally only undertaken after an event catalysed a need to protect family members from death, rape, or imprisonment and torture. The difficulties described by the interviewees that motivated them to then leave the camps ranged from physical discomfort, especially those arriving in the winter months, to psychological and emotional stress, not least for fear of the safety of their daughters. Many of those we interviewed talked of the perceived risk of rape of their younger daughters.[6] For many of the families interviewed, the marriage of a young daughter was seen as a solution to a number of difficulties, many believing it will save her the risk of losing her virginity through rape before marriage and making it more difficult for her to find a husband. Marrying a daughter also relieves the family of

the responsibility of supporting her and in some instances; it brought in additional financial benefits.

6 Syrian refugees living outside the camps are not entitled to work. A number of solutions are found to generate additional income, including accepting extremely low wages for illegal work. This level of poverty has resulted in increased instances of child labour, largely carried out by the boys.[7] In a study of the Syrian refugees living outside the camps in Jordan conducted by UN Women in 2013[8] it was found that over 20% of girls under the age of 16 and nearly 19% of women never leave their homes and nearly 50% of both women and girls very rarely left the home. Even where families live on the same floor of apartment buildings, it was unusual for them to spend time together or even to communicate with one another. Many of the women and girls we spoke to referred to their homes as a prison. They also lamented the fact that they had so little to do. Communal activities that have been introduced in refugee communities around the world, such as using creative processes to process their traumas, making music, forming groups and societies and studying, were not considered appropriate when so many people are still suffering in Syria. The women carried the burden of sadness. It was their duty as Syrian women to connect through their tears with those who are suffering and losing their lives in the country they left behind. Therefore, the daily routine of crying, either alone or in groups was a common regular activity among all the women we interviewed.

> We don't live a normal life. We are not happy. A lot of people from my family got killed in Syria, so how we can live a normal life? We live with sadness. We lost happiness; there is no space for it.[9]

Conclusion

7 The narratives and life stories set out in this paper provide insight into some of the experiences of those refugees who are suffering the consequences of the current conflict in Syria and whose peaceful lives and livelihoods have been disrupted. Although much effort has gone into ensuring the needs of the vulnerable population of the camps, there are deep concerns that the hundreds of thousands of women and children who have left the camps are at greater risk of a series of threats including "recruitment by armed groups, including of under aged refugees; labour exploitation, including child labour; early marriage; as well as domestic, sexual and gender-based violence".[10] The conclusions of this research support the findings of a Harvard Field Study[11] published in January 2014 calling for "innovative and creative programmatic responses" and that the presence of such large number of refugees living outside the camps in Northern Jordan could increase the instability in the region. By listening to the voices of Syrian women refugees and airing reflections on the fear, suffering and sadness of some Syrian refugee women living outside the camps in and around Irbid, this paper highlights the complex and multi-layered nature of refugee experience.

NOTES

1. UNHCR, "2014 Syria Regional Response Plan," December 16, 2013. http://www.unhcr.org/syriarrp6/docs/Syria-rrp6-full-report.pdf.
2. Numbers of Syrian refugees in Jordan was 576,420 on February 23, 2013 (618,615 November 20, 2014) of a total of 2,499,323 in the region. On February 23, 2013 (3,102,334 on December 1, 2014) updated daily on https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php.
3. The UNHCR estimated in the above report in December 2013 that the number of refugees living in non-camp settings in Jordan would rise from 81% to 84% by the beginning of 2014. This figure was increased to 90% by the beginning of 2016.
4. Figure provided by UNHCR Protection chief Volker Turk at a conference in London in December 2013. URL: http://www.unhcr.org.uk/news-and-views/news-list/news-detail/article/unhcrs-protection-chief-sees-key-role-in-future-for-syrian-refugee-women.html.
5. MercyCorps, "Mapping of Host Community-Refugee Tensions in Mafraq and Ramtha, Jordan," May 2013, p. 9. https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=2962.
6. For a full UNHCR report on gender-based violence among Syrian refugees, see UNWOMEN *Gender based violence and child-protection among Syrian refugees in Jordan with a focus on Early Marriage*, July 2013. https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=4351.
7. In 47% of refugee households that reported paid employment, a child is contributing to the household's income, and 15% reported child labour as the primary source (85% of reported child labourers were boys). Statistics from UNWOMEN July 2013, *op. cit*.
8. Data from UNWOMEN July 2013, *op. cit.*, pp 22-23.
9. Interview with Nadia recorded in November 2013.
10. PDES/2013/13 July 2013 *From slow boil to breaking point: A real-time evaluation of UNHCR's response to the Syrian refugee emergency* where the UNHCR's Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) recommend "Quick Impact Projects" be designed to "provide immediate and tangible benefits to those living in refugee-populated areas". Such projects, it states, "should be accompanied by an effective communications strategy, so as to ensure that their purposes are well understood and that messages of solidarity and community cohesion are conveyed to refugees and host populations alike". http://www.unhcr.org/52b83e539.html.
11. Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR) Harvard Field Study Group, January 2014, Jordan *Non-Paper on the International Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis*. http://hpcrresearch.org/publications/other-publications.

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Geographical index: Jordanie
Keywords: women refugees, oral history

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On the Role of Policies, Institutions and Society in Managing Syrian Displacement in Lebanon

Susanne Schmelter

1 When the uprising in Syria started in 2011, it was widely assumed that the evolving war would easily spill over to Lebanon (ICG 2013). The two countries' political affairs are deeply intertwined and the events in Syria reverberate strongly in Lebanon. With over 1.1 million registered Syrian refugees, more than every fifth person in Lebanon is from Syria. The solidarity with the refugees is generally very high, but with severe overstrain of public services, and infrastructure, and no end in sight tensions have been mounting. The Lebanese government does not have a comprehensive strategy on how to deal with the crisis; it rather deploys a *politique du laissez-faire* towards the engagement of local, regional and international actors. Though the security balance is precarious and escalates from time to time into local warfare, it is remarkable how the Lebanese society has managed to absorb so many refugees. In the following, the context in which this displacement happens will be explored by outlining the socio-political relations, the plurality of organizations and the conflict dynamics connected to the displacement from Syria.

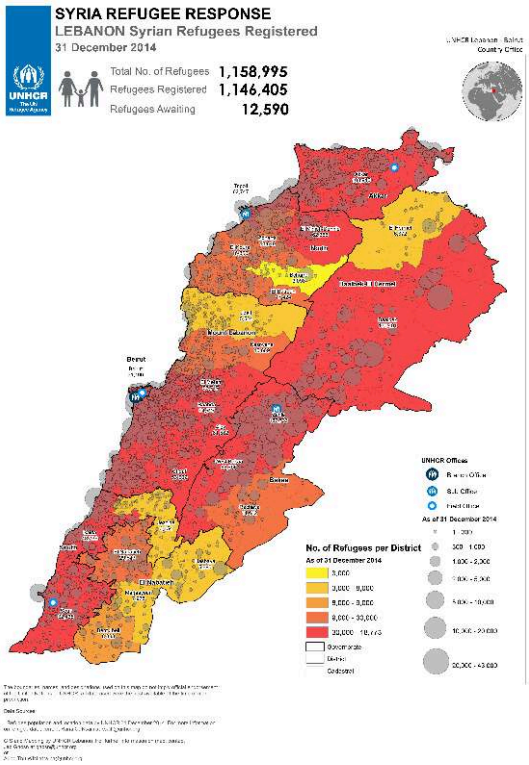
I. Displacement to Lebanon

2 Lebanon, with its porous borders to neighbouring Syria, has for a long time pursued an open door policy towards Syrian nationals. Yet, in autumn 2014, the Lebanese government significantly restricted entry to Syrian refugees for the first time, followed by visa restrictions in January 2015.

3 In addition to the more than 1.1 million registered Syrian refugees, an estimated number of around 300,000 Syrians live in Lebanon without being registered with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Mitri 2014; UNHCR 2014a). From the onset of the crisis, Palestinian refugees from Syria faced more restrictions for entering and

staying in Lebanon. Nevertheless, they had better chances to enter Lebanon than any of Syria's other neighbouring countries and about 53,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria have registered with United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA 2014).

4 Mainly due to the experiences with the Palestinian refugee camps, the Lebanese government refuses the establishment of new camps. The Palestinian refugee camps were set up in 1948 and 1967; they were supposed to be temporary but they stayed and even developed autonomous military structures. As a result of the Lebanese no-camp policy, the Syrian refugees stay virtually everywhere. Spread over more than 1,750 locations, they rent flats, garages, ruins, spaces in half-constructed houses and on fields where makeshift camps are set up. About 15% of the refugee population lives in 600 so-called informal tented settlements (UNHCR 2014b). As there are no designated refugee camp areas, the decision where to seek shelter depends heavily on financial means and work opportunities, but also social contacts and political affiliations are driving reasons.



II. Socio-political relations

5 Traditionally, family relations and economic ties were strong across the two countries' borders. Before the outbreak of the war, agricultural goods were mainly exported via the Syrian land border and many Lebanese families used to go to Syria for shopping. People married across borders and many Syrians used to work in Lebanon. Following the Syrian army's interference in the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990), Lebanon was under Syrian military occupation until 2005. A major division in Lebanon's fragmented proportional system developed between those that were for and against Assad. As regional powers are aligned with the Lebanese parties, the Syrian conflict fuels and catalyses tensions in Lebanon. Even though the Lebanese government had declared a policy of disassociation from the events in Syria in June 2012, the Lebanese Iran-near

Shiite party Hezbollah has been fighting openly on the side of the Syrian army since May 2013 and has significantly altered the power balance inside Syria (Koß 2014; Mohns and Bank 2012).

6 Tied together in the so-called government of national unity, Lebanon's opposed parties often produce a stalemate to the implementation of policies. Thus, the Lebanese government has not developed a coherent strategy on how to deal with Syrian displacement (El Mufti 2014). Only in the fourth year of the crisis was displacement from Syria recognized as a "national" problem – or in the words of social minister Rashid Derbas: "[...] all parties had come to realize that the crisis was a 'Lebanese matter rather than sectarian or partisan' issue" (Knutsen and Kullab 2014). While state institutions are weak, Lebanon has a very active civil society. It is partly organized along sectarian lines, and partly it is explicitly seeking to overcome sectarian politics. The presence of regional and international donors in humanitarian and development projects is not new, the Syrian crisis, however, gave an unprecedented boost to the plurality of these actors in Lebanon.

III. A plurality of organizations

7 The plurality of stakeholders, the lack of clear regulations by the government and the sheer magnitude of the crisis make it difficult to oversee who is doing what in response to the emergency. In this situation, UNHCR jumped forward and took a quite dominant role in the crisis response. It spearheads the coordination meetings that mainly include big international NGOs and some local NGOs. While the cooperation with local implementing partners is a declared aim, local civil society organizations (CSOs) and faith-based organizations (FBOs) often participate only indirectly in the interagency coordination. Reasons for this might be in the different operating modes, standards and principals, language barriers, the demands for proposal and report writing, or lack of continuous funding and planning.

8 CSOs and FBOs generally claim their help should be more direct and are critical of how many hands and organizations money must go through before finally reaching those affected. Moreover, the interviewed CSOs and activists often expressed frustration that their knowledge and experience are not adequately acknowledged. The interviewed Islamic charities seemed less concerned about acknowledgment. Though they criticized the lack of coordination, they made clear that they do not depend on the rules established by UN-institutions and Western donor states; "We would like to coordinate more with the UN-institutions, but we are not willing to lose our time and money on writing reports. And we also do not have to because we have other donors (...)."[1] The representative of another charity highlights how many volunteers his organization has, but, at the same time, admits that they do not deliver on a regular basis. This corresponds also to the pace of donations from Gulf States who are among the major donors for the Syrian crisis and the subsequent emergency in Lebanon; their contributions are not only more directed to the ground but also more spontaneous and less regular (FTS 2014). With the arrival of the refugees, the number of Islamic charities rose so quickly that they have developed their own coordination mechanisms that function outside the UN-led response (Hasselbarth 2014).

IV. Refugee policies and rising tensions

9 Not seeing an end to the conflict in Syria and confronted with a severe overstrain of infrastructure and public services, such as rising rents, overcrowded schools and hospitals, shortages in water and electricity supply, the public discourse on how to deal with the refugees has become increasingly tense. Moreover, the war in Syria has affected the Lebanese economy and, particularly in the low-income sector, competition on the labour market has grown.

10 Against this background, the displacement from Syria turned soon from a mere refugee crisis to a wider humanitarian crisis. Now in the fourth year, calls for more long-term planning and sustainability have become louder. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) strengthened its involvement. Projects in this connection focus mainly on municipalities and aim to strengthen local institutions, infrastructure and employment opportunities; thereby they tackle conflict issues between host and community (LCRP 2014). Clashes between the Lebanese army and jihadists further increased tensions. However while the public discourse on refugees became generally more focused on security, these events and associated discourses translate differently in the municipalities (al-Masri 2015). While humanitarian and development projects might successfully mitigate conflict between refugee and host population, Syrians are generally not part of decision-making processes. Though there are numerous Syrian aid initiatives, Syrian refugees as a group have almost no political or rights-based voice and rarely report incidents of discrimination and attacks. Therefore, they often rely instead on local patronage networks, which can also leave them prone to exploitation (al-Masri 2015).

Conclusion

11 The overall lack of comprehensive regulations imposed by the government and its no-camp policy make the coordination of the crisis response difficult and often less effective than it could be. The plurality of actors and the lack of coordination, on the one hand, give way to creative strategies in dealing with the displacement and enable refugees to find individual niches and strategies to make a living in Lebanon. On the other hand, it makes it difficult to oversee which services and options are available, to appeal to international, and especially national, standards of humanitarian assistance and to report discrimination. Syrian refugees are a large group in Lebanon that, so far, is not very politicized. As they are structurally vulnerable, they might not only be at risk of economic exploitation but also at risk of being hired by militias. At the same time, social and economic relations play an important role in providing housing and work opportunities and can thus be regarded as the backbone of Syrian displacement to Lebanon.

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1. Director of an Islamic charity, Bekaa-Valley, February 7, 2014.

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Geographical index: Liban
Keywords: displaced persons, Syrian refugees in Lebanon, crisis management, humanitarian response, NGO, faith-based organizations

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Syrian Associations in the Turkish-Syrian Border Region and in Lebanon and Politics

Preliminary notes

Laura Ruiz de Elvira Carrascal

1 The Syrian war has forced more than three million Syrians to flee and seek refuge in neighboring countries and beyond. Some seven million others have become internally displaced people (IDPs) since 2011. Against this background, charitable giving and humanitarian aid have become more vital than ever for Syrians. It is in this context that the flourishing of hundreds of Syrian associations in Turkey and Lebanon should be interpreted. Previously isolated and rarely in contact with international donors, Syrian associative actors evolve now in a competitive environment in which they need to negotiate their space and resources with local, regional and international humanitarian actors.

2 The goal of the paper presented at the conference "Guest and aliens" was to explore how these associations, which are hard to quantify due their unofficial nature, relate to politics. Along with Diane Singerman (1996), Saba Mahmood (2005), and Assef Bayat (2010) – for whom *politics* cannot be restricted to either the control or the explicit contestation of the agencies that exert the monopoly on legitimate physical violence, but rather emerge when and where social actors' societal projects clash with those promoted by the authorities and/or with the attempts of the latter to gain social control – politics are understood here in a broad sense, i.e. not only in terms of the connections to political parties or movements, of the will to participate in the political debates and to be heard, and of the capacities to influence policies, but also in terms of *raisons d'agir* and production of a politicized discourse. The aim was to show that these associations, which are described by their staff as apolitical, are *de facto* embedded in politics and can contribute, through different ways, to Syrian political dynamics.

3 In order to grasp the political sociology of these associations and their relation to politics, it is first necessary to understand where these associations come from and

what they do. Hence, my paper first traced the genealogy of these associations, thus showing the elements of continuity with Syria's pre-revolutionary civil society. In a second part, I analyzed the geographical scope and activities of these structures and networks, and revealed the differences between groups operating in Turkey and those working in Lebanon. Finally, in the third part, my paper moved into their actual relation to politics. I will only briefly reflect here on the first and third parts of this analysis.

4 I believe, that "the malleability and adaptability of the associative phenomenon [...] grants it importance as an instrument of societal analysis [...] that reveals a great deal about the tensions of an era" (Laville 1997). In this specific case, the study of Syrian associations has a threefold interest: first, it shows the reconfigurations experienced since 2011 by Syrian civil society; second, it illustrates the interaction between Syrian refugee communities and the local authorities and populations in Turkey and Lebanon; and third, it sheds some light on the new forms of doing, speaking about and relating to politics in the Syrian war context. All in all, it exposes agency in times of constraints.

I. Continuity beyond ruptures

5 Prior to the Syrian uprising, less than 1,500 associations were registered in the Syrian Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor. Almost half of them were concentrated in Aleppo and Damascus, and more than 60% were declared as charities. Although working under highly restrictive conditions, these social actors were certainly forced into "the politics of as if," (Weeden 1999) but were nevertheless neither always compliant nor pro-regime.

6 With the outburst of the popular uprising, Syrian civil society was to undergo significant transformation. Many of the pre-existing organizations were gradually forced to cease activities due to lack of funding, because their members had fled the country, or because the beneficiaries were unable to come to their offices. At the same time, hundreds of networks and structures (more or less) formal would be added to the pre-existing associations in order to coordinate the actions of the protest movement and show the world what was going on inside the country.

7 In late 2011, however, as the revolutionary process became militarized, the number of refugees soared, and early activists were either killed, jailed, or forced to flee, humanitarian and charitable organizations took the upper hand over the initiatives mentioned above. Given the fact that any kind of support to the IDPs and to the injured protesters was being prosecuted by the regime, only informal associations and networks found themselves in a position to tackle these issues in future. This is why hundreds of new social structures began to appear across Syria. They operate secretly with few resources, sometimes supported from outside, mainly through exiled Syrians, sometimes not. They are very flexible and in continuous flux.

8 In the neighbouring countries, new social structures were also to appear gradually. Some of them were built around new sociabilities born out of exile. Other organizations, however, would also open their headquarters in Turkey or in Lebanon but be mainly based on pre-existing informal local networks emanating from Syria. Ghiras al-Nahda, for instance, was first funded in Damascus by a small group of ten people who knew each other previously. They will secretly support the IDPs until the moment when, in 2013, one of its leaders is caught by the regime. Then the remaining

leaders were forced to leave Syria. They went first to Lebanon; then travelled to Turkey, from where they operate today. Finally, a third category is composed of associations which actually are the branches of older registered associations. For example, Zayd ben Thabit, today in Turkey, is mainly built on the network of the very well-known Hefth al-Ni'me association.

9 These examples reveal that the structures which operate today in Turkey and in Lebanon, although sometimes brand new and built from scratch, come in many cases from older networks based on family links, on friendship and on professional or religious relations.

II. Relation to politics: "apolitical illusion"

10 When analysing these associations' relation to politics we find a paradox that can be called, following Laurent Bonnefoy's (2008) expression, an "apolitical illusion". This paradox consists in having actors who claim to be apolitical and show scepticism towards politics while they are *de facto* embedded in politics. Indeed, not only the reasons that push these actors to their commitment can be considered political but also these associations are perceived by most people as *political*, and are connected to political actors, groups and institutions.

11 This desire to keep distance from "politics" and to be perceived by other actors as "apolitical" is highly interesting per se. It means above all that being perceived as "political" is considered problematic. Why? Several elements can be highlighted here. Among them, it should be stressed that being "political" equals being perceived as "partial." Now, partiality can entail problems with foreign donors – who want to have aid distributed in a universal way – but also with beneficiaries, especially when working inside Syria, and even with other Syrian social actors. Equally important is the fear that some Syrian activists feel when speaking about politics. This is particularly true for those associations working in Lebanon, where the political authorities are mistrusted.

12 On the other hand, we have a phenomenon that was named by several of my interviewees *tasyis al-igatha* (the politicization of assistance), an expression that clearly illustrates the connexion between the humanitarian and charitable fields and the political realm. It shows too how these associations are seen as highly political by Syrian society. The first outcomes of the exploratory fieldwork I undertook during the Spring of 2014 point in the same direction.

13 One of the important remarks that can be made in this regard relates to the people who manage, volunteer and work in these associations: many of them rallied against al-Assad's regime during the first months of the uprising and started to be active, either in the civic sphere or in the relief field, when they were still in the country. Therefore, in a certain way, their current activity is a continuation of their previous militant action inside Syria. Similarly, if we ask them about the reasons for their involvement in these associations, we realize that the religious reasons, which were dominant among social actors before 2011, are now secondary. Engagement is explained in highly political terms. In comparison with Syrian associations in the years 2000, we can observe a clear evolution from local ambitions to the national ones, from the singular to the global. Behind the immediate relief actions, there is a social and a political project. Equally interesting is to explore the existing interaction between these

structures, on the one hand, and the political actors and institutions of the opposition on the other hand.

14 To sum up, when analysed in depth, all these elements show how, contrary to what the members and staff of associations hope or claim, these structures are de facto embedded in politics and can contribute, through different means, to Syrian political dynamics. For instance, by supporting those regions under siege, they prolong their capacity to resist the regime, or at least, by trying to keep alive the ideals and values of the uprising.

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Session 6: Closing Remarks

Closing Remarks From a Political Science Perspective

Laura Ruiz de Elvira Carrascal

1 Beyond the cross-cutting issues regarding mobility, migration, and refugees, the conference "Guests and Aliens: Re-configuring new mobilities in the Eastern Mediterranean post-2011" also shed light on several interesting questions from a political science perspective. Among them, five will be highlighted in this short conclusion.

2 The first of these questions relates to the paradoxes, contradictions and undesired effects arising from every social and political process. Several conference participants, starting with the organizer, Natalia Ribas Mateos, underlined how dynamics of continuity and rupture can simultaneously take place, thus reiterating the need to take into account the *longue durée*. Saskia Sassen laid stress on the paradox of mobilities increasing while borders are being rigidified. Jean-François Pérouse explained how in Turkey "the bad Arabs," i.e. the Syrian migrants, are treated differently than "the good Arabs," those who visit Turkey and bring with them a significant economic capital. Susanne Schmelter, Laura Ruiz de Elvira, and Hélène Michalak made the distinction between formal organizations and informal networks in the humanitarian realm. In the same vein, the combinations of "rule of law" *versus* "suspension of the law," of "legal" *versus* "illegal," and of "good refugees" *versus* "bad refugees" were emphasized.

3 A second question was that of *agency*. As shown in most of the papers discussed during the two-day conference, among the myriad consequences of the so-called "Arab Spring", the reinforcement of *agency* in the region should be highlighted. Several papers indeed revealed the increasing role played by civil society, by both NGOs and informal networks (built on local, transnational, and sectarian solidarities, as well as on, for instance, illegal trafficking activities). Similarly, Claire Beaugrand and Vincent Geisser clearly showed in their paper the increasing *agency* of the Arab diaspora, migrants and exiled. The outsourcing of social responsibilities to a wide range of social actors, which was already a strong phenomenon before 2011, has arguably been accentuated in the post-2011 national contexts – e.g. in Tunisia, where the state has been largely inactive since the ouster of Ben Ali, or in Syria, where the state apparatus

has been gradually damaged and dismantled – and has, consequently, increased the *agency* of non-state actors. In other words, contrary to the ideas of "passivity" and "resignation" that prevailed before 2011, a deeper look into Arab societies reveals different forms of *agency* that the "Arab Spring" has surely brought to light, but certainly not created from scratch. Moreover, Mariam Salehi's and Christoph Schwarz's papers reminded us that similar dynamics – i.e. outsourcing of social responsibilities, *agency*, and new forms of resistance – can equally be observed in Europe.

4 A third question that was central to some of the analyses conducted at the conference is that of the redefinition/abandonment of former social contracts, both in the MENA region and in Europe. Achim Rohde and Saskia Sassen explicitly mentioned it in their respective papers but other participants did so implicitly. From this perspective, the breakdown of social contracts (which, in the MENA region, date back to the nascent states of the 1950s and 1960s) generates growing social tensions and can be considered one of the main explanatory elements of the Arab uprisings of 2011.

5 A fourth cross-cutting issue of the conference was that of the importance of the local context. The local context remains vital when shaping broader dynamics that can be observed at the regional level. However, as Kamel Doraï suggested, despite the differences that can be observed between different cases, several salient points remain common – e.g. when talking about refugee policies in Jordan and in Lebanon. Hence, the need for undertaking comparative studies that will enable us to understand what is exceptional or country-specific and what is not.

6 A fifth question that needs to be underlined in this short conclusion concerns the political dimension that lies behind other realms of social dynamics (such as migration, mobility and humanitarian aid) that are initially not conceived as being strictly political. The papers presented at the conference were rich in examples in this regard: as previously mentioned, Claire Beaugrand's and Vincent Geisser's paper explored how the Arab diasporas have become key actors in the post-"Arab Spring" politics (e.g. in Tunisia); likewise, the papers of Susanne Schmelter, Laura Ruiz de Elvira, and Hélène Michalak highlighted the interplay between politics and humanitarian aid. Finally, Andrés Mourenza's and Imanol Ortega's paper showed that the presence of Syrian refugees in Turkey can become a political tool within Turkish politics. These examples revealed the need to rethink the meaning of *politics* (and, consequently, that of the terms *politicization*, *political* and *apolitical*), not only from an analytical perspective but also from the local actors' point of view.

7 Finally, it is interesting to note that the religious question and that of sectarian dynamics, often portrayed as being pivotal to understanding Middle Eastern societies and politics, and especially referred to when talking about the Syrian crisis, were absent in most of the papers presented in the conference. Perhaps this missing perspective could be a good starting point for a new conference on mobilities, refugees and migration in the MENA region.

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The Education of Syrian Children in Istanbul

Öykü Aytaçoğlu and Büşra Demirkol

Elif Aksaz
"The Migration and mobilities research unit" at IFEA adopts a broader view of the migration phenomenon. It encourages comparative and simultaneous analyses of immigration and emigration, of internal and international migration. It encourages comparative and simultaneous analyses of economic and political migration, forced and voluntary migration, etc.
This perspective is also present in this conference. Conference participants discussed the different migrant categories. They drew attention to the way immigration and emigration localities are connected, and to the way immigration interferes with internal migration, for example the dynamics in an urban setting between Syrians and Turkish or Kurdish populations originating from rural areas.
I would like to now give part of my short speaking time to Büşra and Öykü, two students from Galatasaray University who have been carrying out fieldwork research on Syrian populations in Istanbul during their internship at IFEA and Galatasaray University.

1 Following the spring 2011 uprisings in Syria, escalating to a complex, violent civil war, there has been one of the biggest migration waves of this decade, especially towards countries bordering Syria. Turkey is one these countries which has so far received more than 1.6 million migrants. The remarkable issue is that this immense migration mobility will probably not have an end soon as the situation gets more complicated each day. Our field research concentrated on the education of Syrian migrant children in Turkey. These migrant children – who are under 18 – constitute half of the migrant population. In order to research their educational situation, we conducted interviews with some public schools, especially in the Zeytinburnu district – a lower middle class district in Istanbul which is characterized by its migrant population and textile industry – with the District National Education Directorates, several Turkish/Syrian based associations and Syrian schools that are strongly associated with these associations and municipalities.

2 First, we discovered that Turkey's migration policy, which only provides the right of refugee status to European citizens, puts Syrian migrants in an uncertain situation.

Giving a *guest* status, which claims to be a "permanent protection", puts Syrian migrants in a position where they are seen as needy. Also, this absence of status at times causes arbitrary implementations on the part of local state representatives and puts Syrian migrants in an elusive situation.

3 The other thing that we realized during our field research was that the relationship between municipalities, and Syrian schools and associations is based on self-interest. The associations with which we talked prepare the economic infrastructure of Syrian schools and manage bureaucratic relations with local authorities. While schools are trying to create an ideal Syria – with their students, Syrian curriculum and Syrian teachers – during the time that they live in Turkey, the associations perform the task of negotiating with the country of origin. The effect of this collaboration between the opposition in Syria and the current government in Turkey is open to discussion, as well as its impact on Syrian migrants who live in Turkey.

4 Finally, it is necessary to point out the lack of standards in the rulings regulating this situation, which makes the State's policies uncertain and leaves room for various actors. In other words, policies related to Syrian migrants in Turkey are open to initiatives and personal decisions and to the implementation of these policies in local areas. Also, it is important to realize that many Syrian migrants might stay permanently in Turkey. That's why they shouldn't be considered as *guests* who are seen as needy but rather as a diverse community, which can evolve in multiple directions; this is why a more proper approach and respectful of human rights should be adopted by the authorities.

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Keywords: Syrian refugees in Turkey, education of Syrian children

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Roundtable with associations and NGOs working with migrants in Istanbul

EDITOR'S NOTE

Held at Istanbul Addar Center

Middle East Development Network

Lauranne Callet-Ravat

1 Throughout the two days of the conference, the reconfiguration of post-2011 mobilities has been highlighted along with its impact on host societies, triggering social change and fostering inherent public debate.

2 The role of civil society and its various organizations has been thoroughly scrutinized in the light of recent years' political developments in Arab countries and Turkey, notably in the context of the "Arab spring". The evolution of the analysis of the state of civil society in the Arab world among international observers and academics has changed dramatically, however questions still remain. Pre-2011 Arab civil societies were generally considered weak, notably because of restrictive authoritarian regimes, lack of resources, and organizational skills. In 2011, the world received with a mixture of surprise, enthusiasm and questioning the social uprisings, and witnessed the demand of civil societies for a greater role in politics, the economy and society's organization. At the end of 2014, international observers mostly agree on qualifying as a failure the impact of these social movements on genuine democratic transition, with probably the single exception of Tunisia. However, another general consensus is that the mid- and long-term evolutions implied by these social movements will be numerous. One of them, already visible, is the profusion of civil society organizations (hereafter CSO) with evolving and renewed status, roles and claims.

3 The current situation of Syrian civil society is striking in its complexity and the stakes it involves. The Syrian population and, naturally its civil society, is spread and parceled out between Syria, its neighboring countries (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq), the rest of the Arab world, Europe, and the USA. Wherever they went, these newcomers encountered and integrated older diasporas. All this raises important new questions regarding modes of organization, strategic challenges for the coming years, and their possible impact on the country's reconstruction.

4 The case of Turkey and the current Syrian population present in the country is one of the cases with a multitude of complex evolutions. During this conference, important points have been underlined regarding Syrian refugees in Turkey, such as their ethnic composition, identity self-reflection and current legal status. Syrian civil society's role in neighboring countries has been underlined during the Session 5 on "Research on

Border Zones: New mobilities and transnational networks of humanitarian response". Laura Ruiz de Elvira Carrascal pointed out the "*raisons d'agir* and production of a politicized discourse" of Syrian aid-delivering CSOs based in Turkey and Lebanon. Along her analysis, she shed light on the CSO members whose commitment in the field of social services was motivated by their will to help the country's reconstruction in opposition to the politics of Assad's regime. This reality in the field is certainly not disconnected from the other reality, the trend among Western donors and INGOs to carrying out a specific democratic agenda in funding and training Syrian CSOs, both inside and outside of Syria. Both elements are certainly to be taken into account in the above-mentioned long- and mid-term changes to be expected and analyzed regarding 2011 social movements.

5 In this framework, one issue whose importance might be crucial for the effectiveness of change-driven Syrian CSOs is their practical means of action. Among those, a major one is the relationship of Syrian civil society with their counterparts in the host country. These relationships are among the factors defining the access to practical amenities in the host countries, helping to overcome legal obstacles, facilitating relationships with host authorities, but also, in a longer term, the relationship of the refugee community with the host country's society. The relationship of refugee CSOs with host country counterparts in strengthening Syrian civil society is currently out of the scope of most international aid programs and current field case studies. It is particularly important to study this relationship in order to better understand the phenomenon and foster its positive outcomes.

6 In our case study, the Turkish landscape is of importance because of its neighboring position, high number of Syrian CSOs and growing number of INGOs that settle in the country. Turkey is also one of the most difficult countries in Syria's neighborhood for Syrian CSOs in terms of creating links with host societies, notably due to the language barrier, but also certainly because of the weaker cultural ties and civil society relationships, compared to Jordan or Lebanon.

7 Now I am pleased to present the case study of Akademi Society, a Turkish CSO that has considerably adapted its work and orientations to the recent influx of Syrian refugees and created strong links with Syrian CSOs. This Turkish CSO offers a striking example of a civil society initiative that has felt the impact and subsequently rapidly adapted to the new phenomenon of Syrian refugees and CSOs, and diversified its services in the light of the emerging reality. It is also an example of a local CSO that, in cooperation with its partner organization Middle East Development Network (MDN), undertakes the process of institutionalizing and internationalizing its activities as a result of the transformations.

I. About Akademi/AKDEM

8 Akademi Society, also known as AKDEM, is a Turkish CSO, which has been witnessing a dramatic transformation of its activities with the afflux of Syrian and other Arab refugees to Istanbul. Legally speaking, the Akademi team manages two entities, the NGO or association Akademi Society for Language and Scientific Research[1] [*Akademi Lisan ve İlmi Araştırmalar Derneği*], and AKDEM Istanbul Foreign Education Consulting[2] [*AKDEM İstanbul Yurt Dışı Eğitim Danışmanlık Hizmetleri*], a professional language training and distance learning center certified by the Turkish Ministry of National Education.

The CSO is registered since 2009, although active before that date, and is headquartered in the Fatih district of Istanbul. The original purpose of Akademi was to deliver Arabic language classes to Turkish students and to promote the learning of Arabic in Turkey through various cultural and educational activities, as well as through university distance learning programs. In addition, Akademi became the leading partner of the Ministry of National Education in the field of Arabic teaching. In addition, since 2010, it organizes the annual International Arabic Competitions[3], under the official patronage of the Ministry, between secondary schools that have Arabic classes.

9 Starting in 2012, Akademi began to be frequently contacted by Syrians who identified it as one of the rare "Arabic speaking organizations" in Istanbul. Upon their request, Akademi enhanced its activities to include Turkish classes for Arab speakers. In 2013, the volume of Turkish classes and teachers increased exponentially. In 2014, Akademi opened a second branch in the Başakşehir district of Istanbul in order to respond to the growing demand (large numbers of Syrians and other Arabs live in both Fatih and Başakşehir). Akademi currently receives monthly an average of 600 students in the Fatih branch and 156 students in the Basaksehir branch.

II. Socio-economic profile of students

10 The population receiving classes at AKDEM is mostly constituted of Syrians but also of Palestinians, Egyptians, Iraqis and other Arab groups. With the opening of its Başakşehir branch, the AKDEM leadership started to notice socio-economic differences among Syrian refugees. The Fatih branch is mostly hosting a population with a lower income, while the Başakşehir branch is visited by a wealthier Syrian and Arab population. In this regard, AKDEM has developed two different pricing policies: a low price in Fatih and higher fees in the newly established branch in Başakşehir, as well as lower prices for Arabs than for Turks. This differentiation allowed to establish a subsidy system between the two branches in order to make the system financially sustainable. For example, Turkish classes for Arabic speakers are almost half the price of Arabic classes for Turks.

III. Bridging with Syrian CSOs

11 In addition to providing language classes, which is a major tool for fostering integration in the local society, AKDEM diversified its activities through the creation of bridges with Syrian CSOs. This diversification started in late 2013 upon refugees' request to organize their own education and to get support from AKDEM in framing their activities. Hence, AKDEM started to host Syrian schools, from primary education to secondary school level, in September 2013 in Fatih and in September 2014 in Başakşehir. AKDEM infrastructures are currently hosting one of the most modern Syrian schools of Istanbul, with classes delivered in well-adapted buildings, in contrast to other Syrian schools that are mostly hosted in non-adapted residential buildings.

12 The close cooperation between AKDEM and the Syrian schools was further strengthened by the dissolution of the main Syrian coordination platform for education that used to coordinate 18 refugee schools in Istanbul. In such a context, the two Syrian schools hosted by AKDEM approached AKDEM's leadership to request them to join their

management board and thus to not only just host them but also to be directly involved in the process of school management.

13 This partnership between Turkish and Syrian CSOs also led to concrete experience sharing in the field of education. Although the major part of the school curriculum is designed by the Syrian Interim Government (SIG) based in Gaziantep, AKDEM was requested to provide some expert support on the educational content and in the provision of books. Some AKDEM standards were also adopted by the two Syrian schools, notably in welcoming a maximum of 17 students per class.

14 In addition to educational activities, AKDEM also became a supportive structure in terms of consulting for various legal issues (residency permit, administrative matters etc.) and the registration of Syrian CSOs. Based on its own rich experience of NGO management, the AKDEM team consulted for free with a number of Syrian initiatives that wished to register as NGOs, explaining the procedures of registration, helping in filling various documents and forms, guiding in terms of legal steps, and advising on NGO management.

15 Those diverse requests from Syrian CSOs and the cooperation with AKDEM can be seen as an exception that proves the rule. Difficulties are common for Syrian schools in Turkey, especially in finding proper host structures and getting efficient organizational support, and more broadly, it is often difficult for Syrian CSOs to create strong ties with well-established Turkish CSOs and with public institutions. AKDEM's pre-existing familiarity with the Arab culture and its specialization in Arabic language teaching has been a key factor for creating a bridge with the Syrian CSOs and fostering trust with Syrian partners. This is a rather rare example for Turkish CSOs.

IV. On-going institutionalization and internationalization of activities

16 In order to extend its funding sources; strengthen its capacities; capitalize on its work, knowledge and best practices, in recent years Akademi's leadership decided to develop project design skills and bidding capacities in order to participate in various funding programs. The team of Middle East Development Network[4] supported this evolution towards the professionalization of project development and the search for institutional funding, along with the internationalization that allowed growing networking and partnerships with international organizations and INGOs. MDN is an international development company specialized in governance and public policy, based in Istanbul and active in the Middle East and Turkey. Its activities blend those of a consulting company, think tank, and civil society organization. Some of leaders are involved in both MDN and Akademi, which creates an operational link between the two organizations. MDN having extensive experience in the fields of international migration and integration, as well as in project development and international funding, supported this diversification of AKDEM's activities. This created a bridge between local best practices and institutional and international perspectives related with Syrian refugee matters.

17 Thus in 2012-2013 Akademi developed a project and secured funding from the Istanbul Regional Development Agency for training medical staff to answer the growing needs of the Arab-speaking population in local hospitals. The training program provided on

one side basic Arabic language skills to the medical staff, and on the other hand taught medical terminology to professional translators of Arabic. The final beneficiaries of such a project were at the same time Arabic speaking "medical tourists" and the Syrian population settled in Istanbul.

18 Following this first activity funded by a specialized donor, two other project proposals were submitted to the Istanbul Development Agency: one (following a similar logic) focused on the vocational training of Arabic speakers regarding graphic design skills and on basic Arabic skills for professional designers. The second project aimed at studying the socio-economic profile of Syrians in Istanbul. Although both projects were not awarded for various technical reasons, Akademi was able to develop its project development skills and knowledge of the funding process.

19 In 2014, Akademi partnered with MDN in its joint bidding with an American NGO, International Relief and Development (IRD), for the funds of the Bureau of Population for Refugees and Migration (BPRM) in the US State Department (this submission was not awarded either for technical reasons). In this project, Akademi's role would be the hosting of activities for Syrian refugees and using its network with Syrian CSOs to create actions aiming at the social integration of refugees.

20 Among other project ideas currently developed jointly by Akademi and MDN is designing distance-learning higher education programs for Arabic speakers and more specifically for Syrians, potentially in partnership with various universities. However, such a project implies important investments and might lead the organization to lobby this idea with various national and international fund-providers.

21 In addition, Akademi develops its networking skills with international organizations and institutions, and makes ad hoc information exchanges with them. Thus, various working visits to and from UNHCR, IOM, various Western INGOs took place last year, with the involvement and support of MDN.

Conclusion

22 In general, although most Syrian CSOs and Turkish CSOs operate virtually in two separate worlds despite being in the same geographic territory, some of them were able to develop solid partnerships and consistent joint activities. Among those, Akademi stands out as probably the rare Turkish CSO that was able to undertake a major adaptation to the new situation, to tailor its policies to the new needs and demographic phenomena, and to take full advantage of the opportunities that the presence of Syrian refugees offers. The fact that prior to the massive arrival of Syrians, Akademi was focused on Arabic language and had already a good cultural understanding of the Arab world has undoubtedly played a positive role in this transformation. On the other side, these demographic transformations also pushed this Turkish local CSO to develop project design and bidding skills, to discover various national and international funding channels, to professionalize its project implementation, and to develop networking relations with various international organizations and institutions (UNHCR, OIM, INGOs). In this field Akademi's close partnership with an internationally-oriented team, the MDN, has been advantageous and instrumental. Through the example of Akademi, fostering the creation of relationships between Turkish and

Syrian CSOs appears to be beneficial for both sides and to create mid and long terms efficient means of action for refugee CSOs in the host country.

NOTES

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4. http://www.mdncorp.com/.

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Keywords: civil society, Arab Spring, Syrian refugees in Turkey

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Support to Life / Hayata Destek

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1 Support to Life (STL), founded in 2005, is an independent humanitarian agency working in the field of disaster risk reduction, disaster preparedness and emergency response by promoting community participation in Turkey and the surrounding region. In its project work, STL abides by the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independency and accountability.

Projects

Food Security

2 As the number of refugees in Turkey increased and vulnerabilities became more visible, access to basic goods and services has become harder every day for the Syrian refugees settling outside the camps. Since 2012, STL has been working to meet the basic needs of the non-camp Syrian refugees who are unable or unwilling to settle in refugee camps in Hatay, Kilis and Şanlıurfa through a cash-based assistance program. While empowering the refugees, this approach supports the local economy where Syrian refugees live. By the end of 2014, STL had reaches out to 4,769 households on a monthly basis with cash assistance, which represented 25,931 individuals.

Protection

3 STL is also carrying out a protection program through community centers in the Turkey-Syria border areas. As of April 2013, STL has been running two community centers in Hatay and Şanlıurfa. These centers provide community based psychosocial support services and skills development trainings, aiming at personal development, intercultural dialogue, and enhancement of communal and social skills. STL is now preparing to launch a community-based psychosocial program for Syrian refugees in Istanbul. By the end of 2014, a total of 4,871 refugees had attended the programs in STL's community centres.

Emergency Aid

4 Due to the attacks on Sinjar in Iraq and on Kobane in Syria, Turkey received a massive refugee influx during the summer of 2014. STL launched an emergency relief aid program for Kobane and Ezidi refugees in September 2014. Emergency operations took place in Suruç district of Şanlıurfa and in the city of Batman in Southeastern Turkey.

5 The main activities are in-kind distribution of food packages, hygiene items, and households support kits comprising of kitchen utensils, blankets, stoves, tarpaulins and winter clothing sets. In order to prepare the tents for winter conditions and to protect them from fire, insulation material and pallets have been provided. To promote hygiene, water distribution points, water tanks, latrines, shower units, and laundry areas have been constructed in refugee camps.

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Geographical index: Hatay, Kilis, Şanlıurfa
Keywords: NGO, emergency response, humanitarian relief, disaster risk reduction, refugees, refugee camps

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Processes of Forced Departure: The Case of the Palestinian Population of Syria

Salim Salamah and Mette Lundsfryd Heide-Jørgensen

Introduction

1 The Palestinian exile and distribution all over the geography of Syria goes back to 1947–1949 following the Arab-Israeli war on the land of Palestine and the displacement of at least 300,000 Palestinian refugees. In Syria, most of them settled in refugee tent camps with primitive buildings and limited or no infrastructure. Prior to the current-day Syrian crisis, these were urban quarters integrated with their urban surroundings, housing Syrians and Palestinians alike.[1] Yet, August 2011 drew a new threshold in the Palestinian-Syrian relationship. The unique territory of permanent refuge was attacked by the forces of the Syrian regime at Al Ramel camp in the coastal city of Latakia. This forced 5,000 refugees to escape outside the administrative borders of Al Ramel. Since then the countdown of the existence of Palestinian communities in Syria accelerated. Deraa camp in southern Syria was and still is subject to several heavy attacks from the regime and in Yarmouk camp, a heavy siege claimed the lives of 194 Palestinians and the last UNRWA food distribution took place in August 2013.[2] Likewise Khan Eshieh camp, south of Damascus, is seen as "not accessible"[3] according to locals and UNRWA.

2 One might argue that in times of war, the initial decision for a person to leave his or her permanent residence territory has clear reasons, for example: violence, instability and persecution. Yet for a Palestinian of Syria, between the decision to leave a place, the urge to stay, and the actual departure, there is more than just logical reasoning. There is a history of belonging for three generations, there is the factor of "statelessness" that hinders the relatively free movement that nationals enjoys when they cross international borders, and there is a whole history of discrimination against Palestinians when they attempt "to leave" or "change" their geography. Even more, there is the memory of the 1948 Nakba (Catastrophe) and its implications legally and

logistically, nationally and internationally on the livelihood of Palestinians. Finally, there is the fact that for generations Palestinians have been forced to move further and further away from their place of origin. Understanding these different processes of departure, and how they express the far and the near past, as well as the violent present is our main objective. The individual stories, though subjective, offer us insights into the new displacement of the Palestinian communities in Syria, the history of their relationship to the places they once "belonged to", and their future relations to places they will belong to.

I. Escaping Death – Crossing Borders

3 Escape is most often the direct result of persecution, war, and violent assaults. However, we find it important to make an inquiry into the processes of departure, "why" and "how" people leave their habitual places of residency. When inaugurated, we find that the subjective reasons and processes of escape of Palestinian communities in Syria, help us to both understand the violent conflict, but also reveals modes of resistance, intertwining histories and tells valuable stories about the local communities which might be lost if they are not documented now. Moreover, the oral history accounts show that crossing borders as a way of escape starts at the outskirts of the refugee camps and not at the international recognized borders. The departure thus includes several border-crossing experiences, which influences people's chances of return.

II. Contextualization

4 This paper aims to provide insights into how the process of departure for the Palestinian communities in Syria took shape and which frontiers were met. The first departure most often lead to circular movements and multiple displacements from Yarmouk and other Palestinian camps to other neighbourhoods in Damascus and Syria, then to neighbouring countries, such as Lebanon, Jordan or Turkey and eventually to Europe.

- Following the outbreak of the Syrian uprising in March 2011, we do believe that several major events contributed to the decision of Palestinians to leave their habitual places of residency at first and to leave Syria eventually, among them the following:
- During the month of July/August (Ramadan 2012) the Syrian regime initiated a major military operation against Al-Midan, a bordering neighbourhood of Yarmouk. The result of the operation was tens of thousands of refugees taking shelter in Yarmouk UNRWA schools. This specific event marked an important threshold for locals and led them to believe that Yarmouk might be next in the clash lines between the armed opposition and the Syrian regime.
- At the end of that year, December 2012, another major escalation took place with the bombardment of Yarmouk by MiG fighter jets. What followed was collective mass displacement.
- The beginning of the siege of Khane el Sheih in 2013. Many Palestinians from Yarmouk had taken refuge in the suburb of Khan el Sheih – a Palestinian camp, which since 1956 has developed into a well-functioning suburban neighbourhood predominantly inhabited by

people with Palestinian national identity. In the fall of 2013, shelling and siege took over in Khan el Sheih as well.

- Today both Khan el Sheih and Yarmouk camp are seen as "non accessible" areas by UNRWA (UNRWA, "Syria Regional Crisis Response", 80).[4]

5 Yet, in our quest to expand knowledge on the processes of departure we find that the subjective stories of departure are closely linked to different intersections of persecution due to activism against the regime, political affiliation, experiences of detention, connection with the local community, assaults from secret intelligence services, and self-organizing of resistance all play a role in the processes of departure. At the same time, we have found that in the description of the process of departure, there is a close connection between the departure and experiences of being Palestinian, stateless and having nowhere else to belong to.

Presentation of Narrators[5]

6 Here we present five of the main narrators of the project. They are all from the Palestinian communities in Syria, Yarmouk and Khan el Sheikh, and have departed these areas in different ways between June 2013 and April 2014.

- Kamal was born in Palestine in 1946; He lived in different locations in Syria, first in Dera'a, then in Jobar and finally at Yarmouk where he settled until he was forced to flee in 2012. Kamal worked as a philosophy professor at Damascus University. First, he fled to Damascus downtown, going back and forth between Damascus and Lebanon during 2013 and ended up in Sweden in October 2013.
- Noura was born in Syria in 1963; she is a Syrian national, married to Kamal. She was instructor of pedagogy in Damascus University. Since she was married she has lived in Yarmouk Camp. She departed with Kamal, her husband, by the end of 2012 and settled down in Damascus downtown. She escaped to Sweden in October 2013 crossing the official border at Al-Masnaa to Lebanon and arrived in Sweden.
- Roula was born in 1984 in Yarmouk Camp; she is mother of five children (2–16 years of age). Roula has graduated elementary school. Roula's husband and son escaped Syria to Germany via Turkey in 2012. Roula and her four children escaped Syria in April 2014 by car via Al-Masnaa border crossing. She lives in a camp in Southern Beirut and is waiting for family unification with her husband and son in Germany.
- Omar was born in 1986 in Yarmouk Camp. He is educated as an artist in music, dance and theatre. Before the conflict he worked as a music and drama teacher at a UNRWA youth and women's centre. Omar has escaped to Lebanon twice, but was forced to go back to Syria to renew his passport in June 2013. He fled the bombings by car through the official border crossing at Al-Masnaa during both escapes.
- Walid was born in 1988 in the Khan El Sheikh Camp. He is educated as a computer technician. Prior to the conflict in Syria, Walid lived and worked in Damascus. Walid escaped Syria by foot over the mountain El Sheikh alone in November 2013. Walid has found shelter in a refugee camp in Southern Beirut. Walid has no valid passport and does not hold official travel documents.

III. Methodological and Theoretical Approaches

7 Methodologically, the use oral history recordings and ethnographic-participant observation has predominantly inspired our work.[6] We believe as Donna Haraway argues that knowledge must be situated, in order to show "real aspects of the world".[7] Moreover, the oral history approach allows us to inquire into the process of subjective memory of recent and past historical events, and to capture parts of history, is at risk of being silenced by grand narratives.[8]

8 In our research design, we combined several geographical fields of study: firstly the places in Syria from where the narrators departed and were displaced to, and secondly their experiences in the new places of displacement, Lebanon and Sweden. Through five main narrators, we tell the subjective stories of the departure process from Palestinian communities in Syria to Lebanon, and for two of them further on to Sweden. We include these fields in our inquiry in order to bring into light both the stories and destinies of those who managed to reach a safe haven in Sweden and those who reached Lebanon but who are forsaken there now due to a lack of resources and the discriminatory Lebanese border regulations.

NOTES

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4. http://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/emergency-reports/syria-regional-crisis-response-update-80.

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Geographical index: Syrie, Palestine, Yarmouk camp, Al Ramel camp
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