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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Refugees in Urban Areas: Otherness, Exclusion, and Survival

Atahan Demirkol[a]

[a] Afyon Kocatepe University

ABSTRACT

This study examined otherness and exclusion concerning urban refugees in Türkiye by analyzing how the urban creates or prevents the exclusion of urban refugees. Urban refugees account for more than 90% of refugees in Türkiye and consequently, represent a prominent phenomenon in migration studies. Integration is a two-sided and bilateral process performed by refugees and the state. However, in urban areas, the state's role is limited. Urbanization acts as a tool for the integration or disintegration of refugees. Historically, exclusionary practices toward refugees and groups labeled as others by the settled ones have been observed. Thus, refugees become vulnerable in urban areas in terms of exclusion and otherness. Yet, urbanization might be a chance for better integration into the local culture. In this respect, this study explored the effect of urban areas on refugees and whether they facilitate or hinder the refugee integration process. To do so, we conducted in-depth interviews with urban refugees in Afyonkarahisar. This study suggests that urbanization could be both a positive and negative determinant of refugee integration depending on whether the urban policy aims at integration or not.

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How can refugees survive in urban areas? It is an essential question aimed at determining the survival strategies of refugees regarding urban integration because, compared with camps, more refugees have settled in urban areas in recent years. Studies concerning urban refugees, which employ it as a broad term, have explored the urbanization of displacement (Landau, 2014). Henceforth, urban refugees refer to those settling in cities or towns instead of camps. More precisely, urban areas are the places where exclusion and otherness have been created. In this respect, the locality is developed as a new tool for refugee integration to eliminate exclusion and otherness issues. However, urban areas could still be places for racist and exclusionary practices toward refugees (Kelsey, 2021). Even though urban refugees may face problems, they come to cities for certain opportunities: education and health services, anonymity, and integration into social life (Buscher, 2013, p. 17; Jacobsen, 2006, p. 276). As Ward (2014) puts it, most of the refugees worldwide live in urban areas, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been trying to deal with urban refugees and their integration processes since 1997. The latest global effort to address refugees' problems is The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). As an outcome of the 2016 New York Declaration, the GCR was established in 2018, and its main goals are fairer responsibility-sharing for hosting countries and reshaping the global refugee regime (Miller, 2019). This means that the GCR recognized the burden and responsibility on local governments as the first responders (Kale & Erdoğan, 2019). Furthermore, four paragraphs of the GCR identified "local integration" and "other local solutions" (GCR, 2018, paras. 97–100). More precisely, the GCR indicates that "[a] number of States have found it useful to move toward the local integration of refugees…" (GCR, 2018, para. 97).

This is also the case for Türkiye, which has encountered the most frequent refugee flows from Syria since 2011. After the war started in 2011, Türkiye followed an open-door policy toward Syrian refugees (İçduygu & Şimşek, 2016) recommended and implemented by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu, as one of the results of his neoliberal approach (Kale,

CORRESPONDENCE TO: Atahan Demirkol (MSc), Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Afyon Kocatepe University, Türkiye. Email: ademirkol@aku.edu.tr ORCID: 0000-0002-7185-5781

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2017). However, the neoliberal open-door policy approach did not last for a long time, as Türkiye started to close its borders and use migration as a leverage tool in foreign policy against third-world countries (Kaya, 2020; Kırdım & Demirkol, 2021). This policy implementation has quickly led Türkiye to become the world's primary refugee-hosting country. According to recent UNHCR statistics, Türkiye is hosting 3,673,808 million refugees under the UNHCR's mandate, of whom 3,648,983 are Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTPs) (unhcr.org, 2022). Moreover, 3,556,074 of them have been living in urban areas instead of refugee camps (goc.gov.tr, 2022). However, clarification is needed in terms of SuTPs and refugees in Türkiye. In regard to Türkiye's legislation, Syrians living in Türkiye are not officially classified as refugees. Instead, they are categorized as SuTPs because of the geographical limitation to the refugee definition of the 1951 Geneva Convention by the Turkish Government. Given the fact that "urban refugees" is a well-known concept in the existing literature and accepted as a universal academic classification for refugees living in urban areas, this study regarded SuTPs in Türkiye as refugees to comply with the global definition.

Additionally, being an urban refugee in Türkiye has become a two-dimensional concept in migration studies. Erdoğan's (2015) study revealed the frequent use of "guest" by Turkish citizens toward SuTPs. This concept is two-dimensional as it reflects both positive and negative meanings. It might be argued that Turkish citizens prefer the guest concept because of their hospitality perspective. On the other hand, this concept also represents a negative meaning that embodies the hegemony and the grace of the host over the guest. Accordingly, Erdoğan argued that referring to SuTPs in Türkiye as guests is one of the most disturbing incidents in their social relations (Erdoğan, 2015, p. 182).

Afyonkarahisar is one of the provinces of Türkiye hosting Syrians. The general economic structure of the city is built on trade, the marble sector, and tourism, and the demographic situation is homogenous as the majority are local-born people. Foreigners are a minority in Afyonkarahisar's population; thus, being a foreigner is an exceptional case for Afyonkarahisar. Although the refugee population and their ratio to the locals in Afyonkarahisar are not quite high, it is important to examine their otherness, exclusion, and survival practices as this perspective is neglected in migration studies. Urban refugees in Afyonkarahisar are settled next to the city center. Due to this spatial distribution, Afyonkarahisar is a unique case for urban refugees' otherness, exclusion, and survival practices as the public confrontations between locals and refugees are dense. Therefore, Afyonkarahisar was selected as a case study to analyze how refugees face exclusion and otherness practices and how they survive in this environment. Although the metropolitan areas of Türkiye contain most of the refugees, the spatial distributions of them and local people have different consequences. More precisely, in metropolitan areas, public confrontations are lesser because of the settlement distances between locals and refugees. However, the case in Afyonkarahisar diverges from the metropolitan areas because of the spatial preferences of refugees in favor of settling down in the city center instead of suburban areas. In this respect, Afyonkarahisar is a new case for refugee studies in Türkiye to provide data from a neglected refugee-hosting city where the local people and refugees densely interact during their daily lives.

Syrian refugees in Afyonkarahisar mostly came to the city through their networks. The networks have created a migration system between Syria and Afyonkarahisar dependent on the marble sector. This directed us to analyze the survival strategies of urban refugees in Afyonkarahisar by understanding their sentiments and perceptions about being an urban refugee. On the one hand, urban refugees are vulnerable to external factors as they are open to threats of urban life. On the other hand, they are also open to opportunities of being a part of an urban lifestyle. Therefore, urbanization can positively or adversely affect the refugee integration process. The positive perspective depends on the idea that urban areas are melting pots for refugees to harmonize with local people. However, urban areas might pose a dangerous environment for refugees too. Increasing public confrontations of urban refugees with locals might lead to exclusion and otherness practices against refugees or trigger anti-refugee sentiments among the local people.

In practice, urban refugees mostly settle down in the poorest and most underdeveloped neighborhoods of the city because of their financial hardships. In some cases, these areas are far and suburban locations of the cities. Some exceptional fields such as Afyonkarahisar show that the refugee settlements may also be very next to the city center. If refugees settle down in urban areas and if there is no urban policy for their integration at the local level, it leaves them in a chaotic environment. They struggle to establish their lives despite obstacles they face in their everyday practices, such as language barriers, financial insufficiency, and accommodation problems. In contrast, in refugee camps, all basic needs and core human rights services are provided in a secure and safe environment by authorities. Despite this fact, however, most refugees today prefer to live in urban areas.

Urban areas are the places where urban dilemma occurs (Şengül, 2009, p. 15). This dilemma represents a junction of competing interests of different groups in urban areas. One example of this dilemma is the urban refugee vs. local community dilemma. Therefore, in this study, we attempted to determine the survival strategies concerning the exclusion or inclusion of refugees. The concept of urban highlights a structure that consists of institutions, neighborhoods, and workplaces. This structure has attached urban refugees to the present system, and the attachment creates an urban dilemma between locals and them. The new settlers of the city, urban refugees, attempt to survive, attach, and integrate into urban life. However, it is a stressful process for both parties. The hosting community and urban refugees may have disputes about the distribution of space, labor market, and cultural differences.

Being an urban refugee is stressful in a lifecycle. The stress has emerged due to the pressure of the socioeconomic survival in the city and the process of reproduction of identity and belonging. Therefore, we decided to highlight and focus on urban refugee groups and their survival strategies in a neglected field: Afyonkarahisar, Türkiye. Exploring the concept of the urban refugee has two main differences compared with refugees in camps. First, urban refugees are in a less protective environment, and they only receive secondary aid such as financial aid, access to health care under certain circumstances, schooling and education, and limited legal work opportunities. In contrast, refugees in camps are provided with all necessary aid under the UNHCR's mandate (Kobia & Cranfield, 2009, p. 4). In this regard, urban refugees' survival strategies diverge from those of camp refugees as urban refugees have more complex challenges in their daily struggles. Second, urban refugees are a worldwide phenomenon because their numbers have increased. Additionally, as the average lifetime in camps and duration of being under refugee status have become longer, it is not a humanitarian response anymore to lock down the refugees in camps. It is neither financially nor emotionally -or mentally- sustainable for a more extended period. Therefore, because the urban refugee concept still has gaps in the existing literature (Landau, 2014), it is academically worth exploring this phenomenon.

Although several studies have addressed urban refugees and their integration process or difficulties at the local level (Bernstein & DuBois, 2018; Buscher, 2013; Campbell, 2006; Doomernik & Ardon, 2018; Erdoğan et al., 2021; Jacobsen, 2006; Kale & Erdoğan, 2019; Koizumi & Hoffstaedter, 2015; Marfleet, 2007; Norman, 2021; Ward, 2014), this paper aimed to highlight the otherness, exclusion, and creation of strangeness of urban refugees and their survival strategies. In addition, we focused on the positive factors of being an urban refugee that may promote the urban integration process. Therefore, we generally sought an analysis of how urban refugees are excluded or included in urban areas. To achieve this end, we used a field study that we conducted in Afyonkarahisar, Türkiye in 2018. The remaining parts of this paper are constructed as follows. First, a methodology is given regarding the field study. Next, the Syrian refugee flow to Afyonkarahisar is explained through a theoretical framework. In the third section, we focused on the stranger concept, otherness, and exclusion through the examples from the field study. The last section is the discussion and concluding remarks.

Methodology

The case of this paper is a field study conducted in Afyonkarahisar. Afyonkarahisar is one of 81 provinces of Türkiye, and its total population is 744,179 according to the latest national statistics (goc.gov.tr, 2022). Currently, 12,573 Syrians live in the city, and their ratio to the local population is 1,66% (goc.gov.tr, 2022). In 2019, right after the field study was conducted, the Syrian population in the city was 2,518, whereas there were 14,686 foreigners in total.[1] In 2018, we conducted ten in-depth semi-structured interviews in the city's urban area after obtaining the necessary permissions from both the Directorate General of Migration Management and the Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee.[2] Although some of the readers may consider that the field study is outdated, the results were still considered valid by the authors. To construct our sample, we used the snowball method. This method could be used for sensitive field studies, and migration is one of them (Biernacki & Waldrof, 1981). Because of the vulnerability of the urban refugees, we preferred to use the snowball method for sampling. By doing so, we aimed to build trust between the researchers and the interviewees, and we reached ten interviewees. Because the sample size in qualitative studies cannot be determined before starting the field study (Başkale, 2016), we followed the snowball method until obtaining a certain and common inference from the interviews. After ten interviews, we were convinced that we had enough data to determine a common pattern regarding urban refugees and their otherness, exclusion, and survival strategies in Afyonkarahisar. Thus, we terminated the field study.

1 This data was obtained upon the official request of the author according to the Law on Right of Information Acquirement, No. 4982 from the Afyonkarahisar branch of DGMM.

2 The date we obtained the permission from DGMM was 02/03/2018 with the official letter number 62103649-604.02.02-E.10758 and from METU HSEC was 08/02/2018 with the official letter number 28620816/105.

As a part of the snowball method, we found a Syrian gatekeeper who was working in the marble sector and had brought a number of Syrians from Syria to Afyonkarahisar's marble sector to approach the SuTPs in Afyonkarahisar. After the first interview with him, he helped us reach the rest of the participants. Because of ethical issues, the interviews were not recorded, and only notes were taken. The interviewees' years of birth and sex are indicated following the quotations. The main questions we directed to the participants are given below. It should be noted that we added follow-up questions during the interview.[3]

i. Could you please tell us how you came to Türkiye and Afyonkarahisar?

ii. Could you please tell us why you chose Afyonkarahisar?

iii. Why did you choose to come to the urban area?

iv. Did you have friends or relatives in Afyonkarahisar before coming here?

v. How did you provide for your basic needs after you came to the city?

vi. What were the obstacles you confronted in Afyonkarahisar?

Through these questions, we aimed to elaborate on the perceptions of urban refugees in Afyonkarahisar. Next, we analyzed these interviews in the context of social justice, otherness, and exclusion practices. The next section will discuss this theoretical framework to explain the Syrian refugee flow to Afyonkarahisar, employing two prominent migration theories.

Explaining Syrian Refugee Flow to Afyonkarahisar: Theoretical Framework

Migration network theory allows researchers to understand individuals' decisions to determine their immigration destinations. Although the existing literature has primarily utilized migration networks theory related to "internal migration" (Gurak & Caces, 1992, p. 152), we employed it to understand the refugee flow from Syria to Afyonkarahisar as a part of "international forced migration." The basic principle of this theory implies that the networks eradicate or at least decrease the risks and costs of migration (Ahsan Ullah, 2009, p. 155). Therefore, migration networks are interpersonal links between migrants, former migrants, and others in the country of origin and destinations (Massey et al., 1993, p. 396). Through these links, migration networks help migrants find jobs and accommodation opportunities in destination countries and mitigate their integration process (Light et al., 1989).

In our research, most interviewees reported that they had come to Afyonkarahisar as a result of their networks. Hence, they had connections before coming to the city. However, they also underlined dificulties of being a refugee. As one of the interviewees noted, "coming [to somewhere] as a refugee is so bad, it changes your whole world" (Interviewee 7, b. 1970, male). Social networks between the host country and country of origin facilitate the process of migration for immigrants from the perspective of migration network theory. Therefore, the theory emphasizes a link between the immigrants in the host country and prospective emigrants in the country of origin. By conveying information or sharing their experiences, the immigrants prepare better destination conditions for others and play a key role in continuous migration (Arango, 2018, p. 113). Even if the SuTPs are not labor migrants, they still chose Afyonkarahisar as their destination via the preference shaped by their social networks. Therefore, we could conclude from the interviews that although it was not voluntary migration from Syria to Türkiye, finding a refuge in Afyonkarahisar was still a rational choice for SuTPs. Therefore, we could explain the Syria-Afyonkarahisar migration through individual behavior from the actor's perspective (Haug, 2008, p. 586). The refugees selected Afyonkarahisar as the destination point in Türkiye because of a conscious decision owing to their previous networks, which generally consist of relatives. "We had relatives here, so we came. Our relatives made us meet with the muhtar. We had no money, but the muhtar helped us" (Interviewee 10, b. 1978, male). "One of my friend's relatives had come to Afyon, and as he knew the problems at Antep, he told me to come to Afyon" (Interviewee 2, b. 1985, male). "We came here [Afyonkarahisar] in 2015, we had relatives here. We have a comfort zone in Afyonkarahisar. The muhtar helped us firstly" (Interviewee 5, b. 1965, male).

Additionally, the economic cooperation between Syria and Afyonkarahisar played a crucial role in attracting urban refugees. The marble sector, the city's leading economy, was also an essential economic source in some parts of Syria. Therefore, most people who had been marble workers in Syria decided to come to Afyonkarahisar as they could have more livelihood opportunities.

3 Please refer to Appendix 1 for the complete list of questions.

They told me that there is a marble company in Afyonkarahisar, so I came here. I had people that came here whom I had known for a long time. When we first came, the muhtar helped us with our urgent needs and accommodation (Interviewee 4, b. 1987, male).

This cycle also presents a migration system between Syria and Afyonkarahisar. The migration systems theory suggests that "information about the migrants' reception and progress at the destination is transmitted back to the place of origin; if it is favorable, it encourages further migration" (Bakewell, 2014, p. 303). Therefore, the migration system is "two or more places linked by flow and counterflows of people" (Fawcett, 1989, p. 671). This process establishes a migration system between the country of origin and the destination. As in the case of Syrian refugees in Afyonkarahisar, numerous marble workers in Syria chose to come to Afyonkarahisar owing to the migration system created by a Syrian gatekeeper at Afyonkarahisar. Interviewee 7, the gatekeeper for the Syrian migration flow to Afyonkarahisar, informed us about the process.

I brought a lot of Syrians to Afyonkarahisar. As the men I had brought to the city worked well, our bosses wanted more Syrians as workers and told us they would help them. So, 90% of the Syrians in the city were marble workers in Syria (Interviewee 7, b. 1970, male).

Therefore, we could identify the refugee flow from Syria to Afyonkarahisar by employing migration networks and migration systems theories. The marble sector has been the leading factor for Syrian attraction to the city, leading to in the increase in the SuTPs population in Afyonkarahisar. Therefore, the economic cooperation and socioeconomic structural similarity between Syrian and Afyonkarahisar have been the main sources of Afyonkarahisar's urban refugee population. The Syrian gatekeeper attracted more Syrians to Afyonkarahisar and helped their integration into the city through the networks. Henceforth, the SuTPs created an urban refugee group in the city center. This has led to the emergence of exclusion or inclusion practices in the urban area and the sociology of difference.

Sociology of Difference

Population movements either reproduce migrants' identities or place them in an ambiguous recognition before the law. Instead of being a citizen, their social status in the hosting country is transformed into being a social group member. The difference between migrants' legislative classification and sociological categorization results in tension: the legal definition of migrants vs. social recognition of them. This dilemma has been analyzed in sociological research as the sociology of difference, and migration studies allow researchers to discuss this phenomenon because migration flows have historically frequently stimulated nationalist or racist feelings and reflexes. For instance, the beginning of the 20th century marked the political history of England because of the debates in the parliament regarding Lovara Gypsies and Jewish immigration. The main topics of the debates were foreigners and exclusion (Sibley, 1995, p. 109).

Reaction to others is not always related to racism; it is also caused by the threat perception. Approaching the "others" as a threat has not always been about criminal concerns such as national security. Societal security, a threat to the dominant culture and traditional moral values, is another root cause of reaction to others in society. When the incumbent dominant culture presents the others as "deviants," they also label them as "exceptional" for their own traditional values (Sibley, 1999, pp. 84, 109). The concept of the nation-state is another source of reaction to others.[4] Nation-states concreate the "we-feeling" and aim to create a homogeneous culture, values, tradition, and identity (Şahin, 2009, p. 134). According to DeLaet, this nationalist approach marks immigrants as strangers to the citizens because of the threat perception of immigrants to the nation-state's borders and order (as cited in Öner, 2016, p. 14). Therefore, as Bommes puts it, nation-states try to control migration (as cited in Weiß, Ofner & Pusch, 2011, p. 285).

A new phase of migration control and integration policies is characterized by urban refugees. They represent a distinguished case because they are not settled in controlled and surveilled areas such as camps. In this respect, for urban refugees, the urban itself becomes an integration tool (Doomernik & Ardon, 2018). However, an urban policy is needed to achieve refugee integration through it. Otherwise, urbanity presents threats and risks for refugees as they are vulnera-

4 There is a comprehensive discussion about the creation of the nation-state and the transformation from community to society in the existing literature. Although this is not the main concept of the study, from our point of view, it could be argued whether the minority problems had begun with the emergence of the nation-state. Habermas argues that "the problem of born minorities" could also be observed in a democratic society as a result of the reign's cultural domination over its citizens from different origins (Habermas, 1998, pp. 143–144). In this concept, Gupta and Ferguson (1992, p. 12) conclude that ethnological and national naturalisms of nation-states ignore the fact that society is contested.

ble to the reactions of local people. Exclusion, discrimination, and otherness are among the threats that m citizens may pose against urban refugees. To understand this matter, we will discuss the concept of the stranger, its relationship with strangers, the creation of social groups and otherness, and the concepts of social justice and exclusion.

The Concept of a Stranger

Zygmunt Bauman conceptualizes strangers through the processes of exclusion and suffering (Başer & Hülür, 2015, p. 400) and defines them as "socially far, physically close" (Bauman, 2011, p. 188). This definition points out a situation that may be useful in explaining urban refugees. Physically and spatially, urban refugees are attached to the urban structure, yet their social links and networks are detached from the locals. Thus, they are strangers according to Bauman's approach. This was also observed in our field study. One of the interviewees explicitly defined themselves as strangers with these words: "…finally, we are the strangers here" (Interviewee 2, b. 1985, male).

Simmel (1971) also uses the closeness and farness nexus to explain the stranger concept. According to him, a stranger will be close insofar as we feel a special affinity-including affinities derived from general human nature- between us. However, the feeling should be individual, not social. Social familiarness or affinities do not result in the closeness to a stranger (Simmel, 1971, p. 147). Accordingly, Bauman notes that everybody in urban areas is a stranger to each other as he describes urban life as the "life of strangers" (Bauman, 2001, p. 170). Similarly, Sennett (2002) approaches the urban as a place of strangers, too. He underlines that urban consists of a heterogeneous population that interacts via market relations (Sennett, 2002, p. 39).

On the other hand, Kurtuluş (2003) posits that urban areas have historically always presented the spatial distribution of social inequalities. According to his approach, urban reflects spatial segregation of different religious, ethnic, and cultural groups (Kurtuluş, 2003, pp. 79–80). Furthermore, Bauman points out the difference between being a stranger and becoming a nobody. The process of becoming nobody sweeps up physical closeness in the context of being a stranger. To this extent, when the physical closeness disappears by excluding strangers from common or shared spaces, the individual becomes nobody, that is, ignoring (Başer & Hülür, 2015, p. 401).

Relations with Strangers

Bauman scrutinizes being a refugee in a controlled camp, and he describes it as incarcerating people for surveillance. According to him, a camp is not a transition point but an endpoint, and this is a conceptual discrepancy of refugee as an unsettled and temporally hosted person (Bauman & Lyon, 2013, pp. 69, 70) because "being a resident in a refugee camp means being excluded from the world that rest of the humanity shares" (Bauman & Lyon, 2013, pp. 70, 71). In that context, Bauman compared primitive societies' struggling strategies with strangers and today's strategies. To do so, he took Claude Lévi-Strauss' (1955) study as a reference, in which he emphasizes that primitive societies' strategies were different from modern societies' strategies.

According to Lévi-Strauss, the primitive societies' struggling strategies with strangers were "inclusionary absorption strategies." They were "eating and absorbing" and "biologically internalizing" the stranger, and hence, those are "anthropophagic" or "cannibalistic" societies. In contrast, in modern societies, the strategy is an "exclusionary spew strategy." In this context, spew refers to "excluding strangers from society" or incarcerating them in camps (as cited in Bauman, 2001, pp. 235, 236). These modern societies are thus regarded as "anthropoemic" or bulimic." However, Bauman's comparison is that "absorption" and "vomit" strategies are simultaneously implemented in modern societies to polarize strangers as insiders or outsiders. In this polarization, insiders are the absorbed ones, whereas outsiders are the vomited ones. Therefore, societies ensure the elimination of non-polarized strangers (Bauman, 2001, p. 236).

Creation of Social Groups and Otherness

Social groups are informal organizations consisting of familiar people regarding their affinities, and social groups are created by "others." Being a member of a social group is the connection point between an individual and society. "The individual is linked to society through two principal social bonds: to collectivities through membership and to other individuals through social relationships" (Goffman, 1971, p. 188). These affinities among individuals could be religion, ethnicity, or gender, and serve to establish a social group. However, Dunn (1998, p. 53) states that there has been a transformation from traditional culture to modern society in the context of identity and group feelings. The con-

stant and certain structure of identity (religion, belief, or custom) has shifted to the individual elements. The individual constituted a self-conscious identity, and the group ties are weakened.

Also, the individuals' similar historical codes or the cruelties they had faced in history could generate a social group. For instance, African American people in the United States of America (USA) are considered one social group: blacks.[5] However, this skin-color-based aggregation does not include just one type of black color. This implies something beyond their skin colors for this aggregation such as similar social status, origin, and discrimination processes that they have faced. (Young, 1990, p. 43, 44).

In some cases, creating a social group does not depend on clearly visible things such as race or religion. In their research, Elias and Scotson (1994) investigated exclusion or otherness in Winston Prada. According to their study, there were no considerable differences between the two groups in Winston Prada regarding their socioeconomic status, including their race, color, level of income, and occupation. The only difference among them was their duration of living in that neighborhood. In this case, social segregation was based just on "old residents" (established) vs. "newcomers" (outsiders) (Elias & Scotson, 1994, p. xvii). This case demonstrates that exclusion is an urge of individuals that does not only depend on common differences. More precisely, a small difference may stimulate this urge as a dispute between old residents and newcomers.

The Concept of Social Justice and Exclusion

Justice is an essential term for studies on social groups regarding its scope or meaning because it includes referring to some of the social groups as "powerless" or "disadvantaged." Social justice is not about ignoring or abolishing differences in social life. In contrast, it is mostly about preventing the oppression of different social groups (Young, 1990, p. 47). According to Young, the lack of justice in social life results in two facts: "oppression" and "domination." In Young's terminology, oppression means preventing someone's self-development, whereas domination refers to preventing someone's right to self-determination. These concepts are linked to power relations in social life and labeling a group as others (Young, 1990, pp. 33–39). Using these two elements, a powerful social group constitutes its hegemony over another, usually a powerless or less-powered social group. However, hegemony among social groups is not a real power relationship between groups. In many cases, a group, which perceives itself as powerful, leads to the other group feeling "less human" and "powerless" (Elias & Scotson, 1994, pp. xv–xvi). This effect has been observed in Afyonkarahisar, too. An interviewee pointed out this issue as follows: "… [he] told me that I should go back to my country. Otherwise, I have to say okay to all problems here. I would not have come here if I had not had to" (Interviewee 10, b. 1978, male). The idea shared by this interviewee could be considered proof of the exclusion and hierarchical relationship as means of social justice. As argued above, if a group establishes itself as powerful, they begin to hurt others sentimentally or emotionally. In our case, we have observed that local people have organized themselves as a superior hierarchical group against the SuTPs. Instead of providing solutions, they forced them to choose between two options: leaving Türkiye or getting used to the problems they face here, that is, either love it or leave it.

Young (1990) notes that oppression is not just about power relations. More specifically, it has five elements: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. These elements help determine whether a social group is oppressed. Exploitation means controlling a group's capacity for themselves, marginalization refers to the prevention of social groups from economic or social life and constituting a dependency process, whereas powerlessness is using the authority of dominance on a social group or individual according to class distinction. Cultural imperialism is the acceptance of the culture of the dominant group in society as one natural, usual fact, and labeling those who do not belong to the culture as "others." Finally, violence is the most common element of oppression and antithetical to general knowledge. It is not just about basic physical violence. Instead, violence refers to a systematic type of severity. Generally, apart from personal relations, social violence occurs to individuals just because of being a member of a certain social group (Young, 1990, pp. 48–62).

Therefore, it can be concluded that exclusion, marginalization, or oppression are not basic processes about labeling a group from a different race, religion, or color as "others." These processes are strictly systematical because they involve

5 The authors would like to note that they do not agree with the racist use of the "black." Instead, we attempt to highlight the social group labeled in the USA following Young's (1990) research. The use of this word as an insult, categorization, degradation, or humiliation is against the core universal human rights.

reflections on social life to legitimize exclusion. For centuries, European culture has used stereotypes for marginalization in society. Specifically, Sibley explained these systematical processes as follows: “Black is used routinely to describe dirt which, in turn, is associated with shame and disease” (Sibley, 1995, p. 22). Black is always related to negative reflections in European societies, and this also affects Black people in social life (Sibley, 1995, p. 22). Unfortunately, this systemic violence has not always been rejected by societies. Indeed, some individuals desire a “so-called” pure and clean society as “exclusionary tendencies develop in the individual and that the exclusionary practices of the institutions of the capitalist state are supported by individual preferences for purity and order” (Sibley, 1995, p. 87).

In some cases, exclusion becomes concrete by residential segregation between “others” and the “dominant culture.” Occasionally, exclusion occurs by a decision of “others” such as a conscious behavior of living in a residential area distinct from dominant social groups. As in Afyonkarahisar’s case, most Syrian refugees live in a certain neighborhood. Even if it is not spatially segregated from the city center and is located very next to it, this creates a contained, safe, and secure area for refugees. The containment prevents some interactions between local people and refugees; thus, local people cannot understand the refugees’ sentiments about being away from their homelands. This ignorance has led to the reaction of SuTPs as follows: “people ask why we came here. Easy! We would not come here if we did not have to” (Interviewee 10, b. 1978, male).

Furthermore, some problems occur due to the public confrontations between SuTPs and local people in urban areas. This situation reflects relations in public places (Goffman, 1966). Public confrontations are the most significant part of the urban refugees’ integration process. As the local people and refugees share the same public sphere, they start to recognize and know each other over time to understand different cultures better. They subsequently begin to get used to each other’s behaviors, languages, and faces. This is a unique process of integration for urban refugees and provides a natural environment for both parties. However, sometimes public confrontations might trigger tensions between the two groups. This case has rarely been observed in Afyonkarahisar. Especially considering integration, refugees express their gratitude to the local people. They explicitly share their positive feelings and experiences regarding urban life in the city. In our research, we concluded that urban life has created a positive and supportive environment for refugees’ integration in Afyonkarahisar. As they emphasize, refugees “do not feel like a stranger in Afyon” (Interviewee 1, b. 1994, male). Furthermore, some SuTPs believe that they have more opportunities than Turkish citizens. They appreciate that their labor is valuable here. Even if they had everything such as networks, jobs, regular income, and physical and emotional health back in Syria, they were not safe and secure. They consistently point out that their comfort zone in the city is better compared with Syria. They are given a right to live, they say, and add, “it is enough!” (Interviewee 2, b. 1985, male). Their security concerns are the priority in refugees’ daily lives and they choose to live in urban areas as they feel more secure. In this regard, they emphasize that “there is no bomb in Afyonkarahisar, and that is enough! I love the city” (Interviewee 4, b. 1987, male).

Although the city was not “ready” for so many foreigners that have changed its demographic structure, the religious feature of the city has mitigated the integration process. SuTPs in Afyonkarahisar still believe that they are guests and indicate, “if they want me to leave, I will go back to Syria. But I would love to stay here. I know I am the guest here” (Interviewee 5, b. 1965, male). Besides acknowledging that they are guests in the city, concomitantly they are also grateful to the local people for their hospitality. One interviewee noted that “people are warm-hearted here. A foreigner would be comfortable in this city” (Interviewee 8, b. 1970, male). In addition, they believe that integration occurs in urban areas. “We are integrated, but this place is a foreign country for us, not our homeland. If we had the opportunity, we would go back to our country, not to another country” (Interviewee 9, b. 1985, female).

On the other hand, in some cases, exclusion occurs because of urban planning. Bauman links order, urban planning, and strangers to each other. According to him, orderly and planned urban designs in utopias are consequences of a perception that assumes that human life could be regulated if you design the city. In this context, the urban models in utopias have always been a tool for creating a monotype order and people. Therefore, the use of urban planning as a tool for creating such a monotype society and order would be against “strangers” or “others” (Bauman, 2001, p. 172, 173). Similarly, Young (1986, p. 2, 5) argues that the ideal of community denies differences between individuals. Furthermore, Young indicates that an unoppressive city is a city in which people live together without any domination. In the existing literature, Haussmann’s plan for Paris is highlighted as a sample of using urban planning for residential segregation because “[h]is [Haussmann’s] town-planning was partly aimed at eliminating the darkness at the center of the city” (Corbin, 1986, p. 134).

In this respect, some of the SuTPs compare the camps and cities. Most consider that the city is much better than the camps as camps have limited services or just provide basic needs. Urban life reflects a normalized lifestyle for refugees and helps them feel like regular and normal people in their daily lives: "I wake up every morning, take the bus, and go wherever I want" (Interviewee 2, b. 1985, male). SuTPs in Afyonkarahisar explicitly discredit the camps. According to them, a refugee camp is not favorable if one would like to have a life like a regular person. The camp atmosphere represents urgency and emergency in their everyday practices, that is, temporariness. In comparison with living in an urban neighborhood, settling in a refugee camp is not natural as most of the interviewees noted that they are more comfortable with urban life than in refugee camps. This is understandable as refugee camps are limited by providing the core human rights and offering nothing more than that. Additionally, refugee camps exclude people from the rest of the world (Bauman & Lyon, 2013, pp. 70–71).

I went to a refugee camp at first. We had denominational differences with the guy at the entrance, and he did not let me in. I swear that I will not go to the refugee camp again. I can work, and I have physical abilities. Urban is much better than the camp. Nevertheless, Türkiye's worst refugee camp is better than the other countries' (Interviewee 2, b. 1985, male).

As a result of our interviews, we argue that most refugees need to normalize their lives in host countries. Such normalization can only be achieved by urban integration policy at the local level. Urban life is natural and organic. It consists of disorder, anarchy, chaos, differences, colors, emotions, smells, and visuals. In contrast, life in the camp is completely in order, under a hierarchy, and lacks this natural or organic chaotic environment. Everything in refugee camps is calculated and determined. Thus, life is not normal in refugee camps.

In the refugee camps, life is closed to the outside. If you cannot learn the language, you cannot find a job. At least we could find a job in the city. The people who stay in the camps are the ones in the worst conditions. I love the city center because I love walking around (Interviewee 1, b. 1994, male).

Therefore, despite the risks of exclusion, financial hardships, and integration problems, refugees leave the camps for a normal and organic life. They gamble by being outside of a secure camp environment. Nevertheless, although they might face threats in urban life, they still opt for living in urban areas. We should interpret this matter carefully to understand the sentiments and emotions behind this urge. This is the urge to be a normal and regular individual: to be a human being.

Conclusion

The unnatural structure of refugee camps, increased communication with relatives, livelihood opportunities, personal security, and safety lead refugees to choose to be urban refugees (Kobia & Cranfield, 2009, pp. 4–5). As the camp settlements do not provide usual living standards and allow them to follow the usual lifestyle as compared to urban areas, the camps should be considered unnatural. They represent a protective environment necessary for emergencies; however, extended periods in refugee camps are against the flow of life. Under these circumstances, even if urban life has financial hardships and public confrontation risks with the locals, the refugees prefer to be outside the camps. Although in some cases they are forced to leave when the governments decide to shut down the camps, they usually opt for urban settlements. This effort should be understood in relation to their urge to return to their normal life. Urban life settings provide more normal conditions for people in contrast to being jammed into the refugee camp. Therefore, most refugees take risks and opt to live in urban areas rather than camps. However, they consider that the risks are not bigger than the obstacles in their lives in camps. They try to settle down, find a job, enroll their children in school, and live like a regular person: basically, they would like to go with the flow.

Urban refugees are the reality of the contemporary world. The increasing number of refugees in host countries has been forcing governments to allow their flow into the cities. Under these circumstances, it is imperative to focus on urban integration policies, especially by local governments. To do so, this study attempted to analyze the case of Afyonkarahisar, an urban area in Türkiye that hosts SuTPs. In this analysis, we conducted a field study to understand the otherness, exclusion, and integration process of urban refugees in Afyonkarahisar from their perspectives.

Afyonkarahisar is not hosting a huge number of Syrian refugees. Nevertheless, they are located in a neighborhood very close to the city center. Therefore, the refugees' public confrontations with the local people and their interactions with them are dense. Consequently, this situation creates tension between locals and SuTPs, while it might also be a

mitigating factor for better integration. The tension is expressed through “otherness” and “exclusion” practices and labeling them as “strangers” in urban life. The relief effect might be observed in the normalized public relations between SuTPs and citizens.

In our research, we could not reach or observe any systematic urban policy regarding the local integration of SuTPs in Afyonkarahisar. The interviews highlighted the fact that only muhtar, the locally elected administrative person for the neighborhood, has played a vital role in refugee integration. Muhtar has been in a mediatory role between SuTPs and locals and helped SuTPs by finding accommodation and jobs for them.

Hence, we could conclude that urbanization may be a useful tool for refugee integration only if it is supported by adequate and planned urban policies. An urban policy, thus, should be prepared by cooperation with local initiatives to promote the urban integration of refugees. Without such a policy, urban refugees could face exclusion and otherness in urban areas. Local authorities should cooperate with related institutions and refugees to eliminate this problem.

Ethical approval

This study was approved by the Ethics Committee of Middle East Technical University (Date: February 8, 2018 No: 2018-SOS-014).

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Author’s ORCID numbers

Atahan Demirkol	0000-0002-7185-5781

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Appendices

Appendix-1: Interview Questions

1. Could you please tell us about the process of coming to Türkiye and Afyonkarahisar?
2. Why did you choose Türkiye and Afyonkarahisar?
3. Why did you choose to come to the urban area?
4. Had you had any contact before coming to Afyonkarahisar such as relatives or associations?
5. What were the first things that you have done after coming to the city? Did anyone help you with these things?
6. What were the first obstacles and conveniences you confronted after coming to Afyonkarahisar?
7. How did you meet your basic needs? Did you have a chance to work? Have you changed your job?
8. How did you meet your need for accommodation? What were your priorities for accommodation? What kind of problems/conveniences you have faced during this period? Could you please tell us about the conditions in your home and neighborhood?
9. Have you ever had health issues? How do you solve your health problems here?
10. What do you feel about integration in the city? How are the attitudes of local people toward you here?
11. What are your observations and experiences about the city's social life and working environment? How do you evaluate the local workers' and employers' attitudes toward you?
12. Which are the institutions that help and serve you in the city? How did you find out about these institutions?
13. Which one is the most useful institution for you in the city? What are the reasons for that?
14. What are the obstacles and conveniences in city life for you?
15. Could you please tell us about things that you love and dislike the most about the city?
16. Do you have future plans? Would you like to stay in Afyonkarahisar? If not, where would you like to go?
17. Do you have relatives who are not with you here in Türkiye? Would you like to bring them here? Have you ever had any attempts to bring them?
18. If you have children, what conditions are they in? Do they go to school? Do they work?
19. Could you please make a comparison of your expectations regarding the city before and after coming here?
20. What are the most important places and the places that you love most here? What were they in your home country?
21. Whom would you go to ask for help when you are in a trouble here?
22. Would you like to live in any other city in Türkiye?
23. How long did it take for you to overcome the first obstacles in the city? Who did help you most during this period?
24. What do you think about your job here compared to your conditions and wages back in Syria?
25. What are the biggest issues in your work?
26. What would you do if you were not able to find a job here?