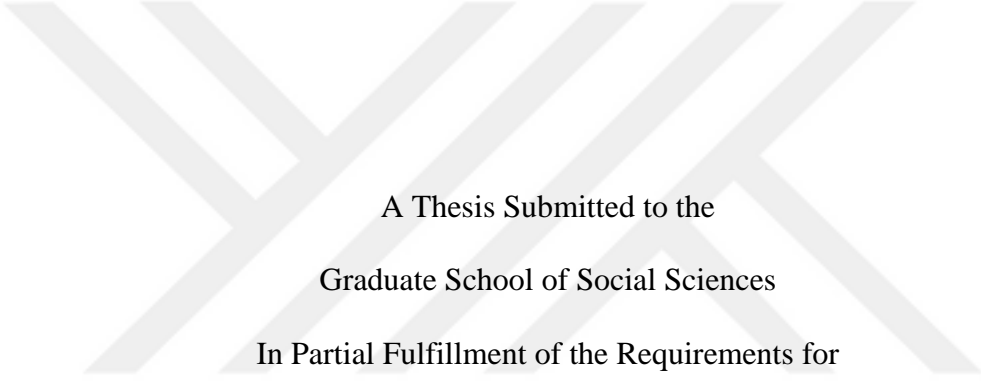


**THE NOTION OF HOME:
THE SYRIAN KURDISH REFUGEES IN BAYRAMTEPE, ISTANBUL**

by

Sena Duygu Topçu



A Thesis Submitted to the
Graduate School of Social Sciences
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree of
Master of Arts

in

Comparative Studies in History and Society

Koç University

August 2015

Koc University
Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities

This is to certify that I have examined this copy of a master's thesis by

Sena Duygu Topçu

and have found that it is complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by the final
examining committee have been made.

Committee Members:

Assoc. Prof. Deniz Yüksek

Asst. Prof. Can Nacar

Asst. Prof. Özge Biner

Date:

Statement of Authorship

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for any award or any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution. It is affirmed by the candidate that, to the best of her knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due references are made in the text of the thesis.

Sena Duygu Topçu



Abstract

This study is about the notion of home among the Kurdish refugees who had migrated from Syria to Bayramtepe, Istanbul. The research aims to reveal the moments where the refugees are active agents in their experiences of displacement. Using the refugees' present notions of home as a tool, the study probes into the ways the refugees make sense of their lives in exile and their reactions to the condition of being a refugee. In fact, the present notion of home is evidently not only related to the present home-making process in exile but also to the nostalgic feelings, individual and collective memories about the past homes, and hopes, dreams and desires for the future home imaginaries. The focus is on the Kurdish refugees' formation of home at the present time through their use of ethnic identity as well as the dynamics of the locality they live in. With these intentions, the findings of the fieldwork in Bayramtepe neighborhood in which the majority of inhabitants are Kurdish people who were forcibly displaced from southeastern Turkey in the 1990s suggest that in the time of forced migration Syrian Kurds' different feelings about home and various home territories is changing. Different notions of home sometimes conflict with each other due mainly to the Kurds' lack of attachment to a fixed territory which is developed through citizenship bonds in the world of nation-states.

Keywords: Syrian Kurds, urban refugees, Bayramtepe, notion of home, displacement-emplacement.

Özet

Bu çalışmanın konusu Suriye'den Bayramtepe, İstanbul'a göç etmiş olan Kürt mültecilerin ev algılarıdır. Araştırma mültecilerin yerlerinden olma deneyimlerinde, sürecin pasif kurbanı olmaktan ziyade süreç içinde etkin özneler oldukları anları ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma, mültecilerin halihazırdaki ev algılarını bir araç olarak kullanarak mültecilerin sürgündeki hayatlarını nasıl anlamlandırdıklarını ve mülteci olarak karşılaştıkları koşullara nasıl tepkiler verdiklerini incelemektedir. Mültecilerin şu andaki ev algıları yalnızca sürgündeki ev-kurma süreci ile ilgili değil aynı zamanda nostaljik duygu ve düşünceler, geçmişteki evleriyle ilgili bireysel ve kolektif anılar, ve gelecekteki ev hayaline dair umutlar, hayaller ve isteklerle de ilgilidir. Çalışmanın üzerinde durduğu konu Kürt mültecilerin şimdiki zamanda bir ev oluşturma süreçlerinde Kürt etnik kimliğini nasıl kullandıkları ve yaşadıkları mahallin bu sürece etkisidir. Bu amaçlarla, sakinlerinin büyük bir bölümü 1990lı yıllarda zorunlu göç ile Türkiyeli Kürtler olan Bayramtepe'de gerçekleştirilen saha çalışmasının bulguları, zorunlu göç mültecilerin eve ve çeşitli ev alanlarına dair hissiyatları zaman içinde değişim göstermektedir. Suriyeli Kürtlerde gözlemlenen farklı ve çatışan ev algıları Kürtlerin ulus-devlet ve vatandaşlık ilişkisi bağlamında kendilerini ait hissettikleri herhangi bir toprak parçası olmayışıyla açıklanabilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Suriyeli Kürt mülteciler, kent mültecileri, Bayramtepe, ev algısı, yerinden edilmişlik ve yerleşme.



To my mother and father,

Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to a number of people who were involved in the process of writing this thesis. I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Deniz Yüksek for her guidance, support and admirable overall attitude as a sociology teacher. She always tolerated my hesitations and managed to turn them into a productive direction numerous times. She read each chapter with her analytical thinking and thereby helped me to finish this study with her insightful criticisms. Her way of thinking was very influential not only for my understanding of social sciences, but also my further graduate studies. I am also grateful to Can Nacar for his endless encouragement for my study on the refugees from Syria since my undergraduate years. He showed an invaluable guidance both in my undergraduate and MA studies with the classes I took from him. His advices for us to look at various social issues from a historical perspective since, for him, history tells us what we need to know about today helped me to rethink the contemporary issues. I would also like to thank him for his comments and criticisms on the thesis. **I feel indebted and very lucky to have Özge Biner in my thesis jury. She kindly agreed to participate in my thesis jury and shared her invaluable comments and constructive criticisms. Her criticisms shed light on many questions that I am eager to pursue in my further studies.**

I am indebted to all my professors in the MA Program in Comparative Studies in History and Society. I still remember each of my classes which have influenced my way of thinking about sociology and history and motivated me to read more on various issues with the impact of what I learnt in these classes. The seminars that we had with Çağlar Keyder were also very inspirational for my thesis especially in the initial stages; he asked me the right questions that helped me to draw the framework of my study and

made this research possible. I would like to thank TÜBİTAK for financial support during my MA studies.

My deepest and sincerest thanks go to the Kurdish refugees who shared their stories, ideas, experiences and even their houses with me. Without their trust in me, this thesis could not have been written.

I have shared my ideas with my friends and received their constructive comments which helped me to improve the thesis. I am particularly grateful to Murat Bozluolcay. He is one of the reasons why this thesis became what it is as a result of many years of intellectual and emotional relationship. As one of the most inspiring persons in my life my Arabic teacher Mazen Rabia, and my friends in the MA programme in Comparative Studies in History and Society Berivan Turhan, Büşra Ünlüönen, and Hande Güzel, helped shape my thoughts and showed me their constant support in this process.

Throughout this process Talha Köseoğlu has always been with me. He discussed every detail of this thesis with me, read each and every sentence a couple of times and helped me to develop my ideas, even in the most stressful moments. He helped me to improve the text by editing and correcting every part of the thesis. Dreaming and hoping for a future together to achieve our aims in life was one of the foremost motivations for me to be able to finish this thesis.

Finally, I am indebted to my family for their support, and making me feel happy with numerous ways of expressing their love and trust in me. I dedicate my thesis to my family who enabled me to do what I have done.

Table of Contents

Statement of Authorship.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Özet	v
Acknowledgements.....	vii
Table of Contents.....	ix
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1. Context of the Study.....	1
1.2. Significance and Objective of the Study.....	2
1.3. Research Questions	5
1.4. Chapter Outlines.....	5
1.5. Limitations	7
Chapter 2: Refugee’s Home in a World of Movement.....	8
2.1. State of Being a Refugee.....	8
2.2. A Literature Review on Home	12
2.3. The Study	17
2.3.1. Research Questions.....	19
2.4. Methodology	20
Appendix A.....	27
Chapter 3: The Setting	28
3.1. The Kurds in Syria	28

3.2.	The Syrian Migration to Turkey in the Aftermath of the Uprising	31
3.3.	Management of Massive Refugee Movements to Turkey	34
3.4.	Temporary Protection Regulation	39
Chapter 4: Home in the Making		46
4.1.	Displacement and Emplacement of the Kurdish Refugees	46
4.1.1.	Displacement.....	47
4.1.2.	Home making in Bayramtepe	52
4.1.3.	Bayramtepe is yet to be home	60
4.2.	The Kurdish Refugees' Home through the Implementation of the Regulation in Bayramtepe	62
4.2.1.	Healthcare services	64
4.2.2.	Education	68
4.2.3.	Employment.....	71
4.3.	Future Imaginaries of Home	75
4.4.	Conclusion.....	81
Chapter 5: Conclusion		83
Appendix B		87
References		90

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Context of the Study

This study is about the notion of home of the Kurdish refugees, who had migrated from Syria to Bayramtepe, Istanbul. In order to understand the objective of the study it is helpful to specify the atmosphere of the uprising and the subsequent civil conflict in Syria and the Kurds' position during this process. The uprising in Syria which began with the government's suppression of peaceful protests in the southern city of Daraa in March 2011, turned into a civil conflict with the involvement of various sides including numerous countries, armed organizations, and the civil society. The civil conflict started as an uprising against the Assad regime which has been in power since Hafez al-Assad's accession to presidency in 1971, followed by his son, Bashar al-Assad in 2000. The conflict has forced many since to migrate from Syria to Turkey and to other bordering countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt). As of August 2015 approximately 1.9 million people migrated only to Turkey.¹

These developments have created particular conditions which led to major shifts in the lives of the Kurds in Syria among others (Güneş & Love, 2015). Yet despite the discrimination and the oppression the Kurds had to endure during the Assad regime, the Kurdish participation to the uprising was meek at the beginning and some of the Kurdish groups explicitly distanced themselves from the movement against the regime. The Kurds in Syria displayed diverse reactions towards the uprising. Whereas the Kurdish youth from Qamishli, Amouda and many other municipalities in Jazira participated in anti-regime demonstrations since the start of the revolution in mid-March 2011, district of Aleppo and Afrin had remained cut off from the Syrian revo-

¹ According to UNHCR statistics. However, unofficially it is being said more than 2 million refugees arrived in Turkey.

lution until the first major demonstration was held in the city on February 2012 (Sidki, 2014). Also, there have been discrepancies between the dominant Syrian Kurdish political party, the Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat (Democratic Union Party, PYD) which is influenced by Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan (Kurdistan Worker's Party, PKK) and other Kurdish parties in Syria which formed Kurdish National Council (KNC).² The KNC members and other observers had complained in the past, of PYD intimidation and harassment and had catalogued a long list of alleged authoritarian actions and abuses of power (Savelsberg & Tejel, 2013).

Alongside this tense relationship among Kurdish political parties in the region during the conflict, PYD has taken control of parts of northern Syria, marking the emergence of the nascent political entity of *Kurdistana Rojava* (West Kurdistan), consisting of Afrin (Êfrîn in Kurdish), Ain al-Arab (Kobani) and Jazira (Cezire), regions of north and northeastern Syria where there is a Kurdish predominance. In January 2014, the PYD and allied parties have founded councils, courts and even a distinct police force along with a new constitutional law ('Charter of Social Contract') in these regions. The external security is maintained through the PYD's armed wing, the People's Protection Units (Yekîneyên Parastina Gel, YPG), who fights against non-state armed groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) (Human Rights Watch, 2014). It was roughly in this political context that Kurdish refugees experienced migration to Turkey.

1.2. Significance and Objective of the Study

Any talk I have conducted with Syrian refugees before starting my fieldwork after the refugee migration from Syria, in few minutes, came to the refugees' dispossession of

² An umbrella body, based in Erbil, made up of smaller Syrian Kurdish political parties that are ideologically linked to the Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), which is increasingly the dominant power in the Kurdistan Regional Government.

everything but few belongings. Given that Kurdish refugees form a stateless nation, upon their arrival to Turkey the concept of home gets even more significant for me. Kurdish refugees migrating to Turkey are significant in terms of the formation and perception of the refugees' home due to several reasons. First of all, the Kurdish refugees' possible interactions with the Kurdish people in Turkey whom comprise approximately twenty percent of Turkey's population need scrutiny. It is a substantial issue for me whether the Kurdish refugees are able to find a space for themselves within the local Kurdish communities in Turkey, whether they use their networks through their ethnic identity in their new environment and the possible reaction of the Turkish state in response to this potential cooperation. Secondly, an analysis of the refugees' perception of home as an attachment to a Syrian national entity, in which they had spent their lives amid the grievances they faced throughout modern Syrian history,³ is illuminating. Lastly, considering that there is an autonomous political entity, aforementioned Kurdistan Rojava, it is essential to recognize the way the refugees define home and homeland as well as their expectations and imaginations regarding a possible home, in the sense of homeland, in this newly formed political entity.

My concerns regarding the Kurdish refugees' notions of home are inspired by two disciplines. First, I draw on critical political scientists' focus on the vulnerabilities of refugees such as their non-citizenship, destroyed political life, quality of being subjected to the law without being its subject by using concepts such as 'statelessness' (Arendt, 1973; Agamben, 2000; Benhabib, 2004), 'bare life' (Agamben, 2000), 'inclusive exclusion' (Agamben, 1998; Butler, 2007) and 'state of exception' (Schmitt, 1922; Agamben, 2005). In spite of these political theorists' contribution to my analy-

³ A brief summary will be provided in the third chapter.

sis, they nonetheless usually regard refugees as mere ‘passive victims’. Nonetheless, my approach is mostly influenced by various anthropologists (Malkki, 1995; Hammond, 2004; Turton, 2005) who seek to view refugees in terms of their reactions towards their conditions of being dispossessed and displaced through their place-making (*em*-placement).

Having this theoretical background, the objective of this research is to reveal the moments where the refugees are active agents rather than ‘passive victims’. Using the refugees’ present notions of home as a tool, I try to probe into how refugees make sense of their lives in exile and how they react to their condition of being a refugee. In fact, the present notion of home is evidently not only related to the present home-making process in exile but also to the nostalgic feelings, individual and collective memories about the past homes, and hopes, dreams and desires for the future home imaginaries. Therefore, the home as a concept enables me to understand the way in which the refugees shape their lives within the vulnerabilities imposed by structural factors. All the while refugees as active agents encounter these structural constraints, their past and future perceptions of themselves shape their current notion of home. It is important for the purpose of this study to note that the refugees’ present notion of home reflects their ideas of home at the present time in exile through their current living conditions and their past and future lives. Home perceptions of the refugees are dynamic and depend on spatial and temporal contexts.

With these intentions, I decided to conduct my fieldwork in Bayramtepe neighborhood in Istanbul, also called Güvercintepe, whose the majority of the inhabitants are Kurdish people forcibly displaced from southeastern Turkey in the 1990s. One of the reasons for this choice was the fact that in summer 2014, I had a chance to develop some connections in the neighborhood, thereby learning about the presence of a sig-

nificant number of Kurdish refugees from Afrin there. Also, I was curious about how the refugees' notions of home would be shaped in a 'politicized' environment where the Kurds and the police are having frequent conflicts since years. The Kurdish refugees' community-making process with the Turkish Kurds in everyday life, their interaction with the police or the moments where refugees were receiving some service provided by the state could have empowered Syrian Kurdish refugees as well as stimulating their alienation simultaneously. Lastly, I believe focusing on a single neighborhood rather than aiming to represent the Kurdish refugees' notion of home in different neighborhoods of Istanbul enabled me to make a coherent analysis of the refugees who had similar backgrounds in their previous lives in Syria.

1.3. Research Questions

The study explores how the refugees' notions of home that are connected to the Kurdish refugees' past, present and future homes, are being shaped in Bayramtepe neighborhood. There will be a focus on the Kurdish refugees' formation of home at the present time through their ethnic identity as well as the locality they live in. Worded more specifically, my research questions pertain to i) *how Kurdish refugees construct notions of home in the context of Bayramtepe* and ii) *how ethnic identity, at both a social and an individual level, shapes intertwined meanings/aspects of home?*

1.4. Chapter Outlines

In this thesis I attempted to understand the notions of home for the Kurdish refugees from Syria living in Bayramtepe. The analysis of notion of home will be two-sided in the guidance of the theoretical background I was inspired and the literature on home. At one side, I will try to explain the structural factors, such as legal framework of the Turkish state, which will reflect the Kurdish refugees' vulnerabilities, and their situations as 'non-citizens', referred by the aforementioned political scientists, in Turkey.

On the other side, I will analyze the Kurdish refugees' reactions to their self-perceived exclusion and discrimination. Both sides of the issue will have influence on the refugees' home-making process.

The second chapter aims at summarizing the theoretical framework, literature review and methodology that I used for the analysis. The third chapter will provide background information about the Kurds in Syria, their migration to Turkey and the legal framework in Turkey for mass refugee movements. The chapter will focus on the enacted Temporary Protection Regulation, considering the fact that the arrival of refugees to Turkey from Syria represented an unprecedented flow in Turkish history with its immense scale in a very short period of time. I will also mention the implementation of the legal framework in the locality of Bayramtepe. This background and the legal framework will enable me to understand the vulnerable moments of a refugee under the impact of the Turkish state.

The fourth chapter will reflect the fieldwork I conducted with 16 Kurdish refugees living in Bayramtepe. First, the chapter will demonstrate the intertwined processes of displacement and the emplacement. Respectively, one refers to the refugees' longings and changes as a result of the forced migration while the other implies their home-making process in Bayramtepe. The refugees are not merely experiencing a loss of home, but are constructing a new space in the locality, mostly through their ethnic identity. Secondly, the analysis will reflect how refugees deal with the given legal framework to which they are exposed in Bayramtepe. Despite the presence of a legal framework, it is the refugee's choice whether to benefit from it or to decide on which means to use the services. Lastly, an understanding of the refugees' future imaginaries of home is shaped with regard to their past and present homes as well as their practices for the sake of achieving their future homes.

1.5. Limitations

The fact that the study is concerned with only the Kurdish refugees living in Bayramtepe who migrated from the two pre-dominantly Kurdish neighborhoods of Aleppo creates several limitations throughout the analysis. First, if the study had a comparative perspective among different neighborhoods of Istanbul where the Kurdish refugees from different parts of Syria have migrated, the analysis could have brought other discussions regarding the Kurdish refugees in Istanbul as well as Bayramtepe. Namely, the Kurdish refugees living in the neighborhoods such as Sultanbeyli, Kanarya, and Esenyurt have various dynamics that can generate different impacts on the refugees' notions of home. I could have observed the impact of diverse historical backgrounds depending on the region from where the Kurdish refugees migrated. The Kurdish refugees, for instance, have experienced both the uprising and the regime's oppression differently in Qamişlo, Tirbespi, Kobani, also called as Ayn al-Arab. The comparisons would lead me to make sense of the refugees' articulations on some issues who live in Bayramtepe, the differences among the refugees living in the same neighborhood, their diversified interactions and social distance with the local communities and their future home imaginaries.

Secondly, the fact that the refugees shared a similar background in their neighborhoods in Syria imposed a limitation in terms of pointing out the divergence among the Kurdish refugees' class positions back in Syria and the places they used to live before migration.

Chapter 2: Refugee's Home in a World of Movement

In this chapter the theoretical background, literature review and methodology of the study is provided. The analysis, concerning notions of home for Kurdish refugees from Syria, will be discussed in two inter-related layers; a) the political in which context that refugees' home both in physical and imaginative senses are shaped b) refugees' reactions towards their experiences as displaced people and refugees. Home is not constituted separate from the state of being a refugee in nation-state system in the current globalized order and being a displaced person struggling to make a new place in exile (em-placement). Instead, they are highly interrelated factors in the process of making notions of home in a refugee's mind. After presenting this multi-layered viewpoint, the discussions regarding home in the literature are given. Then, I will mention how this study conceptualizes home. Finally, I will discuss the methodology of the study.

2.1. State of Being a Refugee

Refugees, asylum seekers, aliens or illegal migrants are presented as the harbinger of a universal condition by many theorists and philosophers (Chatty, 2010). It is the development of the paradigm of nation-state that is responsible for the increase in the numbers of displaced people in the world since the 19th century (Adelman, 1999). This universal condition of the number of refugees and forced migrants in Europe increase even more after the two world wars, as Arendt argues: "Mankind, for so long a time considered under the image of a family of nations, had reached the stage where whoever was thrown out of one of these tightly organized closed communities found himself thrown out of the family of nations altogether" (1973: 294). In other words, after World War II the rise of the number of refugees in the world indicated that the

nation-state system does not provide any space for the refugee figure. In “natural/national order of things” (Malkki, 1995) in the nation-state system, refugees are mere problems.

The problematization of the ‘refugee’ from the nation-state point of view becomes clearer when it is compared with the notion of citizen. The nation-state system emphasizes a distinction between citizens and the people who don’t have citizenship to any state, non-citizens. “These noncitizens often have nationalities of origin, but, inasmuch as they prefer not to benefit from their own states’ protection, they find themselves, as refugees, in a condition of de facto statelessness” (Agamben, 2000). The stateless are misfits in an extreme sense, in that no matter how national or provincial boundaries might be recognized, they would always remain residual groups who do not belong to any established nation-state or recognized as national minority (Zolberg, Suhrke & Aguayo, 1989). While citizens have more possibility of accessing state law in comparison to a refugee, a refugee, beside lacking home and having less access to the law, s/he has less opportunity to achieve the very being of a human. The refugee never reaches accessing the law, but is always getting there. The refugees become structurally, if not physically, ‘invisible’. They live not here, in this world, but somewhere ‘on the outside’ (Arendt 1973, Turner 1967).

In the *Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt makes a distinction put by the new nation-state formations after the two world wars which render human rights as an abstraction and maintain only citizenship rights. According to Arendt, the stateless can neither stake a claim on human rights, so-called as sacred and inalienable rights of man, nor the rights belonging to citizens of a state. The refugees lose every quality and every specific relation except for the pure fact of being human.

Agamben reworks Aristotle's and Hannah Arendt's distinctions between biological existence (*zoe*) and the political life of speech and action (*bios*), between mere life and good life (1998). He uses the term 'bare life' in understanding refugees, especially considering the ones living in camps. Bare life, *homo sacer*, is depoliticized life to be distinguished from politicized life that is manifested in citizen. *Homo sacer* does not refer to a life that is based solely on biological existence of human being (*zoe*) or an apolitical way of life. Rather, it addresses refugee's life becoming a remainder of the *destroyed* political life (*bios*). In other words, refugees' life is stripped of its political significance, not that because the refugee prefers to lose his/her political significance, but the state structure leads in such a direction.

Despite the fact that nation-states destroy the refugees' political lives, as a commentary to Agamben's points, Butler argues "no life can ever be bare" (2007). No simple exclusionary logic can explain the relation between life and politics. Therefore, it can be argued that the state's decisions about refugees not only lead a destroyed political life (*bios*) but also affect their so-called biological existence (*zoe*). According to Ziarek, Agamben also disregards two issues in 'bare life'; first, the resistance that refugees can develop that is not restricted by law and power structures and secondly, the differences between 'bare lives' in relation to refugee's race, ethnicity, and gender (2007).

The critics do not reject the observations of many theorists and philosophers about the increasing vulnerabilities of refugees within the nation state paradigm in the current globalized order. It is this system that affects modern political and historical context, in which refugees' feelings, ideas and practices about home are also partially built upon. Where home is and what home is for a refugee; whether it is the place s/he gains citizenship or earns money or lives in a "modern" way (Ferguson, 2006) are

connected to their thoughts which are also created within this current national and global context next to many other determinants.

In spite of these aforementioned political theorists' contribution to understand notions of home for Kurdish refugees, it is not only related to their status as non-citizens or accession to the law or not. As a complementary layer of the analysis on home, Kurdish refugees' reactions towards their experiences such as displacement and dispossession through place-making process (*em*-placement) should also be analyzed. Referring to the term displacement enables us to go beyond understanding refugees from state perspective and adds the refugees' side to the issue. The term displacement implies refugees' loss of home and moving to a new place in another country. The term also includes experiencing various forms of dispossession: unemployment, part-time employment, early involuntary retirement, lower wage rates, forced relocation, loss of social status, and downward social mobility (Morell, 2014 in Schiller & Çağlar 2013). While these experiences of displacement and dispossession give shape to refugees' home perceptions at the moment of exile, as significantly, their daily struggle to make new places is another factor for building up feelings regarding home. As Turton also asserts "the experience of displacement is not only about the loss of a place, and the pain and bereavement this entails. It is also, and inevitably, about the struggle to make a place in the world" (Turton, 2005).

Various anthropologists (Malkki, 1995; Hammond, 2004; Turton, 2005; Schiller & Çağlar 2013) intend to view refugees within their *em*-placement processes. They study refugees' resistance in the process of displacement and how they create their own spaces in the new environment rather than remaining as 'passive victims' of laws and power structures. The concept "*em*-placement" is defined by Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2015) "as the social processes through which a dispossessed individual builds

or rebuilds networks of connection within the constraints and opportunities of a specific city". Similarly, Hammond (2004) defines it as the process of transforming an unfamiliar place into a familiar, personalized one. Hence, it is the process of emplacement when refugee's agency becomes apparent. These anthropologists have studied the emplacement of refugees using their observations from cases where refugees had to stay in exile for long periods of time such as Burundians in Tanzania (Mallki, 1995), Afghans in Iran (Monsutti, 2010), and Ethiopians return to Ethiopia (Hammond, 2004). Although Kurdish refugees from Syria have spent a relatively short period of time in Turkey which may limit the extent of emplacement this does not mean that refugees do not build their own networks of connections and make a familiar place to themselves in Istanbul and other Turkish cities.

On the whole, at one level the Kurdish refugees' notion of home is undeniably related to their statuses as displaced people and as refugees, and their experiences of various vulnerabilities posed in the nation-state system. Nevertheless, in this study I will focus on the aforementioned anthropologists' understanding of place making in order to understand the refugees' moments as active agents and their ideas about the notion of home. The analysis is mostly related to the way the Kurdish refugees become active agents, rather than being passive victims. I would like to indicate that as time passes, refugees find their own ways of *being* in the city through different means such as daily life practices and material means. Focusing on these active moments is significant in terms of the refugees' home making process in exile without intending to disregard the possible impacts of the refugees' experiences of destroyed political life.

2.2. A Literature Review on Home

Detachment from a home in the past, making new homes at the present and hoping for

a better one in the future has always been essential for refugees living in ongoing displacement. However, the meanings attributed to home both in the social sciences and in narratives of refugees are multiple which makes the term highly complex. The word “home” is used in speaking of the refugee’s house, in the sense of a dwelling place, the lived space of refugees and locals, or an imagined “place where they can be-at-home in the world” (Mallett, 2004). Even though there are various meanings of home, and multiple places for each meaning of home or multiple places for the same meaning, home has been a crucial notion for displaced people.

Home is a geographical concept. On one level, it refers to a place where we live in –in the past, at the present or in the future. This place “is not just a house which offers shelter, or a repository that contains material objects. Apart from its physical protection and market value, a home is a place where personal and social meaning are grounded” (Papastergiadis 1998:2). Secondly, it is the *spatial imaginary* where feelings of belonging, desire, intimacy, fear, violence and alienation are attributed (Blunt and Dowling 2006). The concept home is the fusion of these two meanings; the physical location and feelings of “at home”, sense of comfort, belonging, with a particular place (Easthope, 2004). Home in the physical sense cannot be separated from one’s feelings of belonging to that place. Home may be physically located somewhere, but it is not the location that is home. Instead, homes are the ‘places’ that hold considerable social, psychological and emotive meanings for individuals and for groups (Ibid, 135).

Home is a place that reaches out beyond one location. Analyzing home for displaced people adds another layer that complicates multi-local home attachments. Some narratives of forced migration literature often uncritically see home as the territory where the one returns automatically as a natural process, and that it involves eas-

ier adjustment and integration process for refugees than if they were to enter a foreign society (Brun, 2001; Jansen & Löfving; 2007). Firstly, at the moment exile “a refugee’s home” does not only stand for “homeland”. Homeland refers to a patriotic meaning of home to the country territory, which is not the only meaning of home for a refugee. Secondly, this sedentary bias and the view of refugees as “out of place” lead to expect refugees’ return to a fixed and native place. Warner claims, “The refugee’s return to home, and our desire to prioritize that return, are all our desires to return to a world of alignments and symmetries. Refugees and non-refugees wish to be in a world of equations and alignments, a world that... never was” (Warner, 1994; Malkki, 1995). Warner rightfully argues that it is the nation-state system’s expectation and assumption that refugees would repatriate. However, these expectations of repatriation to homeland and belonging to a single locality do not have a sound basis.

Refugees can feel belonging simultaneously to a number of places that they call home, especially those whose sense of belonging extends to many places that marked their histories (Lovell, 1998). Namely, refugees, who lost their homes in the conflict, are from stateless nations who look for their own homeland, or are in “protracted refugee situation” spent years in encampments and detention centers, reflect how one settled location does not correspond to refugees’ home. A refugee can feel belonging to his/her house or the community built in the neighborhood in exile, while imagining a home in Europe with occupational opportunities, one in where s/he came from and a homeland to be made in the future.

Another reason for homes’ being in multiple places is that home is formed in multi-scales. Feelings of home and belonging are constructed across different scales ranging from household, to the city, to the nation, and global. These feelings of home in different levels could be connected to each other in different levels; therefore, dif-

ferent homes are constructed through other scales (Blunt and Dowling 2006).

Home perceptions of refugees are also dynamic and temporal. Scholars of forced migration introduced a more dynamic and fluid understanding of home with their analysis on home-making practices during displacement. Hammond studied a community of Tigrayan refugees after being repatriated from Sudan to Ada Bai in north-west Tigray, Ethiopia. The place to which refugees returned was not the place that where they had left previously, but a new, strange and empty one. She describes the processes of emplacement as in the meaning of “community formation” and how people generated bonds with each other and developed a sense of belonging to the village of Ada Bai. As Hammond points out that home is being made when the refugees start to form a community they feel belonging. The refugees in exile may start to feel at home as time passes and make their own places. In this process location and meanings of home for a refugee may shift, expand, or shrink. **Refugees’ intention for adaption to the new place, we can observe the** “evolving meaning of home” (Habib, 1996). Since emplacement is a process, refugees’ senses about places change over time. Therefore, home can be viewed as an intimate *locus* tied to specific places and is explainable through a specific set of time (La Vecchia-Mikkola, 2013). In different spatial and temporal contexts home can change its form (Brun & Fabos, 2015).

Home concept is also discussed within its linkage between identity and place. On one hand, homes are places that are actively made by individuals and groups; and are products of social activity (Turton, 2005; Massey, 1995). How refugees experience homes, and how they are making homes are “inextricably bound up’ with their social and personal identity” (ibid, 275). On the other side, home as a place and an imaginary constitute identities (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). For instance, Peteet (2005) indicated how displaced Palestinians living in refugee camps in Lebanon formed iden-

tities to resist their displacement. She argued that although camps, which are created to contain, manage, and erase associations with spaces in Palestine, functioned as sites for resistance and constructing desired identities. She remarks that refugees stayed together in the camps with members of the same village, which enabled them to maintain similar social and familial structures and networks to the ones they had in before 1948. In this way, they were also able to resist daily humiliations by the Lebanese state and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). This dialectical and dynamic relationship between refugees, home and identity demonstrates refugees' identities ought to be considered in understanding their homes.

Lastly, the conceptual framework **“constellations of home”** by **Catherine Brun and Anita Fabos (2015)** is illuminating in terms of its comprehensiveness in analyzing home with its different meanings. These scholars categorize home in **three sub-categories**, “home-Home-HOME”, each referring to different aspects of home in order to understand home and homemaking for forced migrants within the “liminality” in protracted displacement. The scholars propose to use the term “liminality” to describe the refugees' condition in protracted displacement instead of the term “limbo”. While “limbo” puts the displaced refugees into a fixed, static situation in the time they are waiting for a better life, “liminality” implies the mobility that gives room for viewing the refugees' possible innovative engagement with the new community, state or humanitarian actors.

To start with the first sub-category “home”, the scholars argue that it is essential to recognize the day-to-day practices in terms of making their place in their new environment. These practices include the social connections the refugees make in a neighborhood or daily routines in their temporary dwellings (Ibid, 12). Namely, Fabos (2015) in a separate article addresses the way Northern Sudanese refugees adapted to

Cairo surroundings through continuing home visits to each other as they used to do in Sudan. Despite the long distances they have to take for visiting their widely scattered networks, they kept on their visits so that they stayed connected to each other. The notion of “home” deals with the daily homemaking practices at the present moment of exile (Ibid,14). The second modality “Home,” represents the refugees’ memories of home in the past, what they traditionally did at home, nostalgic feelings about an individual, an event or a thing from the past, what they long for and what they dream of for future. “Home” intends to look at refugee’s values about the home in the past, now and the future. “Home” refers to what is dreamed of as a home; an ideal home or an imagined homeland. Thirdly, “HOME” refers to the broader political and historical context in which home is discerned in the current global order (13), roughly implies a homeland. It is within these sub-categories that the scholars aim to view a holistic perspective in the analysis of home.

2.3. The Study

In this study, I conceptualize home as a feeling which reflects familiarity with and belonging to a particular physical location that is shaped through social, emotive and material means. Inspired by the framework proposed by Brun & Fabos (2015), the analysis considers past, present and future homes that shapes the refugees’ present notion of home within the specific context of displacement. The present home deals with the process of forming a new community as well as creating material means through everyday life practices that may lead the refugees to feel “at home” in exile, as Hammond (2004) similarly argues using the term *em*-placement. However, the study will not cover the refugees’ thoughts about attachment to their current houses (Biehl, 2015) in the way they access and choose these houses which has an impact on their home-making process.

Home making in exile refers to a home in the making process, but not yet there. The concept of home in this study covers the networks, community and material means one was attached to in the past as well as the ideal homes the refugees imagine as their “home in mind”, whether it is the place they call as home or homeland. In fact, it is significant to remark that each notion of home hinting different time and space usually points out to multi-local attachments instead of a single home (Lovell, 1998). Also, what refugees attribute to home may have different levels of significance for each refugee. A comprehensive analysis of the refugees’ notion of home requires looking at how they perceive these homes hinting different time and space that exists simultaneously for them in social, cognitive and material levels.

In understanding the Kurdish refugees’ home perceptions at the moment of exile, I will try to scrutinize the interrelationship between the refugees’ past, present and future homes. The home-making process is related to not only the way the refugees find a space for themselves within the Kurdish local community in Bayramtepe but also their subjective feelings regarding the past homes and imagined future homes. Namely, the refugees’ present experiences of displacement in the new locality bring about nostalgic comparisons that disclose their longings for their lives in Aleppo. While at the same time these longings to Aleppo may remind of the refugees’ collective memories regarding Kurdishness which are laden with state oppression. In fact, the study cannot track the changes between the refugees’ notion of home in Syria and the one after they arrived in Turkey.

The ideal notion of home and the home making practices are also related to the way the refugees are governed and disciplined by the Turkish state and their status as refugees in the current global order. Kurdish refugees from Syria, who are from a stateless nation, have faced forced migration many times before and experienced dis-

placement since the Ottoman times (Chatty, 2010) and exposed to similar practices in Modern Syrian history (Tejel, 2009). This historical trajectory reflects the complexity of home in its different dimensions, meanings and contexts.

The notion of home and the interrelationship between different home images are not separate from the Kurdish refugees' ethnic identity. As several scholars (Peteeet (2005), Turton (2005), Mallki, 1995) argue, home and identity have a dialectical relationship in each other's construction. Similarly, Kurdish identity is highly involved in the formation of home in Bayramtepe. The refugees' encounters with Kurdish people from Turkey in Bayramtepe affect the way the refugees' make their homes. Also, the Kurdish refugees' statelessness and their experiences in Syria both individually and collectively have an impact on their imagination of the past, present and future homes.

2.3.1. Research Questions

Within this approach to the refugee' notion of home, I will focus on the refugees' ethnic identity and their current locality as factors shaping the notion of home. The research questions that I will dig into throughout the thesis are as follows:

i) *How do Kurdish refugees construct notions of home in the context of Bayramtepe? How Kurdish refugees actively make their home in Bayramtepe?* I will also refer to some sub-questions in order to figure out the impacts of locality. How do the Kurdish refugees experience their daily practices and rituals in Bayramtepe? How do they get involve in the local community of Bayramtepe? To what extend the new environment is familiar to them considering their previous life in Syria? To what extend they feel exclusion or inclusion in their new environment? How do they perceive their encounters with the state and local organizations in Bayramtepe? ii) For understanding the impact of the refugees' ethnic identity I will ask the question: *how does ethnic identity, at both social and individual levels, shape intertwined aspects of home?*

How does Kurdishness shape their present, future, and ideal sense of home? How does Kurdish collective memory play a role, for Kurdish refugees as members of a stateless nation, in dealing with the lives in exile?

2.4. Methodology

In the course of my study I used secondary sources as well as the findings of a fieldwork study. The secondary sources consist of (1) relevant reports, maps, and statistics by various organizations; (2) regulations and statements of some politicians regarding Syrian refugees in newspapers; (3) and the relevant scholarly literature on home, identity, place and refugees. Additionally, I analyzed Temporary Protection Regulation as a primary source.

An analysis on the legal framework enacted concerning the refugees from Syria, Temporary Protection Regulation, as well as the reports on the status of the refugees are necessary to develop an understanding of the refugees' vulnerabilities that the aforementioned political scientists refer to. However, this analysis lacks the refugees' resistance strategies towards the given legal framework. To shed light on the refugees' notion of home in Bayramtepe, first-person narratives of the refugees' have to be taken into account to reveal the refugees' notion of home.

For my fieldwork study, I conducted sixteen in-depth interviews. I reached an equal number of men and women; each coming from a different family. The demographic overview of the interviewees can be found in Appendix A at the end of this chapter. In fact, it is significant to remark that the refugees' and their families' socio-economic statuses used to be different when they were living in Syria before migration. The occupational difference between the two locations is also provided in Appendix A. Interestingly, although the informants are mostly from working class fami-

lies, almost all of them, except for four women's families, owned houses in Aleppo. The rest of the informants were diverse in terms of having a car or land.

The Kurdish informants whom I had the chance to talk were diverse in terms of their citizenship status back in Syria. As it will be clarified in the next chapter, in Syria there are Kurds who do not have formal citizenship. Accordingly, all the male Kurdish informants had citizenship rights in Syria. Therefore, they could own property, work in a public office, and get education as well as they had conscription duty. On the other side, some of the female informants lack citizenship; they were rather recognized as *ajnabi* (foreigner). *Ajnabi* women have some rights including political participation, education, health, and legal marriage.

The informants are all from Aleppo which is the second largest city of Syria and known for its being centre for trade and manufacturing. More specifically, the refugees migrated from the neighborhoods of Sheikh Maqsood and Ashrafiyah which are the two pre-dominant neighborhoods mostly hosting Kurdish people. Therefore, it became possible to discuss and understand the refugees' past lives since they refer to the same place. Kurds are the largest ethnic and linguistic minority in the city of Aleppo, migrated from Kurdish rural areas in the north and northwest of Aleppo (Rabo, 2005). The Syrian Kurds living in Bayramtepe migrated from either Afrin or A'zaz to Aleppo a couple of decades ago (map 2). Therefore, for most of the informants, except for the ones, migrating to Turkey was a second migration story for them; one voluntary, the other forced migration. It has been more than two years since the informants migrated to Bayramtepe. The Kurdish refugees' ideas about home could have been different for the ones who stayed in Bayramtepe for a shorter period of time; however, the informants I talked to had spent approximately two years in the

neighborhood. All the informants managed to cross the border to reach Turkey irregularly by the help of smugglers.



Map 2: Afrin, Aleppo & Predominant Kurdish Regions in Syria

My visits to Bayramtepe started in August 2014. The actual fieldwork took place in April 2015 for three weeks. I went to the field each day in order to introduce myself to the intermediaries that would enable me to access the refugees. As I managed to create my own acquaintances in the neighborhood I became more flexible about the time I spent in the neighborhood. The interviews were conducted in the café at the park which is at the center of the neighborhood, at refugees' homes and two of them were conducted in the Başakşehir organization building of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP). Women refugees were interviewed at their houses. The refugees' houses were usually gecekondus, if not gecekondu, they were flats located at the ground floor or underground floors.

A Kurdish male friend helped me for translation from Kurdish into Turkish. Before the fieldwork, we discussed in detail the objectives of the study. After a few pilot interviews we started the main fieldwork. Nevertheless, conducting a fieldwork with

an interpreter has its own disadvantages. To be able to make a better sense of the study, it is essential to note these downsides. First, in order to prevent any obstacle that would limit the spontaneity of the interviews, the interpreter was asked to translate the interviews after the interviews ended. Therefore, as I read the transcripts I recognized that some answers could have been asked to the refugees to elaborate more during the interviews. Secondly, direct contact enables to observe the refugees' non-verbal responses for some of the questions which unfortunately the study lacks unless it was evident to me what the refugee talks about at that moment. Also, the meaning or details of certain answers may have gotten lost in translation to some extent. Having another intermediary, as I was another interpreter, in understanding the refugees' thoughts may lead to miss some information. Last but not least, a male interpreter might have created a feeling of insecurity between female informants and the interpreter, but on the other side, this fact enabled to strengthen our relations with some of the male informants as well as the intermediaries.

I reached some of the informants through two humanitarian aid organizations formed by Kurdish refugees from Syria and Başakşehir district branch of Peoples' Democratic Party (Halkların Demokratik Partisi, HDP) which are all located in Bayramtepe. I also used snowball sampling to reach the rest of the informants. The three organizations gave me access to some informants and then, those informants put me in touch with the other informants. Research on refugees often uses snowball sampling to reach informants since it is difficult to access and identify them in other ways (Bloch 1999: 371). I believe using snowball sampling through three different organizations enabled me to have reliable interviews. Using different organizations helped me to avoid relying on a single network connection and a possibility of bias in terms of the content of the talks.

Nevertheless, the researchers' bias is also an issue that may lead the refugees' not to reflect their real ideas and thoughts in in-depth interviews. The relationship established between the interviewees and the researcher during the interviews plays a vital role in the research, as it determines what kind of data the interviewee will choose to provide. Despite the fact that I introduced myself as a student studying social sciences, the fact that I am not a Kurdish person and the organizations that gave me access to them shaped their assumptions about me. These assumptions would be particularly influential in their responses. I attempted to solve this problem through asking the similar questions a couple of times from different angles.

In light of the research questions and my conceptual framework, the questions I asked to them consists various themes which are provided in Appendix B at the end of the thesis. The questions were designed in a line that take them to their daily lives in the past, and move on according to the themes the participant chose to lay stress on. First, I asked the refugees how they arrived in Turkey and Bayramtepe and demographic facts about their lives in Syria. To identify the impact of the Bayramtepe locality in the refugees' notion of home, I asked questions related to their daily life experiences in Bayramtepe such as the food they eat, the places they do shopping, the things they do in leisure time, and the music they listen to. Also, I questioned the Kurdish refugees' weddings that the refugees attended, how they deal with the funerals and the way they celebrate Newroz in the neighborhood. There were questions about the differences in these daily activities and rituals between Syria and Bayramtepe. It was significant to me to have an understanding on their connections with their relatives in Syria.

Second, in order to understand their interaction with the state and some local organizations in Bayramtepe, I inquired about their relations with the police in the

locality and the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), and whether they get aid from any state organization or humanitarian aid organization in the locality. Third, there were questions referring to their access to the services provided by the state including healthcare, education and employment. The questions aim to grasp the refugees' experiences at the hospitals, workplaces and schools. The networks refugees use to find their jobs, the language problems that the refugees would encounter at the hospitals and at schools were other related questions I asked.

The questionnaire also has questions designed for an analysis on the impact of Kurdishness in their home perceptions and formation. The questions on identity are interwoven with the informants' life histories and memories. First, I asked about the refugees' memories on certain occasions that have an impact on Kurdish history in Syria as well as in Turkey. These questions not only helped to reveal the refugees' individual attachment to Kurdish identity but also provide an understanding about the Kurds' collective memories. In this sense, I followed Malkki's (1995) methodology arguing that examining the refugees' knowledge about history is another criterion to figure out notions of home and belonging. The purpose of her research on the refugees' knowledge on history is not to conduct oral history. Rather, the fact that history of a particular kind is also attached to specific territories and motherlands (Arendt, 1973; Renan, 1990) will reveal the impact of territory on Kurdish refugees' identities. Accordingly, this may have an impact on their possible future home. There were also a few questions regarding the refugees' ideas and values about West Kurdistan and the meanings they attribute to West Kurdistan and Aleppo. Third, I asked questions about the places they would like to go when they leave Bayramtepe. Lastly, I also asked about mementoes (e.g. artifacts or photographs) they brought from Syria to observe what they prefer to take in times of pressure. As Parkin (1999) argues, these

mementoes reflect what the refugees are prone to remember in order to understand in which senses the refugees are attached to their lives in Aleppo.

Finally, some clarification regarding the ethics of the study is necessary. Kurdish refugees from Syria living in Bayramtepe were sometimes hesitant to talk to people coming from outside the neighborhood. They were mostly afraid of being identified by anyone for any reason. Therefore, the study needed a special attention in terms of confidentiality. I did not ask for any identification information throughout the interviews. Throughout the thesis, pseudonyms have been used when quoting from in-depth interviews. The same pseudonyms will not be used to refer to the same refugee while mentioning the narratives of the refugees in order to prevent the possibility of their statements to reveal their identities. Where a quotation has been made without formal in-text citation, it can be assumed that an interviewee has been quoted. All translations from non-English sources and interviews are mine, unless otherwise stated. In the next chapter, I move on to drawing a historical framework and the analysis of the legal framework that the refugees are exposed to in Turkey.

Appendix A

Overview of the Informants			
Gender	Age	Occupation in Syria	Occupation in Istanbul
Female	45	Unemployed	Unemployed
Female	25	Unemployed	Tailor in a textile workshop
Female	50	Unemployed	Unemployed
Female	42	Unemployed	Unemployed
Female	29	Tailor in a textile workshop	Tailor in a textile workshop
Female	22	Unemployed	Tailor in a textile workshop
Female	32	Unemployed	Packer in a factory
Female	40	Unemployed	Unemployed
Male	38	Tailor in a textile workshop	Tailor in a textile workshop
Male	48	Real-estate agent	One of founders of the Humanitarian aid Organization in the neighborhood
Male	63	Retired teacher – owner of a market	Teacher in Can Schools
Male	43	Tailor, then employed as driver of a state office	Tailor in a textile workshop
Male	44	Barber	Barber – Part Time Employer
Male	24	University Student	Part Time Employer
Male	35	House painter	Worker in Construction
Male	22	Stayed unemployed, then became a chef in a restaurant	Currently unemployed; used to be a waiter

Chapter 3: The Setting

Home as a concept which is constantly re-constructed depending on time and space, is currently being shaped within the specific context in which the Turkish state is also involved. This chapter, after providing some statistics about the refugees arriving to Turkey, aims to present the legal framework concerning the mass refugee movement from Syria. The existing legal framework concerning the refugees from Syria shapes the refugees' experiences in Bayramtepe as well as their feelings about different localities of home.

3.1. The Kurds in Syria⁴

The Kurds, a community of 2 million people (11% of the total population), had constituted the second largest ethnic group in Syria before the uprising, only second to the Arabs (Chatty, 2010, p. 232). In three regions, they represent the majority: The Kurd-Dagh and the Afrin plain between Aleppo and the Turkish border; the Kobanî (Ayn al-Arab) region; and finally the region which traces the Turkish border between Ras Al-Ayn and Qamishli in the northeast of Jazira. Damascus and Aleppo also have a significant Kurdish population, approximately of 300.000 inhabitants each.

Social, cultural and political composition of the Kurdish population in these regions varies. Jazira is rural and tribal relations prevail and even are replicated in urban centers of the region such as Qamishli and Hasakeh in the aftermath of the rural exodus in the preceding decades. The Kurds of the Kurd Dagh on the other hand have olive cultivation as their basic activity for sustenance, whose products they sell in Aleppo. It is for this reasons that the Aleppine Kurds and those from the Kurd Dagh had cultivated strong cultural and social ties, corroborated by this economic network.

⁴ This brief general account is mostly written from the few but comprehensive accounts on Syria's Kurds. See Pinto, 2007; Tejel, 2009, Allsopp, 2015; and also Chatty, 2010.

The Damascene Kurds, whose migration to the city as soldiers dates back to the 12th century, are closely integrated to the society at large although they had retained their distinct identity as Kurds in such neighborhoods like Salihyyeh and Hayy al-Akrad (literally, ‘the Kurdish quarter’).

Overwhelmingly Sunni Muslims, an apparent cultural marker that sets Kurds apart from the Syrian majority is the Kurdish language, more specifically the Kurmanci dialect. In regions such as the Kurd Dagħ and Jazira Kurdish is widely used both at home and publicly although this is not the case in Damascus and more recently in Aleppo. Ironically, the Syrian state’s weak investment in the Kurdish rural areas paved the way for the learned Kurdish of the region to shoulder the education themselves which facilitated the teaching of Kurdish to the youth. In Aleppo and Damascus, the language taught at school is Arabic. However this is not to say that Aleppine and Damascene Kurds are distanced to their Kurdish ethnic identity. In fact the Kurdish ethnic identity in Syria is expressed through political and cultural consumptions such as music and even more remarkably through Newroz celebrations.

In the post-Mandate Syria, the Syrian Kurds had been without any representation in the form of a political organization until 1957 when the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Syria (KDPS) in 1957 was founded in order to defend the recognition of the Kurdish cultural rights. Although a short-lived moment, the unification of Syria with Nasser’s Egypt marked a moment of a heightened Arab nationalism which culminated in the infamous 1962 census in Jazira. In an effort of ‘Arabization’, people who could not prove their existence in Syria before 1945 were to be robbed of their citizenship, an event that still has repercussions for today as will be detailed below. The Baath takeover in 1963 did not improve things for the Kurds in Syria and the demographic politics of resettlement and ‘Arabization’ have been implemented, especially in the

first half of the 1970s. Later on Hafez al-Assad pursued a more nuanced policy of co-opting a Kurdish elite under the Baathist regime. Some posts were allocated for Kurds (for example the *mufti* or the Communist Party's ex-leader) and even an elite army division was formed of Kurdish soldiers under Alawite commandship. The strategic alliance of the PKK and the Syrian state which let the organization operate in Syria, in 1980 gave birth to a period of an unusual –although always fragile and often interrupted– tolerance for cultural and political expression of Kurds in Syria, especially during the Newroz celebrations. In the aftermath of the Iraq's invasion in 2003, where Kurds obtained their own autonomous region in Iraq, the State's relationship with the Kurds became more and more fragile. The Qamishli Incident of 2004 and the riots after, where 65 people were killed, is representative of this. This incident set the context for the Syrian state-Kurds relationship for the decade, at the end of which the Syrian Uprising took place.

In the 1962 census, 20% of the Kurds (120,000 people) lost their citizenship and were officially registered as *ajnabi* ('alien') thereafter. Even much of the Kurds with proof of their pre-1945 residence in Syria lost their citizenship and some were forced to bribe it back. The ones who did not take part in the census on the other hand became *maktumin* ('concealed/hidden', meaning 'unregistered'), even a lower status than being *ajnabi*. Whereas *maktumin* became *de facto* stateless people, unable to benefit from any rights including political participation, education, health, and legal marriage, *ajnabi* became stateless under international law as they were officially foreigners in Syria but had no other state elsewhere. *Ajnabi* also lost much of their right of property in time. These different categories of citizenship or statelessness have not always been clear-cut and many families had members with different status. Some *maktumin* later on could bribe their *ajnabi* status back and while other *ajnabis* found

posts for themselves to work in private sector. Pinto (2007, p. 264) gives the number in 2007 for *maktumin* as 300.000. Demands for Syrian citizenship became a hallmark of the Syrian Kurds' agenda for political recognition. It is noteworthy that just after the start of the Uprising, Bashar al-Assad promised to give citizenship rights to all Syrian Kurds in an attempt to politically ally Kurds to the Syrian regime. This is demonstrative of the importance of the agenda around the statelessness and the formative effect it has on the Kurds of Syria.

3.2. The Syrian Migration to Turkey in the Aftermath of the Uprising

The Syrian Uprising that had started in 2011 led to the greatest flow of people in history from one country to Turkey. As of August 2015, UNHCR gives the number of registered Syrian refugees in Turkey as 1,938,999 (%50.8 male, %49.2 female, %40.2 under 11 years-old). Although the most up-to-date, these statistics do not provide a detailed picture of the refugee status in Turkey for several reasons. First of all only a minority of these refugees resides in the 22 camps set up by the Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (AFAD) whereas the overwhelming majority is dispersed in almost all of cities of Turkey. Without a break-up of this heterogeneous population, the numbers tell us little about the variances in gender distribution, educational status, socio-economical position, access to facilities, etc. Secondly, with the ongoing crisis the flux of people is hard to predict and ever-changing. For example, a sudden influx of 200,000 refugees at the end of 2014 caused a sudden change in the situation (3RP 2015-2016, 2015, p. 3). Thirdly, a lack of statistics about the ethnic-religious break-up and distribution of the population (e.g. the number of Syrian Kurds in Istanbul) renders these numbers quite ineffective for this study.

Although no reliable report about the Syrians in Istanbul exists, one research gives the number as 330,000 as of October 2014 (HUGO, 2014, p. 13). The state officials at the time insisted on the other hand that the number was around 150,000 (Acar *et. al.*, 2015, p. 7). A report from 2013 indicated that the Syrian refugees in Istanbul were largely condensed in the following neighborhoods: Fatih (Kumkapı), Eminönü (Balat), Sultançiftliği, Şirinevler, Başakşehir (Şahintepe, Altınşehir, Bayramtepe), Esenyurt, Sultangazi and Ümraniye (MAZLUMDER, 2013, p. 9).

The Setting of Bayramtepe



Figure 1 - A view of Bayramtepe by *Jodi Hilton*

Bayramtepe is a neighborhood of Başakşehir Municipality. Başakşehir region is home to the largest satellite city project of Turkey with 65,000 units that was developed by TOKİ⁵ (Mass Housing Authority of Turkey), Atatürk Olympics Stadium which is built in order to host World Olympics in the future and some gecekondu

⁵ Mass Housing Authority is a public institution for social housing. The main aim is to provide middle and lower middle class households with housing with affordable prices.

neighborhoods like Bayramtepe. The municipality has been managed by Justice and Development Part (AKP) since the district was established as an independent municipality in 2008. Başakşehir hosts many refugees from Syria in its numerous neighborhoods such as Şahintepe, Altınşehir, and Bayramtepe as mentioned. Specifically, more than 3,500 Syrian refugees live in Bayramtepe.

Bayramtepe is close to İkitelli which hosts the biggest organized industrial zone in Istanbul and also Turkey **with 30,000 workplaces and more than 300,000 employees. İkitelli has already attracted many working class people and internally displaced people to work in the industrial zone whose sectoral composition is highly diverse -leather, automobile, furniture, textile, timber, metal and so on.**⁶

The location of the neighborhood is within the area of “Kanal Istanbul” project which is a project announced in 2011 by the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for opening a canal between the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara. The project declared some regions of Bayramtepe as reserve area. Some lands were objected to gentrification and some inhabitants’ properties were compensated by the state while some could not get their money from the state.⁷

Although the neighborhoods inhabitants are mostly Kurdish people, there are also Turkish people. The inhabitants live in either three or four-floured apartments or gecekondus. The neighborhood has two public high schools, a few primary schools and kindergartens, a police station, a park with a children’s playground in it, mosques, and a community health center. Bayramtepe has its open-air market on Thursdays. Other than this small market where inhabitants can buy their fruits, vegetables,

⁶ A more detailed picture of the industrial zone can be found through <http://www.iosb.org.tr/>

⁷ See “Kanal İstanbul 3 mahalle için sürgün mü getirecek?”, last modified on June 26, 2014. Accessed through: <http://www.evrensel.net/haber/87078/kanal-istanbul-3-mahalle-icin-surgun-mu-getirecek>

clothes and other minor household needs, relatively cheaper supermarket chains such as A101 and BİM are very common. As the refugees arrived in the neighborhood, the stores opened by the refugees from Syria have become ever more visible.

In 2014 drug addiction became a significant problem in Bayramtepe. Three young people living in the neighborhood died due to using “bonsai” which is an illegal drug known for its cheapness and impact of triggering heart attack. When I started visiting Bayramtepe in August 2014, I saw Başakşehir district branch of Peoples’ Democratic Party’s (HDP) tent which was campaigning for opposing to bonsai addiction in the region. In fact, the tent was removed a few days later by the police on the suspicion that they were engaging in HDP propaganda.¹ It is into this neighborhood setting that the refugees migrated.

3.3. Management of Massive Refugee Movements to Turkey

The section will reveal how the Turkish state responded to two earlier massive refugee movements in the history of modern Turkey until the current mass migration from Syria. Moreover, there will be a discussion on the evolution of the legal framework on migration until the present condition of the mass migration from Syria by June 2015. These discussions will enable to contextualize the current policy-making process concerning mass migration from Syria, particularly the Temporary Protection Regulation in relation to new legislations.

The mass refugee movement from Syria was an unprecedented one for Turkey considering i) the overwhelming number of Syrian refugees in such a short duration, ii) the regulations and laws enacted especially after April 2014, and iii) the ‘open-

door' policy adopted by the government for such a large number of refugees from outside Europe (Kirişçi, 2014).⁸

The most similar mass refugee movements to the current one in terms of numbers were the ones from Bulgaria and Iraq. Nonetheless, the ways the state managed these two refugee movements were not similar to each other since the number as well as the national identities of migrants were different. In 1989 and 1990, more than 350,000 Pomaks and ethnic Turks arrived in Turkey in order to flee the persecution of the communist regime in Bulgaria (Kirişçi, 2014). Most of these refugees were considered as immigrants from “Turkish descent and culture” under the 1934 Settlement Law.⁹ They were granted the right to access the legal residence and to have citizenship due to their recognition as Turkish based on their descent and culture (Danış & Parla, 2009).¹⁰

Even a greater mass refugee movement occurred between 1988 and 1991 in three waves when around 500,000 refugees, mostly Kurds, migrated to Turkey from Iraq. The Kurdish refugees were quartered in camps which were located in places far from local Kurdish villages. The state authorities aimed to make the stay of Kurds from Iraq temporary and to limit their interactions with local Kurdish villagers (Danış, Taraghi, & Pérouse, 2009). The refugees in the three waves were recognized as “temporary guests for humanitarian reasons” on the basis of the 1951 Geneva Convention (Ibid, p. 35). The recent refugees from Syria were also initially identified in the same

⁸ However, time to time there are instances that this policy was stopped. See for instance İstanbul Sığınmacılar Platformu. (2013) *Yok Sayılanlar; Kamp Dışında Yaşayan Suriye'den Gelen Sığınmacılar İstanbul Örneği*. Accessed through: <http://multeci.net/images/stories/1/Yok-Sayilanlar-Raporu.pdf>; See also, “Suruç'ta hukuksuz bir şekilde göz altına alınan Kobaneli mülteciler geri gönderilme riski altında” accessed through: <http://www.amnesty.org.tr/icerik/2/1448/suruc>; “Halep'ten yoğun göç korkusu: Öncüpinar ve Cilvegözü sınır kapıları da kapatıldı” accessed through: <http://www.diken.com.tr/halepten-yogun-goc-korkusu-ocupinar-ve-cilvegozu-sinir-kapilari-da-kapatildi/>

¹⁰ Ethnic Turks from Bulgaria who arrived after the 1990s did not have a similar accession to citizenship and residence based on their kinship to Turkish descent and culture; see Danış & Parla, 2009.

manner by the government based on the geographical limitation on the Geneva Convention.¹¹

Both of these mass refugee movements from Bulgaria and Iraq were managed without having any regulation referring to asylum except for the 1934 Settlement Law and the Geneva Convention, but still national identity and security were the main concerns for the state in managing the movements. The mass refugee influx between 1988 and 1991 prompted authorities in Turkey to reconsider the legal and administrative system of asylum (Kirişçi 2014; Ihlamur-Öner, 2013). In November 1994, Turkey adopted a regulation on asylum that clearly reflected an emphasis on national security over human rights considerations such as violating the principle of *non-refoulement* (Kirişçi, 2012). The regulation also declared that asylum seekers were required to register with the police within no later than five days¹² after their entry into Turkey, sidelining UNCHR's pressures for a bigger focus on human rights (Ibid, p. 67).

From the 2000s until 2013, the governance of asylum and irregular migration in Turkey was mostly connected to the notion of securitization of migration, though without having a single law on migration.¹³ Securitization of migration is related to the securitization of "illegal" migration. As Bigo (2002) puts forward, "the securitization of immigration emerges from the correlation between some successful speech acts of political leaders, the mobilization they create for and against some groups of people and the specific field of security professionals. It comes also from a range of

¹¹ Turkey put a geographical limitation to the Geneva Convention that only lets European migrants to take refugee status. The non-European refugees who arrive in Turkey can only become asylum seekers, who are expected to stay in Turkey temporarily until they get a refugee status from another country (Düvell, 2014).

¹² This time period extended to 10 days afterwards and finally in the 2006 Implementation Directive replaced this time period with "reasonable time period" (Üstübcü, 2015)

¹³ There were various legislations referring a single migration law such as Passport Law, the Law on Residence and Travel of Foreigners and the 1994 Council of Ministers Regulation which was amended in 1999 and 2006 (Kaya, 2008).

administrative practices such as population profiling, risk assessment, statistical calculations, category creation, proactive preparation” (p. 65). The Turkish state authorities’ focus on securitization of migration was governed through balancing the demands of the European Union in the EU accession process, the state’s national interests and the demands of the civil society (Üstübici, 2015).¹⁴ On one side, since the 2000s, the EU has started to take measures against the increasing number of irregular entries to Europe from south and east of the Mediterranean and from Eastern Europe (Yükseker & Brewer, 2011). Thereby, the EU’s securitization and externalization of migration policies put pressure on the transit countries including Turkey to take more responsibility for controlling irregular migration.¹⁵ Turkey, in response, accepted some of the demands of the EU including signing a re-admission agreement with Greece in 2002 (Ibid, 138).¹⁶ However, on the other side, the authorities in Turkey had similar concerns about the increase of irregular migrants arriving in Turkey. For Turkey, as Yüksek and Brewer (2011) quote an anonymous Ministry of Foreign Affairs official, having no immigration policy has become an immigration policy (p. 157). This absence of having an immigration policy not only made refugees invisible before the law in many aspects but also endangered their lives. Also, despite the criticism of the EU or domestic non-governmental organizations (İçduygu, 2015), Turkey still maintains the geographical limitation on asylum.

In the last three years, Turkey has adopted an immigration policy. This period corresponds to the time when the Syrian refugees started to migrate to Turkey. Thereby, the shift in the legal framework is related not only to EU accession process but

¹⁴ For a detailed discussion on the non-state actors involvement in the management of irregular migration, see; Üstübici, 2015.

¹⁵ Turkey signed several re-admission agreements with EU countries in accordance with the Union’s migration policies. (Yükseker & Brewer, 2011). These agreements involve sending back irregular migrants to the transit country from which they migrated to the EU.

¹⁶ Also, in 2013 the re-admission agreement between EU and Turkey was signed and put into force in October 1, 2014.

also to the remarkable increase in the amount of refugees arriving in Turkey. In 2013, the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) which replaced the 1994 regulation, was adopted as the first single legal text comprehensively regulating migration. The implementation of the law started in April 2014. The stress on the integration of the immigrants to the society and conformity to international norms in treating asylum seekers and irregular migrants were included in the law. Being of “Turkish descent and culture” is removed as a condition to obtain the migrant status (İçduygu, 2015). Another substantial change introduced by the law is the centralization and institutionalization of migration with the General Directorate of Migration Management under the Ministry of Interior.

The adoption of the Law on Foreigners and International Protection in 2013 indicates that the state authorities recognized a human rights perspective in the new policymaking. Although the limitation to the Geneva Convention is still in place, non-Europeans are to be granted temporary protection after they apply for refugee status. During status determination process, applicants are granted limited rights to access health, education and other social services, and to the labor market (İçduygu, 2015). Yet, the practice of these rights is limited and irregular migrants lack any of these rights (Üstübcü, 2015).

The unanticipated mass refugee movement from Syria started at the end of 2011. The migration movement has gone through different processes of the legal framework on immigration. As time passed and the number of refugees increased, this migration movement has also led the authorities to enact new decisions and arrangements on asylum and mass migration. In fact, considering that Syrians in Turkey will

soon face a “protracted refugee situation”¹⁷ (PRS), there might be a need to make more decisions.

The refugees from Syria were initially considered as “guests”, and were later granted the status of “persons under temporary protection” based on Article 91 of the LFIP. Nevertheless, no legislation was issued defining who the persons “under temporary protection” are and the rights of such persons until October 2014. As the first secondary legislation of the LFIP, the Temporary Protection Regulation¹⁸ (TP) was put into force in October, 2014. The next section will elaborate on this regulation.

3.4. Temporary Protection Regulation

The Temporary Protection Regulation describes who “people under temporary protection” are in the following two articles:

*“Temporary protection shall be granted to foreigners, who were forced to leave their country, cannot return to the country they left and arrived at or crossed our borders as part of a mass influx, or individually during the period of mass influx, in order to seek urgent and temporary protection and for whom individual international protection status determination procedures cannot be conducted”.*¹⁹

Also, in the Provisional Article 1 it is added that:

“Citizens of the Syrian Arab Republic, stateless persons and refugees who arrived at or crossed our borders, coming from the Syrian Arab Republic as part of a mass influx or individually, for temporary protection purposes owing to events happening in Syrian Arab Republic since 28 April 2011 shall be covered under temporary protection, even if they have lodged an application for international protection”.

The first article provides a general definition concerning the prospective instances of mass migrations to Turkey. The article holds that “temporary protection” status is granted to those who arrive in the borders as part of a mass influx or individuals dur-

¹⁷ “Protracted Refugee Situation” is defined by UNHCR as a situation in “which refugees have lived in exile for at least five years and there is little or no possibility that the cause of their displacement will end and allow them to return home”.

¹⁸ <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2014/10/20141022-15-1.pdf> in *Official Gazette*.

¹⁹ Article 7 in Temporary Protection Law; Translation by Migration Solidarity Network.

ing the period of mass influx.²⁰ The Provisional Article declares that the status is given to all Syrian nationals, as well as stateless persons and refugees from Syria. By “stateless persons” it refers to Kurdish people who do not have citizenship and by “refugees” to particularly Palestinians²¹ and other people who became refugees in Syria. The regulation indicates that even the refugees cross the border without their passports, in other words arrive in Turkey irregularly; they are still granted temporary protection status when they are registered to the police. As Article 5 states, there will not be any fines implemented to Syrians who cross the border irregularly if they register with the offices within a “reasonable period of time”.²² The regulation does not have any references regarding the procedures of the entries at the border; it only concerns the refugees currently living in Turkey and their statuses.

The regulation considers refugees who arrive in Turkey as part of an ongoing mass influx as eligible for temporary protection. However, it is unclear if the regulation will be implemented uniformly. In August 2014, a smaller mass refugee movement occurred from Iraq. As a result of the persecution of ISIS in Sinjar, and Tal A’far in Iraq, the state authorities opened the border for the refugees. Yet Iraqi refugees, comprising Ezidis and Turkmens, got “temporary protection” status six months

²⁰ Here, mass influx is defined in the regulation as: “significant number of arrivals over a short time period of persons from the same country or geographical region, and for whom, due to their numbers, individual refugee status determination is procedurally impractical”.

²¹ Note that Turkey asks visa from Palestinian refugees, which is not possible to get recently since the Turkish Embassy in Damascus is not present any more. Palestinians living in Syria had neither Syrian citizenship nor Palestinian but the travels document that Syrian government. This travel document does not have a correspondence in Turkey. Therefore, Palestinian refugees pass the border illegally. As a result, since according to the regulation leaving Turkey also needs documents, Palestinians cannot let cross the border for a third country even if they already gained a refugee status there.

²² See UNHCR, *Türkiye’deki Suriyeli Mülteciler: Sık Sorulan Sorular*. Accessed through: http://www.unhcr.org.tr/uploads/root/sık_sorulan_sorular.pdf

after their arrival in February 2015.²³ Therefore, the implementation of temporary protection status at other times of mass influxes is yet to be seen.

The regulation also addresses the legal procedure for access to certain rights of refugees under temporary protection. In order for the refugees to benefit from these rights, they have to register with the authorities. The essentiality of the registration and presenting oneself to the state offices are mentioned several times throughout the regulation. The refugees, or “foreigners” as they are called in the regulation, can draw on some social and public services including education and healthcare services, access to the labor market, social assistance and services, and translation services. The refugee has to show the Foreigners Identification Card when getting the service, which is given to the refugee when s/he registered. For further detailed information about these rights and their implementation, the regulation refers to the ministries’ prospective decisions.²⁴

The Temporary Protection Regulation was enacted in a time period when human rights perspective started to be recognized in the policy-making process on migration. Nevertheless, the precedence of securitization of migration and nation state interests still proceeds in the given framework. The articles in the regulation indicate that the state authorities still regard the refugees’ stay in Turkey as temporary and ensure that the refugees are identifiable by the state as mentioned above with the regulation’s insistence on registration. For instance, the duration of protection and

²³ Currently they have “99” at the beginning of the registration number. The refugees from Iraq are allowed to use health-care services and use education services. See “İçişleri Bakanlığı’nın Yeni Genelgesi Irak’tan Gelen Mültecilerin Haklara Erişimini Kolaylaştırabilir.” Accessed through: <https://amnesty.org.tr/icerik/37/1504/icisleri-bakanligi/nin-yeni-genelgesi-irak-tan-gelen-multecilerin-haklara-erisimini-kolaylastirabilir>

²⁴ While the education services are referred to the Ministry of Education or YÖK (Council of Higher Education) decisions, health services are directed to the regulations by the Ministry of Health, procedures to access social aid is directed to Ministry of Family and Social Policies’ decrees, and access to the labor market depends on the decision of the Council of Ministers upon the proposal of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

under which conditions the protection will be terminated are not clearly explained throughout the regulation. The Council of Ministers reserves the right to abolish the temporary protection status and send refugees back to their countries according to the eleventh article of the regulation. Even in the case that the refugee is not temporary, the nation-state's interests are sought to be secured. Similarly, the second clause of Article 11 asserts that those who are under temporary protection may be allowed to stay in Turkey even after the cabinet terminates the Temporary Protection Regulation, but the conditions under which the refugees can stay in Turkey are not stated. The article only says that the refugees "may be allowed to stay in Turkey under the conditions to be determined within the scope of law". In other words, the state decides on who will stay in the country after the duration of temporary protection ends. Therefore, the regulation has articles ensuring that the state will determine who will enjoy certain rights and when.

Even if we disregard the implementation of the regulation, the regulation's very enactment indicates that Turkey has taken considerable responsibility towards refugees from Syria and Iraq in terms of rights. The responsibility Turkey took is evident especially when compared to any neighboring country to Syria or European countries. European countries not only have tight controls at the borders but also hosted fewer than 4% (approximately 123,600) of the 2.8 million registered refugees from Syria by 2014, most of whom arrived to the countries irregularly (Protection from Syrian refugees; 13). Germany, which is currently hosting one of the largest number of refugees among European countries, had granted humanitarian admission to 6000 refugees and 5500 refugees entered to Germany through private sponsorships, by June 2014. The

UK provided the most humanitarian aid in EU, while hosting very few hundreds.²⁵

The Temporary Protection Regulation not only defines the purpose and scope of temporary protection status but also envisages the refugees' access certain rights such as healthcare, education, access to the labor market, and public assistance. However, the regulations concerning social services and work permit do not directly explain the refugees' access to these services and their implementation. Instead, the regulation refers to corresponding ministries for further regulations and practices, as mentioned. For example, policymaking on healthcare services is still in progress by the Ministry of Health. Nevertheless, regarding healthcare, there are numerous reports addressing the inadequacy of the infrastructure both in terms of equipment and personnel,²⁶ local people's reactions to Syrian refugees' crowding the hospitals,²⁷ and the increase in certain diseases such as tuberculosis among the general population since the refugees arrived in Turkey.²⁸ The ministry has to establish new rules and decisions complementing the Temporary Protection Regulation in order to obviate the problems in practice.

Education as one of the basic rights of refugees is also addressed in the Temporary Protection Regulation, and explained in more detail in the Education and Training Services Mandate for Foreigners (Yabancılarla Yönelik Eğitim ve Öğretim Hiz-

²⁵ For detailed analysis of European countries' response to Syrian migration movement see Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford (2014) *Protection in Europe for refugees from Syria*. Accessed through: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/.../pb10-protection-europe-refugees-syria-2014.pdf.

²⁶ See Açık Toplum Vakfı. (2015). *Bekleme Odasından Oturma Odasına: Suriyeli Mültecilere Yönelik Çalışmalar Yürüten Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarına Dair Kısa Bir Değerlendirme*. Accessed through: <http://www.aciktoplumvakfi.org.tr/medya/02062015beklemeodasi.pdf>

²⁷ See ORSAM & TESEV (2015) *Suriyeli Sığınmacıların Türkiye'ye Etkileri*. Accessed through: <http://www.tesev.org.tr/assets/publications/file/09012015104258.pdf>

²⁸ See Bezmialem Vakıf Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi Halk Sağlığı Anabilim Dalı. (2015). *İstanbul'da Yaşayan Geçici Koruma Altındaki Suriyeliler*. Accessed through: <http://halksagligi.bezmialem.edu.tr/dosyalar/siginmaci-raporu.pdf>; Türk Tabipler Birliği (2014) *Suriyeli Sığınmacılar ve Sağlık Hizmetleri Raporu*. Accessed through: <http://www.ttb.org.tr/kutuphane/siginmacirpr.pdf>

metleri Genelgesi). Accordingly, the refugee children²⁹ who are granted temporary protection can go to national schools tied to the Ministry of Education and temporary education centers. The temporary education centers, which are established for Syrian refugees and teach in Arabic, exist in camps and in certain urban areas. These schools are not available in all cities.³⁰ Regarding higher education,³¹ the refugees can continue or start their education, however, university admission system regarding Syrian refugees is highly decentralized and complex.³² For primary and secondary education there are also privately owned schools teaching in Arabic in urban areas.

Lastly, concerning the refugees' employment, the Temporary Protection Regulation includes provision of work permits to the refugees by referring to a prospective decision on work permit. Yet, currently the refugees are not granted work permit; they are not legally included in the labor market. In the provision on work permits it declares that those who have the temporary protection card will have work permit when they work in the "sectors, professions and geographical areas (provinces, districts or villages) to be determined by the Council of Ministers" (Article 29). Following this article, in February 2015, The Ministry of Labor and Social Security introduced a draft of the Foreigner Employment Law³³. Newspaper articles³⁴ report that the draft envisages that a business place can employ people under temporary protection at most 10 % of the total number of employees. In Antalya region the refugees

²⁹ The children in the schooling (between 5 and 18) comprise 48 % of all Syrian refugees living in Turkey; see UNCHR stats by August 2015.

³⁰ UNHCR; Frequently Asked Questions.

³¹ People aged between 18-22 are 10 % of the whole Syrian refugee population

³² For a detailed report on higher education among Syrian refugees in Turkey see Institute of International Education, UC Davis (2014) *We Will Stop Here and Go No Further: Syrian University Students and Scholars in Turkey*. Accessed through:

<http://www.iie.org/~media/Files/Corporate/Publications/We-Will-Stop-Here-And-Go-No-Further-Syrian-University-Students-And-Scholars-In-Turkey-002.ashx?la=en>

³³ See "Yabancı İstihdamı Kanunu Tasarısı." Accessed through:

<http://www.alomaliye.com/2015/yabanci-istihdami-kanun-tasarisi.pdf>

³⁴ "Suriyeli işçiye yüzde 10 barajı" Accessed through: <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/28159479>
<http://www.dw.com/tr/suriyelilere-calisma-izni-geliyor/a-18250816>; "Suriyeli işçilere yüzde 10 kotası." Accessed through: <http://t24.com.tr/haber/suriyeli-iscilere-yuzde-10-kotasi,286674>

will not work at tourism sector and the “qualified” refugees working in engineering, healthcare and education will need the corresponding ministries’ permissions. The Labor and Social Security Minister, Faruk Çelik declared regarding the draft that: “It should be known that this will not create unemployment in our existing labor force. There is a labor deficit of around 80,000-100,000 in part-time and seasonal workers.” Thereby, in these sectors the 10% quota will not be implemented. Yet, as of August 2015, the draft has not passed into law.



Chapter 4: Home in the Making

This chapter displays the analysis of the fieldwork I conducted in Bayramtepe with the Kurdish refugees living in Bayramtepe. The aim of the chapter is to illustrate the moments where the refugees are “passive victims” and active agents at the same time. The analysis focuses on their home-making process at the present as well as their thoughts on their imagined past and future homes. The discussions of the refugees’ present notion of home concern mostly about refugees’ identity and the locality, Bayramtepe, they currently live in. For these purposes, first I explain how the present displacement and the emplacement are alike processes for the refugees. I specify how these processes reveal both the vulnerabilities of the refugees as a result of forced displacement and the way the refugees deal with these difficulties in Bayramtepe neighborhood. Then, the analysis will continue to reflect home making process at the present by referring to the refugees’ way of management with the given legal framework to which they are exposed in Bayramtepe. Lastly, since the present notion of home is also depended on the refugees’ future imaginaries, I attempt to understand their ideas and values about future homes and their possible strategies to achieve these homes.

4.1. Displacement and Emplacement of the Kurdish Refugees

Displacement and emplacement are twin processes (Jansen & Löfving, 2007). While the refugees experience the impacts of displacement in exile, they simultaneously start to make their place in the new environment. The twin processes of displacement and emplacement have important implications regarding refugees’ feelings about home towards Bayramtepe locality. Whereas displacement refers to changes in their lives in various aspects as a result of forced migration, emplacement refers to the

moments where the refugees actively start to build new networks and communities.

4.1.1. Displacement

Displacement as an involuntary movement entails refugees' cultural dislocation, social disruption, material dispossession and political disenfranchisement (Hyndman, 2000). The Kurdish refugees from Syria living in Bayramtepe have been experiencing the hardships of the displacement process in different aspects of their lives. The refugees mostly expressed their grievances concerning the transformation of the community, culture and status they had had back in Syria as well as the loss of their property. Azad (48) explains how he lost all he possessed before arriving to Turkey: "All I earned in my lifetime and my wealth disappeared in an hour on a Friday morning with an explosion." What Azad went through, losing all belongings is a reflection of many other informants' experiences as well. Similarly, Roni (43) stated, "I had to run away with my car after the opposition [refers to ISIS and Al Nusra] bombed my flat. Then the opposition seized my car. They told me that Kurds are not Muslim and their property can be impounded". Most of the informants told me that they brought nothing but the clothes they put on the day they ran away. Some of those who were lucky enough to preserve their properties during the war stated that they sold their belongings before arriving to Turkey since migrating abroad is a highly costly process. While some of the others claimed that they do not know the condition of their houses in Aleppo currently, one of the informants mentioned that he took the title deed of his house and brought it to his parent's house in Afrin.

Hence, most of the Kurdish refugees from Syria were not able to transfer their material wealth to their new environments in Turkey. Their loss of economic capital was accompanied by shifts in their professional statuses as well. Some of my informants reported that they had to change their professions in accordance with the de-

mands of the local job market in Istanbul. Mohammed (22) stated that his father had to work at a draper although he had been the manager of a restaurant in Aleppo and her sister currently worked in a textile workshop as an *ortaci*³⁵ even though she had been a student before the migration. That the Kurdish refugees had to change professions indirectly refers to a change in their status. Together with material loss, these status shifts are among the factors leading to downward social mobility. Besides, the loss of transferable capitals, such as wealth, and the change in professional status, e.g. from being a small business owner to becoming a wage earner, could create a different kind of a social inequality among the informants in Bayramtepe than the social inequality they had been experiencing in Syria.³⁶

Displacement does not only result in individualized losses such as diminution of material and symbolic capital but also brings along predicaments at the collective level. These collective losses, in turn, affect individual refugees' use of social capital they hitherto acquired. Dispersed network is a typical term (Parkin, 1998) used to convey the image of the Kurdish refugees' movements in face of displacement. The Kurdish refugees stated that most of their relatives were in different places, mostly in Afrin but also in other places such as Iraq, Europe, Aleppo or another district of Istanbul. The refugees keep in touch with their relatives and friends as long as a phone or Internet connection is available. Only a few of the refugees went back and forth to Syria in order to contact their relatives and acquaintances. These difficulties among the refugees in communicating with their network appear as an inevitable condition of being displaced. Thus, the displacement process involves disconnection as well as

³⁵ *Ortaci* is the deskilled staff, which carries out intermediary tasks in the textile sector such as placing the output for example.

³⁶ The displacement has evidently changed the dynamics of social inequality among the Syrians in their refuge. My observations indicate that the refugees in Bayramtepe largely experience similar socio-economic conditions although their articulations of their lives in Syria point out to the diversity in their socio-economic background. However, I do not have enough data to confirm this observation. This issue certainly merits further scrutiny.

dispossession of Kurdish refugees from Syria.

The impact of disconnection and dispossession is further solidified by the transformations in refugees' rituals after their arrival to Bayramtepe. Newroz, food, wedding and funeral ceremonies, and music are some of the fundamental traditions of the refugees that have been subject to change. For example, Newroz celebrations, the festival for welcoming spring, is a vital part of the Kurds' self-imagination as a myth used in the construction of Kurdish national identity since the mid-20th century (Aydin, 2005).³⁷

The refugees express the importance of the Newroz celebrations for them and report that they always participate in these festivals. Although the Kurdish citizens of Turkey also celebrate Newroz, the refugees qualify these celebrations in Turkey as different than those in Syria. Lorin and Ahmed point out this difference:

In Syria, I used to attend Newroz [celebrations], almost always. We had more enthusiastic and joyful *bayrams* [holidays] there, when compared to here. We were celebrating the Newroz in the mood of a *seyran* [picnic]. People were making speeches and we were listening to them. Newrozes were running in the mood of a festival. We used to prefer watersides... The entertainment was accompanied by music. The Newroz was celebrated with songs and dances. (Lorin, housewife, 40)

First of all Newroz is the holiday of the Kurds. The celebration in Zeytinburnu is always in Turkish. If this is our holiday why do not we celebrate it in our own language? Newroz happens once in a year and it should be celebrated in accordance with its spirit. (Ahmed, unemployed, 22)

The most commonly held perception among the informants about the Newroz in Turkey is that it is not properly celebrated and that it should be more invigorating and cheerful in accordance with celebrations. Since Newroz is the about welcoming the

³⁷ After the 1960s, this festival became a sort of a ritual of Kurdish nationalism, most notably through songs and dances. This was also the time, under the presidency of Hafiz al-As'ad, of the most important affirming moments on the public position of Kurdishness in the north of Syria and also in the Kurdish quarters of Aleppo and Damascus. After the events of Newroz that took place in Damascus and Afrin in 1986, the regime imposed an official ban on this festival and attempted to eclipse it by making it coincide with a holiday honoring mothers (Tejel, 2008).

spring the refugees emphasize celebrations in the “spirit of the spring”. Moreover, the use of Turkish in the Newroz celebrations in Istanbul further alienates the Kurdish refugees from Syria. Likewise, Roni (38) puts forth that “Newroz celebrations are the clearest indicator of the fact that we are foreigners here.” Therefore, these cultural differences within the same ethnic community lead refugees to feel unattached and “foreign” to their new environment in Istanbul.

Food is another fundamental yet problematic issue for the Kurdish refugees. Two of the informants stated that they brought spices, which they had thought they would not be able to find in Turkey. Parkin (1999) argues that the mementoes (e.g. artifacts, photographs) the refugees brought with them represent what the refugees are prone to remember since these mementoes are selectively taken under pressure in order to remember and envision. In line with this thought, bringing spices may indicate how much they desire the tastes of their food and consequently their longing for the past homes. Their cooking is mostly restricted since some of the ingredients they used to cook with in Syria are hardly found in their new neighborhood. They complained that the taste of olive oil, thyme, or the bread is not the same in Bayramtepe. As an essential part of everyday life the taste and cooking habits have a significant role in people’s sense of belonging as well as for a feeling of comfort in a particular place. Thus, the refugees’ discontent with the food and ingredients and the restrictions they encounter in cooking their food in the way they used to aggravate the displacement process.

In addition to Newroz celebrations and cooking, weddings are among the most profound reminders of the refugees’ cultural dislocation. The complex rituals in wedding ceremonies are quintessential for the Kurdish culture. Besides the fact that most of the refugees articulated that they are not mentally ready for the enthusiasm of

Kurdish weddings with music and dance, the informants mention the difference between their weddings in Syria and Kurdish refugees' weddings they have attended in Istanbul. Some of the informants complain about the difficulties in financing the weddings even though the ceremonies were nowhere near the splendor of the wedding ceremonies they had had in Syria. Roza (29) also specifies the difference in wedding ceremonies: "Back in Syria, we used to hold our weddings for three days and nights. We prepared the trousseau and recorded the ceremony with a camera. The trousseau ceremony used to last one whole day. I have never seen anything like this here. They usually hold the weddings for one day. The weddings are done very hastily. In fact, like everything else here, the weddings are very quick."

The discrepancies among the weddings in Istanbul and Aleppo/Afrin both in terms of their promptness and costliness also indicate, in a broader sense, the different lifestyle in Istanbul to which the refugees have been trying adapt. As Roza points out, the perception of time and time management in Bayramtepe are new and different for most of the refugees. Similar to the pace at the workplace, the weddings end in a couple of hours as the refugees report. Istanbul is a quantitatively different city than Aleppo or Afrin in various aspects including population, size, industry, and financial resources. Thus, the refugees' experiences of overall disruption in their daily lives are also related to migrating to a "global city" like Istanbul (Keyder, 2010). The refugees' displacement process, which is shaped within Istanbul's fast pace of life, costliness and large size, makes their adaptation even more complicated and certainly affects their perception of the new environment.

In fact, the refugees report that they had a sense of what Istanbul could be like before coming here since the Turkish soap operas and movies are popular in the regions they were living in Syria. However, as soon as they had arrived to Bayramtepe

they realized what they knew about Turkey and Istanbul from those TV shows was different than the reality they had perceived. Some of the informants tell me that their new neighborhood in Istanbul, Bayramtepe, is mostly like a village. For them, Bayramtepe cannot be the same place they saw on the screen, it can at most be a village of Istanbul, which was supposed to have been better than the one they are experiencing now. When they talk about Istanbul, the refugees therefore often express their disillusionment in Bayramtepe.

Along with the longings for their lives in Syria and grievances in Bayramtepe, the state's stress on the temporal stay of refugees in the legal regulations is eventually conducive of a stronger feeling of displacement among the refugees. All the informants, as people who have stayed there for approximately more than two years, repeatedly remark that they are in Bayramtepe for a temporary period. When I asked about their future plans, they assert that they would leave Bayramtepe as soon as the war ends or when they find a way to migrate to Europe. Nevertheless, regardless of their articulations concerning their stay in Bayramtepe, it has been almost four years since many refugees arrived in Turkey. In fact, the refugees from Syria, in near future, will be considered as people going through protracted displacement (İçduygu, 2015).

4.1.2. Home making in Bayramtepe

Accompanying the process of displacement, the refugees started to create a home in Bayramtepe through making the neighborhood more a familiar place and through building a new community. One way of familiarizing the new environment is through, at least partly, re-shaping their new locality in a manner so that it becomes similar to their former settlement as they recall it. In this sense, their endeavor is to re-create their places in their new environment and they adopt "a new sense of emplacement" (Stewart & Strathern, 2005). In the context of Bayramtepe, the emplacement has

foremost begun with the everyday life activities the refugees carried from their past home. Most of the refugees report that they watch Ronahi TV, a popular Kurdish television channel in Syria, via satellite in order to listen to music and news about the events in Syria, which remind them of their lives before the migration. In fact, daily routines such as watching TV, shopping for food and cooking remind the refugees of their cultural dislocation. Their longings for these mundane experiences, in turn, become catalyzing factors in making the community in Bayramtepe and restoring the past in a particular way.

As in most of the other cases, emplacement through restoring the shopping and cooking habits depends mostly on the refugees' financial possibilities. Currently Bayramtepe neighborhood hosts a couple of markets, which sell Syrian products including thyme, coffee and bread. Nevertheless, according to my informants, the products brought from Syria are highly expensive and they only occasionally buy them. Thereby, the refugees are either capable or incapable of cooking *kubbe lebeni*, *Şam böreği* (a kind pastry from Damascus), and *miluxi* (a local dish cooked in Syria) depending on their capability to buy meat and other ingredients. In Bayramtepe there is one restaurant cooking Syrian fast food and another selling fruit juice in the Aleppine fashion.

With regard to the Syrian food in Bayramtepe, one of the refugees argued that the Turkish state's attitude towards the food the refugees are allowed to pass through the border varies in time. Süleyman (21) narrates that

We had a king of beet in Syria; it is called “*miluxi*” in Arabic. Those who came here earlier used to bring it [*miluxi*] with them. But later on, the soldiers started not to allow them to cross the border with it since they likened the plant to hashish. Now, after much effort, they came to acknowledge that it is a kind of beet. The Turkish government allows it through the border. In fact it is sold here too.

The refugees' belief that the state as an institution is involved in learning about the

food culture in Syria or the fact that this possibly adds new opportunities in the particular locality of the refugees in terms of finding Syrian or Kurdish tastes contributes to the emplacement of Kurdish refugees from Syria.

Home is also a place entailing the production of “social relations” (Massey, 2001). Home making thus occurs by forming a new community in the new environment (Hammond, 2005). Home making grows by developing familiarity, affinities, and networks of solidarity and community. In Bayramtepe Kurdish refugees are making home by constituting a new community and networks mainly through their ethnic identity. However, these new networks based on ethnicity are frequently fraught with conflicts and negotiations. In fact, most of the informants reflect a sense of tension between the Syrian Kurds and those from Turkey while at the same time referring to the solidarity between them. Ironically though, when the refugees talk of either a tension or a unity between the two said groups, the commonly held perception that each is a homogenous group within themselves is corroborated.

The Newroz celebrations illustrate the conflicts and negotiations in the home making process. The celebrations lead to a sense of belonging to a particular locality such as Bayramtepe or Istanbul, a loyalty that is inspired through historical narratives, myths and rituals about the origins of the refugees (Lovell, 1998). Newroz, while giving the opportunity for the refugees to engage with the Turkey Kurds, also reveals the presence of a conflict among the Syrian Kurds and those from Turkey. Roza (43) indicates, “When we attend [the Newroz celebrations] they say we should not stop working. They even say ‘You people have come from Syria, escaped from the war. What are you doing in this kind of events?’” Thus, the negative attitudes of the Kurds from Bayramtepe towards the refugees from Syria escalate the discontent of the refugees regarding the Newroz celebrations in Turkey. As stated above, all the informants

agreed that the one in Zeytinburnu (Istanbul) is not as good as the ones they used to celebrate in Syria. When the refugees compare the two cities, Aleppo and Istanbul, the latter's Newroz is deemed neither enthusiastic nor fitting enough for the purpose of taking pride in Kurdish identity. Another informant indicated the diversity among the Turkish Kurds when he met them in the Newroz celebrations in Zeytinburnu:

“Kurds here celebrate Newroz in two separate places as two different groups. One group consists of the supporters of Mesud Barzani, and the other, supporters of Abdullah Öcalan. I personally find such polarization among the Kurds wrong. It is possible to support the PKK without opposing Barzani and vice versa. As a Kurd, I do not only find it wrong but also take care not to be a part of such polarizations. In fact, [Jalal] Talabani was excluded when he was the president of Iraq since he was in a position to represent the Arabs as well. I was fond of Talabani just because he is Kurdish. Thus, I celebrate Newroz not as a part of any clique but more freely by unfurling the flag I want.” (Jiyan, unemployed, 24).

Examining his words on Newroz, it seems that he attributed the diversity among Kurds only to the Turkish Kurds disregarding the existing diversity among the Kurdish refugees from Syria.

Because of their discontent with Newroz celebrations in Zeytinburnu and their nostalgic comparisons between Aleppo and Istanbul regarding the Newroz, some refugees preferred in the last two years to attend the festivals organized by the Kurdish refugees themselves in their own neighborhood. For some time, the Kurdish refugees and some local Kurds gather as a community in order to sing Kurdish songs from the region as one of the informants tells:

We made an independent celebration among our community here [in Bayramtepe] with our own music. In fact, some Turkey Kurds attended our celebration and they really liked it. Ultimately, we know each other's language, we can communicate. Newroz celebrations in Syria were nicer in my opinion. They were rather in a mood of picnic. Here, there were lots of different groups who are not Kurdish and we were not able to communicate with them. (Roni, 22)

Thus, the refugees not only create a new locale in accordance with their own habits and customs from Syria but also introduce these to their new neighbors in Bay-

ramtepe. They build their home both spatially and in terms of making a new community. In Bayramtepe, the fact that the refugees and the majority of other residents in the neighborhood have their ethnic identity common certainly facilitates this process.

The refugees' nostalgic comparisons have their role in this particular instance of home making when they bring the Newroz celebrations to Bayramtepe. As Blunt (2002) argues, nostalgia is extremely significant especially among long-term refugees. The refugees can be said to have reconstructed the past home to come to terms with everyday life during displacement. The refugees make use of nostalgia in a productive way to support a desire for home in the present. Similarly, the discontent with the Newroz celebrations in Istanbul seems to pave the way for the refugees to start celebrating in their own way only after a very short span of time.

The process of community formation continues not only with re-storing the – nostalgic– past home in the present time and space, but also through acquiring novel means to adapt to the new environment in Bayramtepe. Among the informants, politicization is one of the most salient factors for the Kurdish refugees' emplacement process. For example, some Kurdish refugees carved out their own space in Istanbul in the Bayramtepe branch of the HDP, the predominant Kurdish political party in contemporary Turkish politics. Şiyar, a party member in the office, notices that the HDP building in Bayramtepe is an easily distinguishable one due to the mostly Kurdish make-up of Bayramtepe, whereas others in Istanbul tend to be almost hidden because of an ever-present danger of violent attacks against them as a Kurdish party. Thus, the party building has a welcoming structure in its appearance within the locality.

The refugees have varying opinions of HDP or as they call it *Mala Gel*³⁸ in Kurdish, meaning peoples' houses. Some mention HDP's donations of clothes and furniture and the accommodation they had provided, especially when they first arrived in Bayramtepe. A few of the informants point out that they consult *Mala Gel* when they have trouble getting their salaries from their employers and that more often than not this solved their problem. However, there are also instances that challenge the solidarity based on the shared Kurdish identity. During an unstructured conversation with the people in the HDP office, I came upon parents asking for help as their daughter had been kidnapped by a local Kurdish man. In response, the man at the office told him that they were busy with parliamentary elections in Turkey at that moment. The parents had to leave the office that day, their expectations unfulfilled. A few days later, I asked about the incident to Uncle Şiyar in the office, who is known in the neighborhood for his helpfulness towards the refugee Kurds. He told me that he had talked to the kidnapers and that the problem was solved. The different responses that the parents had received on different occasions demonstrate that the refugees' experience with HDP about such matters largely depends on the person present at the office at that particular moment.

Another and presumably a more serious tension between the refugees and the HDP is a political one. HDP members often express their desire for the Syrian Kurds to go to the West Kurdistan for settlement, thus populating the newly established autonomous cantons in Kobane, Jazira and Afrin as well as participating in the Kurdish militia's struggle to secure these entities. An HDP-affiliated Kurdish man from Tur-

³⁸ **The word Mala Gel in reference to the local Kurdish party organizations has been in common use among Turkish Kurds for years. Its meaning as people's house can be interpreted as an indication of the fact that Kurdish people attributed a meaning to these local organizations as public places embracing their presence in the locality as their houses.**

key indicated that the Party is financially supporting the refugees who are willing to go to the Rojava cantons. He referred to the recently declared 'Charter of the Social Contract' in Rojava and the need for people in the cantons. He complained about the young people taking the money to travel to Rojava, but then refusing to go even when they had promised to do so.

Although I am not able to check whether these claims have any truth in them, they nevertheless run parallel to the Kurdish refugees' perceptions of a more general attitude of the inhabitants of Bayramtepe towards the Kurdish refugees. In informal conversations the refugees had with the people of Bayramtepe, the very presence of the refugees in Istanbul was often questioned and they were sometimes blamed for not taking part in the armed struggle in the West Kurdistan. Jiyan, for example, reports that he was treated in a similar fashion in the workplace by a Kurdish colleague of his:

One of the Turkish Kurds accused me very often when I was working with him: "Why did you leave Syria? Why did you escape and not fight?" I, of course, told him that it is not his business and that by any means I decided for everything by my own free will. Then I stopped working and told him the following: "Where are my brothers, mother, father, relatives and friends? Do you have any idea about what I have been through? If you don't, why are you still talking? Why are *you* not in the mountain? I have 5-6 friends in the mountain, in Kandil. Why are you not there?" (Jiyan, 24)

The very presence of the Kurds from Syria, generally in Istanbul, but more particularly in Bayramtepe, is the main source of the tension between Kurdish people from Turkey and Syria. This is evident when considering some of the informants' articulations indicating that this attitude is reiterated in Bayramtepe by the HDP as well. This difference among the two supposedly homogenous groups for some of the informants hampers not only a possible solidarity movement among the Kurds, but also the refugees' community-making process.

HDP is not the only institutional body in Bayramtepe, which have an impact in the refugees' home making process though. In fact, the relationship between the refugees and the public security forces shapes this process as well. Some of the refugees mention that they started interacting with the police in the neighborhood through their ethnic as well as religious identity. Ahmed (24) summarizes their interaction with the police as follows: "All the policemen I have personally come across so far were Kurdish. They are very nice due to this. In fact, they are very supportive. They ask us not to go to hotspots. They want to be helpful." Another refugee recounts that when they asked once again for the money their employers owed them, her brother was attacked by a group of twenty people. Her brother and his friends responded by assaulting the work place and they all were taken into custody by the police. At the station, they were asked whether they were Muslim or not and the police officer let them free when he learned that they were in fact Muslims. Even though not everyone's encounter with the police is favorable, these instances are particularly pertinent for demonstrating the refugees' process of becoming a part of Bayramtepe and whether they feel at home there or not.

In the last analysis, the refugees' experiences of displacement and emplacement go hand in hand in Bayramtepe. They have been experiencing a devastating displacement process through which they had become materially dispossessed, socially disconnected and culturally disrupted. Their uncertain stay in Turkey is on the verge of transforming into a status of protracted refugee in very short time. However, their long and uncertain stay in Bayramtepe has also invoked a need to make a home for themselves in their current environment. Making a home as well as creating a community proceeds mostly through ethnicity in a neighborhood where the majority shares a Kurdish identity. However, sharing the same ethnic identity with the neigh-

bors or people the refugees interact with in general is not straightforwardly conducive towards a smooth political solidarity movement based on Kurdishness. Rather, this process entails the aforementioned negotiations and conflicts which are subject to change for different refugees.

4.1.3. Bayramtepe is yet to be home

Amid the twin process of displacement and emplacement, the informants on the whole confess that they are yet to develop a belonging to Bayramtepe or a desire to stay there. Nevertheless, as the refugees continue living in Bayramtepe, they express that the locality started to become like their neighborhoods in Syria such as Sheikh Maqsood and Ashrafiyah. Although the refugees refer to the contentious relations between ‘themselves’ as Syrian Kurds and the Kurds of Turkey in the community making process, for them the very presence of Kurdish people in Bayramtepe has also a symbolic meaning, which is already evident in their preference to migrate to this neighborhood and not another. They report that the Turkish Kurds are the main reason for their stay in the neighborhood.

Actually, for me, here is slightly similar to Sheikh Maqsood. My friends, comrades are all here. When I go down to Halkalı, I miss here. (Roni, a short-term worker in various sectors, male, 22)

One of the reasons I started to like here is the number of Kurds living here. In fact, it sometimes smells like Sheikh Maqsood. The fact that Kurds live here is a source of relief for us. When I visit other neighborhoods, I feel suffocated. I am not sure but maybe it is about the [lack of] communication. (Sevda, housewife, 50)

As they argue, the Kurdish people in Bayramtepe remind them of their previous neighborhoods. Even if Bayramtepe is not perceived as their home yet, and this is all expected given the very short period of time, the refugees’ narratives regarding Bayramtepe indicate a process of a developing familiarity and an adaptation in the making.

I argue that the location of the neighborhood is another conducive factor that reinforces the refugees' sense of adaptation and familiarity. The fact that Bayramtepe is far away from the city center makes the neighborhood an isolated place. The people visiting the neighborhood come there for a specific purpose and stay there for only a very limited amount of time. Therefore, Bayramtepe stands out as a self-contained neighborhood in which people are relatively inclined to develop more intimate relations. This feature of Bayramtepe plays a role in the refugees' adaptation to the neighborhood and the Bayramtepe community. As Firat (40) states:

I can say that I got used to here a little. I even sometimes see it as my own town. This is not my homeland, but I know everyone here. We got used to each other because I have been here for three years. Here I can go out whenever I want. I can be with my family until 12 or 1 at midnight. If I leave Bayramtepe I would like to go somewhere more convenient, somewhere offering better life conditions. I mean the factors, which could make me think of leaving this place, are life standards, job opportunities, rents, and so on. ... The rents are very high in places like Aksaray. Similarly in Okmeydanı they are about 700 TL. So living here does not make much sense. (Firat, 40)

According to the refugees' narrations, Güvercintepe Park at the center of the neighborhood is their meeting as well as main recreation center. They enjoy sitting on the benches in the park with their families, especially on Sundays and in the evenings. Also, a few refugees focus on the neighborhood's inexpensiveness and its convenience for commuting to their workplaces.

On the other side, the houses that I had the chance to visit in order to conduct the interviews may reflect the refugees' intentions for their temporary stay in Bayramtepe. The gecekondus were vast, but very empty inside. There were only their mattresses or rollaway beds in which they sleep, or ground cushions which are transformable to beds at night. Almost all the houses had television and refrigerator. The walls were empty in the houses. This emptiness of the houses is probably related to the fact that the refugees could not have attained enough materiality yet in Bay-

ramtepe that enabled them to design their houses or they did not want to deal with their houses since they believe that they will leave the neighborhood soon. It was significant that this empty view of the houses' interior was persistent among all the women refugees' houses despite the fact that four of them had a relatively lower socio-economic status in Syria.

Even though Bayramtepe is yet to be home for the Kurdish refugees as most of my informants confess, an affinity to the neighborhood is nevertheless developing as this section tried to demonstrate. However their experiences of displacement, conflicts in the community making processes and their perceptions of discrimination by the implementation of the legal framework, which will be discussed in the next section, are serious factors strengthening their lack of attachment to Bayramtepe. In their persistence, Bayramtepe seems to be bound to stay yet to be home for the refugees.

4.2. The Kurdish Refugees' Home through the Implementation of the Regulation in Bayramtepe

As discussed in the previous chapter, under the Temporary Protection Regulation, the refugees from Syria have gained recognition and some rights such as access to education and health and employment. Nevertheless, the refugees' individual decisions, their ethnic identity and the locality in which the Regulation is implemented directly affect the implementation process. This section will discuss how these factors affect the implementation of the Regulation in the eyes of the refugees. By doing so, it aims at shedding light on the Kurdish refugees' home making process by focusing on the moments where refugees actively respond to the Regulation and its inherent self-perceived discrimination against them. Home making is shaped in relation to the refugees' experiences a) of the way the state implements the regulation in Bayramtepe and b) of their own responses to the law. These two factors largely shape the refu-

gees' present feeling of belonging to Bayramtepe, Aleppo or somewhere else for that matter.

Before delving into the discussion on the Kurdish refugees' narratives about their access to some fundamental rights, it is important to note two points. First is the incident where three men among the informants did not prefer to get the Foreigners Identification Card, since they did not want to be identified by the state authorities due to security reasons or lacking the necessity to have the Identification Card. Two of these informants were at the ages of twenties; one of them claimed that he fought for PKK (Kurdistan Worker's Party) in Syria before migrating to Bayramtepe; therefore, he was afraid of being identified by the Assad regime or any Turkish state institutions. He showed a stronger attachment to Kurdish identity in comparison to many other informants which may be a reason or a consequence of his involvement in the armed struggle with the PKK. The other young man argued that he has not needed the card so far and believed that he will not need it hereafter. The other informant lacking the identification card also expressed the tense moments he experienced with the opposition in Syria before migrating to Turkey and felt hesitant towards the card that is imposed by the Turkish state. He gave an impression that he does not trust the Turkish government. In choosing not to get their Foreigner Identification Card, these refugees opted out of their own free will not to be identified by the state in the expense of giving up certain fundamental rights and services granted for the refugees.

Not having the identification card has some implications on these three men's notion of home. On one hand, preferring not to enjoy some fundamental rights provided by the state may indicate that the refugees think that their stay in Bayramtepe is only for a temporary period of time. Interestingly, none of these refugees have any alternative place in their minds to migrate at the time that the civil conflict continues.

They plan to stay in Bayramtepe similar to most of the other informants who claim that they plan to do so. The two refugees who were involved in the conflicts voluntarily or involuntarily, represented a stronger attachment to their Kurdish identity which may be one of reason for their expression of their willingness to stay in a Kurdish neighborhood. On the other hand, lacking these cards may result in relatively less feeling of belonging to Bayramtepe in the near future in comparison to other informants. A second remark is that the narratives of the refugees about the difficulties they encounter in receiving the services is illuminating as factor that amplifies their sense of being discriminated against and of being a ‘foreign’ even though this self-perception does not necessarily entail that Turkish citizens are served in better conditions by these services.

4.2.1. Healthcare services

In Bayramtepe the refugees usually prefer visiting the Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Hospital, the closest and the biggest state hospital in the district, in times of medical need. The refugees’ experiences and perceptions of the treatment they had received are polarized among the informants. On the one side, there are refugees, only four among fifteen,³⁹ who were generally satisfied with the treatment they had received despite their complains about the high medication prices, constant changes in the procedures, and the language barrier while communicating. On the other hand, the rest of the refugees stated that either they had not been taken care of at all or the treatment they received did not help their sicknesses. This discrepancy between refugees’ experiences could be explained by the inadequate amount of equipment and staff, as several

³⁹ One of the informants neither had the card nor any acquaintance that used healthcare services.

reports argue⁴⁰, or by the varying attitudes of different doctors in the hospital. According to the informants, except for one woman, none of them paid any fee at the hospitals or in community clinics.

Roza, as a pregnant woman, refers to the changes in the healthcare procedures, which make using the service highly difficult for them. As the informant recount, among the most important pre-requisites are the identity card, the new decision on refugees' referral to other hospitals in secondary and tertiary health care,⁴¹ and finally the presence of a guarantor:

First they asked me to get the identity card. Later on, even though we got the card, we still could not get the health service. For instance, I am pregnant and have lots of pain, but I still can't get the service. Last time I went, they did not do any examination and dispatched me to another hospital. We don't know our way around here. Another time I have been to the hospital, they told me to come with my landlord next time. And in some other community clinics, it is the language barrier that prevents us to get the service. We need to take the Turkish Kurds with us (Roza, woman tailor in a factory, 29).

First of all, most of the refugees believe that their access to healthcare services is laden with constant changes about the procedures to get the service. The refugees' narratives imply that they learn their rights and restrictions anew each time when they or somebody they know visit the healthcare centers. The fact that the refugees have problems following all the procedural and regulatory changes would not be helpful

⁴⁰ See; Mazlumder, 2013. *İstanbul Örneği Üzerinden Türkiye'de Suriyeli Mülteciler Raporu*. Accessed through: http://istanbul.mazlumder.org/webimage/suriyeli_multeciler_raporu_2013.pdf Bezmialem Vakıf Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi Halk Sağlığı Anabilim Dalı. (2015). *İstanbul'da Yaşayan Geçici Koruma Altındaki Suriyeliler*. Accessed through:

<http://halksagligi.bezmialem.edu.tr/dosyalar/siginmaci-raporu.pdf>; Türk Tabipler Birliği (2014) *Suriyeli Sığınmacılar ve Sağlık Hizmetleri Raporu*. Accessed through: <http://www.ttb.org.tr/kutuphane/siginmacirpr.pdf>

⁴¹ Under the regulation, the patient contribution fee is not collected for primary and emergency health services or for the respective treatment and medication. Secondary and tertiary health care is provided if the treatment falls within the Health Implementation Directive [SUT]. To access secondary or tertiary health care, a referral is needed from the State Medical Hospital; UNHCR (2015) *Türkiye'deki Suriyeli Mülteciler: Sık Sorulan Sorular*. Accessed through:

http://www.unhcr.org.tr/uploads/root/sik_sorulan_sorular.pdf

for cultivating an especially trustworthy sense of home although this is not a *sine qua non* for building a sense of belonging in general as discussed in my literature review.

A second barrier in health care-services for the Kurdish refugees, as Roza conveys, is the language. The refugees have overcome this problem with the help of the ethnically Kurdish citizens of the vicinity. Hence, the ethnic identity of the refugees once again becomes vital in community-making process in Bayramtepe as the Kurdish refugees interact with the Turkish Kurds in order to solve their problems in using social services. The help of the Kurds of Bayramtepe is a consolidating factor for the solidarity between the locals and the refugees, as Kurdish refugees feel grateful for their helps. When the refugees go to the health center, they either take a Kurdish person with them or ask for help from a Kurdish person there since it is highly likely to come across with someone speaking Kurdish in a neighborhood hosting a number of internally migrated Kurdish people. In another incident, one of my informants mentioned that her brother got married with a Kurdish woman from Turkey, so now, she was able to find someone to accompany her and to facilitate their communication at the hospital. Hence, the language problem in healthcare services leads the refugees to interact and develop an instrumental relationship with the Turkish Kurds.

Lastly, some of the refugees state that they do not receive a proper treatment even when they fulfill the conditions for the service and find someone to overcome the language barrier. Most of the refugees report that healthcare staffs are more often than not indifferent and careless towards the refugees. Haşem and Mazlum's experiences are illuminating about the poor level of treatment:

Going to the hospital is a real torture for us. Earlier, they asked us to get identity cards in order to benefit from health services. Therefore, almost all the Syrians here got identity cards. So did we, but we could not get any service. At one stage they wanted us to bring someone who can be our

guarantor, such as our landlords. Of course neither our landlord nor anyone else wants to be our guarantor. I once became severely ill and I was taken to the emergency room. They have tried to treat me for an hour, and then I was discharged. (Haşem, unemployed, 48)

I have been to hospital due to my father's sickness. At that time my father was really sick, I took him to the emergency room. But they did not take care [of my father], they asked for an ID. Then I got angry. I said, 'Okay, you start the treatment, I will go and bring the ID'. Hospital staff did not accept what I proposed. My father waited there, they did not treat him. I quickly went home, grabbed the ID and returned [to the hospital]. When I was back my father was still in the hospital garden. After I brought the ID they gave an injection and sent us back. (Mazlum, tailor, 22)

The inadequacies of healthcare services may not be exclusively for the refugees; Turkish citizens are not necessarily given better conditions in health-care centers. **Turkish citizens are not without these problems either. Lack of treatment at the hospitals, the attitudes of the doctors towards patients and their company, high expenses of medication and communication problems with regard to Kurdish-speaking patients are several issues that Turkish citizens complain about the health-care services and they are strictly in line with the refugees' articulations.** Nevertheless, they evidently perceive the way they were treated in hospitals as discriminatory and alienating. The narratives of the Kurdish refugees living in Bayramtepe regarding healthcare services indicate that their experiences in receiving healthcare services is one of the reasons for them to feel like "temporary" or in the words of Beriwan (40), "provisional" [literally 'as if entrusted to someone']. These grievances of the refugees about the healthcare services lead some of the Kurdish refugees to choose not to go to any health center even when they are sick. Whereas the reluctance for going to hospital is a result of their felt alienation or of being "provisional", the instrumental relationship they build with the Turkish Kurds is a minor but significant factor in their community formation, which can be regarded as a harbinger of attachment to Bayramtepe for the refugees.

4.2.2. Education

Suriye Can Okulları (The Syrian Can Schools) is a private primary school, with its four branches in Bayramtepe, Okmeydanı, Nusaybin (in Mardin), and Batman. Using Arabic as the language of instruction, the schools are founded by a Syrian-Kurdish humanitarian aid organization, Suriye Can Derneği (Syria Can Association). Even though the private school in Bayramtepe, along with others founded by Syrian refugees elsewhere, had not been approved by the Ministry of Education in Turkey as of my fieldwork, they nevertheless continue to operate.⁴² The schoolmaster of the Bayramtepe branch is himself a Kurdish man from Syria. The informants and the founder of one of the two humanitarian aid organizations in the neighborhood state that another private school, supported by a faith-based humanitarian organization, was soon to be opened.

Among the informants I talked to, only a few families had sent their children to school. Among those who sent their children, the private Can Schools was preferred over others. Nevertheless, all the informants expressed their difficulty in continuing sending their children to school due to the high expenses it demanded. Only one of the informants told that he would continue sending her child since she was offered a scholarship due to the fact that her father was martyred in a bomb explosion before coming to Turkey.

The Kurdish refugees' experiences in education also lead them to feel alienated and as outsiders within the current structure of the state services. Most of the refugees are not aware of their rights to send their children to public schools for free and they

⁴² During my talks with the school administration I was unable to clearly specify their way of sustenance and their status on paper and in practice. However an interview conducted with one of the organization members indicates that UNICEF had recently supported their branch in Batman by paying the salary of the teachers. For a brief discussion of these schools, see Uluslararası Af Örgütü (2014) *Hayatta Kalma Mücadelesi: Türkiye'deki Suriye'den Gelen Mülteciler*.

only know the private Can Schools. The refugees complain at length about the high costs, which hinder families to send their children to school. Similarly, the only informant, who expressed his desire to continue his university education, did not know about his rights to attend public universities. He recounted that one day he visited a private university close to the neighborhood to learn about the process, but that he gave up his attempt as he was asked to pay three thousand liras per year as tuition.

A few of the informants who actually did send their children to public schools however stated other concerns which lead them to drop the whole idea. One complained that the education in Turkish was not helpful for her kids whereas the other said the following:

I had sent my daughter to a Turkish school for one month. Then, I recognized that she came to a point where she couldn't speak her own language and started forgetting Kurdish. She was even unable to speak Arabic for some time. So I stopped sending her to school. Here, there is a school called Can Schools opened by Syrians. Now she goes to that school. Even though there is no education in Kurdish there, it is better than forgetting her own language and Arabic (Rojin, housewife, 42).

The refugee evidently chooses to preserve their mother tongue as part of their cultural identity and to transmit it to their children in context of Bayramtepe. Just as in the case of not choosing to receive healthcare as mentioned in the previous section, the refugee's reaction to the implementation of educational regulations reflect their preference not to benefit from these rights. Although the legal framework dictates that the refugee children are allowed to attend public schools free of charge, none of the informants chose to send their children to these schools where the language of instruction is Turkish. The only possibility for free education offered to the refugees may ironically even lead to a firmer commitment to their ethnic identity since they perceive the Turkish education as a threat to the survival of their ethno-cultural markers. The fact that the refugees do not prefer sending their children to the Turkish schools

indicates that the refugees sought ways to protect their ethnic and cultural identity even during the emplacement process. Thus, their reaction to the implementation of education services shows the limitations of the refugees' willingness to make their place in the given context. As such, education appears to be disrupting the refugees' emplacement process.

Apart from the negative attitude towards the offered public education service by the state, the financial as well as the emotional hardships of the displacement also play a role in forming their ideas about public education for refugees. First, the refugees' perception of education and school in the state of exile is not the same as that in Syria. Because of their material dispossession and further financial challenges in Turkey, education for the refugees has ceased to be a must for the future of younger generations. Currently, if a person is "old enough to work", education becomes a matter of choice. In this context, going to school becomes even more of a burden than it used to be in Syria since earning money and contributing to the family budget is a necessity for the Kurdish refugees in Bayramtepe. It was not unusual to come upon informants whose children used to go to high school in Syria, but dropped out when they came here and instead started working. Education has become a burden not only for the parents, but also for the children as it creates dilemmas with regard to their responsibility for their family. These thoughts were prevalent among all the informants who had slight but evident differences in terms of socio-economic status.

Secondly, the education in exile also leads disillusionment on the refugees' part about their children's prospective education life. Some refugees report that their hopes of upward mobility for their children are lost as now they are unable to get proper education. Zozan (38), who comes from an underprivileged family who nonetheless had started to alleviate her situation just before coming to Turkey, states that

she used to have dreams about her children: “I wish my children could be a doctor or a lawyer, but right now, they are estranged from school. I feel so sorry.” Such nostalgic feelings for their past dreams render their past home an ideal place for education while at the same time increasing their dissatisfaction with their lives in Bayramtepe.

4.2.3. Employment

Working conditions as dictated by the implementation of the Regulations in a specific context such as Bayramtepe is another important area to venture. The refugees I have talked to in Bayramtepe, if working, are employed in textile workshops, construction sector and temporary jobs such as portaging, wood chopping and constructing. The refugees with full-time jobs work in İkitelli and Bayramtepe. There are different means for refugees to find jobs. Most of the informants use their family networks, friends and acquaintances from Syria. Some other refugees find jobs through strolling around the workshops and factories so that they can see job postings. There are also other ways to find job. A young man tells me, “Sometimes the Kurds [from Turkey] come here, to the Park [located at the center of the neighborhood], looking for workers. They say there are jobs in Taksim and Aksaray. I found my job like that. I make gypsum or carry cement,” (Azad, 24). Yet, overall the employers of the refugees were not always Kurdish; there were also Turkish employers.

Since the law concerning the refugees’ work permit has not been enacted yet, the refugees in Bayramtepe as well as those in other districts or cities are working informally. Their informal status certainly affects the working conditions and wages, with which the employed refugees are strongly discontent. All of the employed informants complain at length about how long they have to work (as reported, about 12-14 hours) and how ‘quick’ they have to be in their long shifts. Although their working conditions are usually the same with the workers with Turkish citizenship, the in-

formants complain that they are compensated by half of the amount others with Turkish citizenship earn.⁴³ It is hard to firmly establish the specific causes for the refugees' disadvantageous situation as the lack of work permit or their identity as a refugee and/or a foreign, given that informal working conditions are not exclusive for Kurdish refugees, but are also applicable to many Turkish citizen workers. Yet the refugees connect their condition in the job market to their refugee status and express their dissatisfaction with the perceived discriminatory attitude towards them in workplaces.

Because of the informal nature of their work, their wages are paid in an arbitrary manner: The refugees report that the time and the way the workers are going to receive their salaries depend on the employer. Ahmed's experiences reflect the refugees' lives at work:

Once I was working in a plastic factory. I cannot say it was a good working environment. I can say that I had difficulties in general because of the manufactured goods. The factory was too hot; our work was exhausting. Despite all these, the thing that most bothered me was that I did not receive my salary regularly in any workplace up to now. Most of the bosses seized my money. When I did not receive my salary I applied to *Mala Gel* [HDP] organization. Through them I could claim my money from some of the places yet I could not take my money from some others. In fact, one owes me 850 Turkish Lira. It has been a year but I could not receive the sum yet. My boss changed his phone number after I quit and I was not able to reach him up to now. After I reported my complaint to *Mala Gel*, they directed me to Esenyurt branch. Fellows there called the person, who had refused to pay. After they stepped in, my boss called me and told me he could give only a part of the whole amount. Again a person, for whom I have worked for one and a half month, did not give the money he owed me. I had 1700 Turkish Lira to claim. He gave me 600 Turkish Lira and ran away with the rest of the money. He, too, deactivated his phone number and I could not reach him after that. (Ahmed, barber, 44)

The refugees' distaste with the working conditions and wages are the main factors that drive them to a sense of nostalgia for their lives in Syria. All of the working refugees emphasized that the working conditions in Bayramtepe are not at all similar

⁴³ I do not have the data to confirm whether the refugees earn less than a Turkish citizenship for the same amount of working hours. However this is probably the case.

to Aleppo. All the refugees agree on the point that the same job, for example tailoring in textile workshop, needed less amount of labor per day and paid less money in return, yet even then they were still able to make a living. The informants' comparison between Aleppo and Istanbul may not be solely nostalgic. As stated before, these two cities are qualitatively different in various aspects among which the different job market conditions stand out for the current discussion. Since the refugees comes from a country in which the neoliberal economy has not been as powerfully consolidated as Turkey for example, the working-class subjectivity in Syria under the rule of a nationalist-statist party might be different from the realities of the Turkish market. Robin and Haşem indicate my points vividly:

Of course there are differences between Syria and here in terms of working conditions. Although the weekly holiday is 2 days here, we used to have shorter shifts within a workday and when we worked for 3 days everyone was able to earn a living for the household for a week. When I was working with my uncle's son, we were working for 3 days, making 300-400 Turkish Lira and going back home to enjoy ourselves. Here the work is too intense. Wherever we worked in, they kept repeating 'Quick, quick, quick'. We have never seen such working conditions such as those in Turkey. It is very difficult. ... Sometimes we work from 8 in the morning till 10 in the evening. I have never seen anything like this. They do not want us to talk to anyone while working. We cannot smoke, talk on the phone or have rest. (Robin, textile worker, 22)

I work as a tailor here. I was a tailor in Syria as well. Tailoring is different in Turkey than it is in Syria. Both as an occupation and in terms of working conditions, it is different here and there to the extent that it is beyond compare. First of all, we were very comfortable there [in Syria]. Bosses were not yelling 'Quick' or 'Hurry up' all the time. After all, it is the same job, but we were much more comfortable in Syria. We used to do our own jobs and receive our payments on a weekly basis. Here, you start working at 8 in the morning. You are scolded at even if you were to be late by 5 minutes. The wages are not quite enough. In fact, on top of it, we are paid less than the promised weekly wage. (Haşem, textile worker, 38)

The refugees' jobs, working conditions or wages may or may not be better in Aleppo; in other words, their memory of Aleppo may not be based on an imaginary. Yet, the perception of a higher level of exploitation in Istanbul creates a longing for Aleppo

that poses their lives in Aleppo in a position better than it really was.

The refugees' comparison between the working conditions in Syria and Turkey lead them to feel and become aware of the exploitation even more. Accordingly, the refugees may be looking for different strategies to deal with the mechanisms of exploitation in the neo-liberal system in Turkey. As one of the informants says: "The conditions are inhumane here. Let me tell this frankly: Here a lot of Turks have become rich, grown their businesses thanks to our labor, Syrians' labor" (Ciwan). Some refugees indicate that they would like to be self-employed with a small-scale business, instead of becoming a wage earner. They consider renting their own place to open some stores or restaurants. A young male informant expresses his goal for opening a restaurant; "For example I wanted to open a billiard room and a cocktail cafe. In fact I determined the place, but they said that 'Syrians are dirty' and did not rent the place to me". Thus, even when the refugees want to carry out their businesses they encounter with discriminatory acts. Although establishing a business could be a step further towards making their places, the negative attitudes that the refugees receive alienate them from Istanbul.

Consequently, the Temporary Protection Regulation plays a significant role in the lives of Kurdish refugees from Syria at the present time. The implementations and especially the perception of the refugees in these processes largely determine whether the refugees develop a sense of belonging to their current environment in Bayramtepe. My observations based on their perception of healthcare, education services as well as their working conditions suggest that the refugees do not feel comfortable, accordingly, at home in Turkey. In many instances, the way the state implements the legal framework and the refugees' preference to avoid using the services granted for them for various reasons intertwine. These two factors eventually create a discontent

among the refugees with their current situation in Istanbul.

4.3. Future Imaginaries of Home

In order to make a complete sense of the refugees' notions of home at the present moment, an understanding of their imaginaries regarding their future homes is needed. Since the future home imaginary is inter-related to past and present homes, it can only be explored with the guidance of past and present experiences. The future home imaginaries may refer to different localities for various reasons which are shaped by a multitude of factors including refugees' individual and collective memories, ethnic identity, and constraints and opportunities peculiar to the localities. This section will reveal the complexity of these different localities for the future home images in minds.

Homeland constitutes one of the future home images of the refugees. Homeland is a nationalistic concept which refers to a collectively imagined territory. In the world of nation-states, this territory is usually overlapped with the borders of a specific nation-state. In this sense, as refugees from a stateless nation, the way Kurdish refugees define homeland and the images that they associate with a homeland are particularly interesting. For example, some of the refugees defined the homeland as the territory populated mostly by Kurds instead of Arabs or a territory where the PKK is active. For Bahar (41), "what determines the homeland and the place I will go in the future is the existence of the Kurds; whether Kurds live there or not. If there are Kurds, I will be there also". Accordingly, the location of the territory does not matter for some of the refugees; the homeland was more associated with the dominance of Kurdish ethnic identity in that place. Bahar's remarks also indicate that belonging to a particular "imagined community" whose members agree that they have a common origin does not need an agreement on where this territory is when it comes to a "state-

less nation”.

Although the Kurdish refugees from Syria does not have a specific territory which is shared by all the fellow nationals, the refugees concur on that having a homeland is associated with obtaining the basic rights and liberties. Peteet (2005) powerfully shows that for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Palestine symbolizes their “longing for security of place and the rights entailed in being a citizen” (p. 216) rather than their nostalgic reflections about a distant place and past. Similarly, in the context of Bayramtepe, the refugees refer to West Kurdistan as their homeland where they can secure full and equal citizenship rights. For instance, a few women informants who did not hold citizenship in Syria emphasize their willingness to migrate to West Kurdistan since they want recognition in their imagined homeland. Sevda (43) expresses her desire for a Kurdish homeland: “Today the Kurds are fighting for their homeland, for their own honor and pride. I am a Kurd too. I do not have an identity because I am Kurdish. Since I do not have an identity, I am almost non-existent. If I had a homeland, I could have everything, I could have an identity”. This remark indicates that the informant consider only in a future homeland of the Kurds they could enjoy full citizenship rights. Thus, the refugees demonstrated their willingness to reach their rights through living in their imagined homeland. They often refer to West Kurdistan instead of Aleppo as their homeland even though they report that they do not have any belongings in Afrin or other Kurdistan territories and that they own houses in Aleppo.

Another factor that plays a compelling role in the refugees’ homeland imaginaries is their individual and collective memories constructing the nation and the “imagined community”. Homeland is not only imagined exclusively through Kurdish ethnic identity. The memories of the refugees formed in Syria also create an identity

that shapes their homeland image. In other words, homeland images are not directly based on the Kurdish identity; rather they are shaped within the boundaries of Syrian nation-state. Thus, the ethnic identity does not always determine the image of homeland. Sometimes, the homeland in the refugees' mind determines their identity. Nora's (1989) *lieux de memoires* is an illuminating concept to understand the dynamics of the identity making process as well as homeland images of Kurdish refugees from Syria. *Lieux de memoires* is the embodiment of memory in certain sites where a sense of historical continuity persists. For the Kurdish refugees, the Qamishli revolt fulfills a similar function and creates a sense of common origin and common fate among the Syrian Kurds. The Qamishli revolt started in March 2004 with the eruption of violent uprisings in the Northern Syria's Kurdish enclaves and the Kurdish quarters of Aleppo and Damascus.

The revolt harbingered the emergence of Kurdish antiestablishment protests on the Syrian political scene. Almost all the informants personally involved in the events and they reflect their memories of Qamishli at great length. For example, one informant is particularly proud that he initiated the protests in his own neighborhood during the Qamishli revolt. For most of the refugees Qamishli signifies the beginning of a new era for the Kurdish populations of Syria. In contrast, the refugees know very little about the experiences of Kurdish population in Turkey. For example, only a few of the informants tell me they heard about Roboski massacre in 2011. Thus, their political consciousness, national sentiments, and hence homeland imaginaries are mostly shaped within the boundaries of the nation-state in which they live in. Certainly, the communication channels and the media coverage in Turkey and in Syria have an important role in the formation of an imagined community and imaginaries of homeland.

Lastly, the homeland images of the refugees cannot be thought independent from the current developments in the north of Syria⁴⁴ and the Iraqi Kurdistan. From the refugees' viewpoint, the presence of the Kurdish autonomous formation with its three cantons; Jazira, Afrîn and Kobane evokes a realistic hope for a future homeland. Besides, Iraqi Kurdistan is considered as an example of what they imagine as a homeland. For instance, Azad (48) states that "when we look at Iraq for example, people living in Kurdistan region do their military service for themselves. Their military is independent from Iraq. I want a similar system to be established for Rojava. We can pay the taxes to our own administration in a similar way [to Iraqi Kurdistan]. I would personally like this. I hope one day Syrian Kurds and Turkish Kurds build their own states". Thus, an independent Kurdish political entity appears as some of the refugees' future home projection. This imaginary is again related to both their nationalistic sentiments and their quest for equal rights of citizenship. On the other hand, it is important to notice that their ideal of having an independent or autonomous polity is mostly restricted to the boundaries of the existing states they have been living.

Although the refugees do not actively participate in political or military struggle to achieve their homeland ideal, the refugees take symbolic actions for their imagined future home. For Castoriadis (1997), the imagination endows individuals with power and creativity to shape the real world and as such it is not just a projection of an ideal. Similarly, Ernest Bloch, in *The Principle of Hope* (1986), reminds that day-dreams have the potential to raise consciousness for future ideals. Hence, the refugees' imagination of a future home and their hope to reach it empower them, motivate their action and create solidarities. This mechanism is especially useful in explaining

⁴⁴ As mentioned in the Introduction chapter, at the beginning of 2014 the three Kurdish cantons declared their autonomy. Subsequently, the constitution of the new autonomous administration was publicized in the name "Social Contract".

http://www.radikal.com.tr/dunya/kurtler_bugun_rojavada_ozerklik_ilan_ediyor-1171840
<http://www.kurdishinstitute.be/charter-of-the-social-contract/>

the Kurdish refugees' choice of place for burying their funerals. The informants I talked to express their desire to send their funerals back to Afrin located in West Kurdistan since it is the place where they will go back one day eventually. The ones who cannot afford to send their funeral to Syria have no choice but to bury their deceased in the cemetery of the nameless⁴⁵ in Habibler district. In fact, those who buried their funerals in Habibler also asserted that they got the permission of the municipality to take their funerals to Afrin when the war ends. Their hope and practices in pursuit of it is a symbol of the fact that their home is actually Afrin, but not Bayramtepe.

In fact, the Kurds attribute an important meaning to their deceased and treat them with great respect and loyalty. Özsoy (2012) emphasizes the significance of funeral rituals for the Kurdish refugees. Accordingly, the Kurds would like to bury their dead in accordance with their traditions and faith. Moreover, in the traditional Kurdish culture, leaving the dead unburied is a huge embarrassment and dishonor. Those who did not bury their dead properly and fulfill their last duties for their dead are not recognized by the society. Thus, burying the deceased in Istanbul is a *"huge sorrowful and mournful situation"* (Roni, 48) for the refugees since it is significant ritual for Kurdish people to visit the graveyards in Friday prays, or religious days. The informants narrate that their late relatives' declare that their will is to go back to Afrin when they die. One of the informants mentions that her mother went back to Syria when she was sick since she did not want to be buried in Istanbul.

More specifically, Ciwan expresses his disappointment with the funeral of his uncle's wife as follows:

My uncle's wife passed away here, they used to live in Aksaray. The municipality helped in the burying procedures, they washed the deceased and

⁴⁵ The lates are not actually nameless or destitute.

buried him to Habipler Kimsesizler Mezarlığı [the Habibler Cemetery of Nameless]. Actually we wanted to send our funeral to Afrin but it was not possible. Back then the border gate was closed due to the war, and it is not possible to cross a funeral in another way. Also, the municipality provided us with a funeral coach but they allowed only one person to be with the funeral. But it was not possible to carry the funeral and cross the border with only one person. At least 15 people are needed to carry the funeral since our village is at four hours of walking distance from the border.

Some of the children of my uncle's wife who has just passed away are here; two or three of them live in Switzerland. We talked about this issue among us earlier. We talked about what we can do if the war ends and the Kurds turn back to Syria. Their overall tendency is to take the funeral to Syria when the war ends; because there is no meaning to keep the funeral if we are not living here. We visited cemeteries and pray for our lates on holidays and religious days.... If we can get the help of the municipality, we will bury her in her village as soon as the war ends. (Ciwan, 38).

The struggle of the refugees to bury their lates in Afrin indicates their faith in the future for repatriating to the homeland in West Kurdistan, rather than Aleppo, Syria. Their desire to bury their deceased in Afrin also indicates that the meeting point of their dispersed network may not be Istanbul, Aleppo or another place but it can always be West Kurdistan. Thus, they think that wherever they may be at the moment the attachment to West Kurdistan is common for all the Kurdish refugees from Syria. In short, my observations suggest that the refugees collectively imagine West Kurdistan as their place of origin which qualifies the region for them as their homeland. Their hope to achieve their homeland leads them to take an active action for their imagined future through funeral rituals.

Homeland is not the only notion in future home imaginaries of the Kurdish refugees. Feeling at home or familiarizing an environment sometimes has closer connections with the possibility of enjoying basic rights and liberties than living in a place which is imagined as a homeland. In this sense, migrating to Europe where the refugees think they could secure greater rights and "*feel that they are human beings*" (Mahmud, 63) is a considerable alternative for some refugees. They would like to migrate especially to European cities where there is already a major Kurdish Diaspo-

ra, while the civil conflict continues. The fact that they consider migrating to Europe as a place where they can enjoy greater rights may reflect the refugees' need for a "utopia" given their experience of displacement. Thus, the hope of migration can also be a reaction to the refugees' perception of their current situation as a state of desperation (Pine, 2014). In this sense, European cities are considered as a symbol of hope for a better place where they could feel at home.

Moreover, the future home is not only related to rights, identity or memory. The refugees take into account various factors such as the opportunities and constraints of the locality and the refugees' material concerns when thinking about a future home. Namely, the very fact that some informants miss their lives in Aleppo since they were born, grown up and built their network in this city makes Aleppo a second home for them. Aleppo is a large city with a lot of economic and social opportunities, whereas Afrin is a small town offering only a few jobs. For example, Mohammed says:

Even if we stay away for 15-20 years, it [Afrin] is our final place to come back. But, still I may go back to Aleppo because of employment and working conditions. Because I don't have a house in Afrin and employment and working conditions are very limited there. For instance, I am a tailor and I can't work as a tailor in Afrin. I am also a truck driver as my second job and I can't do that in Afrin either. Those maybe the reasons for me to go back to Aleppo, but my homeland, my ancestor's land is Afrin. (Mohammed, 38)

As Mohammed illustrates, the home imaginaries can contradict to each other in terms of their locality. Although Afrin is considered to be the homeland, Aleppo appears as a better alternative to make a living with the relative ease of life.

4.4. Conclusion

In this chapter I aimed to look at the topic from the perspective of the Kurdish refugees' from their home-making process while witnessing their grievances of dis-

placement in exile. The refugees' comparisons between their past and present homes were the predominant determinants which have been shaping this process. The refugees create many moments for adaptation to their new neighborhood both individually and collectively through daily practices and ritual performances. They started to form new community relations with the Kurds in the neighborhood, both contentiously and in solidarity. Second, I observed that some refugees do not simply conform the rules and regulations envisaged by the state for the refugees to be eligible to the state-provided services. For some refugees, it is a matter of choice to get registered and receive the Foreigners' Identification Card in order to use public services. Their strategies certainly have implications for their integration process in Turkey, and harbinger of possible changes in the legal framework concerning the mass refugee movement from Syria. Also, the refugees reflect their strategies of home making for their future homes while they are living in Bayramtepe by burying their funerals to West Kurdistan or trying to find ways to go to Europe.

As the home concept has a dynamic feature, the refugees' notion of home is subjected to change in different time and space. As the refugees build better networks with the Turkish Kurds in Bayramtepe, their views on present home notions including past, present and future homes (and homeland) may change. Namely, these stronger networks can lead to the refugees to imagine a mutual homeland territory with the Turkish Kurds. Unfortunately, this study can only cover the Kurdish refugees' notion of home only within the time period I conducted the fieldwork in Bayramtepe.

With this chapter, I conclude my discussion regarding how home is shaped within Bayramtepe locality in consideration of the Kurdish refugees' ethnic identity. In the next and final chapter, I will review my findings and offer new ways to carry this research to a further point.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

As I spent some time in Bayramtepe before my field research and have the opportunity to talk with the Kurdish refugees, I recognized that home is a central, and yet complicated notion for the refugees given that they experienced a forced migration. The significance of home for the refugees is rooted in the refugees' experiences of displacement and their desire to achieve or restore their past home. Considering the fact that Kurds are a stateless nation due to which they have endured many occasions of oppressions in different territories adds another dimension to the issue. The Kurdish refugees' present notion of home in exile also involves a possible imagined homeland they have never experienced.

In this thesis I have analyzed the Kurdish refugees' present notion of home by mostly focusing on their ethnic identity and Bayramtepe locality as well as considering their past, present and future home images. For this purpose, on one side, I scrutinized the Temporary Protection Regulation, which has been enacted in consideration of the refugees from Syria, in order to analyze the state's perspective on the refugees' current status in Turkey. The state's view on the refugees is intertwined with the refugees' daily life experiences and home-making processes in the duration of their stay in Bayramtepe. My findings suggest that the ways the refugees perceive the practices of the state concerning their stay in Turkey lead them to feel "provisional" (*emanet*, as they often emphasize) and alienated. The refugees clearly do not feel any belonging to Turkey based on the services provided by the state including employment, healthcare and education. **On the other side, this study has offered a discussion of the way the Kurdish refugees actively make a space for themselves while living in Bayramtepe.**

Based on the findings of literature on home and the findings of my fieldwork, my analysis reveals that the Kurdish refugees' are not merely experiencing rigors of forced and protracted displacement. Kurdish refugees in Bayramtepe have started to make their home along the last three years spent in the neighborhood. The refugees asserted that they have noticeably adapted to the life in Bayramtepe during their stay in the neighborhood and that they established an environment which in certain aspects resembles their lives in Syria. Actually, Bayramtepe attains new political dynamics with the recent interactions between Syrian Kurdish refugees and Kurds from Turkey while the refugees are actively making a home at the present in the neighborhood.

Hence, the refugees' conception of home is shaped within this context. Home in the minds of the refugees is constituted through Kurdish refugees' nostalgic comparisons between present and past homes as well as their future home or homeland imaginaries. The findings of field study indicate that the refugees are under the impact of different factors when they imagine different places as their home. The most recurrent factors shaping the notion of home among the Kurdish refugees in Bayramtepe are their commitments to their ethnic identity, desire to have basic rights and liberties in West Kurdistan or Europe, and material needs which can be satisfied in Aleppo rather than Afrin. Being in exile and being a stateless people directly affect the diversity in the Kurdish refugees' images of home. In fact, these different notions of home sometimes conflict with each other due mainly to the Kurds' lack of attachment to a fixed territory which is developed through citizenship bonds in the world of nation-states.

Thus, based on the analysis I have argued that the concept of home is not always literal, rather symbolic for the Kurdish refugees currently live in exile. In other words, the localities where the refugees imagine as home, or a possible home, is not

always the places where they feel at home, comfort or belonging. Rather, home is the places where they attribute symbolic meanings. Namely, the refugees chose to come to Bayramtepe and to stay in the neighborhood because of the presence of Kurds. Yet they express their lack of attachment to this place on several occasions which is among the important indicators of their conflicting home images. Whether they would call Bayramtepe as their home or not as time passes is another topic to be discussed. In the given time and space the Kurdish refugees' notion of home is related to their symbolic past, present and future home images.

In fact, the analysis contains several limitations. The study could have mentioned a more detailed understanding of the differences among the refugees' ideas about home referring to the refugees' class positions and interactions with spatial factors. The interactions and social distance with the local communities and, accordingly, the relationship with their future home imaginaries also need more scrutiny. Besides, my focus on the refugees' everyday practices may be limited because of the fact that the refugees spent most of their time at work since they arrived in Bayramtepe. Lastly, the fact that the interviews were conducted with an interpreter, as an intermediary between the informant and me, increased the boundaries and influenced the way I analyzed the transcripts.

This study invites researchers to reveal more on the community, household and workplace interactions of the refugees in Bayramtepe and elsewhere in İstanbul. A more holistic analysis of the mechanisms through which the refugees build their network in the neighborhood could be more illuminating than asking how identity was affective in the place-making process. In this way, it is possible to observe how the refugees' economic and social capitals work at the same time. Thus, as I re-read the transcripts of the interviews I realized that I could have asked more about the way

they build their homes through their economic activities. Further research also needs to be conducted to see how identity itself evolves in time through the refugees' presence in the neighborhood. Moreover, a comparison between the Kurdish refugees living in different neighborhoods of İstanbul such as Kanarya which mostly hosts refugees from Qamishli, whereas the refugees in Bayramtepe migrated from Afrin, can be helpful as the place where the refugee comes in Syria would lead to different outcomes for numerous reasons. This comparative perspective among different neighborhoods of İstanbul where the Kurdish refugees from different parts of Syria have migrated would bring up other discussions regarding the Kurdish refugees' notion of home.

Appendix B

Demography

Gender, Age, Marital Status, Number of Children, Religion, Social Status (Occupation), Hometown, Date of Arrival

1. Where did you come from, which part of Aleppo or wherever s/he come from?
2. When did you come? How did you come? Which ways? –asking about his/her networks, and links that led them to Bayramtepe.
3. Since when have you been in Bayramtepe?
4. Occupation in Bayramtepe and Syria?
5. Did you own a house in Syria? A car?
6. Approximately how much do you earn here in Istanbul? How do you spend your income?
7. What is the highest level of education you received in Syria?

Experiences in Bayramtepe

Did you get use to the life in Bayramtepe? What do you do in Bayramtepe in an ordinary day?

1. Where do you for shopping? - language barrier? Do you cook? Is it possible for you to cook the food you had in Syria?
2. How did you celebrate Newroz here? How was it in Syria? Were you listening Dengbej in Syria? Do you come across them here?
3. What do you do in the weddings here? How do you celebrate them? Where do you go? What are the differences between the weddings you had in Syria and Bayramtepe?
4. Where do you bury your graves? How often can you visit those graves?
5. Who are your friends? How do you know them? How often do you talk to them?
6. Do your children go to school? If yes, where, which school? What do they do at school?

7. Do you go to the hospital? When? Where? How often? How do you communicate? Could you tell me some of your experiences at hospitals?

8. Do you get any aid from any state organization? How? How are your relations with non-governmental organizations in the region? Would you prefer to get aid from any organization rather than getting aid from some other organizations?

9. How did you find your job in Istanbul? Where do you work? What do you do? How long do you work? Working hours? How is your relationship with your colleagues?

10. How are your relations with the police in the neighborhood? Have you ever experienced any problem with the police?

Homeland

1. Imagine that Rojava (West Kurdistan) is established, would you consider it as your home?

2. What is the condition of your house in Syria? Assume that Syria is stabilized, if you were able to go back to your house in Syria would you consider there as your home?

3. Do you contact with your acquaintances in Syria? How? Where, in which region do you have contacts? Do you have relatives left behind?

Collective Memory and Belonging

1. How was your life in Aleppo? Some incidents that you, your family and friends won't forget in your life in Aleppo or Afrin?

2. What type of rights did you have in Syria before and after gaining citizenship in 2001? What has changed if you compare the two time periods? What has changed in Aleppo within these two periods of time?

3. Can you tell me about the 2004 Qamishlo incident?

4. How do you evaluate Kurdish people's involvement in the uprising, from the beginning to nowadays?

Leaving Bayramtepe

1. In which cases would you think of leaving Bayramtepe or Turkey? In which cases would you think of staying in Bayramtepe? Do you feel any attachment to Bayramtepe?
2. Where would you like to go if you leave Bayramtepe?
3. What would be your criteria about the place you would prefer to go after leaving here?
4. What do you hope for in the place you imagine yourself in the future?

As a final question I asked “*What did you bring with you from Syria*”



References

- Adelman, H. (1999). "Modernity, globalization, refugees and displacement". In A. Ager (ed.). *Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migrants*. London, New York: Pinter.
- Agamben, G. (2000). *Means without End: Notes on Politics* (Vol. 20). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford, CA:
- Agamben, G. (2005). *State of Exception*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Allsopp, H. (2015) *The Kurds of Syria*, I.B. Tauris.
- Arendt, H. (1966) *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (new edition). New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.
- Aydin, D. (2005). "Mobilizing the Kurds in Turkey: Newroz as a Myth". M.A. Thesis. Middle East Technical University.
- Benhabib, S. (2004). *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Biehl, K. S. (2015). "Governing through Uncertainty: Experiences of Being a Refugee in Turkey as a Country for Temporary Asylum." *Social Analysis*, 59, 1, 57-75.
- Bigo, D. (2002). Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*. 27 (1). 63-92
- Bloch, E. (1986). *The Principle of Hope*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Bloch, Alice (1999) "Carrying Out a Survey of Refugees: Some Methodological Considerations and Guidelines," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 4(12): 367-383.
- Blunt, (2002). "Land of our mothers': home, identity and nationality for Anglo-Indians in British India, 1919 – 1947". *History Workshop Journal* (54). p.49-72
- Blunt, (2003). Collective memory and productive nostalgia: Anglo-Indian homemaking at McCluskieganj. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. vol. 21, p. 717 – 738.
- Blunt, A. & Dowling, R. (2006). *Home*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.
- Brun, C. (2001). Reterritorializing the Relationship between People and Place in Refugee Studies. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*. 83 (1). 15-25.
- Brun, C. & Fabos, A. (2015). "Making Homes in Limbo? A Conceptual Framework." *Refuge*, 31 (1), 5-17.
- Butler, J., & Spivak, G. (2007). *Who Sings the Nation-state?*. London: Seagull Books.
- Chatty, D. (2010). *Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Daniş D. & Parla, A. (2009). "Nafile soydaşlık: Irak ve Bulgaristan Türkleri örneğinde göçmen, dernek ve devlet." *Toplum ve Bilim*, 114, 131-158.
- Daniş, D. Taraghi, C. & Pérouse, J-F. (2009). "Integration in Limbo. Iraqi, Afghan, Maghrebi and Iranian Migrants in Istanbul." In *Land of Diverse Migrations. Challenges of Emigration and Immigration in Turkey*, İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi University Press, 443-636.
- Castoriadis, C. (1997) *World in Fragments: Writings on Politics, Society, Psychoanalysis and the Imagination*, translated by David A. Curtis. Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press.
- Düvell, F. (2014). Turkey's Transition to an Immigration Country: A Paradigm Shift. *Insight Turkey*. Vol. 16 (4). 87-104.
- Easthope, H. (2004). "A Place Called Home." *Housing, Theory and Society*. 21, 3, 128-138.
- Fabos, A. (2015). Microbuses and Mobile Homemaking in Exile: Sudanese Visiting Strategies in Cairo. *Refuge*. Volume 31 (1). p. 717-738.
- Ferguson, J. (2006). *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. Duke University Press.
- Habib, N. (1996). "The Search For Home". *Journal of Refugee Studies*. 9/1, p. 101.
- Hammond, L. C. (2000). *This Place will become Home: Emplacement and Community Formation in a Tigrayan Returnee Settlement, Northwest Ethiopia*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Wisconsin, Madison.
- Hammond, L. C. (2004). *This Place Will Become Home: Refugee Repatriation to Ethiopia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hyndman, J. (2000). *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Ihlamur-Öner, S. G. (2013). "Turkey's Refugee Regime Stretched to the Limit? The Case of Iraqi and Syrian Refugee Flows." *Perceptions*, 18, 3, 191-228.
- İçduygu, A. (2015). *Syrian Refugees in Turkey: The Long Road Ahead*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- Jansen, S. & Löfving, S. (2007). "Introduction: Movement, violence, and the making of home." *Focaal*, 2007, 49, 3-14.
- Kaya, İ. (2008). **Legal Aspects of Irregular Migration in Turkey, RSCAS (73) Florence: European University Institute.**
- Keyder, C. (2010) "Capital city resurgent's: Istanbul since the 1980s". *New Perspectives on Turkey*. Issue 43, pp. 177-186.
- Kirişçi, K. (2012). Turkey's New Draft Law on Asylum: What to Make of It?. Turkey, Migration and the EU: Potentials, Challenges and Opportunities, 63-83**

- La Vecchia-Mikkola, V. (2013). *Longing to Return and Spaces of Belonging. Iraqis' Narratives in Helsinki and Rome*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Turku, Turku.
- Malkki, L. H. (1995a). *Purity and exile: violence, memory and national cosmology among Hutu refugees in Tanzania*. Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press.
- Malkki, L. H. (1995b). Refugees and exile: From "refugee studies" to the national order of things. *Annual review of anthropology*, 495-523.
- Mallett, S. (2004). Understanding home: a critical review of the literature. *The Sociological Review*. 52, (1). 62-89.
- Massey, D. (1995) "The conceptualization of place", in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds) *A Place in the World?: Places, Cultures and Globalization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 45–85.
- Monsutti, A. (2010). "Food and Identity among Young Afghan Refugees and Migrants in Iran", in: Dawn Chatty (ed), *Deterritorialized Youth: Sahrawi and Afghan Refugees at the Margins of the Middle East*, New York, Oxford: Berghahn, 2010, p. 213-247.
- Nora, P. (1989). "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations*, 26, 7-24.
- Lovell, N. (ed.) (1998) *Locality and Belonging*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Özsoy, H. (2012). "Arafta Kalmak: Tarih mezarda başlar". Accessed through: <http://politikart1.blogspot.com.tr/2012/05/arafta-kalmak-tarih-mezarda-baslar.html>**
- Papastergiadis, N. (1998). *Dialogues in the Diaspora: Essays and Conversations on Cultural Identity*. London and New York: Rivers Oram Press.
- Parkin, D. J. (1998). Foreword. In Nadia Lovell (Ed). *Locality and Belonging* (x-xiv). London and New York: Routledge.
- Parkin, D. J. (1999). Mementoes as transitional objects in human displacement. *Journal of Material Culture*. 4(3), 303-320.
- Peteet, J. M. (2005) *Landscape of Hope and Despair: Palestinian Refugee Camps*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Pine, F. (2014). Migration as Hope. *Current Anthropology*, 55(S9), 95-104.
- Pinto, Paulo G. (2007) "Les Kurdes en Syrie", in *La Syrie au present: Reflets d'une société*, Dupret, B. and Zouhair Ghazzal, Youssef Courbage, and Mohammed Al-Dbiyat (ed.s), Actes Sud, p. 259-267.
- Rabo, A. (2005). A Shop of One's Own: Independence and Reputation among Traders in Aleppo. London, I. B. Tauris.**
- Renan, E. (1990). "What is a Nation?" In Bhabha, H. K. (Ed.) *Nation and Narration*. (8-22). London and New York: Routledge.

Savelsberg, E., & Tejel, J. (2013). "The Syrian Kurds in 'Transition to Somewhere'" In: Mohammed M. A. Ahmed & Michael M. Gunter (Eds.), *The Kurdish Spring, Geopolitical Changes and the Kurds* (189-218). Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda.

Schiller, N. G. & Çağlar, A. (2013). "Locating migrant pathways of economic emplacement: Thinking beyond the ethnic lens." *Ethnicities*, 13, 4, 494-514.

Schiller, N. G. & Çağlar, A. (2015). "Displacement, emplacement and migrant newcomers: rethinking urban sociabilities within multiscale power." *Identities*, 03/2015; DOI: 10.1080/1070289X.2015.1016520.

Schmitt, C. [1922]. 2005. *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*. Translated by. George Schwab. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Sidki, B. (2014). <http://lb.boell.org/en/2014/03/03/kurds-and-syrian-revolution-statehood-participation>

Steward P.J. (1993). *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham, NC. Duke University Press.

Stewart P. J. & Strathern, A. (2005). Body and Mind on the Move: Emplacement, Displacement, and Trans-placement in Highlands Papua New Guinea: 18th Conference of International Association of Historians of Asia (IAHA), December 6-10, 2004, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.

Tejel, J. (2009). *Syria's Kurds: History, Politics and Society*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Turner. (1967). *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Turton, D. (2005). The meaning of place in a world of movement: Lessons from long term field research in Southern Ethiopia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 18(3), 258-280.

Üstübici, A. (2015). *The Governance of International Migration in Turkey and Morocco: Irregular Migrants' Access to Right to Stay*. Unpublished thesis.

Warner, D.J. (1994) "Voluntary Repatriation and the Meaning of Return to Home: A Critique of Liberal Mathematics." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 7, nos. 2/3: 160-172.

Yükseker, H. D. & Brewer, T. K. (2011). "Astray and stranded at the gates of the European Union: African transit migrants in İstanbul." *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 44, 135-166.

Ziarek, E. P. (2008). "Bare life on strike: Notes on the biopolitics of race and gender." *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 107, 1, 89-105.

Zolberg, A. R., Suhrke, A., & Aguayo, S. (1992). *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Reports, Newspapers and Online Sources:

3RP 2015-2016, (2015). *Regional Strategic Overview*. Accessed through: reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/.../3RP-Report-Overview.pdf

Açık Toplum Vakfı. (2015). *Bekleme Odasından Oturma Odasına: Suriyeli Mültecilere Yönelik Çalışmalar Yürüten Sivil Toplum Kuruluşlarına Dair Kısa Bir Değerlendirme*. Accessed through: <http://www.aciktoplumvakfi.org.tr/medya/02062015beklemeodasi.pdf>

Acar, Ceyda, Büşra Sandıklı, Meltem Mücaz, Zekiye Ülger and Perihan Torun (2015) Bezmialem Vakıf Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi Halk Sağlığı Anabilim Dalı. *İstanbul'da Yaşayan Geçici Koruma Altındaki Suriyeliler*. Accessed through: <http://halksagligi.bezmialem.edu.tr/dosyalar/siginmaci-raporu.pdf>

Human Rights Watch. (2014). http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/syria0614_kurds_ForUpload.pdf

HUGO. (2014). *Syrians in Turkey: Social Acceptance and Integration Research*. Accessed through: www.hugo.hacettepe.edu.tr/HUGO-REPORT-SyriansinTurkey.pdf

Institute of Inter-national Education, UC Davis (2014) *We Will Stop Here and Go No Further: Syrian University Students and Scholars in Turkey*. Accessed through: <http://www.iie.org/~media/Files/Corporate/Publications/We-Will-Stop-Here-And-Go-No-Further-Syrian-University-Students-And-Scholars-In-Turkey-002.ashx?la=en>

İstanbul Sığınmacılar Platformu. (2013) *Yok Sayılanlar; Kamp Dışında Yaşayan Suriye'den Gelen Sığınmacılar İstanbul Örneği*. Accessed through: <http://multeci.net/images/stories/1/Yok-Saylanlar-Raporu.pdf>

Güneş and Love. (2015). Accessed through: http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/field/field_document/20150723SyriaKurdsGunesLowe.pdf

Kirişçi, K. (2014). *Syrian Refugees and Turkey's Challenges: Going Beyond Hospitality*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution. www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/europe/turkey-cyprus/turkey/225-blurring-the-borders-syrian-spillover-risks-for-turkey.aspx

MAZLUMDER. (2013). *İstanbul Örneği Üzerinden Türkiye'de Suriyeli Mülteciler Raporu*. Accessed through: http://istanbul.mazlumder.org/webimage/suriyeli_multeciler_raporu_2013.pdf

ORSAM & TESEV (2015) *Suriyeli Sığınmacıların Türkiye'ye Etkileri*. Accessed through: <http://www.tesev.org.tr/assets/publications/file/09012015104258.pdf>

Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford (2014) *Protection in Europe for refugees from Syria*. Accessed through: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/.../pb10-protection-europe-refugees-syria-2014.pdf

Resmi Gazete, available at: <http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2014/10/20141022-15-1.pdf> [accessed 01 November 2014]

Türk Tabipler Birliđi (2014) *Suriyeli Sıđınmacılar ve Sađlık Hizmetleri Raporu*. Accessed through:
<http://www.ttb.org.tr/kutuphane/siginmacirpr.pdf>

Savelsberg and Tejel, 2013: Eva Savelsberg and Jordi Tejel, ‘The Syrian Kurds in “Transition to Somewhere”’, in Michael Gunter and Mohammed Ahmed (eds), *The Kurdish Spring: Geopolitical Changes and the Kurds* (Costa Mesa: Mazda, 2013) in Chatham House report.

UNHCR. 2011. *The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and Its 1967 Protocol*. UNHCR: Geneva.

UNHCR, *Türkiye’deki Suriyeli Mülteciler: Sık Sorulan Sorular*. Accessed through:
http://www.unhcr.org.tr/uploads/root/sik_sorulan_sorular.pdf

UNHCR (2015) “Syria Regional Refugee Response: Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal”, <<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=224>