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HOW TO LIVE TOGETHER: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF CULTURE AND  
THE ARTS IN THE CASE OF SYRIAN REFUGEES IN BURSA

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How to Live Together: Examining the Role of Culture and the Arts in the Case of Syrian Refugees in  
Bursa

Birlikte Nasıl Yaşanır: Bursa'daki Suriyeli Mülteciler Bağlamında Kültür ve Sanatın Rolünün İncelenmesi

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## ABBREVIATIONS

**AFAD:** Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency

**DG EAC:** Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture  
[European Commission]

**DGMM:** Directorate General of Migration Management [Ministry of Interior of  
Turkey]

**EENCA:** European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual

**EU:** European Union

**ICG:** International Crisis Group

**IDP:** Internally Displaced People

**IOM:** International Organization for Migration

**İKSV:** İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts

**JDP:** Justice and Development Party

**MFA:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**NGO:** Non-Governmental Organization

**OSMEK:** Osmangazi Municipality Vocational Courses Institution

**RPP:** Republican People's Party

**TÜİK:** Turkish Statistical Institute

**UDHR:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights

**UN:** United Nations

**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

**UNHCR:** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

**UNICEF:** United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

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## **ABSTRACT**

The civil war that began in Syria in April 2011 caused the forced migration of millions of refugees around the world. One of the most affected countries, probably the most, by the massive immigration influx has been Turkey. Due to its open-door policy, geographical proximity, and facilitating administrative and legal arrangements, Turkey has become the leading country in hosting Syrian refugees. As Syrian refugees' stay turned from temporary to long-lasting one and their stay prolonged, problems arose both regarding the integration of Syrians and their tensions with the local population.

This study will mainly examine the role of culture and the arts in both developing successful integration practices and reducing the tension between local people and immigrants. In addition, it will be discussed which policy approaches and political philosophies behind those approaches could be appropriate on the issue of cultural diversity in order to achieve peaceful coexistence in society from a broader perspective. Moreover, the chronology of the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the approaches of both the Turkish government and Turkish citizens towards this crisis will be presented as a background to the study. Culture and the arts sector in Bursa, where one of the most crowded Syrian populations in Turkey accommodate will be the focus of this study. Furthermore, the study will examine whether the stakeholders of culture and the arts in Bursa have any attempts on the social inclusion of Syrian refugees. If not, in addition, there will be an attempt to explicate the reasons not to contribute to the peaceful coexistence of Syrian refugees and local people in Bursa. In the final section, policy recommendations to these stakeholders will be presented.

## ÖZET

2011 Nisan'ında Suriye'de başlayan iç savaş milyonlarca mültecinin dünyanın dört bir yanına zorunlu göçüne neden oldu. Bu muazzam ve kitlesel göç akınından en çok etkilenen ülkelerden biri, muhtemelen en çok etkileneni, Türkiye oldu. Uyguladığı açık kapı politikası, Suriye'ye olan coğrafi yakınlığı ile kolaylaştırıcı idari ve yasal düzenlemelerin de etkisiyle Türkiye en fazla sayıda Suriyeli mülteciye ev sahipliği yapan ülke haline gelmiştir. Suriyeli mültecilerin kalışları geçici olmaktan çıkıp temelli hale gelmeye başladıkça ve mültecilerin kalış süreleri uzadıkça hem Suriyelilerin entegrasyonu hem de yerel halkla olan yaşanan gerilim konusunda problemler ve bunların çözümüne yönelik bir ihtiyaç ortaya çıkmaya başlamıştır.

Bu çalışma temel olarak hem başarılı entegrasyon pratiklerinin geliştirilmesinde hem de yerel halkla göçmenler arasında ortaya çıkan gerilimin düşürülmesinde kültür sanatın nasıl bir rolü olabileceğini inceleyecektir. Bununla birlikte, daha geniş perspektiften bakarak barış içinde bir arada yaşama amacı doğrultusunda kültürel çeşitlilik konusunda politik yaklaşımların ve bu politikaların arkasındaki politik felsefenin nasıl olması gerektiği ele alınacaktır. Bunun yanında Türkiye'de yaşanan Suriye Mülteci Krizinin kronolojisi ve boyutlarıyla, hükümet ve halk nezdindeki yaklaşımlar araştırmanın arka planı olarak sunulacaktır. Tüm bunları incelemek için seçilen odak noktası ise Türkiye'de en fazla Suriyeli nüfusu barındıran şehirlerden biri olan Bursa olacaktır. Bursa'daki kültür sanat paydaşlarının Suriyeli mültecilerinin entegrasyonuna ve barış için bir arada yaşama pratiklerini geliştirmeye yönelik bir çalışma yürütüp yürütmediklerini, yürütmüyorlarsa bunun sebeplerini inceleyecek olan çalışmanın son bölümünde ise bu paydaşlara politika önerileri sunulacaktır.

## INTRODUCTION

Civil disorder in Syria, as part of Arab Spring protests, escalated and turned into an armed conflict in 2011. After the civil war started, millions of civilians in Syria had to flee their country to live in a safe environment. According to UNHCR records, “at the end of 2018, Syrians still made up the largest forcibly displaced population, with 13.0 million people living in displacement, including 6.7 million refugees, 6.2 million internally displaced people (IDPs) and 140,000 asylum-seekers” (2018). Most affected countries from this mass influx have been Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan (See Table 3.1). Apart from being a host country, Turkey has become a transit country for the immigration of Syrian refugees to European countries because of its geographic location since the beginning of the civil war in Syria. Illegal immigration to Europe by using Turkey as a transit route has peaked in 2015. According to the EU’s external border force, Frontex, more than 1.800.000 refugees tried to cross the EU’s border in 2015 (Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe explained in seven charts, 2016). Furthermore, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), more than 1.001.700 migrants fleeing from war arrived in Europe by sea in the same year (Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe explained in seven charts, 2016). Strikingly, the most common route for refugees was the route from Turkey’s Aegean coasts to Greece’s islands such as Kos, Chios, Lesbos, and Samos by unsafe boats in a dangerous way (Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe explained in seven charts, 2016). Especially until the agreement between the EU and Turkey on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March in 2016, the Mediterranean became a sea for human trafficking, illegal migration, unsafe migration conditions, thousands of deaths, and humanitarian crises (See Section 3.3.1.). Migration from North Africa to Italy and Spain also increased the extent of the tragedy that has already taken place. Only in 2015, according to IOM’s records, more than 3770 deaths of migrants who tried to cross the Mediterranean had reported. (Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe explained in seven charts, 2016).

At the beginning of the refugee crisis in Europe, there were two different approaches to this issue: advocates of open-door policy led mostly by German Chancellor, Angela Merkel and those who were against the entry of refugees into

Europe such as Hungarian leader Orban. At the beginning, through Angela Merkel's policy more than 1 million asylum seekers entered into Germany (Dockery, 2017). But later, whether due to the effects of the 2008 economic crisis, the terror attacks in 2015 or the cultural conflicts in general, the rising anti-immigration sentiments and xenophobia in Europe in this period became prevalent. Parallel to this, populist and far-right parties have been on the rise in almost all parts of Europe. AFD in Germany, The Brexit Party in the United Kingdom, National Front in France, VOX in Spain, FIDESZ in Hungary could be mentioned as some of these parties in Europe. The increase in the anti-immigrant sentiments and xenophobia in Europe, actually, are parts of a global trend in recent years. While zeitgeist of the post-WWII and the post-colonial era was about welcoming immigrants, successful integration with different philosophical strategies about cultural diversity and so on, political rhetoric against migrants has been reversed after the 9/11 attacks in the US. Moreover, after the European refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016, the concepts of nonacceptance of asylum seekers and *refoulement* (*sending refugees or asylum seekers back to their country*) have become more prominent than the concepts such as integration, social inclusion, and peaceful coexistence. Even the illegal acts according to international law like illegal pushbacks of migrants by some countries from the EU like Greece have been observable in recent years (Christides et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, the Turkish government has followed an open-door policy towards Syrian refugees since the beginning of the Syrian Civil War. As of the end of 2019, Turkey hosts 3.691.133 Syrians registered under the temporary protection regime according to records of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Government of Turkey (see *Figure 3.1*). Turkey's open-door policy, which is guaranteed by temporary protection regime, geographical proximity to Syria, legal regulations, and agreements between Turkey and the EU have been the facilitating factors in the increasing the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey to this extent. Hence, Turkey is, by far, the country that hosts Syrian refugees the most (see Table 3.1). However, it was not expected that the crisis would be long-lasting, and it was treated as temporary by the Turkish government

(Kirişçi, 2014; İçduygu, 2015; Erdoğan, 2017). Turkey preferred to call the Syrian refugees as ‘guests’ (Kirişçi, 2014), suggesting transitoriness intrinsic to the refugee policy. Initial phases in the crisis in terms of policy approaches were shaped in the context of hospitality which addresses providing shelter, humanitarian aid and assistance especially in the refugee camps (Kirişçi, 2014; İçduygu, 2015). The response to the mass influx by the government was framed in the context of “emergency management” (Erdoğan, 2017). However, looking at present day policies towards the Syrian refugees, we can conclude that the Turkish governments approach has not moved beyond the idea of temporariness and that the policy implementations focused on treating the situation as one of ‘emergency’. Thus, Turkish policy towards the Syrian refugees have not progressed towards the acceptance of the Syrians as co-inhabitants of Turkey. Policies towards integration of Syrians into daily life did not fully come into fruition.

A huge influx of Syrians to Turkey has created a serious tension between the local people in Turkey and Syrian migrants. In my view, peaceful and respectful coexistence of Syrian communities and Turkish society is a two-way street. On one side, the Syrian community needs due recognition and to protect their cultural expressions and values while social cohesion of them to the Turkish society is going on. On the other side, the tension between the Syrian community and Turkish people must dissolve. In other words, fostering the practice of living together consists of a successful integration with due recognition and dissolving the tension between them for a peaceful coexistence. I believe that cultural participation and, the arts in general, can play a crucial role to live together peacefully and respectfully.

Within the lights of this brief information and opinions, the main questions in my MA dissertation will be as follows: What can be the best cultural strategies and policies to ensure living together respectfully where different cultures encounter, which philosophical background could be useful for these best practices, and what can be the role of culture and the arts while trying to achieve this ideal? The thesis will try to find answers to these questions through examining these issues in a specific location: Bursa. The thesis, which will also examine the actual situation

in the Syrian Refugee Crisis and policy approaches of the governments of the Republic of Turkey regarding the crisis, will be an attempt to explore the actions of stakeholders of culture and arts scene in Bursa concerning the social cohesion of Syrians in Bursa. In this regard, the thesis will seek answers to the questions as follows: What have the cultural actors in Bursa done for the peaceful coexistence of Turkish and Syrian communities? If there is no adequate attempt to achieve the social cohesion of Syrians into Turkish society, what are the reasons behind it? What can they do to contribute to integration efforts?

My research will be based on semi-structured interviews with stakeholders in the culture and arts sector in Bursa, data available regarding the issues above, legal documents in Turkey in the context of migration and refugees, UN documents related to cultural diversity, reports explaining the role of culture and the arts in peaceful coexistence along with the literature concerning aforementioned issues.

The first chapter will be an attempt to discuss cultural policies to deal with cultural diversity and the philosophical background of these policies such as assimilation, multiculturalism, nationalism, politics of recognition, cosmopolitanism, radical cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitanism from below. In other words, the first chapter will have the feature of literature review that summarizes and discusses theories of related scholars like Charles Taylor, Amy Guttmann, Michael Walzer, Susan Wolf, Will Kymlicka, Gozdecka et al., Martha Nussbaum, Anthony Appiah, Jürgen Habermas, Zygmunt Bauman, Edward Soja, Ralph Grillo, Homi Bhabha, Ulrich Beck, Han Entzinger, Renske Biezeveld, Vani Borooah, John Mangan, Cristophe Bertossi, Edward Tiryakian, Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, John Rex, and Gurharpal Singh. In addition, the chapter will contain some discussions in a report of İKSV named “*Living Together: Fostering Cultural Pluralism Through Arts*” by Baban and Rygiel”. Furthermore, there will be insights from the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005) in the first chapter.

The second chapter will be about the role of culture and the arts to preserve the peaceful coexistence and foster pluralism in the society in the context of

migratory and refugee policies. The chapter will include the basic definitions of terms such as culture, cultural production, and integration. Moreover, the second chapter consists of discussions on the culture and the arts' role in healing and the empowerment of individuals and communities, on integration, civic education, and intercultural dialogue as well as discussions on the transformative power of arts and the economic benefits of culture and the arts. In addition, the chapter will try to clarify the peculiarities of arts as an integration tool along with features of effective use of culture and the arts in the context of migratory and refugee issues. While trying to explicate those issues, I will mainly benefit from the cultural policy report of İKSV named "*Living Together: Fostering Cultural Pluralism Through Arts*" by Baban and Rygiel, and reports of the European Union (EU) institutions related to the issue. Furthermore, this chapter will spare some for explanatory examples about the role of culture and arts in the context of migratory and refugee issues from different parts of the world.

Third chapter of the thesis will be about the history of Turkey in the context of migration and mass influxes, chronology of Syrian Refugee Crisis, legal and administrative tools to deal with refugee crisis, policy approaches of the Governments of the Republic of Turkey towards Syrian Refugees and Syrian Refugee Crisis as well as discourses on these issues and reactions of Turkish society against policy approaches and discourses. Legal documents, data available on these issues, and news concerning Syrian Refugee Crisis will be used in the third chapter, along with the literature on those issues, namely the articles and reports of Murat Erdoğan, Ahmet İçduygu, Ayhan Kaya, Kemal Kirişçi, Birce Altıok, Salih Tosun, and Wendy Zeldin.

From beginning to end, the thesis follows a pattern from general to the specific. The fourth chapter includes insights from my research field. After clarifying why Bursa was chosen as a research field, which institutions were designated by which reasons in Bursa for the research, and what were asked during the interviews; within the lights of the information in the previous chapters, the inferences drawn in the field and interviews will be the main subject of the fourth chapter. The chapter will include both main findings filtered down from all



interviews conducted and key elements in my implications for each interview. In other words, this chapter will have a feature of evaluation of efforts for social cohesion or peaceful coexistence by stakeholders of culture and the arts in Bursa.

Conclusion chapter will briefly summarize the entire research, compile the policy recommendations for cultural institutions regarding the issues in the thesis, explain weaknesses of the research, along with pointing the direction in which further research can proceed.



## **FIRST CHAPTER**

### **HOW TO LIVE WITH THE “OTHER”: DIFFERENT POLITICAL APPROACHES**

“Cultural diversity is a defining characteristic of humanity”, says in the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Expressions (2005, p. 2). Due to the excessive amount of human mobilization, the concept of cultural diversity and challenges stemming from it have come to the fore. Especially after the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, with the tremendous acceleration of globalization, human mobilization has peaked in the last decades. Furthermore, excessive poverty, environmental crisis, civil wars, and humanitarian crises in recent years have made this mobilization even greater. Considering that increasing environmental problems and climate change will push, eventually, for deeper poverty and humanitarian problems, this mobilization is not a temporal phenomenon. Hence, the issue of cultural diversity and its challenges will continue to take an important place in the agendas of national governments. In other words, although cultural diversity is intrinsic to humankind, “the difference” or “the other” has always been an issue for nation states. Thus, governments that face the challenges posed by cultural diversity have been trying to generate policies for their people to live together peacefully.

As I mentioned in the introduction, the salience of inclusion of migrants to the host countries has been weakening. Nowadays, countries that face mass influxes try to find a way to prevent the entry of migrants. Furthermore, more walls and fences have been building across the world in recent years. Instead of the inclusion of migrants to society, they are hosted in the refugee camps by receiving countries. In spite of the rising anti-immigrant sentiments and xenophobia, countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Germany have accepted Syrian refugees fleeing from the civil war in Syria. Therefore, whether the countries that experience migration accept migrants voluntarily or not, the discussion on how to live together peacefully and respectfully, social inclusion of migrants as well as their integration will eventually become a prominent element of their agenda.

The discussion on peaceful coexistence in the case of cultural diversity, policy approaches to deal with cultural diversity, and political philosophies behind these approaches are the products of the post-WWII and the post-colonial era. Notwithstanding that assimilation and multiculturalism are two opposite poles regarding the policy approaches of the management of cultural diversity, multiculturalism prevails those discussions after 1960s until the end of the millennium. As mentioned below, after the 9/11 attacks, the Iraq War, and the following terror attacks in the West, the philosophy of the multiculturalism started to be questioned. Leaders of some Western countries such as Cameron in the United Kingdom, Merkel in Germany and Sarkozy in France stressed the failure of multiculturalism in their society (Bloemraad, 2011). According to Kymlicka, “from the 1970s to mid-1990s there was a clear trend across western democracies towards the increased recognition and accommodation of diversity through a range of multiculturalism policies and minority rights” (Kymlicka, 2010, p. 97). Furthermore, rejection of earlier ideas, which stress homogeneous and unitary nationhood, has enhanced by international organizations and various states in domestic levels in that period (Kymlicka, p. 97). However, as Kymlicka argues, after the mid-1990s, a turn from multiculturalist ideals to acknowledging the principles of common identities, nation building, and unitary citizenship has become apparent (2010, p. 97). As Kymlicka states, although there is no consensus on what comes after multiculturalism, the idea that we live in a post-multicultural era has become common (2010, p. 97).

Fostering the practice of living together is a two-way street which should include both the successful integration or cultural participation of the migrant society to the host community and easing the tension between the host community and refugees. Nation states, especially in the West, have embraced a bunch of policy approaches such as assimilation or multiculturalism to deal with cultural diversity. Furthermore, these policy approaches have several roots in philosophical discussions that eventually reflect into the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) and Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005). This chapter will try to shed light on the

discussions around governments' policies towards cultural diversity and philosophical arguments behind them. So, the concepts of assimilation, cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, post-multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism from below or radical cosmopolitanism will be at the core of the chapter while benefiting from the extensive literature about these concepts, UN Conventions and Declarations, and reports from the civil society. However, it is striking that comprehensive viewpoints to ensure the peaceful coexistence in culturally diverse societies in a period when immigration is so dense is lacking. Nevertheless, by stressing out strength and weaknesses of each approach to the issue of “the difference”, I will try to formulate the best mix by benefitting from aforementioned philosophical discussions, to my mind, for a proper policy approach to deal with the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey. Together with these, the main focus will be, mostly, on multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, radical cosmopolitanism, and the politics of recognition theory by Taylor in this chapter. In addition, this chapter will try to clarify the concept of “toleration”.

### **1.1. DENYING DIFFERENCE: ASSIMILATIONIST APPROACHES**

Nation states see the difference as an obstacle to their aim to achieve a more homogeneous population which “makes easier” to govern. So, nation states that comprise of different ethnic groups or host migrant populations have been applying assimilationist policies throughout modern history. As they see pluralist societies as a threat to the cohesion of the society, governments, whose approaches are assimilationist, expect from migrant societies or minorities to push their identities into the background in order to achieve a better integration (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 11). In the policy report of İKSV, Baban and Rygiel define assimilationist approach as that it portrays cultural differences in the society as threatening to the integration of the society such that those differences are deviant to the dominant national culture (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 23). In other words, the assimilationist approach aims to create a single national unity by forgetting certain memories, erasing certain cultural differences and creating a single identity to fight against challenges that cultural diversity brings.

Assimilationism and multiculturalism represent two opposite poles regarding the policies implemented in the management of cultural diversity. The section 1.3 below will explicate the examples of assimilationist policies in different countries and show the contrast between assimilationist and multiculturalist policies. Yet, the next section will be an attempt to clarify the main tenets of multiculturalism and especially the Taylor's theory of "the politics of recognition". Since one of the main aims of this chapter is the understanding the teachings of multiculturalism in general and the politics of recognition in specific in order to come up with a normative philosophical base in the integration endeavors in the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Turkey, the next sections and sub-sections will be more detailed. After that, in the section 1.3, there will be some examples of both assimilationism and multiculturalism from different countries.

## **1.2. MULTICULTURALISM: THE POLITICS OF RECOGNITION AND ITS ECHOES**

In the core of this chapter, there will be Charles Taylor's seminal work that is called "*The Politics of Recognition*" such that it brings unvoiced issues forward in the literature of cultural diversity such as misrecognition of identity, equal dignity of human beings, dialogical construction of human mind, equal recognition, equal value of societies and requirement of equal respect to societies. So, this part of this chapter will cover both the ideas of Taylor and reflections of Taylor's article in the literature of multiculturalism.

### **1.2.1 Politics of Recognition by Charles Taylor**

The argumentation of Taylor begins with the definition of identity which is "a person's understanding of who they are, of their fundamental defining characteristics as human being" according to him (Taylor, 1994, p. 25). So, one of the main argument of Taylor is that recognition or lack of recognition or even misrecognition is the defining factor for determining the peculiarities of the self, that is, identity (1994, p. 25). Accordingly, he thinks that unrecognized or misrecognized people are damaged in such a way that they feel inferior, oppressed,

imprisoned, depreciated in the society just because of this ontological reasoning (Taylor, 1994, p. 25-26). Therefore, according to him, lack of recognition is not only the indicator of lack of respect but also is the reason for the harm that consists “self-hatred” (Taylor, 1994, p. 26). Because of that recognition is not a favor that we do, yet it is a critical need for the human being, according to him (Taylor, 1994, p. 26). I wholeheartedly believe that this theory of recognition should be the basis of the discussion when discussing cultural diversity, cultural participation, and integration. Furthermore, comparing the ancien regime and modern times, Taylor (1994) introduces the term dignity instead of honor and he sees equal recognition of the dignity of human beings as the prerequisite for democratic culture (p. 27).

At this point, it is meaningful to point out the problematic of authenticity and dialogical character of the self. Taylor (1994) argues that every one of us has an authenticity and this authenticity has a dialogical character, not a monological one (p. 32). In other words, we can generate our ‘self’ only by interacting with “the other”. Herder defines this the other as “significant other” which designates the people matter to us in our interactions (Herder, 1934, as cited in Taylor, 1994, p. 32). So, as Taylor points out: “we define our identity always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the things our significant others want to see in us” (1994, p. 33). One additional valuable contribution from Herder’s “originality” which Taylor embraces and is similar to “authenticity” could be that Herder maintains that the concept of originality is not only valid for individual in the society but also it can be used for people among peoples (Herder, 1934, as cited in Taylor, 1994, p. 31). So, we can apply this notion of dialogical self to the relations between communities, nations, societies, etc.

Other than these, Taylor brings the politics of difference to the forefront as a complementary to equal dignity. Taylor defends that the universalist idea of equal dignity brought the equalization of rights and entitlements, but this underestimates the unique character of the individuals or groups and their distinctiveness (Taylor, 1994). In addition, he maintains that there is also a need for politics of difference such that it paves the way for the respect for the human potentiality equally for everyone (Taylor, 1994, p. 42). In that sense, he criticizes procedural liberalism that

brings about “difference-blind” societies which cause to push disadvantaged communities into more disadvantaged positions and to the reproduction of discriminatory ambiance in the society again and again (Taylor, 1994, p. 38-42). In other words, as Taylor (1994) points out as follows:

The supposedly fair and difference-blind society is not only inhuman (because suppressing identities) but also, in a subtle and unconscious way, itself highly discriminatory (p. 43).

So, unlike difference-blind fashion, he underlines the need for recognizing and fostering the particularity (Taylor, 1994, p. 43).

In his essay, Taylor classifies liberal approaches into two: one is a neutral one, which applies the rules and rights uniformly and is unfriendly about collective goals, and the other which allows particularistic aims and collective goals. Taylor is in favor of the second one mostly by saying that “liberalism can’t and shouldn’t claim complete neutrality” (1994, p. 62)

Taylor also acknowledges the increasing amount of multinational migration that brings about more diverse societies. In terms of the challenges that we face because of the migrations, he stresses that “the challenge is to deal with their (immigrants) sense of marginalization without compromising our basic political principles” (Taylor, 1994, p. 63). In addition, he gives significance not only to the survival of the culture of newcomers but also the acknowledgement of its worth by the host community (Taylor, 1994, p. 64). One last point is worth to mention in Taylor’s essay, which is the presumption that “all human cultures have the potential to “have something important to say all human beings in a considerable stretch of time” (Taylor, 1994, p. 66).

Consequently, even if Taylor criticizes a neutral liberalism, he also is an advocate of a compromise between homogenization of different cultures and imprisonment of particular cultures in the society as the pressure of human mobilization and the possibility of cultural fusions are increasing (Taylor, 1994, p. 72).

### **1.2.2. Reflections on the Politics of Recognition**

In this part of the chapter, I will give coverage to the opinions of scholars, who wrote comments to Taylor's seminal work, such as Amy Gutmann, Susan Wolf, Michael Walzer and some other essays of leading multiculturalist writers such as Kymlicka.

Amy Gutmann, the editor of the book, *Multiculturalism: The Politics of Recognition*, embraces the ideas of Taylor about the dialogical character of human identity and the need for sufficient recognition for the self (Gutmann, 1994). Furthermore, according to Amy Gutmann (1994), the demand for recognition has two directions: one is the "protection of the basic human rights" and the other is the "protection of particular cultural rights of communities" (p. 8). Other than these, she also reexamines the two different liberal perspectives while dealing with cultural diversity. Gutmann (1994) maintains that although one type of liberalism has a universalistic character which embraces the political neutrality and protection of universal basic human rights, the other perspective of liberalism is not insistent on political neutrality such that it acknowledges the worth of policies to protect particular cultural values under three conditions (p. 10). These are the requirement of the protection of basic rights of all citizens, disallowance for manipulation or coercion of public institutions for the benefit of the particular cultural values, and democratic accountability of institutions who determine those cultural choices (Gutmann, 1994, p.10-11).

Gutmann examines the issue of recognition in the lights of the discussions above and in an example related to discussions about the core curricula of universities in the US. She is an advocate for a more inclusionary curriculum which contains also philosophies of non-Western or disadvantaged groups instead of a curriculum that includes only books White-Western-Male thinkers (Gutmann, 1994). However, according to her, every aspect of cultural differences, like racism or anti-Semitism, should not be respected even if their expression should be tolerated (Gutmann, 1994, p. 21). Even if Gutmann holds toleration above respect, she believes that deliberation on respectable moral disagreements and the virtue of



deliberation lie at the heart of “the moral promise of multiculturalism” (Gutmann, 1994, p. 23-24).

Another valuable contribution to Taylor’s book is from Susan Wolf. While Wolf agrees with almost all points of Taylor’s article, she disagrees on the relation between recognition of identities and Taylor’s presumption that every culture has important things to appeal to the humanity (Wolf, 1994, p. 78-79). So, she denies this relation. In order to clarify her argument, Wolf gives an example from child stories. Wolf (1994) states that her children’s generation could have a more inclusive mix for the children books such as stories from Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe contrary to her generation who could only read Western classics such as Rapunzel, Musicians of Bremen or the Fog Prince (p. 81). However, according to Wolf, this change is virtuous not because children have a better or more comprehensive set of stories, but rather it is virtuous because the society embraces themselves as a multicultural community and they “respect the members of that community in all their diversity” now (Wolf, 1994, p. 82-83). Moreover, although she accepts the reasoning of Taylor’s presumption, that we have to learn different cultures because this helps a more comprehensive understanding of the world, she denies that this reasoning is a vital one (Wolf, 1994, p. 85).

The last contribution, from this book, in this part, will be from Michael Walzer who classifies liberalisms in Taylor’s article into two. The first kind of liberalism, which is called Liberalism 1, is defined by Walzer (1994) as follows:

Liberalism is committed in the strongest possible way to individual rights and, almost as a deduction from this, to a rigorously neutral state, that is, a state without cultural or religious projects or, indeed, any sort of collective goals beyond the personal freedom and the physical security, welfare, and safety of its citizens (p. 99).

On the contrary to liberalism 1, Walzer explains Liberalism 2 as follows:

Liberalism 2 allows for a state committed to the survival and flourishing of a particular nation, culture, or religion, or of a (limited) set of nations, cultures, and religions—so long as the basic rights of citizens who have different commitments or no such commitments at all are protected (Walzer, 1994, p. 99).

Since these well-explained definitions have much to tell, I prefer to put direct quotations above. I will benefit from this classification in the next parts of my thesis. Together with this classification, I think, Walzer's choice between the two liberalisms is significant in order to understand the essence of his ideal society. So, Walzer (1994) maintains that he would prefer "Liberalism 1 chosen from within Liberalism 2" (p. 102).

The last contribution to this part will be from a leading figure in multiculturalist philosophy, Will Kymlicka who claims that in the liberal new world order after 2<sup>nd</sup> World War minority rights are, wrongly, classified under the category of human rights (Kymlicka, 1996). Moreover, he maintains that liberals should complete the theory of human rights with a comprehensive theory of minority rights (Kymlicka, 1996).

In addition to this, as migration becomes more prominent today, boundaries are blurring day by day because of the human mobilization, and national dimension of life is inseparable from political discussion, representation rights such as "guaranteed seats for ethnic groups in central institutions of the state" or polyethnic rights such as "financial support and legal protection for certain practices associated with particular ethnic or religious groups" can be beneficial for better integration of migrants to the society (Kymlicka, 1996).

### **1.3. EXAMPLES OF POLICIES OF ASSIMILATIONISM AND MULTICULTURALISM**

Before discussing the criticisms of multiculturalism in the philosophical sense, it would be useful to mention roughly some examples of governmental policies of assimilationism and multiculturalism from different parts of the world. When we examine states' responses to the difference especially in the migratory context, we can observe a spectrum ranging from total denial of the difference to various forms of multiculturalism. Referring to Rex (1998), Tiryakian (2003) classifies these responses into four. Firstly, one can observe "total exclusion from the public sphere and returning of minorities to countries of origin" (Rex, 1998, as cited in Tiryakian, 2003, p. 31). Apartheid regime in South Africa decades ago can

be an example of this type (Tiryakian, 2003, p. 31). The second category could be “non recognition of minorities as culturally distinct but granting citizenship to those born or naturalized on host soil” (Rex, 1998, as cited in Tiryakian, 2003, p. 31). France and the United States are prominent examples of countries in this category (Tiryakian, 2003, p. 31). The third category includes countries that treat immigrants as temporary so that they do not offer the right to citizenship (Rex, 1998, as cited in Tiryakian, 2003, p. 31). Germany could be a country that embraces that kind of an attitude towards its immigrant population. Moreover, countries that accept multiculturalism as a response to cultural diversity constitute the fourth category (Rex, 1998, as cited in Tiryakian, 2003, p. 31). Yet, there are still different versions of multiculturalist policies in practice and philosophy. Within this category, there are two subcategories according to Tiryakian’s classification as follows:

- (a) recognition of minority communities and their cultures as part of the institutional fabric of the social order, but under the aegis and ultimate sanction of the state and its national culture (the indirect rule of many colonial and imperial systems, including the Ottoman *millet* system giving limited autonomy to multiple ethnic communities);
- (b) overhauling the structure of the national culture to have a more complex, diversified or hybrid culture, with autonomy for each of the major minority cultures while protecting and enhancing rights of individuals. Presumably, in this policy option, no one ethnic culture is privileged above any other (Rex, 1998, as cited in Tiryakian, 2003, p. 31).

In the European case after WWII, three major policy responses have been observable. In Rex and Singh’s categorization, the assimilation embodied in France’s policies lies at one corner of the spectrum, while countries like the United Kingdom, Sweden, and the Netherlands sit on the other side adopting multicultural policies (Rex & Singh, 2003, p. 6). According to them, there is also another type of response to immigrant workers mostly in German-speaking countries who deny giving political citizenship to immigrants (Rex & Singh, 2003, p. 6).

As Bertossi argues, based on the creed of the French Revolution, the French state is blind to its citizens in terms of ethno-racial differences (2007). According to Bertossi, French citizenship has two basic foundations: “civic individualism and national modernity” (2007, p3). As Bertossi argues, under civic individualism French state denies giving group rights to minorities and immigrants in the public

sphere and, therefore, the only target of rights is the individual (2007, p. 3). Referring to Schnapper (1994), Bertossi explains the role of national modernity in France as it has strengthened the monolithic sovereignty of the nation so that the national identity strongly balances the cultural, ethnic, religious identities of the minority communities (2007, p. 3). According to Entzinger and Biezeveld, notwithstanding that the French state does not treat immigrants as they are temporary guests, the state expects from immigrants to assimilate to the mainstream culture of the society (2003, p. 14). Moreover, as Entzinger and Biezeveld argue, “immigrant communities are not recognized as relevant entities by public authorities” (2003, p. 14). According to them, it is hard to observe cultural or religious differences in the public sphere in France (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003, p.14). Ban on religious symbols like headscarves at schools could be one of the examples that explicate the intolerance of the French state to cultural and religious differences in the public sphere (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003, p.14). So, according to Bertossi, in France, unrecognizing ethno-racial differences prevent the state from overcoming discrimination in the society and the rift between public institutions and underrepresented immigrant communities (2007, p. 5). Moreover, according to Entzinger and Biezeveld, individuals who cannot assimilate into French society eventually has become marginalized (2003, p.14). In this system, according to Borooah and Mangan, the destiny of assimilated groups is losing many of its characteristics (2009, p. 36). So, the French assimilation system is deprived of giving due recognition to its immigrant groups. Moreover, the drawbacks and inadequacies of assimilationism in France have become observable after the terrorist attacks in France carried out by French citizens who have immigrational backgrounds. Most of those attacks were carried by marginalized immigrants in French society. So, as Wihtol de Wenden claims “in France, like most democracies, the rise of claims for difference means that the republican model of integration has no other choice but to negotiate with multiculturalism” (2003, p. 77).

In Europe, countries such as Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom could be taken into consideration as countries that carry out multiculturalist policies (Rex & Singh, 2003, p. 6). According to Rex and Singh

(2003, p. 6), Swedish governments approach minority communities with the comprehensiveness of the welfare state. However, referring to Schierup and Alund (1990) Rex and Singh suggest that there is a problem of true representation of immigrant minorities since leaders of these communities usually have been chosen from elderly men and the younger members of these communities were underrepresented (as cited in Rex & Singh, 2003, p. 6).

On the other hand, Rex and Singh maintain that *pillarization* is observable while dealing with cultural diversity in the Dutch case (2003, p. 6). As Rex and Singh suggest the pillarization means “the establishment of separate education systems, separate trade unions and separate media for Roman Catholics and Protestants” (2003, p. 6). Moreover, this pillarization policy is also valid for other ethnic minorities in the Netherlands (Rex & Singh, 2003, p. 6). Referring to Rath, Rex and Singh mention that *minorization* does not necessarily mean the equal treatment to minorities, rather it could also be a process that works for the unequal treatment to those who labeled as minorities (Rath, 1991, as cited in Rex and Singh, 2003, p. 6). Commonwealth countries such as Canada and Australia could be sorted as countries that embrace multicultural philosophy in their policy approaches starting from the 1970s while dealing with the cultural diversity (Rex & Singh, 2003, p. 10-11).

In Europe, the United Kingdom could be regarded as the country whose multiculturalist policies are the most developed (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003; Borooh & Mangan, 2009). Since the British state accepted multiculturalism as an official policy while dealing with cultural diversity, understanding the notion of integration in the eyes of the British government could be useful to understand the multiculturalist logic behind its policies. In 1966, Home Secretary Roy Jenkins defined integration as follows:

Integration is perhaps a rather loose word. I do not regard it as meaning the loss, by immigrants, of their own national characteristics and culture. I do not think that we need in this country a ‘melting pot’, which will turn everybody out in a common mould, as one of a series of carbon copies of someone’s misplaced vision of the stereotyped Englishman... It would deprive us of most of the positive benefits of immigration that I believe to be very great indeed. I define integration, therefore, not a flattening process

of assimilation but as equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance.” (Jenkins, 1967, p. 267, as cited in Bertossi, 2007, p. 20).

According to Rex and Singh, this definition is important because, in terms of equal treatment, it suggests a type of multiculturalism without a hierarchy between different cultural communities (2003, p. 6). Entzinger and Biezeveld explain the British multicultural model as a system in which permanent immigrants are accepted as the full members of their new society by highlighting their cultural origins (2003, p. 14). Moreover, since the multicultural character of society is appreciated, services are provided to each community to enhance their cultural identity (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003, p. 14). Furthermore, governments in the United Kingdom take measures to promote mutual understanding between distinct communities in order to achieve a harmonious society (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003, p. 14). Contrary to France, in the United Kingdom, according to Borooah and Mangan, distinct cultural groups can achieve an equal status without privileging any of them (2009, p. 36). While distinct characteristics of immigrant groups are not recognized in the public sphere in France, differences of immigrant groups in the United Kingdom can be represented in the public sphere. According to Bertossi, multiculturalism policies in the United Kingdom have been shaping around concepts such as “ethnicity, cultural and religious diversity, minority groups, racial relations, pluralism in civil society, and weak national identity” (Bertossi, 2007, p. 9).

However, as Rex and Singh claim, 9/11 and the start of the fight against terrorism after 9/11 weakened the rhetoric of multiculturalism in the United Kingdom (2003, p. 14- 15). According to Bertossi, “the 2001 and 2005 riots, and London attacks on 7 July 2005 were a serious challenge to their model” (2007, p. 4). Moreover, Rex and Singh mention in their essay about the “violent conflicts between white British and Asians in some northern cities and asylum seekers in Glasgow and other places” (2003, p. 14). Furthermore, they mention the political discussions at the beginning of the 2000s about the threats of multiculturalism, especially about its segregated forms of housing and education (Rex & Singh, 2003, p. 14-15). In a similar vein, Borooah and Mangan argue that governments who carry

out policies of multiculturalism have a difficulty of “separate development” of communities and “balkanization of the population” (2009, p. 35). It is possible to observe a return on the discourse of state officials in the United Kingdom about multiculturalism. In 2011, then the Prime Minister, David Cameron stated in his famous speech as follows:

Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream. We’ve failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to belong. We’ve even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run completely counter to our values (Cameron, 2011).

When we look at the examples of assimilationist and multicultural policies in two poles, it is possible to see an approximation in policies dealing with cultural diversity in France and the United Kingdom in recent years (Bertossi, 2007). In the example of France, inadequate recognition of minorities and increasing discrimination in French society have led to restlessness and riots in France in the last decade. Because of these, according to Wihtol de Wenden France need to reconcile with the main tenets of multiculturalism (2003). On the other hand, although multiculturalist policies paved the way for due recognition in British society, it is argued that lack of interaction between communities and lack of participation of distinct communities to the common culture have led to incarcerate those communities in their cultural walls. As a response to situations mentioned above, according to Rex and Singh, the idea of unitary British citizenship has been gaining prominence in political discussions in recent years in the United Kingdom (2003, p. 15).

#### **1.4. CRITICISMS OF MULTICULTURALISM: POST-MULTICULTURALISM, COSMOPOLITANISM, AND RADICAL COSMOPOLITANISM OR COSMOPOLITANISM FROM BELOW**

Although multiculturalism and politics of recognition provide a comprehensive toolbox for understanding the problematic of cultural diversity and

for fostering cultural plurality, it is often blamed for incarcerating communities within their cultural walls (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 11). So, this part of the chapter will, first, compile the set of criticisms towards multiculturalism. Most of these criticisms will be from traditional and radical cosmopolitan thinkers. Secondly, I will try to compile set of criticisms towards multiculturalism in the pos-multiculturalist era that is mostly designates the characteristics of the era after the 9/11 attacks and terror attacks in Europe in the beginnings of the new millennium. In that section, the main characteristics of post-multicultural era will be also be mentioned. Then, I will, shortly, introduce the main characteristics of traditional cosmopolitanism which is blamed for pushing different cultures into the sameness and erasing cultural diversity. After that, I will try to point out the philosophy behind cosmopolitanism from below or more hybrid forms of living together and discuss opportunities that it provides for living in a pluralistic society.

#### **1.4.1. Criticisms Towards Multiculturalism**

Firstly, I will exhibit here supplementary ideas rather than criticism by Habermas and Baumann.

By annotating Walzer's classification of Liberalism 1 and 2, Habermas (1994) claims that if the system of rights, guaranteed by a democratic constitutional state, can be internalized as an integrative concept, which regards both equal social conditions and equal treatment of cultural differences, then, "there is no need to contrast a truncated Liberalism 1 with a model that introduces a notion of collective rights that is alien to the system (p. 107-116). Otherwise, according to him, too individualistically constructed and non-integrative system of rights without institutionalized under the democratic constitutional state cannot answer the needs of the struggle for recognition and articulation of collective identities (Habermas, 1994, p. 107-116).

Habermas' questions and his answers about immigration, which is becoming more prominent day by day, are also stimulating. He asks as follows:



Assuming that the autonomously developed state order is indeed shaped by ethics, does the right to self-determination not include the right of a nation to affirm its identity vis-à-vis immigrants who could give a different cast to this historically developed political-cultural form of life? (Habermas, 1994, p. 137).

Habermas (1994) answers this question by classifying integration efforts into two: on the level of “ethical-political self-understanding of the citizens and political culture of the host country” on one hand, on the habituation to the customs of local culture on the other (p. 138). Therefore, according to him, because immigrants cannot be forced to give up their cultural affinities democratic constitutional states can only seek the former: integration or socialization into the political culture of the host country (Habermas, 1994, p. 139).

Nancy Fraser (1999), on the other hand, offers a different perspective by saying that “justice today requires both redistribution and recognition” (as cited in Baumann, 2001, p. 77). Moreover, Baumann, who confirms this idea, presents a substantial analysis of politics of recognition and multiculturalism in his book *“Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World”*. Considering the widening of social injustices, increasing poverty, and the insecurity caused by them, Baumann claims that the call for recognition will be “toothless” without a sustained bid for redistribution (2001). According to Baumann (2001), if recognition claims can be supplemented by the bid for social justice and the equal opportunity, then the way for fertile dialogue can be opened. Otherwise, communities could fall into a trap that is surrounded by somehow culturalist or essentialist tendencies that Taylor embraces (Bauman, 2001).

Other sets of criticisms will be from a cosmopolitan thinker, Appiah who also wrote a reflection to Taylor’s *“Politics of Recognition”*. Notwithstanding that Appiah embraces basic ideas of multiculturalism and politics of recognition such as respecting other cultures, understanding beliefs and values of different groups, celebrating cultural production of other cultural groups, dialogical construction of the self, civic equality and so on, he compiles several disagreements of his about some elements of multiculturalism in a session of conference called “Concepts of Multiculturalism” in Oslo. Firstly, he maintains that “most identity groups are not

defined by a shared culture, a set of beliefs, habits, values held in common (Challenges to Multiculturalism, June 25-26, 2012). For example, Sunnis and Shias don't have the same rituals, but they shared Muslim identity. Secondly, Appiah maintains that "multiculturalism often underestimates the significance of the fact that people belong more than one religious or ethno-racial groups" (Challenges to Multiculturalism, June 25-26, 2012). Thirdly, worthwhile arts or cultural production can be created by mostly some individual efforts rather than a particular group from a particular culture and those art forms can live across boundaries (Challenges to Multiculturalism, June 25-26, 2012). Moreover, there are significant forms of identities that define the person such as gender, occupation other than religious or ethnic identities (Challenges to Multiculturalism, June 25-26, 2012). Furthermore, there is a false assumption of multiculturalism about cross-cultural misunderstandings that hatred is not caused by false beliefs stemming from misunderstandings, on the contrary, false beliefs are caused by the hatred (Challenges to Multiculturalism, June 25-26, 2012). Lastly, that a particular group treats or believes something as valuable does not necessarily mean that it really is valuable (Challenges to Multiculturalism, June 25-26, 2012).

#### **1.4.2. Post-Multiculturalism**

In this section, three basic critiques of multiculturalism that explain the reasons behind the transition to the post-multicultural era will be mentioned. Furthermore, the main characteristics of post-multiculturalism will be compiled.

According to Kymlicka (2010), in the post-multicultural literature, multiculturalism is characterized as follows:

as a feel-good celebration of ethno-cultural diversity, encouraging citizens to acknowledge and embrace the panoply of customs, traditions, music and cuisine that exist in a multi-ethnic society (p. 98).

According to this definition, multiculturalism has been criticized under three basic headings. First of all, as Kymlicka states, issues of economic and political inequality among different cultural communities cannot be overcome by simply celebrating cultural difference (2010, p. 98-99). According to Kymlicka, "problems of unemployment, poor educational outcomes, residential segregation, poor language

skills of the minorities or guest communities, and political marginalization” can be counted as some of those real problems (2010, p. 98-99). As Kymlicka states, although celebrating cultural differences can pave the way for a greater understanding among different cultures, simply celebrating cultural differences may be misleading and dangerous (2010, p. 99). First of all, not all customs such as female circumcision or forced marriage are worthy of celebrating (Kymlicka, 2010, p. 99). Secondly, it may lead to “ignoring the real challenges that differences in cultural values and religious doctrine can raise” (Kymlicka, 2010, p. 99).

Secondly, according to Kymlicka (2010), the type of multiculturalism defined above enhances the static understanding of cultures so that the stress on the distinct cultures and customs poses the risk of ignoring the graces of mixing, hybridity, adaptation, and mongrelization of cultures (p. 99). As Kymlicka claims, this may cause the reproduction of otherness of the perceptions of minorities in society (Kymlicka, 2010, p. 99).

Lastly, according to Kymlicka, this type of multiculturalism has a risk to “reinforce the power inequalities and cultural restrictions within minority groups” (2010, p. 99). Furthermore, as Kymlicka argues, in this type of multiculturalism, the salience of particular characteristics of cultures is designated by traditional elites of these cultures and this hinders the efforts of internal reformers within those cultures (2010, p. 99). The aforementioned Swedish case above could be a good example to understand this critique. Therefore, Kymlicka claims that reproduction of power inequalities and cultural restrictions within groups “imprison people in cultural scripts that they are not allowed to question or dispute” (Kymlicka, 2010, p. 99).

According to Gozdecka et al., when we examine the policies of countries that historically implement multicultural policies such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and the Netherlands, it is possible to observe a transformation from multiculturalist ideas to notions that prioritize national identity and belonging in the dominant discourse on cultural diversity (Gozdecka et al., p. 53). As Gozdecka et al. argue, “these notions are seen as urgently necessary conditions to

counteract the fragmenting forces of multiculturalism leading to the emergence of parallel lives” (2014, p. 53).

Keeping those critiques of multiculturalism mentioned above in mind, Gozdecka et al. (2014) explicate trends behind the transition from multiculturalism to the post-multiculturalism era under five headings. According to them, the first symptom is “the excessive focus on gender inequality within traditional minority cultures” (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 52). By gender inequality, unequal treatments towards women such as female circumcision, forced marriages, honor killings, the role of women in social and work life, dresses of women and so on. According to Gozdecka et al. (2014, p. 54), increasing the salience of gender inequality in traditional minority communities has led to two developments that affect the backlash of multiculturalism. Firstly, the maltreatment of women reproduces the perception about minority cultures as they are “inherently oppressive and coercive (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 54). Secondly, it reinforces “the stereotypical distinctions between liberal and illiberal, modern and traditional, enlightened and backward cultures” (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 54). Therefore, this situation has fed the culturalist arguments.

The second tendency that Gozdecka et al. (2014) observes is “the shift from ethnicity and culture towards religion”. Particularly Islam in Western countries is meant by this shift (Gozdecka et al., 2014). According to them, especially in the post-9/11 era, it is possible to observe the increasing salience of the discussions about the incompatibility of Islam with the values of freedom and democracy (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 54). These discussions have led to some doubts about the problems regarding the integration of Muslim migrants (Gozdecka et al., 2014). These doubts have fed into the policy approaches of Western countries and xenophobic atmosphere that reflect the retreat from multiculturalism. Rising Islamophobia in Western countries, policy implementations like the ban on the construction of minarets in Switzerland, ban on face veiling in France, complicating the requirements for citizenship for Muslim migrants in the Netherlands and Finland could be some examples of this trend (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 55). Consequently, according to Gozdecka et al., “expulsion of religionized subjects

from the sphere of access and appearance has fed into the perception of the inability of immigrants with Muslim background to integrate in host societies” (2014, p. 55)

The third trend that Gozdecka et al. (2014) observes is the “increasing emphasis on social cohesion and security”. The increasing salience of social cohesion in culturally diverse societies is related to the criticism about multiculturalism concerning the ghettoization of cultural communities and fragmenting forces of multiculturalism (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 55-56). The increasing salience of security, on the other hand, can be associated with the 9/11 and terror attacks in London and Spain at the beginning of the 2000s (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 56). It is possible to observe this association in the European refugee crisis after the terror attacks in France and Belgium in 2015. According to Gozdecka et al., anti-immigration sentiments have strengthened by the feeling of economic insecurity of people living in host countries (growing unemployment and unpopular austerity measures) stemming from the economic crisis in 2008 (2014, p. 56).

Lastly, the two other trends that Gozdecka et al. detect are “the emergence of new forms of racism” and “relativization of international and transnational human rights law”. (Gozdecka, 2014).

### **1.4.3. Cosmopolitanism**

One can take the history of the cosmopolitan idea back to the earliest times of Diogenes saying, “I am a citizen of the world”. Stoics’ idea, whose precursor of Kant’s “universal law”, is cosmopolitan in such a way that their aspirations are to the justice, goodness, dignity of reason in every human being rather than partisan loyalties (Nussbaum, 1996). Nussbaum gives a very famous definition of cosmopolitanism in her book, *“For love of country: Debating the limits of patriotism”*, as follows: “We should recognize humanity wherever it occurs, and give its fundamental ingredients, reason and moral capacity, our first allegiance and respect” (Nussbaum, 1996, p. 7). Furthermore, Nussbaum (1996) offers a cosmopolitan education that pledges a) learning more about us through the lens of others in the universe, b) solving problems easier by international cooperation and global knowledge, and c) recognizing better moral obligations to “the other” (3-17).

One can embrace the gist of cosmopolitan education that Nussbaum proposes and, also, of Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism from this quotation in the essay: "The life of cosmopolitan, who puts right before country and universal reason before the symbols of national belonging, need not be boring, flat, or lacking in love" (Nussbaum, 1996, p. 17).

### **1.4.3. Radical Cosmopolitanism or Cosmopolitanism from Below and the Hybrid**

The cosmopolitan idea, also, embraces the idea of the dialogical construction of identity. In cosmopolitan thinking human being is relational so that cosmopolitan identity could be achieved through sustained deliberation and engagement. Nevertheless, the traditional cosmopolitan idea is criticized because it cleanses different cultural affinities and pushes communities into the sameness. In other words, under the so-called universal law, it emphasizes the Western culture and silences the cultural diversity of people who live in the margins of the world. Thus, there is a growing tendency called radical cosmopolitanism which denies top-down forms of universalism and embrace a cosmopolitanism from below within the literature of cosmopolitan thinkers like Appiah (2006), Beck (2002), Cheah (2006), Landau and Freemantle (2010), Nyers (2003), Werbner (2008), and Delanty (2009) as Baban and Rygiel argues (2018, p. 34).

Referred as "reimagining cosmopolitanism from the margins" in IKSU's report by Baban and Rygiel, "radical cosmopolitanism begins with the idea that cultural particularity should neither be absorbed into the larger whole nor be viewed as something unchanging, frozen and authentic (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 34). Moreover, according to Baban and Rygiel (2018), unlike assimilationist policies, integration is a two-way street and guest communities also can have a say about the construction of national identity in radical cosmopolitan thinking (p. 36). Furthermore, radical cosmopolitanism differs from multiculturalism in the sense that minority groups have a potential to transform national narratives as well as recognition and preservation of their cultures (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 36). These

can come true thanks to the very idea that radical cosmopolitanism paves the way for the continuous exchange of ideas, values, and beliefs between dominant culture and minorities. Therefore, it blurs the line between being the host and being the guest. As Baban (2006, 119-120) argues radical cosmopolitanism creates an atmosphere that dominant cultures and minorities construct a new life together and no one is the guest anymore (as cited in Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 46). One last quotation from İKSV's report will crystallize the difference of logic behind radical cosmopolitanism from assimilationist and multiculturalist policies as follows:

Radical cosmopolitanism acts on this premise of finding common humanity, not by showing tolerance towards the guest nor by establishing a set of rules to regulate the host's responsibilities towards the guest, but by redefining the host's sovereignty through a mutually constitutive relationship between a host (who is supposed to define the rules of hospitality) and a guest (who is expected to obey those rules that are already in place) (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 47).

Radical cosmopolitanism is also termed as the "cosmopolitanism from below" reminding the very nature of radical cosmopolitanism that people from the margins of the society or peoples located in the margins of the world can have a say about the shared identity. In his brilliant essay, Ulrich Beck (2007), suggests cosmopolitanism from below as a strategy for Europe to overcome its crisis about cultural diversity, migration flows, and its democracy. In other words, he offers to take Europe's cultural, economic, and social heterogeneity and turn them into Europe's productive advantage (Beck, 2007, p. 68).

Cosmopolitanism from below is always a mutual concession such that it appreciates both otherness and unity in diversity. According to Beck, it resembles the Habermas' idea of "reflexive universalism based on communicative action" such a way that both give importance to tolerance while acknowledging the significance of shared universal values (as cited in Beck, 2007, p. 71). The difference of "cosmopolitanism from below" from nationalist and particularistic thinking lies in their approach to "the different". As Beck (2007) argues "cosmopolitan integration is based on a paradigm shift whose principle is that *diversity is not the problem but the solution*" (p. 73).

Globalization has accelerated human mobility via migrations. This brings new perspectives while thinking about cultural diversity. Now, we live in a world where different cultures are engaging each other, exchanging their values, and construct new shared cultures out of them. This reminds me of the term “third space” that Edward Soja (1996) uses in his book, *Third Space: Journeys to Los Angeles and other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Soja describes the term “third space” as reimagining space and social spatiality where “ideas, events, appearances, and meaning”, simultaneously real and imagined, are perpetually transforming (Soja, 1996). This imagination provides us with a great toolbox that helps to open a new way to think above all binarisms and to enable us to appreciate other sets of choices (Soja, 1996). In our case, this is the ability to think beyond assimilation and multiculturalism without squeezing the binarism between the two.

When we move the term third space to the cultural sphere, we can come across to Homi Bhabha. According to Soja, Bhabha’s third space is a space where it paves the way for both radical openness and hybridity (1996). When we look at the perspective of Bhabha towards the different or the other, these sentences of Bhabha (1990, p. 209) can clarify his position on cultural difference as follows:

With the notion of cultural difference, I try to place myself in that position of liminality, in that productive space of the construction of culture as difference, in the spirit of alterity or otherness (as cited in Soja, 1996, p. 139).

According to Gilroy, “transnationals, like cosmopolitans, are likely to be multilingual and multicultural, but their situation, their multiculturalism, must be distinguished from that of a third category: hybrids” (1998, p. 232). In this vein a new term, hybridity, is stepping into the discussion of handling cultural diversity. Bhabha argues that “the process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation (Bhabha, 1990a, p. 211, as cited in Soja, 1996, p 140). Grillo maintains that “hybridity celebrates polyphony and creativity (1998, p. 232). In a similar vein, Rushdie argues that “it rejoices mongrelization” (as cited in Grillo, 1998, p. 232). Since cultures are not constant and are open to changes when they



meet other cultures, cultural hybridity connotes the permanent exchange and dialogue between cultures. Through this dialogue and exchange, new mixed and shared cultures can emerge when different cultures encounter. According to Bhabha (1990 and 1994), as a new space of deliberation of “meaning and representation”, cultural hybridity, designed a new global culture where there is no space for “exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures”, but for “the representation of cultures’ hybridity” (as cited in Soja, 1996, p. 140-141). Therefore, this is “beyond multiculturalism”. According to Gilroy (1987, p. 39) and Bhabha, both multiculturalism and separatism derive from a static understanding of culture and cultural essentialism (as cited in Grillo, 1998, p. 232). So, Gilroy (1987, p. 39) claims that “the result has been to promote a pseudo-pluralism in which a culturally defined ethnic particularity has become the basis of political association (as cited in Grillo, 1998, p. 233). Lastly, therefore, Grillo opts for non-essentializing egalitarian multiculturalism as the least-worst option to achieve better integration, rather than an assimilationist or essentialist multicultural options (1998, p. 236).

#### **1.5. THE UNESCO DOCUMENTS ABOUT CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS**

Since the UNESCO documents on this subject are the statements that are filtered from all this literature, I care about the points that UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) and UN Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005) point to in conclusion. So, as we still live in a world order (wounded though) in which nation states are part of and because we are still governed by those nation states these documents are still significant in order to resolve the tensions that cultural diversity causes. Furthermore, these documents are important for my case since Turkey is a signatory country of the UN Convention on the Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions with some reservations. So, this part will try to summarize those statements from those documents that shed light on the issue of living together peacefully with cultural diversity.

Cultural diversity, defined as “the common heritage of humanity” in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), is as vital for humankind as the importance of biodiversity for nature. Furthermore, intercultural dialogue that is based on the engagement of different cultures is the best way to refute the Huntington’s (1993) theory of clash of civilizations (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001). Moreover, besides arts and literature, culture consists of lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs and is located in the center of the discussions about identity and social cohesion (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001). So, the general conference of UNESCO affirms that as follows:

respect for the diversity of cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, in a climate of mutual trust and understanding are among the best guarantees of international peace and security (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001).

Together with this, the general conference of UNESCO aspires to “greater solidarity on the basis of recognition of cultural diversity, of awareness of the unity of humankind, and of the development of intercultural exchanges in UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001). Lastly, in article 16 of the declaration, the importance of access to culture is emphasized in accordance with Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001).

UNESCO drafted a more comprehensive document on cultural diversity and named it as “Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions” in 2005. Notwithstanding that it is a more detailed and comprehensive document than the declaration in 2001, the gist of their statements about this subject is more or less the same. Yet, UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions the term diversity of cultural expressions include a more expanded and precise meaning than cultural diversity and it is a binding legal document for countries who are signatories.

## **1.6. INSIGHTS FROM THE LITERATURE: HOW DO DIFFERENT CULTURES LIVE TOGETHER AND HOW DO GOVERNMENTS ACHIEVE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE**

To conclude this chapter, I will try to explain my conclusions about how to approach the integration problem of Syrian refugees in Turkey using my insights from the literature that I have compiled above. Integration of migrants and decreasing the tension between host and the guest community is really a tough problematic. So, there is no one-size-fits-all solution in this issue. I would choose a radical cosmopolitan approach which also embraces the main tenets of multiculturalism. Until now, multiculturalism gives us a great toolbox to think about cultural diversity. Taylor's work on politics of recognition provides us a base for this issue. The vitality of equal recognition for persons and cultures, the dialogical character of the construction of identity, the equal dignity of human being, the importance of respect for every human being, the need for collective rights along with individual ones are some of those from that base. Unlike all these significant teachings of multiculturalism, the risk for imprisoning cultural groups into their own cultural sphere is still there. So, I believe the power of finding common ground between 'different' communities, of keeping open the channels for constant dialogue, and of the potential that both host and guest communities can shape a shared culture. Furthermore, this interaction between host and incoming communities can give rise to emergence of new hybrid cultures that are owned by both immigrants and host communities. In other words, both host communities and incoming communities are co-creators of these hybrid cultures. In this vein, these hybrid cultures enable platforms for intercultural dialogue, which also allows for the celebration of their identity and culture. With the acceleration of the mobilization of humans, ideas, goods it is inevitable to think free from a continuous exchange of ideas, values, and beliefs. That's why I would choose cosmopolitanism from below. Nevertheless, one can see that the culturalization of social, economic, political problems in the conflicts of the contemporary world and vice versa. So, social and economic injustices are as important as misrecognition of identities.

Remembering Baumann's words, recognition claims are not powerful enough without redistribution claims (Baumann, 2001). While taking these teachings as a guide to manage cultural diversity, there is a need to mention that we need new convincing philosophical discussions that transcend the current thoughts such as assimilation, multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and radical cosmopolitanism in an age when immigration mobility is so intense - considering the new realities in the world.



## **SECOND CHAPTER**

### **THE ROLE OF CULTURE AND THE ARTS TO ACHIEVE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

Article 27 of the UN Declaration of Universal Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits” (1948). Culture and the arts can also play a role in facilitating the inclusion of newcomers to society. This chapter, mainly, will try to investigate how culture and the arts affect both integration processes and de-escalation of the tension between host and guest communities. Thus, in the first part, there will be definitions of concepts such as culture, cultural production, culture in the artistic sense, and integration. After that, there will be a section presenting the classification of roles that culture and the arts can play in integration between local people and migrants. In order to comprehend these roles better, there will be some cardinal examples from the world while explaining those roles. This section will also try to shed light on the question of what makes culture different than other integration tools and what is its peculiarity. Lastly, I will seek an answer to the question of how the approach to the use of culture and arts in integration would be more effective.

#### **2.1. DEFINITIONS OF SOME USEFUL CONCEPTS FOR THE DISCUSSION IN THE CHAPTER**

I prefer to use the definition of culture in its broadest sense because it provides better opportunities to understand and explain the issue of cultural participation which is my focal point while discussing the roles of culture and arts in integration. So, I chose two different, but related definitions by Clifford Geertz and Paul Kuttner. According to Geertz (1973), culture is “a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about attitudes toward life” (p. 89). So,

the role of culture is creating meanings, deciphering those meaning, and transmitting them. So, this carries us to Kuttner's brief definition of culture. Kuttner (2015, 71) defines culture as "ongoing process of collective meaning-making" (as cited in Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 16).

Furthermore, cultural production is the embodiment of "meaning-making" conceived as "the creation and consumption of various forms of symbolic creativity including mass media, language, slang, fashion, and the arts" (Kuttner, 2015, p. 71, as cited in Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 16). Like customs, traditions, expressions, and foods; the arts also can be considered within the realm of cultural productions as a component. This brings us to the definition of culture in the artistic sense. Raymond Williams defines culture in the aesthetic sense as "the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity" (as cited in Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture [European Commission] (DG EAC), 2017, p. 11). Positioning the arts as a component of everyday life and culture helps us to see better the effects of culture and arts in the integration of newcomers to the society (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 17).

The last important definition that constitutes the base for this chapter will be the definition of integration. Integration is mostly associated with the adaptation of incoming societies to the host society. However, understanding the integration as a process that works in both directions can provide us a more comprehensive toolbox in migratory and refugee crises. So, Hynie's definition can be useful to understand the twofold dialectic of integration. According to Hynie, "integration is a process whereby both receiving communities and the newcomers change, and change each other" (2018, p. 267). Moreover, according to Crisp, refugee integration is legal, economic, and social adaptation processes in which both refugees and the host population are parts of, and thanks to these processes they coexist peacefully without giving up their own identity (Crisp, 2004). Hence, this kind of explanation of integration is compatible with the main tenets of radical cosmopolitanism that I mentioned in the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter by emphasizing the importance of dialogue, finding the common ground, experiencing the shared culture, giving power also to the refugees to contribute to that shared culture.

## **2.2. CLASSIFICATION ON THE ROLES OF CULTURE AND THE ARTS IN INTEGRATION PROCESSES**

There are several benefits of culture and arts for the inclusion of newcomers to society. I put literature's focuses related to the subject into four, mostly interrelated, categories. First of all, culture and the arts strengthen both incoming individuals and communities by both their healing power and their potential to empower the people. Secondly, culture and arts contribute to peaceful coexistence by enhancing intercultural dialogue or conflict resolution and by teaching civic education. Thirdly, cultural production has transformative potential for changing the very boundaries between the self and the other, and eventually, it has also the potential to create radical cosmopolitan habitats (Baban & Rygiel, 2018). The last category is about the economic impacts of cultural production both for incoming groups and for the economy of the whole country. So, this section will be an attempt to explicate those categories in depth by benefiting mostly from reports related to the issue.

### **2.2.1. Culture as a Strengthening Factor Both for Individuals and Communities**

Strengthening refugees and migrants through culture and the arts can be examined under two headings: the healing power of arts and the potential of arts to empower people. I will explain, first, the healing power of the arts. The art, apart from other forms of formal communication, is a sentimental form that addresses emotions and stimulates them. Whether the arts provide entertainment or function to make sense of certain emotions, events, experiences, and ideas, the arts eventually serve the well-being of people. Mirza (2005, p. 262) maintains that the arts correspond to certain emotional needs of citizens so that arts enable a new function to governments (as cited in Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 50). In our case, cultural production or participation serves a certain function for the well-being of immigrants or refugees. Migration in itself is a traumatic experience. Furthermore, refugees are mostly people who flee from war, natural disasters or persecution.

Besides all the integration problems that refugees face, they also have to deal with their traumatic situation deriving from their precarious living conditions in the host country and their past traumatic experiences in their home country. So, arts can be useful to cope with those traumas. McGregor and Ragab claim that: “Artistic expression can be an important tool in therapeutic settings since it promotes self-esteem, facilitates the expression of emotions as well as the processing of traumatic experiences” (2016, p. 8). So, art therapy has been becoming a powerful device to cope with traumatic experiences. In their studies, Fitzpatrick (2002), Rousseau et al. (2005), and Rousseau & Heusch (2000) demonstrate that “art therapy can improve physical, mental, and emotional well-being of immigrants and refugees and promote their social inclusion” (as cited in McGregor & Ragab, 2016, p. 8). So, according to Baban and Rygiel, thanks to the healing power of arts, arts-based or culture-based community development is on the rise in cities (2018, p. 50).

Giving some examples might be useful to understand the effects of culture and arts in response to traumatic situations. In 2008, many people were displaced and obliged to live in refugee camps because of the increase in xenophobic violence in South Africa. Michelle Atlas (2009) explicates “Lefika Lo Phodiso” Johannesburg-based art therapy center in which film, photography, drawings, and art workshops were used to transform bad experiences of residents in refugee camps into self-healing and counseling to those immigrants was provided. Moreover, Lefika curated an exhibition “Safe Spaces at Safe Shelters” which reflects experiences of displacement and xenophobia that residents of camps have undergone (Atlas, 2009). Atlas summarizes the impact of this exhibition as follows: “Providing a space for debriefing, the opportunity to tell one’s stories and a chance to process the displacement experience was vital for supporting a community in transition, struggling with issues of identity and belonging” (2009, p. 526). Other than that, Bread Houses Network could be a good example to explain the healing power of the arts and culture, especially for disadvantaged groups. Bread Houses Network has developed bread therapy which combines baking with some forms of art such as storytelling, drawing, and theatre (DG EAC 2017, p. 71). The founder of Bread Houses Network, Nadezhda Savova-Grigova expresses that breadmaking,



which is a symbol of friendship and sharing, could be an instrument to unite people and express their traumatic experiences in a world in which horror and terror prevail (Bread Houses Network, 2016).

Examples above not only show the healing power of culture and the arts but also exhibit their role as the empowerment of the individuals and vulnerable groups. Cultural production and participation pave the way for the empowerment of people by opening up new spaces to express themselves freely, to develop their skills, to raise their self-esteem and their feeling of belonging to the society, and eventually to help to provide recognition in the society. In EUROCITIES' policy paper titled as Guidelines for cities on the role of culture in the integration of refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers; the role of culture and arts on empowerment is examined under three headings. According to the paper, firstly, cultural participation gives people a sense of belonging to the community (EUROCITIES, 2016, p. 1). Secondly, active participation in cultural projects may increase people's self-esteem and develop their skills which ease their social and economic integration eventually (EUROCITIES, 2016, p. 1). Thirdly, the cultural participation of migrants gives them an opportunity to contribute to the community in the host country (EUROCITIES, 2016, p. 1). According to the report of DG EAC, the empowerment of migrants may take place through art projects because they can provide a space for dialogue and a basis for voice-attaining (2017, p. 31). The issue of dialogue will be discussed in the next section, but voice attaining also is a significant matter for the empowerment of migrants. Cultural participation of incoming groups provides them a tool to explore their identity better and express their troubles, causes, experiences freely. Furthermore, art is such a powerful instrument that refugees' voices can be heard easier via art projects by host communities and masses.

While refugees are empowering by attaining their voice and expressing themselves, it is important that the local community in the host country is open to hearing the voice of refugees. At this point, concepts such as overcoming prejudices, empathy, and mutual understanding come to the fore. The example of Augusto Boal's Theatre of Oppressed Framework can be beneficial to understand the role of arts in overcoming prejudice and developing empathy. In a report

commissioned by European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual (EENCA), McGregor and Ragab investigated 96 identified European cultural initiatives taking place 2014 and 2016 which work on integration of refugees and migrants through art projects and found that approximately one-fifth of those initiatives focused on theatre, many of which were using the framework of Theatre of Oppressed developed by Augusto Boal (McGregor & Ragab, 2016, p. 12). McGregor and Ragab (2016) explicate the role of Boal's framework in establishing empathy between different groups in society as follows:

Boal challenges conventional theatre etiquette through promoting audience participation, or 'spec-acting'. Forum Theatre, for example, involves a short play being presented by actors in which audience members are invited to stop the play and replace the protagonist allowing the audience to explore the different ways of dealing with situations. In the area of migration, this can be an effective way of dealing with prejudice and promoting an understanding of the 'other' (p. 12).

Through such participatory art projects, according to McNevin (2010, p. 148), refugees can create counter-narratives of their own experiences and become the shapers of civic culture in that community (as cited in Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 58). So, the cultural participation of refugees helps to overcome discrimination disseminating from prejudices in the society and to establish empathy between host and incoming communities. Hence, this process contributes to the appropriate recognition of refugees and migrants which enhances the empowerment of both individuals and groups from incoming society because, as I mentioned in the first chapter, the identity of individuals and groups is constructed through dialogic processes.

This dialogic process could be a good point to switch to the next section on the role of cultural participation in integration. Yet, one last point could be significant in terms of the empowerment of migrants, to my mind: language acquisition. Language has a key role in integration (Esser, 2006). On one hand, artistic expressions facilitate non-verbal communication, they also help newcomers to acquire languages (McGregor & Ragab, 2016, p. 7). McGregor and Ragab (2016) indicated that, in the report that investigated identified 96 cultural initiatives in

Europe, many cultural initiatives that target young immigrants also have branches for language acquisition as a supplementary (p. 19). They can serve for language acquisition either by language courses or projects that include literature, theatre and so on.

### **2.2.2. Culture and the Arts as Determinant Instruments in Integration via Civic Education and Intercultural Dialogue**

The role of cultural participation in civic education and especially in the intercultural dialogue are related to its role in the empowerment of individuals. First of all, art projects can a useful tool to make people embrace civic virtues in society. Since the participatory art projects provide the opportunity to express themselves freely to the excluded individuals, these individuals feel belonging to society (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 55). Together with empathy that I mentioned above, this sense of belonging thanks to cultural participation as Baban & Rygiel argues, “help to facilitate an understanding of the interconnectedness of individuals, the societies we live in, and our environment” (2018, p. 55). Moreover, according to Chou et al. (2015), as conventional forms of politics have been on the decline recent years, alternative path for the acquisition of civic values that cultural participation offers has become prominent. Furthermore, as Baban and Rygiel argue, civic education provided by cultural participation leads to public and political participation of people either and this is important not only for current citizens but also for marginalized communities such as refugees and migrants in the society (2018, p. 56).

Thanks to cultural participation of “the other”, healing traumatic experiences, empowerment of migrants, due recognition of marginalized groups, and civic education via participatory art projects can be secured. Together with all these, intercultural dialogue constructed, through culture and the arts enters the picture as a strong contribution towards the path of integration. In the report examined European cultural initiatives between 2014 and 2016, McGregor and Ragab indicate that encouragement of intercultural dialogue and celebration of multiculturalism were the main objectives of those initiatives and these two objectives expedite the cultural integration (2016, p. 19). Nick Stevenson (2003, p.

333) argues that arts provide an inclusionary public space in which marginalized groups can be heard, their existence is truly recognized, and dialogic engagement channels are open (as cited in Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 56). Referring to the work of Nancy Love and Mark Mattern (2013, p. 5), Chou et al. maintain “arts can spark imagination, creativity, and engagement to produce a more complete version of ourselves and our communities” (2015, p. 609). Together with this, according to them, the environments that are created by the arts are more meaningful for people who cannot be a part of formal participation mechanisms (Chou et al., 2015, p. 609).

So, in our case, marginalized groups such as refugees and migrants can benefit from intercultural dialogue and cultural participation through cultural production. Furthermore, cultural participation is a supplement to intercultural dialogue towards the path of integration. In its March 2017 report, EU Member States’ Experts on Intercultural Dialogue in the Context of the Migratory and Refugee Crisis under the Open Method of Coordination, suggest that cultural diversity is a precondition for intercultural dialogue which is a strong instrument to enable the participation of migrants in cultural and societal life (p. 16). The issue of participation of refugees is related to the issues that I mentioned in the previous section such as well-being, self-esteem, and sense of belonging. According to the same report, “participation is a way toward social mobility, and migrants and refugees attaining influence on the distribution of resources and a voice in decision-making processes (DG EAC, 2017, p. 17).

Another main finding of the DG EAC report in 2017 is that one of the goals of intercultural dialogue should be making implicit prejudices between different communities clear because cultural differences could be a troublemaker when they correspond to certain hierarchies of superiority and inferiority (p. 18). So, the report defends that through participatory art projects which embrace intercultural dialogue, those hidden biases can transform into “new and inclusive values” (DG EAC, 2017, p. 18).

According to the EUROCITIES report in 2016, “Cultural institutions/activities can help facilitate exchanges about different views, beliefs, and social rules; raise awareness about different cultures and identities and identify

common interests and goals” (p. 1). This is somehow the gist of intercultural dialogue. To my mind, intercultural dialogue in migratory context is constant communication which enables erasing hatred deriving from implicit biases, changing stereotypes about the other, and developing empathy towards newcomers. So, intercultural dialogue with the help of culture and the arts contributes to conflict resolutions or prevention and mutual understanding between different communities. Intercultural dialogue through culture and the arts plays an important role in reducing inter-communal tensions and establishing mutual understanding between communities, because, through intercultural dialogue, people either find in other cultures a piece that resembles their own culture, or they can establish an aesthetic connection or they can develop a communication channel that overcomes prejudices that they feed so far. Furthermore, as the EURO CITIES report suggests, “discussing and presenting different cultures promotes a positive public perception of migrants” (EURO CITIES, 2016, p. 2).

In the above integration is defined as a mechanism that works in both directions. According to McGregor and Ragab, integration is not only about how host countries include newcomers but also is about how newcomers adapt to their new destination and its culture (2016, p. 7). Thus, integration has a dialogic character in itself. So, intercultural dialogue is one of the main pillars of the whole integration process. DG EAC report in March 2017 states that since culture is a medium that determines who we are and how we relate to people, both our identity and otherness are explained in cultural terms (DG EAC, 2017, p. 15). Thus, cultural and artistic participation is an important driving force of integration as we define our existence and relationships in cultural terms and as cultural and artistic productions have the potential to penetrate the dialogues that we will establish in the cultural sphere.

### **2.2.3. Culture and the Arts as a Transformative Force Which Shakes the Very Boundaries of Identities**

In his article examining the changing policies of multiculturalism in Canada, Davina Bhandar maintains that the overemphasis on cultural differences and

essentialized cultural traditions in the debate on the equality of ethnic minorities reproduces the mechanisms of othering, and the dichotomy between the cultures of host nation and minorities (Bhandar, 2010). Because of that Baban and Rygiel (2018), stresses the significance of the transformative value of culture and arts as another role of culture which is beyond the healing power of the arts and civic engagement (p. 60). They explain the rationale behind the transformative power of cultural forms of production as follows:

The transformative potential of cultural forms of production, we argue, lies in the ways in which such forms of expression, processes and spaces can destabilize the very boundaries and meanings of national identity and cultural communities and ideas about who does and does not belong, through a spirit of radical cosmopolitanism (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 60).

Baban and Rygiel examine some different forms of cultural production in their report to show the transformative potential of cultural production. One of these examples is a Spanish Art Education Project, *Transformative Looks*. Referring to Pereria et al. (2016), according to them, this collective participatory arts project in which migrant women used photography as a medium enabled those women to create counternarratives which challenge stereotypes about themselves and made those counternarratives visible in the public space (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 61). Although migrant women in this example were opted out of the formal participation mechanisms in the society, those women engaged in cultural citizenship practices via cultural production (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 61). Pereria et al. (2016, p. 14) maintain that such idea of citizenship based on “the struggle and a critical learning process” pave the way for the formation of a “shared habitus, where recognition can be achieved leading to more inclusive societies” (as cited in Baban & Rygiel, 2016, p. 61).

The other example can be a theatre collective that uses Boal’s Framework of the Theatre of Oppressed, discussed earlier. With the Boal’s methods, outsiders become the subject and create their own counternarratives that break down stereotypical thoughts about them. Moreover, these narratives blur the boundaries between the self and the other and become, somehow, one of the architects of the

common culture in society. In other words, culture and the arts create a third space where both host and guest communities shape a shared culture together.

Baban and Rygiel express their observations related to the transformative potential of cultural production in examples that they show in their report. The first observation is that cultural production offers alternative spaces for appropriate recognition without false stereotypes of individuals and groups that paves the way for encountering and engagement between different groups (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 64). Secondly, according to Baban and Rygiel (2018), in offering broader and different representations, the projects generate critical thinking about the boundaries of the community (p. 64). Thirdly, on one hand, migrants can have the sense of belonging that is derived from cultural participation; on the other hand, host communities can have the chance to get to know about migrants' multidimensional characters without implicit prejudices stemming from stereotypes, thanks to face to face encounters that are provided by culture and the arts (Baban & Rygiel, 2018, p. 64). The last point about the radical cosmopolitan atmosphere that is contributed by culture and the arts could be their potential to create new expressions out of established cultural capital in the society. According to the EURO CITIES report, "The 'cultural capital' gained from migrant involvement in cultural activities can lead to new artistic expressions" (2016, p. 2).

#### **2.2.4. Culture and the Arts as an Economic Impact**

Although economic benefits that are provided by cultural participation are not the main focus of the whole discussion related to the roles of culture and the arts in integration, economic contributions for migrants and the whole society take place in the literature. UNESCO designates cultural diversity as a factor for development as follows:

Cultural diversity widens the range of options open to everyone; it is one of the roots of development, understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001, Article 3).

So, cultural diversity and participation also democratize the ways of participation in the economy. Moreover, referring to UNESCO et al. (2015), McGregor and Ragab emphasize the importance of “positive economic spillover effects of diverse cultural scene” both in terms of economic benefits of working migrants in creative economies and their contribution to city’s development (2016, p. 19). So, economic impact stemming from the cultural production of migrants can also be evaluated under the title of the empowerment of newcomers above because economic well-being helps migrants/refugees to overcome precarious living conditions and consequently contributes to their social well-being and integration to the society.

### **2.3. WHAT MAKES CULTURE AND THE ARTS SPECIAL AS AN INTEGRATION TOOL?**

This section will attempt to compile peculiarities that make arts different from other tools in integration processes. I roughly chose to exhibit four of these features that attracted my attention in the literature. After exhibiting those features, I will try to enrich the discussion by giving some examples related to the power of artistic and cultural productions.

First of all, the arts can trigger emotions, and this provides a powerful instrument for changing people’s behavior. In refugee and migratory context, artistic productions facilitate empathy towards newcomers. Furthermore, participants of art projects, either they can be audience or actors, can understand better the situation of migrants and refugees. Williams explains this impact of arts as follows: “It might seem obvious that the experience of art from other cultures can generate emotions, causing empathy and acknowledgment of a shared humanity” (Williams, 2016, p. 9). Dewey describes the power of art and its differences from the other kinds of communication that affect behaviors in a far more comprehensive way. Referring to Dewey’s book, *Art as Experience*, William quotes to explain these as follows:

The moral function of art itself is to remove prejudice, do away with the scales that keep the eye from seeing, tear away the veils due to wont and custom, perfect the power to perceive....We understand it [art from other cultures or art outside our defined norm] to the degree in which we make it



a part of our own attitudes...we install ourselves in modes of apprehending nature that at first are strange to us....This insensible melting is far more efficacious than the change effected by reasoning, because it enters directly into attitude. (Dewey, 2005, p. 334, cited in William, 2016, p. 9).

Secondly, it can be related to the emotional power of arts, yet one can say that arts have the potential to take emotions (either good or bad) and transform them into something different. In her article, *Cultural Diplomacy from Below: Artistic Projects with Refugees and Migrants*, Monika Mokre explains the power of the arts while helping refugees as follows: “The arts can translate and sublimate experiences, even traumatic experiences, to another sphere, another language” (2017, p. 68). In this way, we can mention the therapeutic or healing power of arts on people who are forced to migrate in such traumatic situations. So, the arts help to soften the pain suffered by refugees and turn it into something more positive. Consequently, this is beneficial for the well-being of refugees.

Thirdly, as pioneering individuals, artists find unique artistic ways that have never been tried before to express themselves and to reflect the events that take place in society. In DG EAC report in March 2017, the attitude of the arts and artists as “avant-garde, first movers, experimental, ‘go-betweeners’, and role of them as “helping to interpret refugees’ experiences for the rest of us” (DG EAC, 2017, p. 15). In that matter, artists can use the most radical or most contrarian forms of art and affect the perceptions of the society in contested issues.

Lastly, and maybe the most importantly, culture and the arts provide a means of communication that exceeds the limitations of language. As I mentioned above, according to Esser (2006), language is a key factor in integration. So, the most prominent barrier to integration for refugees or migrants might be not knowing the language of their host country. It hinders the participation of newcomers to society. On the other side, the EURO CITIES report describes art as a “basis for communication beyond cultural and linguistic barriers” (2016, p. 1). In other words, McGregor and Ragab stress the role of culture and the arts in intercultural dialogue since they provide opportunities for non-verbal communication (2016, p. 7). So, cultural and artistic projects promote the social inclusion of incoming groups and

individuals since they help people to overcome barriers to access to cultural participation, education, and communication.

Commissioned by EENCA, the report of McGregor and Ragab investigate 96 artistic and cultural initiatives that took place between 2014 and 2016 in Europe. McGregor and Ragab (2016) highlight that most initiatives that work with migrants and refugees were clustered in four fields: theatre practices inspired by Boal's framework, visual arts, gastronomy, and urban design (p. 11-13). Some examples from these fields could be enlightening to explicate peculiarities of art that I mentioned above in this section. For example, the photo of Aylan Kurdi's dead body that was washed up on the beach in Turkey got viral suddenly in media coverages in the world. The photo was so powerful that it was expressing starkly the tragedy and trauma that refugees face. The photograph had triggered the emotions of broad masses and made them feel the tragedy without lingering on linguistic barriers. Moreover, cultural initiatives that are interested in gastronomy could be representative practices in such a manner that without linguistic barriers people come together, establish empathy with each other, and explore different cultures. *Bread Houses Network* could be an example for this type of initiatives. Another example could be *Multi Kulti Kitchen* in Sofia, Bulgaria. Events in Multi Kulti Kitchen "generally focused on exploring the stories behind food by encouraging refugees and migrants to creatively share their stories through games, musical performances, dance, visual art such as photography and so forth" (McGregor & Ragab, 2016, p. 13).

#### **2.4. WHAT SHOULD BE THE APPROACH IN CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC PROJECTS FOR BETTER INTEGRATION?**

In the last section, I will try to compile some strategic clues and principles that will make cultural initiatives more successful in their integration efforts. While doing this, I will benefit from the report of EU Member States' Experts on Intercultural Dialogue in the Context of the Migratory and Refugee Crisis under the Open Method of Coordination. Their observations are about migrants in the EU

Member States, but they could be enlightening either for the case related to Syrians in Turkey.

First of all, according to the report, while designing the initiative as an integration tool, positioning refugees and migrants as ‘co-designers, co-developers, and co-organizers’ of the initiative is vital for success in integration efforts (DG EAC, 2017, p. 32). Secondly, since integration works in both directions, efficient projects should enable the participation of both migrants and host communities from the very beginning of these projects (DG EAC, 2017, p. 39). It could be significant to address the integration issue from a holistic perspective. So, according to DG EAC’s report (2017), cross-sectorial approaches can make those initiatives more effective (p. 39). For example, links with education have vital importance because those links can help to overcome linguistic barriers of newcomers (DG EAC, 2017, p. 39). According to DG EAC’s report, moreover, cultural and artistic initiatives should target bringing communities together, especially in public spaces in which interaction between people and, consequently, intercultural dialogue are more viable and effective options (2017, p. 39). Furthermore, particular attention should be paid for the cultural education of children and adolescents (DG EAC, 2017, p. 40). DG EAC report suggests that thinking migration as a lasting process facilitates the establishment of perennial structures and sustainable cultural organizations in the migratory and refugee context (2017, p. 41). Because of this, DG EAC explicates good cultural and artistic projects as follows:

They are not satisfied with recognizing otherness but are involving mechanisms that acculturate both migrants and nationals. These mechanisms are not only a dialogue of the deaf, they open up to controversy and confrontation, from which everyone emerges transformed (2017, p. 41).

Lastly, in refugee and migratory context, cooperation between public authorities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), combined with long term financing instruments, is crucial since they are complementary to each other (DG EAC, 2017, p. 42).

## THIRD CHAPTER

### SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS IN TURKEY

#### 3.1. TURKEY AS A CONFLUENCE POINT FOR GREAT MIGRATION MOVEMENTS

Anatolia has been a melting pot of civilizations as it has been experiencing mass influxes of migration throughout history. In other words, since Anatolia is a peninsula stretching between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, it has been both the host and transit route for huge migration movements historically. Notwithstanding that Muslim and Turkic population immigrated into Anatolia as a settlement policy of Ottoman Empire since Byzantium era, it has received Jewish population after their expulsion from Spain and Portugal, and Crimean and Circassian Muslims escaping from the atrocities of Russian Empire in the Ottoman era (Kaya, 2016, p. 6). Furthermore, as a consequence of violent conflicts in the Balkans and the Middle East, Anatolia has been experiencing mass influxes of Turkmen, Iranian, Kurdish, Bosnian, Kosovar, Bulgarian, and Syrian populations in the era of Republic of Turkey (Kaya, 2016, p. 6). In addition, population exchanges had taken place between Turkey and Greece in the early days of the Republic.

It would be beneficial to look at great migration movements in the era of the Turkish Republic in more detail in order to better analyze Turkey's legal framework on migration and its response to those movements that sections below will mention. Kirişçi states that in addition to approximately one and a half million refugees from Balkans from the 1920s to the mid-1990s, Turkey has received more than 300.000 Pomaks and Turks escaping from the assimilation campaign under the communist regime in Bulgaria in 1989 (2014, p. 7). Furthermore, he maintains that the Turkish Republic, in accordance with the *Settlement Law* in 1934, opened its doors to those immigrants from Bulgaria and treated them as from “Turkish descent and culture” (Kirişçi, 2014, p. 7). The second example of the major influxes worth mentioning could be of Kurds fleeing from Saddam Hussein’s atrocity in 1991. Kirişçi expresses that although most of Kurds returned to the safe zone created by United

Nations Security Council in Northern Iraq, Turkey faced with a humanitarian crisis as a consequence of that approximately half a million people sought refuge to Turkey because of Saddam's violent acts that took place between 1988 and 1991 (2014, p. 7). Notwithstanding that Turkey did not recognize Kurds as a separate entity, it regarded those refugees as 'guests' "without any formal legal protection" (Kirişçi, 2014, p.7). In addition to these, immigration of Albanian and Bosnian refugees whose number was near 50.000 was another influx stemming from the Yugoslavian War (Kirişçi, 2014, p. 8).

Besides influxes deriving from atrocities in its near geography, Turkey has become a transit route for immigration and a host to migrants due to historical developments that took place in its neighboring regions such as the collapse of Eastern Bloc and Iranian Revolution. With a reference to İçduygu's (2015) works, Kaya states that Turkey has been receiving irregular migrants from Iran, Bangladesh, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan since the 1990s (2016, p. 6). Furthermore, referring to the work of İçduygu (2009), Kaya maintains that Turkey has become a target country for immigrants from the former Eastern Bloc countries in order to earn a living either through human trafficking or regular migration (2016, p.6).

Despite all these experiences that Turkey undergone related to huge migrations, the recent Syrian Refugee Crisis beginning from 2011 has been an unprecedented one due to its volume (Kirişçi, 2014). So, the next section will focus on the chronology of the Syrian refugee crisis in order to explicit the gravity of the crisis and interpret Turkey's ways of handling it.

### **3.2. A CHRONOLOGY OF SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS IN TURKEY**

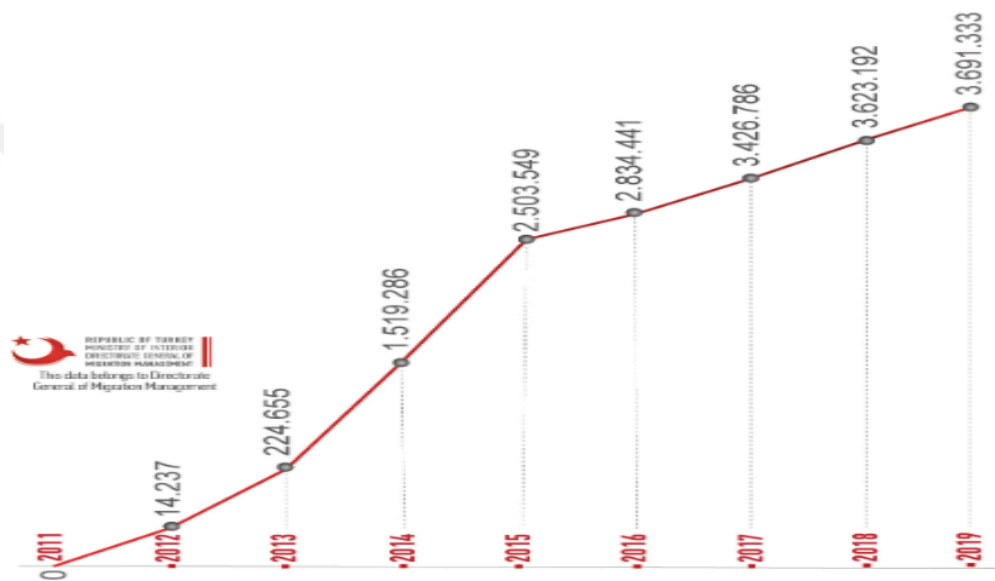
Prior to the beginning of the Syrian Civil Disorder, it can be observed that the number of refugee movements from Syria to Turkey was slim. Based on Turkey's government data, Kirişçi claims that "between 1995 and 2013 there were only 635 asylum applications from Syrian nationals, as compared to more than 48,000 Iranians, 24,000 Iraqis and almost 29,000 Afghans" (2014, p. 11). Nonetheless, before the Syrian Civil War had erupted it can be said that relations

between Turkey and Syria were on a good track. As a matter of fact, the relations reached such a positive point that a visa exemption agreement between Turkey and Syria was signed between the two countries in 2009 (Council of Ministers of the Republic of Turkey, 2009). As a footnote, Kirişçi maintains that this visa liberalization enabled Syrian people to cross the Turkish border easily when the civil unrest in Syria had escalated (2014, p. 14).

So, the civil disorder in Syria, as a part of Arab Spring protests, escalated and turned into an armed conflict in 2011. After the civil war started, millions of civilians in Syria had to flee their country to live in a safe environment. Moreover, according to UNHCR records, “at the end of 2018, Syrians still made up the largest forcibly displaced population, with 13.0 million people living in displacement, including 6.7 million refugees, 6.2 million internally displaced people (IDPs) and 140,000 asylum-seekers” (2018). Right after the crisis erupted, Turkey received Syrian refugees as a guest and followed an open-door policy towards Syrians since then. In October 2014, Turkey revised “*Law on Foreigners and International Protection*” under “*Temporary Protection Regulation*” to provide Syrians temporary protection (Directorate General of Migration Management, 2019). As Kaya suggests temporary protection consists of three elements: “an open-door policy for all Syrians; no forced returns to Syria (non-refoulement); and unlimited duration of stay in Turkey” (2016, p. 10). As we can see in *Figure 3.1* below, right after the adoption of “*Law on Foreigners and International Protection*” and “*Temporary Protection Regulation*”, numbers of Syrians in Turkey have mounted. Furthermore, “*Regulation on Work Permit of Refugees Under Temporary Protection*” enacted in January 2016 could be another significant document in terms of the increase in the Syrian population in Turkey as we can see in *Figure 3.1*. Moreover, another breakthrough was the European Union (EU) – Turkey refugee deal on 18 March 2016 which is an attempt to address the Syrian Refugee Crisis. The next section related to the legal framework of Turkey in the migratory and refugee context will include more detailed information about the agreement.

As a consequence of all these factors, the number of Syrian refugees under temporary protection has reached 3.691.133 as seen in *Figure 3.1*. However,

statements by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the President of the Turkish Republic, show that the Syrian population in Turkey has reached around 4 million considering unregistered Syrian refugees and Turkey’s expenditure on Syrian refugees has mounted in 40 billion dollars (“Erdoğan says”, 2019 November 18). Hence, whereas Turkey is sharing the total refugee population with countries like Lebanon and Jordan, Turkey is, by far, the country that hosts Syrian refugees the most as seen in Table 3.1.



**Figure 3.1** Graph of Statistics on the Distribution of Syrian Refugees in the Scope of Temporary Protection by Years. Reprinted from Turkish Directorate General of Migration Management Web Site. November 27, 2019., Retrieved from <https://en.goc.gov.tr/temporary-protection27>. Copyright 2019 by Directorate General of Migration Management.

The Syrian refugee population in Turkey is clustered in certain cities. According to Erdoğan, as Syrian refugees began to live in city centers rather than camps since 2012 and as they started to settle in metropolitan cities away from the Syrian border, a new puzzle has emerged: urban refugees (Erdoğan, 2017, p. 10-11). Since the focus of the thesis is the sector of culture and the arts in “Bursa”, it would be beneficial to take a glance at the total number of Syrian populations under temporary protection. As of the end of 2019, Bursa hosts the 7<sup>th</sup> most crowded

population of Syrian refugees under temporary protection among the cities hosting Syrians as seen in *Figure 3.2*. To be precise, Bursa is home to 176.638 Syrian refugees under temporary protection according to Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) of The Republic of Turkey in *Figure 3.2* below. The chapter where I discuss my field research contains detailed information about the population of Bursa. Yet, the last official figure for this section could be the “*comparison percentage with province population*”. According to DGMM, as of 27 November 2019, Bursa has received, so far, 176.638 registered Syrians who consist of %5.9 of the overall population of 2.994.521 people (Retrieved from the table titled “Distribution of Syrian Refugees Within the Scope of Temporary Protection by Province” on the DGMM’s official website, available at <https://en.goc.gov.tr/temporary-protection27>).

**Table 3.1**

*Total Persons of Concern by Country of Asylum*

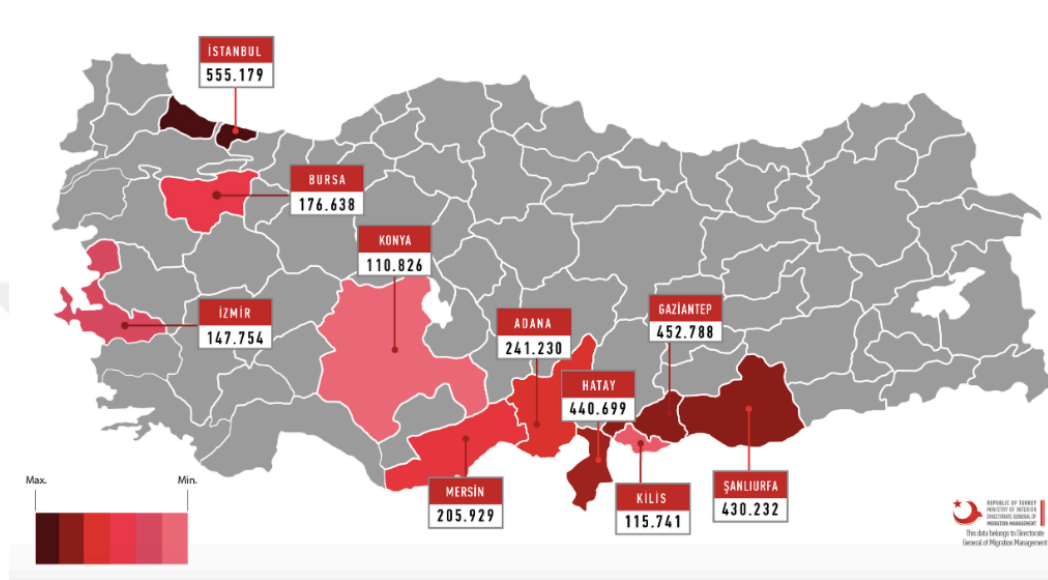
| Location name        | Source                      | Data date   |                                                                                       | Population         |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Turkey               | UNHCR, Government of Turkey | 27 Nov 2019 |  | 65.2%<br>3,691,333 |
| Lebanon              | UNHCR                       | 31 Oct 2019 |  | 16.2%<br>918,974   |
| Jordan               | UNHCR                       | 1 Dec 2019  |  | 11.5%<br>654,192   |
| Iraq                 | UNHCR                       | 31 Oct 2019 |  | 4.1%<br>234,831    |
| Egypt                | UNHCR                       | 31 Oct 2019 |  | 2.3%<br>129,159    |
| Other (North Africa) | UNHCR                       | 30 Nov 2018 |                                                                                       | 0.6%<br>35,713     |

*Note.* Reprinted from “Syria Regional Refugee Response” by UNHCR, December 1, 2019. Retrieved from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria>.

From the start of the Syrian Refugee crisis in 2011 till now, Turkey has gone through a turbulent time in its politics. Furthermore, Turkey has experienced mass protests like Gezi Park Movement, failed coup d’état of 15 July 2016, successive terrorist attacks between 2015 and 2017, successive elections, economic crisis and so on in this period. Thus, this political atmosphere has created some challenges also for the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Turkey. As the Syrian Refugee Crisis has been prolonged, it can be observed that popular resentment against Syrians among Turkish citizens is on the rise in recent years. There will be an attempt to explicate this popular resentment in the last section of this chapter which will try to



summarize the challenges of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, public opinion about the issue, and policies of political actors about the issue. Yet, first, the legal framework of Turkey in the migratory and refugee context, and legal and administrative tools to overcome the Syrian Refugee Crisis will be discussed in the next chapter.



**Figure 3.2** Map of Distribution of Syrians Under Temporary Protection by Top 10 Provinces. Reprinted from Turkish Directorate General of Migration Management Web Site. November 27, 2019., Retrieved from <https://en.goc.gov.tr/temporary-protection27>. Copyright 2019 by Directorate General of Migration Management.

### **3.3. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK TO DEAL WITH SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS IN TURKEY**

#### **3.3.1. Legal Framework to Deal with the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Turkey**

This section will be an attempt to explain the legal framework on the issue of the Syrian Refugee Crisis and migratory issues in general from a historical perspective. It will include national laws, international conventions, and agreements that Turkey is a part of. In other words, there will be an attempt to explain the legal

tools to cope with the issue regarding the migratory and refugee context in this section

Understanding the essence of the Settlement Laws (1934 and 2006) in Turkey could be enlightening to explain the general attitude of Turkish governments related to the issue of migration. As I mentioned above, ‘*Settlement Law*’ (1934) was favoring immigrants of “Turkish descent and culture” such that it was restraining asylum seeking and immigration of people who are not part of “Turkish descent and culture” (Kirişçi, 2014; İçduygu, 2015; Zeldin, 2016). As İçduygu and Aksel point out, “for the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, nation building concerns determined the nature of emigration and immigration flows in the country as the departure of non-Muslims and arrivals of Turks and Muslims dominated the flows” (2013, p. 185).

When it comes to the issue of refugees, three international documents that Turkey is a party to are worth to mention: “Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)”, “Geneva Convention (1951)”, and “Additional Protocol to the Convention on Legal Status of Refugees”. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), it is stated that “Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution” (Article 14/1). Grounding on article 14 of UDHR, the Geneva Convention (1951) is the document that sets the international legal framework regarding refugees together with the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Legal Status of Refugees (1967). Moreover, Turkey is one of the first signatory countries to the Geneva Convention. So, Turkey has established its legal framework on refugees in accordance with the Geneva Convention (1951) and the 1967 Additional Protocol to the Convention on Legal Status of Refugees. According to the Geneva Convention (1951), a refugee is defined as follows:

someone who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country (Article 1).

Signatory parties to the convention have been entitled to have two matters of exception: one is related to history “(two options as ‘excluding the cases before 1951’ or ‘including all cases in all times’)” and the other one is the geographical limitation (Erdoğan, 2017, p. 17). Turkey is one of those countries that uphold geographical limitation which means that Turkey would not regard refugees outside of Europe as “refugees” (İçduygu, 2015; Erdoğan, 2017). According to Erdoğan (2017), whereas most of the countries lifted the geographical limitation from their obligations, Turkey and a few countries such as Congo, Madagascar, Monaco still reserve their right for geographical limitations in their obligations (p.17). Thus, according to this geographical limitation right that Turkey used, Turkey still does not consider Syrians fleeing from the civil war in Syria as refugees because they are non-European.

Geographical restrictions regarding the refugee issue have not been abolished till now in Turkey. Yet, mass influxes such as Kurdish refugees in 1991, influxes from Balkans, and Syrian refugees have led to the evolution of the Turkish legal system. Turkey enacted its first national legislation on asylum in November 1994 with “*Regulation on Asylum*” as a response to the influx of refugees in 1991 (Kirişçi, 2014; İçduygu, 2015). “*1994 Regulation on Asylum*” is a significant document in the sense that it was the first national legal document that sets the framework for how mass influxes could be stopped and how individual asylum applications would be received. However, as İçduygu and Aksel point out, “the 1994 regulation defined the conditions for applying for asylum in Turkey; however, there still remained a limited opportunity for being recognized legally due to the geographical limitation clause of the 1951 Geneva Convention” (2013, p. 176). Moreover, as Kirişçi (2017) argues, it did not prioritize the human rights of refugees since it was enacted as a response to national security concerns (p. 7). On the other hand, one of important outcomes of the 1994 Regulation was that Turkey started to keep regular statistics on asylum since then (Kirişçi, 2014, p. 7). Although Turkey has maintained its policies of geographical limitation on asylum based on Geneva Convention and restrictions on immigrants who are not from “Turkish descent and culture” based on 1934 Settlement Law, these attitudes have been challenged

throughout the time due to external factors. According to İçduygu (2015, p. 4), the first factor was the acceleration of globalization which led to an increase in the movement of people, goods, technologies, ideas and so on starting from the 1980s. Furthermore, İçduygu (2015) maintains that the “EU-ization” of Turkey in the beginnings of the 2000s paved the way for harmonization of Turkish regulations with EU legislation in several areas including migration and asylum (p. 5). “*The Law on Work Permits of Foreigners (Law No. 4817) of 2003*” which facilitated attempts of foreign nationals for searching for jobs in Turkey (İçduygu, 2015, p. 5). Another one could be “*2005 National Action Plan for the Adoption of Acquis on Asylum and Migration*” with the objective of updating Turkey’s legal system on migration (Zeldin, 2016). Lastly, “*2006 Settlement Law*” was an important document which replaced “*1934 Settlement Law*” which emphasized immigration of people of “Turkish descent and culture”. Nonetheless, İçduygu states that despite some progress for liberalizing migration policies in “*2006 Settlement Law*”, background which prioritize immigrants of “Turkish descent and culture” was maintained (2015, p. 12). İçduygu and Aksel clarify this situation as follows:

The identifying features of “Turkishness” are not solely related to Turkish ethnicity, but the ability and willingness to adopt the Turkish language and to be a member of the Muslim Sunni ethnic group often closely associated with past Ottoman rule (İçduygu & Aksel, 2013, p. 181).

Subsequent legal changes are largely shaped as a reaction to the Syrian refugee crisis that was started in 2011. “*1994 Law on Asylum*” was replaced in 2013 by the *Law on Foreigners and International Protection* which provides a more effective migration management system compatible with European standards (İçduygu, 2019, p. 6). Moreover, as İçduygu argues, this new law consists of priority to the integration of immigrants, and attitude towards asylum seekers and irregular migrants in international standards (2015, p. 5). More important than these, as İçduygu (2015) states “the law does not limit migration to Turkey to people of Turkish descent and culture” (p. 6). This was quite a new attitude for the Republic of Turkey towards immigrants as it was treating in accordance with the principle of accepting immigrants of “Turkish descent and culture” since 1934. As mentioned above, Turkey revised “*Law on Foreigners and International Protection*” under

*“Temporary Protection Regulation”* to provide Syrians temporary protection in October 2014 (Directorate General of Migration Management, 2019). *“2013 Law on Foreigners and International Protection”* classifies and describes immigrants as “refugees (only from Europe), conditional refugees, international protection, and temporary protection” (Erdoğan, 2017, p. 17). With the new regulation, the Turkish state designated Syrian immigrants as a formal status of temporary protection. Although international law regards Syrian immigrants as refugees, Turkey still does not recognize them as refugees due to geographical limitations under the Geneva Convention. However, for the first time since the beginning of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, the Republic of Turkey has specified the legal status of Syrians in Turkey under temporary protection regime in such a precise manner. As mentioned before Kaya suggests temporary protection consists of three elements: “an open-door policy for all Syrians; no forced returns to Syria (non-refoulement); and unlimited duration of stay in Turkey” (2016, p. 10). The regulation was followed by another law, *“Law on Work Permits in 2016”* which sets the procedure for work permits of foreigners. According to the law, “Ministry of Labor and Social Security is to make a final decision on a foreigner’s application for a work permit within thirty days (Zeldin, 2016). It regulated the rights and restrictions related to the employment of foreigners.

18 March 2016 Turkey – EU deal regarding the Syrian Refugee Crisis could be another milestone since it hinders the humanitarian crises in the Aegean Sea that have cost many lives. Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) declared the main objectives of the deal as “preventing loss of lives in Aegean, breaking the migrant smuggling networks, and replacing illegal migration with illegal migration” (Turkish MFA, n.d.). The agreement consisted of resettlement of Syrian refugees with “1 for 1” formula which means “for every Syrian to be taken back to Turkey from the Aegean islands, in return the EU will start to resettle another Syrian from Turkey” (Turkish MFA, n.d.). In return, the agreement also included visa liberalization for Turkish citizens to Schengen Area and EU’s pledge for 3+3 billion dollars for projects related to Syrians in Turkey (Turkish MFA, n.d.). However, those pledges have not been fulfilled yet.

### **3.3.2. Administrative Framework to Deal with the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Turkey**

This section will be an attempt to explain administrative tools to overcome the Syrian Refugee Crisis and to achieve “harmonization” between Syrian refugees and the local community, at national and local levels.

When the crisis erupted and thousands of Syrians were crossing the Turkish border, the Turkish government assigned the leading role for coordination of responses to the crisis to Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD). In the initial periods of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, it was not estimated that the crisis would be long-lasting, and it was treated as temporary by the Turkish government (Kirişçi, 2014; İçduygu, 2015; Erdoğan, 2017). As Erdoğan (2017) suggests, since “emergency management” was the priority in the first phases of the crisis, AFAD was chosen for the coordination of the crisis management (p. 20). Furthermore, as İçduygu (2015) suggests, one of the pillars of management of the Syrian Refugee Crisis has been “providing optimal humanitarian assistance” (p. 8). AFAD was explaining its role in the management of crisis as follows:

All the needs of our Syrian guests are being fulfilled under the coordination of AFAD with the joint work of the Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Health, National Education, Food and Agriculture and Livestock, Transport and Finance; General Staff; Presidency of Religious Affairs; Under secretariat of Customs; and Red Crescent (as cited in Erdoğan, 2017, p. 20).

So, in initial phases of the crisis, the scope of the “emergency management” of the crisis was shaped around building refugee camps in cities near the border and providing best possible humanitarian aids in these camps under the coordination of AFAD with the support of NGOs such as Turkish Red Crescent. It can be said that Turkish authorities gave a good account of themselves while managing the emergency. According to Kirişçi, “the government has been relatively successful in setting up and managing refugee camps” where shelter and services like medical

centers, schools, recreational facilities, psychological assistance, television rooms and so on were provided (2014, p. 15).

However, as the crisis has prolonged and refugees have been spreading outside camps, new needs other than humanitarian aids has emerged: long-term planning or integration of Syrians (Kirişçi, 2014; İçduygu, 2015; Erdoğan, 2017). These needs resulted in the emergence of Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) as the main actor in the coordination of crisis management. All the legal regulations mentioned above, administrative decisions, and management of processes were accomplished within the coordination of DGMM till now. Directorate General for Migration Management was established by *Law of 04/04/2013 No. 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection*. In the article of the law the scope of DGMM is explained as follows:

The Directorate General for Migration Management has been established under the Ministry of Interior with a view to implement policies and strategies related to migration; ensure coordination between the related agencies and organizations in these matters; carry out the tasks and procedures related to foreigners' entry into, stay in, exit and removal from Turkey, international protection, temporary protection and protection of victims of human trafficking (2013, Article 103).

Notwithstanding that DGMM is the main actor in Turkey in the migratory and refugee context, *Law on Foreigners and International Protection* entitles “DGMM to cooperate with UNHCR and IOM (International Organization for Migration) as well as other international and non-governmental organizations” (Kirişçi, 2017, p. 37). For example, according to Operational Update Highlights of UNHCR, voluntary repatriations still are monitored by UNHCR (2018).

When it comes to migration and integration management in local administrations, municipalities come to the fore. According to Erdoğan, “there is a serious uncertainty as to which bases local governments in general, municipalities in particular, should operate and serve on refugee issues” (2017, p. 40). Together with municipalities, city councils also operate on the issue of foreigners. Especially foreigners' committees under city councils engage in the issue of immigrants. Municipalities can play an important role in the integration dimension of the refugee crisis, as they are administrative units that can touch the grassroots of

society. Legal bases for the contribution of municipalities in the integration of refugees would be *Law on Municipalities No. 5393* and *the Law on Foreigners and International Protection No. 6458*. Article 13 of *Municipal Law No. 5393* known as “fellow-citizenship” (*Hemşehri*) article designates the scope of the relation between the municipality and fellow citizens including foreigners living in the city as follows:

Everyone is a fellow-citizen of the county which he lives in. The fellow-citizens shall be entitled to participate in the decisions and services of the municipality, to acquire knowledge about the municipal activities and to benefit from the aids of the municipal administration. (...) The municipality shall perform necessary activities to improve the social and cultural relations between the fellow-citizens and to preserve cultural values (2005, Article 13).

The role of preserving cultural values that municipal law assigns to municipalities is significant especially regarding the content of this thesis. Moreover, Article 13 gives municipalities a legal source to serve refugees in the town. On the other hand, Article 14 of the same law designates the scope of these services around the citizenship, which excludes non-citizens as follows:

The municipal services shall be rendered in the most appropriate manner at the places nearest to the citizens. It is a basic principle to adopt a procedure most suitable for the disabled and old people as well as for those in destitute and with limited income (2005, Article 14).

Thus, Erdoğan suggests that Article 14 is contradictory with Article 13 in the sense that the citizenship that is defined in Article 14 excludes non-citizens i.e. immigrants and refugees (Erdoğan, 2017, p. 41). The other legal source could be Article 96 of *Law on Foreigners and International Protection* which regulates the issue of “Harmonization of Refugees” under the governance of DGMM. However, as Erdoğan suggests, “local governments are very poorly linked to the issue since the link is established only as ‘benefitting from their suggestions and contributions’ and works only through DGMM’s initiative” (Erdoğan, 2017, p. 42).

The last mechanism worth to mention to deal with the integration of refugees at the local level could be city councils and foreigners committees under those councils. City Councils (*Kent Konseyleri*) are defined in Article 4 of Regulations on City Council as follows:



City Councils are democratic structures and governance mechanisms in which the central government, local governments, public institutions, professional organizations with public institution status and civil society come together with the understanding of partnership within the framework of fellow-citizenship to determine and discuss the priorities, problems and visions of the development of the city on the basis of sustainable development principles, and to develop solutions. City Councils are democratic structures and governance mechanisms where common sense and reconciliation are essential (2006, Article 4).

Erdoğan maintains that although city councils have the potential to accomplish more, as we see in some places like Alanya, Antalya, and Bursa, they are not being used as active instruments regarding participation to local management in Turkey yet. However, we should note that Bursa has become prominent in a manner that it has a City Council which set up a 'Foreigners Assembly'. Moreover, there are also city councils in the biggest three districts of Bursa such as Osmangazi, Nilüfer, and Yıldırım.

Moreover, international funds regarding the Syrian Refugee Crisis could be an instrument at the hands of local authorities. Aforementioned EU's pledge that consists of 3+3 billion dollars and other international funds delivered by UN institutions, ie. UNHCR, are the most significant funds for Turkish institutions in migratory and refugee context. The monetary mechanism from the EU was named as the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey, which mainly focuses on the humanitarian assistance, education, health, municipal infrastructure, and socio-economic support in the context of refugees in Turkey (European Commission, 2020). Coordination of the assistance and strategic guidance on the amount, the financing instruments and the type of actions for the assistance are provided by The Steering Committee that is chaired by the European Commission and composed of EU Member State representatives (European Commission, 2020). Turkey has an advisory capacity on the committee and "decisions are taken on the basis of an assessment of needs" (EU Commission, 2020). I talked to an official from the Delegation of the European Union to Turkey to learn the procedure for delivering and distributing the money coming from the EU. As the official stated, the EU's money is delivered either to the ministries of Turkey as a grant or to the

international institutions in response to the need assessments (personal communication, February 5, 2020). Moreover, she told me that international institutions can fund projects of municipalities through *İlbank*, which is a state-owned development bank and subordinated to the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning (personal communication, February 5, 2020). Furthermore, monitoring for these projects are coordinated by the Vice Presidency of the Republic of Turkey (personal communication, February 5, 2020).

As a consequence, as Murat Erdoğan (2017) suggests local governments in Turkey still lack adequate instruments and legal regulations to deal with the refugee crises and integration problems stemming from them. International funds could be a window of movement for municipalities in order to overcome the refugee crisis. However, they are still tied with bureaucracy, and the decisions and coordination the central government. According to Erdoğan, municipalities are one of the most advantaged institutions and they should develop themselves in project writing and finding international funds (Erdoğan, 2017, p. 129).

#### **3.4. POPULAR RESENTMENT AND POLICY APPROACHES OF GOVERNMENT IN THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS**

As the Syrian Refugee Crisis has been prolonged, it can be observed that popular resentment against Syrians among Turkish citizens is on the rise in recent years. Economic and cultural factors have contributed to the growth of popular resentment about Syrians in Turkey, as well as the policies implemented by the government and inaccurate media coverage may have influenced this increase.

Before discussing the popular resentment and policy approaches of the government, it could be beneficial to mention roughly the background of the Turkish political agenda from 2011 until now in order to analyze better. Since the beginning of the 2010s until now, if we take a panoramic photo of political, social, economic cornerstone incidents in Turkey, we can say that Turkey has gone through a political turmoil in a sense in the last 8 years. Since 2010 Turkey has experienced 2 referendums, 2 local elections, 4 national elections and 1 election for the presidency. All of them enhanced the political polarization that was already

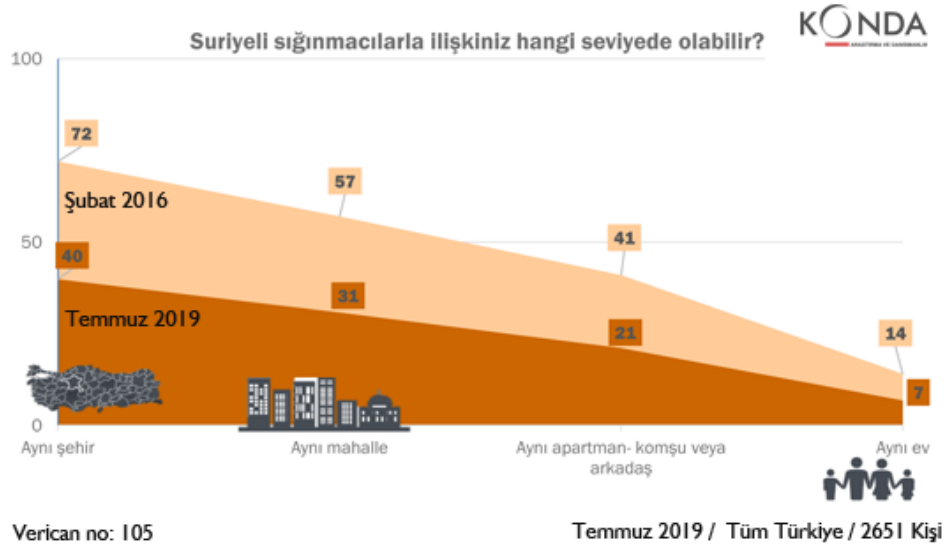
occupying the political realm in the society. Moreover, Turkey has gone through the 2013 Gezi Protests which is the biggest social movement in modern Turkish history and successive deadly terrorist attacks targeting ordinary Turkish citizens. Furthermore, Turkish citizens got through a failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016 and successive states of emergencies after the failed coup. While these were happening, the Republic of Turkey was challenged by external crises with several countries and supranational organizations such as the European Union, Syria, Russian Federation, the United States, Egypt, and Israel. In addition to all of these, in recent years, Turkey has been experiencing an economic crisis with the effect of the exchange rate crisis. Thus, the already challenging political atmosphere has hindered effective solutions to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, especially the integration of Syrian refugees. Furthermore, already existing polarization in the society has enhanced divides in the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Kaya gives the examples failed coup d'état of 15 July 2016 and the Gezi Movement to explain the effects of such incidents on the growth of popular resentment regarding the Syrian Refugee issue. As Kaya states that “Societal and political polarization of the country has become very evident since the #occupygezi movement of June 2013, and the refugees are also becoming more and more exposed to such divides (2016, p. 1). Moreover, as he argues Turkey was not challenged only by the integration of refugees in this process, but it was challenged also by putting its democracy on the right track after the 15 July Coup attempt (Kaya, 2016, p. 1). In the next parts of this chapter, there will be different aspects of the effects of the political atmosphere on the Syrian Refugee Crisis, yet I will continue the discussion from the roots of popular resentment against Syrians in the next sections.

### **3.4.1. Roots of Popular Resentment Against Syrian Refugees**

As the Syrian Refugee Crisis has continued, popular resentment against Syrians in Turkey has become observable throughout the years. According to a research of Konda Research and Consultancy, the percentage of people who do not want to live with Syrians in the same city increased from 40% in February 2016 to 72 % in July 2019 as seen in *Figure 3.3*. Moreover, referring to a barometer

conducted by Murat Erdoğan (2018), Altıok and Tosun shares perceptions of Turkish citizens about Syrians as being “liability to us” (43%), “dangerous people who will cause trouble in the future” (39%), and beggars/living on aids (24.4 %) (Erdoğan, 2018, as cited in Altıok & Tosun, 2018, p. 3). In addition to these perception researches, increasing incidents of intercommunal violence make popular resentment towards Syrians observable. As stated in the report of International Crisis Group (ICG) called *Turkey’s Syrian Refugees: Defusing Metropolitan Tensions*, “Incidents of intercommunal violence increased threefold in the second half of 2017 compared to the same period in 2016. At least 35 people died in these incidents during 2017, including 24 Syrians (ICG, 2018, p. II).

Altıok and Tosun compile the roots of public disfavor towards Syrian refugees under three headings: “(1) perceived cultural and ethnic threat, (2) economic competition over resources and rights, (3) ambiguous political agenda at state level (Altıok & Tosun, 2018, p. 2). Altıok and Tosun suggest that when different parties whose culture, ethnicity or language are different come across, the feeling of cultural threat appears as people fear to lose their cultural cohesiveness or ethnic uniformity (2018, p. 3). In the case in Turkey, this can be one reason behind public disfavor against Syrians. Accordingly, International Crisis Group observes in their report that there is less tension in the border cities such as Gaziantep, Kilis and Şanlıurfa where cultural affinities with Syrians are more apparent (ICG, 2018). That is why ethnic ties with Syrians or speaking the same language (Arabic or Kurdish) could be a factor for less tension (ICG, 2018). On the other hand, Kaya claims that there is a tendency in opposite direction in Southeast of Turkey among Kurdish and Alevi communities in the sense that there are growing rumors that government is trying to utilize Syrians (Sunni-Muslim-Arab people) in order to counterbalance the density of Kurdish and Alevi population (Kaya, 2016, p. 1). Thus, this example also shows that the argument of cultural threat perception of the local people while discussing the popular resentment is valid.



**Figure 3.3** Graph of Percentage Change on the Perception of Syrian Asylum-Seekers (Statistics on the percentage of changes to the question of “What do you think is your relationship with Syrian Asylum-Seekers”). Reprinted from Konda Research and Consultancy Facebook Account. July 26, 2019., Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2quitvR> Copyright 2019 by Konda Research and Consultancy.

Moreover, based on their fieldwork in İstanbul and İzmir, Altıok and Tosun observe that lack of interaction between two communities that are mostly caused by linguistic barriers and ghettoization of Syrians reinforces and reproduces the popular resentment (2018, p.3). In addition to these, Altıok and Tosun observe that public anger is not directed at Syrians just because they are Syrians, but because people feel threatened by different “outlooks and cultural practices” i.e. “manifestations of distinguishing cultural practices such as speaking Arabic, young Syrian males gathering in the neighborhoods, smoking shisha until late hours in the parks” (Altıok & Tosun, 2018, p. 4). Banning Syrians from entering the beach in Mudanya that I mentioned in the introduction could be another example because the Mayor of Mudanya defended himself by saying that they banned Syrians from entering the beach not because they are Syrians, but because they threatened the lifestyles of people in Mudanya by coming with camels and setting up tents to the

beach, and smoking shisha on the beach all day according to *Interviewee 1* who is one of the top officials of public relations and media in Mudanya Municipality and one of advisors to the mayor (*Interviewee 1*, Interview 1, November 26, 2019).

The second root for public disfavor could be economic competition over resources. Referring to Citrin et al (1997). and O'Rourke and Sinnott (2006), Altıok and Tosun maintain that since immigrants provide a source for cheap labor to the economy and as a result host communities struggle more for jobs with the same or lower standards, this creates a tension between host communities and newcomers (as cited in Altıok & Tosun, 2018, p. 4). Economic competition could be an important reason for popular resentment in countries like Turkey which struggles with high and increasing unemployment rates. As Altıok and Tosun claim, feeling the risk to lose jobs by citizens can be regarded as not surprising giving the high unemployment rates and also Syrians' participation in the informal economy and thereby creating a sense that they are taking away economic opportunities (2018, p. 4). On the other hand, although a law on work permits for people under temporary protection enacted in 2016 by the Turkish government, one can argue that flexible job opportunities and insecure work conditions still cause the precariousness for refugees under temporary protection (Altıok & Tosun, 2018, p. 5). In addition to competition for jobs, threats to the welfare system and the burden on social conditions could be other economic reasons (Altıok & Tosun, 2018, p. 5-6). Referring to a research by "Aksoy Araştırma" (2017), "70% of Turkish people think that Syrian refugees cause rising rent prices and unemployment of Turkish people" (as cited in Altıok & Tosun, 2018, p. 5-6). Thus, when Turkish authorities repeatedly stated that Turkey has been hosting around 4 million Syrians and spending around 40 billion dollars on the issue, the perception that incoming Syrians have placed a heavy burden on the Turkish economy become inevitable among Turkish citizens ("Erdoğan says", 2019 November 18). The allocation of resources becomes a complex issue especially for shrunken economies like Turkish economy. Yet, in my view, the scapegoating of Syrians because of their participation in the informal economy is not the right attitude in the sense that they

are not the creator of this situation because they are, rather, the victim of inadequate legal regulations that create the informal economy.

The third root, which is the ambiguous state policies, for public anger towards Syrians that Altok and Tosun compile is related to things that I mention above. Altok and Tosun claim that ambiguous state policies on issues of work permits, citizenships, and children enrolled in schools reinforce already existing public disfavor in Turkish society (2018, p. 7). According to them, whether migrants or citizens are hired, the informal economy that enables inadequate social guarantees for workers has always been there (Altok & Tosun, 2018, p. 6). Flexible job opportunities and granting limited work permits to Syrians enable the continuation of existing informal economies that both the employers and the state benefit (Altok & Tosun, 2018, p. 6). On the other side, refugees do not want to apply for work permits since they do not want to lose their cash assistance (Kızılay Card / 120 liras per month) so that they continue to work in informal economy (Altok & Tosun, 2018, p. 6). Referring to UNICEF's (2017) records, Altok and Tosun maintain that the "state policy allowing child labor to enter work force" could be one of the reasons that the enrollment rate among Syrian children to schools is quite low, approximately 40 per cent (2018, p. 6). In an environment that schooling rate is 40 % among children achieving successful integration seems almost impossible. Lastly, lacking transparency for naturalization leads to rumors among society about who is granted citizenship under which criteria according to Altok and Tosun (2018, p. 7).

In addition to all these, provocative media coverage and disinformation spreading from social media about Syrian refugees could be another factor that reinforces public anger towards Syrians. This disinformation could be either on social and economic rights granted to Syrians or on more delicate criminal issues. For example, on 19 September 2019, a Syrian immigrant was blamed for abuse to an 11-year-old boy in Adana. The events turned out to be a lynching attempt for Syrian refugees with the effect of anger on social media. However, it was understood that suspects of abuse taken into custody were Turkish citizens ("Adana'da Suriyelilere", 2019, September 23).

Another issue related to popular resentment against Syrians could be ambiguous political rhetoric and policy approaches. This will be the subject for another subsection that will discuss the matter in detail.

### **3.4.2. Ambiguous Policy Choices and Political Rhetoric**

As mentioned above, in the initial periods of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, it was not estimated that the crisis would be long-lasting, and it was treated as temporary by the Turkish government (Kirişçi, 2014; İçduygu, 2015; Erdoğan, 2017). Turkey received Syrian immigrants as guests (Kirişçi, 2014). Initial phases in the crisis in terms of policy approaches were shaped in the context of hospitality which addresses providing shelter, humanitarian aid and assistance especially in the refugee camps (Kirişçi, 2014; İçduygu, 2015). As Erdoğan argues, the response to the mass influx by the government was framed in the context of “emergency management” (2017).

However, as the crisis has lengthened, a new need has emerged: integration of urban refugees (Kirişçi, 2014; Erdoğan, 2017). Kirişçi, in his article in 2014, has listed his suggestions as follows: accepting that stay of Syrians is not temporary, going beyond hospitality and bracing for the long run, focusing on the eventual incorporation of refugees into Turkish society, developing comprehensive legal tools to deal with the integration process, and burden-sharing with international community (Kirişçi, 2014). İçduygu also pointed out in his article in 2015 as follows: “redefining the status of Syrian refugees”, “prioritizing integration policies”, “preparing for further refugee flows”, “sharing the burden of refugee flows with international community”, “addressing the shortcomings of international protection system (2015, p. 13-14). Erdoğan also makes suggestions about developing harmonization tools (2017).

Although the governments of the Turkish Republic has been giving a relatively good account of themselves in the context of emergency management to the mass influx of Syrians and in the context of providing humanitarian aid, if we examine the current situation of refugees, it can be said that integration attempts by



Turkish authorities are little bit late and still inadequate and deprived of a comprehensive outlook.

The last point that affects the popular resentment against Syrians and the policy approaches themselves could be the inconsistency in political rhetoric in Turkey. Ayhan Kaya's article called "The Need for a Stronger Integration Discourse in Turkey" would be enlightening to understand the effects of changing the political discourse in Turkey on the refugee issue. As mentioned above, initial phases of the crisis were shaped around the "guesthood" of Syrian refugees (Kirişçi, 2014). This guesthood was connotating a temporary process. However, just before the failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016 the president of the Turkish Republic, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan mentioned a need for granting dual citizenship for Syrians (Özer, 2016). On the other hand, because of the public reaction to Erdoğan's statements, government's spokesperson Numan Kurtulmuş stated that proposal for granting citizenship to Syrian was still on the preparation process and that this proposal would include only Syrian people who have economic and cultural capital ("Hükümetten Suriyelilere Vatandaşlık Açıklaması, 2016). According to Kaya, this "discursive shift pointed out the changing positions of Turkish authorities on the permanent character of at least some of the Syrian refugees in Turkey" (2019). As Kaya (2019) maintains this permanency was framed within acts of the tolerance and benevolence of Turkish state actors. Moreover, Kaya states that these acts of benevolence and toleration presented as "the Ansar Spirit" which connotes the Islamist discourse (2019). However, according to Kaya, the discourse of "the Ansar Spirit" which evokes the cultural intimacy with Turkish people because of the shared beliefs did not resonate with Turkish citizens because they suffer from increasing socio-economic and political problems in Turkey (Kaya, 2019). As Kaya (2019) argues that the political rhetoric continued until local elections in March 2019. According to Kaya (2019), after local elections, there is a drastic change in the discourse regarding the Syrian refugees, towards a re-patriotization programme, that is to say a push for the return of Syrian refugees back to Syria. As Kaya (2019) maintains, both constant statements of oppositional party leaders and spokespersons of the ruling government that include the need for return worsen the integration

efforts in Turkey. The last operation in the North East of Syria with the aim of resettlement of Syrians into captured areas reinforced the discourse of return in practice. However, integration should be the main agenda about Syrian refugees whether they will stay or return. Kaya's enlightening sentences about the issue would be beneficial to focus on what really important is and be suitable for closing this chapter as follows:

One should not forget that integration discourse will pay off in both cases irrespective of Syrian refugees decide to go home, or a third country, or they decide to stay in Turkey. If they go home, or to a third country, they will become the ambassadors of Turkey remembering the good treatment and integrative efforts they received in Turkey. If they decide to stay, then they will also appreciate for integration efforts of the Turkish state and society by delivering positively to the society as the constituent and welcomed individuals. In each option, there is always a win-win scenario (Kaya, 2019).

## FOURTH CHAPTER

### CULTURAL ACTIONS TOWARDS THE SYRIAN REFUGEES: THE BURSA CASE STUDY

In order to analyze the aforementioned theoretical discussions in practice, I chose Bursa as my research field. I focused on stakeholders of culture and the arts sector in Bursa and interviewed the representatives of institutions related to culture or the integration of immigrants. Before giving the details about my interviews, chosen representative of institutions that I interviewed with and questions that I asked, I would like to explain why I chose Bursa as my research field. There are four main reasons why I chose Bursa as my research field. First of all, as of December 2019, Bursa hosts the 7<sup>th</sup> most crowded Syrian refugee population which consists of 5.9 % of the overall population (Retrieved from the table titled “Distribution of Syrian Refugees Within the Scope of Temporary Protection by Province” on the DGMM’s official website, available at <https://en.goc.gov.tr/temporary-protection27>) in the city as seen on *Figure 3.2*. Secondly, the urban refugee population has been creating a significant tension among local people in Bursa where some actions like banning Syrians from entering the beach in Mudanya by the municipality with the impetus of citizens have become a part of national agenda in June 2019 (“Mudanya’da Belediye Başkanı, Suriyelilere Sahili Yasakladı”, 2019). Thirdly, Bursa has experienced several mass influxes of immigrants throughout time. Besides mass influxes before the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, when we consider immigrants that came as a consequence of population exchange agreement between Turkey and Greece, immigrants from Bulgaria that came between 1950 and 1951, 1969 and 1978, and in 1989, immigrants from Macedonia in 1970 one can say that Bursa is a city shaped by migration (Kaplanoğlu, 2014). Moreover, Bursa is one of the cities that have been receiving internal migration the most between 1975 and 2000 (see Table 4.1). Furthermore, except for the last three years, Bursa was still one of the most receiving cities of migration (Uyar, 2018). It would not be mistaken to say that

Bursa effectively absorbed internal and external migrations throughout time. One can say that immigrant associations like Association for the Culture and Solidarity of Immigrants from the Balkans (*Balkan Göçmenleri Kültür ve Dayanışma Derneği*) are among the powerful non-governmental organizations in the civil society in Bursa. These are the reasons for choosing Bursa. I may add that Bursa is my hometown and I have been able to observe changes in the city's culture over time. Thus, Bursa is one of the cities that I know its cultural scene the most.

**Table 4.1**

*Order of Provinces according to net migration rate of 1995-200 period, 1975-2000*

| Order number by size | Provinces    | 1975-1980     |                       | 1980-1985     |                       | 1985-1990     |                       | 1995-2000     |                       |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
|                      |              | Net migration | Rate of net migr. (‰) | Net migration | Rate of net migr. (‰) | Net migration | Rate of net migr. (‰) | Net migration | Rate of net migr. (‰) |
| 1                    | Tekirdağ     | 4.849         | 16,5                  | 3.438         | 10,3                  | 17.907        | 46,7                  | 51.335        | 96,8                  |
| 2                    | Muğla        | 1.659         | 4,3                   | 3.058         | 7,0                   | 15.998        | 32,9                  | 42.921        | 70,2                  |
| 3                    | Antalya      | 17.142        | 26,5                  | 25.339        | 32,8                  | 82.737        | 89,7                  | 90.457        | 64,3                  |
| 4                    | Bilecik      | -394          | -3,0                  | 1.095         | 7,9                   | 3.009         | 19,6                  | 10.105        | 57,9                  |
| 5                    | İstanbul     | 288.653       | 73,4                  | 297.598       | 60,5                  | 656.677       | 107,6                 | 407.448       | 46,1                  |
| <b>6</b>             | <b>Bursa</b> | <b>58.720</b> | <b>61,0</b>           | <b>47.434</b> | <b>41,1</b>           | <b>83.641</b> | <b>61,6</b>           | <b>85.325</b> | <b>45,1</b>           |
| 7                    | İzmir        | 119.896       | 73,7                  | 82.173        | 41,9                  | 146.208       | 63,8                  | 120.375       | 39,9                  |

*Note.* Adapted from “Order of Provinces according to net migration rate of 1995-200 period” by Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), [Source: Population Census, 1980-200]. December 9, 2019. Retrieved from [http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt\\_id=1067](http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1067)

Before analyzing my fieldwork, it is beneficial to make mention, briefly, of the cultural scene in Bursa. Although Bursa has opportunities to have a fruitful cultural scene such as influential businesspeople, proximity to Istanbul where the most fruitful cultural life is in, and rooted cultural institutions, one can say that Bursa is below its potential regarding the cultural life in the city. Yet, some institutions and cultural initiatives in Bursa are promising to fulfil the needs of the people in Bursa. First of all, Bursa has one of the oldest state theatre scenes in Turkey. State Theatres under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism also have been organizing Bursa International Balkan States Theatre Festival since 2013. Furthermore, another organization that is subordinated to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Bursa Regional State Symphony Orchestra, is very active in the city.

The orchestra is supported by *Uludağ İçecek*, one of the influential businesses in Bursa. Other than the organizations related to the central government, municipalities become prominent in the cultural life in Bursa. Nilüfer Municipality, one of the district municipalities in Bursa, distinguishes with the investments in the cultural and artistic activities. As *Interviewee 2* pointed out, the budget allocated to the cultural activities in Nilüfer is % 7.5, which is a decent percentage comparing to international standards (*Interviewee 2*, Interview 2, November 20, 2019). Nilüfer Municipality has its own theatre company and choir that serve to the cultural life in Bursa. Nilüfer Municipality has an astonishing cultural activities program that includes concerts, theatre shows, performances, movie screening, workshops, seminars, and so on. Moreover, in recent years, Nilüfer Municipality has become prominent in Turkey's cultural scene with its festivals such as Nilüfer Jazz Festival (*Caz Tatili*) and Nilüfer Music Festival. Besides, Nilüfer Theatre Festival is also an important festival for the cultural life in Bursa and Turkey. These festivals have become intriguing festivals both within the culture industry and in Turkey in general. It is hard to say that other municipalities have a significant impact on cultural life in Bursa. However, Bursa Culture Arts and Tourism Foundation, which organizes the biggest festivals of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality can be mentioned as an important cultural institution in Bursa. The foundation organizes the oldest and important festivals such as International Bursa Festival, International Golden Karagöz Folk Dance Competition, International Bursa Theatre Festival for Children and the Youth, and International Bursa Karagöz Puppet and Shadow Theatre Festival. There are also some private-led cultural initiatives like Podyum SanatMahal and Nilüfer Stage, which bring quality cultural program to the city. Apart from all these, Bursa's proximity to Istanbul enables the shows in Istanbul to be easily brought by the cultural centers and concert halls in Bursa especially in the context of concerts and performative arts. However, one can argue that there is a scarcity of private-led cultural initiatives in Bursa.

Other than all these, it may be necessary to mention Bursa Migration History Museum hosted by Bursa Metropolitan Municipality in terms of the context of the thesis. The museum covers the migration waves throughout the history in Bursa,

from ancient times to 1990s. It reflects the aforementioned statement about the influence of migration in the demographics of the city. That is, the narrative in the museum affirms that Bursa is shaped by migration movements. However, I found the rhetoric of the narrative of the museum a little bit nationalistic. This feature of the museum reinforces the idea that Turkish migration policy has been aiming the Turkification and Islamization of Turkey since late Ottoman period and the beginning of the Republic. As I mentioned above, Turkish state has always prioritized immigrants who shares “Turkish descent and culture”. Relative success of Bursa in the integration of immigrants to the society may stem from the fact that immigrants who came to Bursa were defined themselves as Turkish and Muslim and they speak Turkish.

I focused on the cultural scene and conducted interviews with representatives of culture and the arts in Bursa between 20 November 2019 and 9 December 2019. I presented the list of interviews and interviewees in the appendix below. Since the cultural scene in cities, like Bursa, are mostly shaped by the efforts of municipalities, I talked to people from cultural departments of the Bursa Metropolitan Municipality and District Municipalities of Mudanya, Osmangazi, Nilüfer, and Yıldırım which are central districts in Bursa and in which daily populations are high. Besides Nilüfer and Osmangazi are the districts that have the most crowded refugee population in Bursa as seen in Table 3. These are relatively most cosmopolitan districts in Bursa since they have experienced the aforementioned mass influxes to Bursa. Moreover, I interviewed one of the top officials of the most important cultural institution in civil society in Bursa, Bursa Culture Art and Tourism Foundation which is partly funded by Bursa Metropolitan Municipality and by influential businesswomen and businessmen. Furthermore, I talked to one of the top personnel of Podyum SanatMahal which is one of the most important private enterprises in the cultural scene in Bursa. Lastly, I talked to representatives of City Council, especially to people from the Foreigners Assembly of City Council of Bursa.

**Table 4.2***Distribution of Syrian refugees under temporary protection in Bursa*

| Name of the City | Name of the District | Numbers of Syrian Population Under Temporary Protection | Total Syrian Population under Temporary Protection in Bursa |
|------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| BURSA            | <b>Yıldırım</b>      | <b>59.404</b>                                           | 147.368                                                     |
|                  | <b>Osmangazi</b>     | <b>44.258</b>                                           |                                                             |
|                  | İnegöl               | 15.084                                                  |                                                             |
|                  | Unknown              | 6.743                                                   |                                                             |
|                  | Gürsu                | 6.590                                                   |                                                             |
|                  | <b>Nilüfer</b>       | <b>3.851</b>                                            |                                                             |
|                  | Orhangazi            | 2.787                                                   |                                                             |
|                  | Karacabey            | 2503                                                    |                                                             |
|                  | Kestel               | 2434                                                    |                                                             |
|                  | Mustafakemalpaşa     | 1649                                                    |                                                             |
|                  | Yenişehir            | 883                                                     |                                                             |
|                  | İznik                | 644                                                     |                                                             |
|                  | Gemlik               | 298                                                     |                                                             |
|                  | <b>Mudanya</b>       | <b>140</b>                                              |                                                             |
|                  | Harmancık            | 41                                                      |                                                             |
|                  | Keles                | 32                                                      |                                                             |
| Orhaneli         | 23                   |                                                         |                                                             |
| Büyükorhan       | 4                    |                                                         |                                                             |

*Note.* Adapted from “Policies of Municipalities Towards Syrian Refugees in Turkey: The Case of Bursa” (p. 39). [Bachelor Thesis] by Öztürk M. June 2018. [Data sent by email from Directorate General of Migration Management, (May 24, 2018)]. Copyright 2018.

My questions in those interviews can be compiled around 4 headings. First, I asked them whether their institutions undertake or not, works and projects about the social cohesion of Syrian refugees. Secondly, if not, I asked the question of what are the underlying reasons for not contributing to integration efforts? Thirdly, I asked what can be done to contribute to the peaceful coexistence of Syrians in the society and what can be their role in these efforts. Additionally, I asked them if the central government or authorities in municipalities direct them to undertake some actions about the integration of Syrians into society. Some additional questions were shaped according to the flow of the dialogue and the characteristics of the institution that I examined. These will be mentioned in detail below while explaining the specific characteristics of each interview.

Lastly, before explaining the conclusions of my fieldwork, one other institution that works for the social cohesion of Syrian refugees also on local scale is worth to mention. One of the areas of activity of Red Crescent Community

Centers (*Kızılay Toplum Merkezleri*) is social cohesion along with health and psychological support, protection, livelihood activities, and restoring family links (Red Crescent Community Center, February 2020). I couldn't carry out an interview with an official from Red Crescent Community Center in Bursa because the process of getting permission from the directorate general of the Red Crescent by the interviewee (a representative from the Red Crescent Community Center in Bursa) has prolonged and I had a limited time to do it. However, I figure out on their social media and website that they have some cultural and artistic activities regarding the social cohesion of immigrants, especially Syrian refugees. Thus, Red Crescent Community Center in Bursa have organized a bunch of cultural activities that target Syrian refugees both as participant and audience such as jam making workshops, cultural trips in Bursa, toy making workshop, and drawing workshops in 2019 (see at: <https://twitter.com/KizilayTM>). Moreover, in the event organized by the Community Center in Bursa on the World Migrant Day, the 'Bursa through the Lens of Immigrants' photography exhibition was opened, and stage shows with various local dances, music, poetry and narratives were held (*Dünya Göçmenler Günü Etkinliği*, February 2, 2020). These events were open for both local and immigrant communities. So, Red Crescent Community in Bursa could be one of the institutions that try to achieve peaceful coexistence and social cohesion in the society in the migratory and refugee context in Bursa. However, I should also mention that other centers in cities like Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, İstanbul and Adana are more active in cultural activities in that matter.

#### **4.1. MAIN FINDINGS**

According to interviews conducted, I've reached some main conclusions. This section will be an attempt to explain those conclusions.

First and most important of all, apart from some singular examples, I have not observed any significant effort in the field of culture and arts in Bursa in terms of contributing to the social cohesion of Syrians through culture and the arts, cultural participation of Syrians, and due recognition of Syrians by Turkish society. Efforts for the integration of Syrians to the society are limited by launching Turkish courses, yet even those efforts lack the coordination of cultural departments of



related institutions. Those singular examples will be mentioned in the next section. Notwithstanding that there is no significant attempt to use cultural participation in integration endeavors among decision makers in the cultural scene in Bursa, there has been an awareness of the necessity of achieving social cohesion on the issue of the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the use of elements of culture and the arts in it. Apart from these, from a broader perspective, it can be observed that there are no specialized departments regarding the integration of Syrians in the municipalities like some municipalities in Turkey have such as Şişli and Sultanbeyli District Municipalities.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from my interviews is that although instruments of cultural participation are not used to integrate Syrian refugees, it is possible to follow a pattern of why culture and the arts are not used as a means of achieving social cohesion in the society. First of all, the access to culture of Syrian refugees under temporary protection cannot be designated among other priority needs such as shelter, employment, humanitarian aid, economic means and so on. This issue is not on the agenda of both Syrians under temporary protection and governmental authorities. At this point, I need to mention the information which I got from local authorities that Syrians do not have these kinds of demands from governmental bodies. Moreover, in other words, in the context of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, it can be said that integration is secondary to emergent needs and cultural participation is secondary within integration endeavors. Secondly, although all cultural institutions take into account the policy of the central government in order to act related to the issue, it can be observed that clear information on government policy could not yet be filtered down to municipalities and civil society in Bursa. Arguably, local stakeholders are in a position of immovability such that all local actors have been referring the responsibility to another actor and especially to superior ones. However, I must point out that the local actors were largely justified in placing responsibility on the central government. The ambiguous policies and discourse of government of the Republic of Turkey on the Syrian Refugee Crisis mentioned in the previous chapter may have caused the actual intent and policies of the central government not to be properly and adequately transmitted

to the local authorities and civil society. When it comes to local governments, although it has not been clearly stated by all of the interviewees, it was obvious that the steps to be taken regarding the social cohesion of Syrians have been postponed with the concern of loss of votes. For example, *Interviewee 1*, who is a top official in the public and media relations department in Mudanya and an advisor to the mayor, stated that endeavors related to Syrian Refugee Crisis should be state policy in the sense that the central government should take the lead (*Interviewee 1*, Interview 1, November 26, 2019). Furthermore, he stated if there is a risk of loss of votes, this risk should be taken by the central government that created this problem, rather than by municipalities run by parties that win elections with slim margins (*Interviewee 1*, Interview 1, November 26, 2019). Arguments on losing votes or not gaining votes because of leading the integration processes can be explained in two ways. Firstly, parties engaged in efforts to integrate Syrians into the society may lose votes due to popular resentment against Syrians among Turkish society. Secondly, since the Syrians under temporary protection are not citizens and do not have the right to vote, producing projects for integration may not gain votes for the parties.

I came across an interesting pattern while examining the works of municipalities. Districts such as Bursa Metropolitan, Yildirim and Osmangazi, where most refugees live in (see Table 4.2) and run by the Justice and Development Party (JDP), are regions where cultural and artistic activities are currently not the significant parts of the municipalities' agenda. On the other hand, although Mudanya and Nilüfer, which are run by the Republican People's Party (RPP), play a leading role in the context of cultural activities in general, the number of refugees in these regions is quite low (see Table 4.2). In order to explain the contribution of Nilüfer Municipality to the culture, I can say the information that I obtain in my interviews as a footnote that the budget allocated to the cultural activities is % 7.5 that can be considered as a decent proportion internationally. The main reason why Mudanya and Nilüfer municipalities do not take steps towards the social cohesion of Syrian refugees and the cultural participation of Syrians can be explained as the fact that the issue cannot be included in the municipal agenda as the Syrian

population is low in these districts (*Interviewee 2*, Interview 2, November 20, 2019; *Interviewee 1*, Interview 1, November 26, 2019). On the other side, Osmangazi Municipality, one of the JDP-run municipalities, approaches the Syrian Refugee Crisis in terms of the resilience of the municipality rather than the peaceful coexistence of Syrians in the society (*Interviewee 3*, Interview 3, November 27, 2019).

When it comes to private sector-led cultural initiatives and foundations in the city, representatives of those institutions stated that they can provide support if there is a request from the city administrations; however, they stated that they did not have such an agenda (*Interviewee 4*, Interview 4, November 27, 2019; *Interviewee 5*, Interview 5, November 26, 2019). There will be more detailed information about those statements in the next section that will point out significant issues in each interview.

According to the interviews I conducted, one can argue that the city councils and especially the foreigners' assemblies that are subcommittees of them have the potential to take important steps in the peaceful coexistence of the Syrians in the society.

The area of the last main finding could be the issue of cooperation of cultural and artistic organizations with international organizations. In the previous chapter, I mentioned the importance of burden-sharing with the international community in the context of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, referring to İçduygu (2015) and Kirişçi (2014). From this perspective, the fact arises that cultural institutions in Bursa and cultural departments of municipalities in Bursa, except for a few individual examples, have very poor links with international organizations such as UNHCR and IOM, which are particularly interested in the refugee issue.

## **4.2. IMPLICATIONS FROM INTERVIEWS**

Besides the main conclusions, mentioning the key elements of interviews conducted would be useful to better understand the fragments of the big picture describing the extent to which the culture and the arts in Bursa contribute to peaceful coexistence in the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

I interviewed one of the top officials in the culture department of the Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, *Interviewee 6*. He stated that they started to work as a new team after local elections, that they had just completed their plans for the next year, that they did not have any projects regarding the cultural participation of the Syrians and that there was a nascent awareness in their department, when I brought up the issue (*Interviewee 6*, Interview 6, December 5, 2019). I should add that the fieldwork in Bursa Metropolitan Municipality was hard for me both because I could not get consistent information from the municipality and complicated procedural works made the fieldwork difficult. During my Interview 6, I was told that Bursa Metropolitan Municipality haven't done anything in neither the department of culture nor the department of social works for the integration or harmonization of Syrian refugees in Bursa. However, it turned out later that under its R&D unit Bursa Metropolitan Municipality was working on projects similar to what Osmangazi Municipality did.

In District Municipality of Yıldırım, an official responsible for culture and the art policies, *Interviewee 7*, answered my questions. Responses are important because Yıldırım has the most crowded Syrian population in Bursa (see Table 4.2). Moreover, nearly as a fact, Yıldırım accommodates not only the citizen population that has the low-income citizens, but it accommodates also the refugee population with the lowest socio-economic wealth, judging from the low rents and costs of living in the district. In addition, the rates of internal migration are also high in Yıldırım. According to *Interviewee 7*, the main impediments to the social cohesion of Syrians are linguistic barriers and reactions to the ethnic difference, namely reaction against Arabic culture among Turkish society (*Interviewee 7*, Interview 7, November 27, 2019). *Interviewee 7* stated that using culture and the arts as an integration tool is not on the agenda of local governments of Yıldırım (*Interviewee 7*, Interview 7, November 27, 2019). While explaining the reasons behind it, he emphasized on two different causes: (1) that the municipality prioritizes issues such as infrastructure investments, zoning issues and social supports in the district which is less developed than the other districts and (2) unawareness about the positive effects of arts and culture as a reflection of the absence of a strong cultural policies

in Turkey (*Interviewee 7*, Interview 7, November 27, 2019). Lastly, *Interviewee 7* stated that since there was no political will to host Syrian refugees permanently, integration efforts were not undertaken from the beginning of the crisis (*Interviewee 7*, Interview 7, November 27, 2019).

It can be said that Osmangazi Municipality, which, after Yıldırım Municipality, hosts the second highest proportion of Syrian populations under temporary protection (see Table 4.2) is the most aware municipality about the Syrian Refugee Crisis among municipalities of Bursa. During interviewing with a project specialist working in strategy development, *Interviewee 3*, I have learned that Osmangazi Municipality is carrying out a resilience project regarding the refugee issue with Marmara Municipalities Union and that the municipality included targets for developing social belonging into its strategic plan for the years between 2020 and 2024 (*Interviewee 3*, Interview 3, November 27, 2019). As mentioned above, resilience project is being carried out in order to prevent the difficulties caused by the Syrian migration wave and to ensure that all fellow-citizens, including Syrians under temporary protection, of the district do not have any problems in the main areas of activity of the municipality such as infrastructure, garbage collection, environmental health, social supports, clean water, landscape and so on. Although not sufficient, it is significant that Osmangazi Municipality has placed its target to “strengthen the sense of social belonging of immigrant groups through the training and projects” that is among its strategic objectives (*Osmangazi Municipality Strategic Plan 2020-2024*, 2019). The objective of “strengthen the sense of belonging of immigrant groups through the trainings and projects” includes three projects: launching Turkish courses within vocational course institution (OSMEK) of the municipality, publishing and handing out brochures giving information about service areas and communication resources for migrant groups, and organizing activities to strengthen the social belonging of migrant groups (*Osmangazi Municipality Strategic Plan 2020-2024*, 2019). *Interviewee 3* stated that there is no active work yet but plans for the next year continue (*Interviewee 3*, Interview 3, November 27, 2019).

In Nilüfer, I interviewed *Interviewee 2* who is one of the top officials in the culture department of the municipality and an advisor to the mayor regarding cultural policies. *Interviewee 2*, who also produces projects on social issues and refugees, and provides consultancy to Hatay Metropolitan Municipality which feels the pressure to immigration influx more than Bursa, stated that Nilüfer Municipality does not have any efforts on the social cohesion of Syrian refugees especially in the field of culture due to the reasons mentioned above. Firstly, Nilüfer accommodates fewer Syrian people than other major districts of Bursa. Secondly, as *Interviewee 2* argued, Syrians under temporary protection in Nilüfer are relevantly wealthy and educated so that they are already integrated into society (*Interviewee 2*, Interview 2, November 20, 2019).

Although Mudanya does not contain a large Syrian population, the evacuation of Syrians from the beach in the summer of 2019 makes my interview with one of the top officials in Media and Public Relations of Mudanya Municipality interesting. *Interviewee 1*, who is also the advisor to the Mayor, stated that the issue was not about banning people from entry, but it was about stopping an invasion of the beach by Syrian people who are deviant to the civic culture of the society (*Interviewee 1*, Interview 1, November 26, 2019). In this incident, it was seen that Syrians came to the coastline with camels and set up tents, smoked hookah, and entered the sea with their underwear. After this incident, that became a national agenda. Municipality authority took a proactive attitude and determined the theme of its first book fair this year as "Those Who Come, Those Who Go, and Those Who Stay" because they wanted to demolish the negative public image after this poorly communicated incident. In this 8-day-long book fair, every night there were panels related to different aspects of immigration and the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Moreover, politicians such as Ünal Çeviköz, İbrahim Kaboğlu, Melda Onur, Hüseyin Aygün, İlhan Cihaner; academicians such as Emre Kongar, Ayfer Karakaya, Kerem Kılıçdaroğlu; writers and columnists such as Cem Erciyes, Ayşen Şahin, Mine Söğüt, İbrahim Varlı, İsmail Saymaz, Levent Gültekin, Murat Yetkin, Mustafa Sönmez, and many other names were invited to discuss in these panels. The titles of these panels can be compiled as follows: "Turkish Foreign Policy and

Refugees”, “Language of Peace in the Literature and Being a Refugee”, “Refugee Crisis within the context of Syrian Policy of the Government”, “Literature, Migration and Refugees”, “What Kind of Future For Syrians?”, and “Rights, Law, and Justice within the Context of International Migration, and Refugees” (Deniz, 2019). *Interviewee 1* stated that the choice of theme is a conscious choice and that they have taken such a step to identify and discuss the problem (*Interviewee 1*, Interview 1, November 26, 2019). Although this fair does not promise anything in terms of Syrian cultural participation, I appreciate the efforts to make the issue at least talkable in a place where there is a public disfavor against Syrians. To the question of “why didn’t you invite any Syrians to these panels as a speaker”, *Interviewee 1* replied that they were thinking of inviting people from Syrian community, but that they had organized the fair as it was done because there was a request from the leadership of Republican People’s Party to keep it limited. The last point about this interview could be that officials in Mudanya Municipality are aware of the necessity of efforts for social cohesion. However, according to *Interviewee 1*, there should be a state policy about the issue under the leadership of the central government that generated Syrian Refugee Crisis in Turkey itself because municipalities run by political parties who won elections in slim margins cannot take the risk of losing votes (*Interviewee 1*, Interview 1, November 26, 2019).

City Councils also have the potential to play a major role in peaceful coexistence in the society. I talked to *Interviewee 8* who is a member of Nilüfer City Council. From City Council of Bursa, I interviewed Foreigners Assembly Facilitator, *Interviewee 9*, and a high representative from Foreigners Assembly, *Interviewee 10*. In the interview with *Interviewee 8*, she stated that there is no significant effort for the social cohesion of Syrians because there are no significant demands for these efforts since there is a small Syrian community in Nilüfer (*Interviewee 8*, Interview 8, December 5, 2019). In addition, as a working group under Nilüfer City Council, there is a choir called “Love and Fellowship Choir” consisting mostly of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of migrants from Bulgaria. On the other hand, Foreigners Assembly under City Council of Bursa has a few projects in the planning phase: Turkish language courses only for Syrian women and handicraft

workshops for Syrian and other disadvantaged foreign children sponsored by Ermetal which is a big manufacturing firm in Bursa (*Interviewee 9 & Interviewee 10*, Interview 9, December 5, 2019). Moreover, *Interviewee 10* stated that they are developing close contacts with UNHCR to realize these projects in cooperation with UNHCR which is a supportive international organization open to cooperation in social cohesion projects (*Interviewee 10*, Interview 9, December 5, 2019).

Contribution from civil society for peaceful coexistence is really precious. However, none of the cultural institutions that I interviewed with the representative of, contribute to social cohesion projects in the context of Syrian refugees in Bursa. Nonetheless, *Interviewee 5*, who is a high representative from Podyum SanatMahal which is a significant culture and the arts center in Bursa, stated that they are open to cooperation for such projects if there will be a demand from related institutions or governmental bodies (*Interviewee 5*, Interview 5, November 26, 2019). Lastly, I conducted an interview with *Interviewee 4*, who is one of the top officials in Bursa Culture Art and Tourism Foundation which is mostly funded by the Bursa Metropolitan Municipality and wealthy businesspeople in Bursa. *Interviewee 4* also stated that they do not have any activity for the social cohesion and cultural participation of Syrians under temporary protection because they mostly engage in preparing and running big festivals of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality, they arrange programs of these festivals according to demands of the municipality (*Interviewee 4*, Interview 4, November 27, 2019). Whereas, I attach importance to contribution of Bursa Culture Art and Tourism Foundation in social cohesion and cultural participation projects regarding Syrian refugees because they organize such big festivals which are by nature open to intercultural dialogue that I mentioned in the second chapter such as International Golden Karagöz Folk Dance Competition and International Bursa Theatre Festival for Children and Young People. Since I have been working at these festivals last year, I can appreciate how intercultural dialogue occupies a place in these festivals. In both festivals, folk dance and theatre groups from different parts of the world come together, rehearse in the same places, stay in the same hotel, exhibit their works to the public in the same shows. Moreover, in both festivals, participants are mostly people aged under 30.



Furthermore, at the theatre festival, they generally perform for children who are in elementary school. Thus, if this theatre festival is to be used also for the social cohesion of Syrian children, an opportunity for cooperation with the educational sector which is also a key element for the integration of Syrian children will surely arise. As mentioned above in the second chapter, cross-sectorial approaches can be more effective for social cohesion endeavors. Finally, besides the fact that there is no part, regarding cultural participation of Syrians, of the foundation's vision, *Interviewee 4* emphasized on the importance of social networks which could not be established between Syrian groups and the foundation in past festivals; while explaining the reason why Syrian groups have not been invited to these festivals in recent years.

## CONCLUSION

As mass protests in Syria have escalated and turned into armed conflict and civil war in April 2011, millions of civilians have fled from their country to find a safe place to live for their families and themselves. As the end of 2018, 6.7 million refugees from Syrian Arab Republic constituted the biggest group of 25.9 million refugees in the world where an unprecedented humanitarian crisis has been experienced according to UNHCR's data (2018). Due to geographical proximity and the fact that Turkey shares the longest borderline with Syria, one of the main addresses of Syrian refugees has become Turkey. Although Turkey had received several mass influxes in its history, the Syrian refugee influx is an unprecedented one for Turkey because of its volume and suddenness (Kirişçi, 2014). Although governments of the Republic of Turkey gave a good account of themselves in terms of emergency process management and humanitarian aids and assistance, there is a need for long-term planning for the peaceful coexistence of Syrians and Turkish society (Kirişçi, 2014; İçduygu, 2015; Erdoğan; 2017). Lack of social cohesion about Syrians and political resentment against Syrian communities are observable in Turkish society. Whether Syrians will stay, go home or to a third country, integration efforts are meaningful since those efforts will, either way, contribute to social cohesion in Turkey or contribute to the positive image of Turkey outside of the country (Kaya, 2019).

However, as I have discussed, this vision of peaceful co-existence and a culture of dialogue has not been part of the policy of the reigning governments since the crisis started, to this day. The state policy towards the Syrian refugees has been dominated by the discourse of temporariness. The Syrian refugees have been treated as temporary guests. And the management of this temporary situation has been framed within the discourse of crisis management, that is to say a management approach that treats a situation as a crisis situation, i.e. temporary. As the Syrian civil war continued, the nature of the crisis began to appear not so much of a temporary character. Then, at that point, we see the state policy to waiver between two polar opposite positions of giving citizenship to the refugees and or sending them back to Syria. Both these policies were situated within a framework of the

political demands of the day. Under these circumstances of ambivalent political reaction and ambiguous policy direction, the local state authorities could not come up with alternative strategies. Opposition political parties also failed in creating an alternative discourse, with civil society remaining very weak too. We would conclude, therefore, that the lack of any local action regarding the welfare of the Syrian refugees and their integration to the society at large can be understood better in the context of the lack of clear policy discourse at the national level emanating from both the governing party and the oppositional political parties and movements.

Fostering the practices of peaceful coexistence consists of successful integration with due recognition of host communities as well as dissolving the tension between host and guest communities: Syrians and Turkish society in our case. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to problems that arise from cultural diversity in the society. In my view, radical cosmopolitan approaches or cosmopolitanism from below that embrace the main tenets of multiculturalist philosophy could be best possible philosophical background for the management of cultural diversity in Turkey. Those main tenets of multiculturalism can be compiled as the need for equal due recognition for persons and cultures, the dialogical character of the construction of identity, the equal dignity of human being, the importance of respect for every human being and the need for collective rights along with individual ones to achieve due recognition. Radical cosmopolitan approaches pave the way for establishing common ground for disputed communities while keeping the channels of a constant dialogue between communities open. Moreover, cosmopolitanism from below enables different communities to shape a shared culture by the means of exchange of ideas, values, beliefs, and emotions without repressing the identities of those communities. Integration efforts also should be in a comprehensive manner such that they should take economic, cultural, political, and social aspects of problems stemming from cultural diversity into consideration. Lastly, since integration works in both directions, those efforts should enable the participation of both migrants and host communities.

I believe that culture and the arts could be a great tool for achieving social cohesion and peaceful coexistence since they have a therapeutic power for

traumatic situations, empower individuals and communities, provide civic education, enable intercultural dialogue, and have the capacity for transforming the very boundaries of identities. Unique peculiarities of culture and arts should be used in social cohesion efforts effectively such that cultural projects should include the participation of host and incoming communities as co-owners of these projects (DG EAC, 2017). Moreover, cross-sectoral approaches could be more effective while using culture and the arts as a tool for integration (DG EAC, 2017). Lastly, cooperation between public authorities and civil society could be key in these integration efforts while using cultural participation as a tool for social cohesion.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, not any significant efforts to use culture and arts as a tool for integration were observable in the case of Bursa, my research field. However, it is possible to follow a pattern of why culture and the arts are not used as a means of achieving social achieving peaceful coexistence of Syrians and the local community in Bursa. Understanding the underlying reasons behind the absence of the use of culture and the arts as integration tools, and inferences in my research field can provide a base for new perspectives on the issue of integration of Syrians into Turkish society. I thought that compiling some policy recommendations based on my research field in the conclusion chapter could be beneficial.

First and most important of all, all segments of public authorities should go beyond the designation of the scope of the Syrian Refugee Crisis and determine their strategies to cope with the crisis. Otherwise, inconsistencies in policy approaches and discourses lead to immovability in all compartments of the society regarding the issue. Furthermore, the final decision should be for integration because it is a win-win approach whether Syrians will stay or go (Kaya, 2019).

When we examine the previous mass influxes to Turkey such as Bulgarian Pomak and Turkish migrants in 1989, one can argue that Turkey had become successful in its integration policies ranging from citizenship and cultural policies to health care and housing with many fewer resources than today (Kirişçi, 2014, p. 2). Bursa was one of the target places for the immigration of those migrants from Bulgaria. As one can observe, people and local governments of Bursa could achieve

the social inclusion of those migrants in the past. The Turkish people and authorities can benefit from their successful past experiences in order to achieve peaceful coexistence. Nevertheless, it is wise to note that the Syrian Refugee Crisis has its own peculiarities. For example, while immigrants from Bulgaria accepted as Turks and they speak Turkish, the language and cultural practices of Syrian refugees are different than Turkish population living in Turkey. Nonetheless, I believe that achieving the successful integration in the context of the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Turkey may contribute to the peaceful coexistence of the Turkish people and the minorities that already have been living in Turkey for centuries.

When it comes to recommendations specific to Bursa and cultural sector in Bursa, several suggestions can be made. First of all, since networks from local governments to city councils, civil society institutions, and private enterprises are very weak in Bursa in terms of the integration of Syrians into the society, empowering links between them becomes a significant matter. Secondly, because, except some singular examples, cultural institutions and international organizations related to refugee issues have very poor links in the case of Bursa, those links can be enhanced by new joint projects with the cooperation of organizations like UNHCR and IOM. Moreover, since cross-sectoral approaches are important to deal with cultural diversity in the society, stakeholders of the cultural sector should establish strong and sustainable links with other sectors. Establishing strong links with the education sector and schools becomes prominent because they engage in children and adolescents and because language education can be key to overcome linguistic barriers which are the linchpin of integration efforts. Performances exhibited in schools in the festivals of Bursa Culture Art and Tourism Foundation could be good examples for cooperation between education and cultural sectors. In addition to these, municipalities should construct strategic plans that include objectives of social cohesion of Syrians into society and culture and the arts as a tool for achieving social cohesion in the society. Furthermore, within the lights of these strategic objectives, municipalities can establish departments concerning specifically the integration of outsiders in the society, especially Syrians within the bureaucracy of the municipalities. These departments should be constructed in a

holistic manner that governance of the department should be based on the cooperation of departments of the municipality related to culture, social works, and economy.

Making the Syrian Refugee Crisis and the problems and pains experienced by Syrian communities to be discussed among all segments of the society and bringing those issues to the forefront in societal agenda can be one of the targets of the culture and arts sector. This paves the way for increasing consciousness about the crisis among society and consequently mutual understanding enables dissolving the tensions between Syrians and Turkish society. All these developments can embolden local authorities to act on the solutions to the crisis. Although it was not sufficient in terms of participation of all parties, panels in the book fair organized by Mudanya Municipality could be an example in that matter.

In addition, while designing the activities and festivals that are currently organized, the priority of which are intercultural dialogue, cultural institutions should take into consideration that we are now living with a Syrian population and the cultural participation of Syrians should be ensured as a necessity of being a pluralist, multicultural society. For example, folk dance and theatre festivals of Bursa Culture Arts and Tourism Foundation can establish networks with Syrian groups to perform in next years' festivals.

Besides cultural participation as a performer, participation as an audience to cultural activities is a significant matter for the social cohesion of Syrians under temporary protection. Because of this participation in culture should be regarded as access to the culture rather than audience development. Access to culture necessitates removing barriers in front of it. Those barriers can be comprised of linguistic, social or economic barriers.

Lastly, since art is a tool that overcomes linguistic barriers, cultural initiatives can give priority to projects and artistic forms whose lingua franca is a shared one. For example, people in choirs come together to sing songs together while contributing the shared repertory by bringing their melodies into the music they create together. Individuals get the chance to be many and one at the same time. Furthermore, gastronomy workshops reflecting the food cultures of both

Turkish and Syrian cultures, including Turkish and Syrian participants, can be a means of intercultural dialogue that transcends language barriers. Such activities can also address the common roots of our cultures and humanity. Cultural and artistic forms such as music, dance, performative arts, gastronomy, contemporary arts, visual arts can be a tool to overcome linguistic barriers. Those cultural and artistic forms can be key factors to create a shared culture which embraces radical cosmopolitan and multiculturalist principles, to enable sustainable intercultural dialogue between different communities, and to set up the common ground between different communities which embrace the principle of equal dignity and the need for due recognition of each individual and community.

In conclusion, mentioning the weaknesses of my research and options for further research could be pertinent. Since my focus and framework of my research in the field is on the actions of cultural and artistic institutions, patterns of cultural participation of Syrians could be missing in my research. Thus, further research can be further social research that studies the ways of cultural participation of refugees from the lens of refugees and their social networks. Secondly, since there were no significant efforts of cultural institutions for social cohesion in Bursa, a comparative research that compares good and bad examples from Turkey and different parts of the world of using cultural instruments in achieving peaceful cohabitation could be explanatory as further research.

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## Appendix

### List of Interviews and Interviewees of the Field Research

Interviews and interviewees with their dates are listed below in order of their appearance in the thesis.

- **Interview 1:** on the 26 November 2019 with the *Interviewee 1* who is one of the top officials in the public and media relations department of the Mudanya Municipality and also one of the advisors to the mayor.
- **Interview 2:** on the 20 November 2019 with the *Interviewee 2* who is one of the top officials in the culture department of the Nilüfer Municipality and also one of the advisors to the mayor.
- **Interview 3:** on the 27 November 2019 with the *Interviewee 3* who is a project specialist working in strategy development of the Osmangazi Municipality.
- **Interview 4:** on the 27 November 2019 with the *Interviewee 4* who is one of the top officials in Bursa Culture Art and Tourism Foundation.
- **Interview 5:** on the 26 November 2019 with the *Interviewee 5* who is a high representative from Podyum SanatMahal, which is a significant culture and the arts center in Bursa.
- **Interview 6:** on the 5 December 2019 with the *Interviewee 6* who is one of the top officials in the culture department of the Bursa Metropolitan Municipality
- **Interview 7:** on the 27 November 2019 with the *Interviewee 7* who is an official responsible for culture and the art policies in the Yıldırım Municipality
- **Interview 8:** on the 5 December 2019 with the *Interviewee 8* who is a member of Nilüfer City Council.
- **Interview 9:** on the 5 December 2019 with the *Interviewee 9* who is a Foreigners Assembly Facilitator in Bursa City Council and *Interviewee 10* is a high representative from Foreigners Assembly of Bursa City Council.