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INTERSECTING LIVES IN POST-MIGRATION PERIOD:
THE DYNAMICS OF RELATIONS BETWEEN "HOST"
WOMEN FROM TURKEY AND "GUEST" WOMEN
FROM SYRIA

GÖÇ SONRASI KESİŞEN HAYATLAR: "EV SAHİBİ"
TÜRKİYELİ KADINLAR VE "MİSAFİR" SURİYELİ
KADINLAR ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ DİNAMİKLERİ

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ABSTRACT

Turkey undertakes an important role in responding to the Syrian humanitarian crisis by hosting the largest number of refugee population around the world through opening its borders to Syrian refugees subsequent to the conflict in Syria after 2011. Turkey has been managing the refugee phenomenon at the beginning with a discourse of 'guest'. The temporary protection regime for Syrian refugees in Turkey ratified in October 2014 on the one hand, and the discourse of 'guest' on the other, constitute significant basis to the sociological aspect of the matter at hand. By nature, the terms 'host' and 'guest' imply an element of temporariness. Against this backdrop, there is a pressing need to focus on the fact that over 2.5 million refugees settled in the urban areas will not be returning shortly to their country of origin even if the war is over now. Given the magnitude of the refugee population, the real question is then the adaptation of this 'stranger' group which has settled in the country and likely to stay in the long term within the urban context.

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This study, based on gendered perspective, aims to explore the factors determining the perception of the insider for the outsider and *vice versa* within the scope of Simmel's 'stranger' typology. Following Simmel's definition of the stranger, in this article I consider Syrian refugees as people who comes today and stays tomorrow. The methodology of this study is based on in-depth interviews with refugee women from Syria and native women in Turkey as well as focus group meetings in Hatay and Gaziantep provinces, conducted in the framework of my PhD thesis.

Keywords: Forced Migration, Gender, Insider-Outsider, Stranger, Syrian Refugees.

ÖZ

2011'de başlayan Suriye'deki ayaklanma ve ardından patlak veren çatışmalar sonrasında kapılarını Suriyeli mültecilere açan Türkiye, dünyada en büyük mülteci nüfusuna ev sahipliği yaparak Suriye insani krizinde önemli bir rol üstlenmektedir. Çağımızda bir insan hakları gereği olarak ortaya çıkan mültecilik olgusu, Türkiye'de krizin en başından beri misafirlik söylemi üzerinden yürütülmektedir. Gerek halihazırda Suriyeli mültecilerin tabi olduğu geçici koruma rejimi gerekse krizin en başından beri sürdürülen misafirlik söylemi, meselenin sosyolojik boyutuna önemli bir taban oluşturmaktadır. 'Ev sahibi' ve 'misafir' kavramlarının belli toplumsal normlar çerçevesinde şekillenen ilişkiler sonucunda ortaya çıktığı ve bu ilişkilerin en temel özelliğinin kısa sürelilik olduğu düşünüldüğünde; 2,5 milyondan fazlası şehirlerde yaşayan Suriyeli mültecinin, savaş şu anda bitse dahi ülkelerine dönüşünün kısa vadede gerçekleşmeyeceği öngörüsü başka bir sorunsala odaklanmak zorunda olduğumuza işaret etmektedir. Bu durumda, kentlerde yaşayan mülteciler bağlamında, asıl sorulması gereken soru ülke içerisine yerleşen ve uzun vadede kalıcı olacağı varsayılan bu yeni 'yabancı' grubun diğer topluluklarla nasıl uyum sağlayacağıdır.

Toplumsal cinsiyet kavramını temel alarak başlanılan bu çalışmada içerdekinin dışardakine, dışardakinin de içerdekine bakışının hangi faktörler etrafında şekillendiği Simmel ve çağdaşlarının "yabancılık" tanımlamaları bağlamında

incelenecektir. Doktora çalışması kapsamında, Hatay ve Gaziantep şehirlerinde Suriyeli mülteci kadınlar ve Türkiyeli kadınlar ile yapılan derinlemesine görüşmeler ve odak grup görüşmeleri bu çalışmanın alt yapısını oluşturacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Zorunlu Göç, Toplumsal Cinsiyet, İçeridekiler-Dışarıdakiler, Yabancı, Suriyeli Mülteciler.

> "If fear is the father of
> prejudice, ignorance is its grandfather."
>
> (*Stephan & Stephan*)

INTRODUCTION: TEMPORARINESS AND LIVING TOGETHER

According to the statistics shared by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), an unprecedented 65,3 million people around the world have been displaced from home due to war, hunger, political, social, economic violence, ethnic and religious discrimination (UNHCR, 2016: 5). With the increased impetus on conflicts in the Middle East in the past 5 years, every person out of 113 is seeking to rebuild their lives away from home while over 4,5 million people have fled Syria since 2011, seeking safety in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and beyond (UNHCR, 2016: 6). Turkey as a neighbooring country to the Syrian Humanitarian Crisis hosts over 2,7 million registered Syrians (DGMM, 2016).

Turkey has opened its borders to refugees coming from Syria in 2011 with the Syrian Humanitarian Crisis. Those who have entered the territory have been protected under the binding *non-refoulement* principle of international law, which foresees access to safe territory and protects against forcible returns as well as providing basic humanitarian needs. As a matter of fact, the refugee status determination procedures require an individual processing of one's claim. However temporary protection and stay arrangements can be implemented as a suitable response to large-scale influxes of asylum-seekers or other similar humanitarian crises, complex or mixed cross-border population movements where individual status determination is either not applicable or feasible, or both (UNHCR, 2014).

To that end, initially starting from 2011 Turkey created its own policy with circulars, regulations and other non-public legal instruments towards refugees from Syria. The Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) endorsed by the Parliament in 2013 and entering into force in April 2014 makes

Turkey's first consolidated legal framework on international protection while keeping Turkey's geographical limitation to 1951 Geneva Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees. Article 91 of LoFIP on temporary protection sets the legal framework for the already existing temporary protection regime for Syrian refugees complemented by the Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR) which has entered into force in October 2014, approximately 6 months after LoFIP.[2]

To briefly explain, the temporary protection regime in Turkey emerged as an urgent response while providing protection from forcible returns and envisaging basic minimum humanitarian needs guided by the Turkey's open door policy. That being said, it should also be noted that temporary protection/stay is not a long term protection response for prolonged situations and/or a tool substituting existing international obligations, in particular the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, or regional refugee instruments (UNHCR, 2012: 4-5). They, in the same vein, can not be considered as a replacement for the proper management of mixed migration flows (UNHCR, 2014).

As Biner & Soykan have argued in their report "Life in Turkey through the Perspective of Syrians Refugees" the legal procedure in the country of asylum, together with the legal status and practices set the ground rules for bounding with life, defining mobility and influencing the idea of resettling (Biner & Soykan, 2016: 10). To that end, legal status goes beyond defining the process of displacement and has a crucial functionality while reproducing the whole process (*Ibid*). Given the fact that the Syrian refugees are in Turkey for more than three years, the questionning of the perceptions of "temporariness" and "guests", as portrayed in the Turkish context, which have serious legal, political and sociological implications has become more and more important.

It follows that there is no middle or long term infrastructure for the adaptation[3] of the 'stranger'[4] perceived as temporary guests, therefore reflections of the temporariness perception are observed on the field. In the same vein,

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[2] Currently, the legal status of the Syrian nationals is defined by the provisional article 1 of the TPR. According to this article, citizens of the Syrian Arab Republic, stateless persons and refugees who have arrived at or crossed our borders coming from Syrian Arab Republic as part of a mass influx or individually for temporary protection purposes due to the events that have taken place in Syrian Arab Republic since April 28, 2011 are covered under temporary protection regime.

[3] The term of adaptation used here to describe the whole process of integration, socialization and social harmony of each concerned group in interaction. It should be noted that the term of 'adaptation' is not only used for the Syrian women in this article but for the local people also.

[4] The term of "stranger" here is used in this article inspiring from Simmel's sociology. According to him, the stranger who signifies an outsider or a newcomer is defined as people who comes today and stays tomorrow. The stranger is also one of the member of any group in which he lives and participates but still remains other than old members of the group. Although the stranger has certain relations and links with the old group members, he is perceived as "other" among the group and his "distance" is more emphasized than his "nearness." He is in the group but not of the group. In this article, Syrians will be defined as Simmel's 'stranger'.

although LFIP vests the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) with substantial discretion for the adaptation procedures, the language of the Law is vague in terms of creating and implementing adaptation policies and activities. Leaving aside the 250.000 Syrian refugees living in the camps governed by the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD in Turkish) (DGMM, 2016) the majority of the Syrian refugees in Turkey live in the urban settings while being expected to be self-reliant. This inevitably leads us to think deeper in the context of living together with a population of 3 million foreigners annexed to an entire country since relations built on the element of temporariness obstructs the adaptation as they generally present themselves in forms of indifference.[5]

Besides all these, according to the statistics shared by DGMM, there are 1,300,000 Syrian refugee women in Turkey, out of whom 700.000 are women aged between 18 to 55 living outside the camps in the urban areas (DGMM, 2016). Syrian women living in cities find themselves in the middle of daily life relations different than the woman who live in a more or less controlled manner in the camps. The problems experienced by Syrian refugee women are multifaceted starting with the loss of social status, segregation, poverty, stress and gender based violence. It should be noted that women have adopted different coping mechanisms to deal with displacement. On the other hand, influenced by the media and daily life practices, local women perceive Syrian refugee women as a threat; resource sharing becomes problematic and clash of different cultures define the scope and the context of the established relations.

Putting together all of the circumstances and conditions together, the first question at hand is to understand how refugee and local women establish relations under existing legal, political and sociological conditions. In other words, what kind of interactions are taking place between women under the impact of 'guest' and 'host' discourses? To what extent the role of masculinity and media is applicable to this relationship and what is the posibility of living together in that context?

Starting with these questions and focusing on both refugee and local women; this study aims to approach from a gendered perspective to the insider/outsider relations by taking into account Simmel's stranger definition. It will explore the relations in post migration period between 'guest' Syrian women and 'host' women from Turkey in Gaziantep and Hatay. For this aim, I will use the data collected from in depth interviews and focus group meetings with refugee and local women, as well as NGO's, political parties, governmental

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[5] See: Stichweh (1997). German Sociologist Rudolp Stichweh links being 'stranger' and attitude of indifference in his article. According to him, indifference can be defined as interactions in the situations of fleeting contact.

institutions and local authorities. In the first part, I will present the theoretical background while in the second I will analyze the data obtained on the field.

1. "GUEST" AND "STRANGER": THE PERSON WHO COMES TODAY AND STAYS TOMORROW

In the migration context, 'stranger' is a significant category for outsider groups which did not exist yesterday yet appeared today and which are perceived to stay for tommorow but assumed to be returning in the long term. George Simmel's definition of 'stranger', firstly introduced in 1908, is amongst the most referred definitions in the field and many migration studies are based upon this definition (Simmel, 1908; Park, 1964; LeVine, 1977). According to Simmel, 'stranger' is *the person who comes today and stays tomorrow*, a *potential wanderer* whose position in society is determined "by the fact that he has not belonged to it from the beginning" (Simmel, 1950:402). This definition is more prominent for refugees who did not exist yesterday yet perceived to have arrived in the country for a temporary period of time.

Insider/outsider group behaviours and their respective interactions discussed upon Simmel's defition of stranger are perhaps one of the most referenced theories in migration studies (Simmel, 1908; Park, 1964; LeVine, 1977). But, an in depth literature review points out that this subject is mainly discussed within the context of foreign workers and migrants in general without a dopting a gender based approach referencing refugee women as the subject.

In contrary, Doreen Indra asserts in her edited book *Engendering Forced Migration* that any analysis based on migration should not be far away from gendered perspective. According to her,

> "*gender rarely surfaced in folk representations and practice concerning forced migrants. Refugees were sometimes spoken of as women, men, or children, but typically either in passing, in relation to idealized, traditional family life and roles, or in regard to programs aimed spesifically at family reunification, women's health or employment. 'Generic' employment and health programs were for everybody and therefore were not usually seen as gendered.*" (Indra, 1999:12-13).

In sum, women have been portrayed as something that the refugee has left or brought as someone with secondary role. As such it has been subject to migration studies within the boundaries of patriarchy and confined within traditional family roles. Neither the 1951 Geneva Convention, nor laws defining States' migration policies make meaningful references to gender based definitions and approaches.

Therefore, it is strongly important that instead of taking women into consideration as secondary subjects of migration, the dynamics of relations created by outsider and insider women should be analyzed in a gendered way.

As Öztan explains in her article "Organizational Experiences of Turkish Immigrant Women in the Netherlands and Feminist Politics";

> "*there is a tendency that women's migration has still been acknowledged as "dependant" or "secondary" migratory movement in guest worker regimes' traditional family reunion schemas. Despite acknowledging the feminization of immigration, literature on immigrant women in guest worker regimes has mainly been focused on integration issues. However it is necessary to recognize Turkish immigrant women as the political/social actors of the country of residence within multiple attachments and to give immigrant and ethnic minority women greater visibility within receiving country context within transnational migration perspectives.*" (Öztan, 2013: 215-216)

That being said, by the 90's gendered approach has become more prominent as women started to become a subject rather than a sub category in migration studies. After that period, women have become more visible in the fieldworks and constitue the main focus point in many studies. Those new studies have paid more attention to gender. Albeit this paradigm shift, this new perspective has serious drawbacks since underpinning women as the subject of the migration studies, undermines to focus on the relations established by women subjects while putting so much effort in studies on women's needs, identities and roles. Therefore, as a starting point, this study is in parallel with the idea of exploring to what extent Simmel's 'stranger', insider/outsider definition can be discussed with both refugee and local women's relations.

By starting with the 'stranger' definiton of Simmel, we can say that stranger is not a member of the group from the beginning, has joined the group after and will be within the group tomorrow. According to Simmel, the stranger is not a full member in a social sense despite the fact that he is spatial member of the group. Due to its origine, the stranger occupies a specific position but he is not a part of it. The foregin residents are an excellent illustration of this phenomenon as they are physically present in most countries but are not always accepted as part of the national community. Their exclusion is not only limited to the fact that they are not considered as 'one of us' but the diversity they provide is sometimes considered detrimental. Although the foreign resident shares national, social, occupational characteristics with the established non-immigrant community in addition to his physical presence he is not one of us (Simmel, 1950: 402-405).

As pointed out by Simmel "strangers are not really conceived as individuals, but as strangers of a particular type" (*Ibid*: 403). Simmel saw the stranger as a temporary sejourner who does not share the essential qualities of host group life. As a result, interaction between the stranger and the hosts tends to take place on a more general impersonal level. (*Ibid*: 405) In this sense,

stranger is present in the society and yet ignored because of the perception of temporariness. Within the Turkish context, in addition to the element of stranger, the ongoing public discourse built on the idea of guests and hospitiality will eventually be limiting the relation that is to be established and developed with the Syrian refugees. The element of temporariness will sociologically prevent the refugees to dissassociate from the past, while affecting the coping mechanisms, rebuilding new life pratices and the relations with the new space (Biner&Soykan, 2016: 4).

One must also take into account that the 'host' or the insider develops its own forms of behaviour towards outsider groups. One group can accept 'strangers' as a big threat to their culture while the other considers the 'stranger' as a richness for their culture. Therefore, each group's behaviors and attitudes towards 'stranger' should be analyzed seperatively to understand the meaning of 'stranger' and the relation with the other group members. The attitudes of the host group often lead the behaviours of their 'stranger'. American thinker on psychological antropology LeVine, defines outsiderness by the relationship established with the host, stepping one step further from Simmel (LeVine, 1977). Stranger status is always defined in relation to a host. LeVine describes the host's response as *compulsive, reflecting the reality of a persisting ambivalence underlying all stranger relationships are invested with a particularly high degree of affect*. According to him, it should be noted that the stranger - host relationship is a transactional one and each set of factors will inevitably influence the other (Ibid: 23). As a guest, the stranger is inducted into a community through a personal bond with an established community member. Which then subjects him to law of hospitality a protocol of exchange through which he sustains his relationship with his host. Depending on the community the hospitality offered allows the stranger to built different levels of intimacy and rights within the community from that of the transient stranger to that of a guest, then friend and with time even the quasikinship of the accredited sojourner. However inasmuch as hospitality is conditional it can always be withdrawn reversing the status of the stranger and exposing him to hostility (Ibid:25).

LeVine summarizes the factors influencing host - guest relations in four main categories: extent of stranger - host similarity, existence of special cultural categories and rituals for dealing with strangers, criteria for group and societal membership, conditions of local community (Ibid:16)

Taking into account these definitions and categories, would it be possible to assert that the relations between 'host' and 'guest' women will develop around LeVine's main categories or should we take into account other factors by approaching the phenomenon from a gendered perspective? Below, I will discuss this question with reference to the findings of my field work.

2. THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN *INSIDER* AND *OUTSIDER* IN THE MIDDLE OF RE-PRODUCED MASCULINITY AND PERCEIVED THREAT: NOTES FROM THE FIELD

In this part, I will assess the data that I collected during the field research in Antep and Hatay provinces in summer 2015. Within the scope of the fieldwork; total number of thirty women (15 Syrian women and 15 native women) and fifteen instititions (NGOs, political parties, faith and religious organisations, local journalists and academicians) were interviewed. Altough governmental and local authorities were contacted; they refrained to take part in this research.

The interviewee group consists of single and married women between 18-55 years of age including Arab, Sunni, Alawite and Turkmen women. The target group was contacted through local NGOs first, then I continued to reach women by using snowball method. 5 focus group meetings were conducted including only Syrian's group, only native women's group, both Syrian and native women's group. During interviews, the names are kept anonymous to gain trust.

The initial data of the ongoing field research will be used to interpret the dynamics of established relations between the "host" and the "guest" based on theories mentioned in the first part. The dynamics of the relations will be discussed in the light of the in depth interviews focusing on gender and being stranger.

The image of Stranger as constructed by the media

There are numerous studies on how the media rhetoric and discourse has altered the attitude towards migrants. Within the scope of a study conducted on 88 students in New Mexico State University Psychology Department, the participants are requested to fill out a survey after reading 4 differents newspieces on Rwandan migrants in Mexico. The first news stipulates that the arrival of migrants will increase the taxes as well as possibly causing contigenous diseases. The second news asserts that Rwandan migrants will damage the democracy in the country and that their traditions will deprave the social construct. While the third newpiece is the combination of both the fourth only explains the migration and war experience of the migrants. The study finds that the more there are threats inside the news the more students' attitude towards migrants become negative (Stephan, et.al., 2005).

The facts are no different for Syrian women either. Inspired by the male dominant rhetoric in the media, some local women create rumors for Syrian women although they previously have not met or interacted. Sex-work news reflected on the most popular TV shows, social media and the newspapers feed a sense of threat on local women afraid of 'losing their husbands'. Because of the discourse in the media, the image of Syrian refugee women has turned into a

dangerous person, prostituting and stealing men from wifes. Indeed, popular newspapers are printed with headings stipulating that "Syrian Women Threaten Turkish Family Structure",[6] "The Fear of Second Wives among Women in Kilis" and "From the Camp to the Night Club".[7] Similar views are also expressed by local women:

> "*These are granted with citizenship. They are easily accepted to universities while we struggle with exams. In the past days, I have heard from the neighbours, they are provided with unemployment pay. We see all over the TV and news, Syrian women apprehended for prostitution every second. We hear that many brothels, night clubs have emerged around Hatay because of them. We have lost our peace.*" (Semiha, 28, Hatay, Local, housewife)[8]

As it can be understood from the quote, local women have identified Syrian women with sex work and accuse them of distrupting the social peace although they have never witnessed a Syrian women prostituting, going to university without examination and provided with unemployment pay. Masculin discourse in the media intensifies the conflict between women. The hate discourse against the newcomer is not only confined to the conventional media but it also encompasses social media. Many internet forums and social media accounts include discussions focusing on Syrian Women with a negative connotation.[9]

Thus every negative comment in the media and every news amounting to hate speech constitute thriving factors shaping the attitude of the local people towards newcomers. The way a Syrian is portrayed in media creates an image of the Syrian in the local, although the latter has never had a prior contact with her.

Insider and Outsider Dynamics in Daily Life

LeVine (1977) contends that the critical variable is not the lenght of time a stranger spends in the host community. Rather he argues that the focus should be upon the type of relationship that the stranger aspires to establish with the host. Referring to LeVine's argument it might be suggested that in Turkey the real issue at stake is not the time spent in being guest but the "guest" rhetoric itself. As previously argued, the relationship of guest is defined upon certain norms and period of time and it is based on mutual understanding of gratitude

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[6] Milliyet Newspaper, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/suriyeli-kadinlar-ile-ikinci-gundem-1947549/, 29.09.2014

[7] Hurriyet Newspaper, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/kilisteki-kadinlarda-kuma-korkusu-40055181, 16.02.2016 also see: "Kamptan Pavyona". (16 Agu 2014). Cumhuriyet Gazetesi. http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/106619/Kamptan_pavyona.html?dxbtkegdxufriqes Accessed on: [23/09/2015]

[8] Real names remain undisclosed.

[9] "I live in Hatay, one million refugee have come here, they are so corrupted", an online forum about women named "Girls are asking": http://www.kizlarsoruyor.com/toplum-sosyal-iliskiler/q489768-ben-hatayda-oturuyorum-1milyon-multeci

rather than a rights based approach which eventually results in consenting to what is given. Thus, refugees are inclined to feel obliged in expressing gratitude to what is provided to them. Any breach in this line of thought damages the established relations and makes from the guest which deserves the highest respect, a rival to be in competition with.

> *"When we first arrived we had many neighbors and they were kind to us. We would go to the market together and our children were playing together. Nowadays we only see enemy faces. They start to complain when they see us. We can't even go to the market"* (Süheyla, 35, Gaziantep, Syrian refugee women, non-employed)

Segregation and miscommunication resulting from the dynamics of relationship between guest and host, in addition to the extended period of stay will be analyzed in the light of the interviews conducted with Syrian refugee and local women. One of the most significant reasons for that are the complications arising from distrubition of resources including but not limited to the increase of prices in daily expenditures and housing as well as the growth in number of persons accessing public services such as public schools and hospitals. On the other hand, the idea that establishing relations with a group that will no more exist in future is vain, prevents both Syrian and local women to interact with each other.

There are many dynamics other than the one specified above in order to define the scope of interactions between Syrian refugee and local women. The miscommunication is not only driven by the prolonged stay but also intensified by language barrier. In the absence of a clear lines of communication women perceive each other as rivals in competition although they go through same and common problems. Rumours and prejudices also contribute to the miscommunication thus leading to no relationality.[10]

It should also be noted that Turkey's proximity to the conflict zone, the presence of foreign fighters in border cities and threats related to the war in Syria fuel local people in embracing negative opinions about Syrians. Due to the insecure enviroment fueled by the war, in border areas such as Hatay and Antep where there is a lack of mutual trust between women; not establishing relations becomes the first available option for women oppressed under the predominant masculinity.

Although not limited to Syrian refugee women, the fact that Syrian refugees become more and more at the center of political debates eventually

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[10] For more details on the insider/outsider theory please see: (Elias and Scotson, 1994). Norbert Elias and John Scotson in their book 'The Established and the Outsiders' talk about the possible relations between the established and the newcomer group. Elias and Scotson's work in a small town *Winston Parva* in England reveals the attitude and behaviours of the established towards outsiders.

affects the relations between refugee and local women. In other words, those who object the government's refugee policies position themselves away from the refugees whereas those who support the government are eager to accept refugees, even though they do it with some conditions. When the government is criticized upon refugees, the refugees themselves become at the center of a heated political debate as political subjects likewise today in Turkey. In this regard, there is a proliferation of unprecented rumors such as granting of citizenship for electoral purposes, unhindered access to universities without examination and allowance of unemployment salaries which eventually results in the increase of hate against refugees making them the most vulnerable group and the scapegoat of the government's policies.

> *"We have huge problems; we can't deal with them. Lately, one of them came to our home as a cleaner. We wanted to help her but she stole my brother's belongings. Local shopkeepers are concerned as well. You can see them everywhere. Syrian shops are everywhere; they sell for cheaper prices. My nephew has lost his job because of them. It is the State who put us together with them. If they don't find a solution, we will, in our way."* (Zeliha, 29, Local shopkeeper in Antep Bazaar)

As it can be understood from the above mentioned quote, refugees are perceived as a trouble caused by the government and the reaction against the government is diverted to refugees. Especially in Hatay, Alawite people are convinced that the government is targeting them because of their religious sect and perceive the policies developed for Syrians as a tool to increase the sunni faith in the province. That is of course a factor contributing for the minimization of relations between the two while increasing the hatred amongst the insider group in Hatay with the idea that the outsider is likely to destroy their identity.

Women in Competition: Reproduction of Masculinity

Several factors affecting the relations between women were mentioned above. But the main point here is to determine the structure of the relations shaped around gendered roles. In post-migration period, the masculinity is a socially re-constructed phenomenon. As Indra puts it (1999:242-260), *"A loss of power and control is intertwined with loss of community and social support, so rebuilding social statuses, relationships, and community is problematic. So, men in post-migration period were reported as being angry, hostile, volatile, threatening, stubborn and difficult".* While the man from outsider group is losing his social belongings, power, and financial resources, the man from insider group becomes more advantegous. Related to these changes in masculinity roles, the women are being redefining, their roles and their status are changing. Therefore, it becomes important to do a gendered reading all over again. It is highly possible to mention here about a reproduction of masculinity considering Syrian and local women in post-migration period. In the face of such a situation, along with the increasing

numbers of intermarriages and second wifes, the insider man uses Syrian woman as an instrument to dominate his wife, thus the insider woman perceives this domination as a threat and begins to create negative stereotypes and prejudices.[11]

> *"Their lifestyle is different than ours. Our day is their night. They have night lives. They wander around parks and gardens. They smoke shisha. Many of them with all make-up and shiny clothes. There are of course vulnerables amongst them but they started to make living by prostitution. Nowadays there are these marriages. People kill each other because of that. Men bring Syrian women as the second wive to home. A neighboor of ours has caught his husband cheating on her with a Syrian woman. Her marriage is ruined. We all fear that our husbands will be distracted."* (Nurcan, 32, Antep, Local, Housewife)

Besides, media has been reinforcing such kind of perceptions and feeding feeling of threat among local women. The Daily newspaper *Milliyet* reported the news with the following headlines: " I agreed to the second wife of my husband as he promised to have my teeth done" where local women stated that " we want these women to leave, we don't want a divorce but we are forced to consent",[12] highlighting the ratio of men marrying their second wives. Early marriages and second marriages as well as sex work are the factors that increase the feeling of hostility towards Syrian women. Many women are in fact in competition to please their husband while reproducing masculinity. Thus, it might be argued that the role accorded to masculinity is remarkably significant within the scope of relations established amongst women cornered between aggressiveness of refugee and local men in the pursuit of exploitation. Below, you may find the experiences of Fatima strenghtening this argument while telling the refugee women's daily life practices:

> *"Three years ago when we first entered to Turkey, my father forced me to marry a man who is older than me. First, I didn't want to marry him but my father hit me saying that if I want to be prostitute or miserable. My husband is a rich man but very aggresive. He does not let me to leave home. I have a few neighbours around, I was used to go to their house but I don't want to talk with them anymore. Last time I went there, a single woman made me sad saying that: "ohh, you came here and found a rich man. You are lucky and must be very happy"* (Fatima, 19, Hatay, Syrian refugee woman, housewife)

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[11] Integrated threat theory is first presented by Walter G. Stephan in 2000. The theory describes the types of threat which are perceived within social groups. According to this theory, there are four types of threat which influence relations within social groups: Realistic threat, symbolic threat, intergroup anxiety, negative stereotypes. Here, the perceived threat by women about their husbands can be studied in the framework of this theory.

[12] Milliyet Newspaper, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-dislerimi-yaptiracagi-icin/pazar/haberdetay/10.04.2016/2224326/default.htm, 10.04.2016

3. EVALUATION: THE NEED FOR REGIONAL AND CYCLICAL ANALYSIS

Inspired by the comments and news reflected in the media, this study aimed at exploring the factors influencing the relations established between women from Syria and Turkey with the motivation of revealing the accuracy of the above mentioned news. Based on Simmel's definition of newcomer and stranger, the study focused on the dynamics shaping the relations between local and Syrian women. Initial data obtained from field work, shows that media coverage and the gender roles in post-migration phase are remarkably significant in determining the relations of these women. Looking at Simmel's stranger definition from a gendered perspective, it was observed that the changing conditions, perception of guest and masculinity are important points to consider. At the same time, it was also observed that the sociological reflections of the perception of temporariness influenced by the current legal status should be read in conjunction with non-relationship, uncertainty and indifference. As I already stated that Syrians still keep in touch with their old lifes with a hope that the war will end soon and they go back to their country while local people don't want to establish relations with their temporary guests since they are about to leave the country soon. When I asked a refugee woman about her relationship with the neighbours, she replied by referring to language barrier:

> *"I didn't even learn Turkish as I believe that the war in my country will end soon and we will go back again. I was thinking that we are here for a short time until the conflict ends. But the war is ongoing and I can't guess when it ends. Now, we have a language barrier with my neighbours and I think they also don't want to talk with us as we are refugees."* (Noor, 42, Gaziantep, Syrian Refugee woman, housewife,)

As previously stated, Simmel argues that the numbers of the migrants are less of a factor shaping the perception of refugees within a society compared to the understanding of what refugees represent in terms of the reason for their arrival and for what purposes they are in the country (Simmel, 1950: 403). In the same vein, during the field work, it is observed that the numbers of Syrian refugees amounting to almost 3 million is less important than the perceived reason for their stay in Turkey. The perception of Syrians among the public opinion is way beyond the concept of refugees, perceiving them in various schemes such as supporters of the government, sex-workers, foreign fighters, thieves, criminals, greedy people in search of free access to universities and unemployment salaries as well as voters. This kind of labelling is evidently setting the cornerstones of relations to be established as well as the social interaction.

It has been proved that more positive contact would reduce fears and worries concerning social interaction and people would understand why the

refugees have come to their countries. A study in United States shows that the more favorable the contact (equal status, voluntary, positive, cooperative, individualized), the more the Americans liked Mexicans (Stephan, et.al., 2005:245-7). Thus, with an increased communication between local women and women from Syria, a more realistic refugee perception, alieneated from unprecented rumors is possible as best summarized in Meryem's words:

> *"When the women from Syria came, first we did not allow them in the neighboorhod because of their religious sect. They were involved in sex work. We thought that they were targeting men and marrying for money. Government was helping them too. We were having monthly meetings amongst women and one day, a Syrian women named Shirin attended one of these meetings. She was a women's rights activist in Syria. After communicating with her we started to establish bonds of solidarity. We said that all women have common problems. Shirin explained us the problems Syrian women are going through. She stated that they can't go to camps, they don't want to be visible always and that they were being raped. She also acknowledged that the Syrian migration has affected the already existing problems of women in Hatay yet explained that they have no other solution. After Shirin, our understanding has changed. We used to believe that we were becoming more vulnerable because of each refugee arriving and we were trying to remain distant from them. After hearing these, we realized that all women have same problems and started solidarity. The women in Hatay are going through the very same problems experienced by Syrian women. They asked us to be included and said that they are not happy. We are being raped, exploited but you have the same problems. Thus we decided to show solidarity. Recently we organized a big women demonstration. Armenian, Assyrian, Turkish, Syrian, women from all different backgrounds have attended. We established a network of solidarity against patriarchy."* (Meryem, Hatay, 52, Local, Director of a Women Cooperative)

It must be noted that the absence of integration policies and the perception of temporariness, lead the Syrian refugees to attach themselves into their previous lives back in their country of origin which prevents them from starting a new life and adapting themselves into that (Biner&Soykan, 2016:4-5). The idea that the current situation is perceived to be temporary and that it would be over soon, obviates for both of the parties to establish relations. Therefore, adaptation becames nearly impossible as the number of the strangers living in adjescent buildings continue increase.

Another important point to consider is the need for a regional analysis. The field research shows that each province has its own and unique context and thus perceptions of Syrian refugees are changing in every province. While in Antep the situation can be more or less chracterized by economic discrimination, in Hatay it may amount to marginalization because of the religous sect. Even though the vestimentary attitudes are almost identical in both of the cities, a

Syrian woman with similar clothes is considered too liberal in Antep and too conservative in Hatay, which affects the nature of the relations to be established.

Last but not the least, it should be highlighted that Turkey's unforeseeable refugee policy in terms of the temporariness element inherent to it, in addition with the total number of refugees in the country with which it is barely possible to provide an adequate response; the issue of adaptation is somehow left in the shadows. As the current situtation is based on temporariness, both of the parties refrain from establishing relations. It follows that it is currently insufficient to approach the situation from one perspective focusing on the integration of Syrian refugees to the society. Further studies need to be undertaken in order to discuss possible ways for the integration of the Syrian refugees as well as acceptance and adaptation of Turkish local people into the new situation and inclusive policies need to be developed.

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