Discursive Construction of Exclusion in Turkey and Naturalization of Syrian Refugees: Analyzing Citizenship through the Lens of Citizens

By

Pinar Dilan Sonmez

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Szabolcs Pogonyi

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Abstract

Most scholarship on citizenship concentrates on macro level debates of policies, regulation and structural changes. This approach neglects the significant role of citizenship as national membership on individual understanding of ordinary citizens and their everyday practices. Turkish citizenship up to now has predominantly been analyzed through the status and rights of ethnic and religious minorities in terms of equal citizenship and most of those analyses studied citizenship on macro level through institutions. By 2016, with the announcement of the exceptional citizenship proposal as a plan to naturalize Syrian refugees which met with a strong backlash, the focus of the scholars has shifted in Turkey from minorities to non-citizens –namely, refugees. With this shift, Turkish citizenship has defined and practiced for the first time through outsiders who are non-citizens. Within the frame of this context, this thesis aims to examine the discursive construction of exclusion through citizenship in Turkey and to investigate the citizenship perception of citizens by adopting a people-centered, micro-level approach. By analyzing the party discourses, social media contents and interviews with 10 shopkeepers, this thesis demonstrates that the presence of the refugees has a renationalizing effect on citizenship by coupling it with national identity and it also reveals that citizenship perception of Turkish citizens is based on a combination of weak territorial membership and strong blood-based membership.

Acknowledgements

For my father, mother and brother

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Abbreviations

AFAD: The Disaster and Emergency Management Authority

AKP: Justice and Development Party

CHP: Republican People's Party

DGMM: The Directorate General for Migration Management

HDP: People's Democratic Party

ICT: The Information and Communication Technology

LFIP: The Law of Foreigners and International Protection

MHP: Nationalist Movement Party

UNHCR: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Introduction

Anti-government protests broke out in Syria in March 2011 and in a short time the conflict escalated to a civil war. With an influx of fleeing the refugees from Syria in April 2011, Turkey opened its borders and welcomed the refugees by taking the opposition side in the Syrian civil war against the Assad regime. According to the Turkish government, a future without Assad in Syria was the only solution and the regime could not last long.[1] The crisis was seen by Turkish authorities as a temporary issue which would end soon and the temporary protection regime was shaped by this perception and expectation. 100,000 refugees were accepted as "guests" and settled in newly constructed refugee camps.[2] By the end of 2012, there had been more than 170,000 registered refugees in Turkey but the increased violence and emergence of the ISIS forced additional hundreds of thousands people to flee in 2014. By the end of the same year, 55,000 people were seeking asylum in Turkey every month.[3] In 2016, there were more than 2.5 million refugees in Turkey and vast majority of the refugees settled outside the camps in cities.[4] Since the management of the crisis became more difficult, Turkey first reassessed its asylum regime to develop temporary protection and finally decided to cooperate with NGOs and international organizations including

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[1] Kemal Kirisci, "Syrian Refugees and Turkey's Challenges: Going beyond Hospitality," (Washington: Brookings, 2014): 1.

[2] Feyzi Baban, Suzan Ilcan and Kim Rygiel, "Syrian Refugees in Turkey: Pathways to Precarity, Differential Inclusion, and Negotiated Citizenship Rights", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, V. 43, N. 1 (2017): 44.

[3] Ahmet Icduygu, "Syrian Refugees in Turkey: The Long Road Ahead," Migration Policy Institute, 2015, 7, accessed May 18, 2018, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/syrian-refugees-turkey-long-road-ahead.

[4] "Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2016," UNHCR, accessed May 23, 2018, http://www.unhcr.org/5943e8a34.pdf.

the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) which had offered assistance to Turkey as early as 2011 but at the time, its offer had been refused by Turkish government.[5]

Considering the fact that conditions did not improve in Syria but continued to deteriorate and it was more evident that refugees were unlikely to return to Syria in the near future, longer-term, durable solutions and an efficient way of governance for Turkey, which turned into a country of immigration, were needed. Within this framework, naturalization was brought to the table for discussion as a response to the refugee crisis and its challenges. On 2 July 2016, at a Ramadan dinner in Kilis, a small town near the border with Syria, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan would announce that the Ministry of Interior of Turkey was preparing to offer exceptional citizenship to Syrian refugees.[6] Even though the attempted coup in July 2016 and the following events in 2017 changed the agenda in the country and the process seemed to slow down, according to the sources of the Ministry of Interior, the citizenship process of a total of 35.000 Syrians was completed and further 15,000 applications were being reviewed by September 2017.[7] Since the first day when the proposal of exceptional citizenship was declared till today, many questions have been left unanswered: Who will be naturalized? Talented and skilled Syrians? Children of Syrian refugees who have been born in Turkey? Or will all Syrian refugees be eligible to apply for the citizenship? While a macro level debate focused on these questions to explain the scope, necessity and applicability of the proposal for regulations and policies, immediate reaction of both anti- and pro-

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[5] Metin Corabatir, "The Evolving Approach to Refugee Protection in Turkey: Assessing Practical and Political Needs," Migration Policy Institute, 2016, 11, accessed May 18, 2018, https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/TCM-Dev-Corabatir-FINALWEB.pdf.

[6] Umut Uras, "Erdogan Plan to Make Syrians Citizens Sparks Online War," *Aljazeera*, July 4, 2016, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/07/erdogan-syrians-citizensship-hashtag-160703190729668.html.

[7] "Turkey processing citizenship for 50,000 Syrians," *Daily Sabah Turkey,* September 23, 2017, https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2017/09/23/turkey-processing-citizenship-for-50000-syrians.

government forces of the society against the naturalization plan directed attention to micro level discussions which indicated a strong anti-Syrian stance.

The announcement of the proposal was a contingent event which triggered a nationalist backlash by galvanizing the groupness[8] in deeply polarized society and brought the issue of citizenship from legal texts to everyday life discourses. The citizenship proposal was seen by the host population as the explicit indicator of replacement of the perception of temporariness of Syrians' with the perception of their permanence in Turkey.[9] It was perceived as a threat since naturalization of refugees challenged the popular perception of citizenship as national membership and change the perceived balance of power relations between the native population and refugees. The backlash in Turkey revealed the bounded character of citizenship in the country which is confined within the boundaries of national political community.[10] If it might be considered as the red line of fragile tolerance towards refugees, it might also be perceived as a concrete case which indicates the possible failure of multiculturalist approach in citizenship literature. In this framework, considering the fact that this thesis focuses on micro level analysis of citizenship regarding to identity dimension, it is crucial to have a brief review of the related literature for a better understanding of why identity dimension still matters.

Citizenship historically grew out of the idea of common good in Aristotelian approach and it was widely discussed as a civic virtue in political philosophy until the modern period. In post-war social sciences, the meaning of the concept has expanded and today, it does not just mean a

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[8] Rogers Brubaker, Ethnicity without Groups (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 14.
[9] Dogus Simsek and Sebnem Koser Akcapar, "The Politics of Syrian Refugees in Turkey: A Question of Inclusion and Exclusion through Citizenship," *Social Inclusion*, V. 6, N. 1 (2018): 177.
[10] David Miller, *Citizenship and National Identity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 81.

status but it also encompasses rights, identity and participation.[11] The concept is analyzed in an evolutionary line from civil to political to social citizenship and is defined as a unifying inclusionary force with an emphasis on basic human equality and full membership of a community.[12] Most scholars for the last three decades, have been in effort to re-question, theorize and analyze citizenship to show the denationalizing effect of migration, multiculturalism, ethno-cultural pluralism and integration.[13] The function of citizenship is re-evaluated to tackle the problems of belonging, identity, and personality in the modern world because of the major changes since the 1980s in the position and institutional features of national states resulting from various forms of globalization.[14] In this regard, citizenship is no longer seen nationally distinctive, but it has increasingly been perceived inclusive and universalistic by indicating de-territorialization of citizenship practices as well as identities and as a result, a denationalized form of citizenship.[15] The concept is not only taken into consideration on the national and post-national levels but also on the multicultural level as it is indicated by Kymlicka who approaches to citizenship with an effort to extend citizens' rights to noncitizens in consideration of the facts of contemporary societies.[16] Most of these recent analyses adopt an institutional approach which predominantly

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[11] Christian Joppke, *Citizenship and Immigration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 30; See also: Irene Bloemraad, "Theorizing and Analyzing Citizenship in Multicultural Societies," *The Sociological Quarterly*, V. 56, N. 4 (2015): 591.

[12] T. H. Marshall, *Class, Citizenship and Social Development: Essays* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 76, 78.

[13] Christian Joppke, *Citizenship and Immigration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 31.

[14] Saskia Sassen, "The Repositioning of Citizenship: Emergent Subjects and Spaces for Politics," The New Centennial Review, V. 3, N. 2 (2003): 47.

[15] Sassen, 42. See also: Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Post-National Membership in Europe (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 3. See also: Linda Bosniak, "The State of Citizenship: Citizenship Denationalized," Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies, V. 7, N. 2 (2000): 483-484.

[16] Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, Citizenship in Culturally Diverse Societies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 5.

focuses on legal and political dimensions of citizenship rather than identity dimension. The significance of citizenship as national membership is largely neglected.[17] Even if the arguments of the multiculturalist approach to citizenship are very convincing and the inclusive character of today's perception of citizenship at institutional level is evident, national dimension of citizenship still plays an important role particularly in individual understanding of ordinary citizens and their everyday practices.

Citizenship etymologically connects a space -city and then state- with persons -citizens- who live there but disconnects the others who are located outside of that space. In other words, it is a system of allocating persons to states, which is "internally inclusive but externally exclusive"[18] and in the context of migration, citizenship functions as legitimate exclusionary mechanism where nation-state sets boundaries between citizens and non-citizens or members and non-members.[19] Furthermore, migration and related state policies may activate the exclusionary power of citizenship in discourses of individuals with a strong emphasis on national identity, national attachment and belongingness, just as it happened in the case of Turkey with the government's naturalization plan. Brubaker underlines this national dimension of the concept of citizenship linking it with nationhood in which outsiders are defined negatively unlike insiders and "they are excluded not because of what they are but what they are not."[20] Likewise Isin and Turner define citizenship as an exclusionary category by showing that it has a generic problem since that which

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[17] Cynthia Miller-Idriss, "Everyday Understandings of Citizenship in Germany," Citizenship Studies, V. 10, N. 5 (2006): 542. See also: Szabolcs Pogonyi, "The Passport as Means of Identity Management: Making and Unmaking Ethnic Boundaries through Citizenship," Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, Special Issue (2018): 3.
[18] Rogers Brubaker, Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 21, 31
[19].Brubaker, 23, 28.
[20] Brubaker, 29.

includes must by definition exclude.[21] Once the question of "who we are" is asked, there is no way to answer it without the question of "who they are." In other words, citizenship implies a dialectic and special attention is required to investigate the identity dimension of the concept with a bottom-up perspective to show continuing importance of national membership and its exclusionary power.

This hypothesis is supported by some recent scholars such as Miller-Idris who argues that state policies on citizenship could not be directly extrapolated to the understanding of citizenship among ordinary citizens in their everyday lives.[22] She tested this hypothesis by examining the perception of ordinary Germans on Germanness and came to a conclusion that national citizenship still matters and does not lose its importance. Similarly, Kirwan, McDermont and Clarke explore how citizenship imagined and practiced in everyday practices by those working at Citizens Advice in the UK and indicate the value of tracing everyday discourses of citizenship through group discussions and interviews which reveal the various ways of imagining.[23] Along the same line, while Knott investigates identity politics and state-kin relations in terms of citizenship and ethnicity in Moldova and Crimea with a people-centered approach,[24] Pogonyi explores identity perception of newly naturalized non-resident Hungarians and demonstrate the significance of citizenship as means of identity management and ethnic boundary making.[25] All these recent

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[21] Engin F. Isin and Bryan S. Turner, "Citizenship Studies: An Introduction," in *Handbook of Citizenship Studies*, eds. Engin F. Isin and Bryan S. Turner (London: SAGE, 2002), 5.

[22] Cynthia Miller-Idriss, "Everyday Understandings of Citizenship in Germany," *Citizenship Studies*, V. 10, N. 5 (2006): 542.

[23] Samuel Kirwan, Morag McDermont and John Clarke, "Imagining and Practising Citizenship in Austere Times: The Work of Citizens Advice," *Citizenship Studies*, V. 20, N. 6-7 (2016): 764, 765, 775.

[24] Eleanor Knott, "Generating Data: Studying Identity Politics from a Bottom-up Approach in Crimea and Moldova," East European Politics and Societies, V. 29, N. 2 (2015): 3.

[25] Szabolcs Pogonyi, "The Passport as Means of Identity Management: Making and Unmaking Ethnic Boundaries through Citizenship," Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, Special Issue (2018): 16.

studies adopt people-centered, micro level perspective to go beyond the institutionalist approach in order to deepen the understanding of the function of citizenship in everyday life and concentrate on identity dimension of citizenship. Even in a global and interconnected world where the classical understanding of space and membership shifted with increased migration and gained more transnational character than national character, there is still need for categorizing and the fact of distinction between citizens and non-citizens.

Within this scope, the main objective of this thesis is not to analyze the macro level debate of policies, regulation and structural changes but rather to examine the concept of citizenship through the lens of citizens, themselves. A micro level approach which investigates the feeling of citizenship of ordinary people may also bring us closer to finding an explanation for popular rejection of the inclusive naturalization policy of Turkey towards Syrian refugees. Considering the fact that previously, Turkish citizenship was predominantly analyzed through the status and rights of ethnic and religious minorities in terms of equal citizenship,[26] the exceptional citizenship which proposed for naturalization of the Syrians, has shifted the focus from minorities to non-citizens. Here, at this point, it is possible to claim that Turkish citizenship has imagined and practiced for the first time through "real" outsiders and thus, by 2016 the exclusionary character of citizenship as the tool of national boundary maker became salient despite the effort for inclusive institutional reforms. In this regard, I also argue that migration in Turkey has a renationalizing effect on individual and societal level owing to the fear of denationalization.

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My thesis is divided in three parts dealing first with a brief overview of the legal structure of Turkish citizenship law and asylum system. The second part provides the background which indicates the concerns of the host population by focusing on socio-economic, security, demographic and political dimensions of the issue which affect the attitude of Turkish citizens to the naturalization plan. The core of the analysis is laid down in the third chapter which is the empirical analysis. In this chapter, Wodak's discourse-historical approach was adopted for the analysis and it was based on triangulation to increase the validity and credibility of the research. With the analysis of three different sets of data which consist of political speeches, social media contents and interviews, I aim to provide a detailed picture of understanding of citizenship in Turkey. Within this frame, first, the political speeches of three opposition parties on exceptional citizenship proposal are examined to indicate distinct views and the impact of political discourses on individual's perception. Then, the hashtag, #IdontwantSyriansinmycountry, which went viral in Twitter immediately after the declaration of naturalization policy, is analyzed by looking at 400 tweets to demonstrate the discursive construction of exclusion through citizenship by investigating the citizenship perception Turkish citizens. Finally, I conclude the thesis with the discourse analysis of 10 interviews which were conducted with shopkeepers from distinct professions who have businesses in the city center of Antalya, the center of tourism in Turkey in which people are expected to be more open to welcome foreigners.

Chapter 1

A Legal Overview

Refugee status determination process consists of legal and governmental procedures undertaken by States or/and the UNHCR to determine whether an individual is considered a refugee in accordance with national and international law.[27] As it is stated in the definition of the process, both international and national law plays role on determining status of displaced persons in host countries and reception as well as settlement conditions which implies the post-immigration process. Even if today's international system has achieved a certain level of success concerning to the standards of treatment for asylum-seekers, different practices of states within the frame of their national asylum system and other related regulations indicate the significance of the impact of national law both on asylum processes and the relationship between asylum seekers and host society which brings the discussions of durable solutions including naturalization. Therefore, in this chapter, first, the status of Syrian refugees in Turkey will be indicated by drawing the frame of the Turkish Asylum System and then the citizenship regime of Turkey will be analyzed to investigate the characteristics and legal structure of the citizenship regime by defining the meaning of Turkish citizenship in order to be able to observe the impacts of large-scale immigration and presence of Syrian refugees on the perception of citizenship regime.

1.1 International Refugee Law and Naturalization

International community has invested quite some efforts in establishing and consolidating the international refugee protection regime since 1920s with the aim of bringing common principles

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[27]"UNHCR Resettlement Handbook: Division of International Protection," UNHCR, July 2011, 73, accessed April 17, 2018, http://www.unhcr.org/46f7c0ee2.pdf.

and standards on international protection. Therefore, international refugee law as a regime of protection deals with the question of who is qualified for the protection. The 1951 Geneva Convention and 1967 Protocol as the key legal documents outline the status of refugees and according to the article 1 of the Convention, refugee is defined as the person who "owing to 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 or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."[28] This definition indicates four fundamental elements of refugee status: Well-founded fear, five grounds of persecution, being outside the country of origin and lack of protection. Well-founded fear, here, is the assessment of the likelihood of a future event, meaning persecution and it expresses whether there is a reasonable chance of being persecuted if the asylum seeker returned to the country of origin. At this point, asylum seeker's testimony, past persecution of the asylum seeker, harm to a similarly situated person, general human rights situation of the country of origin and generalized oppression are the tools to establish the well-founded nature of the fear. Persecution, on the other hand, as the key element for determining the refugee status is defined by Hathaway as "the sustained or systematic violation of basic human rights demonstrative of a failure of state protection."[29] The article 1 of the Convention defines the five grounds of persecution as religion, nationality, race, political opinion and membership to a particular social group however following regional or international

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[28] "Resolution 2198 (XXI)," The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol, 2010, accessed April 17, 2018, http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.pdf.
[29] James J. Hathaway and Michelle Foster, *the Law of Refugee Status* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 183.

regulations as well as researches of legal scholars show that these five grounds are not enough to define persecution. Thereby, there is tendency to have broader definition of persecution today.

The Geneva Convention is a living instrument and maintains its importance not just as a guide for determining the refugee status but also as basis of fundamental principles of international refugee law. For instance, the article 33 and the article 3 of the Convention prohibit expulsion and discrimination by adopting the non-refoulement and non-discrimination principles. Similarly, the unity of the family as one of the fundamental principles is assured by the Convention.[30] As another significant point, it also advises state parties to implement durable solutions such as naturalization which is underlined as a solution in the article 34:

> The Contracting States shall as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalization of refugees. They shall in particular make every effort to expedite naturalization proceedings and to reduce as far as possible the charges and costs of such proceedings.[31]

In parallelism with the 1951 Convention, the article 32 of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons requires States to "as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalization of stateless persons" and the article 1 (2) of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness also describes the conditions a State may place on granting citizenship with the aim of preventing statelessness.[32] Last two articles are important regarding to refugee crisis in the

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[30] "Resolution 2198 (XXI)," The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol, 2010, accessed April 17, 2018, http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.pdf.
[31] Resolution 2198 (XXI).
[32] "1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons," United Nations Treaty Series, V. 360, September 28, 1954, accessed April 17, 2018, http://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons_ENG.pdf. See also: "The 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness," United Nations Treaty Series, V. 989, August 30, 1961, accessed April 17, 2018, http://www.unhcr.org/protection/statelessness/3bbb286d8/convention-reduction-statelessness.html.

context of Turkey since more than 300.000 'stateless' babies have been born in Turkey since 2011.[33]

1.2 "Guests" not Refugees: Turkey's Asylum System and Legal Position of Syrian Refugees

Turkish asylum system has been shaped according to where refugees come from and why they come as well as the circumstances of refugees upon arrival.[34] As state party of the Geneva Convention, Turkey is required to perform certain obligations to offer international protection for refugees and asylum seekers. The implementation of the Geneva Convention, however, depends on political will and the challenge of its enforceability and it also gives states parties' possibility of limiting obligations. This enables states to make reservation or declaration which may aim to exclude or modify the legal effect of certain articles of the Convention. In this sense, Turkey maintains a reservation which was made upon ratification and limits the scope of the Convention's application in Turkey with a "geographical limitation" which is the first significant factor of Turkish asylum system for determining the refugee status. According to the reservation, Turkey grants refugee status "only to persons who have become refuges as a result of events occurring in Europe"[35] and refugee is defined as follows:

> A person who as a result of events occurring in European countries and owing to 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 citizenship and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of

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[33] Bulent Sarioglu, "More than 300,000 'stateless' Syrian babies born in Turkey: Refugee subcommittee," *Hurriyet Daily News*, March 9, 2018, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/more-than-300-000-stateless-syrian-babies-born-in-turkey-refugee-subcommittee-128494.

[34] Dogus Simsek and Metin Corabatir, "Challenges and Opportunities of Refugee Integration in Turkey," Research Centre on Asylum and Migration (IGAM), Report, December 2016, 61-62, accessed May 20, 2018, http://www.igamder.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Challenges-and-opportunities-of-refugee-integration-in-turkey-full-report.pdf.

[35] "Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees," Reservations and Declarations, accessed April 5, 2018, http://www.unhcr.org/protection/convention/3d9abe177/reservations-declarations-1951-refugee-convention.html.

that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it, shall be granted refugee status upon completion of the refugee status determination process.[36]

The main domestic asylum legislation of Turkey, the Law of Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) in 2013 replaced the 1994 Regulation which was mainly a reaction to possible mass influxes of 1980s and 1990s from conflictual regions of that time, and presumed that in such cases, the main response from Turkey should have been to stop refugees at the border they arrive in Turkey's territory.[37] Since the 1994 regulation with some amendments remained in force till 2013, it must actually be considered as the only legal document of Turkey to act in line with during the first three years of the refugee crisis. Turkey, in this period, tried to manage the crisis without a proper and reliable legislative guideline and Syrian refugees were described as "guests" in the absence of a legal term. Thereby, the adoption of the Law Foreigners and International Protection in 2013 is very crucial as it introduces a legal basis to the temporary protection regime which has been *de facto* implemented since 2011 as a result of the "Open Door Policy". The Law investigates the cases based on both the origin of their arrival in Turkey and whether the arrival is individual arrival or a mass influx. Within this scope of the Law, if the case is individual and person who seeks for asylum is a "citizen of a European country", "conditional refugees in terms of them being citizens of a non-European country" and foreigners or stateless persons under "subsidiary protection" who neither could be qualified as a refugee nor as a conditional refugee.[38] For implementation of migration-related policies and strategies, the 2013 Law established the

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[36] Law no. 6458/2013. Article 61 on Foreigners and International Protection.

[37] Dogus Simsek and Metin Corabatir, "Challenges and Opportunities of Refugee Integration in Turkey," Research Centre on Asylum and Migration (IGAM), Report, December 2016, 59, accessed May 20, 2018, http://www.igamder.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Challenges-and-opportunities-of-refugee-integration-in-turkey-full-report.pdf.

[38] Simsek and Corabatir, 61-62.

Directorate General for Migration Management (DGMM) as the national asylum institution under the Ministry of Interior. According to the article 103, the aim of establishment of the DGMM is to "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."[39]

The Law also includes many secondary legislations and directives which clarify implementation issues having direct or indirect effect on the status of Syrian refugees in Turkey. The article 91 of the 2013 Law describes the circumstances in the case of mass influx for determining who is eligible for the temporary protection as "temporary protection may be provided for foreigners who, have been forced to leave their country, cannot return to the country that they have left, and have arrived at or crossed the borders of Turkey in a mass influx situation seeking immediate and temporary protection."[40] Within this frame of this article, on 22 October 2014, the Council of Ministers adopted the 2014 Temporary Protection Regulation which establishes rules on registration and documentation procedures to be followed by temporarily protected persons, introduces a clear right to stay in Turkey with non-refoulement principle until temporary protection regime is over, and clarifies the set of rights and entitlements for the temporary protection beneficiaries.[41] According to the eligibility criteria which is defined in the article 7 of the Regulation, at present all Syrians, Palestinian refugees and stateless persons living in Syria and

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[39] Law no. 6458/2013. Article 103 on Foreigners and International Protection. See also: "About Us," Republic of Turkey Ministry of Interior Directorate General for Migration Management, accessed May 21, 2018, http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik/about-us_912_956.

[40] Law no. 6458/2013. Article 91.

[41] Meltem Ineli-Ciger, "Implications of the New Turkish Law on Foreigners and International Protection and Regulation no. 29153 on Temporary Protection for Syrians Seeking Protection in Turkey," *Oxford Monitor of Forced Migration*, V. 4, N. 2 (December 2014): 29.

seeking refuge in Turkey are designated as eligible for temporary protection.[42] This regulation is the main legal source determining the status of Syrian refugees even though it does not provide a permanent status which brings certain social rights since the Syrians are not recognized as refugees or asylum seekers by the Regulation but as foreigners under temporary protection regime.

1.3 Turkish Citizenship Regime

Citizenship includes institutionalized norms as a constitutive element of a political community. However citizenship regimes of states which have multiple configurations and dimensions, do not only create a legal membership status and a frame of rights and duties of that certain membership but they also indicate how political membership is governed by states.[43] Even though citizenship is, in the first sight, considered as a non-voluntary, life-long status acquired by birth and maintained the intergenerational continuity,[44] the context of international migration requires states to develop a particular system for acquisition of citizenship as voluntary status. Naturalization policies change from state to state since they are sovereign to determine who their citizens are and who may become their citizens.[45] Thereby, national citizenship regimes of different states usually show distinct characteristics which serve distinct purposes. Vink and Bauböck, at this point, distinguish five purposes – intergenerational continuity, territorial inclusion, singularity, special ties and genuine link – that citizenship law serve and two dimensions –territorial inclusion and ethno-cultural inclusion – which are characterized by different principles

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[42] Ineli-Ciger, 30.

[43] Maarten Vink, "Comparing Citizenship Regimes," in *Oxford Handbook of Citizenship*, eds. Ayelet Shachar, Rainer Bauböck, Irene Bloemraad and Maarten Vink, (London: Oxford University Press, 2017), 221-222.

[44] Maarten Vink and Rainer Bauböck, "Citizenship Configurations: Analyzing the Multiple Purposes of Citizenship Regimes in Europe," *Comparative European Politics*, V. 11, N. 5 (3 June 2013): 622.

[45] Vink and Bauböck, 623.

of inclusiveness.[46] Based on these two dimensions, Vink and Bauböck offer typology of four different citizenship regime: Ethno-culturally selective, insular, expansive and territorially selective regimes. While the first one is highly based on jus *sanguinis* with weak *jus soli*, the last one indicates strong *jus soli* with weak *jus sanguinis*.[47] Insular and expansive regimes can be characterized by some forms of both *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*.[48]

Turkish law accepts the *jus sanguinis* principle, giving primary acquisition of Turkish citizenship by parental descent. According to the article 66 of the 1982 Constitution, every child of a Turkish father or a Turkish mother is identified as Turkish citizen.[49] The second part of the Turkish Citizenship Law describes the ways of acquiring Turkish citizenship in a similar direction. Even though the article 5 underlines that Turkish citizenship is acquired by birth and after birth, acquisition of Turkish citizenship by birth and descent are by definition indicated as primary ways.[50] As it is stated in the article 8, the place of birth is the secondary acquisition of Turkish citizenship in order to avoid statelessness.[51]

According to the article 9 of the Turkish Citizenship Law, Turkish citizenship shall be acquired after birth with a decision of competent authority, by adoption or by choice' and the article 11 regulates the conditions required for application as:

> a) Being of the age of consent possessing the distinguishing power according to his/her own national legal system, or according to the Turkish law if s/he is stateless;
>
> b) Having been resident in Turkey for five years, without interruption, prior to her/his date of application;

[46] Vink and Bauböck, 636.
[47] Vink and Bauböck, 638-639.
[48] Vink and Bauböck.
[49] 1982 Constitution of Republic of Turkey, accessed April 4, 2018, *https://global.tbmm.gov.tr/docs/constitution_en.pdf*.
[50] Law no: 5901/2009. On Turkish Citizenship.
[51] Law no: 5901/2009.

c) Having the intention of settling in Turkey and prove this intention with action;

d) Not having any disease that constitutes a danger to public health;

e) Being a person of good morals;

f) Speaking an adequate level of Turkish;

g) Having an income or profession to provide for his own livelihood and those of his/her dependants in Turkey;

h) Not posing a threat to national security and public order.[52]

In addition to that, the Turkish Citizenship Law offers "exceptional citizenship" for those who "bring into Turkey industrial facilities or have rendered or believed to render an outstanding service in the social or economic arena or in the fields of science, technology, sports, culture or arts;" "whose being received into citizenship is deemed to be necessary;" "who are recognized as migrants."[53] The decision for exceptional citizenship is taken upon a proposal by the Ministry of Interior and decision of the Council of Ministers. The article 12 gained significance in 2016 after proposal towards Syrian refugees, new regulation which amended the Turkish Citizenship Law was accepted in 2016 and the "Amendment Regulation on the Application Regulation of Turkish Citizenship Law" (Amendment Regulation) was published in the Official Gazette on 12 January 2017. The amendment details the conditions for a foreigner to acquire Turkish citizenship as follows:

a) The detection of the Ministry of Economy that a fixed capital investment at least in the amount of USD 2.000.000 has been performed by a foreigner

b) The detection of Ministry of Environment and Urbanization that a real estate with a value of at least USD 1.000.000 has been purchased by a foreigner on condition with an annotation on the land registration that the real estate shall not be sold within 3 years as of such purchase

c) The detection of Ministry of Labor and Social Security that a foreigner has generated employment for at least 100 people

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[52] Law no: 5901/2009.
[53] Law no: 5901/2009.

d) The detection of Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency that a cash investment in the amount of at least USD 3.000.000 has been performed by a foreigner to the banks operating in Turkey on condition that such amount shall not be withdrawn for 3 years as of such investment

e) The detection of Under-secreteriat of Treasury that State Debt Instruments have been purchased by a foreigner in the amount of at least USD 3.000.000 on condition that such amount shall be held for 3 years following such purchase[54]

Exceptional citizenship and the latest regulation show that the Turkish regime has a form of inclusive legal structure based on strong *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*. Naturalization in the Turkish Citizenship Law is highly based on two purposes which are defined as main purposes of citizenship laws by Vink and Bauböck: Territorial inclusion of desirable ones with the exclusion of undesirable new citizens and special ties which indicates a belonging to the society, polity or nation by virtue.[55] The regime is, thus, defined as expansive citizenship regime concerning the migration. The asylum system of Turkey, on the other hand has limitations mainly arising from the geographical reservation even though it has been in a process of progress in the aftermath of the adoption of the Law 2013 and the 2014 Regulation. The issues in the asylum system are the main reasons of being in search of efficient way of governing the crisis and the exceptional citizenship proposal has actually been offered as a durable solution which may bring local integration. That is the reason why, Turkey amended the Citizenship Law and enabled the Syrian refugees' application to the citizenship even if the Temporary Protection Regulation clearly defines in the article 25 that "temporary protection identification document shall not be deemed to be equivalent to a residence permit or documents, which substitute residence permits, as regulated by the Law, shall not grant the right for transition to long term residence permit, its duration shall not be taken into

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[54] Official Gazette. No. 29946. On Amendment Regulation on the Application Regulation of Turkish Citizenship Law.

[55] Maarten Vink and Rainer Bauböck, "Citizenship Configurations: Analyzing the Multiple Purposes of Citizenship Regimes in Europe," *Comparative European Politics*, V. 11, N. 5 (3 June 2013): 631.

consideration when calculating the total term of residence permit durations and shall not entitle its

holder to apply for Turkish citizenship."[56]

Chapter 2

Unwelcomed Guests: Growing Anti-Refugee Sentiment and Host Community Concerns

Once one is defined as a guest, the boundaries become visible. Hospitality implies an

unusual temporary inclusion of an outsider and involves a relation of power.[57] The guest status

refers to an unfavorable but tolerable position since hospitality is conditional, limited and

controlled by the one who hosts. When the guest 'overstays' or shows tendency for permanency

or acts out of the host's control, it is usually perceived as a threat by the host. In other word, such

a new condition is not acceptable by the host since it changes the balances of unequal power

relation between the host and the guest and violates existing boundaries. It might also lead to a

process of marginalization and dispossession of the guest by the host.[58]

The 'guest' approach was constructed in a similar way in Turkey. Syrian refugees, as it is

explained earlier in the first chapter, are not legally considered refugees in Turkey, but rather

"guests" and this guest discourse which implies a temporariness, is widely recognized and adopted

by the Turkish people. Even though the guest status was replaced by the temporary protection

regime, the guest label has continued to be used to define the Syrians. This might also be

considered as a choice since the guest status sets an expectation that the Syrians' stay would be

short. To put it another way, it is possible to claim that referring to the Syrians as guests is an

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[56] "Turkey: Temporary Protection Regulation," October 22, 2014, accessed April 6, 2018, http://www.refworld.org/docid/56572fd74.html.

[57] Jacques Derrida, On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness (London: Routledge, 2001), x, 17.

[58] Secil Dagtas, "Whose Misafirs? Negotiating Difference along the Turkish-Syrian Border," International Journal Middle East Studies, V. 49, N.4 (2017): 671.

informed choice of the majority of the Turkish people to indicate that they are only in favor of temporary and short presence of the Syrians in the country.

By the end of 2014, refugee-host interaction had increased with a growing population of the Syrians in cities and towns. Contrary to the expectation that intergroup contact might contribute to the social cohesion by reducing bias and all kind of negative attitudes,[59] interaction of two groups caused various conflicts even clashes. Particularly in the borderline cities such as Hatay, Gaziantep, Sanliurfa and Kilis which received the highest number of the refugees, anti-Syrian sentiment, by having a great impact on everyday life discourses, gradually increased and spread to other cities.[60] The nationalist voices which had been relatively silent until 2014 due to a certain level of empathy and tolerance, started to be heard and the Syrian refugees were no longer seen as brothers and sisters who needed help but as an economic burden, a rival and a threat for the future of the country. When the Syrians who had been seen as guests started to be new neighbors in 2014 and became fellow citizens in 2016, Turkish hospitality turned into a hostility. Some of the Turkish media groups also fueled the hostility by regularly reporting issues happening in border provinces related to refugees with a partial understanding.[61] Likewise, political parties instrumentalized the refugees by adopting different approaches based on their ideological perceptions and political

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[59] Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (London: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1954).

[60] Sebnem Koser Akcapar and Dogus Simsek, "The Politics of Syrian Refugees in Turkey: A Question of Inclusion and Exclusion through Citizenship," *Social Inclusion*, V. 6, N. 1 (2018): 182.

[61] Selin Yildiz Nielsen, "Perceptions between Syrian Refugees and their Host Community," *Turkish Policy Quarterly,* V. 15, N. 3 (2016): 103-105.

interests. Under these circumstances, anti-refugee protests turned into violent attacks against local Syrian businesses or directly against the individuals.[62]

Although there is a popular common understanding on labelling the refugees as guests, the concerns of the host population are diversified. In this chapter, the host community concerns are described dealing with socio-economic, security, demographic and political dimensions of the issue.

2.1 Socio-economic Concerns

As of 2014, the rapid influx of the refugees have started to put a great strain on social and economic infrastructure in Turkey. Financial expenditures have substantially increased and the situation of the refugee camps which are close to reaching to their maximum capacity challenged the policies of the state to respond the crisis. While the cost was $ 4.5 billion in November 2014,[63] the total expenditures exceeded to $ 7.6 billion in September 2015.[64] One of the most recent statements made by the Turkish authorities in December 2017 shows that Turkey used more than $ 30 billion of its national funds for the needs of Syrian refugees between 2011 and 2017.[65]

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[62] Ünal Çam, "Suriyeli Mültecilerin Dükkânlarına Saldırı," *Milliyet*, July 18, 2016, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/suriyeli-multecilerin-dukkanlarina-gundem-2279409/. See also: Vartan Estukyan, "Suriyelilere Linc Plani," *Agos*, July 15, 2016, http://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/15901/suriyelilere-linc-plani; "Olaylar İstanbul'a da Sıçradı: Suriyelilere saldırı," *Cumhuriyet*, August 25, 2014, http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/109855/Olaylar_istanbul_a_da_sicradi__Suriyelilere_saldiri.html.
[63] "Turkey spends $4.5 billion on Syrian refugees," Anadolu Agency, November 4, 2014, https://www.aa.com.tr/en/economy/turkey-spends-45-billion-on-syrian-refugees/104908.
[64] Ercan Gurses, "Turkey spent $7.6 billion hosting 2.2 million Syrian refugees," Reuters, September 18, 2015, https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-europe-migrants-turkey-idUKKCN0RI0N520150918.
[65] "Turkey says EU funds not being actively used for needs of Syrian refugees," Reuters, December 30, 2017, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-eu-funds/turkey-says-eu-funds-not-being-actively-used-for-needs-of-syrian-refugees-idUSKBN1EO06S.

Similarly, the number of the refugees residing in the urban areas also dramatically increased in the aftermath of 2014. As it is presented in the Table 1, by early 2018, more than 90% of the registered refugees have settled outside of the camps where they face various difficulties such as limited access to accommodation, job opportunities, health and other social services.[66] Although socio-economic issues had appeared even earlier than the end of 2014, the economic impact of the refugee crisis was not completely perceived by the Turkish people until Syrian refugees resided in high numbers in cities as active players of the economic structure. Moreover, it is even possible to say that local population initially welcomed the refugees as potential customers.

Most of the recent research indicate that the majority of Turkish people, particularly those who live in the borderline cities, blame Syrian refugees for causing for rising of local rent prices, decreasing wages of labor market, increasing risk of unemployment.[67] Considering the facts of high unemployment and informal employment in Turkey as well as legal barriers for the Syrians to access to formal labor market before 2016, it is possible to state that the refugees are seen as economic threat by mostly low income groups of the host population who are competing for jobs in informal sector with lower wages.

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[66] Kemal Kirisci and Raj Salooja, "Northern Exodos," *Foreign Affairs*, April 15, 2014, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/turkey/2014-04-15/northern-exodus.
[67] "Social Cohesion in Turkey: Refugee and Host Community Online Survey," World Food Programme, 2018, 10-11, accessed May 20, 2018, https://www.wfp.org/content/turkey-social-cohesion-refugee-host-community-online-survey. See also: Dogus Simsek and Metin Corabatir, "Challenges and Opportunities of Refugee Integration in Turkey," Research Centre on Asylum and Migration (IGAM), Report, December 2016, 73, accessed May 20, 2018, http://www.igamder.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Challenges-and-opportunities-of-refugee-integration-in-turkey-full-report.pdf.

Table 1. Sheltered and Unsheltered Syrian Refugees by Temporary Shelter Centers

Year	Sheltered	Unsheltered
2014	**227.021**	**1.292.265**
2015	**267.243**	**2.236.306**
2016	**258.545**	**2.575.896**
2017	**228.568**	**3.198.218**
May 2018	**216.037**	**3.377.827**

Source: The Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) and the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD)

According to the research of the International Crisis Group, some Turkish citizens pointed out that while unskilled workers used to get 50 TL a day, Syrians accept 30 TL and some others also complained that shoemakers used to hire out for 80 TL, but Syrians do the same work for 12 TL.[68] Taken the points of these citizens into consideration, it can be claimed that the changes on wages is the main reason of the popular daily discourses of "they will take our jobs" and "we cannot find work because of them since they work for very low wages."[69] In particular, construction, agricultural and textile workers have negatively been affected from this shift on labor force depending on wages.

In addition to rising rent prices and lower wages, the majority of the host population are also very annoyed due to the cash assistance of NGOs to the refugees as well as the state authorities and their free access to public services such as health facilities and education without paying into

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[68] "The Politics of Permanence Crisis Group Europe Report N°241," International Crisis Group, November 30, 2016, 12, accessed on May 21, 2018, https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/turkey-s-refugee-crisis-politics-permanence.
[69] "Social Cohesion in Turkey: Refugee and Host Community Online Survey," World Food Programme, 2018, 11, accessed May 20, 2018, https://www.wfp.org/content/turkey-social-cohesion-refugee-host-community-online-survey

social security, unlike citizens. Indeed, these concerns regarding social rights indicate a common

popular perception which has constantly been stated by considerably high number of Turkish

citizens as the reason of being against the presence of the refugees in Turkey both before and after

Erdogan's public statement on exceptional citizenship. The policies of government have been

criticized due to granted social rights with the discourse of "being second class citizen in Turkey

as Turkish."[70] The refugees who are seen as economic burden, are blamed for depleting the sources

of the country. Furthermore, there are even more radical concerns such as the higher birth rate of

Syrian refugees than the birth rate of Turkish citizens[71] which points out the perceived threat not

just for the Turkish economy but also for national existence of Turkish people.

Nevertheless, these are not the only concerns of the host population who live in the cities

where most of the refugees reside. As of 2013, the Syrians have started investments by establishing

new businesses which mostly concentrate on food and textile industries. As it is presented in the

Table 2, between 2014 and 2017, the number of Syrian businesses significantly increased. Such

investments are the indicators of, first, the permanence of the Syrians in Turkey and, second, the

emergence of new employment opportunities to the refugees by assisting the economic

integration.[72] Although the establishment of these new Syrian businesses have contributed to

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[70] Emre Erdoğan and Pınar Uyan Semerci, "Attitudes towards Syrians in Turkey 2017," Istanbul Bilgi University Center for Migration Research, March 12, 2018, https://goc.bilgi.edu.tr/media/uploads/2018/03/12/turkish-perceptions-of-syrian-refugees-20180312.pdf.

[71] Bulent Sarioglu, "Birth rate of Syrians in Turkey surpasses that of Turkish citizens," *Hurriyet Daily News,* November 15, 2016, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/birth-rate-of-syrians-in-turkey-surpasses-that-of-turkish-citizens-106149.

[72] Dogus Simsek and Metin Corabatir, "Challenges and Opportunities of Refugee Integration in Turkey," Research Centre on Asylum and Migration (IGAM), Report, December 2016, 72, accessed May 20, 2018, http://www.igamder.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Challenges-and-opportunities-of-refugee-integration-in-turkey-full-report.pdf.

Turkish economy, they have exacerbated the competition more by also involving the middle income groups.

Table 2. The Number of Newly Established Companies with Syrian Partners

Year	Companies with Syrian partners	Total Shareholding Companies
2013	**489**	**3875**
2014	**1257**	**4736**
2015	**1599**	**4729**
2016	**1764**	**4523**
2017	**1202**	**6731**

Source: The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey

Competition for scarce sources and strong perception of economic threat have gradually triggered the anti-refugee sentiment. The presence of refugees in cities adversely affected the low-skilled labor forces, especially in informal market however its impact on formal market is relatively low and furthermore it scholarly requires more researches to be done.[73] It is also necessary to highlight that there is a positive effect of the refugees on formal employment and local markets since refugees have invigorated the local economy as consumers who buy goods.[74] Additionally, complex structure of regional markets, limited economic sources of some municipalities in borderline cities which do not receive additional support from Ankara due to their political affiliations and most importantly the fragility of current Turkish economy should definitely be taken into consideration whilst evaluating the resentment against the refugees. Based

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[73] Oguz Esen and Ayla Ogus Binatli, "The Impact of Syrian Refugees on the Turkish Economy: Regional Labour Market Effects," *Social Sciences*, V. 129, N. 6 (2017): 10.
[74] Oguz Esen and Ayla Ogus Binatli.

on the recent indicators, it seems quite challenging to absorb the cost for the need of the refugees for Turkish economy.[75]

2.2 Security Concerns

The perception of threat to safety is the other cause of the anti-refugee sentiment and exclusionary attitudes of the host population in Turkey. Turkish people widely see the refugees as security risk and take stance against the idea of open borders. Particularly numerous deadly terrorist attacks of the IS-linked suicide bombers in 2016 and identification of jihadists with their complex networks in Turkey increased the security concerns of Turkish people.[76] One of the biggest fear of the host population has been the feeling of being vulnerable to terrorist attacks.[77] Within this perspective, the refugee camps were seen as the potential places which would become centers of attraction for jihadists who might enter Turkey as either asylum seeker or wounded foreign fighters.[78] Even though this threat might be considered as a realistic threat due to the high possibility of the jihadist groups taking advantages of open borders prior to 2017,[79] some constructed common and ongoing tendencies of the host population such as linking all Syrian refugees to terror or considering every single person who speaks Arabic as potential terrorist are the indicators of an exaggerated, unrealistic perception. In some cases, locals have extended the

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[75] Oguz Esen and Ayla Ogus Binatli, 11.

[76] Doğu Eroğlu, "Türkiye kendi IŞİD'ini nasıl yarattı: Kent kent IŞİD hücreleri," Birgün, August 23, 2016, https://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/turkiye-kendi-isid-ini-nasil-yaratti-kent-kent-isid-hucreleri-125232.html.

[77] "Effects of the Syrian Refugees on Turkey," *ORSAM and TESEV*, Report No: 195, 2015, 19, accessed on May 26, 2018 http://www.orsam.org.tr/files/Raporlar/rapor195/195eng.pdf.

[78] Fulya Memisoglu and Asli Ilgit, "Syrian Refugees in Turkey: Multifaceted Challenges, Diverse Players and Ambiguous Policies," *Mediterranean Politics*, V. 22, N. 3 (2017): 327.

[79] "The Politics of Permanence Crisis Group Europe Report N°241," International Crisis Group, November 30, 2016, 14, accessed on May 21, 2018, https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/turkey-s-refugee-crisis-politics-permanence.

perceived threat by also linking the refugees to the Assad regime and PKK particularly after the siege of Kobane in October 2014.[80]

Another issue raised by the Turkish people regarding to security is about petty crime and harassment such as stealing and prostitution. The refugees, particularly those who have been living in cities under harsh conditions, are largely stigmatized as the potential criminals and the popularity of this perception has gradually increased since 2011 with news of certain incidents which the Syrians involved. Therefore, it is very crucial to underline the role of certain newspapers and news channels on nurturing the resentment against the refugees. Their news including sensitive stories or contents constructed rumors that crime was higher among Syrians and they caused problems everywhere.[81] At this point, one of those newspapers, for instance, defined the refugees as crime machines.[82] Although, in mid 2017, the claims of rising crime rate among Syrians were rejected by the Turkish Ministry of Interior by pointing out that the crime rate among Syrians was 1.32% between 2014 and 2017, many Turkish citizens have continued to use similar discourses.[83] Some other kind of incidents such as the riot which a Turkish flag was taken down by the Syrians and a Syrian flag was put up in Islahiye camp in 2012 or the clash between Turkish border police and the Syrian refugees in 2013, escalated the tension between two groups more by galvanizing the national feeling.[84] Concerning the national security, the negative impacts of the war in Syria

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[80] "Effects of the Syrian Refugees on Turkey," 20.
[81] Yildiz Nielsen, 103.
[82] Ali Ekber Erturk, "Misafirler (!) suç makinesi gibi," *Sozcu*, May 15, 2016, https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2016/gundem/misafirler-suc-makinesi-1230634/.
[83] "İçişleri Bakanlığı: Suriyelilerin Türkiye'deki suç oranı yüzde 1,32'dir," T24, July 5, 2017, http://t24.com.tr/haber/icisleri-bakanligi-suriyelilerin-turkiyedeki-suc-orani-yuzde-132dir,412676.
[84] "Daily Situation Report on the Situation Pertaining to Syria," United Nations Country Team in Turkey, 22 July, 2012, accessed May 24, 2018, https://data2.unhcr.org/ar/documents/download/36873. See also: "Turkish border police wounded in clashes on Turkey-Syrian border," Reuters, May 2, 2013, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-

on Turkey have also adversely affected the attitudes of the host population towards the refugees even though the impacts of the war was not associated with the refugees.

2.3 The Demographic and Political Concerns: The Impact of Identities

Unlike socio-economic and security concerns, reactions of the Turkish citizens to identity-related issues diversify from one group to another based on their ethnic, religious and political belongings. The guest discourse is distinctly constructed within the scope of identities and the Syrian refugees are welcomed or unwelcomed depending on whether the refugees are Arabs, Kurds, Alevis or Turkmens. Upon the arrival of Syrian refugees, diversity of Syrian population overlapped with the diverse population of Southeastern Turkey where Kurds, Alevis, Arabs, Turkmens, Assyrians and other minority groups live. As a consequence of the mix of diverse populations, the fear of an ethnic/sectarian conflict among groups occurred since different understandings and feelings of the Kurds about Kurds, Kurds about Arabs, Alevis about Alevis, Alevis about Sunni Arabs, Arabs about Arabs, Turks about Turkmens, Turks about Arabs shape intergroup relations. For instance the Kurds in Turkey sympathize the Kurds in Syria and welcome them but feel antipathy towards ethnic Arabs who are seen as the other.[85] Similarly, while the attitudes of Alevis in Turkey change based on whether refugees are Sunni or Alewite, perceptions of the Turks to Arabs differ depending on whether Turks define themselves as ethnic nationalist, secularist or religious.

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syria-crisis-turkey/turkish-border-police-wounded-in-clashes-on-turkey-syrian-border-idUSBRE9410LP20130502?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews.

[85] Mucahit Navruz and Mehmet Akif Cukurcayir, "Factors Affecting Changes in Perceptions of Turkish People towards Syrian Refugees," *International Journal of Social Sciences*, V. 4, N. 4 (2015): 80.

Considering the fact that majority of the refugees are Sunni Arabs who have been settled in certain areas of the Southeastern provinces where the Kurds and Alevis form the majority, most emphasis has been placed on the demographic concerns by the Kurds and Alevis.[86] The location choices of the government to construct camps or subsidize residential complexes for the Syrian refugees caused unease and the settlement policy has been perceived as the indicator of a project of demographic engineering which aims at decreasing the Alevi and Kurd population in the region.[87] Particularly, the construction of the settlement camp in the area of Sivricehoyuk in Kahramanmaras where Alevi villages locate and the settlement of the Sunni Arabs in Hatay where the majority of the population is Alewites, got reactions of the Alevi community since the settlement policy is seen as a Sunnification project of the government.[88] Similar situation was also observed in the cases of Sanliurfa and Kilis which respectively Kurdish and Turkmen populations of the cities decreased with the settlement of the refugees. For instance, displacement of an estimated 500.000 people from the city of Diyarbakir and close towns in the aftermath of the urban war in 2015[89] and the government's decision of expropriation of these places are perceived as a part of this ethnic demographic engineering process. Likewise, secularists of the country have also

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[86] "The Politics of Permanence Crisis Group Europe Report N°241," International Crisis Group, November 30, 2016, 15, accessed on May 21, 2018, https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/turkey-s-refugee-crisis-politics-permanence.

[87] Erk Acarer, "Sığınmacıları kullanarak demografik yapıyı bozacaklar : Oy vermiyorsanız oy vereni buluruz!," *Birgun*, March 31, 2016, https://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/siginmacilari-kullanarak-demografik-yapiyi-bozacaklar-oy-vermiyorsaniz-oy-vereni-buluruz-107772.html.

[88] "The Politics of Permanence Crisis Group Europe Report N°241," 17. See also: Soner Cagaptay, "The Impact of Syria's Refugees on Southeastern Turkey," The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policy Focus 130, 2014, 15, https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/uploads/Documents/pubs/PolicyFocus130_Cagaptay_Revised3s.pdf.

[89] Sinem Adar, "Re-thinking EU-Turkey co-operation over migration," Open Democracy, April 11, 2018, https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/sinem-adar/re-thinking-eu-turkey-co-operation-over-migration

had concerns that the settlement of the refugees in certain places like Izmir is the indicator of a demographic project for constructing new islamized national identity.[90] In addition to all these, high birth rate among the refugees appear as a national concern in Turkey where the fertility rates has fallen by more than two-thirds since 1960.[91] In this regard, according to the latest researches, it is expected that by the end of 2017 on every year 100 thousand babies would be born and this would generate 1 million more refugees in 10 years.[92] Long term implications of the fact of the birth rate is perceived as a real threat to nation and the demographic structure of the country by the host population.

Dramatic demographic changes of cities which is indicated in the Table 3, might demonstrate the realistic perception of demographic threat but most importantly, the claims of Kurds, Alevis and secularists are the crystallization of the political opposition and an evidence of mistrust to the ruling party, Justice and Development Party (AKP), which adopt a Sunni, nationalist stance. Demographic concerns regarding to ethnic, cultural and sectarian issues are often voiced in tandem with political concerns by the political opposition which consist of all democratic, anti-AKP forces of the country from every segment and ideology. Even though these groups have been united in opposition by criticizing the instrumentalization of refugees by the government for political and electoral interests, their approaches to the presence of refugees have differed based on whether they adopt secular or Islamic identity and ethnic or national (civic) identity. Since the

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[90] Acarer, "Sığınmacıları kullanarak demografik yapıyı bozacaklar : Oy vermiyorsanız oy vereni buluruz!."
[91] Kareem Shaheen and Gokce Saracoglu, "Turkey's waning fertility threatens Erdoğan's vision of strength," *The Guardian,* December 25, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/25/turkey-fertility-secular-religious-divide-erdogan-population-growth.
[92] Kareem Shaheen and Gokce Saracoglu, "Turkey's waning fertility threatens Erdoğan's vision of strength."

political concerns and the impact of the discourses of the political party leaders on the people became more visible with the declaration of the exceptional citizenship proposal which triggered the anti-refugee sentiment more than anytime, political concerns of the host community is broadly analyzed in the following chapter.

Table 3. Distribution of Syrian Refugees in the Scope of Temporary Protection by Province

Province	Registered	Population	Percentage
Gaziantep	385.117	2.005.515	19.20%
Hatay	445.218	1.575.226	28.26%
Izmir	136.998	4.279.677	3.2%
Kahramanmaras	100.274	1.127.623	8.89%
Kilis	130.601	136.319	95.81%
Mardin	92.912	809.719	11.47%
Sanliurfa	475.796	1.985.753	23.96%

Source: The Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM)

Dramatic demographic changes of cities which is indicated in the Table 3, might demonstrate the realistic perception of demographic threat but most importantly, the claims of Kurds, Alevis and secularists are the crystallization of the political opposition and an evidence of mistrust to the ruling party, Justice and Development Party (AKP), which adopt a Sunni, nationalist stance. Demographic concerns regarding to ethnic, cultural and sectarian issues are often voiced in tandem with political concerns by the political opposition which consist of all democratic, anti-AKP forces of the country from every segment and ideology. Even though these groups have been united in opposition by criticizing the instrumentalization of refugees by the government for political and electoral interests, their approaches to the presence of refugees have differed based

on whether they adopt secular or islamic identity and ethnic or national (civic) identity. Since the political concerns and the impact of the discourses of the political party leaders on the people became more visible with the declaration of the exceptional citizenship proposal which triggered the anti-refugee sentiment more than anytime, political concerns of the host community is broadly analyzed in the following chapter. It is also very significant to bear in mind that all these concerns of the host population are taken into consideration in the last chapter of this study whilst analyzing the citizenship perception of the Turkish citizens through their reaction against the naturalization of the Syrian refugees since the concerns as justifications of exclusionary discourses created the ground for defining the Syrians as outsiders.

Chapter 3

Exceptional Citizenship and Discursive Construction of Exclusion of Refugees

> *"Turkey is your home, too. I believe that among our brothers and sisters there are some who want to become citizens of the Republic of Turkey."*
> *Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the President*

In July 2016, President Erdogan announced that Syrian "guests" in Turkey would be granted Turkish citizenship and he started his speech by adopting an inclusive approach. Erdogan's statement was a clear indication of a shift from the official guest discourse by revealing the tendency of the government to adopt the politics of the permanence in terms of integration rather than politics of temporariness. It also aimed at preventing brain-drain and strengthening the country's humanitarian image. Although the inclusive language of the President was the sign of a significant institutional change, an immediate debate which started in the political arena and the strong backlash of the host population forced the government to provide more details about the scope and the aim of the proposal. First, the ministers clarified that there would be certain tough

criteria and the process would be far from automatic.[93] Then, Erdogan emphasized that what was being offered should have been considered as dual citizenship and it did not mean that everyone who benefitted from it would remain in Turkey.[94] Indeed, this was apparently a backtracking with the concern of domestic interest after the societal reactions against the proposal. Erdogan and the government tried to induce the oppositional forces of the country and take them to the same line with the government. Despite these efforts, the political and social forces continued to be against the naturalization of Syrian refugees by justifying their stance in reference to possible economic, social and political outcomes proposal.

In this chapter, based on the triangulation approach, respectively, political party discourses, social media contents through the hashtag #IdontwantSyriansinmycountry and 10 interviews which were conducted with shopkeepers, are analyzed to examine the citizenship perception of the Turkish citizens through their reactions against the exceptional citizenship proposal. This empirical part starts with a meso-level analysis which focuses on political party discourses and then, the last two parts deepen the understanding of citizenship with the micro-level approaches. In this regard, the analysis of party discourses does not directly reflect the citizenship perception of citizens since it is a meso-level approach but party discourses are crucial to indicate the impact of political parties on people's citizenship perceptions and on the construction of exclusionary discourses. It should also be underlined that AKP which has been the proponent and advocator of the exceptional citizenship proposal as the ruling party, is excluded in the analysis of party

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[93] Suraj Sharma, "'Vermin, dirty, freeloaders'… Turks Turn on Syrians Offered Citizenship," *Middle East Eye*, July 11, 2016, http://www.middleeasteye.net/syrians%20citizenship%20turkey%20akp%20erdogan%20racism%20nationalism.

[94] Sharma, "'Vermin, dirty, freeloaders'… Turks Turn on Syrians Offered Citizenship."

discourses since AKP has been in effort to construct an inclusive understanding which is not the scope of this thesis.

3.1 Political Party Discourses

A healthy political life is only possible with a strong and working democracy. Political parties which "brought order out of chaos to a multitude voters" are the driving forces of democracy as inevitable central intermediate structures between society and government.[95] In other words, there is an interdependency between the level of democracy and power of political parties as mediators in a democratic sense. Within this scope, Turkey's fragile democracy and the political parties with weak intra-party democracy make political life more vulnerable to breakdown. Political parties function to resolve the problems and manage conflicts in a system but in a country like Turkey, the ebb and flow of the democracy may result in emergence of undemocratic political structures which may even function to trigger conflicts. Political parties constitute the most effective bodies of people's will and thus all the parties in a parliament, no matter what ideology they have or whether they are in opposition or in government, are responsible for making and implementing policies by considering national interest. Even though a common understanding of national interest is expected, policies and discourses of political parties on national interest vary based on their perception which is usually shaped by ideological or pragmatist stances of parties. The exceptional citizenship proposal which sparked an immediate debate among political parties, indicates very well the distinct approaches of parties on an issue which is related to national interest.

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[95] Richard S. Katz, "Party in Democratic Theory," in *Handbook of Party Politics*, ed. Richard S. Katz and William Crotty, (London: SAGE Publications, 2006), 34. See also: Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party System: A Framework for* Analysis (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976): ix.

Within this framework, in this part of the third chapter, the discourses of three opposition parties which are represented in Turkish Parliament, are analyzed in parallelism with the concerns of host populations to indicate how the opposition parties constructed their exclusionary discourses and how they legitimate their critique about naturalization of Syrian refugees. Inspiring from the typology of Spiering on Euroscepticism,[96] the party discourses on naturalization of Syrian refugees are classified as patriotic exclusion or pragmatic exclusion. In this regard, while patriotic exclusion implies a sort of exclusion which occurs as a result of perceived threat to national belonging and security or a general dislike of other groups than its own group, pragmatic exclusion is more about structural concerns such as socio-political outcomes of naturalization plan or its humanitarian aspects.

3.1.1 Republican People's Party

The Republican People's Party (CHP) which has a unique place in Turkish political history as the party of the founders of the Turkish Republic, stands on the center-left of the political spectrum. The party is known with its six Kemalist principles which are revolutionism, secularism, statism, republicanism, nationalism and populism. Within the scope of these principles, CHP follows the understanding of Ataturk nationalism which is characterized as a combination of both French and German style nationalism based on the citizenship and territoriality as well as ethnicist variations.[97] Considering the ideological stance of the party, CHP locates itself in opposition to centre-right AKP which is conservative and religious. In this context, CHP was against the exceptional citizenship proposal by emphasizing that the naturalization of the refugees was a part

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[96] Menno Spiering, "Euro-sceptic Concerns about National Identity," in Turkey and the European Union, eds. Esra LaGro and Knud Erik Jorgensen, (New York: Palgrave, 2007): 175.

[97] Tanil Bora, "Nationalist Discourses in Turkey," *the South Atlantic Quarterly*, V. 102, N. 2/3 (2003): 437.

of the hidden domestic agenda of AKP. According to the main opposition party, the plan was outlined to serve governing party's electoral interest.

As it is indicated in the statements below, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, the leader of CHP, by using the singular personal pronoun "you," directly addresses to Erdogan and suggests to call for a referendum on citizenship. From the perspective of both domestic politics and party politics, calling for a referendum with an emphasis on "national will" can be interpreted as a populist attempt to influence the Turkish citizens who are referred with the word "the people." His exclusionary approach is very subtle here as is demonstrated by his concluding words implicitly defining the citizenship proposal as a "betrayal."

> "What is the reason you are giving Syrians citizenship? If **you** insist on it, you always talk about the "**national will**," so let's ask the people. If it is doing this in order to gain **votes** to introduce the presidential system, it is a **betrayal**."[98] (Kemal Kilicdaroglu, the leader of CHP)

Kilicdaroglu's following statement indicates a similar approach more explicitly. He, now, uses the plural personal pronoun "they" to refer both the President and AKP. He sets multiple boundaries between CHP and AKP; between Syrian refugees and Turkish citizens through "we" and "they" distinctions. Particularly, his question "who brought them from Syria?" is clearly an othering. Moreover he refers "four million Syrians" which is fallacy since it is a hyperbole of number considering the fact that the population of Syrian refugees in Turkey has not reached to four million yet.

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[98] "Turkish Opposition Party Leader Calls for Vote on Citizenship for Syrian Refugees," *Middle East Eye*, July 14, 2016, http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/turkish-opposition-party-leader-calls-syrian-citizenship-referendum-364477594.

"Who brought **them** from Syria? Now they are saying 'We will grant **four million** Syrians citizenship after 'yes' **votes** emerge.' We should all sit and think"[99] (Kemal Kilicdaroglu, the leader of CHP)

All the statements which belong to the leader and other deputies of the party emphasize the electoral concerns to justify their critiques and objections to granting citizenship to the Syrians. The words "vote" and "election" are constantly used in the speeches of the party members but the ways how the members use the language and the points of approaches differ. For instance, while Yilmaz Ozturk, the deputy leader, constructs an exclusionary understanding by showing the naturalization proposal as a risk for the "national security," Ozgur Ozel, the parliamanetary group chair of the party, prefers a more neutral approach. Furthermore, unlike Ozturk's populist, nationalist perception, Ozel stresses the humanitarian dimension of the issue by objecting the instrumentalization of the refugee crisis. Veli Agbaba's statement which blamed the government for implementing an assimilation policy can also be interpreted in the same way as Ozel's statement.

"**National security** of Turkey cannot be put a **risk** with such **electoral concerns**." [100] (Yilmaz Ozturk, Deputy leader of CHP)

"President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the AKP did not see the refugee crisis as a **humanitarian** problem but rather as a political tool and a political step toward the upcoming elections." [101] (Ozgur Ozel, CHP deputy parliamentary group chair)

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[99] "4 million Syrians to be Granted Turkish Citizenship if 'Yes' Votes Emerge in Charter Referendum: CHP," *Hurriyet Daily News*, March 25, 2017, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/4-million-syrians-to-be-granted-turkish-citizenship-if-yes-votes-emerge-in-charter-referendum-chp-111243.

[100] Yurdagul Simsek, "CHP: Suriyelileri oymatik sandikmatik'e dönüştürmek siyasi ahlakla bağdaşmaz," *Sputniknews*, February 23, 2017, https://tr.sputniknews.com/columnists/201702231027358238-suriyelilere-vatandaslik-verilmesine-itiraz/.

[101] "Opposition reacts to plans of granting citizenship to Syrians," *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 4, 2016, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/opposition-reacts-to-plans-of-granting-citizenship-to-syrians--101215.

"The AKP is clearly showing that it is thinking of its political prosperity rather than the lives of these oppressed people by looking from the viewpoint of religion and sect, its election calculations and its assimilation plans." [102] (Veli Agbaba, CHP Deputy Chair)

Kamil Okyay Sindir's critique to the referred criteria for citizenship by the government is another important point since it shows the citizenship perception of CHP which is based on egalitarian understanding.

"The government used the argument the refugees who will be given citizenship constituted a qualified work force. That means you are discriminating" [103] (Kamil Okyay Sındır, Secretary General of CHP)

There are diverse approaches in CHP and while the party leader and some deputies use more exclusionary discourses, some others approach to proposal in a more moderate way even though they also object to naturalization policy. Consequently, it is not possible to explain the behavior of the party with only patriotic exclusion or pragmatic exclusion but the discourses here indicate both types of exclusion since there are references to both national security and structural concerns. It might also be claimed that the ambiguity of Ataturk nationalism which CHP adopts, reflects the party's citizenship perception by embodying the characteristics of both civic and ethnic understandings.

3.1.2 People's Democratic Party

The People's Democratic Party (HDP) which was founded in 2012 as the last in a long series of leftist, pro-Kurdish political parties, passed the 10% national threshold in 2015 by running a successful election campaign. HDP which claimed to be a party of Turkey with an anti-AKP

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[102] "Up to 300,000 Syrians could get Turkish citizenship: Report," *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 10, 2016, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/up-to-300000-syrians-could-get-turkish-citizenship-report--101412.

[103] "CHP, MHP oppose Turkish citizenship for Syrians," *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 7, 2016, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/chp-mhp-oppose-turkish-citizenship-for-syrians-101341.

stance, became the second opposition party in the Parliament and a leading actor of current politics. This was a strategic shift in Turkish political system in terms of representation of Kurdish minority in the Parliament. In this framework, HDP's approach to exceptional citizenship was primarily shaped concerning existing changes in the Southeastern region of the country.

Selahattin Demirtas, the former leader of HDP, in the following statement, points out the changes on demographic structure which is explained with details in the second chapter. He means the Kurdish population by referring the 'indigenous people" who are displaced due to the urban war in 2015. He links the displacement with naturalization of the Syrians and shows exceptional citizenship proposal as the part of a project to modify the demographic structure of predominantly Kurdish areas. With a similar approach, Muslim Dogan, a HDP deputy refers to Alevis as a constituent population of the region. These are the indicators of perceived threat to ethnic and sectarian balance of the Southeastern region.

> "By granting Turkish citizenship to Arab refugees, and as the **indigenous people** are leaving due to the security operations, the **demographic** structure of the Kurdish areas will gradually change." [104] (Selahattin Demirtas, the former leader of HDP)

> "It is very **dangerous** to instrumentalize asylum seekers for such a **project**. Alevis and Kurds never accept it. We know the real aim of AKP. They try to create a new group of **electorates**" (Muslim Dogan, HDP Deputy)

Dogan's statement above also puts emphasis on political concerns in association with elections and instrumentalization of the refugees. Demirtas stresses a similar point by directly referring to Erdogan as Kilicdaroglu, the leader of CHP, and calls for a referendum with a populist discourse by claiming that such plan would result with triggered racism in the context of Turkey.

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[104] Hisham Arafat, "Turkey's citizenship for Syrian refugees threatens ethnic balance," *Kurdistan24*, July 14, 2016, http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/c9db0bc4-a326-4e36-b1fb-504b745a5b5f/Turkey-s-citizenship-for-Syrian-refugees-threatens-ethnic-balance.

In the second statement, Demirtas implicitly refers the level and significance of the popular backlash by underlining that "people" –namely, Turkish citizens– are not convinced and indicates the possible outcomes of the proposed naturalization plan which has not been well-presented by the government. It is important to underline one interesting point in regard to the second statement that he objects the naturalization plan concerning the backlash of the "people" but at the same time he uses inclusive language and defines the Syrians as brother with the possessive pronoun "our."

> "They are using Syrians as a tool of domestic politics. First of all, the president has no such jurisdiction to decide on this by himself. But if **he** trusts himself so much, then OK let's take it to **referendum**" [105] (Selahattin Demirtas, the former leader of HDP)

> "Without convincing the people and by only fueling the racist, chauvinistic wave against **our** Syrian brothers by fueling nationalism, you cannot solve this issue" (Selahattin Demirtas, the former leader of HDP)

Demirtas also criticizes the understanding of selectivity for granting citizenship and argues that the refugee status should first be given to the refugees. There are two significant points here: First, he shows citizenship perception of the party in reference to egalitarianism as it is also observed in CHP discourses and in a sarcastic way, he criticizes the governing style of Erdogan; second, he underlines the priority of granting refugee status for the Syrians living under the temporary protection plan. Demirtas is the only leader who explicitly indicates this legal issue which shapes the Turkish asylum system.

> "**He** is saying 'there are lawyers and doctors among them.' So he is personally going to select which migrants to take too." [106] (Selahattin Demirtas, the former leader of HDP)

[105] "HDP co-chair calls for referendum on Turkish citizenship to Syrians," *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 12, 2016, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/hdp-co-chair-calls-for-referendum-on-turkish-citizenship-to-syrians--101521,

[106] "Opposition reacts to plans of granting citizenship to Syrians."

"First of all we should give Syrians the right to be [recognized as] refugees. This right means winning the right to education, healthcare and employment" [107] (Selahattin Demirtas, the HDP)

The approach of HDP to the naturalization of the Syrians can be defined with the pragmatist exclusion since there is an emphasis more on humanitarian aspect of the issue. Even though there are nationalist concerns on perceived threat to ethnic and sectarian demographic structure of the Southeastern region and the party is intended to preserve the status quo in the region, the source of the demographic concern demonstrate more the mistrust to the government than the exclusion of the refugees. Moreover, the way how they use the language whilst referring the Syrians is moderated and even inclusive. Therefore, HDP's concerns is more about structural issues.

3.1.3 Nationalist Movement Party

Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) which was formed in 1969, is the radical right party of Turkey which adopts nationalistic discourses based on cultural and historical essentialism in reference to Turkism and pan-Turanism.[108] MHP which is also defined as Eurosceptic, anti-Kurdish and anti-left party, was in opposition to the AKP government until 2017 and when the exceptional citizenship proposal was declared, MHP stood against the plan due to both the political and national concerns.

As other two opposition leaders, Devlet Bahceli, the leader of MHP directly addresses to Erdogan to criticize the proposal. In the statement above, Bahceli implies the value of Turkish

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[107] "Syrians should be recognized as refugees: HDP co-chair Demirtaş," *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 14, 2016, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/syrians-should-be-recognized-as-refugees-hdp-co-chair-demirtas-101592.
[108] Tanil Bora, 445.

citizenship by stating that "Turkish citizenship is not a title." According to this approach, citizenship means more than a status.

> "The issues regarding citizenship are not in the authority of the Presidency. Turkish citizenship is not a **title** that is left to the will of the Presidency." (Devlet Bahceli, the leader of MHP)

Emphasizing the "the generosity of the Turkish nation," Bahceli makes a positive self-representation to show the superiority of Turkish nation which provides humanitarian help to the "ones who need it." In this statement, the humanitarian help is depicted like a favor and he avoids using the word "refugees" or "the Syrians." Moreover, Bahceli's concluding words which are related to political concerns in association with elections, indicate citizenship proposal as the irresponsibility of the government in a subtle reference to national security just as it is used by a CHP deputy.

Semih Yalcin, MHP Deputy Chair, points out the change in demographic structure of Southeastern Anatolia. In the first sight, it seems interesting since it is also used in the same way by HDP but it should be clarified that demographic change is the common concern of all opposition parties in association with different groups. Additionally, it is an issue which has started even earlier than citizenship proposal but the naturalization plan, at this point, has triggered the discussion more.

> "We can share our bread, show **the generosity of the Turkish nation** and provide humanitarian help to the **ones who need it**; we don't object to any of these. Bringing citizenship to the agenda with the **calculation of votes** is irresponsible.[109] (Devlet Bahceli, the leader of MHP)

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[109] "MHP Leader Criticizes Erdoğan's Offer of Citizenship to Syrians," *Hurriyet Daily News*, July 12, 2016, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/mhp-leader-criticizes-erdogans-offer-of-citizenship-to-syrians--101500.

"First of all, [it] would change the **demographic structure** in southeastern Anatolia. In a political meaning, 3 million people equals a 10 percent vote." [110] (Semih Yalcin, MHP Deputy Chair)

The discourse of "partition or fraternal fight," as in the statement of Devlet Bahceli below, is one of the best example for the use of traditional strategy of Turkish nationalists to create terror and fear in society by presenting a certain group as outsider and a threat of national unity. Moreover, this statement including the argumentations of both *disaster topos* and *topos of threat,* aims at mobilizing the nationalist forces of the country. Citizenship proposal is perceived as a threat to the national unity and the peace in the country as well as the possible reason of a fraternal fight. Using the threat of partition is a very strong discursive construction of exclusion in Turkey where the same rhetoric has been used by Turkish nationalists for years by targeting to the minorities, particularly the Kurds.[111]

"I'm calling on everyone regardless of their different political beliefs and parties to show their democratic objection regarding Turkish citizenship. **Turkish nationalists** won't stay silent to Turkey being **partitioned** and being dragged towards a **fraternal fight**. We will object to it until the end." (Devlet Bahceli, the leader of MHP)

A similar ethnocentric approach is also observed in Mehmet Gunal's statement, by referring the Meskhetian Turks, hints the general citizenship perception of MHP which is based on ethnicity. Additionally, unlike other two opposition parties, MHP does not criticize the government's approach on selectivity; furthermore the party suggests a selectivity based on ethnicity by explicitly excluding the Syrians.

"Why the priority will be given to Syrians whilst hundreds of people including **Meskhetian Turks** have been waiting for Turkish citizenship." [112] (Mehmet Gunal, Deputy leader of MHP)

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[110] "Opposition reacts to plans of granting citizenship to Syrians."

[111] Gamze Avci, "The Nationalist Movement Party's Euroscepticism: Party Ideology Meets Strategy," *South European Society and Politics*, V. 16, N. 3 (2011): 442.

[112] "Suriyelilere Vatandaslik Tartismasi," *DW*, July 5, 2016, http://www.dw.com/tr/suriyelilere-vatanda%C5%9Fl%C4%B1k-tart%C4%B1%C5%9Fmas%C4%B1/a-19377980.

Contrary to other opposition parties, MHP uses a very nationalist tone with an emphasis on nation, national superiority and national unity. While the words "Turkish" and "Turk are used almost in all discourses, there is only one reference to "Syrians." It can be interpreted as an apparent ignorance strategy. The perceived threat to national security is much higher than the other parties. Based on these findings, MHP's approach can easily be defined as patriotic exclusion.

Party discourses indicate that there is a strong parallelism between the parties' approaches which are shaped based on their ideological stances and the host population concerns. Party discourses reveal that all opposition parties refer similar concerns to justify their objection to the proposal by using language of exclusion in different ways. Citizenship perceptions of parties in association with their political stances also differ. In this regard, while MHP defines citizenship by coupling it with national identity and underlining the significance of descent, HDP which prefers to use "people" for the nation, adopts a civic understanding of citizenship by not having reference to nation or Turkishness. CHP's citizenship perception, on the other hand, can be interpreted as national membership which originates from Ataturk nationalism which is previously mentioned in this chapter. In this regard, citizenship for CHP can be defined as both a membership and a belonging based on territoriality and descent.

In the following parts, I deepen my analysis with micro-level approaches and investigate the exclusionary discourses of the Turkish social media users and 10 shopkeepers in Antalya on the exceptional citizenship proposal to understand the citizenship perceptions.

3.2 Antagonistic Anti-refugee Stance Retweeted: #Idontwantsyriansinmycountry

Upon Erdogan's public statement on exceptional citizenship, a Turkish-language hashtag, #ÜlkemdeSuriyeliİstemiyorum, translated as "I don't want Syrians in my country" started to trend on Twitter by drawing angry, nationalist, anti-refugee reactions from considerably high numbers of Turkish social media users including public and political figures.[113] It was immediately followed by other similar hashtags such as #suriyelilerehayir (#NoSyrians) and #suriyelilerinTCvatandaşlığınaHAYIR (#NoTurkishCitizenshipforSyrians). The tweets with these specific hashtags which explicitly targeted to Syrian refugees did not just demonstrate the antagonistic anti-refugee sentiment and made existing bias against Syrians visible but it also revealed the individual's perceptions of citizenship through their reactions against naturalization of refugees. Therefore, in this part of the third chapter, I investigate the discursive construction of exclusion through citizenship by investigating the citizenship perception of Turkish social media users through the tweets posted against proposed naturalization plan but prior to the analysis of tweets, it is important, here, to highlight the significance and power of social media in Turkey as a new but arguable public sphere to show why this online backlash in Turkey is worth to examine.

Social media networks have deep negative and positive impacts on people's life, social changes and politics. Turkey is, indeed, one the most striking case to analyze these complex and diverse impacts of social media on society and politics. Internet use is gradually increasing in the country and according to Turkish Statistical Institute, the number of Turkish internet subscribers in 2017 was approximately 68 million.[114] The Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

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[113] Umut Uras, "Erdogan Plan to Make Syrians Citizens Sparks Online War." See also: Sharma, "'Vermin, dirty, freeloaders'… Turks Turn on Syrians Offered Citizenship."

[114] "Number of Fixed Telephone, Mobile Telephone and Internet Subscribers," Turkish Statistical Institute, 2017, accessed April 21, 2018, www.tuik.gov.tr/PreIstatistikTablo.do?istab_id=1580.

Usage Survey on Households and Individuals of 2017 also indicates that 80.7% respondents were using Facebook and 18% were using Twitter, and the total number of social media users in 2017 was projected to be 34 million by Statista.[115] Social media, thus plays a very crucial role by touching lives of majority and its power and impact on society is vital.

In the absence of proper and reliable news sources after the failure of Turkish mainstream media which lost impartiality and imposed news blackouts, particularly, as of the start of Gezi Park protests in 2013, social media appeared as an alternative communication channel and main source of information. The popularity of social media was in a level which forced government to take measures against. For instance, Twitter, during the Gezi protests, was called as 'the worst menace to society'[116] and many social media platforms were banned for quite a long time. The Gezi resistance was actually a turning point for the use of social media indicating the beginning of a new period which would be dominated by the authoritarian policies of the oppressive government such as media blackouts, arbitrary detentions, bans, restrictions on freedoms. Turkey first rocked by the Corruption Scandal of 17-25 December at the end of 2013. Then, presidential campaign and AKP-Hizmet Movement conflict as a question of parallel state dominated the agenda during 2014. Last but not least, while 2015 was the year of elections under series of campaigns, 2016 would be the longest year of Turkey due to 27 deadly terrorist attacks,[117] a coup attempt, increase media crackdown, deep polarization and imposition of martial law. As an outcome of these new

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[115] "Distribution of Social Media Used in Turkey 2016-2017: Which Social Media Do You Use?," Statista, 2017, accessed April 21, 2018, https://www.statista.com/statistics/570098/distribution-of-social-media-used-turkey/.

[116] James Creedon, "Erdogan: 'social media is the worst menace to society,'" *France24*, June 4, 2013, http://www.france24.com/en/20130603-turkey-twitter-social-media-menace-erdogan-sarkozy-london-goldman-sachs-parallel-diplomacy.

[117] "2016'daki Bombalı Saldırılar," *Aljazeera*, December 17, 2016, http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/haber/2016daki-bombali-saldirilar.

circumstances of Turkish politics under the de-democratization process, social media has opened a door to freedom of expression for people by creating a new public sphere and gained more and more power to shape both social and political processes.

However this was just one side of the coin. Online activism which is also called 'keyboard activism' gradually became popular and this new type of activism which provided sort of fictional freedom of expression, squeezed an entire society in the online world by making people refrain from going out to streets.[118] While this process was to the authoritarian government's benefit to control people, online social networks and power relations developed by gaining a more complex character. Social media in Turkey turned into a platform of aspersion, bullying and stigmatizing which even caused suicides and unlawful trials,[119] and social trust simultaneously with the deep political polarization was lost. Under these circumstances, the refugee crisis and the presence of Syrian refugees in Turkey did not just appeared as a new trending topic of social media but also as production and reproduction of discursive construction of exclusion.

3.2.1 Data Collection

As Turkish Twitter users are very active on Twitter and tweet about almost all political and social events by using multiple hashtags and keywords, there was a very large number of tweets available. For the purpose of this study, a set of Twitter data based on the hashtags

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[118] Ozgun Ersin, "*The Influence of Social Media on Turkish Public Opinion in Relation to Foreign Affairs: A Case Study of the Russian Plane Crisis*" (MSc. Thesıs, Middle East Technical University, 2017): 20.
[119] "Sosyal medya linci intihara sürükledi!," *Vatan*, October 13, 2017, http://www.gazetevatan.com/sosyal-medya-linci-intihara-surukledi--1109988-yasam/. See also: "Sosyal Medya Paylaşımlarından Altı Ayda 1656 Kişi Tutuklandı," *Bianet,* December 24, 2016, http://m.bianet.org/bianet/hukuk/182039-sosyal-medya-paylasimlarindan-alti-ayda-1656-kisi-tutuklandi; "Half of Turkish youth talk to strangers online, a quarter face cyberbullying, research shows," *Daily Sabah*, January 2, 2018, https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2018/01/02/half-of-turkish-youth-talk-to-strangers-online-a-quarter-face-cyberbullying-research-shows.

#ÜlkemdeSuriyeliİstemiyorum (#IdontwantSyriansinmycountry) and #suriyelilerehayir (#NoSyrians), was used as the primary source and limited with a time span. Majority of tweets were saved on a 48 hour basis with an extension to July 15, 2016 because of fewer numbers but it is also important here to underline that same hashtags are still active and used by Turkish Twitter users time to time. I preferred to collect all tweets between the announcement of proposal on July 3, 2016 and the failed coup attempt on July 15, 2016 which dramatically changed the agenda. The data collection resulted in total 400 tweets excluding the retweets and Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach was applied to have a broader analysis by integrating knowledge about historical, intertextual sources as well as the social and political background.[120] Tweets were coded based on perception of threat and national membership in association with the concerns of the host population which were described in the previous chapter and analyzed within these categories. It is also important to note that these two categories mostly overlap to each other.

3.2.2 Findings

The perception of threat, our first category of analysis, plays crucial role on construction and reproduction of exclusionary discourses in terms of citizenship. The level of threat determines the attitudes of the host population towards refugees which are identified as the concrete outgroup by in-group. In this regard, the higher threat, no matter if it is realistic or symbolic, increases more the possibility of objection to granting citizenship rights to refugees. [121] The perceived threat from

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[120] Ruth Wodak, "Politics as Usual: Investigating Political Discourse in Action," in the *Routledge Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, eds. M. Handfors and J. P. Gee (New York: Routledge, 2012), 529.

[121] Rebeca Raijman, Eldad Davidov, Peter Schmidt and Oshrat Hochman, "What does a Nation Owe Non-citizens? National Attachments, Perception of Threat and Attitudes towards Granting Citizenship Rights in a Comparative Perspective," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, V. 49, N. 2-3 (2008): 200.

Syrian refugees crystallized on the questions of refugees' entitlement socio-economic and political rights. Within this framework, considerably high number of Turkish social media users, deny naturalization of the Syrians due to their perception of competition in socio-economic level.[122] Economic arguments which shortages of resources and the needs of host population are proclaimed as the justification of the rejection of the exceptional citizenship plan. This is illustrated in seven unique similar examples below:

(1) "#ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum take 3 million Syrians who are neither fish nor fowl, to the country; give better rights than I have; give salary from my pocket; and also grant citizenship! When we react to it, define our reaction as racist. Yes, under these conditions, then, we are racists!" (@sametgsoy, July3, 2016)

(2) "The government should first feed their own citizens, provide job and support to them and then think about Syrians #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum" (@buyukderin, July 3, 2016)

(3) "#UlkemdeSuriyeliistemiyorum we did not even recognize such privileges in capitulations. Damn! Who votes for this system?" (@srknkrg, July 3, 2016)

(4) "Many Syrians give birth everyday and they are in a better situation than us with our money. Every kinds of health services are free for them #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum" (@duyguozkan400, July 4, 2016)

(5) "#ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum It is enough that they are fed by our children's future. Go and consume sources of Europe!" (@ADNANDESTEBAS, July 5, 2016)

(6) "Syrians take scholarship. Russians have vacation by just paying 1400 TRY. Buddy, it is like we are refugees not them, #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum " (@B_gozyilmaz, July 3, 2016)

(7) You give 400 TL to your own student but 1200 TL to the betrayers who flee the war by leaving their nation behind #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum. (@bugranicin, July 2, 2016)

All of the tweets above see the presence of refugees as an economic burden for the country. As it is displayed, Turkish social media users reject to share the sources of the country with refugees who are clearly coded as outsiders. Moreover, they carried the fear of losing their current status and conditions in the future. The 3rd example particularly indicates the threat referring the past. The word "capitulations" is used on purpose to indicate the threat. For many Turkish people,

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[122] Rebeca Raijman, Eldad Davidov, Peter Schmidt and Oshrat Hochman, 198.

capitulation as word recalls the narrative about the late Ottoman period in school textbook which capitulation was coded as one of the reason for the collapse of the Empire and something that new Turkey should always avoid. Another important point which should be underlined is the shift of blame and responsibility. As it is observed in the language of all the tweets above, the actual addressee of the anger of the users is not the refugees but the government and its policies.

Within the frame of security concerns, the users stress the perception of motherland which has to be protected against the refugees who are dangerous outsiders. In other words, the refugees are seen as a threat to national security. The created threat scenarios construct social actors as 'we' and 'them' through the notion of motherland by setting strong boundaries.

(8) "We don't want any more suicide bombers and terrorists in our country! Erdogan gives them identity for their VOTES. #ÜlkemdeSuriyeli?stemiyorum (@yeliizerdem, July 3, 2016)
(9) #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum They betrayed their motherland. How do we know that they will not betray to us. (@Metin_Ismail, July 5, 2016)
(10) #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum If Turkey was in a war, they would attack to us inside. They did not defend their country though but they hit below the belt. (@enderozdem, July 5, 2016)
(11) "Syrians' betrayal has already started now #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum" (@mutlutt, July 7, 2016)
(12) "I do not want those who betrayed their country #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum" (@ozportakal, July 3, 2016)
(13) "Traitor dogs #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum" (@onuralimucahid1, July 5, 2016)

The 8th tweet defines all Syrian refugees as suicide bombers and terrorists. Use of such a discourse implies the existence of a very strong threat perception and it is obviously written under the effect of fearful atmosphere of 2016 which many terrorist attacks and bombing incidents happened. This discourse however means a fallacy since it is not a realistic threat. At the same time, in the same tweet, the word of 'votes' is written with capital letters which means that the user is an opponent of the government who adopts the discourses of the political opposition.

In the 9th tweet, the user's question "How do we know that they will not betray to us?" points to the rights and duties which come with the citizenship. According to the tweet, if the refugees become citizens, they have duty to defend Turkey but obviously there is a mistrust to the refugees. The word of "betrayal" is here the other indicator of threat which is based on very strong distrust and indeed the roots of this attitude is hidden in the formation of Turkish national history. According to national historical approach, Arabs were stigmatized as "traitors" who stabbed the Turks in the back in WWI.[123] In other words, it is observed here that the perception of group threat has historical roots which is hidden in the process of the construction of Turkish national identity. The 13th tweet also dehumanizes the refugees whilst stressing the security concern. These threatening scenarios can also be analyzed with the *disaster topos* which implies a defense strategy through the rejection of an action –namely, granting citizenship to the refugees– whose consequences are depicted negative for the future of the country and the nation.[124] The two tweets below are, for instance, very good examples of *disaster topos* and they also reflect well the negative perception of these social media users towards naturalization of Syrian refugees.

(14) #suriyelilerevatandaşlıgahayır The future of the country has never been under such a big danger. So big mistake, so big danger!!! (@burcucalhan. July 5, 2016)
(15) No Turkish citizenship for Syrians. We took the territory of Anatolia with wars and now we should not lose like this #suriyelilerevatandaşlıgahayır (@kuflu_kasar, July 5, 2016)

In addition to the perceived socio-economic and security threat, political concerns are the other constitutive reason of exclusive discourses and rejection of the naturalization policy. Under

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[123] Talip Kucukcan, "Arab Image in Turkey Report N.1," Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research, 2010, 8, accessed April 25, 2018, http://tesev.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Turkey_Arab_Perspectives.pdf.

[124] Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cillia, Martin Reisigl and Karin Liebhart, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity* (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 2009), 40.

the influence of the political party discourses which we analyze in the first part of this chapter, the majority of social media users who underline the political aspect of the naturalization plan by pointing out a secret plan of the government, refer the words "election", "vote" and "referendum." These are particularly the words observed in the discourses of CHP and HDP. Additionally, based on the language which is used in all tweets below, it is possible to claim that there is an anti-AKP tone. Furthermore, since the last three tweets below, explicitly address Recep Tayyip Erdogan, himself, it can be said that there is a stance against the President Erdogan. However these words are not just the indicators of political affiliation but also the citizenship perception as an exclusionary power. Particularly, the emphasis on voting, indicates that citizenship is seen as the right to vote and political participation and through that the right to decide the future of a nation. At this point, the decision of the exceptional citizenship is perceived as a violation of national sovereignty. In this regard, asking for referendum means that only if they are approved by the in-group, they can be included.

(16) #suriyelilerehayır We don't want at all. I believe, AKP sees the Syrians as potential voters (@Hilalzcan20, July 13, 2016)

(17) When we say #Ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum we are not racist. We are not fascist. We help whoever needs help but I don't want Syrian in my country because the aim of the naturalization plan is very different. We are against this plan. There is something wrong. Be aware of that. (@DKBork, July 3, 2016)

(18) Of course, free votes to AKP, they are clever #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum (@EsraJong, July 6, 2016)

(19) Granting citizenship to the Syrians is not anything else than an investment for the election #DeporttheSyrians #suriyelilerevatandasligahayir (@m_dag0990, July 3, 2016)

(20) #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum for citizenship, we ask for referendum. Happy Eid my president **@RT_Erdogan** (@CherKezEthem, July 4, 2016)

(21) Since **you** decide to grant citizenship to them, if you have balls, bring it to the referendum. You know very well to refer referendum for everything (@otukenn__, July 4, 2016)

(22) #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum Do you think **he** proposes to grant citizenship because **he** loves the Syrians? The only concern of him is taking the votes from them in case there is a presidential election. (@vaskin77, July 3, 2016)

The national membership as the second category of the analysis present a deeper understanding on citizenship perception in Turkey through the analysis of the exclusionary discourses of the Turkish social media users. As the statement on exceptional citizenship is the reason of emergence of this backlash in online space, majority of tweets have direct or indirect references to citizenship and it is mainly defined as national membership. In most of the tweets below, Turkish social media users define their national belonging through motherland which indicate an understanding of territoriality. Turkish citizenship is legally based on both *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis* having an inclusive civic character, citizenship is widely defined in an essentialist sense by Turkish social media users through Turkishness or being Turk. Citizenship as a membership defines boundaries as in the tweets below:

(23) "Room, food and, if it is needed, even money can be given to a guest but not the deed of the house #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum" (@busealdemir4)

(24) This is the motherland of people who fight for their country not of people who escape from war #Ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum (@DKBork)

(25) "I am sorry but I don't want unregulated Syrians immigrants in my country as well. Turkey is not a refugee camp #ÜlkemdeSuriyeliİstemiyorum" (@_macaryos, July 3, 2016)

(26) "Do I have to share my motherland with them? Of course no! I cannot even stand that they are in my country #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum" (@kabaca1982)

(27) "#ÜlkemdeSuriyeliİstemiyorum! I hate Syrian refugee in my country!" (@dgnburak_)

The 23rd tweet is one of the most popular tweets which was retweeted many times by different users and it defines the boundaries using the metaphors of 'house' and 'deed' which respectively imply the motherland and national sovereignty. Moreover the refugees are defined as guests in literal meaning in reference to political definition of Syrian refugees in Turkey. While the last two tweets above is an explicit indicator of a general intolerance, the 25th tweet specifies it as an intolerance against unregulated Syrian immigrants. Although it is significant that the word 'immigrant' and 'refugee' are for the first time used in a tweet, the fallacy in the perception of this

tweet should be underlined since it refers a generalization by showing all refugees as unregulated immigrants.

The definition of the motherland in the 24rd tweet as 'the motherland of people who fight for their country' implies both a moral superiority and sort of qualification required to be an insider which according to that social media user Syrian refugees do not have. In other word, it is devaluation of Syrian refugees and an emphasis on dissimilation which justify the stance against granting citizenship to the refugees. In the tweets below, the social media user devaluates and downplay not just the refugees but entire Syrian nation to demonstrate the superiority of Turkish nation which is a fallacy of comparison and pride of being Turkish nationals.

(28) In consequence, while they have a nation which cannot defend its own territory and even houses, we have a nation which run to a war with its life and blood. (@Ecemaakyol, July 13, 2016)
(29) Citizenship of a nation which wrote its history with blood, cannot be given to a nation which escaped from the war. (@Golliath_Murat, July 6, 2016)

National membership is also defined in moral terms which has to do with being part of a community. At this point, moral values as well as social and cultural habits play role on exclusion and inclusion. In our case, as it is observed from the tweets below, the refugees are referred as an undesirable "thing" and particularly the 32nd tweet by using the word 'pollute' implicitly define refugees as "filth."

(30) "#ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum we cannot know who is who in my neighborhood. They are very noisy and disrespectful. I don't want to live with these people." (@huseyinkartals)
(31) When I went to Hatay, I asked myself if this is my hometown ☹ My childhood was destroyed #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum (@hayatyumagi)
(32) We come to see beautiful view, we see Syrians who pollute my country's sea #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum (@gzkorkmaz)

Dehumanization of refugees here is the other point which should definitely be underlined regarding to membership definition which enable the exclusion. Syrian refugees as it is observed in the tweets below, are devaluated through dehumanization and rejected, excluded or forced to change. According to tweets, the Syrian refugees are disrespectful, filth and uncivilized and a bad example, Turkish people are not like them and they are good examples. Most of dehumanizing tweets are indeed very insulting.

(33) #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum if there is someone who like Syrians so much, can take them to their house and look after. If it is possible, **don't let them be in the streets**. There is no such a disrespectful and easygoing **model**. (@huseyinkartals)

(34) #ulkemdesuriyeliistemiyorum We **fed** them, we **raised** them. They stir up trouble on purpose and we will also grant citizenship to them. You gotta be kidding me! (@onerose_su)

(35) "#Flagisbloodandmotherlandislife that's why #suriyelilerehayir. Moreover **unattended** Syrians should be either sent to a concentration camp or expelled." (@hktzn)

(36) "Those who came to the country are reluctant to return. Then #**neuter** them no matter if they are woman or man. **Even animals** do not reproduce so much #suriyelilerehayir" (@kayradeniz33)

Based on the analysis, it is found that there is a high threat perception among Turkish social media users and it plays a constitutive role on the attitudes of the host population towards Syrian refugees. The analyzed tweets confirm that rhetoric of 'welcoming guests' which used by the authorities since 2011 was recognized by the public and that is why the reason except one tweet, all the other examples do not define Syrian refugees as 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker' but define as either 'guests' or 'Syrians'. Almost all users distinguish between 'us' and 'them' and use the categories as a homogenous whole.

In terms of citizenship, while high socio-economic, political and security concerns demonstrate an understanding of citizenship as rights and duties, the tweets which have more nationalist and essentialist senses with a direct reference to citizenship indicate more the status and

identity dimensions of the concept. Citizenship is explicitly or implicitly defined by all the users as national membership which implies both belonging to Turkish state and to shared beliefs and culture. Put it another way, the perception of citizenship as national membership shows both civic and ethnic characteristics. It is also important to note once again that these categories often overlap each other and as a result it is not very possible to mention one certain understanding of citizenship but multiple and fluid citizenship perceptions. Last but not least, even though there is a strong tendency to see social media as the most powerful communication tool which contribute to democracy by playing a key role in initiating, promoting and spreading political participation and deliberation, it also creates various platforms for production and proliferation of prejudices, stereotypes, racism and discrimination through hateful and antagonistic posts. Moreover, due to the fictional freedom which cyberspace provides to the people, it is not always certain whether these are the reflections of actual attitudes or reactions. Therefore, in order to increase the validity and credibility of this research, in the following part, I analyze the findings of the interviews which were conducted in the field with face to face interaction.

3.3 Views of Turkish Citizens on Turkish Citizenship

This part of the thesis is based on the analysis of 10 semi-structured interviews about the concept of citizenship and the exceptional citizenship proposal. The interviews were conducted in Antalya in which people are expected to be more open to welcome foreigners since it is the center of tourism in Turkey. I interviewed the shopkeepers from distinct professions who have shops in the most touristic locations of the city which the shopkeepers have direct interaction with both locals and foreigners including tourists and migrants. I first contacted with two voluntary respondents who I reached through my personal network in Antalya and then I recruited other eight respondents by using the snowball sampling. I scheduled the interviews with them only if

they were really interested. My aim was to interview five male and five female interviewees but due to the fact of the sector which is male-dominated, I could only recruit two female interviewees (See Table 4). The questions were formulated based on the initial findings of the social media content analysis. All interviews were conducted face to face and took place in the respondent's shops in which they felt more comfortable. During interview, I rarely oriented the respondents. I also avoided to ask the participants' party choices or ethnic origins since these topics are quite sensitive in Turkey but half of the participants referred their political identity or ethnic origin during the interviews. While nine respondents out of ten confirmed, in writing their consent to use of the audio recording, one respondent confirmed his consent only for taking notes.

The purpose of the interviews was to investigate how citizenship is defined and perceived by Turkish citizens through the discussion of exceptional citizenship proposal for the naturalization of Syrian refugees. More precisely, I wanted to have detailed picture to understand how the exclusionary character of Turkish citizenship acts as the tool of national boundary maker in the presence of "real" outsiders –namely, Syrian refugees.

I began my research by examining the meaning of citizenship for the respondents. As the first question of the interview, I asked what citizenship means for them and how they can define the citizen. Through respondents' definitions, citizenship perceptions are categorized as blood-based membership and territorial membership which indicate, respectively, ethnic and civic understandings. These categories are used to indicate how different perceptions construct exclusionary discourses in reference to previous analyses.

Table 4. Shopkeepers by Age, Birthplace, Education and Gender

Age	Birthplace	Education	Female	Male	Shopkeeper
41	East	Primary Education		✓	Owner of a Tea House
40	West	Higher Education		✓	Owner of a Retail Store-1
82	West	Secondary Education		✓	Owner of a Retal Store-2
52	West	Secondary Education		✓	Owner of a Accessories Store
58	Central Anatolia	Primary Education		✓	Owner of a Market
40	West	Higher Education	✓		Pet Shop Owner
58	East	Secondary Education		✓	Owner of a Herbalist Shop
46	East	Primary Education		✓	Men Hairdresser
56	East	Higher Education	✓		Real Estator
35	Central Anatolia	Higher Education		✓	Owner of a Bakery

Within this context, all of the respondents provide similar definitions to the citizenship and the citizen by referring to belonging and birthplace. The definitions of the market owner and the hairdresser below, are shared by all other respondents with minor differences which do not change the meaning.

"Being a citizen of a country means to **born and raised** in that place and benefit from all **advantages and rights** of this country." (Owner of Market)

"Citizenship is a **belonging to a state**." (Hairdresser)

The main emphasis in all definitions is the birthplace for being a citizen of a country. There is not any reference made to ethnicity or nation. Likewise citizenship is also defined in a civic sense as belonging to a state which is predominantly used to imply a legal status. All respondents,

without exception, refer rights and duties either in the definition of citizen or the definition of citizenship. The character of responses, however, shifts when I ask what being Turkish citizen means for them. Majority of the respondents express their negative or positive feelings about being Turkish citizen instead of giving a definition. For instance, the owner of retail store-1 immediately and proudly responds my question:

"I was born Turk, I will die Turk!" (Owner of Retail Store-1)

Even though this response does not seem a proper response for the question, it indicates an ethnic understanding. Similar reaction is also observed in the response of the bakery owner who justifies his statement with a reference to the past which can be interpreted as a positive self-representation and an emphasis to national uniqueness. The pet shop owner's response below, however, indicates an ethnocentric approach since she defines Turkish citizenship based on a blood-based membership by underlining the necessity of being ethnic Turk to be proper Turkish citizen. By using "unfortunately" in the concluding words, she also hints her general objection to the civic perception of citizenship. Similar understanding is also observed in the response of the owner of retail store-1.

"Being Turkish citizen is a pride. We have a **heroic victorious past**." (Owner of Bakery)

"Being Turkish citizen means the belonging to the group of people in Turkey. I respect all **races** but if we call someone as Turkish citizen, then that person have to be a **Turk** but **unfortunately** it is not like this today." (Owner of the Pet Shop)

"Turkish citizens are Turks." (Owner of Retail Store-1)

Contrary to the responses above, hairdresser and the owner of tea house stress their displeasure of being Turkish citizen. It is important to note here that both shopkeepers mentioned about their ethnic and political identities during the interviews to criticize the state policies towards

minorities and other groups which are in opposition to the government. Within this context, particularly, the hairdresser's reference to "racism" indicates a strong feeling of being excluded.

> "I am not glad to be a Turkish citizen because freedoms and rights are restricted in Turkey." (Hairdresser)

> "When you ask what being Turkish citizen means, the first thing that comes to my mind is **racism**." (Owner of Tea House)

Defining Turkish citizenship allows us to make a distinction between Turkishness and Turkish citizenship which may be perceived as the same thing. All respondents, except the owner of accessory shop, explain that Turkishness refers an ethnicity but Turkish citizenship embraces everyone lives in the territory of Turkey no matter what ethnicity, religion or race they have. The owner of accessory shop perceives the Turkish citizenship and Turkishness as the same thing. Interestingly in Brubakerian way, he highlights the identity in association with ethnicity as a matter of choice based on people's self-identification.[125]

> "Turkishness means a race but Turkish citizenship indicates a legal membership which the people follow the rules, law, culture of a specific country." (Market owner)

> "These two words seem like different but for me, there is no difference. It is the same thing. One English or one American can get the Turkish citizenship and feel more Turkish than we feel. This is matter of feeling, how you define yourself." (Owner Accessory Shop)

The respondent's approaches to citizenship become more visible in their responses to the questions which are related to naturalization of foreigners and the exceptional citizenship proposal in association with the refugees. Majority of the respondents including the ones who provide answers which indicate a civic understanding of citizenship based on strong territoriality, adopt an ethnocentric, exclusionary language. First of all it is very important to note that all respondents

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[125] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond Identity," *Theory and Society*, V. 29, N. 1 (2000): 18.

directly link the word "naturalization" with Syrian refugees. In this framework, except the real estator, the hairdresser and the owner of herbalist shop, all other respondents decidedly state their objection to the naturalization of foreigners and particularly the Syrians. Even though a general view of respondents on naturalization is asked without referring to the refugees, all respondents tend to answer the question through the Syrians and the exceptional citizenship proposal. Market owner, for instance, implies the Turks and Syrians by using the personal pronoun "we" when he underlines the cultural dissonance below. He uses an exclusionary language by setting boundaries. This can be interpreted as a strategy of emphasizing the difference with the construction of "us" and "them" distinction. Moreover, his emphasis on Azerbaijan by using the adverb "even" hints an ethnic understanding of citizenship. The bakery owner who is more moderated about naturalization in general, stresses his objection to the naturalization of "a group of people." Apparently, he implies the refugees with "a group of people."

> "Foreigners shouldn't be naturalized. Everyone should live in their own **motherland**. They come here and what do they do? They get a share from everything including values of our country. We are living in same region but our **cultures** are different. We see how they live here. It is different. I do not accept a foreigner to be naturalized even if he/she is from **Azerbaijan**. Can you imagine?" (Market Owner)

> Individual cases can be accepted based on certain criteria but I am strongly against naturalization of **an entire group of people**. (Bakery Owner)

Political concerns in reference to the elections are also observed in the responses of the shopkeepers and they use almost the same discourses as the discourses of opposition parties. The biased understanding which is based on the perception that all refugees are potential AKP voters, determines the stances of the respondents regarding to the exceptional citizenship proposal.

> "Since Syrians are closer to the current Turkish Government, they can be used in the elections. Therefore, I don't want them to be granted with Turkish citizenship." (Owner of Tea House)

"The government can also instrumentalize the Syrians for its electoral interests. If they are granted citizenship, they can vote for the government." (Owner of Bakery)

While the owner of herbalist shop defines the Syrians as "our co-religionist" and supports both open door policy and naturalization despite his socio-economic concerns, the hairdresser is the advocator of liberal, inclusive approach by indicating that "everyone should get the citizenship of the country which they want to live." The real estator also shares a similar view by putting emphasis on the significance of rights and duties:

"How we have right to apply for the citizenship of other countries, foreigners can also acquire Turkish citizenship. Everyone can live in the country which they like by taking the citizenship as long as they follow the **rules and laws** of that country." (The Real Estator)

Inclusive approaches which supports territorial-based membership constitute a minority among the respondents since blood-based understanding is very dominant. Particularly the responses of the pet shop owner and the owner of accessory shop which are indicated below, are the explicit indicators of intolerance and marginalization by setting strong boundaries:

"I do not support the exceptional citizenship. If they will grant citizenship to everyone, what will our people do? If they get the citizenship, they will encroach our rights. They are multiplying themselves like **amoeba**. There are already **thieves, rapers** among them. They are the **threat for our country**. The soils of my motherland was taken with bloods." (Pet Shop Owner)

The pet shop owner implies the birth rate among the refugees by using the metaphor of amoeba and it indicates an othering strategy through dehumanization. Additionally, she tries to demonstrate the threat through both dehumanization and stigmatization which can also be read as a fallacy. The discourse of "threat for our country" is a perceived threat to national security which is a way to construct a ground for the justification of exclusion. In a similar way, the owner of

accessory shop stigmatizes the refugees by implying that they harass women in the beaches. Additionally to use the verb "feed" displays an argument of subordination.

> "They may help the Syrians but I don't find correct to **feed** 3,5 million Syrians to the country. They should not grant citizenship to the Syrians. I see so many young people. If I am young in my 20s, as a **Turkish**, I stay and fight for my country, I do not come to the **beaches of Antalya to watch women**." (Owner of Accessory Shop)

As it is observed in several tweets in the previous part, the discourse of "why they do not fight for their country," is also used by the owner of accessory shop for emphasizing the moral superiority of Turk and this is the subtle justification of objection to the naturalization of the refugees. There are also exclusionary but humanitarian approaches which are in search of a peaceful solution for the crisis just like the one which the owner of retail store-2 adopts but in any case the refugees are seen as guests, meaning outsiders.

> "We do not accept naturalization of foreigners. Everyone should stay in their country of origin. Everyone should have their life and order in their motherland. Why are they coming? Because of economic difficulties, threat, security or etc.? If the world acts in favor of peace, not just Turkey or the U.S. but entire world, then nobody leaves their home and motherland." (Owner of Retail Store-2)
>
> "They are asylum seekers, refugees and what does refugee mean? Guest!" (Owner of Retail Store-1)

In the second part of this chapter, citizenship perceptions and exclusionary character of the concept are investigated through perceived threat and national membership by analyzing the exclusionary discourses of the social media users. In this part of the chapter, an opposite strategy is followed to cross-check the analysis. The responses of the interviewees enable me to gain insight more about the citizen's perception.

Conclusion

The analysis of Turkish citizenship in the basis of the refugees who are non-citizens is a new topic of research. Turkish citizenship, up to now, has been analyzed with regard to the minority rights of the people who are citizens in the legal sense and accordingly, the exclusionary practices of citizenship have been examined together with assimilation policies. The exceptional citizenship proposal as a plan to naturalize Syrian refugees, points to a shift in focus of the citizenship literature in Turkey from minorities to refugees. With this shift, Turkish citizenship has defined and practiced for the first time through outsiders who are non-citizens. Within this context, it was the purpose of this thesis to examine the discursive construction of exclusion through citizenship and to investigate the citizenship perception of Turkish citizens by adopting a people-centered, micro-level approach.

Turkish citizenship regime which is defined with strong *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis*, has an inclusive legal structure. This inclusiveness, however, indicates a selective inclusiveness since naturalization is based on the territorial inclusion of desirable one with the exclusion of undesirable new citizens. Findings of this thesis showed us that while Syrian refugees was included as desirable ones by the authorities, they were excluded by the majority of host population. The "guest" approach which was used due to the gaps and limitations in the asylum system, contributed this exclusion. First, it marginalized the refugees more in the absence of the refugee status and it also psychologically constructed a perception of temporariness. Even though the asylum system was in a process of progress in the aftermath of the adoption of the Law 2013 and the 2014 Regulation, the perception of temporariness could not be de-constructred.

Within this scope, social unrest which started with the emergence of socio-economic, security, demographic and political concerns reached to its peak with the announcement of the exceptional citizenship proposal which crystallized the permanence of the refugees in Turkey. While the perception of "guest" created the ground for defining the Syrians as outsiders, the concerns of host population were used as the other justifications of exclusionary discourses.

To examine the citizenship perception of the Turkish citizens through their exclusionary discourses in regard with the proposal, I respectively analyzed the party discourses, social media contents through the hashtag #IdontwantSyriansinmycountry and 10 interviews which were conducted with shopkeepers.

The findings in this thesis showed that, the discourses of the opposition parties and the host community concerns which put emphasis on electoral issues, demographic change and national security were developed by mutually affecting each other. Nevertheless, it is indicated that the overall impact of the political parties on citizenship perception of the citizens was relatively weak. Discourses of social media users demonstrate a diverse understanding of citizenship and in most of the discourses, categories overlapped the each other. Even if citizenship was often defined through the dimension of rights and duties, all discourses were constructed with a reference to the perceived threat. In other words, the concept of citizenship is explicitly or implicitly defined by all the users as national membership which implied both belonging to Turkish state and to shared beliefs and culture. The perception of citizenship as national membership showed both civic and ethnic characteristics.

The analysis of face to face interviews which aimed to cross-check the findings of the social media analysis provided more insight on the citizenship perception of the Turkish citizens than the social media analysis which was based on the discourses of online space. Although the

responses often fell into both categories just like in the social media analysis and the perceptions varied among the respondents, findings of the analysis indicated that civic understanding of citizenship mostly remained on the level of discourses. The way of practicing citizenship by Turkish citizens, as it was observed in the responses of the interviewees about the exceptional citizenship, demonstrated the co-existence of weak territorial membership and strong blood-based membership.

Consequently, it is also important to underline based on the reaction of the host population against the exceptional citizenship proposal and exclusionary discourses that migration renationalized the citizenship in Turkey by recoupling it with national identity. This argument also challenges the studies in the literature which claims that Turkish citizenship denationalized in the beginning of the 2000s with the EU reforms.[126] All of these findings have wider implications for both citizenship and migration studies. This thesis was an initial attempt of understanding the everyday practices of citizenship. Further researches on this topic is needed and they may include other factors and actors to deeper the analysis with ethnographic research methods and by not just focusing on citizenship perceptions of the host population but also the perceptions of the refugees.

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