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Forced Migration in the Middle East: The Palestinian and Syrian Refugee Experience

Meltem YNCE YENILMEZ

Abstract. Forced migration in the Middle East has a long history, going back to, at least, the early days of the 20th century. This paper looks at the experience of two populations, the Palestinian refugees, who experienced their initial displacement in the mid-20th century, and the current day growing population of Syrian refugees. This latter group constitutes the largest group of displaced people since the Second World War. This paper uses the experience of both of these groups to explore the impact that forced migration has had on the host countries and the region at large. It looks at the economic, cultural and political impact of forced migration and concludes that, in the long-term, forced migration, although extremely disruptive to all involved, has a net benefit on the host countries. It also explores lack of regional coping mechanisms, and proposes that the terms “crisis” and “guests” should be replaced when discussing forced migrations.

Keywords: migration, Middle East, refugees, politics, culture

For decades, the Middle East has been the scene of forced migration. As Martin (2001) indicates in her paper, forced migration itself “has many causes and takes many forms. People leave because of persecution, human rights violations, repression, conflict and... in a growing number of cases people are driven from their homes by government and insurgent groups intent on depopulating or shifting the ethnic, religious or other composition of an area.” It is the latter part of that description, of government forces displacing people, that this paper will be referring to when it discusses forced migration. This phenomenon of violent mass displacement has become one of the defining features of the Middle East. In 1915, Armenians experienced a genocide that killed hundreds of thousands, with some estimating that up to a million were killed and as stated by Bloxham (2003) more
than two-thirds of those deported. Forced migration\textsuperscript{1} continued throughout the century, with the displacement of the Palestinians from the wars with Israel in the 1940s, and then in the 1960s creating a refugee population that still has not been officially settled decades later, forcing the populations into generations of permanent impermanence (Sayigh, 2005). Forced migration has continued into the 21st century, with Syria’s civil war creating the largest number of refugees since World War II, with an estimated 4.6 million forced to flee the country (UN, 2016). This paper will take these experiences of these two groups and use them as touchstones for a better understanding of the impact that forced migration has had on the region and beyond.

As can be expected, this history of forced migration has had a big impact on the entire Middle East, on its cultures, and especially on the politics of the region. Each time there is extensive forced migration, it changes the relationships among the countries, and has a deep impact on the individual countries involved. Labor markets are changed, both in the home country of the forcibly migrated, and the host country. Typically, the host country benefits as it receives a large influx of new workers. It also improves the institutional and political health of the country as existing institutions and the political system are forced to cope with the influx of refugees. Admittedly, it can take a long time for the country to adjust, but in the long run the country is better for it. Additionally, the host country’s culture is enriched by the increase in diversity that the displaced people bring with them through their own cultures. Furthermore, cross-cultural political relationships are strengthened in the long run as the countries have to learn to work together to handle the major displacement of people. However, as will be shown, the lack of regional coping mechanisms has made the plight of the forced migrants even worse.

Naturally these benefits do not come without a price. The migrants themselves suffer some of the worst trauma that people can ever experience. All the countries involved are greatly disrupted politically and socially, and in cases similar to Syria, the whole region can become unstable. Culturally, the host country will be disrupted as mentioned above, and although increased diversity will make the home country stronger in the long run, not everyone will be happy to see this change, as the country’s identity will be in flux. This is especially true as handling

\textsuperscript{1} In this paper, “forced migration,” “forcibly displaced” will be considered synonymous as will also “the forcibly displaced” and “refugee(s).”
the influx of refugees can force countries to question their identity of being traditionally open to all comers, as is happening in the European Union countries (Szabo, 2015). However, in total, forced migration ultimately strengthens the countries that host the forcibly displaced.

Labor

It is impossible to have large numbers of people move from one country to various other countries without the labor market being profoundly impacted. As can be expected, the home country loses out since thousands of workers are forced to flee the country. For the host country, the picture can be more nuanced, and the benefits more uncertain, as a huge number of workers suddenly flood their domestic labor market. Such a sudden influx will always be disruptive as these new workers are not instantly absorbed into the new society, and this creates a burden on the existing institutions. This, in turn, can lead a host country to question the wisdom of opening their borders to the refugees. However, the net effect is beneficial to the host countries as the new labor pool ultimately makes the economy stronger.

A prime example of this is what has happened in Turkey following the influx of close to 2.5 million refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict. Turkey has spent billions of euros\(^2\) to accommodate them; economically, this inflow of refugees into Turkey has had a net benefit. The refugees have displaced Turkish workers in some areas, notably in the unskilled, informal, and part-time work sectors, they have also been the catalyst for an increase in formal employment for the Turkish, an increase in demand for higher-quality work, which is then filled by the Turkish, and an increase in the average wages of the Turkish employees employed in the formal sector. Although the net benefit is positive for Turkey, labor market dynamics have shifted. Women in particular have been negatively impacted by the influx of refugees, as they have been forced out of the informal labor market, and have not seen a corresponding uptick in employment in the formal sector (GSDRC, 2016).

The Turkish experience highlights a fact that other host countries need to keep in mind: that for the host countries to experience the full benefit of the influx of refugees, the refugees need to be quickly integrated into the labor market on a

formal level, as this will have the effect of giving the refugees the protection of a stable situation (Fargues, 2009). If this does not happen, the refugees will end up in the informal market, which, although it provides some form of employment, is ultimately less beneficial to both the refugees, and the economy of the host country. The refugees have an insecure form of employment, and the host country does not have access to tax revenue that would otherwise be generated by the work of the refugees.

**Politics**

Political disruption is impossible to avoid when it comes to forced migration. It is political upheaval that often leads to forced migration, and it is political upheaval that results from forced migration. A prime example of this is the political upheaval that led to the forced migration of thousands of Palestinian refugees following the war with Israel in 1948, following the creation of the state (regional political upheaval in and of itself) and the 1967 war. Many of these refugees are still living in camps, primarily in Jordan.³ What makes these refugees particularly unique is that most of them are descendants of the original refugees who fled decades before. As indicated by Goldberg (2012), the exact number of how many of them are still alive today is uncertain, but it is probably a few tens of thousands. As the question of their ultimate fate is still undecided, they exist in a state of permanent impermanence as mentioned in the introduction.

The question of what to do with the Palestinian refugees is one of the main sticking points in the ongoing political dispute between Israel and the Palestinians, as the Palestinian authorities assert the right of return, saying that the Palestinian refugees should be allowed to return to Israel. Israeli authorities see this as a non-starter as it would dramatically change the demographics of the country, making the Jewish population a minority.⁴ Of course there are more than one factor that keeps the political dispute between Israel and the Palestinian alive, but the fact that the Palestinian and Israeli authorities have opposing, non-negotiable positions means that it can be argued that the presence of the refugees is doing its part to keep the political situation from being completely settled (Sontag, 2001).

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³For more information, please see [http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan](http://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan)
⁴For more information, please see [http://prrn.mcgill.ca/background/background_resolving.htm](http://prrn.mcgill.ca/background/background_resolving.htm)
However, it is not all negative and in some regards, forced migration can have a positive effect on the political process. Although the net effect in the long-term, as said above is positive, the short-term burden can be great, and can put a huge strain on the institutional and fiscal resources of the host countries. The forced migration from Syria has had perhaps the greatest political impact of any forced migration in recent history. Neighboring countries have accepted many of the millions displaced, but as the conflict keeps going, the neighboring countries are feeling the strain. This is particularly true for the host countries that are underdeveloped economically in comparison to the other countries in the region. Jordan and Lebanon, in particular, have both expressed concern over the burden being placed on their institutions, with Jordan recently saying that, without additional international aid, they will soon be at the breaking point.\textsuperscript{5}

To solve this, Jordan says that it needs international aid and this highlights, perhaps non-intuitively, the positive political impact that forced migration can have. Forced migration forces a change in the politics of the host country, as the institutions are forced to adapt to the added strain on them, and the refugee policy is forced to adapt as well. At a regional level, host countries are compelled to reach out to their neighbors and work to share the (hopefully) short-term burden of hosting the refugees. To properly share the burden of forced migration, especially on the scale created by the Syrian conflict, close cooperation is required. Not all the countries in the region are at the same economic level, and thus have different capabilities for hosting refugees. To equitably share the burden, other countries in the region, such as Saudi Arabia, would need to step up. And to ensure this, the countries need to talk to each other, and this leads to ties being forged and strengthened. These ties then can be used in the future to further international cooperation on other regional challenges that will arise.

In the long-term, new ties can be forged between the home country of the forcibly migrated, and the host countries. This can come about as the host countries and the home country work together to settle the conflict that has resulted in the forced migration, also from the shift in demographics. The conflict in Syria has effectively spread out the Syrian population. Where once upon

\textsuperscript{5}For more information, please see https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2016/2/2/jordan-reaching-breaking-point-over-syrian-refugee-influx
Forced Migration in the Middle East
JIMS - Volume 10, number 2, 2016

At a time the vast majority of Syrians lived in Syria, there are now millions living in neighboring countries. Although, now their ties to their homeland are strained at best, they still remain. In the future, these personal ties will continue to exist, and will create points of commonality between the host countries, and the home countries. For example, assuming that conflict in Syria is eventually settled, Syria, and the countries hosting Syrian refugees, will work together to ensure that the ties between them remain strong so that the Syrians abroad can either return to Syria, or at least have easier travel to and from Syria to visit family, and to deal with other personal interests in Syria. In brief, although greatly disruptive in the short-term, forced migration can lead to an improved political situation as existing systems are forced to adapt to the new reality, and to forge new and strengthen existing political ties among countries.

Culture

Culturally speaking, forced migration changes everything, especially when it is a large scale forced displacement. In the Middle East, the countries, except for Israel, have a lot in common culturally, sharing common languages, cultures of hospitality, and a common religion, Islam. Of course there are internal division within Islam, most significantly between Shia and Sunni branches of Islam, but it is still a commonality. Thus when Syrian refugees, for example, flee to Jordan, it is not as culturally disruptive as it could be.

In the long run, cultural mixing and diversity make a country stronger. Although forced migration is far more disruptive than the slower, lower key regular levels of migration, there is no reason that in the long run, this disruption should not be offset by the benefits that come from increased diversity. Diversity makes a country less insular and more outward focused. It also fosters a culture that is more accepting of differences; this means that more people from more backgrounds will feel welcome in the country. This will, in turn, boost the reputation of the country abroad and increase it’s standing in the world community.

At a domestic level, varying worldviews and ideas meet and are exchanged. Perspectives on challenges of all sorts are more wide-ranging and stronger, meaning that more compelling solutions to challenges facing a society can be created. Instead of having only a handful of ways of doing something, a culturally diverse country will have dozens, if not hundreds. At the practical level, people who
have survived being forcibly migrated have had to think creatively, and call upon a will and a drive to survive and succeed that other communities typically do not. A society, a country, and community can only benefit from harnessing those forces.

However, while mixing cultures is good for a country in the long run, in the short run it can prove to be fractious. In Turkey, for example, where the home culture and the migrant cultures are more different than in other parts of the Middle East, the reception has been different as the cultural differences are more profound. Syria and Turkey, although sharing religious similarities, linguistically and demographically they have significant differences. As the social and political pressures have increased due to the continual inflow of refugees, anti-immigrant and anti-Arab sentiments have surfaced more and more within Turkish society (Özden, 2013). This growing hostility creates a level of social/cultural tension within Turkish society. This is further exacerbated by the fact that the refugees are viewed as guests within the country. This means that they are expected to be there only temporarily, and are viewed as outsiders, even if only benignly. Add to it the fact that Turkey has taken a stance opposing the Assad regime, and it is not difficult to see how opposition to the regime could become opposition and hostility to Syrians in general.

This is an important point to keep in mind. Typically, the forcibly migrated are viewed as strangers within the host country and their situation, as mentioned before, is viewed as being temporary. Of course, it is assumed that some of the migrants will be integrated into the host country, but the assumption is that the majority of them will return to their home country, ideally through the mechanisms created by the closer political ties between the home country and the host country. However, this puts the refugees in the position of being outsiders. Just as a personal guest is not viewed as being part of the household they are visiting, the forcibly migrated are not viewed as being full-fledged members of the society of the host country.

However, this does not mean that they do not have a cultural impact on their host countries. They bring with them the culture of their home countries, and they add to the diversity of their host country. Normally the migrants reject the culture of the host country, but their children, if they end up settling in the host country, adopt the culture of the new country. Although this can lead to intra-familial conflict, it does indicate that some cultural mixing is going on. If
the families end up migrating back to their home country, they often find that both them and their home country have changed, further adding to the cultural mixing (Roizblatt and Pilowsky, 1996).

Furthermore, there is a cost to diversity, and that is that it can change the cultural identity of a country, and this has caused some tension in parts of the world that have been receiving Syrian migrants. With forced migration in the Middle East, the biggest cultural impact has been felt outside of the region. Millions of refugees have fled the Middle East entirely, migrating to Europe. Traditionally, Europe and the European Union have been fairly open to migrants. However, as the influx of the forcibly migrated increases, opposition to their presence has increased. Several countries in the European Union have taken the dramatic step of closing their borders to refugees or re-imposing border controls after years without.\(^6\)\(^7\) Traditionally tolerant countries like Sweden have also have seen social movements arise that have opposed the presence of the migrants. Magnusson (2015) reported the story as one of shifting attitudes:

> It is the latest sign of the major change in sentiment sweeping across Scandinavia’s biggest economy as the Sweden Democrats—a party with neo-Nazi roots—forces itself into the mainstream of Swedish politics.... forcing it [the government] to form a pact with the core opposition parties in an effort to prevent the Sweden Democrats from disrupting lawmaking. But voters are signaling they want the group to have a bigger say. And after Sweden’s generous asylum policies led to a surge in refugee flows from war zones in the Middle East, the government’s political clout has waned. Its budget pact with the opposition fell apart in October and both the coalition and the main opposition parties have since been forced to tighten their stance on immigration.

One of the concerns is cultural in general. Unlike in the Middle East, European cultures, broadly speaking, are historically quite different from Middle Eastern cultures and significant proportions of the population in Europe fear the transformative influence that a large number of migrants will have on Europe. This in turn has led to a serious rethinking about what it means to be European, and whether or not European policy towards the Middle East needs to be rethought (Szabo, 2015).


Adding to the complexity of the situation are the fears regarding security. With all those people displaced, moving from one country to the next, forced migration raises genuine and serious concerns regarding the security of the host countries. The fear is that, under the guise of being refugees, terrorist organizations and/or criminals will infiltrate the host countries, and do harm against the host country. How a host country can balance openness to refugees, as well as the security of its people is a major challenge; one that each host country is grappling with in different ways? Bertossi and Milkop (2008) summarize it nicely in the opening of their paper:

One country declares a state of emergency because of the presence of undocumented immigrants in its territorial waters. Another dispatches asylum seekers to offshore islands in foreign jurisdictions before considering their applications. Genetic testing is seen as a proper tool for coping with possible abuses of family reunification laws. To paraphrase Shakespeare, there are serious problems in the “kingdom” of international migration and migration policies.

Additionally, the host countries only need to look at another country in the Middle East that is experiencing conflict and a large outflow of refugees, Iraq, to see how it could turn ugly. As Lischer (2008) puts it when discussing the Iraqi refugee challenge:

As this crisis demonstrates, displacement can expand and intensify violence during a civil war. In addition, refugee flows increase the risk that conflict will spread across international borders. In some cases, refugee militarization can lead to international war and regional destabilization. Even if the displaced Iraqis do not join militant groups, their mere presence will exacerbate political tensions.

Is it any wonder that countries in the region, and beyond, are worried about the forced migrants coming into their countries? Existential questions about national identity aside, neighboring host countries face the prospect that by opening their borders to refugees, they are opening their borders to the conflict that started it all. However, in the same article Lischer (2008) proposes a multi-faceted solution that can reduce the chances of this happening, and that can be applied to the Syrian refugee challenge: First, provide a massive infusion of humanitarian aid. Second, resist the temptation to build camps to house the displaced. Third, do not return the displaced people home against their will. Fourth, expand and expedite the resettlement process.
This latter recommendation is not very feasible at the moment, but it points to the ideal solution to the whole challenge, the outcome that would assuage the concerns of everyone, forced migrants, regional leaders, as well as the average citizens, who are anxious about what changing demographics of their neighborhoods means for the identity of their countries - peaceful repatriation of the refugees. It would not end the fact that demographics in Europe have, and are, changing, but it would at least put an end to the so-called “refugee invasion” of Europe (Calì and Sekkarie, 2015). Politically speaking, this is much more achievable vis-à-vis the Syrian forced migrants, than for the Palestinians. It would entail ending the conflict, a massive challenge, but once that was done, there would be no major barrier, such as exists with the Palestinians, towards eventual peaceful repatriation. Naturally, this assumes that the sectarian aspects of the Syrian civil war are adequately addressed in any peace treaties, and that there are minimal disputes at the communal level. It has happened with the Balkans, so one can hope that it would happen in Syria as well.

**Conceptual Changes**

Of all the different categories of people, such as citizen and foreigner; forced migration has had the greatest impact on how the term “refugee” is considered. Historically, refugees are considered to be temporary visitors to the host country. They would flee a conflict, or be forcibly removed from the country, but the thought in the back of everyone’s mind was that one day, fairly soon, they would be allowed to return. No host country thought that it would be permanent.

However, the Palestinian situation changed it. As mentioned above, Jordan, for example, is hosting fourth and fifth generation refugees. At one time, that would be unthinkable. How could someone who was not even born at the time for the original forcible displacement is considered a refugee? And yet, it is the reality. The same may soon be said regarding the forcibly displaced from

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8The Brookings Institution frames it like this (from 2015): “Let’s first put things into perspective. This year up until July the EU received for asylum (including Syrians and others). Since January 2012 the number has been 1.9 million, which makes the size of the “swarms” and “invasion” of “marauder” asylum seekers equivalent to a mere 0.37 percent of the EU population.”
Syria. The conflict there has been grinding on for years, with no end in sight. If the host countries have not thought about it yet, they may soon want to—how will they handle a permanent influx of forcibly displaced Syrian refugees?

What the world community has now is a different category of people, someone who is not officially a permanent resident, but is not a citizen either. The new category is one of the noncitizen that is trapped in a dangerous situation. For some this status is temporary, the emergency will pass, but for many more, they are a part of the permanently impermanent, to paraphrase Sayigh. This is a category of people who are particularly vulnerable, and to quote Weerasinghe et al. (2015), stakeholders within the international community have recognized that existing legal and institutional frameworks for protecting forced migrants are inadequate to address the diversity of movements and needs—that they are an at-risk population requiring tailored responses.

Part of this risk comes from the fact that they are not considered to be immigrants to a new country; they are not expected to stay. Thus, there are few if any mechanisms in place to provide long-term support. At the same time, there is no mechanism for them to return to their homeland, or, as with the Syrian refugees, it would be fatal for them to return. Thus they are stuck in limbo, a limbo that for all intents and purposes is permanent, especially with the Palestinians, where their existence in a state of the permanent impermanence is practically institutionalized. One could actually argue that the existence of UNRWA, an agency dedicated to providing them assistance does institutionalize their status.

The political reality has spilled over into the social realm as well. Turkey talks about the Syrian refugees as “guests.” At first, everyone felt sympathy for their plight, and was willing to help them out. However, the dynamic has changed. To extend the metaphor, the guests cannot go home right away, and no one knows what to do about it. Resources are starting to get stretched and they wish that their neighbors would help out more. However, at the same time, the neighboring countries are dealing with the same problem, and are feeling stretched as well. Society is being forced to consider the idea that their ‘guests’ might be here to stay. If that is the case, should they still be considered guests? How does a society accommodate them, when they may not want to be fully integrated, but cannot leave whenever they want? It is a tricky situation with no clear social solution.
Symptom and Consequence

When it comes to the question of what are the forces behind forced migration vis-à-vis the state, it is generally safe to blame the state for the forced migration. As Adamson (2006) puts it: “The population flows of refugees and exiles produced by forced migration have, as often as not, been the product of state action rather than of non-state or market forces.” The examples of forced migration that this paper has touched upon, the 20th century displacement of the Palestinians and the 21st century displacement of Syrian refugees, serve to illustrate the two sides of this force. The Palestinian experience is an example of forced migration as a consequence of state building, and the Syrian refugee experience is an example of forced migration as a consequence of state in the process of collapsing, or at the very least, extreme political upheaval.

It is not the objective of this paper to argue whether or not the Israeli government of the late 1940s set out to deliberately expel the Palestinians as part of their state building plans. Moreover, the data is simply not very clear, and historians continue to argue how much of the displacement was spontaneous, and how much was a result of policy (Laipson, 2002). However, it did happen as a consequence of their state building agenda (Adamson, 2006). Part of this state building involved defending itself from aggression on the part of its neighbors. The ensuing conflict resulted in the displacement of a large number of Palestinians. Officially these Palestinians, and their descendants are still displaced until a political solution can be reached, and this has remained a major sticking point in the negotiations with Israeli regarding a Palestinian state (Sontag, 2001).

This continual displacement of the Palestinians who have been forcibly migrated has served Israel’s state building ends. Israel was founded as a Jewish state, and for that state identity to remain secure, it needs the country to remain predominantly Jewish and this means that the Palestinian refugees cannot return to their land of origin, especially now as the population has grown from around 750,000 give or take, in 1948 to well over 5 million.9

For more information, please see http://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees

This number is a 1950 number. In 1948 UN General Progress report put the original number at 711,000 and a 1950 Final Report of the United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East outs the number at 726,000. All told this constituted about 85 percent of the total Palestinian population. For more information, please see http://www.badil.org/phocadownloadpap/Badil_docs/publications/Q&A-en.pdf
The Syrian conflict is, on the other hand, a side effect of a state that is, for all intents and purposes, collapsing. The government is currently embroiled in a multi-faction civil war, as well as a conflict with an outside force, the Islamic State. Officially, it has not collapsed, but the Assad regime does not have complete control, and seems to be losing ground every day. It is this conflict that is responsible for the refugees that have fled the country. Although the forced migration of refugees from Syria is not a consequence of a complete collapse of the state, it is a consequence of the breakdown of the state. The conflict began with a revolt against the Assad government and the initial refugees were fleeing this conflict. Later on, other refugees ended up fleeing attacks by the government on civilians, and as no government should be attacking its people (Fahim and Saad, 2013), one can argue that the refugees were fleeing a failed government. As the Islamic State got involved, and as later Russia, as well as other countries, became embroiled in the conflict, present day refugees could now be said to be fleeing a generalized state of war. Was the initial forced migration a consequence of state collapse? No, but it was a consequence of the failing government, and a severe collapse of law and order, as evidenced by the fact that government security forces responded to protests with violent crackdowns.

Regional Coping Mechanisms

The Middle East, as a region, does not have legal asylum mechanism. As alluded to above, it has a culture of hospitality, whereby people forcibly displaced are welcome to seek shelter and aid. However, this means that there is an absence of formal mechanism to provide support for them. What has resulted is a patchwork of inventiveness, and some intervention by UN agencies. The most well known of these is United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, known by its acronym UNRWA. This agency’s primary task is to provide institutional level support to Palestinian refugees in the camps. Of course, it cannot do everything and thus the refugees are forced to improvise. One of these most dangerous forms of improvisation that they have embarked on is being smuggled out of the Middle East. As Anderson (2015) article highlights:

For more information, please see http://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/unrwa_in_figures_2015.pdf
Before the Syrian civil war began, there were 70,000 Palestinians living in Ain al-Hilweh, which occupies less than one square mile of land. But the devastating conflict has prompted another flood of Syrians and Palestinians living in Syria: The camp’s population is now estimated to have ballooned by another 10,000 people. Given the brutal conditions there, many of its residents are seizing the opportunity to hire people like Zeinab to provide them with passage to Europe. As the influx of refugees seeking asylum in Europe grows, so does the refugee smuggling industry, now said to be a $26 billion per year business. Over 300,000 migrants are reported to have crossed the Mediterranean Sea into Europe, and the number keeps growing.

Of course it is extremely dangerous thing to do. They face death along the route, and a very uncertain future in Europe. As they are Palestinians, they face deportation, as many of the destination countries’ policies are to not accept them. That is even if the smugglers send them on their way. Many have simply had their money taken, and then the people smugglers leave them behind. However, they have a lot of motivation. The Palestinian refugee camps are very underdeveloped, economically speaking (Perdigon, 2015). Poverty is one of the most enduring characteristics of the camps and it is one of the strongest motivators for the refugees to take extreme measures to improve their lot in life. Additionally, not only are the living conditions harsh in the Palestinian refugee camps; with the civil war in nearby Syria, the camps have become a refuge of sorts for Syrian refugees as well. This, in turn, has attracted the attention of the Islamic State and others, effectively bringing the Syrian civil war to the Palestinians.

The Syrian forced migrants has adopted people smuggling, but they have adopted other means of improvisation to aid in their survival. One of these methods is taking advantage of religious social networks (Akcapar, 2006). This

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12 Akcapar relates a fascinating side story to the larger narrative of forcibly displaced people in the Middle East. Before the Syrian civil war, the largest number of people seeking asylum in Turkey were from Iran. A surprising characteristic of many of these asylum seekers is that they were Christian converts, both Catholic and Protestant. The conversions took place both in Iran and in Turkey, which was being used as a country of transit on to the West. This is extraordinary as Turkey is 99 percent Muslim. However, these converts were using their conversion as migration strategy. As a persecuted minority in Iran, the converts, predominantly Shi’a could not be deported back to Iran as they risked death. Additionally, the conversion gave them access to a whole new social network that could provide support and connections to the West and this seems to be the appeal for a number of the converts.
strategy is neatly illustrated by the experience of the Syrian Christians. Christians, in general, in the Middle East have been hit particularly hard by forced migration. Religious leaders are abducted, and sometimes murdered, and across the Middle East, thousands of Christians are fleeing their homes. Syrian Christians compose tens of thousands of the forced migrants escaping the civil war in Syria. In rebel held areas of Syria, no outward show of Christianity is tolerated. Other refugees have described being forced to pay a heavy tax of money and/or property. If they resist, they face the prospect of being killed. As Flamini (2013) goes on to report:

The reality is that the Christian population in the Middle East is shrinking at a faster rate than ever before, through emigration and wholesale killing, as well as a lower birthrate than its Muslim counterpart... Migrants can come back, of course, but rarely do. Sixty-three percent of Arab Americans are descendants of Christian immigrants.

How are they escaping? Chances are it is very similar to what the Iranian Christians did in the past. That is to say that they are leveraging their connections with their Christian social networks to escape to the West.

The fact that no real, formal coping mechanisms have developed in the Middle East is a serious problem for the region. As the Syrian forced migrant experience demonstrates, having a culture of hospitality is not enough. Nearby countries will take the brunt of the influx of migrants, and if they are fortunate, like Turkey, they will be economically healthy enough to be able to handle it. If they are not as robust, like Jordan or Lebanon, they will soon reach the breaking point, and if they do break, it will only add to the already existing instability. This lack of formal coping mechanisms have, in opinion of this author, compelled many of the forcibly displaced to risk abuse and death to try to reach Europe through the avenue of people smugglers (US Fact Sheet, 2006)\(^\text{13}\), instead of being able to take

However, it seems just as clear that for others the conversion came about from interest in Christianity. Regardless of the initial reasons for converting, all of these Christian refugees used their new connections to aid them in their journey.

\(^{13}\) The popular press commonly confuses human trafficking and human smuggling as there is a lot of overlap between the two. According to the United States Department, human smuggling is the facilitation, transportation, attempted transportation or illegal entry of a person(s) across an international border, in violation of one or more countries laws, either clandestinely or through deception, such as the use of fraudulent documents. Human smuggling, also known as trafficking in persons (TIP) can be compared to a modern day
advantage of a regional mechanism for safer transport away from the violence. Instead, the forced migrants are left to fend for themselves, and do the best they can to reach safety.

This also demonstrates a failure on the part of the host countries to recognize the value of the migrants. As illustrated in previous sections, the refugees result in a net benefit to their host countries. Farsighted regional leaders would have looked at history, seen the patterns, and have instituted coping mechanism to allow host countries to quickly integrate the refugees into the society of the host country, but still make it easy for them to leave when life calms down in their country of origin. Additional coping mechanisms would have allowed the host countries to quickly call upon the resources of other regional countries, so that no one country got overwhelmed. One can hope that the Syrian forced migrant experience will demonstrate the need for such mechanisms and when the next mass forced migration happens, the region will be better prepared.

A Crisis?

In the press, it is not uncommon to hear the condition of the Palestinian refugees as well as the Syrian refugee story as being described as a “crisis”. However, is this the best way to describe it? The Merriam-Webster dictionary (2015) defines “crisis” as “a difficult or dangerous situation that needs serious attention.” It goes on to say that it is “a situation that has reached a critical phase.” The word also carries with it the implication that something is short-term and urgent. It also means that it is something that can be taken care fairly quickly. A crisis is a turning point, something that comes, and then is gone. The plight of both the Palestinian refugees and the Syrian refugees is urgent, but is it short-term, something that will pass quickly? No. The Palestinian refugees have been refugees for 60+ years. That is an extremely long time for something to be at a “critical phase”. The Syrian conflict has been going on since 2011 with no clear end in sight, and with more and more players getting embroiled in it. This will only lead to further forced migration out of Syria, and a continuation of the refugee tragedy.

form of slavery. It involves the exploitation of people through force, coercion, threat, and deception and includes human rights abuses such as debt bondage, deprivation of liberty, and lack of control over freedom and labor. Trafficking can be for purposes of sexual exploitation or labor exploitation.
“Crisis” is the wrong term to use to try to understand what is going on when forced migration occurs. It is understandable that it is used, because it has a sense of urgency to it, and it is an emotive word, containing within it a call to action. However, it is misleading as it does not prepare people to engage for the long-term and, more importantly, to think of long-term solutions. As Adamson underlines (2006), could this be one of the reasons that regional coping mechanisms were never set up, even though forced migration in the Middle East has been occurring the since at least the early 20th century?

Of course it is impossible to say one way or another, but what can be said is that forced migration demands a different type of analytical lens; the reason is forced migration is a systemic problem, not a short-term disaster that will be around and then disappear. Forced migration, as just mentioned, has been going on in the region for so long that it has become practically a part of the fabric that makes up the Middle East. It is an occurrence that is made up of crises. When violence breaks out in a Palestinian refugee camp, which is a crisis. When a boat filled with refugees capsizes off the coast of Europe that is a crisis (Al Jazeera, 2016). When a population has been displaced for decades, when a 6-year-old civil war keeps producing thousands of forced migrants that is something else entirely. It is a systemic calamity.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary (2015) defines “calamity” as “a state of deep distress or misery caused by major misfortune or loss; an event that causes great harm and suffering.” The Palestinian refugees are in a perpetual state of deep distress and misery. The civil war in Syria is an ongoing event that produces great harm and suffering, and the everyday experience of the Syrian refugees trying to make it to safety is one of the miseries caused by the greatest of misfortunes and loss – the destruction of their homes and those they care about.

Understanding forced migration, as a calamity would mentally prepare policy makers by giving them a sense of the enormity of the challenge. It would make them consider the fact that it is not a short-term disaster but a long-term phenomenon that will require long-term solutions and long-term planning; not only to ameliorate the current crisis, but also to prepare for the possibility of more forced migrations in the future.

Additionally, the host countries need to revise the way that they think of the refugees themselves. Instead of thinking along the lines of the people being in their country for the short-term, as “guests” so to speak, and providing the
refugees with assistance that is designed to provide aid only in the short-term, it would be better to begin to think of them as exiles, not the sense of being barred punitively, but in the sense of being compelled to leave by circumstances, an involuntary exile. Exiles never know exactly if, or when, they could return. It could be tomorrow, or it could be 20 years in the future. By thinking of the forced migrants as exiles, host countries would be incentivized to develop flexible instruments to provide aid and flexible policies towards hosting them as they could be there for a long time or for only a short while.

Conclusion

One can hope that this shift in thinking will force the regional policy makers to consider the long-term benefits to the host countries having migrants. Of course, an increase in migration will be disruptive to a host country, and forced migration even more so. However, in the long run, forced migration is a net benefit to the country. Economically, it makes the host country more prosperous, culturally, it is enriching, and politically, it makes the system more robust and the institutions more flexible. Internationally, countries in the region are forced to cooperate to not only share the initial burden of created by the forced migration, but to address the underlying factors that created it in the first place. This has the effect of strengthening existing ties, and creating new ones.

However, forced migration is not without its costs. The greatest cost is born by the forced migrants themselves, as they have to go through some of the harshest trauma that people can experience, and without a clear idea of when it will end. The host countries face social and political disruption created by the influx of migrants, and if it continues long enough, they face the prospect of a shifting national identity that can lead to internal political changes, as people may resist this change. Additionally, the host countries, by opening their borders to the migrants run the risk of inadvertently spreading conflict, if the refugees become militarized or the combatants follow them to the host country.

Despite these costs, and one by now would hope that the region would have got frustrated enough to do something to prevent them\textsuperscript{14}, the Middle East has

\textsuperscript{14} Perhaps forced migrations have become something like genocide. After every genocide the world seems to collectively say “never again!” but several years later another is happening.
seen multiple incidences of forced migration in the last two centuries. Traditionally, cultural hospitality has been the mechanism by which the refugees are aided, and this has meant that neighboring countries were willing to host the refugees, and this led to an absence of regional coping mechanisms. The presence of a Palestinian population living in several generations of official impermanence, and the tragedies lived out on a daily basis by the Syrian refugees is an indication that the region needs to rethink how it addresses forced migration.

One way is to stop thinking of forced migration as a crisis, as this carries the idea that it is temporary, and think of it as a calamity. This term carries with it the notion that is something serious with long-term and significant consequences. Another way is to think of the refugees, not as transient guests, but as involuntary exiles that may be away from their home for an unknown span of time. This would preserve the culture of hospitality, but combine it with long-term thinking about how best to express that hospitality, so that when the next forced migration occurs, it may actually be a short-term crisis, and not a calamity with no end in sight.

Future Study

More research needs to be done on the social attitudes that host countries have towards refugees. How do the citizens of the countries view refugees? Are they considered outsiders? What about in places like Jordan, where Palestinian refugees have been there for generations? Do the societies view them as a part of the national fabric? In Lebanon the refugees have not been able to integrate much into the country. Is it the same in Jordan, or has the fact that the population is so large meant that they have been integrated more? How extensive is the viewpoint that forced migrants are guests? Does it extend beyond Turkey, or is it unique to Turkey? Additional study needs to be done to see how open the regional policy makers would to redefining the way that refugees are viewed, not as transients, but more as exiles. Lastly, more research needs to be done on how long it takes for host countries to receive the benefits of hosting migrants.

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The ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ Refugees? Imagined Refugeehood(s) in the Media Coverage of the Migration Crisis

Marta SZCZEPANIK

Abstract. This text is an attempt to analyze a particular, normative aspect of the media narrative about refugees during the recent migration crisis in Europe. It looks at the substantive semantic distance between the ‘good’ or ‘real’ refugees presented in some media outlets and the definition of a refugee under international law. This difference is later explained by a particular kind of exposure to the events of the refugee crisis – a ‘mediated experience’, and by the existence of a normative ‘refugee archetype’. I look at images representing refugees through the lenses of John B. Thompson’s (1995) concept of opposition between lived and mediated experience – the figures of ‘bad’ and ‘good’ refugees are seen as belonging to the order of mediated experience, therefore, as argued by Thomson, impersonal and dispersed in time and space. Finally, I refer to the Malkki’s (1996) concept of a refugee as a ‘universal humanitarian subject’ – an apolitical and de-historicized figure, reduced to the role of aid beneficiary which serves me to explain the ambiguity of representations of refugees and their dependence on political interests.

Keywords: media narrative, migration crisis in Europe, refugees’ crisis

With the refugee crisis rapidly unfolding in Europe, forced migration became a regular topic in the public debates across the continent. Immediately after first reports about the deaths of migrant trying to reach Europe – with the Lampedusa shipwreck in 2013 that took 360 lives¹ as definitely not the first such disaster but surely first of this scale that was reported all over the world – it became a heavily political issue. In the subsequent months and years the public got used to the reports on drowned migrants, overcrowded camps and people stuck in bus or train stations, stranded along the Balkan route. As the scale of this exodus increased and finding acceptable political solutions seemed more and more difficult, questions started emerging as to who the refugees are and why they flee to Europe, as

well as to the legitimacy of their protection claims².

While not trying to answer the said question of legitimacy, this paper looks into the notion of the refugee as appearing in the press and social media. It does not aim to provide an analysis of the whole media discourse on refugees and the refugee crisis but concentrates on particular narratives where the attributes of a ‘good’ or ‘genuine’ refugee that one should possess in order to ‘deserve’ protection are expressed. The existing distance between the ‘good’ refugees presented in some media outlets from the definition of a refugee under international law is later analyzed in the context of exposure to the events of the refugee crisis – a ‘mediated experience’ and by the existence of a normative ‘refugee archetype’.

The „good” and „bad” refugees in the media

In an article published in September 2015 by The Independent, the author Emily Cousens argued, as the title of her text reads, that ‘we need to stop pretending that women and children are the only refugees who matter’³. She referred to the particularities of how both genders and the children are presented in various media reports concerning the migration crisis. She pointed, for example, to the common use of phrases indicating the number of women and children among the casualties used to stress the innocence and vulnerability of those who died, as well as to different ways of presenting men, women and children in photographs. She argued that there is a prevalence of images of passivity when women are presented and activity, often in the form of aggression in the case of men who are repeatedly portrayed as dangerous, barbaric collective. Cousens also makes an interesting observation with regard


³ E. Cousens, ‘We need to stop telling ourselves that women and children are the only refugees who matter’, The Independent, 9 September 2015, http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/we-need-to-stop-telling-ourselves-that-women-and-children-are-the-only-refugees-who-matter-10493332.html, accessed:12.06.2016.
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to children. She refers to the photograph of a dead Syrian boy that made the headlines in early September 2015 as the ‘the refugee photo’ – one that changed the narrative of the crisis. Indeed, within 24 hours the photo was published in the media around the world causing a shock to the public, an increase in donations for humanitarian assistance to refugees and statements from politicians, for example from the British Prime Minister David Cameron who pledged to take in 20,000 refugees from Syria over the next five years.

According to Cousens, in the UK, the image of the boy and the and subsequent pledge resonated with the memory of an event from the past – a rescue operation from the WWII known as Kindertransport. Just months before the war broke out, Great Britain had accepted around 10,000 Jewish children from Nazi Germany and occupied territories. This memory and its symbolic connection to the present situation might have, in Cousens opinion, further consolidated the idea that its primarily children whose lives are worth saving. Compassion limited to women and children and invisibility of male as victims may lead to their symbolic (and often unconscious) dehumanization.

A ‘gendered’ narrative is not the only aspect characterizing the public reception of the phenomenon of refugeehood. Observation of posts and comments in the social media allows to distinguish at least several other attributes of a ‘good’ or ‘genuine’ refugee. Such attributed included the material situation of individuals (for example, the possession of smartphones), the fact of travelling alone or with family members (men travelling alone were accused of cowardice, desertion and leaving their women and children behind). Equally often being a genuine refugee was associated with a particular nationality (for example, Pakistani origin is seen as an excluding circumstance

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4The picture of 3-year-old Alan Kurdi (initially reported as AylanKurdi), a boy who drowned along with his mother and brother while crossing from Turkey to the Greek island of Kos was taken by a Turkish photojournalist NilüferDemir on September 2, 2015 r.


making one a bogus asylum seekers while Syrian origin was accepted as legitimizing the protection claim)\(^7\).

Individuals who do not possess the attributes of a ‘good’ or ‘genuine’ refugee are not only seen as undeserving protection but oftentimes it is also implied that they intend to abuse the system of social welfare. An article published by *National Review* first suggests that the arriving migrants are mostly men (thus having little legitimacy as asylum seekers) and that, even if admitted to Europe, they would rather benefit from social assistance than become economically independent:

‘A full 70 percent of all refugees arriving in Europe are males unaccompanied by their families. When war reaches towns and villages, families flee in their entirety; they don’t simply shed young males from their midst’

(...)

Clearly, many of the refugees and migrants seek out Europe because of its welfare. Even if Qatar or Saudi Arabia allowed them in, few Syrian refugees would be prepared to take the manual-labor jobs now performed by Indians, Bangladeshis, and Pakistanis in those countries, all the more so when they can get an apartment, food, and health care in Europe without having to work\(^8\).

This narrative can be problematic for at least two reasons. Firstly, it is incompatible with a legal definition of refugee and sets an alternative standard that is based on a imaginary refugee ‘ideal’. While it is necessary to note that the legal definition can also be contested, the ideal used to define who deserves protection is more dangerous as it has no objectively measured point of reference. It can be thus easily used by political figures to exacerbate the already very emotional debate on immigration. Furthermore, it is also limited in the capacity to reflect the actual situation of migrants and the ways it evolves. For example, according to the UNHCR statistics, while in June 2015 men accounted for 74% of those who crossed the Mediterranean to Greece or Italy, they have accounted for just 47% this year so far\(^9\). The reasons for this ‘gender shift’ may be the fact that men who made the initial step last year are now attempting to bring their


families to join them and other ways (such as legal family reunification) are unavailable\textsuperscript{10}. It is therefore misleading to see recent mass migration to Europe as migration of young men. Moreover, the ideal of a refugee as primarily female or minor it at odds with what is known about the character of modern conflicts. Modern wars are total humanitarian situations as opposed to the 19th and early 20th century wars waged on battlefields between the armies of nation-states. Already in the 1990s, about 20 civil wars were occurring during each year, which was 10 times more that in 19th century\textsuperscript{11}. As a result of the increased number and average duration of domestic wars, poor distinction between armies and civilian populations, use of weapon of mass destruction and activities of non-state actors engaged in wars the number of civilian casualties (both men and women) is on the rise\textsuperscript{12}. While the vulnerability of women and children is often at centre of media attention, there is a tendency to neglect the fact that wars increasingly ethnicised, become humanitarian situations which affect entire populations.

**The definition of refugee in the international law**

The most important act of international law is the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees adopted in Geneva (hereinafter: the 1951 Refugee Convention). It defines a refugee as a 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’\textsuperscript{13}.

The process of finding solutions to the problem of forcibly displaced populations began under the League of Nations in the early 1920s. However, it was the Second World War II followed by a need to respond to the mass displacement in Europe


and the establishment of the United Nations system that eventually led to the adoption of the Convention\textsuperscript{14}.

The legal act sets obligations on the side of states-signatories towards refugees and basic principles for providing protection that were later reiterated in European and national laws. One of the crucial provisions – the \textit{non-refoulement} principle prohibits the return or expulsion of asylum seekers to territories where their life and freedom may be threatened. The signatories are also bound by the obligation to ensure that refugees have access to work, education, health and welfare system, freedom of movement and access to justice whereas refugees are required to conform to their laws and regulations\textsuperscript{15}.

As mentioned above, the law refers to particular grounds for persecution that the individuals must flee from to be called refugees. Most importantly, this legal framework does not limit the eligibility to apply for asylum to any gender, country of origin or material status as the defining feature of a refugee is the fact the he or she flees persecution. Whereas women in some instances can be seen as a ‘particular social group’ and be offered protection due to the gender-based persecutions in their countries of origin, the legal refugee definition does not foresee a gender paradigm in granting protection. In other words, gender itself does not make an asylum claim more legitimate.

It is interesting how in the narratives described above this is of limited importance; the imagined ‘refugee ideal’ contradicts the background legal definition. The substantive semantic distance between the ‘good’ or ‘real’ refugees presented in some media outlets from the definition of a refugee under international law can be explained by the fact of a particular kind of exposure to the events of the refugee crisis – a ‘mediated experience’, and by the existence of normative ‘refugee archetype’.

\textbf{Lived vs. mediated experience}

An average viewer or reader experiences the recent refugee crisis through what John B. Thompson’s (1995) calls a ‘mediated experience’. In his theory,


\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
'mediated experience' is opposed to ‘lived experience’ which he describes as ‘immediate, continuous and, to some extent, pre-reflexive’\textsuperscript{16}. The mediated experience, on the contrary, is made available indirectly through the media and based on indirect quasi-interactions. According to Thompson, the events that one accesses through the media are mostly distant (both in time and space) from the reality of every-day lives. Due to this distance, there is very little if no influence that the viewer or reader can have on the course of the events; at the same time those events do not have immediate implications for the viewer’s life. However, as Thompson says, between the events that are experienced through the media and the everyday life there can exist causal relations. However, as repeatedly mediated, those relations are extremely stretched and dispersed, and as such – imperceptible. Furthermore, the mediated experience of reality is always recontextualised as it is lived in a different environment than the reality itself. This lead to permanent clash of contexts and confrontation of different worlds.

The refugee crisis is, without a doubt, a real experience for some Europeans who came in direct contact with refugees as volunteers, aid workers, states officials or journalists. The ‘lived experience’ of the refugee crisis are personal stories: the individual impact of the experience of displacement. They are revealed by refugees and migrants to, for example employees of aid-providing agencies or ethnographers during their field research or. This experience is unique for an individual and may concentrate around such aspects as: losses of different types – economic and material goods, social networks, political and legal rights or around the problem of one owns agency in the context of displacement: strategies and plans and their collision with existing obstacles and barriers.

Instead, the strongly contradictory figures of ‘bad’ and ‘good’ refugees as presented in the media belong to the order of mediated experience. The majority of the recipients in Europe do not get a chance to engage in a conversations with the people arriving in thousands in several European countries over the past years. The attributes of ‘good refugees’ – female, poor, helpless and possessing a particular nationality are taken for granted and rarely accompanied with information on the context. One of such examples would be the changing migration pattern that make men and women migrate separately in different times. Another example of such missing information that alters the meaning of presented images is related to the use

of smartphones by refugees. It concerns the common use of smartphones by many refugees not only for communication with relatives and friends, but also as a source of navigation during their perilous journeys. In fact, their meaning changes from a fashionable commodity to the basic survival tool\(^{17}\).

While in principle it is possible for the media to provide information about refugees in a way that includes their own perspectives and explanation of their actions (for example, through registered interviews), it may not be common. The reason for that can be time constraints or lack of interest but it can also be caused by a much deeper problem of silencing the refugee voices who are seen as first and foremost the subjects of potential political action or intervention. In addition to that, the universal image (archetype) of refugee may be so strongly embedded in individual and collective consciousness that it becomes difficult to accept any counterevidence, any story that challenges whom we are used to see as refugee.

**The refugee archetype**

I find Liisa Malkki’s concept of refugee as ‘universal humanitarian subject’ very useful to understand how a universal image of a ‘good refugee’ was created during the European refugee crisis. Malkki described this concept in an 1996 article ‘Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization’ based on her fieldwork in the 1980s and early 1990s among Hutu refugees in the Great Lakes region of Africa\(^{18}\). She studied social imagination of refugees and the refugee status among the administrators of humanitarian aid. She found out that while the legal claim to refugee status by the Hutu was fully acknowledged by these administrators, there existed more elaborate normative definitions of ‘refugee’ that lived ‘in the shadow of the law’\(^{19}\). Refugee were expected to behave in a certain way (for example: not to have a high standard of living) and to display characteristics that would justify the provision of aid,  

\(^{17}\)An example of such usage could be a mobile application ‘Asylum in Serbia’ created by a Belgrade-based NGO during the crisis on the so-called ‘Western Balkan route’ in 2015 or ‘InfoAid’ designed by a group of Hungarian volunteers. These applications provided refugees with the information on nearby reception centres, border crossings, laws and regulation in the country and end emergency numbers. See: [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.dvuckovic.asylumseeker&hl=pl](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.dvuckovic.asylumseeker&hl=pl).  


\(^{19}\)Ibid, p. 378.
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some of them being: poverty and passivity.

Malkii argues that the most important aspects of social imagination of refugee are dehumanization and dehistoricization. Refugees are dehumanized when presented as a devoid of agency, speechless ‘sea of humanity’ where individuals remain anonymous or sentimentalized (as the figures of refugee mothers with children). Dehumanization is reinforced by visual representation and photographic testimony of the media focused on showing tragedy, but also by humanitarian agencies which, in the visual materials for their fundraising campaigns show passivity and victimhood. Dehistoricization of refugees, in turn, occurs when they are presented in a way that does not take into account the temporal and geopolitical characteristics that make one humanitarian crisis different from another; as if the refugees from Rwanda, Bosnia, Iraq and now – Syria were all the same by the very fact of having fled their homes. In dehistoricising narrative refugee’s historical agency and political memory are neglected. Both processes serve, in Malkii’s opinion, the humanitarian agenda by legitimizing the need for humanitarian operations and the existence of aid organizations.

In the context of Europe’s refugee crisis dehumanisation and dehistoricisation served, in my opinion, a different purpose – the one of legitimization of the efforts to keep refugees out of Europe. Although in Europe, as in context where Malkii conducted her research, there exist many organisations that provide humanitarian services to refugees and may need to present the needs of their beneficiaries to potential sponsors in a way that evokes compassion, the dominant factor (and the main political problem) concerned not so much the question of aid to refugees but their very existence on the European soil. Thus, the use of a (dehumanized and dehistoricised) ‘good refugee’ ideal served first and foremost to legitimize the policies of the ‘fortress Europe’. Through the acceptance of this ideal, detached from both the legal definition and the lived experience of those forcibly displaced, is a means to say that the newcomers who fail to conform to it cannot stay.

Conclusions

The aim of the analysis presented in this text was to look at the particular type of normatively loaded representations of refugees in the mass media discourse of the refugee crisis in Europe. The term ‘refugee’ is a multidimensional discursive figure that is composed of at least two basic elements: the legal
definition and the ‘refugee archetype’ – a universal set of normative characteristics (such as poverty, passivity or helplessness, gender-related behaviour patterns) rooted in past geographical and historical contexts. I suggest that, as these elements can vary and change proportions in a given discourse, their deliberate use may have an impact on responses of the public to the problem of forced migration. The use of the ‘refugee archetype’ instead of the legal definition to define who deserves protection is dangerous as it has no objectively measured point of reference. It can be thus easily used by political figures to exacerbate the already very emotional debate on immigration when they play the ‘migration card’. Furthermore, seeing refugees as ‘universal humanitarian subjects’ (or the embodiments of the ‘refugee archetype’) has a poor analytical usefulness and a limited capacity to reflect the actual situation of refugees and the changing character of forced migration. Attributes and characteristic of today’s imagined archetypal refugees tend to reflect the past reality and be resistant to changes making it difficult to accept any evidence, any story proving that refugee population from today may be different those form the past.

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The Immigration Crisis' Challenge to the Universality of Intergenerational Justice

Ciprian N. RADAVOI

Abstract. This essay raises the question whether the intergenerational justice (IGJ) debate is entering a new phase, in which cultural identity matters are gaining more weight. After the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development failed, in 2012, to adopt the institution of the Ombudsman for Future Generations, the IGJ debate in its traditional form, i.e. centered upon environmental quality and natural resources, faded. A new intergenerational ‘good’ is now capturing the attention of societies and policy makers. Concern for cultural preservation is widespread among European host societies in the context of the actual immigration crisis, and is at the same time enshrined in the Budapest Memorandum (2014) as an intergenerational duty. Integrating massive numbers of migrants originating from cultures very different from the one of the host country is a challenge to cultural preservation, and thus to the understanding of IGJ declared by the signatories of Budapest Memorandum. Inspired from the international law mechanism of diplomatic protection, this essay proposes that inter-national, rather than universal intergenerational justice, should be aimed at as a first step, under these circumstances.

Keywords: immigration crisis, intergenerational justice, Budapest Memorandum, identity

Introduction

After decades of intellectual exploration, the idea that posterity has rights because we have duties towards it has prevailed over the view that future people do not exist yet, and thus they cannot have anything, rights included. Once accepted theoretically, intergenerational justice needed operationalized, and the first half of the present decade has shown encouraging signs. At international level, OECD and UN have made the mainstream position clear. The former maintains in its Glossary of Statistical

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1See, e.g., Matthew H. Kramer, "Getting Rights Right", in Rights, Wrongs and Responsibilities, ed. M.H. Kramer (Basingstoke: Palgrave 2001), 54.
Terms that intergenerational justice (IGJ) is an “issue of sustainable development”, while the latter shows that only for sustainable development issues, as an exception, international solidarity embraces generations who do not yet exist, otherwise the matter pertains to relations among currently living representatives of different generations. The starting point of this approach to IGJ, i.e. bundled into sustainable development (SD), was the famous Brundtland Report, in the often quoted reference to “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Recent significant steps in this direction include the debate in the civil society over the institution of an Intergenerational Ombudsman at UN, and proposals in academia for a constitutional intergenerational convention.

Sustainability was, in a historical perspective, the third framework for discussing IGJ, after individual liberties in the aftermath of the American and French revolutions, and then peace and national freedom, starting with the United Nations Charter (1945) and moving along the decolonization period. Interestingly, we have now an emerging fourth view. If in late 18th century, IGJ was related to freedom, in mid 20th century to peace, in late 20th century to ecology, in early 21st century it seems to necessarily include a cultural component. Indeed, in April 2014, gathering in Budapest, the representatives of independent offices or parliamentary bodies handling intergenerational issues in the few countries that have already operationalized the IGJ principles agreed on the necessity of “safeguarding the natural environment, the natural resources and the climate, together with our cultural heritage”.

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8 Budapest Memorandum signed by the participants of the Conference of Model Institutions for a Sustainable Future held in Budapest, 24-26 April 2014 (Emphasis added).
The Memorandum, in spite of limited adherence, is of high significance, since it conveys the view of those who actually took seriously the intergenerational equity principles, and operationalized them at constitutional and institutional levels; we may thus even see this position as indicating a change in the global understanding of intergenerationality. But if we introduce the cultural variable into the IGJ equation, we necessarily challenge the axiomatic declamation of its universality found for instance in a United Nations’s document stating that “universality is the core attribute of ... intergenerational justice”.

The massive migration from certain countries in Africa and Asia, that is, mostly Muslim and belonging to the Global South, brings an obvious cultural challenge to the secular, developed, European countries of destination – a challenge that, put in an intergenerational perspective, may switch the focus of present generations from environmental to cultural preservation, and from a universalist to a communitarian approach.

**Reviving the Intergenerational Justice debate: Step I**

Is this the end of the debate on intergenerational justice? Not necessarily, but universalism should be aimed at via a different path. Introducing culture, a matter so intimately related to communities’ identity, on the intergenerational agenda infuses it with a degree of localism that requires rethinking its operationalization at global level. We should therefore replace international with *inter-national* intergenerational justice, and the norms of public international law are useful in this endeavor. To this end, I propose that the virtues of localism, as far as intergenerational concerns are concerned, should be openly acknowledged as a first step.

This is more difficult from a moral and political correctness perspective, than from a conceptual one. Conceptually, the universalism of IGJ is anyway built on weak foundations, as demonstrated by the failure to craft an accepted theory of justice in the field - let alone to operationalize it. Universalists rely heavily on the globalizing effect of the words “human” and “planet” - see for instance Feinberg

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The Immigration Crisis’ Challenge to Intergenerational Justice

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(“The human future ... will, after all, be human”),\textsuperscript{10} Weiss (“each generation is entitled to inherit a robust planet”)\textsuperscript{11} or Weston (“our planet”, “planetary catastrophe”).\textsuperscript{12} Speaking from the Eastern cultures perspective, Kobayashi even discusses the “Global Family Person”. But all these appear excessively idealistic when confronted with a simple, real-life argument: a universal theory of IGJ “cannot offer any reason for people in rich countries to cut back so as to improve the prospects of future people in other communities”.\textsuperscript{13}

That affinities are stronger in groups like family, friends, towns or even countries is well demonstrated - see, e.g., the concentric circular model proposed by Oldenquist,\textsuperscript{14} showing that loyalties fade the more we move towards the outer circles, and are the weakest when we come to the most remote circle, that of the human species. Therefore, we should build upon affinities in the unit of nation-state, at least for the practical reason that countries are well-defined and perennial in the sense that even when they disappear, we have clear rules of succession, which is often not the case with other types of communities. Most importantly, nation states are the smallest unit where projects implying considerable degree of self-sacrifice to others’ benefit, including future others, are feasible: from redistribution of wealth between geographic or ethnic units within the state to life risk during wars, many types of self-sacrifice require the fuel of patriotism.

The problem is that we enter a field of total war between adepts of patriotism as virtue, such as MacIntyre or Wingo, and those who reject it as “bad faith” (Keller), a “moral burden” (Miller), going as far as labeling it as “racism” (Gomberg). However, there is safe ground in the no man’s land: Nathanson’s “moderate patriotism”, Nussbaum’s “globally sensitive patriotism”, Audi’s “minimal nationalism”, or Viroli’s “reformulated” patriotism as tool to combating nationalism are but few of the constructs allowing room for “good” patriotism. Perhaps the

\textsuperscript{13} Brian Barry, "Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice", in Fairness and Futurity, ed. Andrew Dobson (New York: Oxford University Press 1999), 95.
most convincing plead for patriotism as usually a good thing came (see Cafaro), relevantly to my argument, in the field of environment, where the corrosive “us versus them” danger of patriotism turns into a beneficial “us, as example and inspiration to them”.

A counterargument to relying on patriotism as fuel for intergenerational care may be related to the already existent multiethnic societies in the countries of the Global North. One may legitimately ask what patriotism could we invoke in countries as diverse as the United States, Canada, or certain European states; the answer is that at a minimum, multiethnic countries can rely on the 'constitutional patriotism' popularized in the 1980s by the German political philosopher Jürgen Habermas. Constitutional patriotism implies that "political attachment ought to center on the norms, the values and, more indirectly, the procedures of a liberal democratic constitution", ¹⁵ rather than a national culture.

Therefore, patriotism with its power to inspire sacrifice for the well-being of others can be one of the two missing links between a communitarian and a universal understanding of intergenerational equity – the second link being the rules of public international law, as shown in the next section.

**Reviving the Intergenerational Justice debate: Step II**

Even without further steps, national operationalization of IGJ will lead to universalistic impacts, by an aggregative process:

> It is true that any communitarian theory ... only argues for the justice obligations of each community for its own successor generations. Yet, if we presume that part of every culture, no matter how different in other ways, is a shared sense of its own successor generations, then a theory of intergenerational justice ... has a universalistic impact. True, it is an appeal that works only for a community in consideration of its obligations of justice to its own future generations, but it makes the appeal to every community to act in such a way. (Hiskes 2006:84)

I propose, however, that aggregation is enhanced via a mechanism conceptually and procedurally described in the following. We should first note that intergenerational issues have long been intuitively located within the broader

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The concept of human rights, accepted as universal since they are inherent to us as human beings. But human rights themselves face the dilemma of protection in cases of extraterritorial abuse. Under the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and under the regional human rights conventions, states are responsible for breaches of their nationals’ rights; the extraterritorial application is limited to cases when the breaching state exercise some form of effective control overseas – a logical consequence of the fact that it is primarily the responsibility of the victim’s state to protect the rights of its nationals.

But in 2014 – and here is where my parallel starts – the Human Rights Committee urged that the right to privacy has to be respected regardless of the nationality or location of the individuals whose communications are under direct surveillance.\(^{16}\) At least for the right to privacy in the context of secret mass surveillance, control is not necessary for the existence of the breach. A state can breach human rights of existing generations anywhere on Earth. In theory, an effective remedy in cases of extraterritorial human rights abuse without effective control is the victims’ state taking the case to the International Court of Justice, by way of diplomatic protection.

If we add the temporal variable to the spatial one – that is, if violations are done abroad, but to future generations – the mechanism should remain applicable. Present generations in one country can breach the rights of future generations in another country – and since there is no jurisdictional link between perpetrators and victims, the state of the victims should be allowed to bring a claim on their behalf; a “diplomatic protection” for unborn victims. The parallel is even more comprehensible if we think that states already function of speakers for other generations, in the case of apologies for past events whereby generations in one country have hurt future (future, from their perspective; present, from ours) generations abroad.

In the mechanism I propose, they will equally speak for their future generations. I see three main pillars for operationalizing such approach, i.e. establishing norms and procedures related to State Responsibility for Intergenerational International Wrongful Acts.

a) The clean slate. Seen in the North/South perspective, inter-national

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intergenerational harm was mainly done by North in the last two centuries – from pollution and environmental degradation during its industrialization, to cultural aggression during the colonial period, and more recently to consumerist lifestyles for which the bill is paid by South, for generations to come. In turn, South now claims its own right to development – with the associated reverberations on the environment – plus, as said before, it exports people of which number and cultural homogeneity are at a level potentially affecting local cultures. An inter-national intergenerational convention should find ways to put up with these unresolved problems.

b) The list of intergenerational rights. With environment and culture as main candidates, participants to the intergenerational conference preparing the convention should first assess whether other rights should be on the list, e.g. related to wars and migration, to excessive borrowing, or to excessive prolongation of life. Then, it should detail a set of state obligations meant to ensure the realization of these rights. In identifying the list of intergenerational topics with inter-national relevance, thorny issues have to be touched, like North’s overconsumerism, brain drain, nuclear waste disposal in the third world, or environmental destruction through their corporations under the name of ‘development’ – or, from the opposite side, South’s demographic excesses.

The latter is perhaps one of the most sensitive issues to be included in the global intergenerational debate; on the one hand, the famous authors of the ‘tragedy of the commons’ boldly affirmed that “[f]reedom to breed is intolerable”, but on the other hand, countries like China, which have tried to limit this freedom, are harshly criticized in the Western world, see the latest report (2015) of the United States’ Congressional-Executive Commission on China. So far, reproductive rights are only touched upon in soft international law, see the well known Cairo Declaration referring to people’s “freedom to decide if, when and how often to [reproduce]”. But continuing to hide this thorny matter under the carpet for the sake of political correctness will not do any good to future generations. A universal cap on reproductivity makes sense if there is to make intergenerational

justice really universal, and its place may be in a comprehensive inter-national intergenerational convention, given that for instance, countries may in the future raise claims to the global commons according to their population weigh.

c) The procedures. For *intra-national* intergenerational issues, the convention should employ the same mechanism found in the anticorruption conventions (OECD Anti-bribery Convention 1997, and United Nations Convention Against Corruption 2003) – state commitment plus reports and/or monitoring – and combine it with the ICCPR mechanism for complaints. For *inter-national* intergenerational issues, the solution might be an international arbitral court where states can bring claims on behalf of their future generations, when their substantive rights have been violated.

**Conclusion**

Policy makers in the countries that gathered two years ago in Budapest have shown determination to preserve their people’s culture. This challenges the dominant understanding of intergenerationality during the last decades, i.e., related to resources and the environment.

Even though not officially related to the increased South to North migration, the addition of culture to the baggage we are supposed leave to our descendants requires rethinking the intergenerational justice debate. From this perspective, the migration flow, regardless of the migrants’ motives for leaving their country, brings about two types of intergenerational injustice: that done by past generations in the Global North to present generations in the Global South, and those possibly done by present generations in the South to future generations in the North, mainly through excessive reproduction and subsequent migration.

If we accept the national cultural heritage as a right of future generations, the *inter-national* approach to IGJ is the only way to preserve the idea of IGJ’s universality. True, it will depart from the “global commons” view of future generations, and for a good reason: as shown in the global commons’ tragedy literature, the problem is that no one feels really incentivized to protect them. But “allocating” world’s future generations to their countries is not a departure from universalism, or no less than the human rights system is. The mechanism I proposed in this essay would protect distant generations’ rights in a manner similar to human rights protection – that is, acknowledging that humankind is one, but recognizing the state role in the field, domestically and internationally.
References


New Added Languages within EU -2015 and the Rroma’ language

Lia POP

Abstract: The refugees and migrants waves detonated a bomb in the EU’ 2015. The people composing the waves aimed, as usually, the Western and Northern countries, where the advances inclusive policies and high social benefits are available. A moderate rate of legal and illegal migrants (plus some refugees) took the central Mediterranean route to Europe and directed to North. In 2015, the new comers, (much more than previously) used additional routes, too. One of their new route, the Balkan Route, is the topic of the present paper, seen on the sociolinguistic perspective. On the Balkan Route with the new people arrived large of speakers of new languages, rare and extremely rare for Europe. On the one hand, this speakers challenge the management of migratory fluxes and also the future linguistic policies in EU. On the other hand, their speakers risk to miss the EU CEAS¹ protection and to become victims of traffickers and exploiters of the Human Being. The present paper aims to draw the attention to the impact of the new languages received in Europe and to indicate European resources already able to work with some of them. It is trying to list the new added languages within the EU languages coming via Balkan route 2015, in the Q 3, looking to the first 10 “providers states” of the new languages. It limits the research on the languages coming from Asia. The analysis compares them, in terms of the number, of languages’ family; of the previous speakers’ communities’ presence within the EU. It will draw the attention to the Rare Added Languages in Europe (RALE), and especially, to some languages (and dialect) belong to the family ROM and DOM. The rarity of some of the new added languages represents real issues for the immigration officers. They need European interpreters, objective and well qualified, able to speak directly with the persons in need, able to recognize the language of those people who do not speak any of the linguae francae working in Europe, or more familiar Asian language. People trapped behind the language barriers are likely to become victims of misunderstanding, just because they could not speak for themselves. In isolate cases, they are likely to be the victims of the traffickers or exploiters which interpret for them at the entry points. Among the Rare Languages Added in Europe are the languages of the Dom and Lom Languages’ group too. That is why, in this context, the educated Roma’ get the chance to contribute in the European effort to correctly assess the refugees and migrants and so to protect the vulnerable refugees and migrants, but also to envisage a carrier of researcher in the field of Rare Added Languages in EU (RALEU).

Keywords: Asylum seekers and migrants; New Added Languages within EU; Rare Languages Added in Europe; ROM’s family of languages

¹ CEAS is the EU Common European System of Asylum.
Introductory remarks

The interest for the issue of the New Added Languages within EU is motivated, generally in the interest for the migrants and refugees nowadays wave. The New Added Languages within EU came with migrants and refugees.

Specifically and pragmatically, this interest is motivated by the fact that the most vulnerable people among the new comers are in linguistic impossibility. Indeed they face the linguistic barriers not only as a temporary limitation for an independent life, but as a risk of being transform in slaves or trafficking of human beings’ victims with no chances to get out. They could not speak any European Language and neither an Asian languages familiar here.

With that they are out of the possibility to be protected by the EU’ CEAS, person by person.

They are constraint by their linguistic impossibility to ask for another person’ support in the interview organized by the European Immigration Officers. In such type of cases, there is to consider the existence of the significant probabilities that those who interpret for the people in impossibility to speak for themselves to patronize them, or even worst to be the “owner” of them. The owners many times transform the persons in linguistic impossibility in victims of the traffickers and exploiters of human beings.

Secondly it is to protect the EU citizens by the criminal activity and to disclose them at the entry points.

Thirdly, the progress in the knowledge of the diversity of the languages that comes to Europe and on their consequences are needed, just because it is modifying the linguistic map of Europe by adding new languages, enriching some linguistic families and by opening new lines of interpreting.

Fourthly, the interest in the New Added Languages is of some political relevance, because the new rare languages are challenging the Council of Europe linguistic divisions and may be the Charter of the Minority Languages.

The educated Rroma role would be the first specific call to contribute to Europe defense, exclusively addressed to them, and exclusively valorizing their groups’ intercontinental history and experience.

On the other hand, a more specific management of the new comers entrances combined with a increasing knowledge on them could practically help to
adequate the EU strategy - Common European Asylum System\(^2\) - to the de facto, realities. (The need to adequate it is also imposed by internal European factors as: the changing dynamic of the fluxes – routes, speed, and re-locations, returns, asylum seekers applications proceeding; the European member states capacity to support and integrate them; the European public opinion mood toward them\(^3\); the fact that the multilingual perspective is out of being considered in the EASO (European Asylum Support Office)\(^4\), on the dimension Country of Origins Information\(^5\).

The hypothesis of the paper is that the number of the New Added Languages in the EU is incredibly high and it could increase exponentially, mainly on the Balkan route.

At the first moment, the new languages\(^6\) could be barriers in the access of the refugees and migrants to the EU protection against the trafficking in human being or against other forms of crimes.

Without a concentrate effort designed to get access to the communicative process in such new languages some groups of criminal could use them to build linguistic citadels for their illegal activities. It is quite common for some tribes with the un-orthodox practices to use a rare language as secret languages. (As consequence, there is not the case to invent a new practice. There are, conform the linguistic and ethnological studies a large number of tribes that use the secret languages in Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India ... Regularly, they are rare languages.

The mastering of the country of origin’s language by a European Interpreter is crucial also for the respect of the migrants\(^7\) rights – as established in the Geneva Convention on Refugees 1951 and the New York Protocol 1967\(^8\). It is also crucial for the early interactions with the locals.

The methods to determinate the new languages entered is hardly to figure.

\(^2\) See more on the CEAS at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs.
\(^3\) After the 20 July 2015, it became less and less favorable. Sometimes it was shocking. A journalist, Erlah, Sebastjan, twitted in August, 26, 2015: They can be stopped with bullets!
\(^4\) See more at https://easo.europa.eu.
\(^5\) See more at https://coi.easo.europa.eu.
\(^6\) New as considered from an European point of view.
\(^7\) The term migrant is used here as international migrant.
Direct Observation and interviews conducted among the new venue people at the entries points could be the most extensive way to learn about the languages they daily speak. Because of the sensitivity of the issue and the security protection of the places, it is impossible to be used. Beside the linguistic barriers encountered by the interested researcher in such a Babel Tower seems to be impossible to overcome. Instead of the direct observation, the other method are to be imagined.

The indirect way to find out how many and which languages are coming in the EU with the migrants and refugees is based on combining the information on migration with the data on the languages spoken back home the first countries of migrants and refugees origin.

The paper is using the indirect method. It examines the first ten countries of origins of the Migrants on one of the determinate route - the Balkan Route - as they are officially communicated by the Eurostat. It combine the data with languages spoken back home as they results from special data bases, specific studies, or special Encyclopedias. It results in some estimations on the number of languages possible to come from the first ten countries and an order of magnitude, which allow us to estimate the scale of linguistic diversity entered in two years 2015-2915 in Europe on one single route. (The migration experts speak on 6 routes.)

1. The migrants' routes toward Europe in 2015

The migration routes considered are:
1. The route started somewhere in the Far Asia and it is continuing through the Eastern Mediterranea See shore, collects in the Balkan Region and directs to the Germany and Scandinavian Countries;
2. The route started somewhere in Africa, in the Eastern coasts or in the Middle continental, reunites the groups in North Africa – Libya, Tunisia, crosses the Central Mediterranea See to the Costal Europe as Italy, Malta, France and from here further to Calais aiming Britain or to Germany and Northern Europe;
3. The route started somewhere Continental Africa and reunites close to Costal North Africa nearby Ceuta and Melila (Spain) and from here to the European Spain;
4. The routes started somewhere in the West and Western Costal Africa,
direct to the Pacific Ocean shore to the Spain (Canares Islands) and from here to the Continental European Spain;

5. The routes started in Commonwealth and directed to Britain;

6. The routes started in Ukraine and directed to Poland and Romania or to the others European countries.

**Figure no. 1. 2015: The Routes of Immigration to the European Union**

The legal routes do not differ from the illegal ones.

What is specific for 2015, it is, on one hand, that the CEAS entered into force in July 20, 2015 and created more promising conditions for the new comers; on the other hand, it is the overusing the Balkan route, especially after the CEAS enforcing. The Balkan route collected the larger number of migrants and refugees 726,274 (Q 3) in comparison with all the routes together. The majority of them came from camps in Turkey.

In their way to Europe, the refugees and migrants collected are more and more concentrated on the same itinerary.

The map below provided by UNRCH prove it.
The concentration of the flux in one major route alongside Europe suggests the work of the professional organizers and some demonstrative goals. To inspire a new fear in Europe could not be excluded. The creations of new phobia either.

The fact that the mass refugees and migrants started immediately, after the CEAS entered into force, is also suggest an organizational process and a goal, which is not the goal of the people involved in the marches to Europe. By contrary, it seems that their tragedy was cynically used.

The New Added Languages and New Rare Languages are coming on one route is addressing the question on the languages coming on another five routes.

2. How many languages could come to the EU with the most recent waves of refugees and migrants?

The table below – Figure 3 - proves that only with the new migrants and refugees listed as coming from the first ten countries “contributors” we have to face
over the 100 + 500 new languages, only on the Balkan route.

The New Added Languages within EU come from very different linguistic families and the vast majority of them could got only the status of Rare Added Languages in the EU (RALEU). (That means that is very hard to find the European educated interpreters and mediators to work with migrants and refugees coming from the regions where such languages are the working ones.)

Others are languages that function with the status of lingua franca back home. It is the case of the Arabic, Russian and Serbian\(^9\) practiced in the migrants’ networks very successfully. The Romani also does it.

Looking to the practical conditions the issues are: How to interview at the entry points a person that could not speak an European languages? How to manage groups that are in similar conditions?

Some of the refugees and migrants are able to speak a version of Arabic. That is why they rely on the inter-comprehensibility provided by it.

For the most vulnerable new comers the European lingua franca are not available. The Arabic neither. For some of them (the illiterate ones) the official languages back home are also unknown. They need other languages as bridges. The most suitable – as the bellow Table shows – is the Romani.

The Roma’ language is one of the branches of the languages known as DOM, ROM, LOM versions of the nomad groups with the Indian origins, which agglutinated on the Persian territories\(^10\) and from here started to West on different routes, routes that separated the mention groups of Languages: DOM, ROM, LOM. The languages of the first stratum is larger inter-comprehensible, than them of the third stratum as M. Courthiade stated\(^11\), the others are less inter-comprehensible, but not totally different.

In contemporary Europe, there are people with a University degree able to speak at least three languages – some times more – that could contribute as mediators for all the group speaking a language close to their mother tongue.

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\(^9\) In the last semester the Serbian disappeared from the top 10. (see the news release on Eurostat report 44/2016 at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7203832/3-04032016-AP-EN.pdf/790eba01-381c-4163-bcd2-a54959b99ed6)

\(^10\) As the theory supported by \(^10\) D. Kenrick, - Romany Origins and Migration Pattern (2000), http://www.ijfm.org/PDFs_IJFM/17_3_PDFs/07_Kenrick_hw.pdf.


\(^11\) M. Curtiade “Distance between Romani dialects in ” GLS / NAC Newsletter”, 8/1985, nr. 2.
Figure no. 3.2015, Q 3: THE DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES OF THE COUNTRY OF ORIGINS OF THE ASYLUM SEEKERS AND MIGRANTS TOWARD EU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY OF ORIGINS</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Official language at home</th>
<th>Other languages spoken back home</th>
<th>First European foreign languages spoken</th>
<th>Languages Added in EU (Col.3&amp;4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syria1</td>
<td>221 730</td>
<td>Arabic 6 + versions.</td>
<td>+11 including languages from DOM and LOM family</td>
<td>French, English</td>
<td>6+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan2</td>
<td>102 705</td>
<td>Pashto &amp; Dari (Farsi, 1965) 2+</td>
<td>+ 48 Languages (+Domari/Romani included.) 3 (with Arabic alphabet)</td>
<td>???/ English</td>
<td>2+48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 See more at [http://www.ethnologue.com/country/sy/languages/](http://www.ethnologue.com/country/sy/languages/). There are spoken in Syria, aside of the 5 versions of Arabic, traditional languages as Adyghe, Assirian Neo Aramaic Armenian; Azerbajani, South; Domari; Kabardian; Kurdish, North; Lomvaren (Alternate Names: Armenian Bosha, Arnebuab Bisa, Bosa, Bosha. Classification: Mixed language, Armenian-Romani. Comments: Non-indigenous); Turoyo; Western Neo-Aramaic = +11 traditional languages. The Domari is actually a family of languages and it is family close with Lomvaren family ...and with the Rom Family of languages.

2 See more at [http://www.ethnologue.com/country/AF/languages](http://www.ethnologue.com/country/AF/languages). Aside Pashto and Dari in Afghanistan are official in at some regions level Uzbec, Turkmen, BalochimPashavyi and Nuristani. Other languages spoken are indo European languages as Ashkunu, Kamkata-viri, Vasi-vari, TregamiKalasha ... more than 40 minor languages with many dialects (200). The most interesting seem to be: Brahui with alternate names as Birahui, Biravi, Brahuiki, KurGalli, Kurd Gali: Domari with alternate names: Dom, Ghorbati. Dialects: Churi-Wali: Inku[jat] with alternate names as Jakati, Jat, Jafari, Jati, Jatu, Kayani, Musali. The jat were considered as Rroma ancestors. Parya (spoken in Langanman Province and limitedly in Kabul province)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Added Languages</th>
<th>Other Languages</th>
<th>Spoken Languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>69,460</td>
<td>Arabic &amp; Kurdish 2+</td>
<td>+ 19 others languages</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kosovo</td>
<td>68,930</td>
<td>Albanian, &amp; Serbian 2+</td>
<td>+ 2 (Turkish &amp; Romani). (The Roma speak Serbian or Romany, while the Ashkali and the Egyptians speak Albanian)</td>
<td>Italian, Turkish, Roma, French, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>54,340</td>
<td>Albanian 1+</td>
<td>+ 5 Aromanian with alternate Names: Armani, Armina, Armini, Aromunian, Macedo Romanian, Macedo-Rumanian, Vlach. Bosnian, Serbian, Turkish, Romani.</td>
<td>French, Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>36,680</td>
<td>Urdu + English</td>
<td>+ 72 languages (65 are indigenous and 8 are non-indigenous). Domaki (a DOM family dialect)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Glottolog reports secret languages too.

4 Aside the 7 versions of Arabic Spoken – Kurdish is spoken by approximately 15-20% of the population, the Turkmen (South Azeri), Neo Aramaic are also spoken by a significant number of citizens. Smaller minority languages include Bajelani, Domari Koy Sanjaq Sura, Kurdish, Mandaic, known also as Gorani, Gurani, Hawramani, Hawram, Hewrami, Macho-Zwani, Macho, Sarli, Shabaki, Armenian, Feyli Lurish and Persian. Arabic, Kurdish, Persian, and South Azeri are written with versions of the Arabib script and, the Neo-Aramaic languages in the Syriac script. See more at [http://www.ethnologue.com/country/iq/languages](http://www.ethnologue.com/country/iq/languages).

5 See more at [http://www.ethnologue.com/country/PK](http://www.ethnologue.com/country/PK). The complete list could be consulted in Glossolog. The Pakistan regional languages are The country is also home to several regional languages as Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, Balochi. Several languages reunite significant number of speakers: Kashmiri, Hindko, Brahui, Shina, Balti, Khowar, Dhatki, Marwari, Wakhi, Burushaski. Minorities language include: Aer, Badeshi – spoken by Bedias? – Bagri, Balti, Bateri, Bhadrawahi, Bhava, Buriq/Puriq, Burushaski, Chambeali, Changtha, Chilisso, Chitrali, Dari, Dameli, Dogri, Dehawri, Dhatki, Domaaki (DOM family), Gawar Bati, Ghera, Goaria, Gowro, Gujarati, Goljri (Gujarli), Gurcula, Hazaraki, Jadgali, Jandavra, Jogi,
### Data Table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Official Language</th>
<th>Other Languages</th>
<th>Language Minority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>35,990</td>
<td>No Official Language. 6 languages are institutional Tigrinya, Tigre, Arab, Italian, French</td>
<td>+ 97. Semitic languages</td>
<td>English, Italian, French, Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>24,910</td>
<td>Serbian 1 + Serbian + in Vojvodina</td>
<td>+ 15 Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarin, Bunjevac, Croatian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Macedonian, Romani, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Ukrainian and Vlach</td>
<td>Russian, English, French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>23,195</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>+ 520 languages spoken (among them the most spoken are Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Ibibio, Edo, Fulfude, Kanuri.</td>
<td>English + others Approx. 520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kabutra, Kachchi (Kutchi), Kalam, Kalashamun, Kalkoti, Kamviri, Kati, Khetran, Khowar, Kohistani Indus, Koli, Kachi, Koli-Parkari, Koli-Wadiara, Lasi, Loarki, Marwari, Memoni, Od, Ormuri, Palula, Sansi, Savi, Swati, Shina Kohistani, Torwali, Uygur, Ushoio, Wakhi, Waneci, Ydgha, Zangsari

6 See more at http://www.ethnologue.com/country/ER.

7 The groups of languages spoken in Eritrea are: the South Semitic, (70% of speakers), which includes: Tigrinya, Tigre, Dahlic, recently assigned its own ISO 639-3 code; Cushitic branch includes Beja, Saho, Afar (spoken in Ethiopia) and Blin; Nilo Saharian includes Kunama and Nara.

8 The Council of Europe Report on regional or minority Languages in Serbia lists as minorities’ languages in Serbia Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Bunjevac, Croatian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Macedonian, Romani, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Ukrainian and Vlach See more in http://www.npld.eu/news/latest-news/60/latest-council-of-europe-report-on-regional-or-minority-languages-in-serbia-published-/
An estimation on the total, indicates 100 + 520 NEW LANGUAGES RECEIVED + ... It is a result after an attempt to let out the languages coming from the African countries and the languages already spoken by the diasporas in EU.

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9 Nigeria’s Languages are not in the focus of this study.
10 See more at http://www.ethnologue.com/country/UA
3. How to bridge so many languages arrived to the EU?

Sociolinguistic researches account for 23 official languages of EU plus the 60 indigenous regional and minority languages. (It is right, the number of the languages spoken as the languages of many diaspora in Europe are not considered in the total of the European Languages.)

Looking to the table above and considering only the Asian origins, it is to acknowledge that the number of the new languages possible to arrive here, at least, overcome the spoken languages within EU. How many exactly and which ones, belonging to which language’ families, whether or not there are already in Europe diasporas which communicate in such languages ... could be establish only by a group of research coordinated by a specific institute.

Those new languages could be: transnational languages, national, regional, minorities’ languages or tribal languages. Others could be minority’ languages with recognized status, or by, contrary of non-recognized, and finally tribal languages spoken in small communities, with no written form, with no standardization, functioning as secret language in the new larger community.

Each of them could be languages spoken in some diaspora living already in Europe – having their churches/ temples/mosques with educational units meant to conserve their origins’ languages. Others could be languages without a known community of spikers.

The languages of the New Comers in Europe could be languages related in large families, (some of them transnational). That means they are internal Linguae Francae for large number of speakers, “natural lingua franca among people from a common original area. Others, could be classified as regional, minority or languages with no political status, tribal languages (with extremely rare sociolinguistic status in Europe.). It is from here that the New Rare Added Languages in EU came. It is the source of the New Added Linguistic Diversity in EU and it challenges the EU linguistic policies in managing linguistic diversity.

With such a new overcoming diversity in EU after 2015, the policies to promote unlimited new diversity are to be carefully analyzed, at least in terms of sustainability.

A special attention deserves the Romani language – with its special case of diversity and with its openness to be continuously nurtured with elements of the
other family members, DOM and LOM.

Considering the new languages added in EU, 2015, via Balkan Route, under the perspective of possible unity, four new linguae francae could be considered. (See the Figure 4.)

**Figure no. 4. 2015, Q 3: THE UNITY OF THE LANGUAGES OF THE COUNTRY OF ORIGINS OF THE ASYLUM SEEKERS AND MIGRANTS TOWARD EU**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migrants &amp; Asylum seekers</th>
<th>LANGUAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COUNTRY OF ORIGINS</strong></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Syria</td>
<td>221 730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Afghanistan</td>
<td>102 705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Iraq</td>
<td>69 460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Kosovo</td>
<td>68 930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Albania</td>
<td>54 340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Glottolog reports secret languages too.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Official Language</th>
<th>Languages Spoken</th>
<th>Table Language</th>
<th>Other Languages</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>36 680</td>
<td>Urdu + English</td>
<td>+ 72 languages (65 are indigenous and 8 are non-indigenous). Domaki (a DOM family dialect)</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Possibly ROMANI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>35 990</td>
<td>No Official Language, 6 languages are institutional</td>
<td>Tigrinya, Tigre, Arab, Italian, French</td>
<td>Semitic languages</td>
<td>English, French</td>
<td>??? ROMANI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>24 910</td>
<td>Serbian 1 + Serbian 1 + in Vojvodina</td>
<td>+ 15 Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Bunjevac, Croatian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Macedonian, Romani, Romanian, Ruthenian, Slovak, Ukrainian and Vlach</td>
<td>Serbian</td>
<td>Russian, English, French</td>
<td>SERBIAN + Possibly ROMANI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>23 195</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>+ others 520 languages spoken (among them the most spoken are Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Ibibio, Edo, Fulfulde, Kanuri.)</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>English + others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>17 200</td>
<td>Ukrainian 1 +</td>
<td>+ 24 languages (10 are indigenous and 15 not) 2 are institutional. ++ Romani, Jakati/Inku (spoken by the Jat in Afghanistan, and Slovak)</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Russian, English</td>
<td>RUSSIAN + Possibly ROMANI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>900 730</td>
<td>THE LINGUAE FRANCAE for the NEW COMERS: ARABIC, ROMANI, SERBIAN, RUSSIAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analyzing the Figure 4, it is clear that the ARABIC, ROMANI, SERBIAN, RUSSIAN will function – after the receiving and return procedures – four new __________

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2 The groups of languages spoken in Eritrea are: the South Semitic, (70% of speakers), which includes: Tigrinya, Tigre, Dahlic, recently assigned its own ISO 639-3 code; Cushitic branch includes Beja, Saho, Afar (spoken in Ethiopia) and Blin; Nilo Saharian includes Kunama and Nara.
Linguae Francae within the EU. Aside the EU policies, they possibly would host associations, alliances and conflicts and conflict resolutions. To get them in the process of the EU efforts to build the societal coherence and the EU identity, the policy of launching bridges to them are to be constructed, using each of the lingua franca available.

In the same interest, the ROMANI is to be considered as the bridge to the spikers of the Rare Language arrived in Europe.

The Romani is enjoying nowadays a solution to address its extremely rare varieties (languages, dialects and sub-dialect), its internal diversity. It is the Council of Europe’ policy expressed in terms of Council of Europe Recommendation, (Rec. 1203/1993). It consists in the policy of the flexibility and linguistic pluralism\(^3\). It could be a sample in managing diversity with internal forces.

On the other hand, carefully considered politically and wisely managed practically – the Romani could be the fundament for a new Lingua franca. As a lingua franca it could be the bridge among the European citizens with competences in the Romani and the new comers, spikers of rare languages, inherited common roots with Romani.

The calls addressed to the Rroma people with university degrees, to contribute in the EU management of the linguistic diversity brought by the new comers in the European manner could be an immediate solution in the contemporary crisis.

Looking to the diversity management succeeded with Romani, to the opportunity to open Romani as a lingua franca among rare languages’ speakers and to the possibility to involve of the educated Rroma people in the crisis solving process, it is to move the focus from the issues to the available resources to face them.

Conclusions

Analyzing the number of the languages that came toward EU recently – considering only the venues on the Balkan Route for migrants and refugees – it is clear that at least 100 of new languages (plus multiple dialects for many of them)

arrived in here with the people which plan to stay here for a while or for good. Such languages constitute of the New Added Linguistic Diversity within EU.

The second conclusion is that the political measures to respond to such a challenge are to be designed, approved and implemented as a first degree emergency for the sake of the Europe of peace and security. In such a framework, the Common European System of Researching the Rare Languages on the grounds of the European Values and Culture is the main recommendation of this paper.

The third conclusion is drawing the attention to the Romani languages as a resource. The Romani language – with its dialects and varieties - is one that cross the cultural and cross continental geography and roots. It link speakers from India to Europe. The Romani’s European speakers could serve as devoted agents of the Europeanization / integration of the new comers in a Common European System for Integration of the new comers who speak a language related to Romani. In the first emergency they could serve as interpreters at the entry points for the most vulnerable new comers, the ones exposed to the trafficking in persons or to be exploit.

References:


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Rezvani, Babak, - Etho-Territorial Conflicts and Coexistence in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Fereydan (2013), University of Amsterdam, 2013.


Abstract. The paper aims to investigate the relationship between the recent increasingly pattern of Vietnamese migrants in Thailand and migration networks. By surveying 50 Vietnamese migrants in Bangkok, Thailand, the study confirms that migration networks have played a critical role in facilitating migration flows, especially irregular flows from Vietnam to Thailand over the years. It can be reflected by reducing the cost of migration, coping with new working environment and risks during working in Thailand and ensuring the return process for Vietnamese migrants. Moreover, forms of social networks includes personal networks (kinship and friendship networks), and community network (người dân đường’s network, social media) has been also discussed. The study also implies that the người dân đường’s networks might contribute to recently emerging issues such as human trafficking and smugglings, which require further research.

Keywords: social networks, Vietnamese migrants, international migration, Thailand

1. Introduction

According to the Department of Labor – Invalid and Social Affairs in Ha Tinh Province, Vietnam, the number of Ha Tinh inhabitant emigrated to Thailand might reach 10,000. Surprisingly, there are communes where almost all of the working-age people have been working in Thailand. My Loc commune in Can Loc district, Ha Tinh province, is a stark example, where more than 1,000 inhabitants have been
working in Thailand among its total population of 7,800.\(^1\) Similar situations can also be found in other Northern Central region of Vietnam such as Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, and Quang Tri provinces, which are very close to the borderline with Lao PDR. In fact, there has no formal statistic existence on the number of Vietnamese migrants in Thailand since most of them are irregular migrants.\(^2\) The fact, thus, raises questions why and how Vietnamese migrants migrate to Thailand and how they can adapt with a new environment since there has many differences in language and culture between two countries.

In explaining reasons people migration, various theories have been given such as neo-classical economic theory, the new economics of migration theory, and the network theory, etc. Of which, social networks can be considered a central component in migration system analysis (Boyd 1989). The study, thus, is expected to figure out the role of social network in facilitating people movements from Vietnam to Thailand in recent years in order to understand more the patterns of Vietnamese migrants in Thailand.

2. Literature review

There has been a number of studies, both theoretically and empirically, which affirmed the role of social network in facilitating international migration.

Theoretically, social networks has been considered as a form of social capital that the non-migrants can rely on their interpersonal ties of kinship, friendship or shared community in looking for abroad employment (Massey et al. 1993, Boyd 1989). According to Massey (1993), the role of social networks can be manifested clearly in lowering the costs and risks of migration process as well as ensuring higher possibilities of returning. Particularly, the costs and risks relate to travelling, employment search, settlement and adaptation a new culture, arrest

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\(^2\) An estimation that Vietnamese Ambassador in Bangkok Nguyen Tat Thanh cited from the Royal Thai Police in an interview were nearly 50,000 Vietnamese migrant workers for the period of 2012-2014. The interview with Vietnamese Ambassador Nguyen Tat Thanh can be founded at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1dLK8fvkWM
and deportation, etc. The study applied the Massey’s approach in exploring whether or not social networks of Vietnamese migrants in Thailand are be able to reduce costs and risks for migration process.

There has been various empirical studies which has been primarily explored Mexican migrants’ networks in United States (Deléchat 2001, McKenzie and Rapoport 2007, Winters, De Janvry, and Sadoulet 2001, Choldin 1973, Palloni et al. 2001, Dolfin and Genicot 2010). Studies on social networks, in addition, has also been conducted for the case of Bangladesh immigrants (Rashid 2012), immigrants in Kuwait (Shah and Menon 1999), Sri Lanka immigrants (Gunatilleke 1998), Nepalis migrant in India (Thieme 2006). Generally, the above empirical researches consistently recognized the importance of social networks and connections in motivating non-migrants’ decision to migrate (Winters, De Janvry, and Sadoulet 2001), contributing to reduce costs of migration process and then easing the inequality among migrant’s groups (McKenzie and Rapoport 2007).

There has been also a need in distinguishing on specific effects of forms of social networks on migration (Boyd 1989). The forms of social networks, thus, have been also studies separately. Of which, several empirical studies on the importance of personal networks, kinship in particular, in the migration behavior and process can be listed such as (Choldin 1973, Shah and Menon 1999, Boyd 1989). Several other studies, in contrast, favours the role of community network (Winters, De Janvry, and Sadoulet 2001, Dolfin and Genicot 2010). For example, Winters, De Janvry, and Sadoulet (2001) distinguishes the effects of family and community networks on the Mexican migrant’s decision and level of migration. The study finds that the community network would play more important role for migration than the former when a migration is well-established in the destination. Moreover, individuals’ migratory decision will be strongly influenced by a sound community network rather than their family background.

There are very few studies exploring the patterns of Vietnamese migrants in general and the role of Vietnamese immigrants’ networks in Thailand in particular. A study of (SRIKHAM 2012) argued that community network which has been formed by a long standing oversea Vietnamese in Thailand, namely Youn Kao and Youn Op Pha Yap has offered employment for younger Vietnamese generation due to the mutual nationalistic sympathy. Moreover, newly Vietnamese migrants are usually received better treatments from the Vietnamese Thai employers such as free accommodation, foods, training, visa extension fees,
etc. (Nguyen and Walsh 2014, SRIKHAM 2012). However, it is noted that Srikham’s case study which is conducted in Ubon Rachathani, where a large original group of Vietnamese entering Thailand during the Vietnam war, would not be able to comprehensively cover the pattern of Vietnamese immigrants in Thailand, particularly in Bangkok. The role of kinship and friendship networks have still been received less attention in studies of migration networks from Vietnam to Thailand. Therefore, the study is expected to fill in the gaps, which results in contributing to more empirical evidences in exploring the importance of migration networks of Vietnamese in Thailand.

3. Research Methodology

The study involved a combination both quantitative and qualitative methods. The research procedure includes the following steps.

**Desk Research**
At the first step, secondary data and information was gathered from related studies and newspapers. Moreover, data and information will be also collected and analyzed from sources of social media such as Facebook which has been established by the migrants themselves.

**Fieldwork**
**Sampling Method**
The study choose Bangkok, Thailand as a case study in order to collect primary data. The size of the sample is 50 workers. The surveyed migrants have been chosen based on the following criteria: (i) They are not oversea Vietnamese; (ii) The migrants have been working in Thailand for at least 2 months; and (iii) The surveyed respondents are both employed and self-employed migrants. Accordingly, the sample includes 12 garment workers, 13 waiters/waitress, 1 domestic helper, 4 salespersons, 1 IT staff, and 19 street vendors.

**Data Collection**
The purposive and snowball sampling techniques were applied to choose the respondents since the approach to Vietnamese migrants became the most challenge due mainly to their illegal status. Some of migrants refused to provide information about their situation because they think these information would put them into danger as Thai police define their illegal situation. Thus, the study used the techniques and referral from the
migrant workers to locate his counterpart who meet the requirements of the study.

The primary data collection was collected based on face-to-face discussions and structured interviews. Besides, in-depth interviews were also conducted of 9 key interviewees from the fieldwork.

The fieldwork was conducted from 8\textsuperscript{th} December 2015 to 26\textsuperscript{th} January 2016. Many interviews were undertaken either on Sunday or evenings when the migrants finished their work. Especially, interviews with some garment workers were conducted as they were working because they did not have time for interviewing outside the working place.

The surveys and interviews were undertaken in Vietnamese because it used as mother tongue of the researcher and the respondents. The advantage helped the researcher to get better information and save the time. However, it is noted that some elderly migrants who come from rural area in Ha Tinh province speak Vietnamese with their local dialect so that it took time for the researcher to ask again to make sure the exact of information.

4. Research findings

Background of the surveyed migrants

\textit{Age and gender}

The age of the surveyed migrants is ranged from 21 to 51 years old. As shown in Figure 1, more than half of the migrants surveyed (54\%) were in the 25-34 age group, followed by the 34-44 group, the 15-24 group and the oldest age group (45-54 years old), respectively. Apart from the 34-44 age group, there were more male than female migrants in almost other age groups (Figure 1).

\textit{Place of origin}

The surveyed migrants come from various provinces and cities of Vietnam. However, the majority of them came from rural regions in Northern Central Coast provinces, namely Ha Tinh and ThanhHoa, accounting for 84 per cent of the sample. Notably, some 10 per cent came from periphery areas of big cities of Vietnam, including Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh and Vung Tau that its economic development also based mainly on agricultural sector (Table 1).
A majority (70 per cent) of the surveyed migrants reported that they got married. Of which, many young couple migrants are working either the same job or different job in Bangkok. The single group who are from 15 to 24 years old making up 18 per cent. The remaining 12 per cent of the surveyed migrants were...
divorced (Table 2). Among the respondents, 70 per cent had at least one child. Notably, the shares of migrants who have three children also make up 10 per cent. This proves that almost the migrants have a number of dependent persons (Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of children</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3 Number of children of surveyed migrants**

Education level

Of the 50 surveyed migrants, 64 per cent were at the lower levels of education attainment (none, primary and lower secondary education), followed by upper secondary and university education attainment, 34 per cent and 2 per cent, respectively. Mr. Thanh, 28 years old, from Quang Tri province work as a IT staff at a Thai computer company is the only respondent holding a university degree. He graduated from Rajabhat Udonthani University in Udon Thani province. Then, after graduation, with his Thai skills fluency, he applied for a job at a Thai computer company (Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower secondary</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper secondary</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University degree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4 Education level of surveyed migrants**

Documentation status and ability using Thai language

A majority (90 per cent) of the Vietnamese migrants have entered and stayed legally in Thailand. Some 8 per cent are currently staying illegally due to overstay. The remaining 2 per cent of respondents reports that they lost their passports during working here. However, all the respondents can be also arrested
since they have not been granted a working permit from the Thai government.

In term of Thai language, apart from the case of Mr. Thanh above, a number of the respondents (66 per cent) can be able to communicate basically with Thai people, but cannot write and read in Thai. The remaining respondents (32 per cent) just can be able to communicate limited words (Figure 2).

**Figure 2 Ability using Thai Language**

![Bar chart showing ability using Thai Language](image)

- Very good
- Good
- Average
- Fair

Migratory history

The respondents were able to engage various kinds of employments in Vietnam. Of which, a higher share of them used to work in agricultural sector, garment and textile industries, and construction. There are also some migrants who either unemployment or migrated to Thailand after upper secondary completion.

Among the respondents, 70 per cent had been migrated to work in other cities and provinces in Vietnam, focusing mainly on big cities such as Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Vung Tau and Binh Duong. Of which, 20 per cent of them had been working abroad, including Russia, Lao PDR, Malaysia and Cambodia.

Around 66 per cent of the surveyed migrants reported that they have been in Thailand for 1-5 years. Interestingly, 22 per cent of the respondents have been here for more than 5 years. Among the surveyed migrants, 72 per cent of them reported that Bangkok is the first working, focusing on those who are street vendors, waiters/waitress, or salespersons. However, garment workers indicated...
that Phuket was the first working place since the province was supposed to be attract as many as orders from foreigners. The case of Mr. Thanh started his job in UdonThani. The other case is started from NakhonPhanom.

Assistance received prior to and during the first trip to Thailand

How to get to know employment information in Thailand?

According to the surveys, 83 per cent of surveyed migrants reported that they were informed information on employment in Bangkok through their relatives (41 per cent) and friends (42 per cent), followed by their own and facilitators or người dẫn đường, 12 per cent and 5 per cent, respectively.

Who assisted you for the first trip to Thailand?

More than 80 per cent of the surveyed migrants indicated that their first trip to Thailand were escorted by their relatives and friends (50 per cent) and người dẫn đường (32 per cent). Among the respondents, garment workers and street vendors were more likely to receive assistance from their personal networks (Table 5). The remaining (18 per cent) migrants were went to Thailand without any assistance during the movement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Relatives/Friend</th>
<th>Alone</th>
<th>Broker</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiter/Waitress</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic worker</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street vendors</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale persons</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the surveys, the migrants indicated that facilitators (người dẫn đường) are usually Vietnamese who had been in Thailand for a long time. They offer various services from assisting migrants to entry into Thailand, finding a job and settlement, handling visas and assisting migrants who either overstay or lost their passports to go back Vietnam. In this study, these formation of facilitators or người dẫn đường’s networks can be seen as a representative for community network.
Costs of the first trip

Those who were escorted by their relatives and friends would just be charged for travel cost including bus fees and meals during the movement. The surveys revealed that for several migrants whom their parents or brothers had been working in Thailand, their expenses were also fully covered by their relatives. As the case of Mr. Thai, 20 years old, from Thach That District, Hanoi. His parents have already worked in Nakhon Phanom province, Thailand for 15 years. After completing the undergraduate degree, he wanted to follow his parents to work in Thailand. His father went back Vietnam to pick him up to Thailand.

A majority of the migrant who migrated to Thailand by themselves were received assistance from their relatives and friends upon their arrival. Meanwhile, those who were assisted by người dân đường’s network reported that they had been charged an extra money as a service fee apart from the travel costs. They usually had to pay fully the amount of money in advance.

Ms. Tam, 34 years old, from Ha Tinh province. She is currently a street vendor at Hua Lam Phong temple area. She has already been worked in Bangkok for over 4 years.

You are also able to pay partially prior to the first trip, then the rest of the money would be paid after one month arrival. Otherwise, it would becomes a loan which you will be charged an interest that similar to the bank’s interest.

These migrants usually were either little connection or do not have any friends or relatives in Thailand.

Assistance received upon arrival

Upon their arrival, the newly migrants are supposed to face various difficulties and challenges since communication language are completely different. The section sheds light the role of social networks in searching accommodation and jobs as well as helping them to adapt with the new environment.

Accommodation

A majority of the respondents (88 per cent) reported that they stay with their relatives or friends (88 per cent), the remaining of the sample who assisted by người dân đường’s network were usually arranged to stay with other Vietnamese migrants coming from the same province in Vietnam. In several cases, người dân
đường’s network helped the newly arrived migrants who want stay alone to communicate with the owner of apartment for hiring a room. Among the migrants, the garment and domestic workers reported that they had not experienced struggles in the issue since their accommodation are often provided freely within their employers’ house. Meanwhile, normally, the other newly migrants, particularly street vendors and salespersons were previously arranged to stay with their relatives or friends.

**Job search**

All the surveyed migrants whom either their relatives or friends were working in Thailand said that they had been arranged a job upon arrival. Their job were either their relatives and friends’ jobs, particularly street vending and garment work or other jobs that working location are not far from their living location such as salespersons. The migration networks, kinship and friendship networks in particular, thus, usually results in the concentration of migrants at the same occupations or establishments. In the study, the surveyed garment workers have been found mainly in Phetchaburi and Sukhumvit areas, while a majority of the street vendors converged around Silom and Hua Lam Phong areas and the surveyed salespersons at Samyan markets. Meanwhile, the remaining migrants usually wait for few days till a week to get a job from người đàm đường. The migrants were usually introduced to work as waiters/waitress at food stalls or restaurants.

**Integrating into the new environment**

Upon the initial settlements, the newly migrants would take time to adapt with working environment as well as life style of Thai people. Their adaptation ability depends on various factors such as their learning skills, assistance from social networks, previous migration experience, etc. It is, however, noted that those who are self-employed migrants are more likely to quickly adapt to the environment than other migrants since their working location are extremely exposed to police. The surveys indicated that in order to become a street vendor, they were consistently received guidance from their personal networks, especially from their relatives. Due to the job’s characteristic, they have to know where to buy materials, how to communicate with buyers in Thai, and how to cope with risks of arrest during selling.

Ms. Tam said:

The hotter it is, the more buyers come. I can withstand the heat on the street. But I am afraid of raining because I would not able to have customers. Moreover, finding a
good selling place is not easy because there are also Thai and other nationals sellers.
I usually sell at Silom area. Each month I have to pay 1,000 THB for that selling area.
At the weekends, I usually move to sell at the Hua Lam Phong temple because there
are more people coming that area for visit the temple. But, I have also pay for a
security guard 500 THB per day.

Ms. Mai, 36 years old, a street vendor at Silom area for more than 10 years said:
I was arrested many times since I have sold here. But I was not deported to Vietnam
because thanks to her brother in law. He got married with my fourth young sister. He
has been living in Bangkok more than 20 years and has made acquaintance with local
police. We just gave 5,000 THB for them in order to being released. So each time
when I was arrested, I just call him coming for ransom. For the others, they would
get more trouble. They have to ask a Thai an advance payment of 50,000 THB for
ransom, called “Pa kan”. Otherwise, they would be confined for 48 days before being
trial at court. Then, they would be deported to Vietnam.

The study also revealed that many cases of the surveyed vendors, a monthly
fee 3,000-4,000 THB per person will be collected and submitted to Ms. Mai’s brother
in law. He is responsible for working with local police, getting small stamps provided
by them as a sign for ensuring their rights for selling, and distributing these stamps to
vendors. Besides, the surveyed vendors also said that their ice-cream material is also
imported from his own ice-cream establishment.

**Visa extension**

Since Vietnamese migrants entry into Thailand as a tourist, they need to
leave the country after 30 days. According to the surveys, there is a Thai company
offering visa extension services (“tô” visa) for migrants. Instead coming back
Vietnam, they just need to leave the country at Cambodia or Laos border gates and
then make a reentry in order to stay legally in Thailand. The costs for the service
depend on frequencies of entries into Thailand. For those who has the first passport
stamp or “new passport”, they just have to pay around 700-1,000 THB. The cost will
be 2-3 times higher than the first time for those who has more than two stamps in
their passport or “old passport”. Normally, it usually took them about 1-2 days before
going back Bangkok.

A majority of the surveyed migrants reported that they do not want to stay

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4 Under the tourist visa exemption scheme, Vietnamese nationals are allowed visit to
Thailand without a visa with stay period up to 30 days. Source: Department of Consular
illegally because they would be able to face many risks such as being arrested by police, etc. Some of the surveyed employed migrants has been given either fully or partly the cost by their employers.

**Returning**

Of the surveyed migrants, a majority (76 per cent) of them travel back to Vietnam 1-2 times a year. There were 10 per cent of respondents go back Vietnam from 3-5 times. These migrants reported that no matter how busy they are, they would still go back with family and friends to celebrate Lunar New Year (traditional or “Tết” new year) and death anniversaries of their family members. Meanwhile, the remaining (14 per cent) of the migrants said that they did not travel back. The surveys indicated that those who do “tò” visa monthly would be easy for return process, while the opposite is true for migrants who either overstayed in Thailand or do not any documentation. It is, however, noted that such migrants are still be able to travel back and forth by assistance of nguời dẫn đường’s network. The costs such migrants paid for nguời dẫn đường’s network usually 4-5 times higher than that of the other migrants (around 10,000 Baht).

**5. Discussion and Conclusion**

Based on the above findings, the section provides the main following discussion. Firstly, it is argued that the role of social networks has been manifested differently among the migration process and the employment types of migrants. As mentioned above, the migration process can be divided into three main steps: prior and during the movement, upon arrival, and returning. In general, a majority of the surveyed migrants have been supported by kinship or friendship networks at the initial migration process. It is, however, noted that those who are street vendors are more likely to depend much on community network upon their arrival due to their business operation. Moreover, the nguời dẫn đường’s network has also played an important role in addressing risks of arrests and deportation as well as ensuring the return process for migrants. Importantly, the surveys also revealed that the nguời dẫn đường’s network has helped remittances transfer for migrants. The cost for transferring each 10,000 Baht is 300 Baht.

Secondly, it is possible that those with a higher level of education are less likely to be assisted by social networks, probably because the possibilities of such
migrants getting a job directly from the employers are greater. The case of Mr. Thanh was the only case holding a university degree. After graduation from Rajabhat Udonthani University in Udon Thani province, with his Thai skills fluency, he himself applied for a job at a Thai computer company in Bangkok, then has been directly recruited with a IT staff position. Meanwhile, on the other hand, those with low education attainment and social capital are more likely to be charged much more others, or even possibly become victims of tricks, human trafficking, or abuses from many unreliable người dân đường’s network.

Thirdly, the role of community network has also been manifested by social media, especially Facebook that provide a convenience channel for migrants in referencing employment, sharing their homesickness, or even learning Thai language, etc. However, it remains potential risks since there has been no guaranteed on such information.

In conclusion, it is undeniable that social networks have played a critical role in ensuring successful migration from Vietnam to Thailand. The role can be clearly manifested in facilitating Vietnamese migrants for the first trip as well as helping them to cope with new working environment and risks during working in Bangkok and ensuring the return process. It is believed that with limited education background and Thai language skills, newly Vietnamese migrants would be difficult to adapt with a new lifestyle of Bangkok people as well as cope with challenges and risks under their illegal status without the guidance and assistance of the formal migrants. Forms of social networks includes personal networks (kinship and friendship networks), and community network (người dân đường’s network, social media) has played different roles in facilitating migration flows between Vietnam and Thailand. It is, however, expected that the negative impacts of người dân đường’s network would be explored in the future research that eliminates the issues of human trafficking and smuggling between two countries.

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Moroccan Diaspora in France: Community Building on Yabiladi Portal

Tarik SAMAK

Abstract. Over the last decade, social networking sites emerge as an ideal tool of communication that facilitates interaction among people online. At the same time, in a world that is characterized by massive waves of migration, globalization results in the construction of the Diaspora who seek through new ways to build communities. Within this framework, while traditional media have empowered diaspora members to maintain ties and bonds with their homeland and fellow members, the emergence of social media have offered new opportunities for diasporas to get involved in diasporas identity and community construction. The creation of several diasporas groups on social media like Yabiladi.com and WAFIN.be, respectively in France and Belgium, emphasize the vital role they play in everyday lives of the Diaspora. To study the importance and implications of these online communities for Diaspora members and investigate their online practices, this article carries out a virtual ethnography of the Moroccan community on Yabiladi portal in France. By means of the qualitative approach of interviews, this article aims at justifying whether the online groups of diasporas Moroccans in France can be defined as communities, and whether social networking sites can be considered as an alternative landscape for the Diaspora to create links with other diasporas members. This article, through users’ experience, provides deep understanding of Yabiladi members’ beliefs about the “community” and their online daily practices which enable them to “imagine” it as a community.

Keywords: Moroccan Diaspora, community, social networking sites, Internet, ethnography

Introduction

In general terms, migration is not a new practice for humanity, nor is the investigation of migration a new area of research for academic studies. Nevertheless, over the last decade, the emergence of new information and communication technologies (ICT) have led to a review of migration literature. Thanks to these new technologies, transnational identities have emerged and, thus, have affected the traditional theories of migration. They have emerged as the ultimate tool to provide the appropriate conditions for migrants to strengthen ties
and bonds with fellow citizens and re-root in a common sense of community their cultural placelessness (Appadurai, 1996).

While in the past migrant communities always demonstrated interest in exploiting traditional media (newspapers, radios, and TV) to keep themselves tied with their homeland, the advent of the World Wide Web has established a new decentralized and egalitarian platform for diasporans to build communities. Bernal argues that the web 2.0 applications strongly enabled diasporic communities to overwhelm geographical distance and barriers to re-enact their cultural heritage to create transnational, virtual diasporic spaces. (Bernal, 2006). Contrary to the traditional mass-communication sender-receiver models, Internet in general and web 2.0 in particular have given rise to a participatory privilege in cultural consumption, production and community building.

In fact, over the last ten years there has been a considerable proliferation in the construction and use of the social networking websites (SNS), especially Facebook, the most popular social networking site with the number of users which exceeds 1.71 billion monthly active users. This increasing number is a strong indicator about the significance of this medium, which has led to a great transformation in the way people communicate, build and maintain virtual friendships. Because these websites were basically built with the younger demographic as the target, a large part of the scholarship has targeted young peoples’ use of SNS.

According to digital diaspora studies, one of the most significant sections of the people using SNS include those in the diaspora. In an era of globalization, characterized by increasingly intense population movements, has led to the appearance of diasporic communities. Covering a time period of two years, I observed that Yabiladi website is appropriated by Moroccan diasporic groups for their community communication. This site has become a highly busy space for Moroccan Diaspora that is using it for discussing topics ranging from the burden of finding a job and accommodation in a new country to ceremonalizing religious festivals; from the challenge of living in a new country to the concerns of their belonging, their identity and what they can do to maintain their homeland culture. Consequently, Yabiladi website has become a virtual space of diasporic discursive animation and introduces itself as an area of research for studying the subtleties of diasporic communication, the expression of ethnicity in the new media and the way this space empowers the Moroccan diaspora to negotiate its new identities and realities.

Unfortunately, the Moroccan Diaspora whose number increases year after year and constitutes the so-called Moroccans residing abroad (Marocains Resident
Moroccan Diaspora in France

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à l’Etranger (MRE)) has received very modest attention. Loukili’s (2007) article, a unique work carried out on Moroccan diasporic cyberspace, shed some light on Moroccan migrants’ use of cyberspace to give voice to their Moroccan identity.

Despite the fact that the above mentioned research on Moroccan diaspora conveys the idea that Internet offers the opportunity for setting up a new communication platform, none of the researchers up-to-now has attempted any exploration of the practices on social networking sites in the context of the Moroccan diaspora. Therefore, it is significant to bring social networking sites inside the research area and shed light on the diasporic members’ use of the SNS.

In order to start this article, I consider the Moroccans on Yabiladi in France as a case study and pay a particular attention to the daily practices of its members. By means of this case study, this article investigates the practices of the Moroccan diaspora members on Yabiladi and how they perceive and experience ‘community’ on Yabiladi forum.

Methodology

In this article I explore Yabiladi as a social networking site which provides a setting for everyday interactions. This theoretical framework is borrowed to comprehend the complexities of the interactions taking place on Yabiladi forum and the awareness of its participants about Yabiladi as a community. By adopting Christine Hine’s (2007) definition of ‘virtual ethnography’, this is an attempt to explain how participants of an online discussion on forum perceive this technology and use it to communicate and negotiate their identities. Based on this, it is reasonable to adopt an ethnographic approach thanks to the fact that it permits researchers to deeply understand the full picture of a certain community and to grasp the connotations, which the community associates to their social world (Bryman, 2001). Just like in the case under study, Yabiladi allows for the technological setting of interaction as well as the social context of members’ diasporic status as Moroccans in France, an ethnographic approach permits investigating the meanings that Yabiladi users socially build through their interactions on this portal.

Because this research focuses on the practices through which Yabiladi portal is used and understood in every day settings for the construction of community and identity by diasporic Moroccan members in France, a virtual
ethnography of the social networking site Yabiladi seems thus to fit best as an adequate methodological foundation and Yabiladi portal becomes the ethnographic substance for this research. This ethnographic research is carried out to investigate the long-lasting practices through which Yabiladi community becomes meaningful to its members. Christine Hine argues that ‘ethnography is a way of seeing through the participants’ eyes: a grounded approach that aims for a deep understanding of the cultural foundations of the group (Hine, 2000 : 21). It is attractive in a sense that it helps provide deep description and offer very close comprehension to the ways which people interpret the world (ibid :42).

Yabiladi is a rich source of information about Moroccans as a community. Data collection took about two years, hence experiencing many important moments in the life of the community. Another important feature is that on the forum, identity is revealed naturally, like in every day life, through stories and experiences. Before starting the discussion of the social networking site under study, a brief description is introduced.

Yabiladi Portal

Yabiladi(my country in Arabic)was launched in 2002 by Mohamed Ezzouak, a second generation Moroccan migrant. Launched from France, Yabiladi is the most visited online diasporic site by Moroccan migrants. The reason behind creating Yabiladi portal was that Mohamed Ezzouak wanted to create direct link between Moroccan diaspora members and provide them with the new ways of communication, information exchange and to develop the feeling of belonging (Loukili, 2007). According to Afrik.com, the key reason behind creating Yabiladi portal was that to ‘federate all Moroccans in the world. Internet is a powerful tool to meet, have contact, laern get informed and entertained’ (Afrik.com, 2002).

According to lavieeco.com, Yabiladi portal managed to have an active diasporic community on a regular basis with 40000 visits per day and more than 1 million per month in 2008 (lavieeco.com, 2008). Statistics provided by the webmaster of Yabiladi indicate that 50 percent of Yabiladi users live in France, 25 percent in Morocco and the rest of users are based in different countries.

As a portal site.Yabiladi is designed in terms of several sections which
serve both nationals and migrants. It provides a wide range of administrative information like Moroccan embassies and consulates contact information, as well as local and international news. Yabiladi contains sections about religion, food recipes and updated Morocco-related political and cultural events in Europe and Morocco. It also guarantees access to Moroccan TV and radio. In addition, Yabiladi contains interactive applications like video and photo sharing, a chat room and a forum. Generally, participants observation and interview data show that it is specially the forum section that is used by Moroccan diaspora members for their community interactions and thus I will deal with this section for pertinent data collection and analysis.

**Moroccan Immigration: General View**

During the second half of the twentieth century Morocco was one of the prime sources of labour migrants for several countries in Western Europe such as France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Thousands of unskilled Moroccan workers were recruited to compensate for the labour shortages, especially in sectors like industry, mining, housing, construction and agriculture.

According to statistics provided by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation for Development (OECD) ‘Morocco remains a major sender of migrants with annual flows estimated at 140,400 individuals.’ This continued till 1980s after some migration restrictions which had been put by the traditional receiving countries in Western Europe. Oil crisis in 1973 caused very drastic economic stagnation and resulted in low demand for unskilled labourers in Western Europe. Since then, Moroccans have tried new destinations like Libya, for temporary contracts, but, recently, the United States and the French-speaking Canadian province of Quebec have attracted an important number of Moroccans, especially the well-educated. The second wave of migrants to Europe are students. The majority of them have been leading a good living and decided to settle there. While the reasons of migration for the first group of migrants were economic, to help the household, for the second were political and socio-cultural. According to Reniers (1999), socio-cultural reasons can be translated in terms of an urge among young Moroccans to get rid of the Moroccan model where religion and family restraints are widespread. Another motive which strengthens the desire of Moroccan youth to migrate is the use of information and communication.
technologies such as internet and satellite receiver that diffuse tantalizing images of western societies.

Moroccan Diaspora and the Use of Electronic Media

The majority of scholarship on media and diaspora agrees that Internet opens up many opportunities for people to participate in the discussions which take place in the public sphere. For migrants, Internet is an ideal tool to keep in touch with their fellow compatriots all over the world and maintain their bonds with their homeland. By the same token, Moroccan migrants, especially in Western European countries have set up a number of diasporic websites. Generally, according to statistics provided by the webmaster of these diasporic websites, they indicate that Moroccan migrants are especially active on the Internet. Today, thanks to modern electronic media, Moroccan diaspora members have compressed space and geographical barriers to get involved in transnational activities.

Still, not all people have equal access to Internet. Many scholars point out that factors like social status, geographical distribution (urban or rural), gender and ethnicity determine the access to the World Wide Web. This is typically relevant to Yabiladi users. Yabiladi users are mostly young. According to Yabiladi figures, 72 percent of them are between 18 and 40, and 67 percent are well-educated. Early Moroccan migrants, especially unskilled labourers, have less access to the Internet vis-à-vis the second and third generations. Generally speaking, Yabiladi can be perceived as a symbolic space that is part of the Moroccan diasporic community, a platform for expressing the feelings of belonging and maintained ties with the country of origin.

Data Analysis

To address the key research questions on community, the qualitative approach is used for data analysis. First, the data gathered from interviews is analysed in terms of narrative analysis and interpretation. Then, discussion of my observations is undertaken about the shared practices and system of meaning produced by Yabiladi users.

To address the key research question, participants were asked about reasons for joining Yabiladi and their perceptions about Yabiladi community. The
responses include sub-themes that appear in the 8 interviews. Schroder et al indicate that ‘the analysis is thus, to some extent framed by pre-given set of codes or categories, but proceeds with an open mind by adding new codes as warranted by the transcript’ (Schroder, 2003 : 168). This technique of getting results through generating themes from the interview guide and then from interview transcripts is illustrated in the table below.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>How do users experience and perceive community on Yabiladi?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reasons for joining Yabiladi</td>
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<tr>
<td>-looking for information</td>
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<tr>
<td>-exploiting benefits from membership</td>
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<tr>
<td>-enjoyment and socializing</td>
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Seven interviews out of eight willingly looked for a community on diasporic portal of Yabiladi. This practice of looking for other diasporic members highlights the importance of the property of ‘searchability’ a property of social networking sites. In justifying the reasons why diasporans join Yabiladi, interviews pointed out to the strong appeal for the community thanks to its name and massive membership. Informant 1 made it clear when he revealed ‘actually being a Moroccan and in France … I just had to join the Moroccan community … especially with that number of members in the community … you can obtain enough information.’ Similarly, informant 2 wanted ‘to get some important information which migrants might need for settling down for good in France.’ Informant 6 explained, ‘I love conversation to go on … members share much found in all transcripts. Furthermore, the responses showed the informants’ expectations for exploiting benefits from membership, a theme that exists in the eight interviews. In addition, information … information about jobs, housing, etc.’ These responses clearly illustrate the informants attempts for looking for information appeared as a central theme that can before respondents 2, 3 and 4 it was obvious that their need was just to find new friends in a new country. That was their decisive factor for joining Yabiladi. As respondent 4 put it, ‘the time I left Morocco, I didn’t want to feel alone … and I think this was the best way to find friends…’,and respondent 5 explained, ‘I noticed all the posts were new (1min or 2 min) and I decided to be part of this busy community … and to obtain some help when I need especially from intelligent Moroccans with different backgrounds and who live in France.’ For informant 2,
socializing was a crucial factor for joining Yabiladi, as he explained, ‘when you are single and working in a foreign country ... it’s good for you to make friends and enjoy their company.’ These responses indicate another aspect of Yabiladi membership, that of enjoyment and socializing.

Therefore, 3 themes (looking for information, exploiting benefits from membership and enjoyment and socializing) were generated from the responses to the question that illuminated the groups’ reasons.

The answers by the informants for the question about their perception of Yabiladi community and if they saw it as a real community stressed the fact that he could easily find people with the same interests so as to feel at home. He explained, ‘yes for me it’s a community ... generally we Moroccans living in France are part of it and we belong to it. Yabiladi is good for making friends and socializing ... if you have just come to France then Yabiladi is the place where you can get information, help and even you can plan for a trip to discover the place where you live ... it is also a good place for finding people with similar tastes and opinions to feel home.’

Likewise, respondent 4 explained that, ‘I believe it is a community... sometimes I feel that I belong to it more than to Paris... in 2010 time of crisis I still remember I could find people who were ready for help... not all people, but they exist...’

Informant 3 argued that, ‘yes it is a real community, real people and real events... a group with almost the same interests... personally I don’t harbor strong connection to Yabiladi... because I believe that in the end it is just a virtual community.’

In the time the above responses demonstrate high dependence on Yabiladi, some others are doubtful about members’ commitment. Respondent 1’s belief ‘it is community although some people who know each other just ask questions and get answers and leave’ indicates that participation in the community for some members happens just when there is a need. This explanation discloses two important things about some of Yabiladi members: uncertainty about members’ commitment and the community is real only for some.

To account for how Yabiladi members create a community and maintain it, new themes came to view from the interview answers: ‘high traffic on Yabiladi’ and ‘diversity in community’. Respondents 1and 2 revealed the central topics that make the forum interesting.

Respondent 1: interesting topics catch your attention ... the reason for coming in big numbers is that there are knowledgeable people who are ready to give hand. Terrorism/culture/religion/science/bledd(refers to Morocco in Moroccan
Arabic)/religious events/wedding ceremonies/Moroccan cinema and sports ... these topics keep me in the forum ... they make everyone participate...

Respondent 2: return back to Morocco, investment in Morocco, education, housing, jobs, ramadan, Eidlekbir Eidlekbir (an Islamic religious ceremony commemorating the Abraham sacrifice that takes place once a year), electoral elections in Morocco, summer holidays in Morocco, festivals, wedding ceremonies ... and in case someone needs help people respond immediately ... that is the best place.

Conclusion

In order to address the key research question ‘How does Moroccan diaspora perceive and experience community on Yabiladi?’ two umbrella themes were identified: the reasons for joining Yabiladi and the conceptions of Yabiladi community. Following this, six sub-themes were generated through informants’ responses, which introduce their perception and experience on Yabiladi. While the themes for looking for information, exploiting benefits from membership and enjoyment and socializing reveal the reasons for joining Yabiladi by Moroccan diaspora users, the themes of doubt of how strong are the members’ commitment, community as genuine for some members and unlikely alternative for offline community appear as the central point that attract Yabiladi members about the community.

Despite the fact that online diasporic congregations such as Yabiladi platform appear like a substitute landscape for community building, it is equally important, however, to acknowledge that members’ skepticism about the ties and relationships established on such public space. Skeptical members see it as a community which is characterized by temporary relationships and involves no sense of commitment, and thus in these members’ perception it is unlikely to be an alternative for the offline community.

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Democratization and Political Alienation: The Legacies of Post-Communist Transition in Romania

Marius Ioan TĂTAR

Abstract. A frequent finding in the political behavior literature is that citizens from Central and Eastern Europe participate less in politics than their western neighbors. While political institutions have democratized and consolidated in some of these countries (i.e. the new EU member states), overall civic and political activism of citizens from the former communist states knows an obvious setback. This article focuses on Romania and traces the sources of political disengagement to the problems of post-communist transition in this country. The findings reveal that public expectations during the transition processes (i.e. demand side) have largely diverged from the perceived democratic performance of political authorities (i.e. supply side). Thus, the paper identifies widespread disappointments with the perceived outcomes of the political process as a key source of political alienation in post-communist Romania. Pervasive symptoms of political alienation in this country include feelings of political exclusion, helplessness and political ineffectiveness, distrust of politicians and political institutions, lack of interest in politics and the perception of politics as irrelevant to people's lives. All these further hinder citizen participation in the democratic process.

Keywords: democratization, political alienation, post-communism, transition, Romania

An increasing number of studies assess the development and quality of democracies by how widespread and equal citizen involvement in the political process is. A common finding in the literature is that citizens differ in the extent to which they participate politically (Nový 2014, Hooghe and Quintelier 2014) and this differing degree of engagement can hinder the equal representation of citizens’ interests and preferences in democratic politics (Dahl 1989, Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Perceptions of unequal governmental responsiveness to citizens’ needs seem to be acute in post-communist countries where people tend to distrust political authorities and feel politically alienated more than citizens of western democracies (Mierina 2014, Torcal and Montero 2006).

However, previous research has paid little attention to the broader societal
and political context in which political alienation occurred in countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). While political institutions have democratized and consolidated in some of these countries (i.e. the new EU member states), overall civic and political activism of citizens of former communist states knows an obvious setback (Inglehart and Catterberg 2002, Howard 2003, Mishler and Rose 2001). This finding is all the more puzzling as political participation is generally regarded as a benchmark for the quality of democracy in a country (Merkel, 2011). From this perspective, once democracy takes roots in a society, one would expect citizens to participate more and not less in the political process. Data on political participation in post-communist countries seem to contradict these expectations (Tătar 2015b). These ambiguous findings suggest that approaching post-communist democratization processes exclusively from an institutional and procedural point neglects a series of relevant questions on how people perceived and responded to the post-1989 transformations: What meanings do post-communist citizens attach to democracy and what expectations do they have regarding democratic governance? How do they asses the democratic performance of the new political institutions? How do citizens conceive their role in the post-communist politics in general? Answering these questions calls for a research approach that examines both the demand (i.e. public expectations about democracy) and the supply (i.e. public perceptions of the performances and outcomes of the new democratic regimes) sides of the political process.

This article aims to contribute to a better understanding of how the connection between citizens and the new democratic states has been reconfigured in CEE after decades of repressive control exerted by the communist regimes. More specifically, the article will focus on Romania chosen as a case that illustrates the democratization without participation pattern mentioned above: a relatively successful democratic consolidation of political institutions in this country (which has joined the EU in 2007) was accompanied with relatively low and declining rates of citizen political engagement during the post-communist transition. Since 1989 Romania has undergone profound social, economical and political changes. In the first phase, which largely overlaps the first post-communist decade, these changes were generated by a double transition: from communist totalitarianism to democracy and from state planned to market economy. The second phase of transformations occurred in the context of strengthening and adapting democratic institutions to the Euro-Atlantic (NATO and EU) integration processes unfolding in
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Central and Eastern Europe. This paper will analyze how changes since 1989 have marked citizens’ political attitudes and behaviors, affecting also the participatory nature and quality of democracy in Romania.

One fruitful way to understand the reconfiguration of state-society relations in new democracies is to examine the phenomenon of citizen participation in connection with the changing socio-political and economic context of post-communist transitions. Thus, the next sections of this paper will analyze the legacies of the communist regime in Romania, the dynamics of citizens’ views regarding democracy and the socio-economic transformations that have taken place mainly in first decade of democratic reconstruction. I will particularly consider the evolution of several factors usually associated with political participation such as satisfaction with the functioning of democracy, institutional trust, the degree of political alienation, and the level of interest in politics.

Premises of post-communist transitions

The fall of communism in 1989 revealed significant differences between Central and East European countries. The reforms initiated by several communist regimes during the late 1980s smoothed the post-communist transition processes of these states. Central European countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary were generally more dependent on Moscow’s influence than Romania. Therefore they have benefited to certain extends from the policies of openness (glasnost) and restructuring (perestroika) initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev. The strategy of distancing Romania from Moscow’s control was initiated by Gheorghiu-Dej during the early 1960s and then it has been continued under Ceaușescu’s national-communism rule until 1989. Particularly this strategy of getting Romania out of the soviet sphere of influence had its own perverse effects. Hence, during the late 1980s Romania was left untouched by the wave of reforms announced and allowed by Gorbachev in the countries of the communist bloc.

Consequently, at the end of the 1980s Romania was paddling against the increasingly strong reformist stream initiated in the region. At that time in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary initiatives for the development of autonomous civil society organizations gained momentum and such organizations were increasingly critical towards the communist regimes. By contrast, Romania remained a rough totalitarian state, increasingly isolated internationally, with a monolithic center of
power and an unprecedented degree of intrusion in the private sphere of its citizens in a perpetual attempt to completely control the society (Mungiu-Pippidi 2002).

The communist dictatorship exerted control over the Romanian society through several means. One of the main instruments was the Romanian Communist Party (PCR), which had the ambition to be the largest of the communist parties in Eastern Europe, relative to the population. With around 4 million members representing over 30% of the adult population of Romania PCR had a rate of membership which was double the regional average (14%) and triple to the ones existing in Poland and Hungary (Mungiu-Pippidi 2002). If we add to these figures those indicating the number of persons who were active in the communist trade unions and also the Romanian communists under 30 who were members of the Union of Communist Youth (UTC), we have an impressive overview of the degree of control and mobilization to which the Romanian society was subjected before 1989. Besides extensive mobilization, another control mechanism was terror instituted by the infamous Securitate, the secret police of the Romanian communist regime, which in turn had an impressive network of agents and informers infiltrated in almost all social groups. Any potential opposition to the political system was discouraged by the feeling that the Securitate is omnipotent and omnipresent in society. This feeling, in turn, has generated widespread fear and distrust, and a sentiment of helplessness and resignation.

Beyond the state and party structures, there was a poor society unhappy with abounding deprivations such as the "streamlining" of food distribution or the energy "savings" which literally meant periodical cuts of electricity and heat that left the residents of communist blocks of flats in the dark and cold in the dead of winter. These deprivations increased during the 1980s, as a consequence of payment arrangements of foreign debt accumulated in previous decades when the regime has tried to industrialize the communist economy. Poverty also started to affect the privileged classes comprising people in the key administrative and party positions often referred to as the communist "nomenclature", as well as people hired in the repressive apparatus. Consequently, discontent became generalized in the late 1980s (Mungiu-Pippidi 2002).

This brief overview of the situation in Romania before 1989 outlines the image of one of the most repressive regimes in Europe, in which the few voices criticizing the regime could be easily isolated and silenced before they could gain
support from other people. The collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe found Romania in the situation of having no organized opposition to the communist regime and no significant autonomous nuclei of civil society in which pro-democratic attitudes and behaviors could have been learned and alternatives to the communist regime could have been initiated and developed (Tătar 2006). Thus, the National Salvation Front (NSF) that emerged as the political and patrimonial successor of the Romanian Communist Party (Mungiu-Pippidi 2002), won the first post-communist elections of 20 May 1990 obtaining a special majority of 66.91% of the parliamentary seats. The weak and heterogeneous opposition parties were led on the one hand by dissident intellectuals from the communist-era and on the other hand by former interwar party leaders and members that survived imprisonment during the communist period (Mungiu-Pippidi 2002).

The dual transition: towards democracy and market economy

In countries of Central and Eastern Europe, political transitions from communism to democracy overlapped with transitions from state-planned to market economy. At least during the first part of the 1990s, the vast majority of Romanians tended to define democracy through elements related to economic prosperity (e.g. more jobs, better economic conditions, etc.) in addition to the standard political features of democracy (multi-party system, political liberties, equality, etc.). Figure 1 shows how Romanians have conceived democracy during the first post-communist decade.

Thus, in 1990 economical and social meanings associated with democracy seemed to prevail over purely political understandings of democracy. Thus, the items most often associated with democracy were better economic conditions (96.3%) and more jobs (91.6%). The classic elements of the political definition of democracy were ranked by Romanians only from the third place downwards: equal rights for women and men (87.5%), political freedom (84.1%), multi-party system (83.2%). Subsequently, difficulties associated with economic restructuring and especially the social costs of transition lead to a reassessment of the meanings ascribed to democracy. Thus, perceptions have changed by 1998, when political meanings of democracy took precedence among Romanians: more parties 91.5%, political liberties such as freedom of speech or association 90.2%, equal rights for women 86.4%. Conversely, the percentage of those who associated democracy
mainly with economic elements substantially decreased in 1998 compared to 1990: 81.8% associated democracy with better economic conditions and only 67.8% linked it with more jobs. The percentage of Romanians who connected democracy with an active role of the state in the economy and society has also decreases. For instance the proportion of those who believe democracy has to do with government control of banks or large enterprises dropped from 68.8% in 1990 to 63% in 1998, while the percentage of those who associate democracy with social equality declined from 72.3% to 67.8%.

**Figure 1: The idea of democracy in post-communist Romania, 1990-1998**

![Bar chart showing the idea of democracy in post-communist Romania, 1990-1998](chart.png)

*Source: Personal elaboration based on PCP 1 and 2 datasets (see Fuchs et al. 2005)*

On the other hand, during the 1990s one can note a significant increase of the percentage of those who associate democracy with elements related to: state decentralization (i.e. the perception that in a democracy more political and administrative decisions can be taken at the local and regional levels increased from 76.6% to 86.8%); rule of law and public order (i.e. equality before the law from 76.9% in 1990 to 78% in 1998, less corruption and selling of influence from ...
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59.4% to 65.7%); tolerance (association of democracy with moral and sexual freedom increased from 38.3% in 1990 to 63.3% in 1998).

In addition, at the outset of post-communist transition Romanians tended to assess democratic governance especially in terms of economic performance and less in terms of political achievements. This is well illustrated by the way people perceived the changes that took place in 1990. From a political point of view, 1990 was a hectic year in Romania: the emergence of many new political parties\(^1\), ethnic violence in the city of Târgu Mureş, the first post-communist elections in May 1990, anti-governmental protests and occupation of the University Square in Bucharest, violent clashes in Bucharest between anti-governmental protesters and pro-government miners coming from the Jiu Valley etc. On the other hand, economically Romanians fared well in 1990. People’s incomes have increased compared to 1989, both in terms of net average wage and average pension\(^2\) (Zamfir, Stanescu, and Ilie 2010). Economic reforms started relatively late and gradually in Romania and as of 1990 they have not yet shown their social costs contrary to what happened in other post-communist countries in the region which began a radical restructuring of the economy through the so-called "shock therapy" (Giannaro 2011).

In this context, the Post-Communist Publics (PCP) surveys conducted in Central and Eastern Europe in two waves (1990-1991 and 1997-2001) show that at the end of 1990 Romanians had the lowest level of dissatisfaction with the way things have been getting on since the fall of the communist regimes in the region (see Figure 2). Thus, only 13.13% of Romanians believed that since the fall of the communist regime things have gone worse than expected, compared to 41.90% of Slovaks, 43.41% of Hungarians and 40.81% of Bulgarians. In other words, at the end of 1990 when the first wave of this survey was carried out in Romania, most respondents did not seem to have been disappointed by the way things evolved (especially in economic matters) during the first year of post-communist transition.

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\(^1\) Political parties mushroomed in Romania during the first months of 1990. The record in this regard was set in January, when on average one new political party was officially registered each day. Subsequently, most of these parties disappeared as quickly as they have appeared.

\(^2\) According to the Romanian Quality of Life Research Institute (ICCV), the growth of the net average wage (expressed in 2009 prices for data comparability) was from 1061 (in 1989) to 1114 RON (in 1990), while the average pension increased from 498 to 528. It should be noted that both indicators presented here have dropped dramatically between 1991 and 1993 and will not reach a comparable level to the one recorded in 1990 until 2007 when Romania joined the European Union.
On the contrary, this wave of the PCP survey (1990-1991) shows that Romanians expressed the highest levels of optimism regarding the evolution of the economy: 63.9% believed that the economic situation will improve in the next year. Optimism levels were much lower in other countries from CEE: only 23.9% of Hungarians, 23% of Bulgarians, 29% of Slovenians, 19.5% of Czechs, 17% of Slovaks and 18.8% of Estonians believed that the economic situation in their country will improve in the next year. Levels somewhat closer to Romanians’ optimism were recorded in Lithuania (52.2%), Poland (42.1%), East Germany (38.9%) and Ukraine (33.6%).

Starting with 1991 however, the population of Romania began to experience the social costs associated with the economic transition. According to a report issued in 2010 by the Institute for Quality of Life Research (ICCV), the post-communist Romanian economy has fared sinuously, having two main periods of economic collapse between 1991-1992 and then 1997-1999 and a period of sustained economic growth from 2000 to 2008, followed by the global economic crisis (Zamfir, Stanescu, and Ilie 2010). Cătălin
Zamfir summarizes the guidelines of the economic policies during the transition period (outlined in particular through agreements signed by Romania with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank): a) immediate withdrawal of the state from the economy; b) the rapid introduction of market economy mechanisms; c) rapid and full privatization; d) the strategy of "shock therapy" is preferable to gradual transformations and e) opening the national economy to international trade, with as few restrictions as possible (Zamfir 2004). Structural changes of the economy had extremely high social costs: loss of millions of jobs, hyper-inflation in the 1990s and a dramatic drop in living standards (Zamfir, Stanescu, and Ilie 2010). Thus, in Romania the post-communist transition was accompanied by widespread phenomena of poverty, social disintegration and decline of state authority amid rapid growth of inequalities, social distrust and corruption (Zamfir, Stanescu, and Ilie 2010).

These macroeconomic developments mirrored in individual attitudes regarding political developments. Compared to 1990, Romanians' perception of the transition process changed radically in 1998, as captured by the data in Figure 2. Among the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Romania recorded the largest increase in the degree of dissatisfaction with the changes during the post-communist transition, about 36 percentage points (from 13.13% in 1990 to 49.66% in 1998). Moreover, analyzing data in Figure 2.2, one can divide the CEE countries into subjective "winners" and "losers" of the post-communist transition processes based on the evolution of the aggregate perception of citizens regarding the changes after the fall of communism. We can include in the camp of subjective "winners" of the transition four countries where the level of dissatisfaction has decreased during the period analyzed here (1990-2001): Slovenia (from 40.8% to 33.97%), Hungary (from 43.38% to 35.21) East Germany (from 31.07% to 30.83%) and Estonia (36.5% to 32.26%). On the other hand, the group of subjective "losers" includes 7 countries in which the degree of dissatisfaction with the developments during the transition increased: Ukraine (from 49.71% to 78.9%), Slovakia (from 41.9% to 58.07%), Romania (from 13.13% to 49.66%), Poland (from 15.25% to 43.26%), Lithuania (from 28.41% to 58.12%), Czech Republic (from 32.83% to 51.32%) and Bulgaria (from 40.81% to 54.19%). In sum, between 1990 and 2001 there is an overall increase of the level of discontent in the CEE countries regarding the way things have evolved since the fall of communism.  

It should be noted that although the degree of dissatisfaction skyrocketed in the first post-communist decade, in 1998 Romanians continued to remain the most optimistic (with a
Figure 3: Dynamics of satisfaction with democracy in CEE, 1990-2001

Note: Data represent the average for each country on satisfaction with the functioning of democracy measured on a scale from 1 = “completely dissatisfied” to 10 = “completely satisfied”. For each country, the line marked with triangles is the difference between the averages of the two waves of the PCP survey: 1990-1991 and 1997-2001. Source: Personal elaboration based on PCP, waves 1 and 2.

In CEE the dynamics of satisfaction with democracy between 1990 and 2001 (see Figure 3) follows a similar pattern to the perceptions of how things have been getting on during the post-communist transitions. Typically, in countries where the degree of dissatisfaction with economic developments diminished, satisfaction with the functioning of democracy increased. Conversely, where people were increasingly unhappy about economic issues during transition, the level of satisfaction with the functioning of democracy has fallen. Comparing data in Figures 2 and 3, we observe only two exceptions to this pattern. First, in Bulgaria although the degree of discontent with how things have been getting on since the fall of communism grew, we note an increase in level of satisfaction with the functioning of democracy, and second Slovenia, where both the level of economic discontent and the average satisfaction with the functioning of democracy decreased. The other nine countries analyzed here conform to the patterns set out above.

percentage of 50.6%) of Eastern Europeans regarding an improvement of the economic situation of their country in the next year, according to PCP survey data, wave 2, 1997-2001.
Moreover, individual level data show that people less dissatisfied with the evolution of things since the fall of communism tend to be more satisfied with how democracy works in their country. This correlation holds for the entire dataset covering the period 1990-2001 (Spearman's Rho coefficient = -0.301, N = 23503, p <0.001). The relationship between the two variables (i.e. degree of dissatisfaction with the evolution of things since the fall of communism and the level of satisfaction with the functioning of democracy) is stronger for Romanian respondents (Spearman's Rho coefficient = -0.385, N = 2306, p <0.01). This suggests that Romanians tend to evaluate democracy especially in terms of economic performance, even in higher proportions than people from other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, Figure 2.3 shows that in 1990 Romanians had the greatest degree of satisfaction with the functioning of democracy (an average of 5.14 on a scale ranging from 1 to 10). Also Romania stands out with the biggest decline in the level of satisfaction with democracy in 1998 compared to 1990 (-1.57 points). This is consistent data showing that during the same timeframe (1990-1998) Romania registered the most pronounced increase of the degree of dissatisfaction with the way things have evolved since the fall of communism. Moreover, Romanians’ confidence that democratic governance can provide solutions to people’s problems decreases too. For instance, in 1990 about 63% of the Romanians believed that "in democracy problems will be solved", while just about 50% still believed this in 1998, according to PCP 1 and 2 datasets.

Declining trust in state institutions

Trust in state institutions and particularly in fundamental institutions of representative democracy such as the parliament and the government had a sinuous evolution during the transition period in Romania (see Figure 4). However, the overall trend is of declining trust rates. Initial percentages of institutional trust

4 Some authors argue that institutional trust has neither diminished nor increased in Romania as the "lack of confidence in key institutions of democracy characterized from the beginning the attitude of this country’s citizens towards the new democratic regime" (Pavel 2010, 15). This assertion is however contradicted by data presented in Figure 2.4, which shows that trust in the main political institutions (Parliament, Government, President) has a sinuous dynamics in Romania with ups and dramatic downs, particularly overlapping on election cycles until 2004. Therefore, instead of claiming that lack of confidence in key institutions of democracy characterized Romanians from the outset of democratization (as Pavel does), it would more accurate to say that the lack of confidence in new democratic institutions
were relatively high. In 1990, 59.1% of Romanians had confidence in Parliament, and 63.1% in the new Government. After 8 years of transition, levels of institutional trust have dropped to 20.9% for the Parliament and 15.9% for the Government in 1998. Other key organizations of representative democracy, such as political parties, lost much of citizens’ trust, from 28.6% in 1990 to 8.6% in 1998 (according to data from the PCP surveys, waves I and II). Moreover, since the mid 1990s Romanians’ trust in political parties had never exceeded the 20% threshold (Tufiș 2011).

This sinuous evolution of institutional trust, with ups and downs which closely overlap election cycles (see Figure 4), suggests a potential "honeymoon" effect (Tufiș 2011, 487). This effect reflects people’s tendency to grant more trust to political institutions and the new governmental team immediately after winning elections. During the first post-communist decade, substantial increases in levels of institutional trust are generally followed by dramatic erosions of people’s confidence in the main institutions of representative democracy. This evolution appears to be stronger and therefore more visible in Figure 4 in the case of the 1996 and 2000 elections. Afterwards, in the second post-communist decade, the intensity of the honeymoon effect seems to decrease.

The ups and downs of trust in Figure 4 suggest that elections seem to provide a sort of "fuel" (or legitimacy) that democratic institutions need in order to work during an electoral cycle. But this statement could be amended and specified by two observations. First, not all elections may be similarly effective in recharging the reservoir of trust in the main political institutions. For example, the general

installed relatively quickly after the fall of communism, but not immediately, because for example, in 1990 (the turning point of Romanian democracy) both the Government and the Parliament recorded relatively high rates of trust and Romanians were significantly more satisfied with the functioning of democracy, to their neighbors in other post-communist countries. Trust in institutions begins to decline in Romania in 1991, when the social costs of economic reforms are first felt by the population (see the previous section for data and discussions on this topic).

5 The general enthusiasm that followed the double victory of the opposition in the 1996 elections (presidential and parliamentary) is illustrated by Vladimir Pasti, Mihaela Miroiu și Cornel Codită (Pasti, Miroiu, and Codită 1997, 207): „Exactly that part of intellectuals and professionals, which proved to be the most harsh on criticizing the previous government on the basis of contested realities of the economy and population, was now the source of spreading downright overwhelming optimism. Nothing seemed impossible; nothing seemed unsolvable once the government had been finally changed. Such optimism contradicted then, and it is contradicting now, the most important conclusions of the assessment of the state of affairs in Romania.”
elections of 1992 neither seem to have brought any additional trust, nor have stopped the downward trend of institutional trust recorded since 1990. This might be so because the general elections of 1992 did not manage to produce a genuine alternation in power, although they somewhat balanced the ratio of parliamentary seats between government and opposition. Conversely, the general elections of 1996 brought about the first alternation in power after the fall of communism, while the 2000 elections generated the second alternation of power. In the aftermath of both the 1996 and 2000 elections one can note a dramatic increase of institutional trust, followed then by a similarly spectacular decrease of confidence in the main political institutions as governing processes started to unfold.

Figure 4: The evolution of institutional trust in Romania, 1990-2011

Source: Personal elaboration based on data provided by Claudiu Tufiş - data from 1990 to 2008 (also see Tufiş 2013), Eurobarometer 71.3 June 2009, Eurobarometer 73.4 May 2010, CSSB survey October 2010, CURS survey March 2011.

Data in Figure 4 suggest that levels of institutional trust are a function of people's post-electoral expectations compared to how people perceive the subsequent policy outcomes delivered by the governing elite. Higher expectations
and hopes are, more trust people grant to the new governmental team and representative institutions. On the other hand, it seems that larger disappointments are (that is the difference between high expectations and small achievements or outputs), more dramatic is the decrease of levels of institutional trust.

These remarks lead us to the second observation which in turn requires a discussion. After the 2000 elections institutions’ “tank” of trust seems to fill less and less with each new row of elections. This phenomenon could be attributed to social learning: post-election disappointments were felt repeatedly by significant parts of the population which subsequently perceived the ineffectiveness of governing processes unfolding after 1989. These repeated disappointments seem to have lowered people’s expectations regarding politics and their demands towards the political class in general. In sum, recurrent post-electoral disillusionments can also increase people's skepticism about the effectiveness of elections as a mechanism through which citizens can have a say in the democratic governance of the country.

However, declining public confidence has not affected all institutions equally. Romanians have kept relatively high levels of trust in traditional institutions, such as the military and the churches (details not shown here). In a transitional period characterized by profound transformations of social and economic relations, which have been often accompanied by feelings of uncertainty and insecurity, trust in traditional institutions could be interpreted mainly through their perceived symbolic role as “protectors of the self” through physical means, in the case of the army, and spiritual ones in the case of churches (Tufiş 2007).

On the other hand, trust in state institutions can be interpreted as a form of specific support for democracy. From this perspective, prolonged periods of low trust in state institutions may have negative consequences on diffuse support for democracy, that is perception of democracy as a legitimate form of government (Tufiş 2011). In an analysis of the evolution of institutional trust during the transition period in Romania, Tufiş (2007) emphasizes that trust in state institutions is strongly influenced by how the public and the media evaluates these institutions, suggesting that an improvement of institutional performance could lead to an increase in institutional trust. In addition, a significant part of the variance of trust

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6 Dan Pavel (2010) considers that Romanians had huge expectations and then similar disappointments regarding the regime change of 1989. The high level of disappointment "was bestowed upon elected politicians and democratic institutions" which have been found as "scapegoats" for everything that occurred during the transition (Pavel 2010, 15)
in state institutions depends on how people assess both their own economic circumstances and the economic situation of their country. Therefore, an improvement of the economic situation and a positive perception of the effectiveness of institutions could lead to an increased trust of state institutions (Tufiş 2007). Yet, during the global economic crisis the opposite scenario was unfolding Romania (as in many other European countries) leading to a dramatic decline of institutional trust.

Nevertheless, declining trust in political institutions is not a phenomenon specific only to Romania. A similar evolution of institutional trust can be seen in other former communist countries, but also in developed democracies. However, the sources of these trends could be interpreted differently: in advanced democracies declining trust might be a consequence of citizens’ changing expectations towards state institutions, while in new democracies it may primarily result from malfunctioning of institutions (Tufiş, 2007). Moreover, the reservoir of trust differs particularly in hardship times. In ‘old’ democracies, citizens who were once satisfied with the work of democratic institutions know that institutions can deliver more than they are currently achieving. On the other hand, the experience of citizens of former communist countries with democratic institutions was rather negative from the beginning, hence they have a generally skeptical attitude towards future performance improvements of democratic institutions (Tufiş 2007).

Political alienation and lack of interest in politics

The post-communist transition in Romania is characterized by a loss of confidence not only in political institutions but also in the political class in general (see Figure 5). Thus, the percentage of those who believe that one should not trust politicians increased from 56.1% in 1990 to almost 70% in 2002. The public has

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7 However, even in consolidated democracies the lack of confidence in political institutions due to people’s changing expectations which are not met anymore by these institutions could be also interpreted as an institutional malfunction, at least from the public’s perspective who perceives an inadequacy of political institutions to the problems and changing needs of citizens.

8 This is especially true in post-communist countries which started economic reforms and people felt their social effects immediately after the change of regimes in 1989. In Romania, these economic measures were delayed by the first post-communist government and at least in 1990, Romanians had a relatively high level of confidence in the new democratic institutions.
perceived that politicians are increasingly distancing themselves from people's problems and views: in 1990, 36.4% of respondents believed that politicians do everything to get to know people's opinions, while only 18.9% still believed this in 2002.

During the transition period, Romanians' cynicism regarding politicians and politics has increased substantially. This cynical attitude is expressed in public opinion surveys, among other things, by respondents' agreement with the following statement: "only those who want to make their fortune get involved in politics". The percentage of those who agree with this assertion rose from less than 50% in 1990 to 83.5% in 2002. Thus, political engagement is increasingly seen as a socially stigmatized and stigmatizing activity rather than a civic virtue. Moreover, the belief that public and political involvement is a civic or patriotic duty of every citizen decreases from 65% in 1990 to 49% 1998. The big difference between the percentage of those who agree that voting is a duty of every citizen (over 94% in 2002) and the significantly lower percentages of those who believe that participation in political activities in general is a civic duty (only about 49% in 1998) might suggest that for most Romanians voting is one of the few (if not the only) form of political participation that is socially desirable.

But effective participation in political life is not just about voting, as shown by Vladimir Pasti, Mihaela Miroiu and Cornel Codită (1997) in an analysis of the first seven years of the Romanian post-communist transition. These authors argue that participation is contingent on "a minimum interest in public life", and given the fact that most people are concerned more with struggling for survival, they have lost their interest to participate in public affairs (Pasti, Miroiu, and Codită 1997, 179). Furthermore, the authors cited above have estimated that during the mid 1990s about half of the Romanian population suffered from social and political exclusion, poverty being the main obstacle to participatory democracy.

In addition, the share of those who have perceived democratic governance in Romania as a participatory process substantially decreased during the first post-communist decade. Thus, while almost a third of Romanians believed in 1990 that "everyone has a say in the affairs of the country", only about a quarter still agreed with this statement in 2002. On the other hand, there is a notable increase in the percentage of those who feel excluded from politics, which is perceive as a rather closed process, reserved exclusively to politicians expressed through agreement with statements such as: “ordinary people are always excluded from power”(from
57% in 1990 to almost 80% in 2002), "politicians are glad if people don’t interfere in their matters" (from 68% to almost 90%), "only when there is trouble politicians are interested in people's views" (from about 66% to about 80%). These data suggest a pronounced degree of political alienation of significant parts of the population.

**Figure 5: Citizens’ perceptions of politics and politicians in Romania, 1990-2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everybody can have a say in the matters of the country</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians do their best to seek the views of the people</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's better not to get involved in politics</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To participate in political activities/vote* it's a patriotic duty</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These days only those who want to make their fortune get involved in politics</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>83.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You'd better not trust politicians</td>
<td>50.1%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary people are always excluded from power</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only when there's trouble are politicians interested in the views of the people**</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>79.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politicians are glad if people don't interfere in their matters</td>
<td>67.1%</td>
<td>85.9%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As long as things are getting on well, I'm not really interested in who is in power</td>
<td>77.7%</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data represent the percentage of those who agree with the respective statements. * The question of BOP survey in June 2002 relates to voting as a civic duty, while questions in the PCP surveys from 1990 and 1998 relate to involvement in political activities in general (hence probably the large gap between the results on this item). ** This item is missing from the BOP 2002 questionnaire. Otherwise, the questions were formulated in a similar way in all three surveys, so that data are comparable over time. Source: Personal elaboration on the basis of three surveys: PCP I (1990) and II (1998), and BOP, May-June 2002.

The transition period in Romania was also characterized by a widespread sense of a minimal role of citizens in politics. According to Pasti and his colleagues, the perceptions of "minimal citizenship" are expressed through electoral absenteeism, lack of involvement in local communities, lack of interest in civic
association, and skepticism regarding the output of the political process (Pasti, Miroiu, and Codiţă 1997).9

To analyze the predictors of political alienation I used a multiple linear regression model (details not shown). The dependent variable, namely the level of political alienation is measured as a summative index of four items (Cronbach Alfa = 0.637) that measure the degree to which an individual agrees with the following statements: parties are more interested in winning elections than solving people's problems, no matter who wins the election eventually things unfold likewise in the next four year term, politicians' morality is very low, MPs' salaries are too high. Politically alienated people in post-communist Romania are in general persons who negatively evaluate politics and believe that democratic governance cannot provide any solutions to people's problems. Hence they are less interested in politics. People with a higher degree of political alienation are persons with low levels of support for democracy as a form of government, who have less confidence in state institutions and political leaders, those who are dissatisfied with the government's performance in various fields, those who are on the whole dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy and market economy in Romania, who have a lower degree of personal modernity (measured here by the number of foreign languages known and computer literacy). At the same time, people with fewer personal relationships10 on which they can rely on to solve problems that can occur in various situations have a higher degree of political alienation.

Diminishing sense of citizen participation as a civic duty, distrust of politicians, and feelings of political exclusion are just some symptoms of political alienation of Romanians in transition. Other factors associated with political alienation are: lack of interest in politics, perception of politics as irrelevant to people’s life, feelings of powerlessness and political ineffectiveness. For instance data from 1998 (PCP II) show most Romanians had little or no interest in politics.

Moreover, Vladimir Pasti, Mihaela Miroiu and Cornel Codiţă have ketched the profile of the “minimal citizen” who is: “unsafe physically, uncertain about state institutions, doubts that the principle ‘no one is above the law’ will ever make a practical sense as s/he faces daily counterexamples, has a sense of humble beggar in front of state institutions and a complex of hierarchical inferiority since institutions are perceived as the means by which the state controls and owns society; disturbs public officials from their work when s/he requests a public service; bothers the seller who actually guards the merchandise from the buyer” (Pasti, Miroiu, and Codiţă 1997, 181)

If we interpret these personal relationships as an indicator of social integration, then we can say that people who are socially isolated or marginalized are also usually more politically alienated.
The lack of interest was higher for local than for national politics: over 78% of Romanian declaring little or no interest in local politics and 64% in national politics. Lack of interest in politics was accompanied in 1998 by perceptions of politics as irrelevant to people’s life: 59.3% thought their personal situation is little or very little influenced by decisions of local authorities, and 43.9% believed that national level political decisions had only a limited influence on their life.

Thus, people tended to perceive politics as a characteristic of the central government (Comșa 2006). Thus, during the first post-communist decade, Romanians seemed to be more interested and deemed national politics to be more important than local politics. Self-perceived political efficacy (i.e. the subjective ability to influence political decisions) recorded relatively low rates in Romania. We can rather speak of political inefficiency because more than three quarters of Romanians believed they can do little to influence political decisions. However, subjective political efficacy is somewhat higher when people aim to influence decisions of local authorities: about 22% of Romanians believe they can influence local decisions to a large or very large extent, compared to only 15% who believe they can influence national decisions.

Interest in politics is one of the most important predictor of political participation in all its forms: turnout in elections, conventional or protest participation, cognitive involvement in politics or direct participation in local decision making (Tătar 2015a, b, Tătar 2013, Tătar 2011c, Tătar 2011a, b). To understand why Romanians are (not) interested in politics, I have examined the predictors of this variable. Table 1 shows multiple linear regression coefficients and their level of significance. The model explains over a third of the variance of interest in politics (% Adjusted $R^2$ = 34.4%). Resources of a person are strongly associated with her/his interest in politics, people with more resources being generally more interested in political affairs. In terms of regional variance, one can observe a higher political interest in Bucharest and Moldova and less interest in Oltenia (residence in other regions had no significant effect). Gender socialization is one of the most important predictors of interest in politics, men being generally more interested in politics than women.

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11 This trend seems to have changed however by mid 2000s, when people tended to give more importance to local politics and turnout for local elections became higher than turnout in parliamentary national elections.

12 Only the final model is presented here that resulted after the removal of statistically insignificant predictors.
Table 1: Predictors of interest in politics - Multiple Linear Regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors of interest in politics</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.547</td>
<td>1.211</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>1.027</td>
<td>.348</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oltenia</td>
<td>-.446</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>-.057</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucharest</td>
<td>.254</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1.866</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1.552</td>
<td>.292</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.896</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>.175</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>-1.296</td>
<td>.526</td>
<td>-.049</td>
<td>.014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household material endowments</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade unionist after 1990</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td>.422</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society membership after 1990</td>
<td>1.047</td>
<td>.383</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social relationships</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party membership after 1990</td>
<td>1.617</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in state institutions</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>.128</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in political parties</td>
<td>.160</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believes that elections make governments pay attention to people's opinions</td>
<td>2.046</td>
<td>.297</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective political efficacy (belief that people can influence policy decisions)</td>
<td>.573</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.173</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believes that the country is moving in the wrong direction’</td>
<td>.876</td>
<td>.297</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believes that s/he will live worse next a year</td>
<td>.785</td>
<td>.350</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political alienation</td>
<td>-.293</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>-.078</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% Adjusted R² = 34.4%

Note: Multiple Linear Regression, *backward elimination*, regression coefficients significant at *p* < 0.10. The significance level of each coefficient is presented into column *Sig.* The closer are the Beta coefficients to 1 (or -1), the stronger that variable's influence on political interest is. The sign in front of the coefficients indicates a positive/negative relationship between the predictor and the dependent variable.

Source: Analysis of BOP, May 2005 survey data (see BOP 2005).

A number of other socio-demographic and economic variables influence the degree of political interest of a person too. Education is the most important variable of them. More educated a person is, higher her/his interest in politics is. People who have more resources in the form of household material goods are
generally more interested in politics than people with lower household endowments. In addition, married people tend to be more interested in politics than the unmarried ones. In terms of age, the regression model shows a modest increase in political interest with age. However, bivariate analyses reveal that political interest indeed increases with age, but interest in politics drops dramatically after the age of 70. In terms of ethnicity, one can note that persons belonging to the Hungarian minority in Romania tend to be less interested in politics than the rest of the population.

Social capital indicators have a weak influence on the level of political interest a person has. Membership in various civil society associations or unions is generally associated with higher interest in politics. Romanians who are or have been members of civil society associations after 1990 tend to be more interested in politics. Similarly, people with more personal relationships on which they can rely on in different situations or those who are or were union members are generally more interested in politics. However, the effect of these variables on political interest seems to be relatively modest in post-communist Romania.

On the other hand, indicators of what might be called as the ‘political capital’ of a person are significantly associated with her/his interest in politics. Thus, individuals who are or have been members of political parties after 1990 are more interested in politics than those who were not affiliated with parties. Regardless of party membership, people with higher levels of trust in political parties are generally more interested in politics than those who do not trust parties. Similarly, trust of state institutions has a positive influence on political interest.

Data in Table 1 show that interest in politics is substantially influenced by several attitudinal variables. For example, interest in politics increases when people think elections are an effective means through which government is made more attentive to people’s opinions. Moreover, interest in politics is generally higher when people believe they can influence important decisions affecting the community to which they belong (i.e. subjective or internal political efficacy). Prospective evaluations of national/personal situations have a significant effect on interest in politics. People expecting a worsening of the circumstances both in their personal lives and/or in the country tend to be more attentive to political

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13 But the regression coefficients of some of these variables are statistically significant only at p <0.10.
phenomena and more interested in politics. In other words, our data show an increased political interest of people who believe the country is heading in a wrong direction, or who are pessimistic about the future and believe that next year they will live worse than currently.

**Conclusion**

This paper linked post-communist citizens’ political attitudes and behaviors with the profound socio-economic and political changes affecting the Romanian society after 1989. The double post-communist transition towards democracy and market economy provided the context in which Romanians had the opportunity to participate freely into politics after decades of authoritarian rule. However, the development and consolidation of democratic institutions was accompanied by low levels of public involvement in democratic governance qualifying Romania as a case in which democratization occurred without substantial public participation.

On the contrary, public expectations during the transition processes largely diverged from the perceived democratic performance of public authorities. Since the political, economic and social transformations occurred simultaneously, they altogether have marked the context in which Romanians (as well as citizens of other post-communist countries) began to assess the functioning of democracy particularly through the lens of structural changes and economic outcomes during the transition period. As this paper has highlighted, at the beginning of the transition period Romanians’ views of democracy incorporated a multitude of economic and social rights. Thus, most Romanians had relatively high expectations of what democratic governance should deliver during the post-communist transition. However, people perceived the economic and social outputs of the new democratic processes as generally disappointing. Thus, economic hardship, loss of jobs, deterioration of living standards, everyday life’s uncertainties and risks were associated with a loss of confidence in the new democratic institutions and political actors.

In terms of attitudes towards politics, the post-communist transition period in Romania can be characterized by a *political alienation syndrome*. Symptoms of this syndrome include: a reduced sense of civic duty, distrust of politicians, feelings of political exclusion, lack of interest in politics, perceptions of politics as irrelevant to people's lives, feelings of helplessness and political ineffectiveness, citizens’
diminishing expectations with the solutions offered by the political sphere and lowering expectations regarding the quality of the political class in general. All these constitute unfavorable prerequisites of citizen participation in the democratic processes unfolding in Romania after 1989.

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BOOK REVIEWS


Review by Sylvie BURIANOVA

The Irregularization of Migration in Contemporary Europe edited by Yolande Yansen, Robin Celikates and Joost de Bloois, brings together border studies experts across Europe to reflect on the transformation of borders, we are witnessing today. The aim of the book is to “rethink the basic schemes through which we perceive and conceptualize migration and its irregularization”. Contributing authors mainly from the field of political science and sociology demonstrate in eleven essays that the change borders and our perception of the nature of them have been undergoing is an underlying cause for the growing impression of migration as ‘not regular’ and thus the need to strengthen border controls.

This book is a great contribution to the recent efforts to deflect from the meaning of borders just as protective walls and fences. By taking more theoretical approach it stands out in prevailing deliberation about the design of European migration and border policy as it goes behind this debate and raises the question of the meaning of erecting borders and their significance for our interpretation of inclusion and freedom of movement.

The focus of the book is on European external borders. The events in the Mediterranean region are showcased for their prominence to be an example of the “deportation global regime” much deeper rooted than in the recent dramatized increase in immigration flows to Europe. Europe, in this case more so equated with
the European Union, is nevertheless unique from the viewpoint of the authors due to the substantial shifting of sovereignty which takes form of the European integration project. The contest accompanying this transfer of power vent into practices carried out at the southern border.

The volume is well structured into three thematic parts, each of them focusing on different aspect accompanying the transformation of borders. At the first glance, the selection of topics covered can look at first glance unsystematic and confusing, however, the wide range appropriately demonstrates the premise of the book from many angles and puts together the intended image of European immigration management. In this sense, the volume connects eligibly the past (Jansen, Chapter 2; Buckel, Chapter 9), the present (Karakayali, Chapter 3; Jeandesboz, Chapter 6; Dijstelbloem, Chapter 7) and the future (Amaya-Castro, Chapter 10; Peeren, Chapter 11). First chapters attempt to set the institution of border into a wider context of identity, race and liberal democracy. Following parts centre on concrete ways the irregularization of migration in Europe takes place and the last third of the book introduces the expanding modes of resistance against this phenomenon.

The book’s premise is the ongoing transformation of borders. Borders do not longer represent just things like erected walls and fences. Their aim is not to block the entry but rather select who can entry and how fast. In their principal, borders are liquid, selective and regulatory instruments of biopolitics. Their character reflects the struggles for control, not only between the member states and the Union institutions but also between NGOs and private sphere, caused by liberalization of the borders complementing the integration process (Bigo, Chapter 4; Jeandesboz, Chapter 6; Dijstelbloem, Chapter 7). Ultimately, borders are “complex social institutions” as they are shaped by the interaction of these actors and by the geopolitical reality combined with its cultural inheritance (Mezzadra, Chapter 8; De Genova, Chapter 1). The violence stemming from this interaction that accompanies border controls is understood not only with regard to physical harm but also as tracking, screening and subsequent stigmatization of immigrants (Jeandesboz, Chapter 6).

The selective feature of borders implies that they divide people not only in terms of geographical location but also in terms of their rights and encompassment. As De Genova says: “Borders cross everyone, including those who never cross borders” (De Genova, Chapter 1). Their selectivity constitutes
irregularization as opposed to inclusion in the form of citizenship. These two are mutually constitutive conditions as irregularization of migration is “the active and tactical constitution of noncitizenship”. Nonetheless, authors of this book seek to deemphasize the role of citizenship in migration studies and open space for new concepts that will enable formulation of inclusion behind European cultural and normative dimensions of citizenship (Mezzandra, Chapter 8; Jansen, Chapter 2).

The main contribution of the book is the formation and application of new concepts in migration and border studies. Worth highlighting is the “capture” of Jeandesboz (Chapter 6) which is supposed to be an alternative to “blockage” as it accentuates the permeability of borders and the shift towards new forms of control. The “bordered identity” of De Genova (Chapter 1) then directly links citizens and deportability and underscore the complex set of relations borders create. Engaging is the work with the concept of “visibility” primarily carried out by Amaya-Castro (Chapter 10) and Peeren (Chapter 11). Trivially said, describing the rising of the movement “We are here” in Netherlands Amaya-Castro proves how fundamental is what can be seen and Peeren analysing the recent attempts to refocalize migration, reminds the importance of how it is seen. Two points need to be underscored here. First, the degree of visibility of migrants has a direct influence on formulation of migration policies. The pressure on irregular migrants to stay invisible is one of the instruments of control over populations which European migration policies employ. Second point is that we will never be able to understand and observe fully until we are aware of the limitations of our views. This means simply that looking through the eyes of one subject is not reliable.

Furthermore, the Eurocentric outlook on migration is limited per se. The book fittingly demonstrates that the externalization of border controls, aka “rebordering”, still carries the logic of postcolonial imperialism and present Europe as an ideal of liberal democracy with perspective of citizenship with normative and cultural implications. These undertones are displayed in reality in the treatment of Roma community in the European Union (van Baar, Chapter 5). As De Genova (Chapter 1) argues, though, citizenship was proven to be a flexible category in the past. Hence, the crucial message of the volume is that before we try to formulate common European migration policy we should rethink our understanding of citizenship with its link to the freedom of movement and come with more suitable alternatives for studying contemporary international migration.

The strength of this book lies in its theoretical work intended to expand our
comprehension of recent developments in international migration. Building on Foucault’s biopolitics and emphasizing the human’s perception as the creator of "objective" reality the authors of this volume present irregularity as an instrument of control flourishing in contemporary struggles for power at European borders. The tone of the book is rather critical and even though it aims to be especially an epistemological tool it does not present more specific proposals how to revise implemented migration policies. It would have been beneficial if the authors connected their conceptual work with more explicit schemes how to affect the policy in practice. There is also little space dealing with the causes of European immigration and migrants’ and policy makers’ motivation. Overall, mainly aimed at migration scholars and researchers, The Irregularization of Migration in Contemporary Europe shows only a narrow picture of immigration in Europe highlighting the exploitation and deportation practices, nevertheless, it fulfils its set objectives and it extends the conceptual framework for examining the predominant trends in current migration regimes.

Review by Marius Ioan TĂTAR

The global economic crisis had major social and political impact on European societies. The political consequences of the crisis mainly stem from rising unemployment, the freezing or cuts of public sector pay, declining purchasing power, pessimism about future developments and perceptions of bad governance. In this context, a new wave of protest has spread across Europe as a reaction to the austerity measures adopted during the economic crisis. Governments’ inability to deal with the crisis has generated in many places anxiety, which then turned into popular anger. People who have been hard hit by the crisis placed most of the blame with incumbent governments and condemned the corruption and lack of political responsibility of the political class in general.

In *Social Movements in Times Austerity: Bringing Capitalism Back into Protest Analysis*, Donatella della Porta focuses on the major episodes of contention that emerged during the economic crisis, and which illustrate opposition to austerity measures. However, as della Porta demonstrates in this book, recent waves of protest in the global North reflect not only opposition to austerity measures, but also a more fundamental crisis of neoliberal capitalism and democracy. As the author points out, public outrage was raised by the corruption and deterioration of political institutions seen as captured by big business interests and unresponsive to citizens’ needs and demands. People attributed much of the responsibility for the economic crisis and the inability to manage it to political corruption that was essentially perceived as a corruption of democracy.

The book is structured into six chapters. In terms of research design, the book builds on the assumption that in order to understand the main characteristics anti-austerity movements in terms of their social basis, identity and organizational
structures and strategies, one should look at the specific features of the socioeconomic, cultural and political context in which these protests developed (p. 3). As della Porta acknowledges, this book aims to highlight (some) similarities in the national contexts and connect them to shifts in neoliberal capitalism and its effects on society (pp. 3-4). In other words, this means that shifts in neoliberal capitalism and its effects on society should be similar in different nations in order to explain/generate similarities in protest episodes, all other things being different. Then the implications is that this study seems to employ a most-different cases research design according to which the author should analyze different countries (that have different economical, cultural, social, and political national contexts) in which similar shifts in neoliberal capitalism occurred during the crisis and link these similar shifts to similarities in protest episodes from these countries. A most-different cases research design could be useful either to control for/exclude the effect of national context when analyzing the relationship between similarities in shifts in capitalism and protest episodes or to show that this relationship holds in different contexts. However, as della Porta mentions, the main theoretical challenge of this study is to locate protests inside the linkages between market and state, between capitalism and democracy (p. 4). That means the author will need to factor in national context in the analysis of protest episodes. Yet, economic conditions vary from country to country and this has implication for social movement protests. If so, it is questionable how factoring in national contexts will explain similarities in the new wave of anti-austerity protests over the world.

The first chapter of the book introduces the debate about bringing capitalism back into protest studies. Della Porta shows that most social movement studies have generally paid little attention to the sources of grievances and the effects of socioeconomic structural developments over the social movements. Citing previous research, the author points at the grievances spread by neoliberalism and its crisis in the Arab world and South Europe. Della Porta identifies the sources of these grievances (and protest) in the austerity policies (cuts in public spending and deterioration of public services) and in the growth in inequality and poverty. According to della Porta, a new class that emerged as the main actor of these protests: the social precariat composed of young, unemployed, or only part-time employed and often well educated people. Precariat is characterized by a sum of insecurities on the labor market: job (regulations on hiring and dismissal give little protection to workers); work (weak provision for
accidents or illness), and income (low pay). All these conditions have effects in terms of accumulation of anger, anomie, anxiety and alienation (p. 5). The authors discuss political cleavages, that are the main lines of social conflicts which are culturally and politically structured, and points out how cleavage theory could help investigating the relationship between structural conditions and social movements.

The second chapter looks at the social bases of the political cleavages Global Justice Movements (GJM) with anti-austerity movements. The chapter stars with a discussion on the dynamics of capitalism and emphasizes the characteristics of late neoliberalism in which the social movements analyzed in this book are embedded. The author points that while GJM mobilized mainly middle class participants, anti-austerity movements mobilized more diverse categories of people: workers in full employment, as well as the unemployed. Thus anti-austerity protest are characterized by large coalitions of various social actors: students, precarious workers, industrial workers and public employees.

Chapter 3 focuses on the cultural elements of the cleavages, highlighting the collective identities developing in neoliberalism and its crisis. As della Porta notes, after a identifying a socio-structural basis, a next step towards the creation of a cleavage is and identification process, with the acquisition of some specific norms and world-views (p. 68). Due to the high diversity of social actors, the challenge of anti-austerity movements is to build all-inclusive identities with reference to broader categories such as the people, the citizens, the indignados, or the 99%, which are resisting the immorality of neoliberalism (p.96).

Chapter 4 links the economic crisis of neoliberalism to a crisis of responsibility, as an additional dimension of the socio-political context in which the movement develops. As della Porta highlights, the crisis of responsibility, driven by the choice of free market over social protection, had an effect in terms of sudden drops in trust in political institutions, which punctuated a long-term decline (p. 153). The anti-austerity protests have stigmatized the corruption of the institutions of representative democracy, which are claimed to be unable to represent the citizens (p. 154). This crisis of responsibility is essentially a crisis of legitimacy which challenges traditional conceptions of representative democracy.

Chapter 5 discusses the changing conceptions of democracy that participants in social movements have and practice in their organizational forms. Della Porta stresses that movement activists develop their conception of democracy, introducing innovation that then travel across countries and from one
movement generation to the next (p. 2007). For instance, the author cites previous research showing that, in the acampadas, the principle of deliberative and participatory democracy, inherited from previous movements – were adapted to the characteristics of a movement of “common people” rather than activists, that privileged persons over associations (p. 208).

The concluding chapter (6) summarizes the main findings and discusses their implications for the broader fields of social movement studies, theories of political economy, and democratic theory. The author points out not only the capacity of anti-austerity movements to raise awareness among public opinion, but also to socialize to democratic politics large numbers of citizens, by prefigurating different participatory and deliberative forms of democracy.

This book will substantially improve our understanding of recent waves of anti-austerity protests. On theoretical grounds, this study fills an important gap in the literature by connecting political economy theories with social movement studies and democratic theory. Thus, the book sets a rich and important research agenda for further interdisciplinary studies of protest. It also provides a useful and inspiring source of information for political activists across the world.
Internet and digital technologies have transformed our lives, changing social relationships, from the labor market and how to do business, to interpersonal relations and those with political environment and state institutions. A whole literature exploring how internet and digital networks could help the development of social capital and civic activism has emerged in recent decades and the book review here, *Participatory Culture in a Networked Era. A Conversation on Youth, Learning, Commerce and Politics*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2016, 214 pages, is part of it.

Conceived as a conversation between the three authors, Henry Jenkins, Mizuko Ito and Danah Boyd, without losing by this the scientific rigor, the book introduces us to the universe of participatory practices in this digital age. The book is organized into seven chapters, each of them beginning with an introductory essay by one of the authors, followed by a conversation between all three on the topic under discussion. As stated in the preface, the goal of the book is to critically examine the concept of “participatory culture”, tracing the ways the authors’ thinking has evolved through the years in response to a changing media environment and to the shifting stakes in policy debates surrounding digital media.

The first chapter, *Defining participatory culture*, introduces the core concept framing the book: “a participatory culture is one which embraces the values of diversity and democracy through every aspect of our interactions which other- one which assumes that we are capable of making decisions, collectively and individually, and that we should have the capacity to express ourselves through a broad range of different forms and practices” (p. 2). It is one in which members...
believe their contributions matter and feel some degree of social connection with one another. The chapter makes conceptual clarifications, such as distinction between participation and interactivity: we participate in something, we interact with something. Social media platforms like Facebook or YouTube are not necessarily participatory cultures, they are rather tools often used as means of maintaining social contact. Participation refers to the property of the culture where groups collectively or individually make decisions that have an impact on their shared experiences. Another notion, “networked individualism” refers to the fact that many social networking platforms promote a form of egocentrism and narcissism. Even if it is difficult in practice, we have to find a balance between the individual and the community, between “personalization” and “socialization”.

The second chapter, Youth culture, youth practices, discusses how the “digital natives” experience technology. For many teenagers the internet is a form to escape from their home context, a way to connect to some kind of larger community beyond their schools and local community. For parents, an additional source of concern is that digital and mobile technologies have created more autonomous zones, exposing their children to risks. But, on the other hand, the social lives of youth are more visible to parents than even before, being the various forms of adult surveillance over young people’s online lives.

The next chapter, Gaps and genres in participation, explores the diversity in forms of participation in relation to the issues of equity. The authors discuss the efforts made by public institutions like schools and universities, taking on cultural identity and social networks directly, to open up traditional pathways to opportunity for kids who do not otherwise have access. Chapter following, Learning and literacy, investigates the implications of participatory culture for education and media literacy, the authors concluding that “if we can find ways to broker the peace between the cultures of education, entertainment, and youth peer engagement, new media and networked culture can have a huge role to play in expanding these opportunities” (p. 119).

The chapter Democracy, civic engagement and activism consider the intersection between these topics and participation and networked culture. Most of the research trying to understand the routs young people take towards greater civic engagement accentuate that they become invested in politics as a consequence of the role models provided by their parents, their teachers (especially in civic classes which deal with controversial issues or field trips to see
government at work), their school communities (extra-curricular activities, community service) and their informal learning communities (including those around fandom and gaming). Today we have a much more dispersed and decentralized notion of what activism looks like in a networked culture. As the authors emphasizes, “the new style of participatory politics tap into what young people already know as fans, consumers and participants within social networks and deploy this popular cultural capital as starting point for political action” (p. 157). And the hope is that this new model could help people who have felt excluded from politics to find their way into fuller participation. But these “advanced practices” are more likely to be performed by those with high educational, economic, cultural and social capital than by those who are more disadvantaged. So, while participatory politics hopes for a more democratic culture, it cannot in and of itself to overcome structural inequalities that have historically blocked many from participating in civic and political life.

The concluding chapter, Remaining participatory culture, reflects on some of shared values, perspective and commitments, emphasizing that participatory culture is by its very nature a work in progress. It can be used both as a descriptive model and as an aspirational one: “as a descriptive model, it indicates a set of practices that have centered on accessible and communal forms of cultural production and sharing. As an aspirational model, it embodies a set of ideals for how these social practices can facilitate learning, empowerment, civic action and capacity building” (p. 183). Participatory culture requires an ethos of “doing it together” in addition to “doing it yourself”; it is about collectively engaging in an aspirational project that constantly challenges us to expand opportunities for meaningful participation.
UPCOMING EVENTS

University of Oradea, Faculty of History, International Relations, Political Sciences, and Communication Sciences and the Research Centre on Identity and Migration Issues (RCIMI)

invite you to participate in the

Jean Monnet International Conference

A Social Europe for Youth: Education to Employment

18-20 May 2017
Oradea, Romania

within the support of Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, Jean Monnet module, 2015-2018
564846-EPP-1-2015-1-RO-EPPJMO-MODULE
In 1993, the Commission’s Green Paper on European social policy started by asking a question:

"What sort of a society do the Europeans want?"

The social goals that the European Union has been given by its Members, of which Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union is the clearest expression: to promote harmonious and balanced development of economic activities sustainable and noninflationary growth respecting the environment high degree convergence of economic performance high level employment and of social protection the raising of the standard of living and quality of life, and economic and social cohesion and solidarity among Member States.

There a number of shared values which form the basis of the European social model. These include democracy and individual rights free collective bargaining, the market economy, equality of opportunity for all and social welfare and solidarity.

The European Social Model isn’t just a paradigm but a part of the EU construction and according to some voices, the soul of the European Union, issues on social dimensions being addressed and challenged by various tests: the financial crisis, the refugee one, they all measured the European consensus on the social values. Many reforms were been made by member states on social protection, worker’s rights and working conditions, public services, social dialogue, pensions, health system.

Questions are raised regarding the ability of European Union of keeping its legacy on the social area.

Now, looking at the Europe 2020 growth strategy for the coming decade, one can notice that still, in a changing world, we pretend from the EU to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. These three mutually reinforcing priorities should help the EU and the Member States deliver high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. The Union has set five ambitious objectives - on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy - to be reached by 2020.

But social policy goes beyond employment, it affects people at work and in their family environment, their health and their old age. The complex interaction of policies should be assessed and addressed.

This conference aims to bring together academics and researchers from various field of expertise and countries, but also politicians, journalists,
NGO’s representatives, to discuss topics from the following sections and workshops:

**Sections and workshops:**

1. EU governance, social construction and the legitimacy of the EU social model
2. Social values in education; education and employment
3. EU Social Policies versus National Realities;
4. Social exclusion: old problem and new solutions;
5. Unemployment and youth’s issues in the EU;
6. Equality on schedule?
7. Social integration of vulnerable groups; social dialog
8. Social Journalism and the EU public sphere
9. Social media and its impact on youth
10. Student’ section

**Important dates:**

- 23 December 2016: Deadline for submission of abstract
- 10 January 2017: Notification of acceptance
- 10 May 2017: Delivery of full conference paper
- 18-20 May 2017: Conference in Oradea, Romania

**Abstracts:**

The **abstracts** (max. 500 words, followed by 3-5 keywords) will be submitted for review in electronic MS Word format. Please provide the full names, affiliation and e-mail addresses of all authors. Authors are also asked to send a **100 words biographical note** focusing on research activities, scientific interests and previous publications. Abstracts should be sent by 23 of December 2016 to the Conference Coordinator, Gabriela Goudenhooft, at the following address: gabrielagoud@gmail.com

**Travel & Accommodation**

There is no participation fee for the conference. Accommodation and meals during the conference will be paid by the organizers for one presenter of each accepted paper. There are no available funds for travel costs.
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Manuscripts will be accepted with the understanding that their content is unpublished previously. If any part of an article or essay has already been published, or is to be published elsewhere, the author must inform the Journal at the time of submission. Please find below the standard requirements that have to be fulfilled so that your material can be accepted for publication in JIMS:

- The ideal length of an article (written in English) is from 4 000 to 8 000 words, including a 200-word abstract in English, keywords, and a very brief autobiographical note or resume of the author(s)
- The number of bibliographic references should be within reasonable limits
- The inclusion of tables, charts or figures is welcome in support of the scientific argumentation
- All articles should be presented in Microsoft Office Word format, Times New Roman, 12, at 1.5 lines, and will be sent to the e-mail address jims@e-migration.ro and a copy to contact@e-migration.ro mentioning "Manuscript Submission: [TITLE OF ARTICLE]"
- Book reviews are welcomed to be published in JIMS, but no longer than 2000 words
- Contributions are welcomed at any time of the year and will be considered for the next issues
- The editors reserve the right to edit the articles or to modify/eliminate some fragments, observing the original sense.
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- Footnotes (no endnotes);
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