

**AN ANALYSIS OF HATAY ARAB ALEVIS' ACCOUNTS OF THEIR
RELATIONS WITH SYRIAN REFUGEES IN HATAY AFTER SYRIAN
CRISIS IN 2012**

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ABSTRACT

An Analysis of Hatay Arab Alevis' Accounts of Their Relations with Syrian Refugees in Hatay after Syrian Crisis in 2012

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This thesis analyzes the Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts on the presence of the Syrian refugees in Hatay after Syrian crisis in 2012. This study questions the influence of Syrian refugees on Hatay Arab Alevis who constitute a national minority in Turkey but a local majority in Hatay from the perspective of Hatay Arab Alevis. This study focuses on Arab Alevis' accounts of their social and economic relations with Syrians in Hatay within the context of political, social developments in Hatay. In order to understand perceptions, I utilize literature on ethnicity. Furthermore, to examine the perceptions of local Arab Alevis on Syrian refugees and the interactions between these two ethnic groups in social environment, ethnographic fieldwork is conducted in Hatay province using participant observation and interviews; I also made newspaper analysis.

Keywords: Arab Alevis, Syrians, Hatay, Ethnicity, Tolerance

ÖZET

2012 Suriye Krizinden Sonra Hatay Arab Alevileri'nin Hatay'daki Suriyeli Mültecilerle Olan İlişkilerine İlişkin Algıları

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Bu tez 2012 Suriye krizinden sonraki Suriyeli göçmenlerin Hatay'daki mevcudiyetlerinin Hatay Arap Alevileri üzerindeki etkilerini Hatay Arap Alevilerinin algılarına bakarak analiz etmektedir. Bu çalışmada Türkiye genelinde azınlık durumunda olan etnik bir grubun Hatay'da yerel çoğunluğa sahipken Suriyeli Sünni mültecilerin Hataya gelmesiyle Hatay'daki mevcut yapısı üzerindeki etkilerini ve Hatay Arap Alevilerini nasıl etkilediğini sorgulamaktadır. Bundan dolayı, Hatay Arap Alevilerinin algılarına bakarak, bu çalışmada Hatay Arap Alevileri ile Suriyeli mülteciler arasındaki sosyal ve ekonomik ilişkiler göz önüne alınmıştır. Hatay Arap Alevilerinin algılarını daha iyi anlamak için akademik literatürden etnisite üzerine yoğunlaşmış ve grup algısı yorumlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Ayrıca yerel Hatay Arap Alevilerin algılarını daha yakından incelemek için etnografik bir saha çalışması yapılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Arap Alevileri, Suriyeliler, Hatay, Etnisite, Tolerans

To My Parents and Hande Sözer

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: The Research Problem in the Light of Theoretical Approaches to Ethnicity

1.1. The Research Problem in relation to the Ethnicity Concept

This thesis, utilizing the literature on ethnicity, ethnic borders, and ethnic content, engages with the following question: How may a national ethnoreligious minority group that constitutes a local majority in a host setting be influenced by the migration of refugees with different ethnoreligious identity? It focuses on the Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian refugees in Turkey after the Syrian crisis in 2012 and answer how may Arab Alevis that constitute a national minority in Turkey but a local majority in Hatay have been influenced by the flow of Syrian refugees to Hatay.

The question is significant considering that the influx of Syrian refugees to Hatay has been interpreted in the academic and non-academic sources as a source of tension: Hatay is often presented as a multi-ethnic province where many ethnic communities, such as Arab Alevis, Arab Sunnis, Arab Christians and Armenians, have lived in harmony for many years (e.g. Dođruel 2005). Since 2012 the mass migration of Syrian refugees to Hatay province is interpreted not only as a source for socio-economic unrest in media but also as a cause for the shift in the demographic balance in the province at the disadvantage of local Arab Alevi majority.¹ Even in the academic literature the Syrian refugee influx is interpreted as an issue of possible future ethnic and sectarian tensions between locals and refugees (see Cađaptay, 2014). This research is conducted to hear out Hatay Arab Alevis' own accounts, which is absent in the local newspapers and academic texts, of the claimed shift in the ethnic and demographic structure of Hatay and of whether Hatay Arab Alevis have ethnically marked perceptions on Syrian refugees and their influence on the economic and social environment in Hatay.

In social and political research, the literature on ethnicity concept has burgeoned in the last few decades; yet, the ethnicity concept remained to be debated

¹ See Suriyeliler Tanrı misafiri ama... | Hatay Gazetesi - Hatay'ın haber sitesi... (2014, 10). Retrieved (Last Access May 17, 2015), from <http://www.hataygazetesi.com/haber/genel/suriyeliler-tanri-misafiri-ama%E2%80%A6/1749.html> and Dingil, M. (2015 16). Reyhanlı'da tedirginlik havası hâkim. Retrieved (Last Access May 17, 2015), from <http://www.ozyurtgazetesi.com/index.php/yerel-guendem-1/item/958-reyhanli-da-tedirginlik-havas-hakim.html>

and open to various interpretations. Some scholars underline the importance of objective criteria in explaining the concept ethnicity; for instance, Anthony D. Smith stresses the role of “ethnie[s]” as “precursor[s] of nations” with key components of “symbols, rituals, traditions and ways of life” in ethnic groups and ethnic identity (in Guibernau and Rex, 2010, p. 14). Other scholars argue for subjective criteria in explaining ethnicity, ethnic identity and ethnic groups. For instance, Guibernau and Rex point out the dual nature of subjective criteria in understanding ethnicity: “on the one hand there is the ethnicity which the members of a group claim and feel for themselves; on the other hand there is ethnicity which is attributed to them by others” (Guibernau and Rex, 2010, p. 8). The first group of scholars seem to presume a more permanent notion of “ethnicity” while the other presume a perceptual, therefore, more flexible, relational and contextual notion of ethnicity.

My study follows the second group of accounts to ethnicity which examines focuses on how ethnicity and ethnic differences structure the relations between different communities, particularly between local and refugee communities. The thesis focuses on Hatay Arab Alevi’s accounts of their relations with Syrian refugees in Turkey since the Syrian crisis in 2012. I examine ethnic group content and boundaries to understand how groups, such as Hatay Arab Alevis, make their ethnic identification to their own group, how they use their ethnic identification to differentiate “us” from “them,” how they draw boundaries between their own group and others, and how this self-drawn group boundary may or may not change in the context of particular social and economic relations in Hatay.

The ethnicity concept is utilized in my thesis to answer the following questions: Is ethnicity become a significant marker of difference for members of a local community when they encounter with an ethnically-different refugee community? Does ethnicity always “matter” for the members of the local community in perceiving a newly arrived migrant community and in organizing their economic and social relations with the members of a migrant community? Are there any cases in which members of local communities see ethnic differences as irrelevant in perceiving the refugees? In the light of these questions, this thesis examines Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts of Syrian Sunni refugees and their social and economic relations with Syrian refugees. It aims to answer the questions that under which

circumstances Hatay Arab Alevis perceive Syrian refugees as an ethnic “other”. Specifically, I explore the particular cases in which the groups’ conflict of economic interests emerges and how such a conflict has an impact on their sense of being a distinct and separate ethnic group, their ethnic identifications with their own group and their accounts of “the other” groups.

Understanding ethnicity, ethnic groups and/or ethnic minorities in relation to the significance of ethnic boundaries and ethnic content in intergroup relations, I focus on the interaction of the ethnic groups and their social and economic relationships. This is important because, it enables us to examine the economic interests and group identity within the context of ethnicity and it provides us with answers about how the rapidly changing world has influenced individuals and ethnic groups’ needs or interests. Furthermore, it is important to understand whether the relation between such groups are characterized by a competition and whether this competition is purely informed by essential ethnic differences or it is merely a competition over control of economic sources.

The literature discusses how, in the case of scarce economic sources, ethnic mobilization is utilized by some groups to mask economic competition between different groups. Accordingly, the competition on scarce economic resources have led groups to seek economic advantages (May, Modood, and Squires, 2004, p. 35) and cause them to “live[...] and continue to lead their lives within the framework of an ethnic group...[ethnic identity] (Tarimo, 2010, p. 299). Therefore, the meaning of ethnic identities has changed depending on the ethnic groups’ economic interests, and their search for political power. As a result, ethnic groups’ economic interests bring in the competition and then the ethnic mobilization, which lead to individuals’ integration into certain ethnic groups, to particular inter-group social relationships and political process (Nagel and Olzak, 1982). More precisely David Cunningham (2012) argues the following:

Competition, stemming from the overlap in the economic or political activities of multiple ethnic groups, becomes a key mechanism through which particular boundaries are reinforced...when competing groups occupy similar positions, thus exhibiting considerable niche overlap, ethnic solidarities intensify and contribute to increased competition-based conflict (Cunningham, 2012, p. 505).

On the other hand, while these scholars recognize the importance of the intergroup economic competition for ethnic mobilization to point out flexibility of ethnic identities, others argue for how this process of competition creates the “persistence of the ethnic boundaries” in organizing inter-group relations” (e.g. Despres, 1975). According to Barth, “if a group maintains its identity when members interact with others, this entails criteria for determining membership and ways of signaling membership and exclusion” (Barth, 1969, p. 15). Barth puts his arguments on interaction of the groups between each other by highlighting the differences of the groups and their cultural differences maintaining their identity “us” and “them” which actually exists “out there” in “the real World” (in Wan and Vanderwerf, 2010, p. 10–11). They claim that economic competition may be the reason for evoking the intergroup differences and ethnic mobilization; yet, these differences may ultimately become “real” in the eyes of members of ethnic communities.

In the light of these arguments, my thesis examines how Hatay Arab Alevis’ particular economic concerns may have caused Hatay Arab Alevis’ instrumentalist mobilization of ethnicity by emphasizing their being a distinct ethnic group separate from the Syrian refugees. I discuss the impact of such ethnic mobilization on Hatay Arab Alevis’ perceptions and accounts of themselves as a self-essentializing group and that of Syrian refugees as their ethnic “other.”

The following section discusses ethnicity theories by focusing on essentialist and anti-essentialist accounts of ethnicity and focus on the relevance of literature in both camps regarding my case study on Hatay Arab Alevis. First, I focus on various conceptualizations of ethnicity and ethnic difference. Second, I focus on the ethnicity theories by incorporating “essentialist accounts” to ethnicity, ethnic group, ethnic identity and ethnic group borders by Primordialists and Ethno-symbolists and “anti-essentialist accounts” to ethnicity, ethnic group, ethnic identity and ethnic group borders by Constructivists and Instrumentalists. Finally, I propose Frederick Barth’s framework on ethnic borders and ethnic identity which seems to find a middle ground between the essentialist and anti-essentialist accounts to ethnicity.

1.2. Accounts on Ethnicity and the case of Hatay Arab Alevis in relation to Syrian Refugees

1.2.1. Ethnicity as an Issue of In-group Similarities and Inter-group Differences and Hatay Arab Alevis' Accounts

Defining and understanding the concept of ethnicity is important to make a discussion on the ethnic groups and the intergroup relations and provide to think with a broad perspective. "Ethnicity is seemingly a straightforward concept, but in fact it is subject to different interpretations. Some understand it as ancestry, and others perceive it as physical attributes" (Yang, 2000, p. 39).

While the concept of ethnicity brings lots of diverse accounts in the literature, who counts as a member of an ethnic group or a non-member of an ethnic group may vary in the eyes of human groups. What meant by "ethnicity" seems to show variation from individuals to groups, from time to time, from culture to culture. Therefore, it is important to understand this concept by taking into account cross-cultural and cross-historical variation in the way it has been used in the literature and by the human groups (in Clifford and Marcus, 1986).

Despite the cross-cultural and cross-historical variation in peoples' accounts of ethnicity, ethnic identity operates on creating a matrix of similarities and differences within and across groups. According to Jack D. Eller (1997), ethnicity

is a social and psychological process whereby individuals come to identify and affiliate with a group and some aspect(s) of its culture; ethnicity is what emerges when a person, as affiliated, completes the statement: "I am a ____ because I share ____ with my group." Ethnicity is consciousness of difference and the subjective salience of that difference. It is also mobilization around difference—a camaraderie with or preference for socially-similar others. (Eller, 1997, p. 1–2).

This thesis focuses Hatay Arab Alevis' ethnic group identity by focusing on this matrix of similarities and differences in relation to Syrian refugees. My work shows that Hatay Arab Alevis' sense of ethnic group identity is not simply formed by an essentialist sense of groupness that is ultimately different because of the sectarian differences between Sunnis and Alevis. On the contrary, utilitarian concerns, calculation of economic benefits, material interests, the struggle for economic power

on the local level greatly shape Hatay Arab Alevis' ethnic group identity and their perceptions of Syrian refugees as a group as I discuss in the data chapter.

My work examines Hatay Arab Alevis' senses of "self" and "other" in relation to Syrian Sunni refugees by focusing on potentially crucial role of power competition between ethno-religious groups and it regards their material interest as well as their sense of primordial ties which makes them feel as a "group." Specifically, I examine under which circumstances material interests emerge or framed as an issue of ethnic difference, and how the sense of ethnic groups may change with the concerns of economic benefits and simply how Hatay Arab Alevis see themselves as an ethnic group in relation to Syrian Sunni refugees in the data chapter. To locate my case of Hatay Arab Alevis in the literature, the next section provides a detailed discussion in the literature on essentialist and anti-essentialist accounts of ethnicity.

1.2.2. Ethnicity in terms of Essentializing and Anti-essentializing Ethnic Group Identity and the Case of Hatay Arab Alevis

1.2.2.1. "Essentialists" Accounts of Ethnicity in the Literature:

Primordialist Approach and Hatay Arab Alevis' Accounts

Primordial approach, as the oldest account of ethnicity, treats ethnicity as "something given, ascribed at birth, deriving from the kin-and-clan-structure of human society, and hence something more or less fixed and permanent" (Isajiw, 1993, p. 2). Ethnicity shows itself with the combination of common history, descent, common identity, culture, shares in common, kinship, shared blood ties. Primordialists define the concept of ethnicity with 'primordial' ties of the ethnic groups which associated with the 'biological descent' that comes with the nature and cannot change. In Primordialism the concept "ethnicity" is used interchangeably with the concept "nation" referring to so called natural, permanent and unchanging character of this identity.

Özkırmılı (2010) refers to 'Primordialism' as an umbrella term while describing the belief and nationality that " is a 'natural' part of human beings, as natural as speech, sight or smell, and that nations have existed from time

immemorial” (see Horowitz, 1985; Özkırmı, 2010, p. 49). On the other hand, there is culturalist approach of primordialism which are associated with Edwards Shils and Clifford Gertz. In order to examine the culturalist approach Özkırmı focuses on the study of, “The Poverty of Primordialism”, Jack D. Eller and Reed M. Coughlan who argue the concept of primordialism into three main ideas that:

Primordial identities or attachments are ‘given’, a priori, underived, prior to all experience and interaction... Primordial attachments are ‘natural’, even ‘spiritual’, rather than sociological. Primordial attachments have no social source (1). Primordial sentiments are ‘ineffable’, overpowering, and coercive ... If an individual is a member of a group, he or she necessarily feels certain attachments to that group and its practices (2). Primordialism is essentially a question of emotion and affect ... These feelings make primordialism more than a mere interest theory, and primordial identities are qualitatively different from other kinds of identities (3) (in Özkırmı, 2010, p. 55)

This argument point out that the ethnic identities become permanent and keep the ethnic groups (individuals) together through their cultural similarities which based on kinship, territory, religion with the ‘biological descent.’ On the issue of permanent ethnic identities, Horowitz also argues that according to primordialists ethnic identity is not something to choose; it something given when born into it which is the primacy of birth (Horowitz, 1985, p. 57).

In the nationalism and ethnicity literature, Primordialist accounts have long been discredited considering the potentially detrimental effects of presuming essentialist, natural, unchanging ties between groups and ethnic conflicts such assumptions may cause. Eller (1997) criticizes primordial approach on the concept of ethnicity and argues that “ethnicity is a social and psychological process ...” (p.2) while Seol (2008) criticize it for ignoring social change and the role of political and economic influences (p. 340 – 341). Yet, some scholars also notice that despite these scholarly accounts, some ethnic group members continue to develop “self-essentializing” accounts of their group identity (e.g. Hayden, 2007). Therefore, in my case study, I examine the ethnic identification of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants to understand and interpret whether they utilize a primordialist sense of “the self” and “the other”. My data chapter shows that my informants utilize primordialist notions

in explaining their ethnic group identity particularly when they affiliate Syrians with a negative impact to their group identity and see Syrians as a threat for the homogeneity of their group.

1.2.2.2. “Essentialists” Accounts of Ethnicity in the Literature: Ethno-Symbolist Approach to Ethnicity and Hatay Arab Alevis’ Accounts

Similar to the primordialist approach, the ethno-symbolist approach presumes a cohesion within the ethnic group borders and a persistent content which makes an ethnic group “group.” It emphasizes “the role of myths, symbols, memories, values and traditions in the formation, persistence and change of ethnicity and nationalism” (Özkırıklı, 2010, p. 143) and argues for the continuity between the pre-modern and modern forms of social cohesion in the groups. For instance, Anthony D. Smith, as the prominent scholar of the ethno-symbolist approach, argues that “*ethnies*” i.e. pre-modern ethnic communities constitute the core of the modern nations and contain six components: “a collective proper name, a myth of a common ancestry, shared historical memories, and one or more differentiating elements of common culture, as association with a specific “homeland”, a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population” (in Wan and Vanderwerf, 2010, pp. 14–15).

The ethno-symbolist account to ethnicity is relevant to this thesis because my informants utilize some of the six components of ethnic group by Smith in explaining their “groupness” as I discuss in my data chapter. Hatay Arab Alevis in some circumstances they used – as Smith contend- a collective proper name, a myth of a common ancestry, shared historical memories, and one or more differentiating elements of common culture, as association with a specific “homeland”, a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population” (in Wan and Vanderwerf, 2010, p. 14–15) to stress their difference from Syrians in Hatay. Therefore, in understanding my informants “self-essentializing” group identity, it can be said that ethno-symbolist approach helps me to a certain extent.

This approach, however, does not fully explain their group identity and behavior either considering that Hatay Arab Alevis silence the descent based

group identity when their interaction with the Syrian refugees have the potential to bring in their own economic advantage, for instance when they employ Syrian refugees in their business, as I discuss in the data chapter. Therefore, I examine the relevance of anti-essentialist accounts in the next part.

1.2.2.3. “Anti-Essentialists” Accounts of Ethnicity: Constructivist Approach and Hatay Arab Alevis’ Accounts

The constructivist approach presents ethnicity as socially constructed; it explains ethnic identities through cultural, historical and political process and ethnic groups through their socio-cultural and cultural dimensions (Hempel, 2004, p.256; Seol, 2008). In this view, the ethnicity is “not something people ‘possess’ but something they ‘construct’ in specific social and historical contexts to further their own interests. It is therefore fluid and subjective” (Wan and Vanderwerf, 2010, p. 8).

The constructivist approaches differ from the primordialist approaches, because they give importance to the process of the emergence of the ethnic groups and the time when they have gained social significance (G. K. Brown and Langer, 2010). Constructivists contend that the ethnic identities shows variation over time and space, because the ethnic groups could affect from the societal change and this change is identified by the constructivists view regarding construction and reconstruction of identities, negotiating boundaries emphasizing the individual’s action in the social environment (Anderson, 2006; G. K. Brown and Langer, 2010; Wan and Vanderwerf, 2010).

Benedict Anderson argues that ethnic identity is shifting and fragmented and the nation as an “imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (Anderson, 2006, p. 6). Anderson's vision of constructivism and imagined communities are overarching the domain of nations. Anderson states that all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and even these) are imagined (2006). He argues that authenticity and genuineness of ethnic group’s debate is irrelevant because the production of convincing national myths and narratives have been activated by these two categories (in Köse, 2013).

Constructivists do not presume natural, fixed, unchanging, and permanent and essentialist “contents” of ethnic groups. On the other hand, they argue that these different contents or components of ethnic group have been created by structural conditions and they are open to change (see Yancey, 1976). The constructivist account to ethnicity is relevant for this thesis considering how ethnicity is socially constructed and how ethnic solidarity is situationally mobilized by the individuals for creating social distance from other groups, and for immediate advantages such as social or economic mobility. Specifically, this account may help to explain how present “ethnic content” presumed by Hatay Arab Alevis, can actually be a result of historical structural circumstances and they may be open to change. Therefore, Hatay Arab Alevis’ sense of group and their accounts of Syrian refugees needs to be contextualized within the broader history of Hatay Arab Alevis in Turkey as a minority, which is discussed in the next chapter.

1.2.2.4. “Anti-Essentialists” Accounts of Ethnicity: Instrumentalist Approach and Hatay Arab Alevis’ Accounts

The Instrumentalist approach also sees ethnicity as socially constructed in a given society while it emphasizes the role of ethnic interests in ethnic group identity formation and ethnic mobilization. It argues that “ethnicity is constructed by particular elites who are driven by competition for political, economic benefits, social status or other objectives and motives” (Seol, 2008, p. 345) and who uses ethnicity as “resource” or an instrument in order to define the group identity and make sure to regulate the group boundaries and membership for their resources (G. K. Brown and Langer, 2010). For them, ethnicity and ethnic identity become relevant in cases of social, political and economic competition (G. K. Brown and Langer, 2010) and therefore ethnicity is “dynamic, variable and reflexive” (Hempel, 2004, p. 255). Therefore, Instrumentalists show us how members of the ethnic groups may manipulate ethnic markers and emphasize their own unique ethnic identity as an instrument for their survival in a changeable and transformational life standard or to access to political or economic material benefits.” (Wan and Vanderwerf, 2009, p. 11).

Instrumentalist approach, to a certain extent, help me to interpret my Hatay Arab Alevi informants' perceptions of Syrian Sunni refugees particularly to show how Hatay Arab Alevis suppress their own ethnic difference in their economic relations with Syrian refugees with the calculations of their own material interests in some economic transactions when they overemphasize their own difference from Syrian refugees in regards to social interactional context. Yet, anti-essentialist approaches may have problems in understanding Hatay Arab Alevis' presentation of their group in essentialist terms. Therefore, in the next part, I discuss frameworks combining anti-essentialist and essentialist accounts.

1.2.3. Linking Essentialists and Anti-Essentialists Approaches to Ethnicity: A Barthian Framework in the Case of Hatay Arab Alevis

Hatay Arab Alevis' complex accounts of ethnic identity and difference, specifically their self-essentialization in social relations and ethnic mobilization in economic relations lead me to ask the following question: Is it possible to see ethnic communities acting in accordance with the principles supporting both essentialist and anti-essentialist assumptions?

Some scholarly works provide cases in which ethnic groups may self-essentialize for pursuing their material interests in relation to other communities. For instance, Miguel Vale De Almeida's an ethnographic research on Afro-Brazilians regarding the "historical construction of the race" and "the division of labor" shows how communities may utilize narratives that both signal importance of primordial ties (e.g. kinship, religion, geographical roots and heritage in Africa) and individual interests for them by instrumentally mobilizing for the strategies of empowerment within the local politics (Vale de Almeida, 2000, p. 21). Vale de Almeida put this situation as 'the instrumental mobilization of primordialist ties' as a form of 'strategic essentialism'(Vale de Almeida, 2000). The similar "strategic essentialism" seems to be the case in my case of Hatay Arab Alevis and Almeida's framework help me gain a new perspective while thinking the ethnic categories and the ethnic identification of the ethnic groups regarding to their social interactions and economic interests.

On a more theoretical level, as the most famous scholar of ethnicity theories, Frederik Barth's account of ethnicity and ethnic border also links the "essentialists" and "anti-essentialists" accounts to ethnicity and helps understanding Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts about Syrian refugees.

Fredrik Barth mainly focuses on the "ethnic categories" and the "ethnic boundaries while doing his study of ethnicity. In his *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969) defines the ethnic group "ethnic group" defined by recognizing *the ethnic content* of the ethnic group in an essentialist sense as follows:

[1][It] is largely biologically self-perpetuating... [2] shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms... [3] makes up a field of communication and interaction... [4] has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order. (Barth, 1969, p. 10–11)

On the other hand, Barth also argues that "the ethnic boundary that defines the group [is the most significant,] not the cultural stuff that it encloses" (Barth, 1969, p. 15). This argument of Barth indicates us the importance of the social boundaries of the groups and how this ethnic boundaries direct the social life of the ethnic groups. Barth argues that ethnic boundary "entails a frequently quite complex organization of behavior and social relations" (Barth, 1969, p. 15). Therefore, this significance attributed to "ethnic boundaries" (instead of ethnic content) makes Barth come closer to "anti-essentialists" accounts to ethnicity.

This duality in the Barth's account of ethnicity, ethnic content and ethnic borders has been interpreted differently in the literature. "Essentialists" interpretations of Barth emphasized that Barth's argument show the significance of individual's identity due to an individual's origins and background. Therefore, ethnic group categories or categorical groups and the boundaries are stable according to Barth. (in Wan and Vanderwerf, 2009: 10-11). On the other hand, "anti-essentialists" interpretations of Barth see Barth as an instrumentalist. They point out the significance Barth attributed to not the ethnic content but the ethnic borders. Barth examines the interaction of the groups, ethnic identification and the group boundaries

which makes the boundaries of the ethnic groups' fluidity towards their interests and instrumental benefits.

My work draws on both interpretations of Barth: According to Barth "The roots of this social organization are not cultural content but dichotomization, so that the ethnic boundary is a social boundary formed through interaction with others" (in Hummell, 2014, p. 49). Barth draws attention on the "boundaries" by saying that ethnicity was "constructed" during the social interactions. Furthermore, "Barth contended that ethnicity is conceptualized as a group identity which is essentially fluid, depending on how the boundaries of an ethnic group are drawn in a specific context, and thus ethnic identity is defined in relation to distinct external stimuli" (in Seol, 2008:342). This means that Barth explain the identity as individual's origin; and historical background of the individual implements ethnic categories to the groups which provide interaction between oneself and others (Barth, 1969). In other words, the ethnic content may not matter but the group members may utilize the "content" for claiming their difference from the other group. To put it differently, the ethnic borders may change based on the instrumental needs of the group members but their sense of difference persists.

In the light of aforementioned theoretical perspectives above, I try to link the "essentialists" and "anti-essentialists" accounts with Barthian approach to understand how Hatay Arab Alevis do group identification and how they use their ethnic identification to differentiate "us" from "them" – Syrian Sunni refugees and how they draw boundaries between their own groups and Syrian refugees. Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of ethnicity connect to by both "essentialists" and "anti-essentialists" accounts of ethnicity.

More precisely, as the data chapter shows, my Hatay Arab Alevi informants, on the one hand, explain some social interaction situations with Syrian refugees by referring to the significance and difference of their own values, traditions and symbols especially when they feel a conflict to their group identity and; on the other hand, they put their ethnic identity aside while explaining the economic interactions with Syrian refugees when these interactions have a potential to bring economic power and privilege for themselves. This situation, in my opinion, shows that Hatay

Arab Alevis shape their boundaries with Syrian refugees in a situational context and define their relations according to purposes of interactions yet they never fully abandon the significance of the difference between Hatay Arab Alevi and Syrian refugee groups' ethnic distinctions.

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To sum up, in this part, I mainly tried to examine the concept of ethnicity and ethnic identification within the context of ethnicity theories which is divided as essentialist and anti-essentialists. In my Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian Sunni refugees case, material interests and the ethnic identification play a crucial role between these two ethnic groups' in a daily life in Hatay province; because economic benefits is changing the interactions between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian Sunni refugees in spite of their different ethno-religious and sectarian identities. In order to make the intergroup relations and the social interactions between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees from the Hatay Arab Alevis' perceptions clear, I tried to interconnect the ethnicity theories; because my case could not be explained with one approach and my informants perceptions could be explained to a certain extent with the help of these two views. The elaborated version of this information could be seen in the ethnographic chapter as well.

1.2.3. The relevance of studying Hatay Arab Alevis' Accounts within the Context of Political Science

The relevance of this thesis in term of Political Science comes from its focus on the ethnicity concept in relation to inter-group power relations. I discuss "ethnicity" in terms of ethnic identity, ethnic groups, ethnic boundaries and ethnic content to examine intergroup relations with a focus on power. I critically discuss how ethnic identity has impacts on the ethnic groups' interactions and how ethnic groups try to reach to their political power within the ethno-political competition. In order to understand the sense of ethnic group and how this ethnic group sense changing with the concerns of economic interest, it is important to understand the meaning and the nature of ethnic identity. This study help us to understand how ethnic groups' ethnic identity shaping towards their interest through their ethnic

competition which give the political power to who has dominance in that region. Studying this issue within the Arab Alevis context is important, because it bring a new perspective to literature by engaging the essentialist and anti-essentialist accounts with Barthian approach which help exploring the particular cases in which the groups' conflict of economic interests emerges and how such a conflict has an impact on their sense of being a distinct and separate ethnic group, and on their ethnic identifications with their own group and their accounts of "the other" groups.

The relevance of this study to Political Science comes from its focus on the minority-majority relations by focusing on the Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian refugees in Turkey after the Syrian crisis in 2012. It tries to answer how has Arab Alevis that constitute a national minority in Turkey and a local majority in Hatay been influenced with flow of Syrian refugees.

This study focuses on ethnicity, minority-majority relations concepts with awareness of other sociological categories such as class. Studying Hatay Arab Alevis perceptions on Syrian refugees help me see the impact of ethnicity and ethnic identity on the ethnic groups' social interactions which is formed towards ethnic groups' interest. Specifically, studying perceptions of Hatay Arab Alevis on Syrian refugees does not only challenge to the commonsense perceptions, which presumes the migration of Syrian refugees to Hatay province as a source of ethnic tension and a shift in the demographic balance, but also shows in-class competition. It is important to say that calculation of economic benefits, material interests, the struggle for economic power on the local level greatly shape Hatay Arab Alevis' perceptions of Syrian refugees which also will shows us how the class competition is happening between the same class groups' position in ethnographic data chapter.

My thesis is organized as follows: The second chapter focuses on the historical background about the Syrian refugees flow to Turkey and to Hatay province, by examining the status of Syrian refugees in Turkey and the status of Hatay Arab Alevis' status as locals in Turkey. The third chapter focuses on methodology and methods I utilized during my research regarding my research

problem about Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian Sunni refugees in Hatay. I also provide information about interview questions, participant observation and content analysis I utilized as methods. The fourth chapter focuses on my ethnographic fieldwork where I discussed my findings which I found from my field research in Hatay about Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of their relations with Syrian refugees with a focus on economic relations and social interaction. In the conclusion chapter, I discuss my findings and their theoretical and practical implications.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL IMPACTS OF SYRIAN REFUGEES

This chapter provides a time line for the influx of Syrian refugees to discuss the impact of increase in their numbers, the change in the status of refugees, the particularity of Hatay as a refugee hosting province and the importance of Arab Alevis' national minority status which can be seen as factors that may influence Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian refugees positively or negatively.

2.1. Historical Background of Syrian Refugee Flow to Turkey

The Syrian crisis occurred in March 2011; and with this crisis, the first exodus of Syrian refugees started to influx to the neighbor countries which are Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq (Ferris, Kirişçi, and Shaikh, 2013). In this section, I provide the major milestones of the Syrian refugees' migration to Turkey in chronological manner between 2011 and 2014. The aim of giving this kind of time line for the influx of Syrian refugees shows that the increasing number of the Syrian refugees' influences on the socio-economic and socio-political structure in Turkey and Hatay province as well within the broad national context.

Starting from 2011, masses migrated to close neighbor countries and Turkey is one of them. "The number of displaced Syrians crossing the border into Turkey has dramatically risen with the escalating use of violence employed by the Syrian regime into suppress the revolt" (Özden, 2013, p. 1). The first movement of the Syrian refugees started to Turkey in April 2011 after Turkey announced its "open door policy" for the Syrian refugees (Kirişçi, 2014; Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015) from Aleppo, Halep, Rakka, Lazkiye and Idlip, which are close border provinces, to Hatay province in Turkey (Ihlamur Öner, 2013). The first announcement about the number of Syrian refugees was reported by the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) in June 2011 as 8,535 individuals living in the camps established in Hatay, Yayladağı and Altınözü according to statistics of Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) (Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015, p. 12).

The increasing number of Syrian refugees has provided an environment for considering the status of Syrian refugees in 2011. Turkey's open door policy have welcomed Syrian refugees under the status "guest" instead of the status "refugee" which has no ground in the international refugee law (Ihlamur Öner, 2013). The "guest" status, however, contributed to the increase in refugee inflow in Turkey.

In the mid of 2012, the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey reached 78, 049 in August (Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015) and 170, 912 at the end of the 2012 (UNHCR, 2015)². "As the number of refugees began to reach significant levels and it became increasingly clear that refugees would not be returning soon(Kirişçi, 2014, p. 38) as a source of tension for local populations. Furthermore, another big problem for Turkey is that the unknown yet increasing number of urban Syrian refugees. Therefore, the urban refugees have started to be seen in the cities and started to struggle with the life conditions on their own. The visibility of the Syrian refugees at the local job market and social environment started to disturb Turkish people in all around Turkey³.

The increased yet unknown number of urban refugees together with changes in the legal status of refugees in later years is expected to influence local population's perceptions of the Syrian refugees. In September 2013, according to the Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) "the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey has reached half a million, with 200,000 staying in camps and 300,000 staying outside " (Ihlamur Öner, 2013, p. 203). Furthermore, in 2013 the Syrian refugee crisis took a new turn and this question of chemical weapon attack crisis⁴ influenced the Turkey, because in order to escape from this attack lots of Syrians escaped from Syrian to Turkey which led to the number of Syrian refugees reaching a massive scale in those times (Ihlamur Oner, 2013; O'Rourke, 2014). In

² UNHCR Syria Regional Refugee Response. (2015, May 4). Retrieved (Last Access May 19, 2015), from <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=224>

³ ISTANBUL - Agence France-Presse. (2014, August 25). LOCAL - Residents of Istanbul suburb in violent protest over Syrian refugees. Retrieved (Last Access, March 26, 2015), from <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/residents-of-istanbul-suburb-in-violent-protest-over-syrian-refugees.aspx?PageID=238&NID=70878&NewsCatID=341>

⁴ Syria chemical attack: What we know. (2013, September 24). Retrieved (Last Access May 24, 2015), from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23927399>

this year the number of Syrian registered refugees reached to 560,129⁵ (UNHCR, 2015).

In 2014, the negotiation about the Syrian refugees' status in Turkey also gave rise in the number of the Syrian refugees with the "temporary protection regime" which ended the discussion about the status of the Syrian refugees." In April 2014 Turkey changed the status of refugees to a population under "temporary protection" under the Turkish Law on Foreigners and International Protection (Cağaptay, 2014). By this time, the number of Syrian refugees in Turkey is 1,552,839⁶ (UNHCR, 2015). According to UNHCR's data about the Syrian refugees from 2011 until May 2015, the total number of Syrian refugees have reached 1,759, 846⁷ (UNHCR, 2015).

In sum, since Syrian crisis in 2011, Turkey have faced with the problems due to the influx of the Syrian refugees and it is expected to see this increasing in number of Syrian refugees influence the local populations' perceptions of the Syrians as well as socio-economic and socio-political structure in Turkey. My thesis examines the perceived effects of Syrian refugees in Hatay within this broad national context.

2.2. Historical Background of Refugee Flow to Hatay Province in Turkey

The Syrian civil war and following refugee inflow have influenced almost all of the cities in Turkey (Cağaptay, 2014; Kirşçi, 2014; Kirişçi, 2014; Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015) while Hatay as a province of Turkey has had a key position as the first province to host Syrian refugees. Vast majority of the Syrian refugees have concentrated in the border cities of Turkey, which also share the same border with Syria, and allow immigrants which are Hatay, Kilis, Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa and Mardin after the Syrian conflict in 2011 (Cağaptay, 2014; Kirişçi, 2014; Orhan et al., 2014; Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015; Özden, 2013). Although all of these cities have camps or a concentration of Syrian population living outside the camps, Hatay

⁵ UNHCR Syria Regional Refugee Response. (2015, May 4). Retrieved (Last Access May 19, 2015), from <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=224>

⁶ UNHCR Syria Regional Refugee Response. (2015, May 4). Retrieved (Last Access May 19, 2015), from <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=224>

⁷UNHCR Syria Regional Refugee Response. (2015, May 4). Retrieved (Last Access May 19, 2015), from <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=224>

province seems to be a special case as first group of refugees moved to Hatay at the very beginning of the crisis.

Hatay is a special case for several reasons: First of all, numerically before the Syrian crisis in 2011, the local population of Hatay was 1.474.223 and in 2014 the local population of Hatay was 1.519.836⁸. While between 2011 and until the end of the 2014 Hatay province received approximately 75.000 Syrian refugees but still we do not have certain official number about Syrians (Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015). Numerically in Hatay, in 2011, 5000 refugees came to Hatay province in Turkey from Syria⁹. In 2012, this number is increased in a very short time and 7000 refugees entered to Hatay province (Ferris et al., 2013). In 2013, according to United Nations data, the number of Syrian refugees reached to 15,504 in Hatay's five region camps and the official number of Syrians who live in the city at that time was 60,000 which is "doubled when the estimated number of unregistered refugees living in Reyhanlı, Antakya and the towns close to the border are added to this amount" (Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015, p. 25).

Secondly, despite that Turkey has mono-ethnic and mono-linguistic character, Hatay as a province always has a multicultural character (Dönmez and Enneli, 2011) divided between Arab Alevis and Sunni Muslims with Arab Orthodox Christian and Armenian minorities (Doğruel, 2005; Özden, 2013, p. 13). When Hatay Arab-Alevis had been a local majority in Hatay, most of the refugees from Syria to Hatay have been Sunni Arabs (Cağaptay, 2014). The Syrian migrants are expected to increase the complexity of the demographic composition of Hatay. The Syrian refugees might lead to demographic changes and this changing the complexion of the Hatay province that might lead to the tension between local people, who are mostly Alevi, and refugees who are mostly Sunni Arabs.

Thirdly, Hatay has been a special case regarding the state's policies for Syrian refugees as the following quotation indicate:

⁸ see www.tuik.gov.tr

⁹ Arsu, S. (2011, June 13). Turkey Scrambles to Accommodate Syrian Refugees. *The New York Times*. Retrieved (Last Access, 2015-04-18) from <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/14/world/europe/14turkey.html>

As a result of the 2013 the Turkish Law on Foreigners and International Protection law, Syrian refugees now have some legal protections. According to the new law, non-European refugees who enter Turkey can legally receive a temporary residence permit in any province other than Hatay (where sectarian tensions are high) (Cağaptay, 2014, p. 8)

The quote points out another effect of Syrian refugee flow on Hatay with a unique demographic structure which contains Turkey's largest proportion of Arab Alevis that is nearly a third of the province -1.5 million (Cağaptay, 2013). Cağaptay (2013) and Arab Alevis form a local majority see the presence of the Syrian refugees in Hatay province as a possible threat for the demographic structure and the 2013 law give the residence permission to the Syrian refugees any province rather than Hatay where the sectarian tensions are high due to the Hatay's complex demographic structure. That's why Hatay province is an important and special case to examine the intergroup relations within the context of social and political conflicts particularly within the context of Hatay Arab Alevis perceptions on the Syrian Sunni refugees. Some scholars, such as Cağaptay, argues that "several unique demographic, political, and historical factors are at play in Turkey's Hatay border province, increasing the risk of violent sectarian spillover from next door" (p.1). Most of the Syrian refugees in Hatay are Sunni whose numbers have changed the demographical mosaic of Hatay province and causes sectarian tension between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian Sunni refugees and lack of security among the Hatay Arab Alevis (Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015). The variety at the demographic balance of Hatay province might be expected to carry the existing polarization in Syria between Syrian Sunnis and Syrian Alawis¹⁰. Therefore, this kind of demographical change and the possibility of polarization could be provocative and increases the tensions between locals and refugees not only in the socio-economic structure but also in sectarian dimensions due to ethnically mixed structure of Hatay province as well (Philips, 2012; Cağaptay, 2014).

The flow of Syrian refugees had various influences in terms of economic, social and political issues in all around Turkey especially at the first phases this have

¹⁰ Alawis (reference to the Arab Alevis) and Alevis (reference to Turkish Alevis) (see Doğanılmaz, 2013; Schwartz, 2012)

influenced mostly the border cities (Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015). This situation can be observed better in Hatay province. The arrival of Syrians is not truly welcomed by the Arab Alevi Turkish citizens in Hatay.

In Hatay, the potential tension became visible with two sets of events. First in 2013, there was “Reyhanlı attack”. Two car bombs exploded in Reyhanlı and 52 people lost their lives and 100 people injured in 11 May 2013 in Reyhanlı, Hatay¹¹. This attack caused the growing tension between the locals and refugees which also influenced the coming of Syrian refugees to Turkey. Especially, with the 2013 Reyhanlı bombing attack¹², the Syrian refugee issue exacerbated the social environment in Hatay: Protests and demonstrations were started by Hatay local Arab Alevis in the last months of 2011 in Antakya, Harbiye and Samandağ. Demonstrators took an opposite stance against Syrian refugees, although Hatay has a sizeable Arabic speaker population and those are members of Alevi sect who have some sympathy towards Assad and Syria's Alawis, and still supporting Assad regime in Syria. Furthermore, in Hatay province, there is a concern about the influx of the Syrian refugees especially on the issue of the expansion of the sectarian tension to their –‘traditionally tolerant’ city- and as a result of these, settling of Syrian refugees to the towns of Hatay became difficult (Philips, 2012; Orhan et al., 2014; Cağaptay, 2014; Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015).

The second issue also happened in 31 May 2013 which is Gezi Park’s events. In Samandağ, some protests were made for the position and the policy of the Turkish government on the refugees; and also for the rapidly increasing number of the Syrian refugees that influence on the locals’ daily life (Cağaptay, 2013, 2014; Ihlamur Öner, 2013). Therefore, it can be said that in 2013, there was slowdown on coming of the number of Syrian refugees to Turkey due to the strong reaction of the local people on Syrian refugees.

¹¹ Daloğlu, T. (2013, May 12). Reyhanlı Worst Terror Attack Turkey Has Witnessed - Al-Monitor: the Pulse of the Middle East. Retrieved (Last Access March 26, 2015) from <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/05/reghanli-bombing-turkey-syria-policy.html>

¹² In May 11, 2013 two car bombs exploded which killed at least 46 people and injured many others in Reyhanlı, Hatay (“Turkish media review,” 2013)

2.3. The Status of Refugees in general and Syrian refugees in Turkey

The official asylum policy of Turkey is describing with “geographical limitation” in the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees (Özden, 2013). Turkey is known as a country of asylum who signed the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Kirişçi, 2007). Historically, the Republic of Turkey has had strict policies on refugees: it signed the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees on 24 August 1951 and approved it on 29 August 1961. Yet, Turkey had accepted only the people from Europe as “refugees” while the people from non-European countries had been accepted only as “asylum seekers” (Kolukırık and Aygül, 2009). This official policy can also be seen in the case of Iraqi refugees to Turkey in 1988 (Latif, 2002) and become the background for the official policies regarding Syrian refugees in Turkey.

The status of Syrians in Turkey, however, has a particular trajectory. The Syrian refugees who came to Turkey in April 2011 were officially received as “guest” instead of “refugees” by the Turkish government (see Orhan et al., 2014 and Kirisci and Salooja, 2014). Defining the status of Syrians as “guests” instead of “refugees” has a purpose behind: if the Syrians had got the refugee status, this recognition of refugee status grants them certain rights such as health, education under international law and the Turkish state should have committed to grant those rights and benefits to Syrians. For example; according to U.N. criteria, “camps for refugees need to be established 50 kilometers away from the border. When this was said to the head of a camp in Turkey that was right at the border, that person said, “That is the criteria for refugees; these are guests, we can locate them wherever we want.”¹³ It means that the government of Turkey by referring to Syrians as “guests” rather than refugees aimed to clarify the status of the refugees in order not to give legal status when they entered to Turkey from Syria. The Syrians under this protection have gained free access to health services; however, this act of government failed due to the mass migration of Syrians to Turkey, because Syrian refugees gained the identification of their legal status with the “temporary protection regime” (Amnesty International, 2014).

¹³ (Yinanc, B. (2013, May 27). MIDEAST - Poor transparency shadows Turkey’s Syria refugee policy. Retrieved (Last Access February 11, 2015) from <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/?PageID=238&NID=47639>)

In April 2011, Syrian refugees' "guest" status was changed into "guests under temporary protection" by the Turkish government (Kirişçi and Salooja, 2014) and this kind of raise also became the main issue of the Turkish government's refugee policy agenda which brought the issue of "temporary protection" in November 2011. In order to cope with the issue of the growing number of Syrian refugees, Turkish government have brought up the "temporary protection regime" which entails "unobstructed entry of Syrians into Turkey without any travel document or ID, no forcible return, no individual status determination process, and accommodation and provision of basic services in camps (Ihlamur Öner, 2013, p. 202). According to UNHCR, in March 2012 the temporary protection guaranteed international standards, "in particular guaranteeing all Syrian residents access to Turkish territory, protection against refoulement and access to basic services" (Amnesty International, 2014, p. 20).

In 2013, Syrian refugee's presence has changed the refugee policy of Turkey further. The increasing number of Syrian refugees in Turkey led the Turkish government to taking another step towards the status of Syrian refugees by identifying the temporary protection status. According to UNCHR, 1.785 million Syrians are hosting in Turkey.¹⁴ Since Syrian crisis to the present, it is nearly four years, the Syrian refugees stayed under the temporary protection, but from 11 April 2014 Syrian refugees have begun to receive new identification cards under a measure passed by the Council of Ministers in October granting them access to basic services like health care and education with the Law on Foreigners and International Protection (no. 6458) (Amnesty International, 2014; Yeğinsu, 2014).

According to conducted researches on the issue of Syrian refugees and the impact of Syrian refugees in Turkey, the number of Syrians in Turkey continues to increase day by day due to the "open door policy" of Turkish government which has increased the negative effects on social, economic and politics and security issues such as free access to the public services on Turkey. Most of the Syrians spread all over the Turkey and most of them are urban refugees. Additionally, the urban Syrian

¹⁴ "UNHCR Global Appeal 2015 Update - Turkey," (April 2015). Retrieved from (Last Access April 19, 2015) <http://www.unhcr.org/5461e60c52.html>

refugees are estimated as 515, 000 (Kirişçi, 2014) , started to be visible in the streets that caused the locals who live in Turkey feeling uncomfortable in their social and economic environment (Akgündüz, Berg, Marcel, and Hassink, 2015; Çağaptay, 2013, 2014; Erdoğan, 2014). Furthermore, the initial impacts were seen at first mostly at the border cities and Hatay is one of them. Hatay is considered as instable province and most of the Arab Alevis blame Sunni Syrian refugees as the source of this problem which make the local people feeling uncomfortable in their social environment and they see the arrival of Syrian refugees as a “social explosion”¹⁵ (Çevikalp, 2014; Vela, 2012).

2.4. The Status of Hatay Arab Alevis in Turkey as “Locals”

This section focuses on the status of Hatay Arab Alevis in Turkey considering that they form a national ethnoreligious minority in Turkey while demographically speaking they form a local majority in Hatay and that this situation itself may greatly shape Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts of Syrian refugees considering the Hatay Arab Alevis’ national minority status may became another source of resentment that influence their accounts of refugees.

Hatay Arabs form an Alevi community, as so-called “heterodox” Muslim community. The definition of the term “Alevi” is ambiguous in the literature, (Köse, 2013) due to “the ambiguous nature and character of the Alevi identity” in general. Whether the Alevi identity is an ethnic, sectarian, religious or political identity is a matter of debate within the Alevi community” (p. 591) and there is no quite certain definition particularly of Arab Alevis (Bruinessen, 1996; Köse, 2013; Savaşçı, 2010; Vorhoff, 1998).

The concept of ‘Alevi’ has a comprehensive meaning, because it defines a large number of different communities whose beliefs, customs and ritual practices differentiate from each other to an important degree. In Turkey, in terms of language we can mention four groups of Alevis (Schwartz, 2012). For instance, in the literature, scholars differentiate between Turkish and Kurdish Alevis (Bruinessen,

¹⁵ (Çevikalp, M. (2014, June 14). Border province Hatay bears brunt of Syrian crisis. Retrieved (Last Access March 5, 2015), from http://www.todayszaman.com/anasayfa_border-province-hatay-bears-brunt-of-syrian-crisis_350365.html)

1996) and between Alawis (reference to the Arab Alevis) and Alevis (reference to Turkish Alevis) (Doğanyılmaz, 2013; Schwartz, 2012). In my study, I mainly focus on Arab Alevis who are Arabic-speaking group as native language, who conduct their religious rituals in Arabic, who has historical ties to Syrian Alawis and who hold Turkish citizenship, different from the Syrian Alawis.

Historically, Arab Alevis of Turkey are the Arabic speaking group resides in the southern part of Turkey especially in Hatay, Adana and Mersin (Doğanyılmaz, 2013; Erdem, 2010; Goldsmith, 2011; Shah, 2013). 15 million Alevis live in Turkey, but half million of these are Arab Alevis mainly living along the border with Syria (Shah, 2013). Arab Alevis in Turkey and Alevi of Syria show similarities, because both groups have the same religious identity (Islam) and same ethnic background (Arab) and both of them are known as “Twelvers and devoted to Ali, the son-in-law and cousin of Prophet Muhammad” (Schwartz, 2012, p. 1).

In Turkey, Alevis is known as a minority and constitute the second largest religious community after Sunnis in Turkey (Paul and Seyrek, 2014; Schwartz, 2012; Zeidan, 1999).

“Despite some differences between the different Alevi groups, there is a general list of common grievances and demands. Their place of worship, “Cemveleri”, are not recognized as such; they do not receive any financial support from the state to build and maintain their places of worship while mosques do” (Paul and Seyrek, 2014, p. 1).

Furthermore, apart from religious freedom, Alevis also face with serious problems about the issue of officially recognizing and representation by the state that ignored the Alevis (Paul and Seyrek, 2014). For example, in this issue, Paul and Seyrek (2014) argued that

There is [also] no air space in state operated media for Alevis, while Sunnis enjoy many programs as well as separate TV and radio channels under national public broadcaster. Furthermore, all of Turkey’s 81 governors, who are directly appointed by the government, are Sunni which signals an institutionalized discrimination (Paul and Seyrek, 2014, p. 1).

Apart from these general, national level representation and recognition issues, Arab Alevis have faced further sources of frustrations: For instance, in May 2013, bombing attack was happened in Reyhanlı, Hatay which is a town close to the Syrian border. In May 2013, in order to condemn this bombing attack, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, prime minister at that time, used sectarian description referring to the victims who lost their lives in this bombing attack by saying that “52 Sunni citizens” (Paul and Seyrek, 2014, p. 2). This kind of sectarian discrimination as well shows us how Arab Alevis in Turkey is being ignored and not represented in Turkey. I argue that the Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts of Syrian refugees in Hatay cannot be examined without taking into account of Arab Alevis’ national minority status in Turkey.

In sum, in this chapter, I provided a time line for the influx of Syrian refugees, the changes in the status of refugees, the particular importance of Hatay and the importance of Arab Alevis’ national minority status as factors that may influence Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts of Syrian refugees.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY: Ethnographic Fieldwork

3.1. Ethnographic Fieldwork Methodology

My research on Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian refugees is a sensitive issue. This issue, however, receives insufficient attention from the scholars. Thus, the lack of sufficient literature on the subject led me think that ethnographic fieldwork could be the best methodological choice for investigating social interaction between these two ethnic groups and for providing rich, detailed and little known information. As stated in the literature, "ethnography is, in particular, suitable to investigating sensitive issues because such work can provide rich, detailed descriptions about the unknown or the little known." (Li, 2008, p. 101). Conducting field research helped me in explaining and understanding Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian refugees which is still remain unmentioned in the newspapers or any other secondary sources.

Ethnographic fieldwork methodology helps a researcher to describe a culture or a way of living from the perspective of people who belong to that culture (Robben and Sluka, 2012). In order to understand community or different societies in terms of human being and human beings' relations with a scientific experience and with a detailed knowledge, the researchers have "traditionally immersed themselves in it, learning, as far as possible, to think, to see, feel and sometimes act as a member of its culture" (Robben and Sluka, 2012, p. 1). Compared to the researcher profile as depicted in these sources, I was already familiar with the Arab Alevi culture in Turkey as a member of the community and connected to Hatay Arab Alevi communities by family and friendship ties which turned out to be an advantage in understanding the Hatay Arab Alevis' cultural contexts.

In ethnographic fieldwork, a researcher lives with the people for a length of time, which was traditionally set as one year in traditional societies while in the contemporary context there is no definite time period agreed upon by researchers. For instance, John Van Maanen discusses the new development in ethnographic fieldwork in his book *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography* and argues for the contextually "negotiated" character of contemporary ethnographic fieldwork as different from "once the so-called traditional fieldwork-the single site, year in the

field, one-tribe-one-scribe realist tale” (Maanen, 1988, p. 164). My fieldwork in Hatay lasted one month and my aforementioned background helped me connect with my Hatay Arab Alevi informants and reduced the time I spent in accessing the informants, receiving their informed consent and utilizing various methods enabled by ethnographic fieldwork, such as participant observation, interviews as I discuss in the next section.

3.1.1. Research Methods during Ethnographic Fieldwork

Studying perceptions of Hatay Arab Alevis about the presence of the Syrian refugees in Hatay is a critical issue due to covering conflict of intergroup relations in Hatay province. Therefore, conducting ethnographic fieldwork helped me to see various dimensions of the effects of Syrian refugees. In that sense, conducting ethnographic fieldwork provides my work an empirical ground.

My ethnographic fieldwork relied on participant observation and semi-structured interviews as primary research methods. Using these research methods provided me with little known issues about the perception of Hatay Arab Alevis on Syrian refugees and gave the chance to observe their daily social interactions with Syrian refugees which one may not be able to find in the newspapers. Therefore, I think that ethnographic fieldwork was a convenient methodology for my research, because one could receive only limited information from the news and the newspapers. This is the reason of why ethnographic fieldwork is important to understand on-the-ground developments in Hatay province and to witness publicly visible interactions between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees clearly.

3.1.1.1. Participant Observation

“Participant observation is a way to collect data in a relatively unstructured manner in naturalistic settings by ethnographers who observe and/or take part in the common and uncommon activities of the people being studied”(DeWalt and DeWalt, 2010, p. 260). I conducted participant observation in the public spaces such as at coffee houses, parks, shopping malls, hospitals in one month length. I also stayed

with an Arab Alevi family in this duration which gave me a chance to observe their actions and understand their way of living and thinking according to their perceptions. In these venues, with participant observation, I had a chance to see what my informants do in their social life while interacting with the Syrian refugees in addition to what they say and they do.

One valuable contribution of participant observation method to my research is that participant observation assures “an observer take part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of the people being studied as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their culture” (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2010, p. 260). By utilizing participant observation, I had a chance to make sufficient observation particularly about the contradictions between my informants’ statements and their actual behaviors in their natural social environment in interacting with refugees.

The method “participant observation” helped me to analyze my informants’ answers to my questions. Sometimes my informants’ statements and behaviors showed changes. For example, most of my informants’ state that they did not want Syrian refugees in Hatay; but during my fieldwork I saw lots of the construction workers were Syrian refugees with a low wages. Another example is about marriages. For example, my informants said that nobody wants to marry with Syrians or nobody permit their son or daughter to marry with a Syrian refugee due to Syrian refugees’ negative behaviors. Actually the marriage issue mainly connected with religious dimensions; marriage issue has a greater significance for Alevi identity and the culture of Alevism since Arab Alevism is well-known for not allowing outside marriages or mixed marriages (Doğruel, 2005). However, I was informed of marriages of Syrian refugees with Arab Alevis in Hatay from my informants.

Considering these aspects, participant observation allowed me “to observe what people do in “real life” contexts, not what they say what they do” and it supplied me with “detailed, authentic information unattainable by any other research method.” (Li, 2008, p. 101).

3.1.1.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

For this study, I conducted semi-structured interviews with Hatay Arab Alevis. I prepared my interview questions before going to Hatay. I applied to and received approval from the METU Human Participant Researchers Ethical Committee about my study before going to the field. I divided my semi-structured interview questions into three dimensions which are economic, social and political to direct my participants easily to focus on my research question.

My sampling pool consists of Hatay Arab Alevis from various occupational, class, gender backgrounds (see Appendix C). Before going to field work, I guessed that I could reach around 10-15 Hatay Arab Alevis for interviews considering that Arab Alevis remain to be a particularly closed community (see Doğruel, 2005; Shah, 2013) even when other groups Alevis in Turkey has been through Alevi revival since 1990s.

At first stage, no one wanted to talk with me, after that I found informants who started to show their interests on this study and wanted me to expose what was happening in Hatay province. When people started to feel comfortable, they started to explain clearly about how they feel about the presence of Syrian refugee and how the Syrian refugees had a negative influence in their daily life. The reason why my informants felt comfortable while they talked with me is that because I am a member of their community, i.e. Arab Alevis, and because of this they felt comfortable when they talked with someone from their own community. Therefore, I managed to conduct interviews with 28 Hatay Arab Alevis in Hatay province over a month.

Furthermore, I had an advantage of speaking Arabic language which helped me during my research in this field because sometimes some of my participants did not speak Turkish during my interviews. The advantage of language also provided me to understand my informants' perceptions on Syrian refugees with their mother tongue gave me some clues about their expression on the issue of intergroup relations in Hatay.

My access to these 28 Hatay Arab Alevis for semi-structured interviews become possible via pursuing several strategies. First, before visiting Hatay I had already contacted with a member of an Arab Alevi organization in Hatay province in

addition to utilizing my personal familiar connections in Hatay. In the second place, by utilizing the first set of informants' connections, I utilized snowball sampling, in which "the researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contacts with others" (Bryman, 2012, p. 202).

During my ethnographic fieldwork, I granted informed consent from 28 Hatay Arab Alevis and I used tape recorder during some of my interviews. I recorded 21 interviews and I took notes from my 7 interviews. Furthermore, when my participants did not want me to use tape recorder, I took notes during interviews. In my study, I hid the recorded interviews data very well by using encryption for the sound data files. Furthermore, I hid the identity of my participants in this study by making them anonymous and undetectable by giving them pseudo names.

I asked the following interview questions to my informants: In your opinion or based on your experience, what is the legal status of Syrian refugees in Syria? How do you feel about the possibility of naturalization of Syrian refugees into Turkish citizenship? What do you think about the possibility of Syrian refugees voting in local elections in Turkey? While analyzing my informants' answers to these questions I came across with the "second-class citizenship" narratives and the narratives on being local, being newcomer, the host and the guest, the self and the other- together with their statements about "how [they] tolerate Syrian refugees."

I mainly aimed to find how the economic and social relations occur between the Syrian refugees and Hatay Arab Alevis; since, these relations seemed to me much more complicated within the framework of both local-refugee tension and sectarian concerns. For example, I asked the following questions: What do you think about economic contribution of Syrian refugees to the local economy of Hatay? Do you think that they contribute the local job market in Hatay? Have you ever employed any Syrian refugee? If you have employed workers from Syrian refugees, have they faced any work permit issues? If you have not employed workers from Syrian refugees, do you want to employ them? Which contribution may Syrian refugee workers do to local economy in Hatay?" By asking these questions, I tried to find how Syrian refugees presence affecting the economic relations in economic market

and how Hatay Arab Alevis see Syrian refugees in local economic environment and local job market; and under which circumstances they use their ethnic identity as a ground for overpowering Syrian refugees for economic benefits.

On the other hand, with some questions, I also realized that some of informants support Syrian refugees but under some conditions. For example, I asked the following questions: Do you think that they contribute the local job market in Hatay? Do you know any Syrian refugee who works in Hatay? Have you ever employed any Syrian refugee? If you have employed workers from Syrian refugees, have they faced any work permit issues? If you have not employed workers from Syrian refugees, do you want to employ them? Which kind of works would Syrian refugee workers be suitable regarding your business? Some of my informants gave me answers saying that they do not feel any disturbance about Syrian refugees. These informants were those who were employers and who would like to recruit Syrian refugees as workers with a low salary. Actually, preparing these kinds of questions I did not expected to find supporter of Syrian refugees in the local market by Hatay Arab Alevis. In that sense, given answers make me think about another questions such as the following: Which of workers would be suitable for your business, local or Syrian refugees? In which circumstances do you prefer Syrian refugees for your business?

In examining social relations, I intended to understand the intergroup relations between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees and their social interactions in the daily life. I asked the following questions: Do you have close friends among Syrian refugees? If you have friends among Syrian refugees, how do you spend time together? If you have friends among Syrian refugees, where do you spend time together? For instance, do you make home visits; do you go to public places such as coffee houses? Do you know any local resident of Hatay who got married with a Syrian refugee? What is your opinion about the marriages of locals with Syrian refugee males or females? If your son or daughter would ask your permission to marry with a Syrian refugee male or female what would be your answer? In examining complicated social relations between two groups, I looked how social interactions influence Arab Alevis' perceptions of Syrian refugees and I noticed that

almost all my informants feel uncomfortable about the Syrian refugees' presence and see the presence of Syrian refugees as negative for the social environment in Hatay.

It is important to ask these questions in my interviews, because they helped me to have data from my informants with depth responses about how the economic and social relations occur between the Syrian refugees and Hatay Arab Alevis; since, these relations seemed to me much more complicated within the framework of both local-refugee tension and sectarian concerns. Furthermore, asking these kinds of questions helped me to understand under which circumstances the social interactions showed alterations between these two ethnic groups.

3.1.1.2 Content Analysis of Newspapers

In my research, I also screened newspapers as a secondary source of data and conducted content analysis before going to my fieldwork. I carefully examined the web-based local newspapers and non-web-based newspapers such as *Denge*, *Antakya Toplumcu Halk Gazetesi*, *Atayurt*, *Zafer* and *İrade* which helped me to examine publicly visible forms of interaction between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian Sunni refugees. These newspapers had been selected with regard to the different political perspectives they promote. This kind of political variation helped me to analyze how the happening issues in Hatay were transmitted to the locals by looking at these newspapers' opponent point of views in Hatay.

Besides Hatay's local newspapers, I had also examined *Sol*, *Zaman*, *Hürriyet*, *Sözcü*, *T24*, *Radikal* newspapers before going to fieldwork shaping my interview questions and after my fieldwork from the internet to understand which kinds of news mainly posted about Syrian refugees and of the news. For example, while I was conducting content analysis on the newspapers such as *Sol*, *Zaman*, *Hürriyet*, *Sözcü*, *T24*, *Radikal*, I did not see any news about marriage issues between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees. However, when I went to Hatay and did my participant observation, I was informed of marriages between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees. This information is crucial for my study, because Alevism as a community is a close group who enshrine marriage issue. Actually the marriage issue

mainly connected with religious dimensions; marriage issue has a greater significance for Alevi identity and the culture of Alevism since Arab Alevism is well-known for not allowing outside marriages or mixed marriages (Doğruel, 2005).

In the newspapers, I generally came across with the issue of “fight between locals and Syrian refugees,” “sectarian tension,” “social explosion,” “increase of unemployment and crime rate.” For example, the newspapers generally wrote about the sectarian tension in Hatay with the influx of the Syrian Sunni refugees due to the demographic structure of Hatay province.¹⁶ In other words, for instance, another set of general news about the Syrian refugee was about the unemployment and the increasing rate of unemployment. After the coming of Syrian refugees, newspapers mentioned the impact of Syrian refugees on the economic market and their influence to the local people.¹⁷ Therefore, I gathered my data from the newspapers to understand the events with coming of the Syrian Sunni refugees by making content analysis before going to my ethnographic fieldwork providing me getting familiar with the publicized interactions between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian Sunni refugees.

To summarize, in this section, I explained my ethnographic fieldwork methodology and my research methods during my research in Hatay. I explained my methodology and my method towards my topic in order to analyze the relationship between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian Sunni refugees from Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts in the light of my interview questions, participant observation and archival research. By the using semi-structured and unstructured interview and participant observation methods I had a chance to notice various dimensions between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees from the perspective of Hatay Arab Alevis. What happened in Hatay came to me more interesting by experiencing with the

¹⁶ Letsch, C. (2013, September 3). Syrian conflict brings sectarian tensions to Turkey’s tolerant Hatay province. Retrieved (Last Access March 4, 2015), from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/03/syria-crisis-threatens-turkish-tolerance>

¹⁷ Bulut, M. (2014, October 8). Suriyeli göçmenler sorunu çalışma hayatına da sığıyor.... Retrieved (Last Access May 6, 2015), from http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/dr_mehmet_bulut/suriyeli_gocmenler_sorunu_calisma_hayatina_da_sicriyor-1217608

ethnographic fieldwork than the newspapers news which gained importance with my interviews as well.

[Participant observation] offers researcher the opportunity to learn directly from his own experience. Personal reflections are integral to the emerging analysis of a cultural group, because they provide the researcher with new vantage points and with opportunities to make the strange familiar and the familiar strange (Marshall and Rossman, 2006, p. 100) .

Generally, I tried to be inclusive of my informants' perceptions and attempted to pay attention to how they framed and structured their responses to my question regarding the impacts of Syrian refugees in Hatay in addition to the attempt to understand how my Hatay Arab Alevi informants perceived Syrian refugees and interacted in their social life.

In this chapter, I explained the methodology and methods I utilized during my research regarding my research problem about Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian Sunni refugees in Hatay. I discussed issues I faced regarding ethnographic fieldwork methodology as well as participant observation, semi-structured interview and content analysis methods.

CHAPTER IV

ETHNOGRAPHIC CHAPTER: Hatay Arab Alevi' Accounts on Self, the Other and Inter-group Tolerance

This chapter provides data about Hatay Arab Alevi's account of their economic and social relations with Syrian refugees to understand to what extent, how and when these are marked by their concerns about economic competition and /or group identity. First I focus on Hatay Arab Alevi's notions of tolerance, which is a theme that frequently comes up in interviews in explaining their social and economic relations with Syrians. Second, I focus on Hatay Arab Alevi's specific accounts of their economic and social relations with Syrians. While my Hatay Arab Alevi informants are not homogenous in class, gender, age, occupation and religiosity, they display two accounts in regards to their economic and social relations with Syrians as I discuss below.

4.1. Tolerance

Traditionally, an uncritical account of the term tolerance has been used as a solution for managing possible intergroup tensions in multicultural contexts such as tensions between local majorities and migrant communities or ethnic minorities in Western Europe (e.g. Wagner, 1986; Weldon, 2006). Recently, the political theory has critically approached to the tolerance concept as an issue of power relations and asymmetry between tolerating groups and tolerated groups (e.g. Brown 2009). My study uses the critical literature on tolerance and examines Hatay Arab Alevi's direct and indirect reference to tolerance notion in their accounts of Syrian refugees in Hatay.

The significance of my utilization of the tolerance literature comes from that it reveals my Hatay Arab Alevi informants assumptions about the power relations between themselves and Syrians. My informants utilize the concept tolerance to express their discomfort over the presence of Syrian refugees in Hatay, to show their objection or aversion of Syrian refugees. Hatay Arab Alevi utilize the notion tolerance indirectly or directly during the interviews to discuss their group's difference from Syrian refugees in terms of culture and occasionally ethnic identity.

The term ‘tolerance’ has a protean meaning, it is a universal concept which shows variability in purpose, in content, in situations, in understanding and way of living (Brown, 2009). Therefore, the discourses of tolerance show variability as far as its place of use in daily life. In the common sense usage, the term ‘tolerance’ is mainly used for the peoples’ permissive attitudes for the other people who are different in their way of living and thinking. It is used to show respect to the other even if a tolerating person might disagree with the tolerated other on an issue such as on religion, culture, or marriage. This use of the term tolerance has been loaded with positive connotations. On the other hand, the term tolerance also has negative meaning; it refers to a tolerating group’s endurance or patience to the other (e.g., Hayden, 2002; Lynch, Molz, Mcintosh, Lugosi, and Lashley, 2011; Thomassen, 2006).The term tolerance in the negative sense is defined “as passive noninterference” and signals “the lack of ability of either group to overcome the other” (Hayden, 2002, p. 206).

Hatay Arab Alevis sometimes use this positive notion of tolerance in order to show how they welcomed Syrian refugees in Hatay. For example one of my informants claims that

We show hospitality, it came from our ancestors. We will not let a victimized person suffer. We give our hand with love to them and when we make it we will not ask Are you Alevi? Or Are you Sunni? We embrace at any circumstance. We have this mentality. (Rec006)¹⁸

Yet, my Hatay Arab Alevi informants mainly use the tolerance concept in their narratives with the negative connotation of the term. For example, one of my informants claims that

¹⁸ “Biz misafirperver bir halkız, çünkü Atalarımızdan böyle gördük. Mağdur olan bir insanı mağdur etmeyiz. Mağdur olan insana sevgi ile el uzatırız. El uzattığımız zamanda sen Alevi misin, Sünni misin gibi sorularda sormayız. İnsan mısın, mağdur musun ne olursan ol sana her şekilde kucak açarız. Biz bu felsefeye sahibiz...” Rec006)-(From now on, You can find the original quotes which was given by informants’ local language to check by the native speaker for their meaning.)

They are working here as taxi driver, grocery, shipper, nothing is changed. Of course they will work here to earn money and we cannot do something about this. (Rec004)¹⁹

Tolerance has negative connotations as discussed in the literature. For instance, according to Wendy Brown (2009), the term tolerance, “despite its pacific demeanor, tolerance is an internally unharmonious term, blending together goodness, capaciousness, and conciliation with discomfort, judgment, and aversion” (Brown, 2009, p. 26). In other words, although the term of tolerance is being used to create positive understanding notion, actually it brings out an environment with aversion and judgment on the others.

This insight is meaningful considering my informants’ ways of thinking; while Hatay Arab Alevis are talking about the impacts of Syrian refugees, at the beginning of the interviews they declare themselves content about the Syrians presence, and however, in the later parts of the interviews they immediately switch their tone towards aversion regarding Syrians. Their conciliation of Syrians’ presence is often coupled with portraying themselves as the victims of the process. This can be seen at the following example:

Sealing the borders affected trade relations. Many workplaces stopped work. Main source of living of tradesmen was border trade. Tradesman affected too badly about this. The income of local people is decreased. There was unemployment before but it increased after they came. But they have to work for less salary because they are poor. This situation affected employers positively but local people is damaged financially. (Rec005)²⁰

Hatay Arab Alevis’ who use negative notions of tolerance in the following way: At once they normalize the situation of presence of Syrian refugees in Hatay

¹⁹“Is yapıyorlar burada, deęişen bir şey yok. Taksicilik, bakkalcılık, nakliyecilik yapıyorlar. Tabi ki bunlar burada çalışacaklar, para kazanacaklar, geçimlerini sağlayabilmek için.”(Rec004)

²⁰ “Sinir kapısının kapatılması sinir ticaretinin etkilenmesine neden oldu. Çoęu işyeri çalışamaz duruma geldi. Esnafların geçim kaynaęı sinir ticaretiydi. Esnaf bu durumdan çok etkilendi. Yerel kesimin kazancının düşmesine neden oldu. Zaten işsizlik vardı bunlar geldi bu durum daha da fazlaştı. Ama mecburlar yoksullar ucuz emekle çalışabiliyorlar. Bu durum işverenleri olumlu etkiliyor ama bu seferde yerel kesimdeki fakir işçilerin maddi yönden etkilenmesine de yol açıyor.” (Rec005)

and then they react to Syrians' presence in a rather hostile or "antagonistic" way. In the academic literature this defined as "[t]olerance carries within it an antagonism toward alterity as well as the capacity for the normalization"(Brown, 2009, p. 26). Brown argues that the term of tolerance might be seen as with the components of objection and acceptance which shows antagonism. This dual process of objection and acceptance creates the ambivalence in that environment as seen in the following informants' account:

Some of them [Syrian refugees] are really victims. They are working at every job they find in order to survive. You are helping these but after that you see some of the rich people came from there [Syria] and buy apartments and drive some luxury cars. They are living better than us. Interestingly, they have immunity because considered as victims of the war. They owe too many things that we do not. At this situation we do not know who is victim. Us – who cannot use freedom of travel around or them – who act like the real owners of this city. (Rec14)²¹

The aforementioned quotations also shows how tolerance creates an antagonism and bares power relations between a tolerating "us" and a "tolerated" other. This means that tolerance creates a power asymmetry in which the tolerating one to has superiority over the tolerated one.

The ambivalence of accepting and objecting Syrian refugees characterizes the narratives of my informants. As a general pattern, when Hatay Arab Alevis refer to the concept "tolerance" implicitly or explicitly in their narratives, they often do so to exclude the Syrian refugees and to otherize them at the same time. For example, it can be seen that how Hatay Arab Alevis use normalization and antagonism as the case in the following example:

We have not been comfortable since the day they came. They are everywhere. They are robbing houses, harassing us for everything. I do not want to live with them together or given

²¹ "Mağdur olan insan var gerçekten. Buldukları her iste çalışıyorlar karınlarını doyurabilmek için. Bu insanlara yardım ediyorsunuz ama bakıyorsunuz oranın zengin insanları geliyor buradan en lüks yerlerden ev alıyor, en lüks arabalara biniyorlar. Bizden çok daha güzel yaşıyorlar. İlginçtir bunlarda savaş mağduru konumundalar ve dokunulmazlıkları var. Bizim sahip olmadığımız birçok şeye sahipler. Bu durumda kim mağdur bilemiyoruz; sokağa çıkma özgürlüğünü kullanamayan bizler mi yoksa buraya gelip elini kolunu sallaya sallaya buraya yerleşen buranın gerçek sahibiymiş gibi, yerlisiymiş gibi davranan onlar mı?" (Rec14)

citizenship for them because our future is unknown as long as they stay here. Sometimes we are showing mercy for them. We do not know how they came here or what they suffer at their country because we are also human beings. (Rec0013)²²

The term tolerance, as discussed in the literature, is a matter of power relations between the groups. Brown (2009) argues that the act of toleration implies a sense of superiority by the tolerating group over the tolerated one. It is a changeable sociopolitical power relation between the groups which aims to control rather than resolve the conflict (see Brown, 2009; Michael Hurst, 2009). For example, Rainer Forst (2012) argues that “toleration means that the authority gives qualified permission to the minority to live according to their beliefs on condition that the minority accepts the dominant position of the authority of majority” (Forst, 2012, p. 5). In the relations between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees, one can see the emergence of such power relations as between the local and the new comer, the host and the guest, the self and the other. Specifically Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts elaborate on this power relations along with the themes which are “hospitality”, “real victim”, “self-victimization”, and “Arab Alevism” which I will discuss the rest of this section of the chapter.

Tolerance is not a limitless relationship; the relationship of tolerance has boundaries and the tolerating group always has a limit in tolerating the tolerated group. I will examine the threshold or limits of Hatay Arab Alevis’ tolerance to Syrian refugees under the titles of “hospitality”, “real victim”, “self-victimization”, “and Arab Alevism”.

4.1.1. Tolerance and Hospitality

In this part, I focus on the concept “hospitality” in relation to the concept tolerance to examine the power relationship they establish between a “self” and “the other,” in this case between Hatay Arab Alevis and the Syrian refugees.

²²“Onlar geldi geledi rahat değiliz. Her tarafta onlar oldu... Evlere giriyorlar, hırsızlık yapıyorlar, her konuda taciz de bulunuyorlar... Onların burada ne kalmalarını, ne de mal mülk sahibi olmalarını ne de vatandaşlık hakkı almalarını istemem. Çünkü onların burada kalması demek bizim sonumuzun ne olacağını belli olmayacağını gösterir. Ama yeri geliyor biz de onlara acıyoruz. Nasıl buraya geldiklerini, nasıl bu konumda olduklarını biz de bilmiyoruz... Biz de onların bu haline acıyoruz. Çünkü artık bizde insanız.” (Rec0013)

The concept of hospitality is mainly used in order to explain the process of developing an affirmative relationship between a host (the self) and a guest (the other). This process of being hospitable is marked with our act and practices with goodwill, which makes the coming guest feel comfortable and welcomed. Trudy Conway (2009) says that:

Hospitality defines a way of dwelling with others far different from benign indifference or principled non-interference. The hospitable response begins with the simple, but powerful, act of perceptual recognition that the other is present saying “I am here; acknowledge me. (Conway, 2009, p. 8)

It can be said that, at first, hospitality starts with someone’s recognition of and respect to the other. The positive understanding of tolerance is about how the host behaves and how the guest should act. On the other hand, there is a contradiction internal to the hospitality process: in hospitality while “the host, the owner of the home, the one who accepts, remains the master of the home” he or she also “retains his/her authority in that place” (Yeğenoğlu, 2003). In other words, hospitality is possible *only* when the host shows to the guest that the host has the power in his/her hand. The notion of hospitality is also about a power relation of Hatay Arab Alevis in relation to Syrian refugees; they tolerate Syrian refugees *only* with limits and this limit-setting puts a distance between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees. These limits become determiner of the self’s and the other’s positions in the public interactions in Hatay. Conway (2009) argues that:

Toleration puts up with the other who is kept at a manageable distance. But often such distance it contributes to misinformation and limiting, disabling prejudgments which in turn confirm our initial disdainful response. We tolerate the other, but safely at a distance. Not moving toward the understanding interaction enables, we keep our ourselves open to the possibility of intolerance and the harm it risks. In contrast, hospitality recognizes and engages the presence of the other and draws the other into interaction, creating a dialogical space that previously did not exist. With both intolerance and tolerance, we remain focused on the self and have no reason to welcome the other.(Conway, 2009, p. 8-9)

According to Conway's argument, in showing tolerance, one should think about the possibility of intolerance from the other. Therefore, according to him, the self is in a dialogue, in a relation with the other in the case of hospitality, while such a dialogue or relation between the self and the other is not the case in tolerance. However, in my case, I found that Hatay Arab Alevis' narratives show tolerance and even use the term tolerance directly for otherizing the Syrian refugees while at the same time using the term hospitality. This can be seen at the following example:

They [Syrian refugees] are staying at slums and living at shanty houses because of low price. Or 3-5 family coming together and renting an apartment which cause the increase of rent prices. Besides local people feel disturbed about their existence in that area. However we have hospitality so there will be no fight among us. (Rec005)²³

Another informant states that:

Unemployment and this new cheap labor force issue have created a serious disturbance. Because before, we could find work 3-4 days a week but right now this number decreased to 1. We bring 3 buns of bread to our home instead of 10. It created serious disturbance among local people. But we are trying to share our bread with Syrians, we are hospitable people. (Rec006)²⁴

Additionally, by analyzing this contradictory relation, I also deal with how Hatay Arab Alevis decide the limits of tolerance in the light of hospitality and the limits of tolerance. Therefore, at first, I will look at "conditional" and "unconditional" hospitality to understand which kind of hospitality Hatay Arab Alevis use in their daily life on the Syrian refugees.

²³ "Birçoğu maddi sıkıntılardan dolayı gecekondularda kalıyorlar ki onların çok pahalı değil fiyatları. Ya da kiralık bir evde kalanlar 3-5 aile birleşerek kalıyorlar. Tabi bu da kira fiyatlarının artmasına neden oluyor. Ayrıca o çevrede huzursuzlukların artmasına neden oluyor. Ama bizim yapımızdan dolayı bir gerginlik yaratılmaz çünkü biz çok misafirperveriz." (Rec005)

²⁴ "İşsizlik ve yeni ucuz iş olgusu Hatay halkında ciddi bir rahatsızlık yarattı. Çünkü daha önceleri haftada 3-4 gün iş bulabilirken şuan iş bulma olasılığı haftada bire düştü. Evine 10 ekmeğe götürcekken şuan 3 ekmeğe düşmüştür bu durum. Ciddi bir rahatsızlık yarattı yerel halkta. Ama biz Hatay halkı olarak o kadar misafirperveriz ki soframızı bile gelen Suriyeliler ile paylaşmaya çalışıyoruz. Çünkü onların çoğunun mağdur olduğuna inanıyoruz." (rec006)

Jacques Derrida identifies two versions of hospitality, “unconditional” and “conditional” hospitality, and claims a controversial relation between them (Derrida in Linnell Secomb, 2007). “Unconditional hospitality welcomes without controlling or identifying the foreigner or stranger” (Secomb, 2007, p. 149). So it can be said that unconditional hospitality does not necessitate anything for the new comers who are welcomed by the hosts. In this type of hospitality, the hosts do not have to show to the guest the authority. In contrast, “conditional hospitality” has some thresholds or limits for who are welcomed by the host. The host always wants to keep everything in his/her hand to control all in all. Meyda Yeğenoğlu (2003) also discusses the concept conditional hospitality and states that “[the other] is allowed to enter the host’s space under conditions the host has determined”(p. 15). The notion of hospitality is started with Hatay Arab Alevis hospitality as seem to fit under the “conditional hospitality” as the following example shows:

If they were really victims, we will not find this issue strange. We cannot find time to look victims because of them. They are living with our taxes and in addition to that they are trying to show superiority. We can take them to our home if they were real victims. (Rec 20)²⁵

Another my informant says that

The main concern here is not about victimized Syrians, it is about terrorist people who are 'so called' fighting for human right and democracy. Otherwise, local people of here can take the real victims to their home and feed them. (Rec 19)²⁶

In the following parts of this section, I discuss notion of hospitality according to Hatay Arab Alevis’ discourses as a conditional hospitality by showing how they utilize “real victims” vs non-victim distinction in relation to Syrian refugees.

²⁵ “Gerçekten mağdur olsalar bahsimizin üstünde yerleri var. Mağdur olan insanlarla ilgilenemiyoruz onlar yüzünden. Bizlerin maaşıyla, vergisiyle geçiniyorlar, yaşıyorlar bir de bize üstünlük sağlıyorlar bundan dolayı doğal olarak da ilişkiyi kuramıyoruz konuşmakta istemiyoruz. Gerçekten mağdur olsalar biz evimize de alırlar onları.” (Rec020)

²⁶ “Buradaki temel kaygı mağdur olan Suriyeliler ile ilgili değil; daha çok orada güya demokrasi adı altında özgürlük adı altında insan hakları adı altında mücadele eden terörist kesimle sorunları var. Yoksa buradaki insanları gerçekten mağdur olan Suriyeliyi alır evinde barındırır.” (Rec19)

4.1.2. Portrayal of the Syrian Refugee in Relation to “the Self”

4.1.2.1. “Real Victim”, “Innocent Refugee”

As I argued in the previous section, Hatay Arab Alevis’ sense of tolerance to Syrian refugees is a tolerance with limits and restrictions. They bring up the concept the “real victim” and they differentiate “the victim” from “the non-victim” corresponding to “[the help] deserving refuge” and “[the help] undeserving” refugees as a part of their broader “conditional” notion of hospitality, which rejects absolute openness to the Other (Lynch et al., 2011). Majority of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants explicitly and directly use to the term “real victim” in their narratives.

Hatay Arab Alevis claim that Syrian refugees have received local people’s attention because they are deprived of the means to survive. Hatay Arab Alevis present those Syrian refugees as “real victims”. Yet, this reference to “real victims” also reminds the possibility of existence of “unreal victims” among Syrian refugees according to them and shows their differentiating between “deserving” and “undeserving refugees” among Syrian refugees. For majority of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants, a Syrian refugee really counts as a real victim is only if he or she must work to survive even when their attempt to work would deprive Hatay Arab Alevis from employment opportunities. Some of my informants clearly refer to “deserving and undeserving refugees” distinction in the following way:

We do not have any problem with innocent refugees. But we have who slaughter our brothers, relatives with blunt knives. We will do whatever necessary for those innocent refugees. But how can we trust to others who are walking here and then going back to Syria and making slaughters. (Rec009)²⁷

Another example is that the following:

According to our observations, people know that %80 of refugees are innocent but rent prices increased to 600-700TL from 300TL. This situation disturbs me very much as a citizen. Because these people already victims and hungry and we are making this situation worse for them. Of course not all of them are real victims, some of

²⁷ “Bizim masum mültecilerle hiçbir sorunumuz yok. Ama kardeşlerimizi, akrabalarımızı kör bıçakla kesip buraya mülteci adı altında gelen cani teröristler ile sorunumuz var. Masum olan mültecilere tüm imkânları sağlar gereken yardımı yaparız. Ama elini kolunu burada sallayıp gezen sonra Suriye'ye gidip orada katliam yapanlara, bizi tehdit edenlere biz nasıl güvенеceğiz.” (Rec009)

them come here to create disorder. However it will be unfair if we think all of them are like that. (Rec006)²⁸

The other example is that

Because of them we cannot take care of real victims. They are living with our taxes and in addition to that they are trying to show superiority so that we do not want to talk or communicate with them in any way. We could take them to our homes if they were real victims. Because of them we are foreigners at our country. They just came yesterday but right now we are the second-class citizens. (Rec20)²⁹

On the other hand, some of my informants claim that they do not see Syrian refugees as “real victims.” They argue that Syrian refugees residing in Hatay, “in Arab Alevis’ living space” are very happy and comfortable without hesitation. One of my informants claims that

Not just real victims came here. When you walk around the bazaar, you can see that some scary kind of people who may carry guns. It is like here is their living area. They started to scare us. (Rec14)³⁰

Another my informant claims that

Unemployment and this new cheap labor force issue have created a serious disturbance. Because before, we could find work 3-4 days a week but right now this number decreased to 1. We bring 3 bread to our home instead of 10. It created serious disturbance among local people. But we are trying to share our bread with Syrians, we are hospitable people. (rec006)³¹

²⁸ “Yaptığımız gözlemlere göre % 80’ini insanların mağdur olduğunu bildiği halde kiralar 300 TL iken 600-700 TL’ye çıkmıştır. Bu durum beni bir vatandaş olarak gerçekten rahatsız ediyor. Çünkü bu insanların çoğu mağdur, zaten açlar, zaten yoksullar memleketlerinden kaçıp gelmişler onları burada da mağdur etmek gerçekten hiç hoş değil. Her gelen insan gerçekten mağdur olan insan değildir. Aralarında Hatay’ı karıştırmak isteyenlerde çıkıyor. Fakat çok az bir kesimin böyle çıkması hepsini aynı kefeye koymak değildir.” (Rec006)

²⁹ “Gerçekten mağdur olsalar bahsimizin üstünde yerleri var. Mağdur olan insanlarla ilgilenemiyoruz onlar yüzünden. Bizlerin maaşıyla, vergisiyle geçiniyorlar, yaşıyorlar bir de bize üstünlük sağlıyorlar bundan dolayı doğal olarak da ilişkiyi kuramıyoruz konuşmakta istemiyoruz. Gerçekten mağdur olsalar biz evimize de alırız onları. Ama çalışmamalarına rağmen ekmeğelden su golden misali en iyi muameleyi onlar görüyorlar. Onlar sayesinde biz kendi ülkemizde yabancı olduk. Daha dün geldiler biz hala 2nci sınıf muamelesine maruz kalıyoruz.” (Rec20)

³⁰ “Buraya sadece gerçekten mağdur insan gelmemiş. Çarşıda dolaştığımızda görebiliyorsunuz; normal halktan olan insan değil, görünüşü bile insan ürküten tipler dolaşmaya başladı. Kimileri de silahlı bir şekilde de dolaşabiliyorlar hiç çekinmeden. Sanki meydan onların, hatta burası kendi yaşam alanlarıymış gibi. Artık bizi ürkütmeye başladılar.” (Rec14)

³¹ “İşsizlik ve yeni ucuz iş olgusu Hatay halkında ciddi bir rahatsızlık yarattı. Çünkü daha önceleri haftada 3-4 gün iş bulabilirken şuan iş bulma olasılığı haftada bire düştü. Evine 10 ekmeğ götürcekken şuan 3 ekmeğe

The “real victim” is also defined in terms of whether or not Syrian refugees have a family. Hatay Arab Alevis argue that “the real victims” among Syrian refugees are those who maintain a family and working for his or her family under any circumstances. This condition reminds us the point made by Tomassen: “The act of toleration retains an element of an act of mercy or of ‘doing a favor’” (Thomassen, 2006, p. 440). Hatay Arab Alevis see their help to Syrian refugees as a favor rather than rights coming from Syrians’ refugee condition. However, despite all these conditions and even though Hatay Arab Alevis are not economically content about the presence of Syrian refugees in Hatay, they could still tolerate Syrians that are under “the real victim” category. One of my informants’ account shows the threshold point in his tolerance to Syrians as follows:

Some Syrians are working. They are trying to live with a half salary of our local people. The earning of local people decreased dramatically. We already had unemployment but it increased very much after the arrival of them. But Syrians are have to work for these prices because they are poor so that they can work for low salaries. (Rec005)³²

On the other hand, I also found that Hatay Arab Alevis’ narratives reveal a degree of acceptance towards the existence of the Syrian refugees in Hatay. This can be seen at the following example:

There is a nationalist understanding which is ‘We should not let Syrians’ work’. But in general people accepted their situation. There is mercy. They are trying to help them but... (rec005)³³

Another example on this issue is that

They are more than us everywhere. When you walk through Antakya bazaar you can see them everywhere. Tradesman here started to accept this issue. Many workplace has Arabic writings on

düştür bu durum. Ciddi bir rahatsızlık yarattı yerel halkta. Ama biz Hatay halkı olarak o kadar misafirperveriz ki soframızı bile gelen Suriyeliler ile paylaşmaya çalışıyoruz. Çünkü onların çoğunun mağdur olduğuna inanıyoruz.” (rec006)

³² “Suriyelilerden bazıları çalışıyor. Burada yerel işçinin çalıştığı fiyatın daha azını alarak geçimini sağlamaya çalışıyorlar. Bu da yerel kesimin kazancının düşmesine neden oluyor. Zaten işsizlik vardı; bunlar geldikten sonra bu durum daha da arttı. Ama Suriyeliler mecburlar öyle çalışmaya çünkü yoksullar, bu sebepten ucuza çalışabiliyorlar.” (Rec005)

³³“Suriyelileri çalıştırmayalım gibi milliyetçi bir anlayış var. Ama genelde millet burada bu durumu kabullenmiş durumda. Acıma var. Yardımcı olmaya çalışıyorlar ama çokta benimsemek istemiyorlar.”(rec005)

advertisement posters. Local people accepted they are not here temporary. (Rec026)³⁴

Another example is that

At the last couple of years, workplaces started to use Arabic instead of English. For example, you can see these writings at the biggest shopping mall here. The Arabic population was also majority here but before we did not see something like this. Although tradesman has to do this, this situation suits their book. (Rec026)³⁵

In the light of the above, in this section I tried to discuss Hatay Arab Alevis creation of subcategories of Syrian refugees as those who are “real victims” and those who are not. Among these subcategories the “real victim” Syrians are presented as “deserving refugees” while the others are “undeserving refugees,” which indicates Arab Alevis’ creation of a moralized hierarchy among Syrian refugees. Arab Alevis’ sense of moral authority in introducing such hierarchy itself draws a parallel with the literature that presents the tolerance concept as a marker of inter-group inequality and power asymmetry.

4.1.2.2. From “Real Victims” to Self-Victimization of Hatay Arab Alevis

Even while distinguishing “real victims” among Syrian refugees, Hatay Arab Alevis also underline how they themselves become victims by Syrian refugees’ presence. Hatay Arab Alevis utilize self-victimization in explaining their relations with Syrian refugees; they argue that the Syrian refugees “abuse the system” and place Hatay Arab Alevis into “second-class citizens in [their] own country.” For example, one of my participants stated the following:

We have hospitality, it came from our ancestors. We will not let a victimized person suffer. We give our hand with love to them and when we make it we will not ask Are you Alevi? Or Are you Sunni?

³⁴ “Her yerde bizden daha fazlalar. Antakya çarşısında yürüdüğümüz zaman onlar artık her yerde görebiliyoruz. Zaten artık kendileri de bunu hissettiriyorlar da bize. Zaten buranın esnafı da yavaş yavaş kabulleniyor. Çoğu işyeri afislerinde, ilanlarda Arapça yazmaya başladı. Buranın yerel halkı da onların artık burada geçici olarak kalmadıklarını kabullenmiş durumda.” (Rec026)

³⁵ “Son 1-2 yılda İngilizce yazılması gereken şeyler Arapça olarak yazılmaya başlandı. Örneğin buranın en büyük AVM’sinde bile İngilizce yerine Arapça yazılar var. Arap nüfusu burada çok fazla ama şimdiye kadar böyle şeylere kesinlikle rastlamadık. Bu esnafın mecbur kaldıkları bir durumdur.” (Rec026)

We embrace at any circumstance. We have this mentality. But yes, we are suffered by this situation very much. (Rec006)³⁶

One of my informant claims that

I am not despising them, never. There are Alevi around 700.000 in Hatay. Today who cares brotherhood, unity and flag more than us? There is peace in Hatay because of Arab Alevi because we are the majority. We repress the treatment shown to us because we do not want to cause any problems. (Rec009)³⁷

Another way to show their victimization, they emphasize their sect as Alevi and try to explain how they become oppressed nation in Turkey under the discourse of second-class citizenship. Other examples on this issue are that the following:

Right now it is like they are the hosts and we are the visitors. It is as if we are refugees. Even hospitals treat us as second class citizens. Not only there, this situation is everywhere. (Rec20)³⁸

If they were real victims, we will take them to our home. But they are not working and at the same time they are taking the best treatment. Because of them we are foreigners in our country. They just came yesterday, and today we are the second class citizens. (Rec20)³⁹

In the Hatay Arab Alevi's narratives on "second class citizenship" theme their concerns about sharing services, particularly the hospitals takes a huge portion. They complain about the use of hospitals by showing how Syrian refugees use and abuse these services; and therefore, how they feel like "second-class citizen" in Hatay. For example, one informant argues the following:

³⁶ "Biz misafirperver bir halkız, çünkü Atalarımızdan böyle gördük. Mağdur olan bir insanı mağdur etmeyiz. Mağdur olan insana sevgi ile el uzatırız. El uzattığımız zamanda sen Alevi misin, Sünni misin gibi sorularda sormayız. İnsan mısın, mağdur musun ne olursan ol sana her şekilde kucak açarız. Biz bu felsefeye sahibiz; biz memleket olarak misafirperveriz biz memleket olarak hayrı severiz. Ama evet ciddi bir şekilde mağdur kaldık."(Rec006)

³⁷ "Ben onları kesinlikle aşağılamıyorum. Hatay da 700.000 civarı Alevi var. Bugün vatana, bayrağa, kardeşliğe, birliğe, beraberliğe bizim kadar değer veren kim var? Hatay'daki barış ve huzur biz Arap Alevileri sayesinde var çünkü biz çoğunlukta'yız. Bedel ödüyoruz, eziliyoruz, hor görülüyoruz ama sorun çıkmasın diye her şeyi içimizde sindiriyoruz." (rec009)

³⁸ "Sanki onlar ev sahibiymiş gibi bizler burada misafir durumuna geldik. Mülteci konumuna düştük. Hastanelerde 2nci sınıf vatandaş muamelesi görüyoruz. Gerçi sadece orada değil bu her yerde böyle." (Rec20)

³⁹ "Gerçekten mağdur olsalar biz evimize de alırız onları. Ama çalışmamalarına rağmen ekmek elden su golden misali en iyi muameleyi onlar görüyorlar. Onlar sayesinde biz kendi ülkemizde yabancı olduk. Daha dün geldiler biz hala 2nci sınıf muamelesine maruz kalıyoruz." (Rec20)

Hospitals are important concern for us. Syrians have priority at there. We are not going to state hospitals right now. We wait in the line but they are not. They are not war victims but they have the priority. We became second class citizen in our country. (Rec14)⁴⁰

One of my informant claims that

We have great respect for refugees. They have bad economic conditions. We may split our bread into two-three for them. But when we go to hospital, some people gets the treatment first. This makes us second class citizen and we just watch them. (Rec17)⁴¹

In order to express the relations between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrians, my informants present themselves as second-class citizens on the grounds that they have been disadvantaged in the hospitals. While explaining these disadvantages Hatay Arab Alevis also emphasize their superiority by using the words of hospitality. For example, one of my informant says that

I am a citizen of Turkey and when I go to a state or private hospital, they have the priority not me. This is as a result of our hospitality which came from our state, citizen and culture. (Rec006)⁴²

Besides these, majority Hatay Arab Alevis complain about how their relation with Syrians does not fit into their presumptions about the relationship between a guest and a host. Hatay Arab Alevis demand from the Syrian refugees to act as a guest not as “the owner of home.” This can be seen with the following excerpt:

It is like they are the host and we are the visitor. We are like refugees. Hospitals are treat us as second class citizen. Actually not only at hospitals, it is like this at everywhere. (Rec20)⁴³

⁴⁰ “Hastaneler bizim için çok büyük bir sıkıntı. Hastanelerde Suriyelilere öncelik veriyorlar. Biz artık devlet hastanelerine gitmiyoruz. Sırada beklerken elini kolunu sallaya salaya gelip muayeneye giriyorlar. Odalar onlara tahsis ediliyor ki bunlarda savaş mağduru da değiller ama öncelik onlarda. Kendi ülkenizde 2. sınıf vatandaş konumuna düşünüz.” (Rec14)

⁴¹ “Buraya gelen mülteciler baş tacıdır. Ekonomik durumları olmayan insanlardır. Biz Aleviler olarak buraya gelenlere ekmeğimizi ikiye gerekirse üçe böleriz. Ama hastaneye gittiğimiz zaman ilk önce ne olduğu belli olmayan insanlar ortaya çıkıyor ve onlar ilk tedavi oluyorlar. Biz ise daha çok 2. sınıf vatandaş konumunda kalıyor ve onları izleyici konumunda oluyoruz.” (Rec17)

⁴² “Bir devlet hastanesine, bir özel hastaneye gittiğimizde ben bir Türk vatandaşımı sosyal güvencem olduğu halde onlar benden daha fazla değer almakta. Çünkü bu da gerek devletimizin, gerek vatandaşımızın gerek kültürümüzün verdiği misafirperverlikten kaynaklanıyor.” (rec006)

Hatay Arab Alevis see the Syrian refugees as a threat for their political rights as well. For example, some of my informants put their claim on the economic issues, cultural differences and also social structure to show why they do not want Syrian refugees getting citizenship. The following excerpts show that:

Personally, I do not want to give a citizenship for Syrians. Our grandsons are going to be affected from this situation and became victims. First we should improve the conditions of our local people and eliminate the unemployment. After that we may give them citizenship. But I do not want them here. Maybe 3-5-10 years is ok but we do not have endurance for life-long and we do not have to. (Rec006)⁴⁴

Absolutely we are against giving citizenship to them. They are like dynamite, their staying ruins here. Local people will not accept this. There will be conflict take place in the future if this goes like this. Alevis, Sunnis, Christians are all disturbed from this situation. (Rec009)⁴⁵

Furthermore, Hatay Arab Alevis express their resentments regarding their own political rights in their own country. They emphasize their emergent role as second class citizenship after the arrival of Syrians. The following statements show that:

They [Syrians] continue their lives with our taxes and they are overpowering us. Because of this we cannot communicate with them well and actually we do not want it also. Although they are not working, their conditions are better than us. Because of them we are foreigners at our country. They just arrived yesterday and now we are the second class citizens. That is why I do not want citizenship for them. (Rec020)⁴⁶

⁴³ “Sanki onlar ev sahibiymiş gibi bizler burada misafir durumuna geldik. Mülteci konumuna düştük. Hastanelerde 2nci sınıf vatandaş muamelesi görüyoruz. Gerçi sadece orada değil bu her yerde böyle”. (Rec20)⁴³

⁴⁴ “Suriyelilere sahsım adına vatandaşlık hakkı verilmesini istemem. Ekonomik anlamda ciddi bir şekilde bu durumdan torunlarımız etkilenecek ve mağdur olacaktır. Çünkü önce kendi ekonomimizin düzeltilmesi gerekiyor, kendi halkımızın işsiz olan halkımızın ekonomik durumlarının düzeltilim ki onlara vatandaşlık hakkı verebilelim. Ama ben onların burada kalmalarını istemiyorum. 3-5-10 sene tahammül edebiliriz ama onlara bir omur boyu tahammül edeceğimiz diye bir kaide yok etmekte zorunda değiliz zaten.”(Rec006)

⁴⁵ “Kesinlikle vatandaşlık verilmesini istemiyoruz. Bunların burada tutulması buraya konulmuş bir dinamittir. Tamamen burayı bozar. Buranın halkı bunu, bu durumu içine sindiremez. Mutlaka bir sürtüşme, bir çatışma çıkar. Buranın Alevi’si de Sünni’si de Hristiyan’ı da kısacası herkes bu durumdan rahatsız.” (Rec009)

⁴⁶ “Bizlerin maaşıyla, vergisiyle geçiniyorlar, yaşıyorlar bir de bize üstünlük sağlıyorlar bundan dolayı doğal olarak da ilişkiyi kuramıyoruz konuşmakta istemiyoruz. Ama çalışmamalarına rağmen ekmeğelden su golden misali en iyi muameleyi onlar görüyorlar. Onlar sayesinde biz kendi ülkemizde yabancı olduk. Daha dün geldiler

We are not happy about this: both in terms of economic and denominational we do not need these people. They can go and live at their own country. We do not need them. Okay, we made our human duty but when these issues end, we will send them back, throw out if necessary. They will go away from here one way or another and I do not want them to take citizenship. (Rec007)⁴⁷

In that sense, Hatay Arab Alevis underline almost in every conducted interview that they become second-class citizens in Turkey and become more structurally disadvantaged than before. In other words, my informants recall that Arab Alevis' disadvantage is not new but dates back to earlier when Alevis in Turkey are a minority group and their main purpose and desire had already been "hav[ing] equal rights with the Sunni Muslims who make up the majority of the society" (Dönmez and Enneli, 2011, p. 85). In the eyes of my informants, this situation got worse with the arrival of Syrian refugees and therefore they do not want Syrian refugees in Turkey. Furthermore, they think that Syrians may be granted with Turkish citizenship due to being Sunni Muslim and this situation is seen as threatening by my informants. Hatay Arab Alevis do not accept the Syrian refugees' possibility of gaining citizenship. For example, the following excerpt shows this idea:

We do not want them to take neither citizenship nor any other legal rights. They should leave immediately, this is our country. (Rec10)⁴⁸

In sum, Hatay Arab Alevis recognize the "real victims" and yet they also try to show their self-victimization due to their own hospitality. Hatay Arab Alevis do not merely recognize some Syrian refugees as "real victims" and while doing this they utilize "self-victimization".

biz hala 2nci sınıf muamelesine maruz kalıyoruz. Bu yüzden vatandaşlık hakkı verilmesini istemiyorum." (Rec020)

⁴⁷ "Biz bu durumdan rahatsızız: ekonomik yönden de, mezhepsel yönden de çünkü bizim bu insanlara ihtiyacımız yok ki. Gitsinler kendi ülkelerinde yaşasınlar. Bizim onlara ihtiyacımız yok. Tamam, biz insanlık görevimizi yerine getirdik ama olaylar biterse göndereceğiz gerekirse kovacağız. Bir şekilde buradan gidecekler, vatandaşlık hakkı verilmesini istemiyorum yani." (Rec007)

⁴⁸ "Vatandaşlık hakkı ya da herhangi bir yasal hak almalarını kesinlikle istemiyoruz. Biran önce gitsinler, burası kimin memleketi yani." (Rec10)

The self-victimization of Hatay Arab Alevis is meaningful considering the literature on intergroup tension. Scholars argue that in cases of ethnic tension leading to ethnic conflict “a sense of victimization” is common (Zaslavsky 1992) and possible (Williams, Jr, 1994, p. 59), and such transformation is grounded on one groups perceptions about “loss of autonomy, loss of historically claimed territory, infringement of prior rights, or generally, treatment thought to be unfairly discriminatory” (Harris 1977 in Williams, Jr, 1994, p. 59). Hatay Arab Alevis’ reference to themes such as becoming “second class citizenship,” in Turkey, “being a foreigner in one’s own country” and overall their “infringement of prior rights” such as in accessing to health services can be considered as similar self-victimization.

Hatay Arab Alevis, by being a national minority in Turkey, see these so-called economic disadvantages, deprivation of social rights to generate a common feeling of self-victimization. Furthermore, they direct this sense of “self-victimization” into direct hostility by blaming Syrian refugees for lack of their “adaptability” to the social environment of Hatay In the next section, the notion of hostility will be explained in a detailed way.

4.1.2.3. From Self-victimization to Hostility

Hatay Arab Alevis’ self-victimization occasionally turns into antagonism and even direct hostility to the other. Hatay Arab Alevis want from Syrian refugees to show “adaptability” which comprises that “the other [should] follow our rules, our way of life, even our language, our culture, and our political system and so on” (Gibson and Molz, 2012, p. 169). According to Hatay Arab Alevis, Syrian refugees do not show any “adaptability” to these. As the following examples shows:

Socially, it had too many effects such as peer pressures and discrimination. Innocents or real victims also suffered here. We sometimes discriminate a person who has same sect with us. Because we do not know who is who. Especially, in a place like Antakya where you can find church, mosque and djemevi, this kind of

insecurities create discrimination. There is no you-me relation right now, but us-them is. (Rec17)⁴⁹

There are people walking at Antakya streets with strange looks. It seemed that they made do everything at any time; they have long beard with strange outfits. Their looks, walks and acts cause to take attention of ours. (Rec20)⁵⁰

In sum, in this section I tried to examine Hatay Arab Alevis' notion of hospitality emphasizing how they become a victim in their own country by Syrian refugees' presence. In order to explain their self-victimization, Hatay Arab Alevis utilize their relations with Syrian refugees; they argue that the Syrian refugees "abuse the system" and place Hatay Arab Alevis into "second-class citizens" in [their] own country. It is important to say that this kind of notion as well shows that Hatay Arab Alevis' perceive refugees as a potential threat to their social environment.

4.1.2.4. "Philosophy of Our Sect", Arab Alevism /Alevism

Some Hatay Arab Alevis explain and justify their tolerance to Syrian refugees by underlining certain cultural features that are claimed to be unique to Arab Alevis. These cultural features are explained by over emphasizing the superiority of "philosophy of Arab Alevism". In my fieldwork, Hatay Arab Alevis refer to the "Alevi people" and "Alevi culture" and express hospitality as central to "the philosophy of [their] sect" as following:

We have hospitality, it came from our ancestors. We will not make suffer a person who is already victim. We give our hand with love to them and when we make it we will not ask Are you Alevi? Or Are

⁴⁹ "Basta mahalle baskısı, ayrımcılık olmak üzere sosyal anlamda birçok etkileri oldu. Burada kurunun yanında yasta yanyor. Bazen aynı mezhepten olan insanı yadırgıyoruz, dışlıyoruz. Çünkü kimin ne olduğunu bilmiyoruz. Artık kimseye de güvencemiz kalmadı. Hale ki Antakya gibi kilisesi, camisi, cem evi olan bir yerde bu tarz güvensizlik ister istemez insanları ayrıştırıyor. Artık burada sen-ben ilişkisi yok Onlar-Bizler ilişkisi var." (Rec17)

⁵⁰ "Antakya sokaklarında ne olduğu belli olmayan abuk sabuk insanlar dolaşiyor. Sakallı bir karış, ne olduğu belirsiz, ustu başı paramparça, her an bir şey yapacakmış gibi duruyorlar. Görüntüleri bile pusu da yatmış düşman gibi etrafta dolaniyorlar. Bakışları, yürüyüşleri, hal ve hareketleri bu kadar göze batmalarına neden oluyor." (Rec20)

you Sunni? We embrace at any circumstance. We have this mentality. As a nation we like to help others, we like charity. But yes, we are suffered by this situation very much. But we shared our bread with them anyway. (Rec006)⁵¹

Another example is that

We have great respect for refugees. They have bad economic conditions. We may split our bread into two-three for them. But when we go to hospital, some people gets the treatment first. This makes us second class citizen and we just watch them. We suffer like they are because Alevi are full of love and love to share. (Rec17)⁵²

Another informant claims that

Hatay Alevi are quiet people. Whatever our state says, Alevi accept it. Local people provided help already for victims. However some people came here with full of hate against Alevi people and they started to show this hatred with explosions. We saw some incidents like head cutting and these were not reflected outside. (Rec15)⁵³

The excerpts above show that Hatay Arab Alevi presume and emphasize some superior values inherent to Arab Alevism and argue that they do not do any otherization for the new comers due to these values. Yet, this does not mean that they do ignore the distinction between Alevi and Sunni groups' group identities. For instance, one of my informants argue this explicitly said that

Here we live with European culture, Alevi culture. We accepted their culture even though it was a hardly acceptance but there was a

⁵¹ "Biz misafirperver bir halkız, çünkü Atalarımızdan böyle gördük. Mağdur olan bir insanı mağdur etmeyiz. Mağdur olan insana sevgi ile el uzatırız. El uzattığımız zamanda sen Alevi misin, Sünni misin gibi sorularda sormayız. İnsan mısın, mağdur musun ne olursan ol sana her şekilde kucak açarız. Biz bu felsefeye sahibiz; biz memleket olarak misafirperveriz biz memleket olarak hayrı severiz. Ama evet ciddi bir şekilde mağdur kaldık. Fakat elimizdeki bir avuç çorbayı da onlarla paylaştık." (Rec006)

⁵² "Buraya gelen mülteciler baş tacıdır. Ekonomik durumları olmayan insanlardır. Biz Aleviler olarak buraya gelenlere ekmeğimizi ikiye gerekirse üçe böleriz. Ama hastaneye gittiğimiz zaman ilk önce ne olduğu belli olmayan insanlar ortaya çıkıyor ve onlar ilk tedavi oluyorlar. Biz ise daha çok 2. sınıf vatandaş konumunda kalıyor ve onları izleyici konumunda oluyoruz. Biz de onların çektiği acıyı çekiyoruz çünkü Aleviler sevgi doludur paylaşımcıdır." (Rec17)

⁵³ "Hatay Alevileri sessiz insanlardır. Devletin kabul ettiği her şeye evet diyen insanlardır. Mağdur olanlara halk zaten kapıları açmış gereken tüm maddi-manevi yardımı sağlamıştı. Ancak savaş zihniyetli ve Alevi düşmanlığı adı altında gelenlerde vardı ve içlerindeki barındırdıkları kini burada kasmaya çalıştılar ve sonuç olarak patlamalar oldu. Bazı bölgelerde mahallelerde kafa kesmeler gördük bunlar hiç yansıtılmadı dışarıya." (Rec15)

nation who suffered. But our cultures are different because we are coming from a modern culture provided by Ataturk. We can understand from their outfits that they came from Syria. (Rec15-16)⁵⁴

Hatay Arab Alevi also make some separation between their culture and Syrian refugees' culture even if they are coming common religion, Islam. Hatay Arab Alevi make otherization with their cultural features about their sect, including the groups' members' sense of proper attire in the public spaces. Furthermore, Hatay Arab Alevi also argue that after the coming of the Syrian refugees, cultural features of Hatay's has been affected negatively. For example, while expressing this kind of disturbances, they also give the examples about Syrian refugees' clothes and appearance and also life style. Rec 021 claims that

We are living here for years. No one lived a problem regarding outfits with one another. But their looks create disturbance among us. You cannot ask like who are you? They ruined this heavenly place. (Rec21)⁵⁵

Another informant claims that

When you look to social relations, some people make marriages and start running business with Syrians. But social structure is completely broken right now. Wives are threatened by their husbands. There are too many divorces taking place. Even Alevi started marriages with non-Alevi but this is because of financial reasons. Our moral and cultural values have been changing. (Rec009)⁵⁶

It is important to say that my informants' attitudes transformed toward Syria refugees during the process of interaction between themselves and Syrian refugees; since, the interaction of my informants with the Syrian refugees helped my

⁵⁴ "Biz burada Avrupa ruhuyla, alevi ruhuyla yaşadığımız bir kültüre sahibiz. Onların kültürünü zor Kabul etmemize rağmen yine en azından Kabul ettik çünkü acı çeken bir millet vardı. Ama kültürlerimiz farklı çünkü biz Atatürk'ün sunduğu çağdaş bir kültürden geliyoruz. Onları çarşıda gördüğümüzde kıyafetlerinden bile nasıl bir Suriye kültüründen geldiğini anlayabiliyoruz." (Rec15-16)

⁵⁵ "Biz yıllardır burada yaşıyoruz. Kimsenin kimseye kıyafetleriyle alkali hiçbir sıkıntısı olmamıştır. Ama onların tuhaf görünüşleri uzun sakalları bizde ister istemez rahatsızlık yaratıyor. Kimin nesi olduğunu da soramıyorsunuz bu güzelim cennet vatani mahvettiler." (Rec21)

⁵⁶ "Sosyal ilişkilere bakıldığında kız alıp verenler var, is ortaklığı kuranlar var Suriyeliler ile. Ama sosyal ve toplumsal yapı tamamıyla bozuldu. Esler artık eslerini Suriyeliler ile tehdit ediyorlar. Çok sayıda boşanmalar oldu. Aleviler arasında da nadir de olsa karma evlilikler olmaya başladı ama tamamen maddi sebeplerden dolayı. Ahlaki ve sosyal kültürümüzde, yapımızda çözümler oldu." (Rec009)

informants find out explore the boundaries of their ethnic identity in relation to their ethnic other, i.e. Syrian refugees in Hatay. The excerpts above my informants emphasize "...having primordial ties are still an important requirement of being part of the Alevi moral community" (Kose, 2009, p. 276) However, "...what is more important,..., is [that] the practical use of the available resources within the Alevi identity struggle" (Kose, 2009, p. 259). My Hatay Arab Alevi informants use their cultural differences and moral and cultural values for their "identity struggle," which is an indicator of how they "self-essentialize" their ethnic group as a homogenous unity and actually how they utilize "strategic essentialism" for magnifying their own differences from Syrians as I discussed in the introductory chapter. The next section further discusses Hatay Arab Alevis' use of cultural differences argument in magnifying inter-group boundaries between themselves and Syrians.

4.1.2.5. "Our Way of Living"

Hatay Arab Alevis' narratives reveal their discomfort with Syrian refugees due to some perceived negative influences of Syrian refugees on the ways of living in Hatay. One of Hatay Arab Alevis narratives claims that

We saw Hatay as the capital of peace and brotherhood till yesterday. But incidents made here like a camp. Man kidnappings, killings are started to mention under Reyhanlı attack. (Rec009)⁵⁷

Hatay Arab Alevis feel that Hatay province is not like before, "the capital of peace and brotherhood." According to them, the climbing events such as kidnappings, murders and the Reyhanlı bombing attacks⁵⁸ bring the province into a military camps. These accusations can actually count as "criminalization" of Syrian refugees. For example, the following examples from my informants show different degrees of association of Syrian refugees with crime:

⁵⁷ "Biz Hatay'a düne kadar barış, huzur ve kardeşliğin başkenti olarak bakıyor ve dünyaya öyle tanıtıyorduk. Ama gördüğünüz gibi tırmanarak gelişen olaylar artık burayı bir karargâh haline getirdi. Adam kaçırma, adam öldürme, Reyhanlı saldırısı kapsamında anılmaya başlandı." (Rec009)

⁵⁸ In May 11, 2013 two car bombs exploded which killed at least 46 people and injured many others in Reyhanlı, Hatay ("Turkish media review," 2013)

Except real victims, some people hares our daughters. After eating at the restaurant they said go and take the bill from Tayyip Erdoğan. Local people suffered from this situation. Syrian people have more right to speak. (Rec006)⁵⁹

They are getting out of camps but there are thieves and beggars among them. So this situation makes us nervous. We are afraid to go out at nights, in the end we are also human and we are scare to confront with those. We did not have any problems before. (Rec007)⁶⁰

Burglary started. Beggary also started and all of the beggars are not from us, from them. We want them to leave soon. They are different people, they look like terrorists, a member of El-Qaeda. (Rec10)⁶¹

Hatay Arab Alevis put their expression on how Syrian refugees make them feel uncomfortable in their province in the interviews examining the social environment disturbances underlying the Syrian refugees as a criminal. Another informants claim that:

Syrians have very much effect socially. Because we have not been comfortable since they came. We have too many complaints; they steal and rob places, harass our daughters. Even their looks are scary. Busses are full of them. I cannot allow my child to play outside. Before we were going for a walk at evenings but right now they are everywhere. We are scare of everything. Before we used to live comfortably. (rec13)⁶²

These people came out from another country, they do not have an identity or a personal record. A man can cause an accident, steal something, kidnap someone or commit a murder. You cannot do something about this issue because they have no record. This

⁵⁹ “Bu gerçekten mağdur olan kesimin dışında olan kesimden kızlarımıza çocuklarımıza sarkıntılık yapanlar oldu. Restoranlara girip yemek yiyip parasını gidin Tayyip Erdoğan’dan alın diyenlerde oldu. Bu durumda esnafımız halkımız güç duruma düştü. Suriyeli vatandaşın bizden daha fazla söz hakkı var şuan.” (Rec006)

⁶⁰ Bunlar kamplardan çıkıyorlar ama bunların hırsız var, gaspçısı var, dilencisi var bu durum haliyle bizim de tedirgin olmamıza neden oluyor. Geceleri bir yerlere çıkmaktan korkar olduk; sonuçta biz de insanız ve karşı karşıya geliriz diye korkuyoruz. Daha önce bir sıkıntımız yoktu buralarda. (Rec007)

⁶¹ Hırsızlıkta başladı. Dilencilikte başladı zaten dilencilerde bizden değil yani onlardan hep. Ortam bozuldu. Biran önce gitsinler. Bunlar başka insanlar; baksana tiplerine hepsi el kaide ya da terör örgütünden hep sakallı bıyiksız burada, rahatça dolaşabiliyorlar. (Rec10)

⁶² “Sosyal anlamda Suriyelilerin çok etkisi var. Çünkü onlar geldi geveli rahat değiliz. Her tarafta onlar, köyler, şehirler onlarla dolu. Çok şikâyetçiyiz; evlere giriyorlar, hırsızlık yapıyorlar, her konuda tacizde bulunuyorlar. Tipleri bile korkutucu. Çarşıya giderken dolmuş hep onlarla dolu. Artık çocuğumu dışarıda oynatamıyorum. Gece yürüyüşlere çıkardık buralarda ama şuan her yerden onlar çıkıyor. Her şeyden korkuyoruz. Eskiden biz burada rahat yasayan insanlardık.” (rec13)

situation cause unrest among local people. So my issue is can you say terrorist for the people who do not have record? Or can you say victim for those? We do not know any of these. (Rec19)⁶³

In all of the aforementioned excerpts, my Hatay Arab Alevi informants argue that the province of Hatay is “the city of tolerance,” and that the new comers negatively influenced the social structure of Hatay. In spite of their overall negative perception of the Syrian refugees and even criminalization of them, some Hatay Arab Alevis seem to develop empathy towards helpless the conditions of Syrian refugees which might channel them towards criminal acts:

When a man in a very bad situation, he may do everything. For example, I am not blaming those who steal because only God can know how hard their situation is. Or when a women started to work as a prostitute, we cannot assume her situation. I do not blame people for these things but I can blame people who brought them here. (Rec22)⁶⁴

In that sense, my informants claim that they felt uncomfortable with the presence of Syrian refugees in their province and their discomfort lead to the point of some informants’ “criminalization” of Syrian refugees.

The significance of this discussion on tolerance is to show how Hatay Arab Alevis’ usage of the term “tolerance” and related concepts in regards to Syrian refugees actually operates for their deemphasizing ethnic differences and even for neutralizing ethnic differences between Arab Alevis and Syrians. However, despite Arab Alevis carefully and instrumentally de-ethnicize their intergroup relations with Syrians, they introduce and reproduce another mechanism of hierarchy between Arab Alevis and Syrians as a hierarchy between the local/host/citizen populations and

⁶³ “Bu adamlar başka ülkeden kaçıp gelmiş ne bir kimliği var ne de bir kaydı ya da tescili. Bu adam bir kazaya sebep olabilir, hırsızlık yapabilir, adam kaçırabilir öldürebilir de ama siz veya biz hiçbir şey yapamayız çünkü hiçbir kayıtları yok. Bu da ister istemez insanları tedirgin edebilir, rahatsız edebilir. Yani kim oldukları bilinmeyen insanlar sonuçta terörist midir? Mağdur mudur? Bunların hiçbirini bilmiyoruz.” (Rec19)

⁶⁴ “Bir insan zor durumda kaldığında, dara düştüğünde yapamayacağı şey yoktur. Mesela hırsızlık olaylarında onları suçlamam çünkü Allah bilir ne duruma geldiler de hırsızlık yaptılar ya da diğer taraftan kadın ticareti tarafından baktığımızda o kadın da ne durumdaydı da fuhuş yapma derecesine geldi. Suç bu insanlarda değil onları buraya getirenlerde.” (Rec22)

refugees/guest/non-citizens. Furthermore, they create further hierarchies within Syrian refugees, between “real/deserving/innocent refugees” and unreal/undeserving/criminal refugees.

The ethnicization of intergroup relations is not even seen under the “philosophy of our sect”, or “our way of living” themes since Arab Alevis carefully avoid framing their concerns about Syrian refugees as a concern about differences between Alevism and Sunnism while they do not avoid emphasizing their ethnic identification with the Alevi group with particular religious and cultural content with distinctive group boundaries.

It can be said that Hatay Arab Alevis’ perceptions shows that social process in Hatay province revealed boundaries of the identification with the discourses of cultural differences, economic conditions and ethnic identities under the name “our way of living”.

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Overall, in this chapter I discussed the notion of tolerance among Hatay Arab Alevis in relation to Syrian refugees. In discussing tolerance, I focused on five sub themes which are tolerance and hospitality, “real victim”, “innocent refugee”, from “real victims” to self-victimization of Hatay Arab Alevis, philosophy of Our sect”, Arab Alevism /Alevism, “Our way of living”. Regarding the first one reveals notion of hospitality of Hatay Arab Alevis and how they have conditional hospitality and utilize “real victims” which they act according to this towards Syrian refugees. Regarding the second one, I focused on how Hatay Arab Alevis use the notion of “real victim” by making separation between “deserving refugee” and “undeserving refugee”. Regarding the third one, I focused on how Hatay Arab Alevis do not merely recognize some Syrian refugees as “real victims” and while doing this they utilize “self-victimization” by referring to themes such as “second class citizenship,” “being a foreigner in one’s own country”. Regarding the fourth one, I focused on how Hatay Arab Alevis cultural features changed after the coming of the Syrian refugees. My informants claim that their lifestyle and cultural values damaged with the coming of the Syrian refugees. Regarding the last one, I focused on how Hatay Arab Alevis’ narratives reveal their senses of being uncomfortable with Syrian

refugees due to the negative influences of Syrian refugees on the ways of living in Hatay. Hatay Arab Alevis complain about the Syrian refugees about how they disturb their way of living in Hatay. Beside Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts on self, the other and inter-group tolerance, Hatay Arab Alevis' perceptions on economic, social and political interactions with Syrian refugees are also examined in this study. The next of this chapter will focus on economic interest and group identity to understand the whether the competition between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees' competition over economic power.

4.2. Hatay Arab Alevis' Perceptions on Economic, Social and Political Interactions with Syrian refugees: Economic Interest or the Group Identity?

My thesis aims to answer the question how Arab Alevis, a national ethnoreligious minority but a local majority in Hatay, may be influenced with the migration of Syrian refugees. Specifically, I focus on the question whether Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of their relations with Syrian refugees are marked by an essentialized notion of ethnic differences between themselves and Syrians or whether ethnic differences appear as a cover for actually existing economic competition. In this section, I focus on Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of their economic and social relations to understand to what extent, how and when these are marked by their concerns about economic competition and conflicting economic interests and group identity.

As I discussed in my introductory chapter, the instrumentalist theories to ethnicity focuses on mobilization of ethnic identity in line with the emergent economic interests of individuals and groups. Accordingly, the individuals' economic needs lead to the restructuring of society during the modernization period. The rapidly changing world has started to affect the individual's needs and interests. According to Lynn Hempel (2004)

Modernization led to a restructuring of society, a number of scholars maintained that these changes served to foster, not reduce, the importance of ethnicity. Modernization was seen to strengthen ethnic divisions in multiethnic societies because it stimulated ethnic

competition. Ethnic identities in this mode of analysis do not reflect “traditional and narrower bonds of one’s local place, kinship group, or caste,” but are built around “wider loyalties to language or religious communities” (Brass 1976: 229). The larger “ethnic” group then serves as an effective means for competing in modern society (Hempel, 2004, p. 254–255).

In the aforementioned quotation, Hempel, (2004) mainly argues that ethnic identity is using as an instrument in accordance with the interest of individuals for a direct competition over resources. Therefore, intergroup interactions also give shape to the emergence of “ethnicity”. Orlando Patterson argued that

Economic factors affect the size, continuity and even the definition of specific ethnic groups over time because ethnic identity may serve the economic class interests of individuals who belong to specific ethnic groups. The point is not whether people have a class identity or an ethnic identity-this is an erroneous question because people can have multiple identities-but rather how people abandon, maintain or change their ethnic identity depending on their position in the class structure (in Schryer, 2014, p. 22)

Patterson argues that the economic interests of the individuals forms the ethnic identities by emphasizing that the ethnic identities are formed towards individuals’ position in the class structure.

On the other hand, Fredrik Barth also argues about how interaction of the groups between each influences the emergence of ethnicity among them, yet by highlighting the differences of the groups and their cultural differences maintaining their identity “us” and “them” (Barth 1969).

In my case, I deal with how my informants use their ethnic identity as an instrument in their economic interest with Syrian refugees as well; but the interesting is that there is a division within my Hatay Arab Alevi informants’ accounts on Syrian refugees. On the one hand, Hatay Arab Alevis show two main camps in terms of how they see economic interests as a factor in their relations with Syrians. On the other hand, Hatay Arab Alevis are also divided into two camps in seeing how they see their social interactions with the Syrian refugees in erecting inter-group borders

during intergroup interaction in the social sphere. Furthermore, these two camps in the case of economic and social spheres occasionally overlap to show us that Hatay Arab Alevis use their ethnic identity over Syrian refugees to highlight their group and cultural differences; but they also use Syrian refugees for their economic interest in order to show the power relation over the economic resources as well.

At first sight, my categorization of Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts into two groups might be interpreted as a false attempt to homogenize Hatay Arab Alevis and their views. However, I should note that despite their internal diversity in terms of occupation, class, gender, age, religiosity, my Hatay Arab Alevi informants have displayed relatively homogenized views on their relations with Syrian refugees. Majority of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants were utilizing the nation and local discourse that sees Syrian refugees negatively, which is the nationally and locally hegemonic discourse publicly circulating via newspaper news and newspaper articles. Particularly, in the local news, we can mainly see how Syrian refugees had been seen in terms of their negative influence on Hatay local people's social and economic life. This hegemonic discourse mainly points out Syrian refugees' allegedly negative influence on the cultural values of local peoples as well as locals' economic conditions.⁶⁵ The following statement by Ahmet İçduygu shows the main themes of the local and national anti-Syrian discourses:

Host communities' attitudes toward Syrian refugees also depend on economic factors, like employment rates and wage levels, and on sociological factors such as the presence of anti-foreigner sentiment. A recent study found that host populations are particularly concerned by rising rent and housing costs; unemployment and economic competition; competition from new, Syrian owned-businesses; and the poor living and social conditions of Syrians... This is particularly true for urban refugees, especially those who are more visible in cities, smaller towns, and districts in the border regions-as demonstrated

⁶⁵ For examples, see the following: "Antakya'da "Suriyeli Göçmenler" masaya yatırıldı" | Hatay Gazetesi - Hatay'ın haber sitesi... (2014, 3). Retrieved November 21, 2015, from <http://www.hataygazetesi.com/haber/genel/antakya%E2%80%99da-%E2%80%9Csuruyeli-gocmenler%E2%80%9D-masaya-yatirildi/810.html>; "Suriyeliler toplumsal yaşamı nasıl etkiledi." (2015, 23). Retrieved November 10, 2015, from <http://www.tgrthaber.com.tr/gundem/suriyeliler-toplumsal-yasami-nasil-etkiledi-93808>; "Suriyeliler toplumsal yaşamı nasıl etkiledi." (2015, 23). Retrieved November 10, 2015, from <http://www.tgrthaber.com.tr/gundem/suriyeliler-toplumsal-yasami-nasil-etkiledi-93808>; "Bölge halkı Türkiye'nin Suriye politikasına tepkili." (2012, 12). Retrieved from <http://haber.sol.org.tr/kent-gundemleri/bolge-halki-turkiyenin-suriye-politikasina-tepkili-haberi-53783>

strikingly negative attitudes towards Syrian refugees in affected cities in south and southeast Turkey (İçduygu, 2015, p. 10).

On the other hand, despite that majority of my informants were utilizing the variations of the national and local anti-Syrian discourses, I managed to reach to a small proportion of Hatay Arab Alevis who does not buy into the hegemonic anti-Syrian approach. This group of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants were not seeing Syrian refugees a threat to social and economic life in Hatay. It was surprising to see a group of Hatay Arab Alevi informants who does not utilize the hegemonic anti-Syrian discourse. Yet, soon I noticed that the reason for their immunity from the national and local anti-Syrian discourse was also related with another, less popular approach which is presenting Syrian refugees as an asset or an economic source to exploit.⁶⁶

In the rest of this chapter, in order to understand the intergroup relations in social and economic contexts, I examine Hatay Arab Alevis perceptions of Syrian Sunni refugees with a focus on Alevi locals' self-identified and other-identifying notions of "us" and "them". I argue that the competition between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees is primarily a competition over economic power and specifically on the control of material resources. This is important because Arab Alevis had been the majority in multicultural Hatay before the arrival of Syrian refugees and they were controlling main economic resources in sectors such as farming, the construction business, and viticulture in. However, after the Syrian refugees' arrival, Syrian refugees did not only change the existing ethnic and sectarian balances but also challenged the economic dominance of Arab Alevis especially on local job market in Hatay. They mostly affected the existing mostly-Arab-Alevi craftsmen (local small business owners, drivers, and constructors mostly unskilled workers). Under these circumstances, as my interviews show, Hatay Arab Alevis seek ways to

⁶⁶ See Yazar, T. (2014, 6). "Hatay ya da başka bir il, onlar UCUZ İŞGÜCÜ!" - Antakya Gazetesi | Antakya Toplumcu Halk Gazetesi. Retrieved November 21, 2015, from <http://antakyagazetesi.com/H6295-hatay-ya-da-baska-bir-il-onlar-ucuz-isgucu.html>; Çetingüleç, M. (2012, 26). "Syrian refugees aggravate Turkey's unemployment problem" - Al-Monitor: the Pulse of the Middle East. Retrieved December 11, 2014, from <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/07/cetingulec-syrian-refugees-turkey-unemployment-illegal-work.html>

draw and harden inter-group boundaries to secure their already established economic and demographic dominance by portraying Syrian refugees' presence as a "threat" to their economic interests and to the demographic balance of Hatay.

The following sections of this chapter examine Hatay Arab Alevis' perceptions of their economic and social relations with Syrian refugees to discuss the significance of economic interest and group identity in determining their relations with refugees. The rest of the chapter is divided into two parts, which are examining the Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts: first, their economic relations with Syrians and second, their social relations with Syrians. Each of these parts are divided into two other parts: the one, which is the majority view, that sees Syrians as a threat to existing relations and the second, which is the minority view, that sees Syrians not as a threat contrarily, beneficial for themselves as well.

4.2.1. Hatay Arab Alevis' Perceptions of Syrian Refugees regarding Economic Issues

In this part of my study, the impact of Syrian refugees is discussed to clarify in the light of my informants' accounts based on how Hatay Arab Alevis portray Syrian refugees as a threat or not to their economic life and economic security through their impacts on job market. Tallmeister (2013) argued that refugees could be portrayed as threat for the host countries' economic life and she puts her arguments as stating that

Immigration can be argued to pose a threat to a receiving country's economic security through its impact on the labor market. Guild (2009) addresses this concern by highlighting some key issues: do migrant workers decrease wages in strong economies? And, in a strong economy, do immigrants take away jobs from native-born workers (135)? Public opinion often supports the notion that immigrants depress wages and take away jobs, contributing to economic problems (Somerville and Sumption 2009:3) (in Tallmeister, 2013, p. 5).

In that sense, Hatay Arab Alevis accounts on how Syrian refugees had negative impact on their economic environment echoes the portrayals that Tallmeister discusses.

Hatay Arab Alevis' perceptions of Syrian refugees regarding their economic interactions with the Syrian refugees are not uniform. Some of my informants emphasize "economic benefits" brought by Syrian refugees and support their presence in Hatay considering refugee's demand for low wages as a labor force. However, majority of my informants emphasize their discomfort with the presence of Syrian refugees in Hatay's economic relations on the grounds that Syrian refugees could be a threat to their local job market with their "new low wage labor" phenomena. Simply majority of my informants do not want Syrian refugees neither as low wage labor force nor as a refugee in Hatay. In this group, some portray their concerns merely as economic concerns (i.e. about the negative effects of Syrian refugees on local economic life) while others, interestingly, combine their economic concerns with some social concerns such as negative effects of Syrian refugees on local marriage patterns, particularly on the issue of polygamy.

4.2.1.1. Portraying Syrian refugees as primarily as an "economic threat"

Hatay Arab Alevis make separation on the Syrian refugees according to their contribution to economy and their different ways of living. Therefore, in this section, I focus on the economic interests in order to see the power relations between these two ethnic groups for the possible conflict who see the Syrian refugees as a threat for their group identity.

4.2.1.1.1. Syrian Workers as "an economic threat to the job market"

In the literature only a few comments are presents regarding on economic impacts of Syrian refugees on job market. The exact impact of Syrian refugees on job markets is not known. However some researchers make comments about Syrians impact on job markets. For instance, Orhan and Gündoğar states that, "Syrians in Hatay have done well in getting jobs in entry levels... unregistered labor is still an

issue, and there are some groups who are disturbed with Syrians getting jobs in the city” (Orhan and Gündoğar, 2015, p. 27). Confirming this comment, majority of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants are connected to hegemonic anti-Syrian approaches by stating the supposedly negative impact of Syrians to job market as sources of “cheap labor force.”

Some of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants clearly consider Syrian refugees as an economic threat to the existing balance to the local job market. Specifically they claim that after the coming of the Syrian refugees to the Hatay province, unemployment among the local population has increased. According to them, Syrian refugee labor become preferable compared to local labor since Syrian refugees are offered to work at lower wages compared to local workers. This situation caused the transformation of the job-market in matching the employers’ needs and Syrian refugees’ needs, which is a kind of cycle depends on the balance of the mutual need relations. This perception among Hatay Arab Alevis seems to cause a great discomfort about the Syrian refugees as some of my informant discuss in the following:

Everyone including workers and households were influenced by the arrival of Syrians. Before, workers could earn enough money to keep on their lives but now it is not possible; since a new labor force is emerged and it caused problems for the local labor force. Of course, what could these people do? [They are not to blame] But what should we do then? For example many firms had changed their employees by sacking local workers and hiring Syrians. (Rec021)⁶⁷

As a result of the cheap labor force that Syrians created, local people are quitting their workplaces because the money they offered is not enough for them. This situation is creating trouble for the [local] people because everything is related with economy. (Rec021)⁶⁸

⁶⁷ “Çalışan işçisinden tut ev sahibine kadar herkes etkilendi Suriyelilerin gelişinden. Eskiden burada çalışan işçiler aldıkları günlükle evini rahatça geçindirebiliyordu. Ama şimdi geçindiremiyor. Çünkü ortaya çıkan yeni iş olgusundan dolayı yerli işçi kesiminde sıkıntılar olmaya başladı. Tabi oradan gelenler ne yapsın; bir şekilde geçimlerini sağlamak zorundalar. Ama buradaki insanların suçu ne? Örneğin sanayide birçok işletme işçi kadrosunu değiştirdi. Yerel işçileri çıkartıp yerine Suriyelileri aldı çünkü daha ucuza çalışıyorlar.” (Rec021)

⁶⁸ “Suriyelilerin çıkarttığı yeni iş olgusundan dolayı yerli halk onlarla aynı paraya geçinmiyor; geçinemeyince de sıkıntı oluyor ve isten ayrılıyorlar. Bu da halkta sıkıntı yaratıyor. Çünkü her şey ekonomiyle bağlantılı olduğundan halk içinde huzursuzluklar başlıyor.” (Rec021)

In the light of aforementioned quotations, the cheap labor force leads to existing unemployment problem increase a lot among the local population due to Syrian refugee labor becoming preferable; Syrian refugees are offered to work at lower wages compared to local workers which create a transformation at the local job market in Hatay. Therefore, Hatay Arab Alevis thought that Syrian refugees disturb them in their local job market. For example, according to below examples, some of my informants claim that:

Employers are hiring Syrians because of lower salary. Daily wage of ours was 50TL Turkish Lira but after they came it decreased to 20-25TL. If you look to a construction firm, you can see all positions (plasterer, painter, and craftsman) are Syrians. Because they can hire three Syrians instead of one local worker with the same salary. So that as a result of the cheap labor force they prefer Syrians. (Rec004)⁶⁹

I cannot see any Turkish workers at construction sites. I am veterinarian and travelling to villages and even at every barn Syrians are working. Wherever I go, I am seeing a Syrian chum. (Rec15-16)⁷⁰

Construction firms in our lands preferred cheap labor. Syrians started to work under cheap firms because they were hungry and they needed desperately but now local people are unemployed. This gave important damage to our economy. (Rec006)⁷¹

These examples are just a few of my informants' perceptions which mainly show that how the hegemonic discourses take a shape with the "cheap labor force" which gain a new extent with the presence of Syrian refugees in Hatay. Due to the new cheap labor problem, many employers started to prefer Syrian refugees at the work places such as factories, constructions at the position of plasterer, painter, and craftsman which create a tension between local workers. Therefore, these aforementioned

⁶⁹ "İşverenler Suriyelileri ucuza çalıştırıyorlar. Bizim burada bir çalışanın günlüğü 50 TL iken, onlar geldikten sonra bu 20-25 TL oldu. Git bak bir inşaat firmasına bütün çalışanları Suriyeli (sıvacısı, ustası, boyacısı). Çünkü adam 1 yerli işçi yerine 3 Suriyeliyi daha ucuza çalıştırabiliyor. Yani yerli halkın yerine ucuz iş gücünden dolayı bunlar tercih ediliyor." (Rec004)

⁷⁰ "İnşaatlarda artık Türk işçisini göremiyorum. Hatay'da köyden köye gezen bir veterinerim ahırlarda bile Suriyeli çalışıyor. Her bir yere giriyorum muhakkak bir Suriyeli arkadaş görüyorum." (Rec15-16)

⁷¹ Kendi memleketimizdeki, kendi evimizdeki ticarethaneler ucuz işçiliğe koşular. Ucuz işçiliğe kosan vatandaşlar Suriyeleri kardeşlerimizin karni aç, karnini doyurma adına bu ucuz işçiliği yapmaya baslarken buradaki vatandaşlarımız işsiz kalmaya başladı. Bundan dolayı ekonomiye çok büyük zararları oldu." (Rec006)

quotations reveal an important dynamic of specific inter-group dynamics between locals-refugees on economic issues. Hatay Arab Alevis feel discomfort by the presence of Syrian refugees especially those who are working at low-paying jobs for unskilled labor.

Employers want to work with Syrians especially at unskilled works because they can hire 4 workers instead of 1. People are working for 50TL-60TL cannot find a job because Syrians are working for 20TL-30TL. This effects the job opportunities of local people. Financial difficulties are causing the emergence of inter-parental conflicts. (Rec007)⁷²

However, despite the lack of accurate data about whether Syrian refugees have really caused any change in the unemployment rates in Hatay (see Çetingüleç, 2014; Akesson, 2014), Arab Alevis perceive Syrian refugee workers as a threat for their local job market environment and they blame Syrian refugees about Hatay's unemployment problem due to being as a threatening competitors in the local job market. For example, some of my informants make the following statements:

Unemployment and the new concept of cheap labor force created disorder at Hatay. Before people can find daily jobs 3-4 times a week but now this number is not exceeding one. People can bring 10 breads before but now this number is 3. It created serious trouble. (Rec006)⁷³

The tranquility is also not like before at Hatay. Everyone complain about this issue. Workers, drivers, wholesalers, shippers were earning enough money to sustain their lives but everyone affected with this situation. (Rec003)⁷⁴

⁷² "işvereneler 1 işçi yerine 4 tane çalıştırabildiklerinden Suriyelilerin çalışmasına izin veriyorlar (ama daha az güven isteyen işlerde). 50-60 TL'ye çalışanlar artık iş bulamıyorlar. Çünkü gelenler 20-30 TL'ye çalışıyorlar. Bu da burdakilerin iş bulmasını etkiliyor. Ayrıca ucuz işçi çalıştırmak temiz işin de çıkmasını engelliyor. Ekonomik yönden geçim sıkıntısının ortaya çıkması aile içi huzursuzlukların artmasına neden oluyor." (Rec007)

⁷³ "İşsizlik ve yeni ucuz iş olgusu Hatay halkında ciddi bir rahatsızlık yarattı. Çünkü daha önceleri haftada 3-4 gün iş bulabilirken şuan iş bulma olasılığı haftada bire düştü. Evine 10 ekmeğe götürcekken şuan 3 ekmeğe düşmüştür bu durum. Ciddi bir rahatsızlık yarattı yerel halkta." (Rec006)

⁷⁴ "Hatay'daki huzur artık eskisi gibi değil. Herkes bundan şikâyetçidir. Eskiden tüccarı da vardı ihracatçısı da vardı herkes bir şekilde geçimini sağlıyordu. Ama şuan herkes Hatay'daki bu durumdan etkilendi; işçisi de, şoförü de, toptancısı da, nakliyecisi de.(Rec003)

These narratives of Hatay Alevis show that they do not merely complain about the unemployment problem in Hatay, but they frame the issue as a matter of “trouble” or “tranquility” in Hatay and they seem to make a statement about their concerns about broader socio-economic balance in Hatay.

The significance of pointing out how my Hatay Arab Alevi informants appeal to hegemonic narrative against Syrian refugees in local job market comes from that it is pointing out a contradiction: It is important to say that Hatay Arab Alevis who see Syrian refugees as a threat share a similar class position with the Syrian refugees which is blamed for being the “cheap labor force.” Most of my Arab Alevi informants and the Syrian refugees are working class people, who experience more or less the same economic conditions even though they form two separate ethnic groups. Yet, my Arab Alevi informants do not question the existing economic structure which is the root cause of the exploitation of both Syrian refugees and themselves. Instead they blame Syrian refugees about the economic stagnation and unemployment and they see Syrian refugees as a threat for their economic environment. Furthermore, in my opinion, Hatay Arab Alevis had already granted with economic power in the multicultural Hatay and want to keep this control as before, even after the flow of refugees. This seems particularly true when we consider that Hatay Arab Alevis had already established a degree of economic power particularly in the local job market vis-à-vis the other local ethnic groups such as local Sunnis, Christians and Armenians even just because they form the demographic majority in Hatay. The flow of Syrian refugees changed the demographic balance in Hatay and causes panic among Hatay Arab Alevis (Cağaptay, 2014).

These kinds of perceptions of my informants also reveal that there is an in-class competition between Hatay locals. Before the coming of Syrian refugees Hatay locals (e.g. Arab Alevis, Arab Sunnis, Arab Christians and Armenians) has displayed a balance in available class position, which means that “the awareness that a class structure exists and the identification with others in one’s class position and related to the shared class positions Hatay locals have a view of the class system in the local context (for class system and class position relation, see Andersen and Taylor, 2007, p. 241). The arrival of the Syrian refugees seems to complicate locals’ perceptions of the class structure. I found that Hatay Arab Alevis complain about the negative

influences of them on economic environment while they also want to gain money from them as well. This shows that material interests of my informants led them to act towards their economic benefits from Syrian refugees at the local job markets not only at the border towns but also at the central Antakya as well.

4.2.1.1.2. “Syrian refugee workers” as an economic threat to local small business owners

The national and local hegemonic discourse that presents the presence of Syrians as an economic problem finds place in local and national newspapers, as I discussed above. For example, Çevikalp (2014) states that the “exports of the province's famous fresh fruits and vegetables to the Middle East have halted. Large international road transport (TIR) trucks line the roads but they are parked, and are not moving⁷⁵”(Çevikalp, 2014, p. 1). One of such economic problems is those related with the impact of Syrian refugees on local small business. A group of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants present Syrian refugees as an economic threat to the existing local small business. For instance, some of Arab Alevi shopkeepers express their being uncomfortable by saying that after the coming of Syrian refugees, “everything started getting worse” especially in the economic life. Another sector affected negatively is local border trade which has direct influence on local business owners as one of my informants also state as follows:

Our tradesman is now miserable. The biggest touristic income was sustained from Syria. But now terrorists are coming not tourists. All of our economic sectors (transportation, export, import, etc.) have stopped and tradesman is affected most by this situation. (Rec009)⁷⁶

Before these people came, we had an important border trade. After incidents, this border trade stopped and tradesman is affected badly. (Rec006)⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Çevikalp, M. (2014, June 14). “Border province Hatay bears brunt of Syrian crisis”. Retrieved March 5, 2015, from http://www.todayszaman.com/anasayfa_border-province-hatay-bears-brunt-of-syrian-crisis_350365.html

⁷⁶ “Esnafımız sefilleri oynar oldu. Turistik yönden en büyük gelirimiz Suriye'den sağlanıyordu. Ama artık turistler değil teröristler gelir oldu. Bütün ekonomik dayanaklarımız (nakliye, taşımacılık, ithalat, ihracat, vs.) durma noktasına geldi ve bu en çok esnafın etkilenmesine neden oldu.” (Rec009)

⁷⁷ “Fakat bunlar gelmeden önce, bu olaylar olmadan önce ciddi bir sinir ticaretimiz vardı. Bu olaylar olduktan sonra sinir ticaretinin bitmesiyle esnafımız çok etkilendi.

As stated in these quotations, Hatay Arab Alevis particularly focus on the impact of Syrian refugees on local trade. A component of the local trade used to be cross-border trade with Syria which was seen positively before and started to be seen as negatively after the refugee flow. These perceptions are backed by Hatay Arab Alevis' complains about permeability of the border at the border towns such as Reyhanlı, Altınözü, Kırıkhan. According to them, these border towns have a special condition in the cross border trade. Due to being closer to borders the border town residents started to make border trade between themselves and the Syrian refugees. This action has created new routes and actors in trade; this situation influenced the *local* small business owners by causing them lose customers. For example, one of my informants claim that

The satisfaction of our border towns has economic reasons. The economies of Reyhanlı and Altınözü is not like ours. They can traffic gas, cigarette and alcohol because they are border towns. Because of this reason they may not want an end to Syrian civil war. (Rec019)⁷⁸

This aforementioned quotation shows that Syrians' migration has positive impacts in border towns on the small local business owners. Yet, this negatively influenced the small local business in the central Antakya because small local business owners in Antakya want to earn money from the border towns and do business as well.

We are tradesmen and they interrupt our peace here...Tradesmen are victim, there is unemployment...Really, any of the tradesman want them here. (Rec010)⁷⁹

⁷⁸ "Sınırdaki beldelerimizin memnuniyeti ekonomik sebeplerden kaynaklanıyor. Bir Reyhanlı'nın bir Altınözü'nün ekonomisi bizim merkezdeki gibi değil. Bunlar sınır kentleri ve kaçakçılıkla akaryakıttan, sigaraya, içkiye her şeylerini bir şekilde temin edebiliyorlar. Bu nedenden dolayı Suriye'deki kargaşanın bitmesini istemiyor olabilirler."(Rec19)

⁷⁹ "Esnaf olarak huzurumuzu bozdular... Esnaf mağdur, işsizlik var... Onların çok etkisi oluyor. Gerçekten hiçbir esnaf onların burada olmasını istemiyor." (Rec10)

Some of shopkeepers also emphasize the difficulties of the life conditions in Hatay and how they try to adapt themselves to this condition by explaining their situation in the local market. For example,

I am working at Bazaar. Normally 300 people were coming to me but now this number is around 50. I am selling 300-400kg instead of a ton. This situation is influencing my job. My earning started to split. Besides, there were some procedures for running a business at Bazaar and no one can operate the business in accordance with their will. For example I rented an apartment at city center and tried to orientate myself to the work, after all my efforts which finally lead to government's permission for my business. However, now Syrians are coming and working here [by opening shops] and no one is making control. (Rec027)⁸⁰

In that sense, it can be said that small local business owners had negative impacts in the local market due to Syrian refugee workers. Hatay Arab Alevi small business owners thought that if Syrian refugees came and open a work place near to their places, the customers will divide and this causes to the dividing of the profit.

The significance of pointing out that Hatay Arab Alevis see Syrians as a threat for their business is that the presence of the Syrian refugees in Turkey created a competitive advantage of the local businesspersons at the border towns of Hatay over local businesspersons at Antakya. In other words, Syrian refugees did not cause a direct threat to business to small business owners in Antakya but they caused an indirect influence by involving in business with small business owners at the border towns. Simply, Syrian refugees' presence initiated an in-class competition within local business owners in Hatay, between the local business owners at border towns whose profits has increased and the local business owners in Antakya whose profits has decreased with the arrival of Syrians.

The business at border towns become more advantageous for several reasons: The Syrian refugee workers become more related to the border towns' residents after

⁸⁰ "Ben pazarda çalışıyorum. Bana normalde 300 kişi gelecekken şuan 50 kişi falan geliyor. 1 ton urun satacakken 300-400 kg satıyorum ki bu da ister istemez isimi etkiliyor. Kazancım bölünmeye başladı. Ayrıca bir pazarda çalışmak için belli prosedürler vardı kimse istediği gelip burada satış yapamazdı. Ben bu isi alabilmek için merkezde ev kiraladım buradaki şartlara uyum sağlamaya çalıştım ki benim burada çalışmama devlet anca izin verdi. Ama şuan bakıyorum Suriyeliler istediği gelip o pazarda çalışabiliyor kimse de karışmıyor. Bu durumda benim canımı sıkmaya başladı açıkçası." (Rec027)

they become refugees since Syrian refugees share similar cultural composition with the local populations at the border towns of Hatay. Yet, small local business owners in Antakya do not directly blame the business owners at the border towns while they blame Syrian refugees who engage in trade with business owners in border towns, they show their concerns with this kind of engagement between the border-town inhabitants and the Syrian refugees.

4.2.1.2. Portraying Syrian refugees as not as an economic threat at all

As I discussed in the previous section, majority of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants see the Syrian refugees as an economic threat in line with the hegemonic national and local discourse, which presents Syrian refugees as a threat to local economy. Yet, a smaller group of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants do not see Syrian refugees a threat economic life in Hatay while their views are not less problematic than the others. In this part, I discuss the views of those Arab Alevi informants who do not agree with the hegemonic anti-Syrian approaches and those who do not feel any disturbance about the Syrian refugees. As I discuss below, I found that they are not directly anti-Syrian because they see Syrian refugees as an economic asset or source. Among them, there are employers who recruit Syrian refugees as workers due to their demand for low wages as the following informant states:

Employers are hiring Syrians because of lower salary... If you look to a construction firm, you can see all positions (plasterer, painter, and craftsman) are Syrians. Because they can hire three Syrians instead of one local worker with the same salary. So that as a result of the cheap labor force they prefer Syrians. (Rec004)⁸¹

Furthermore, other groups of informants state how some other local shop-owners (i.e. not themselves) see Syrian refugees even beneficial since Syrian refugees are these shop-owners' potential customers in the shopping malls or small business. These store owners see the Syrian refugees only as "customers" without considering if he/she is a Syrian refugee. Therefore these store owners give much

⁸¹ "İşverenler Suriyelileri ucuza çalıştırıyorlar... Git bak bir inşaat firmasına bütün çalışanları Suriyeli (sıvacı, ustası, boyacı). Çünkü adam 1 yerli işçi yerine 3 Suriyeliyi daha ucuza çalıştırabiliyor. Yani yerli halkın yerine ucuz iş gücünden dolayı bunlar tercih ediliyor." (Rec004)

more importance to the rich Syrian refugees than the local people, as I saw from my participant observations in the malls. When I visit the shopping malls in Hatay, I observed the Syrian refugee “customers” spending their money especially on textile and cosmetics which are high-end goods in the shopping malls. For this reason, local shop-owners do not portray Syrian refugees as an economic threat; contrarily, different from the local customers they give importance to the well-off Syrians as they spend much more money than the locals in the shopping malls.

If the issue is money, people may not make a distinction. At the end, it is normal to not making distinction of Syrians if a person earns money. (Rec019)⁸²

Some Hatay Arab Alevi informants do not see Syrian refugees as a threat. This is important because it shows that Hatay Arab Alevis do not have a uniform opinion about Syrians and that not all Hatay Arab Alevis buy into the hegemonic anti-Syrian discourse. In other words, there are two kinds of accounts who see Syrian refugees as a threat and who do not see as a threat which indicate that Hatay Arab Alevis are not homogenous group. Yet, I should note that the accounts of Hatay Arab Alevis who do not see Syrians as a threat are connected to a less hegemonic public discourse on Syrian refugees which sees Syrians as an economic asset or a source.⁸³

The cases in which my Hatay Arab Alevi informants see Syrian refugees as a source are relatively few but present. For instance, there are markers of how Syrian refugees are seen as potential customers for some Hatay Arab Alevis as indicated by the signs written in “Arabic” at the shopping malls and the city center stores. These signs also indicate that Syrian refugee “customers” are important for the store owners and their benefits, because Syrian refugee “customers” who are the rich ones spending much more money than the locals in the shopping malls such as, especially,

⁸² “İş para konusu olunca insan belki ayırım yapmayabilir; sonuçta para kazanacaksa adam, Suriyeli ayrımı yapmayabilir.” (Rec19)

⁸³ Yazar, T. (2014, 6). Hatay ya da başka bir il, onlar UCUZ İŞGÜCÜ! - Antakya Gazetesi | Antakya Toplumcu Halk Gazetesi. Retrieved November 21, 2015, from <http://antakyagazetesi.com/H6295-hatay-ya-da-baska-bir-il-onlar-ucuz-isgucu.html>

at relatively high-end textile and cosmetic chain-stores. For example, one of my informants put his/her claim on this situation by indicating that how the things is changed after the influx of the Syrian refugees to Hatay as

Tradesman started to accept this situation. Many workplaces started to write Arabic at their advertisement notices. (Rec027)⁸⁴

At the last couple of years, workplaces started to use Arabic instead of English. For example, you can see these writings at the biggest shopping mall here. The Arabic population was also a majority here but before we did not see something like this. Although tradesman has to do this, this situation suits their book. (Rec027)⁸⁵

The excerpts clearly show that my Hatay Arab Alevi informants recognize Syrian refugees as customers and therefore an economic source as “rich customers.” According to them, employers and the shop owners prefer Syrian refugees towards their economic benefits and that’s why they do not see them as a threat in their environment.

Syrians are seen as an economic source in other terms too, for instance as “cheap labor sources.” Specifically some of my informants claimed that Syrian refugees are employed by the local business owners due to the reluctance of local workers to work with low wages. For this reason, lots of employers are hiring the Syrian refugees in the local markets. This situation can be exemplified with the following excerpts:

I think there is no harm for one over another. Some people have complains like; Syrians are working for cheaper salaries so Alevi people are showing reactions. But employer is happy because they do not need to pay social security payment, work conditions are not important and salaries are very much low. Alevi employees are claiming they came and unemployment problem increased. Here there are too much job opportunities but local people do not want to

⁸⁴ “Zaten artık buranın esnafı da yavaş yavaş kabulleniyor. Çoğu işyeri artık afislerde, ilanlarda Arapça yazmaya başladı.” (Rec027)

⁸⁵ “Son bir iki yılda İngilizce yazılması gereken şeyler Arapça yazılmaya başladı. Örneğin buranın en büyük AVM’sinde bile İngilizce yerine Arapça yazılar var. Arap nüfusu burada çok fazla ama şimdiye kadar böyle şeylere rastlamadık. Bu esnafın mecbur kaldıkları durum ama işlerine de geliyor aynı zamanda.” (Rec027)

work for low salaries. If I have a suitable work environment I will also prefer Syrian workers because they are hard-working and well-behaved people, but I am not hiring them because here is a family place. (Rec027)⁸⁶

Syrians were worked for low salaries by employers. If you go and look to a construction firm, you can see all the employees are Syrians because 3 Syrians work for a same salary with 1 local worker. Because of cheap labor force Syrians are preferred. If I were employer, I will also prefer Syrian (Rec004)⁸⁷.

In sum, in this section I tried to discuss the Hatay Arab Alevis' perceptions of Syrian refugees regarding economic benefits when they work for low wages or as a source of labor force alternative to the local labor. In this light, I discussed who see Syrian refugees as an economic threat to the job market, to the local small business owners and who do not see as an economic threat at all.

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In this part of my data chapter, I focused on Hatay Arab Alevis' perceptions about Syrians regarding their economic relations. I tried to explain how and under which circumstances they see Syrian refugees as a threat or not. Therefore, I discussed on economic burden and benefits affiliated to Syrian refugees. I explained that those who support Syrian presence in economic sense do so by considering refugees being either "cheap labor force" or as "rich customer." I also explained that those who do not support by the presence of Syrian refugees in Hatay do so, on the grounds that Syrian refugees could be a threat to their local job market as a competing labor force.

⁸⁶ "Burada kimsenin kimseye zararı yok bence. Şöyle bir şikâyet var piyasada: Alevi çalışan insanlar buraya gelen ucuz ücretle çalışan Suriyeli işçiye karşı tepkili. Ama işveren mutlu çünkü sigorta yok Suriyeli işçiyi istediği kadar, istediği koşullarda düşük ücretle çalıştırıyor ama buranın Alevi çalışanları onlar geldi işsizlik problemi arttı diyor bu yeni is olgusundan dolayı. Ama burada iş çok hatta ben çalıştıracak eleman bulamıyorum çünkü buradaki yerli işçiler düşük masala çalışmak istemiyorlar. Benim yerim müsait olsa ben Suriyeli işçi çalıştırırım çünkü çalışkan insanlar, terbiyeli insanlar ama aile ortamı olduğu için çalıştırmıyorum." (Rec027)

⁸⁷ "İşverenler Suriyelileri ucuza çalıştırıyorlar... Git bak bir inşaat firmasına bütün çalışanları Suriyeli (sıvacısı, ustası, boyacısı). Çünkü adam 1 yerli işçi yerine 3 Suriyeliyi daha ucuza çalıştırabiliyor. Yani yerli halkın yerine ucuz is gücünden dolayı bunlar tercih ediliyor. Yani ben de olsam ben de Suriyeliyi çalıştırırım..." (Rec004)

The significance of focusing on Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts on their economic relations with Syrian refugees are as follows: First, Hatay Arab Alevis' utilize narratives informed by the publicly circulating discourses, namely the hegemonic anti-Syrian discourse and the less visible discourse that presents Syrians as an economic resource and an asset. Among my informants, while the hegemonic discourse that points out the negative impacts of Syrian refugees on economic environment is common. There is a small group of my informants who do not see Syrian refugees as a threat but as a source of economic benefits as "cheap labor force" or as "rich customers." This point is significant also to show that Hatay Arab Alevis do not form a uniform opinion on Syrian refugees while they have concentrated on two views despite their diverse backgrounds in terms of their class, gender, age, occupation and religiosity.

Second, my findings relate to my research problem about whether Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian refugees are marked by an essentialized notion of ethnic identity and ethnic differences between Arab Alevis and Syrians or by an economic competition between them which is masked as an "ethnic" differentiation. My data shows that Hatay Arab Alevis that are workers and small business owners utilize an instrumentalist understanding and they do "ethnicize" their relations with Syrians. "Ethnicization is primarily a form of social organization. Its business is boundary formation, and its mission is the protection of the integrity of a (presumed) cultural heritage." (Milikowski, 2000, pp. 446–45). Specifically, Hatay Alevi small business owners, in order to differentiate Syrian refugees from their economic environment, they make ethnicization and they form their social boundaries towards their economic benefits to protect their economic borders against Syrian refugees. In the light of Milikowski's argument, Hatay Arab Alevis try to protect their economic borders and economic interests by emphasizing the "primordial sense of belonging and kinship" (Mikilowski, 2000) with the natural and cultural dimensions of their ethnic identity. Hatay Arab Alevis from the working class background also see Syrian refugees as a threat, which I interpreted above as ethnicization of the Syrian even though both Arab Alevi and Syrian refugees from working class share the same class background, class position and class interest. It is because my informants ignore their shared class interest with Syrian refugees and blame Syrian refugees for

the unemployment and the economic stagnation instead of economic system that exploits both. Also I showed how Syrian local business owners are seen as a direct threat by Hatay Arab Alevi local business owners as a part of in-class competition in the same way.

4.2.2. Hatay Arab Alevis' Perceptions of Syrian Refugees regarding Group Identity and Social Relations between Groups

In this section, I focus on Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of their social relations to understand to what extent, how and when these are marked by their concerns about their ethnic group identity. I examine Hatay Arab Alevis' perceptions on their social interactions with the Syrian refugees. I explain inter-group borders and how these borders are established and change through intergroup interaction.

The significance of focusing on Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of their social relations with Syrian refugees is related with how refugee flow is interpreted in the literature in terms of inter-group. In the literature, Hatay is depicted as a harmonious multi-ethnic province with Arab Alevis, Arab Sunnis, Arab Christians and Armenians (Doğruel, 2005), while the influx of Syrian refugees is presented as a challenge to the demographic balance in the province (Cağaptay, 2013; Özden, 2013). The mass migration of Syrian refugees to Hatay province is discussed in terms of a possible a socio-economic unrest and even "ethnic tension" in Hatay since the Hatay Arab-Alevis had been a local majority in Hatay while most of the refugees from Syria to Hatay have been stated as Sunni Arabs (Cağaptay, 2014). This literature emphasize that "[Alevis] dominated the Arab community of Hatay before the war, constituting approximately one-third of the province's population, the influx of Sunni Arab refugees is shifting the balance and stoking tensions" (Cağaptay, 2014, p. 3). Simply, according to this view, refugees in Syria at least increased the complexity of the demographic composition of Hatay and at worst may cause to an ethnic "tension" between the local people, including Alevis, and the refugees who are mostly Sunni Arabs. Simply, the literature sees Syrians' presence in Hatay in an "ethnicized" and "conflictual" way.

In this section, by focusing on the group identity and the social interactions between the local Arab Alevi and Syrian refugees, I try to point out whether Hatay Arab Alevi really see their relations with Syrians in an ethnicized way as depicted in the literature. In the following parts, I mainly focus on how my Hatay Arab Alevi informants and Syrian refugees interact between each other at working locations, shopping malls, coffee houses, and public spaces as places of their interaction. Local Arab Alevi mainly live at a segregated neighborhood at Antakya and therefore their encounter with Syrian refugees occur in not their residential neighborhoods but in places stated above in Antakya as well as at the border towns of Hatay . In this part, I study Syrians and Arab Alevi' interactions to understand under which circumstances they act towards their ethnic group identity and under which circumstances Hatay Arab Alevi see the Syrian refugees as a threat do not want to come closer with the interaction at the same social spaces.

4.2.2.1. Portraying Syrian refugees as a threat to their own group

4.2.2.1.1. Portraying Syrian refugees as a threat to local group identity

According to the literature, after the arrival of the Syrian refugees to the Hatay province, social environment of Hatay is re-created within a process of interaction between Hatay Arab Alevi and Syrian refugees (see Cağaptay, 2014; Özden, 2013). It means that these two ethnic groups have started to live together in Hatay since 2012 and with this new situation, they have started to interact in social settings such as shopping malls, coffee houses, and public spaces such as parks. This interaction does not seem to be seen as friendly; on the contrary it seems to further increase the negative perceptions of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants about Syrian refugees. During my interviews, I also came across with the hostile expression against Syrian refugees. For example, one of my informants claims that

We are not happy about this: both in terms of economic and denominational we do not need these people. They can go and live at their own country. We do not need them. Okay, we made our duty as humans but when these issues end, we will send them back, kick

them off if necessary. They will go away from here one way or another... (Rec007)⁸⁸

The rest of this section examines the ways in which Hatay Arab Alevis portray Syrian refugees as a threat to local group identity in the broader society and social interactions.

4.2.2.1.2. Portraying Syrian refugees as a threat to broader Society

This section focuses on Hatay Arab Alevis' various grounds for excluding Syrian refugees such as by criminalizing them and by despising their appearance and "cultural" ways. For example, Hatay Arab Alevis mostly mention burglary and the appearance of the Syrian refugees who disturb the locals at their social environments. As the following excerpts from my interviews shows that how Hatay Arab Alevis put their expression on the criminalization issues while mentioning from the Syrian refugees:

They are coming out from camps but they can be thief, extorter, and beggar. Therefore we feel uncomfortable. We started to scare from going out at night. We did not have a problem like this before. (Rec007)⁸⁹

It affects also socially. Because we have not been feel comfortable from the day they came. They are everywhere around the city. We have too much complains; they are robbing, stealing and harassing us for every issue. Even their looks are scary. I cannot allow my child to play outside. Before we were jogging at evening but we are not doing that because we do not feel safe. We are scare of anything. Before we feel safety and live comfortable. Things are not like before. (Rec013)⁹⁰

⁸⁸ "Biz bu durumdan rahatsızız: ekonomik yönden de, mezhepsel yönden de çünkü bizim bu insanlara ihtiyacımız yok ki. Gitsinler kendi ülkelerinde yaşasınlar. Bizim onlara ihtiyacımız yok. Tamam, biz insanlık görevimizi yerine getirdik ama olaylar biterse göndereceğiz gerekirse kovacağız. Bir şekilde buradan gidecekler..." (Rec007)

⁸⁹ "Bunlar kamplardan çıkıyorlar ama bunların hırsız var, gaspçısı var, dilencisi var bu durum haliyle bizim de tedirgin olmamıza neden oluyor. Geceleri bir yerlere çıkmaktan korkar olduk; sonuçta biz de insanız ve karşı karşıya geliriz diye korkuyoruz. Daha önce bir sıkıntımız yoktu buralarda." (Rec007)

⁹⁰ "Sosyal anlamda çok etkisi var. Çünkü onlar geldi geledi rahat değiliz. Her tarafta onlar, köyler, şehirler onlarla dolu. Çok şikâyetçiyiz; evlere giriyorlar, hırsızlık yapıyorlar, her konuda tacizde bulunuyorlar. Tipleri bile korkutucu. Çarşıya giderken dolmuş hep onlarla dolu. Artık çocuğumu dışarıda oynatamıyorum. Gece

You can see when walking around outside; their looks are scary not like the type we used to see before. Some of them can walk with guns without any hesitation. They are thinking that this is their living place. This situation started to scary us. (Rec014)⁹¹

The excerpts in this section clearly show that how my Hatay Arab Alevi informants feel uncomfortable about living together with the Syrian refugees in the same social environment. They complain about the Syrian refugees claiming the crimes made by them in Hatay.

Hatay Arab Alevis examine the order of the city legally. For example, they mention how the Syrian refugees do not obey the regulations such traffic rules. Furthermore, they complain about the record of the refugees in Hatay if they access to the Turkey legally or not. Therefore, Hatay Arab Alevis think that the crime rate increased after the coming of the Syrian refugees. They saw the Syrian refugees as a “terrorist”. For example, some of my informants claim that

They do not obey traffic rules. There are too many Syrian beggar children. (Rec26)⁹²

These people came out from another country, they do not have an identity or a personal record. A man can cause an accident, steal something, kidnap someone or commit a murder. You cannot do something about this issue because they have no record. This situation cause unrest among local people. So my issue is can you say terrorist for the people who do not have record? Or can you say victim for those? We do not know any of these. (Rec19)⁹³

yürüyüşlere çıkardık buralarda ama şuan her yerden onlar çıkıyor. Her şeyden korkuyoruz. Eskiden biz burada rahat yasayan insanlardık.” (Rec13)

⁹¹ “Çarsıda dolaştığımızda görebiliyorsunuz; normal halktan olan insan değil, görünüşü bile insan ürküten tipler dolaşmaya başladı. Kimileri de silahlı bir şekilde de dolaşabiliyorlar hiç çekinmeden. Sanki meydan onların, hatta burası kendi yaşam alanlarıymış gibi. Artık bizi ürkütmeye başladılar.” (Rec14)

⁹² “Trafik kurallarına kesinlikle uymuyorlar. Trafikte çok dilenci Suriyeli çocuk var.” (Rec26)

⁹³ “Bu adamlar başka ülkeden kaçıp gelmiş ne bir kimliği var ne de bir kaydı ya da tescili. Bu adam bir kazaya sebep olabilir, hırsızlık yapabilir, adam kaçırabilir öldürebilir de ama siz veya biz hiçbir şey yapamayız çünkü hiçbir kayıtları yok. Bu da ister istemez insanları tedirgin edebilir, rahatsız edebilir. Yani kim oldukları bilinmeyen insanlar sonuçta terörist midir? Mağdur mudur? Bunların hiçbirini bilmiyoruz.” (Rec19)

Not only tourists, we also cannot walk around comfortably. We are not going outside or even hospital if we do not have to because it is unknown when or where a terrorist came up. (Rec009)⁹⁴

Feeling uncomfortable and insecure “in their own country” make Hatay Arab Alevis raise their guard against Syrian refugees in Hatay. Their affiliation of the increasing the rate of the crimes in Hatay with refugees also contribute to their hostile approach toward Syrian refugees. Some of informants claim Syrian refugees are and becoming more dangerous for their social environment as the following statements exemplify:

There is no security at Antakya. There is surely a sharp object on the hands of a Syrian. This makes us nervous because you cannot predict what they will do. At the end, they have a came from war look and it is not suitable for the environment. (Rec20)⁹⁵

No one is pleased about them because they are unknown people. Besides, most of them members of Al-Qaeda and it is normal that people are nervous. We are thinking unavoidably when see a Syrian; are they really victim or terrorist? When someone said Syrian a monster is coming up our minds. (Rec22)⁹⁶

Woman trafficking increased dramatically. Actually in order to obtain a second identity, this trafficking takes place. This situation is taking place everywhere and people started to react it as a common thing. (Rec15-16)⁹⁷

The aforementioned quotations indicate how my Hatay Arab Alevi informants criminalize Syrian refugees and otherize them.

⁹⁴ “Artık bırakın burada turistleri biz bile şehirde rahat dolaşamıyoruz. Zorunlu olmadıkça dışarı çıkmıyor hastaneye gitmiyoruz. Çünkü nereden, nasıl hangi teröristin çıkacağı belli olmuyor.” (Rec009)

⁹⁵ “Emniyet denen bir şey yok Antakya da. Burada Suriyelilerin elinde mutlaka bir kesici, delici alet oluyor. Bu da bizi tedirgin Çünkü o kişinin her an ne yapacağı belli olmuyor. Sonuçta savaştan gelmiş gibi görünümleri hiçte o ortama göre uygun değil.” (Rec20)

⁹⁶ “Hiç kimse onlardan hoşnut değil. Çünkü tanımadığın insanlar. Ayrıca kelle kesen, adam öldüren bu tiplerin çoğu el kaide örgütünden oldukları için insanların tedirgin olması normal. İnsan ister istemez bir Suriyeli gördüğünde bunlar gerçekten mağdur mu yoka terörist mi diye düşünüyor artık. Biri Suriyeli dediği zaman aklımıza insandan çok bir canavar geliyor.” (Rec22)

⁹⁷ “Kadın ticareti inanılmaz derecede arttı zaten gelen kadınların ikinci bir kimlik kazanma doğrultusunda kadınlar ticari olarak satılıyor. Hatta o kadar çok yaygınlaşmış durumdaki bazı bölgelerde bu durum normal karşılanmaya bile başlandı.” (Rec15-16)

Another issue is that my Hatay Arab Alevi informants express that they feel uncomfortable about the Syrian refugees' appearances. The appearance of the Syrian refugees also influences the social interaction with the locals. My Hatay Arab Alevi informants despise Syrians appearance as the following excerpt shows:

Peace and tranquility affected very badly. As family we cannot walk around. We cannot send our children to school comfortably. At shopping malls, planes, bus terminals, streets we see people with beard, without moustache, with strange clothes and they are making conversations related with armed weapons and they buy military outfits. (Rec009)⁹⁸

There are too many people walking around whose beards are long, clothes are turned and looks like they can do something wrong at any moment. Because of their looks, walks, acts they are glaring. (Rec20)⁹⁹

Another issue which is also mentioned by Hatay Arab Alevis is about the “improper” use of social spaces such as the “rudeness” of Syrian refugees at the public gardens or parks, shopping areas led to feeling discomfort. But as I understood from the conducted interviews, complaining about the negative behavior of Syrian refugees, they try to show their differences emphasizing the so called “cultural differences” under the name of rudeness. It means that Hatay Arab Alevi informants in order to draw their borders of the group identity as local/Alevi, they put their expression on various grounds and rudeness under the name of cultural difference is one of them as well. By making this kind of exclusion, they differentiate themselves from the Syrian refugees due to seeing them as a threat for the group identity. As the following excerpts from my Hatay Arab Alevi informants' shows that how they feel uncomfortable at the public spheres from the attitudes of the Syrian refugees:

⁹⁸ “Barış ve huzur çok kotu etkilendi. Ailece rahat dolaşamıyoruz. Çocuklarımızı rahatça okula gönderemiyoruz. AVM’lerde, uçaklarda, otogarlarda, cadde de hemen yanı başımızda kim olduklarını bilmediğimiz sakallı bıyiksiz tuhaf giysili, silah mermi muhabbeti yapanlar, askeri kıyafet alan çok sayıda insanlar olduğunu biz bizzat gördük.” (Rec009)

⁹⁹ “Antakya sokaklarında ne olduğu belli olmayan abuk sabuk insanlar dolaşiyor. Sakallı bir karış, ne olduğu belirsiz, ustu başı paramparça, her an bir şey yapacakmış gibi duruyorlar. Görüntüleri bile pusu da yatmış düşman gibi etrafta dolanıyorlar. Bakışları, yürüyüşleri, hal ve hareketleri bu kadar göze batmalarına neden oluyor.” (Rec20)

I have three children and I cannot go to park with them because they are scaring us. If you look around, you can find Syrians everywhere and we are scare to go the places they are around. Here is the living place of ours, we born and raised here but right now it like we are refugees. (Rec14)¹⁰⁰

We have Antakya Park but we cannot go there easily. They are living there. They are treated as first class citizens on the one hand and on the other they confiscate our social places. (Rec20)¹⁰¹

In sum, in this section I examined how my Hatay Arab Alevi informants examined feeling uncomfortable and making social exclusion of Syrian refugees by focusing on various grounds such as by criminalizing them and by despising their appearances and by pointing out “cultural differences” such as rudeness. Actually, by claiming these, I tried to show how Hatay Arab Alevis use “cultural differences” argument to differentiate themselves from Syrian refugees. The attitudes of Syrian refugees affect the locals negatively and this negative expression of Syrian refugees also affects the social interaction with the locals as well. As Verena Stolcke (1999) argued that

It was contended that people by nature prefer to live among their own kind rather than in a multicultural society Immigrants in large numbers would destroy the ‘homogeneity of the nation’, endangering the values and culture of the majority and unleashing social conflict. These were non-rational, instinctual fears built around feelings of loyalty and belonging (Stolcke, 1999, p. 26)

Therefore, it can be said that there is a new kind of exclusion which depends on cultural differences apart from the biological ties. According to my Hatay Arab Alevi informants by using “culturalist discourse(s)” (see Stolcke, 1999), actually, they try to protect their ethnic boundaries against the Syrian refugees and differentiate their cultural features from Syrian refugees making exclusion.

¹⁰⁰ “Benim 3 çocuğum var; ben artık çocuklarımla parka gidemiyorum çünkü onların her yerde olması çok ürkütüyor bizi. Çünkü baktığımız zaman her taraf Suriyeli, onların bulunduğu ortamlara girmekten biz korkar olduk, biz çekinir olduk. Çünkü adım attığımız her yerde onlar var artık. Dediğim gibi burası bizim yaşam alanımız, bizim doğup büyüdüğümüz yer ama sanki burada biz mülteciymişiz gibi bir konuma geldik.”(Rec14)

¹⁰¹ “Sosyal anlamda bir Antakya parkımız var artık ona da rahatça girip çıkamıyoruz. Orada yatıp kalkıyorlar. Yani 1nci sınıf vatandaş muamelesi görüyor olmalarına rağmen bizim sosyal alanlarımızı istilak etmiş durumdalar.” (Rec20)

4.2.2.1.3. Perceiving Syrian refugees as a threat to Intergroup Borders with a Focus on Marriages

Hatay Arab Alevi informants also underline the inter-group borders between themselves and Syrian refugees by focusing on their sectarian differences from the Syrian refugees. Due to feeling insecure, they try to keep distance with the coming refugees; because they do not trust them, so they want to protect their group borders against the Syrian refugees. For example, one of my informants claim that

Sometimes we find strange and exclude people who are same sect with us. Because we do not know who is who. We do not have trust also. This situation creates separation in a city like Antalya where you can find church, mosque and djemevi. Here there is no you and me relation, there is us and them. (Rec017)¹⁰²

My Hatay Arab Alevi informants present the issue of “marriage” as another theme to fortify the inter-group differences and borders. According to Hatay Arab Alevis’, the family structure is destroyed after the coming of Syrian refugees to the Hatay province. My female informants see Syrian refugee women negatively influencing Hatay Arab Alevi men and their own marriages with the Hatay Arab Alevi men. Furthermore, marriage issue has a greater significance for Alevi identity and the culture of Alevism since Arab Alevism is well-known for not allowing outside marriages or mixed marriages (Doğruel, 2005). Hatay Arab Alevis constantly state how the social and family structures are negatively influenced from the Syrian refugees by causing marital conflict and divorces in the following example:

Social structure is completely broken right now. Wives are threatened by their husbands. There are too many divorces taking place. Even Alevis started marriages with non-Alevis but this is

¹⁰² “Burada kurunun yanında yasta yaniyor. Bazen aynı mezhepten olan insani yadırgıyoruz, dışlıyoruz. Çünkü kimin ne olduğunu bilmiyoruz. Artık kimseye de güvencemiz kalmadı. Hale ki Antakya gibi kilisesi, camisi, cem evi olan bir yerde bu tarz güvensizlik ister istemez insanları ayırıştırıyor. Artık burada sen-ben ilişkisi yok Onlar-Bizler ilişkisi var.” (Rec17)

because of financial reasons. Our moral and cultural values have been changing. (Rec009)¹⁰³

Some of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants clearly state that they are not open to marriage with the Syrian refugees due to the religious reason specifically their membership to different sects. They clearly see the Syrian refugees as “culturally different” due to sectarian differences and they do not want their son or daughter marry with a Syrian refugee male or female even when they cite reasons for their objection to such marriage as possible issues of trust and possible abuse of locals by them by being used for residential permits. The following pieces of interviews are examples for this:

I will not allow my children to marry with one of them because everything is different. They have different personalities and I cannot predict what will happen to my daughter. Religious reasons also important at this decision. But there is marriages also happening and this number can increase by the time if they will stay here. Their main concern is not marriage actually, they want a shelter. Also they can do everything for the money. Men in here are using this issue over women coming from Syria. (Rec13)¹⁰⁴

Because of insecurity, marriage is not a matter of discussion. For example, we have monogamy but they do not have. Maybe I can allow my son but I cannot allow my daughter because I cannot predict what will happen to her. (Rec26)¹⁰⁵

At rural places this situation is acceptable but some rejects and gets divorce and this is affecting family structure. Absolutely I do not want my children's marriage with them. I have an important trust issues against Syrians and those are just because the things going on

¹⁰³ “Ama sosyal ve toplumsal yapı tamamıyla bozuldu. Esler artık eslerini Suriyeliler ile tehdit ediyorlar. Çok sayıda boşanmalar oldu. Aleviler arasında da nadir de olsa karma evlilikler olmaya başladı ama tamamen maddi sebeplerden dolayı. Ahlaki ve sosyal kültürümüzde, yapımızda çözümler olmaya başlandı.” (rec009)

¹⁰⁴ “Asla çocuklarımın onlardan biriyle evlenmesine izin vermem. Çünkü anlayış biçimleri her şeyleri farklıdır. Onlar çok farklı kişiliklere sahipler ben kızıma ne olacağını bilemem. Bunda daha çok dinsel sebeplerin etkisi var tabi. Ama evlilik yapanlarda yok değil ki bu ilerde aratabilir bunlar burada daha da kalırsa. Zaten bunların derdi evlenmek falan da değil daha çok kalacak barınabilecek yer bulma. Zaten para karşılığında her şeyi yapabiliyorlar. Buradaki erkeklerde oradan gelen kadınları kullanıyor da zaten.” (Rec13)

¹⁰⁵ “Güvensizlikten dolayı kesinlikle evlilikle ilgili bir durum söz konusu olamaz. Mesela bizde tek eşlilik var onlarda yok. Belki oğluma izin verebilirim ama kızımı vermem çünkü kızımın başına ne geleceğini bilemem.” (Rec26)

right now. So before I could allow the marriage but right now it is impossible. (Rec14)¹⁰⁶

Marriage is enshrined by the Hatay Arab Alevis in protecting the group borders. Therefore, they do not want make any mixed marriages with Syrians or a take a Syrian woman as a second-wife. But after the coming of the Syrian refugees to the Hatay province, mixed marriages, taking second-wife and even woman trafficking have started to show itself according to the claim. Some of my informants bring up this issue and react to these practices while others do not see this cases negatively pointing out the economic benefits of such relations for Syrians. With the following examples, it can be understood more clearly. For example, some of my informants claim that

When you look to social relations, marriages are taking place with Syrians and local people. Some families become partners of work. Even it is rare, Alevis also started to marry with Syrians but this is because of financial reasons. Our moral and cultural values have been changing. (Rec009)¹⁰⁷

Marriages are taking place by the saying of 'protection Syrian women'... (Rec14)¹⁰⁸

Syrian women are sold for gaining a second identity. At some places people react to this issue normally. (Rec015-16)¹⁰⁹

The issue of women-trafficking is completely based on financial reasons. There is prostitution and second wife issues are taking

¹⁰⁶ “Kırsal kesimlerde bu durum kabulleniliyor ama kabullenmeyenlerde boşanıyor ki bu da ister istemez aile yapısını da etkilemiş oluyor. Su durumlar karşısında ben çocuğumun bir Suriyeliyle evlenmesini istemem kesinlikle. Bu durumlar olmadan önce olsa karışmazdım ama şuan benim Suriyelilere karşı güven problemim var ve bu tamamen şuan yaşananlardan dolayı.” (Rec14)

¹⁰⁷ “Sosyal ilişkilere bakıldığında kız alıp verenler var, is ortaklığı kuranlar var Suriyeliler ile... Aleviler arasında da nadir de olsa karma evlilikler olmaya başladı ama tamamen maddi sebeplerden dolayı. Ahlaki ve sosyal kültürümüzde, yapımızda çözümler olmaya başladı.” (rec009)

¹⁰⁸ “Evlilikler daha çok Suriyeli bayanlara sahip çıkılması söylemleri doğrultusunda yapılıyor...” (Rec14)

¹⁰⁹ “Gelen kadınların ikinci bir kimlik kazanma doğrultusunda kadınlar ticari olarak satılıyor (kuma). Hatta bazı bölgelerde normal karşılanmaya da başlandı.” (Rec015-16)

place. At rural places there is more second wife issue is taking place without looking to age. This issue became sector here. (Rec027)¹¹⁰

In the light of aforementioned quotations, it can be said that my Hatay Arab Alevi informants express their reasons for the marriage issue with a Syrian male or female under the name of possible issues of trust and possible abuse of locals to show the cultural differences. However, the crucial point in this issues is that the marriage in Alevis is not allowed to the outside; so under this kind of “culturalist discourses” they actually put some reasons for the marriage with a Syrian male or female due to seeing as a threat for their intergroup borders and they want to keep their group identity against these kinds of marriages. According to Stolcke (1999) “relations between different cultures are by nature hostile and mutually destructive because it is in human nature to be ethnocentric. Different cultures ought, therefore, to be kept apart for their own good (Stolcke, 1999, p. 27). Therefore, it can be said that my informants under their “culturalist discourse(s)”, actually, they try to protect their ethnic boundaries against the Syrian refugees due to seeing them as a threat.

The significance of these findings in regards to my research problem, i.e. the relevance of ethnicity in the Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts of Syrians, is as follows: majority of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants discuss their social relations with Syrians by underlining the relevance and importance of ethnic group borders between themselves and Syrians. One way of raising the intergroup borders is to otherize them by criminalizing them. Another way to raise the intergroup borders is to merely present Syrians as a “culturally different” kind of people as if these cultural differences are essential and cannot be negotiable. Overall, majority of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants utilize ethnic differences in interpreting their social relations with Syrian refugees.

¹¹⁰ “Kadın ticareti de tamamen maddi sebeplere dayanıyor. Yani fuhuşta var kuma gibi 2nci eş durumları da var. Kırsal kesimlerde daha çok imam nikâhıyla ikinci eş olayları daha fazla oluyor yasa bakılmaksızın. Bu da burada bir sektör haline geldi.” (Rec027)

4.2.2.2. Portraying Syrian refugees not as a threat to society, to the group or to the group identity

A small portion of my informants do not see the Syrian refugees as a threat to the society, to the group and to the group identity. This part focuses on the social situations which are not seen as a threat for the social identity in the social interactions such as Syrian refugee small work place owner and homeowners who took Syrian refugees as renter.

If you look the issue as Alevi - Sunni, there is an economic separation; when they go to town, they are shopping from 'Them' and when we go we are shopping from 'Us'. Most of them have workplace here but I will not go and make my shopping from 'Them'. (Rec004)¹¹¹

This quotation shows how Hatay Arab Alevi's material interests lead to hiring of the Syrian refugee workers in the local markets without thinking the group identity boundaries. Economic benefits and advantages affect the attitudes of the employers while hiring Syrian refugees even when they are seen as outsiders. . In that sense, they do not see Syrian refugees as a threat to Hatay Arab Alevi group identity. However, another interesting thing is that Hatay Arab Alevi employers allow Syrian refugees because Syrians work for lower wages but if Syrian refugees open a shop and do business, my informants told “do not go and prefer Syrian refugees’ work place. The following excerpt exemplified this:

Many of them have a workplace here. Right across of my place they are selling coffee, assorted nuts and etc. No one is saying something to them. However, I will not go and buy something from them. (Rec004)¹¹²

It is, of course, affecting socially. If you rent out an apartment, you will see 20 people stay there. There will be noise problem also. Besides you cannot understand who is coming and going to that

¹¹¹ “Ama Alevi-Sünni olarak bakıldığında ekonomik yönden söyle bir ayrışması var: Çarşıya gittiklerinde “Onlar” da belli bir kesimden alışveriş yapıyorlar “Biz” de. Ki burada birçoğunun iş yeri de var zaten. Ha ben onlardan gidip alışveriş yapmam ama.” (Rec004)

¹¹² “Burada birçoğunun işyeri var ki... Hatta bakın tam karşıdaki binada onlardan biri kuruyemiş, kahve falan satıyor. Kimsede bir şey demiyor diyemez de zaten. Ha ama ben gidip onlardan gidip alışveriş yapmam zaten.” (Rec004)

apartment which is annoying us. Some question is coming to mind; are they stealing? Are they really earning the money? Are they using their women? No one can give an answer to these and because of that some people reacts to this issue. However, homeowners are happy of this situation because they take more money. (Rec006)¹¹³

In this section, I focused on some social situations which are not seen as a threat for the social identity in the social interactions. Therefore, even though these informants do not present Syrian refugees particularly as a threat, they clearly state their avoidance from the situations involving any interaction with the Syrian refugees unless there is an economic benefit behind. Hatay Arab Alevis give priority to the economic benefits much more than the group identity in some places and taking economic advantages in the job environment is the one of them. However, when the thing is come to “Other(s)” economic advantage which they called to Syrian refugees, everything is changed and Hatay Arab Alevis convert their economic benefits into the discourses of group identity by hardening the inter-group boundaries. Furthermore, they clearly support group-segregation by using “Us-Them” phrases. It means that my informants exclude Syrian refugees based on some cultural parameters that are believed to be the source of their own group identity. In the literature such parameters include “... ethnicity, nationality, professional status and expertise, gender, age as well as ideology and style of living” (Anna Duszak, 2002, p. 2). Hatay Arab Alevis mostly emphasize “the style of living” among them.

Simply in this part, I pointed out the presence of a smaller group of Hatay Arab Alevi informants who does not directly see Syrians as a threat to themselves. Yet, I showed that this group of Arab Alevis does not deny the importance of the ethnic differences between themselves and Syrians. On the contrary, they reinforce their group identity by either avoiding Syrians or by functionally interacting with them merely on issues that are not central to the group identity.

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¹¹³ “Ama sosyal anlamda etkileri oluyor tabi. Kiralar yüksek olunca bir aileye verdiğin evin içinde bir bakıyorsunuz 20 kişi kalıyor. Bunun gürültüsü var, ayrıca kimin girdiği kimin çıktığı belli olmuyor bu da bizim rahatsız olmamıza neden oluyor. Ama diğer kesim bu gelenler hakkında bunlar çalıyor mu, çırpıyor mu, gerçekten mi kazanıyor, fuhuş mu yapıyor kimse bunları bilemiyor. Bu yüzden insanlar gelenlere tepkili davranabiliyor. Ama bu durumdan ev sahipleri memnun fazlasıyla kiralardan paralarını alıyorlar.” (Rec006)

In conclusion, my thesis aims to discuss Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of their relations with Syrian refugees in terms of whether they use an essentialized notion of ethnic differences between themselves and Syrians or whether ethnic differences appear as a cover for actually existing economic competition. In this chapter, I examined the impacts of group identities on economic and social interactions between Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees to understand to what extent, how and when these are marked by their concerns about economic competition and conflicting economic interests and group identity.

In examining economic and social relationships between local majority-Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees, I focused on Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian refugees. I noticed that my Hatay Arab Alevi informants are not homogenous in class, gender, age, occupation and religiosity while they display two accounts in regards to their economic and social relations with Syrians. On the one hand, local and national hegemonic anti-Syrian discourse that see the negative impacts of Syrian refugees on economic and social environment is shared by majority of my informants, who I analyzed under the title "Portraying Syrians as a Threat." They were seeing Syrians as an economic threat by how Syrians become a new labor force, "cheap labor," or a group that is in economic competition with them. They were also seeing Syrians as a social threat by referring to events of social unrest, increase in crime and their "cultural differences"

On the other, and a small group of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants do not see Syrian refugees as a threat. On the contrary they see them as an economic resource and asset, such as workers or customers, regarding economic relations and as a population different but economically useful, regarding social relations. In either case, I noted that Hatay Arab Alevis' relations with Syrian refugees characterized not by social isolation or segregation but by constant and active interaction with them on economic, social and political levels on daily basis.

I noticed that my Hatay Arab Alevi informants economic competition is as important as protecting their group boundaries: Hatay Arab Alevis try to protect their economic interests by emphasizing the "primordial sense of belonging and kinship" (Mikilowski, 2000) by evoking the natural and cultural dimensions of their ethnic

identity and therefore they self-essentialize for economic interests as instrumentalist theories to ethnicity claims.

Majority of my Hatay Alevi informants ethnicize their relations with Syrian refugees by masking the economic competition and framing it as an issue of intergroup difference. The interesting thing is that Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees are coming from the same social class as people who “share a common identity and enough awareness of their common interests to be able to act in accordance with their long-term economic interests” (Schryer, 2014, p. 20). Actually, they also suffer almost from the same economic conditions with Syrian refugees. Yet, instead of developing a class alliance, Hatay Arab Alevis accounts are towards protecting or advancement of their material interests with the context of their competition with Syrian refugees over economic power and specifically on the control of material resources. For such an advancement, Hatay Arab Alevis emphasize a primordial sense of belonging to their own ethnic group. This situation seems to be meaningful considering how Orlando Patterson discusses the relation between ethnicity and economic competition, Hatay Arab Alevis “people abandon, maintain or change their ethnic identity depending on their position in the class structure (in Schryer, 2014, p. 22)

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

This thesis attempted to answer following question: How may a national ethnoreligious minority group which constitutes a local majority in a host setting be influenced with the migration of refugees with different ethnoreligious identity? It focused on the Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian refugees in Turkey after the Syrian crisis in 2012 and aimed to answer how Arab Alevis that constitute a national minority in Turkey but a local majority in Hatay may have been influenced with flow of Syrian refugees.

My research question requires a focus on the literature on ethnicity concept and I utilized theories on ethnicity from interdisciplinary field of Nationalism Studies which combines insights from Political Science, Sociology, and Anthropology. Specifically Primordialist, Ethno-symbolist, Constructivist and Instrumentalist theories to ethnicity, ethnic difference, and inter-ethnic relations are used to understand the particular configuration of an ethno-religiously marked local community and an ethno-religiously marked refugee community. I discussed "ethnicity" in terms of ethnic identity, ethnic groups, ethnic boundaries and ethnic content to examine intergroup relations with a focus on power. I critically discussed how ethnic identity impacts the ethnic groups' interactions and how ethnic groups may use ethnicity within the case of power within the economic and social competition with other groups, such as refugees. In addition to the literature on ethnicity, the study indirectly discusses the majority-minority relations as well as non-sociological categories other than but related to ethnicity, such as class. Furthermore, I focus on the critical accounts of the concept tolerance from the Political Theory and Political Philosophy (such as Wendy Brown's work) which rejects the conventional liberal Political Science's presentations of "tolerance" as a power-free concept.

Among the existing theoretical frameworks on ethnicity ethnic groups, and ethnic identity, I considered my Hatay Arab Alevi informants' perceptions and I tried to understand whether and how ethnicity is relevant for them in their relations with Syrian refugees. I discussed two major accounts in the literature in terms of

relevance of ethnicity and the permanence or flexibility of ethnic identity for ethnic groups.

On the one hand, there are essentialist theories that argue for the importance of ethnicity and explain the substance of ethnic groups. For example, Primordialists define the concept of ethnicity with ‘primordial’ ties of the ethnic groups which associated with the ‘biological descent’ that comes with the nature and cannot change (see Horowitz, 1985; Özkırmı, 2010). Another essentialist theory is ethno-symbolist approach which also presumes a cohesion within the ethnic group and a persistent content of the group. They emphasize that “the role of myths, symbols, memories, values and traditions in the formation, persistence and change of ethnicity and nationalism” (Özkırmı, 2010, p. 143).

These essentialist theories, as I argued in the introductory chapter and showed in the data chapter, are relevant for understanding Hatay Arab Alevi’s presumptions about a persistent and distinct ethnic identity and their self-essentialization in social relations. However, they could not explain the cases in which Hatay Arab Alevi mobilized ethnicity in some of their economic relations with Syrians for strategic purposes. As I show in the data chapter, Primordialism was relevant in understanding how my informants utilize primordialist notions in explaining their ethnic group identity particularly when they affiliate Syrians. They see Syrians as a threat for the homogeneity of their group. Most of the Hatay Arab Alevi informants discussed their social and economic relations with Syrians by pointing out the relevance and significance of ethnic group borders for them between themselves and Syrians.

On the other hand there are anti-essentialist theories which argue for the flexibility of the ethnicity and ethnic identity due to imagined character of ethnicity (in the case of constructivists) or due to ethnic group members’ instrumentalists pursuits of their own material interests (in the case of instrumentalists). Among those, Constructivist approach claims that ethnicity is socially constructed, ethnic identities are products of cultural, historical and political process (Hempel, 2004, p.256; Seol, 2008). In this view, the ethnicity is “not something people ‘possess’ but something they ‘construct’ in specific social and historical contexts to further their own interests. It is therefore fluid and subjective” (Wan and Vanderwerf, 2010).

Another anti-essentialist theory, Instrumentalists claim that “ethnicity is constructed by particular elites who are driven by competition for political, economic benefits, social status or other objectives and motives” (Seol, 2008, p. 345) and who uses ethnicity as “resource” or an instrument in order to define the group identity and make sure to regulate the group boundaries and membership for their resources (G. K. Brown and Langer, 2010).

These anti-essentialist theories, as I argued in the introductory chapter and showed in the data chapter, are relevant for explaining Hatay Arab Alevis’ economic interactions with Syrian refugees while they do not explain Hatay Arab Alevis’ equal emphasis on their ethnic identity, ethnic differences of their group from the others, such as Syrians. Hatay Arab Alevis suppress their own ethnic difference in their economic relations with Syrian refugees with the calculations of their own material interests in some economic transactions when they overemphasize their own difference from Syrian refugees in regards to social interactional context. In the economic relations, Hatay Arab Alevis put their ethnic identity aside while explaining the economic interactions with Syrian refugees when these interactions have a potential in gaining economic power and privilege for themselves. As instrumentalist approach states that ethnicity card may be utilized for seeking economic benefits between competing groups, as my data also shows. My data chapter discusses how Hatay Arab Alevis emphasize or deemphasize their group boundaries when they relate to the Syrian refugees in a situational context and according to the purposes of interactions. Yet, they never fully abandon the difference between Hatay Arab Alevi and Syrian refugee groups’ distinction.

However, as I explained it in my introductory part, in the light of my findings discussed in the data chapter, these two, essentializing and anti-essentializing accounts, do not completely explain my Hatay Arab Alevi informants’ narratives. This is why I linked essentialists and anti-essentialist accounts by utilizing a Barthian approach on theoretical level in analyzing my informants’ perceptions. Frederik Barth argues that “the ethnic boundary that defines the group [is the most significant,] not the cultural stuff that it encloses” (Barth, 1969, p. 15). This argument of Barth indicates us the importance of the social boundaries of the groups

and how this ethnic boundaries direct the social life of the ethnic groups; yet, he does not devalue the importance of “the cultural stuff” completely.

This approach is relevant to my research because, on the one hand, Hatay Arab Alevis explain some social interaction situations with Syrian refugees by referring to the significance and difference of their own values, traditions and symbols especially when they feel a conflict to their group identity. “The cultural stuff” is important for them. On the other hand, they put their ethnic identity aside while explaining the economic interactions with Syrian refugees when these interactions have a potential to bring economic power and privilege for themselves. It can be said Hatay Arab Alevis draw their boundaries with Syrian refugees in a situational context and define their relations according to purposes of interactions or the “ethnic boundary” may change.

Historical background became a necessary topic to cover in this thesis on Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts on Syrian refugees. For instance, my discussion on the timeline of developments between 2012 and 2015 indicates the increase in the number of refugees which may be seen as a factor leading to Hatay Arab Alevis’ negative accounts of Syrian refugees. Examining the historical background of Syrian refugee flows Turkey helped me to discuss how Arab Alevis who form a local majority see the presence of the Syrian refugees in Hatay province as a possible threat for the demographic structure. Second, I focused on the changing in the legal status of Syrian refugees in Turkey towards more rights. For instance, the Turkish government have brought up the 2013 “temporary protection regime” law that entails Syrians “unobstructed entry of Syrians into Turkey without any travel document or ID, no forcible return, no individual status determination process, and accommodation and provision of basic services in camps (Ihlamur Öner, 2013, p. 202). This kind of changing in the legal status of Syrian might increase the negative accounts of Hatay Arab Alevis on Syrians’ presence. Third, I discussed Hatay as a special case due to its status in Turkey considering that they form a national ethnoreligious minority in Turkey while demographically speaking they form a local majority in Hatay and that this situation itself may greatly shape Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts of Syrian refugees considering the Hatay Arab Alevis’ national minority status may became another source of resentment that influence their accounts of

refugees. Finally, I focused on the Arab Alevis' national minority status in Turkey since being ignored or underrepresented in Turkey, Hatay Arab Alevis' might have extra sensitive and negative towards Syrian refugees in Hatay.

Methodologically, in order to understand the Hatay Arab Alevis' accounts of Syrian refugees, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork research. The lack of sufficient literature on the subject led me think that ethnographic fieldwork could be the best methodological choice for investigating social interaction between these two ethnic groups and for providing rich, detailed and little known information. My ethnographic fieldwork relied on participant observation and semi-structured interviews as primary research methods. Using these research methods provided me with little known issues and various dimensions of the effects of Syrian refugees about the perception of Hatay Arab Alevis on Syrian refugees and gave the chance to observe their daily social interactions with Syrian refugees which one may not be able to find in the newspapers.

Participant observation method is utilized in the public spaces such as at coffee houses, parks, shopping malls, hospitals in one month length. In these venues, with participant observation, I had a chance to see what my informants do in their social life while interacting with the Syrian refugees in addition to what they say, because there were differences between what Hatay Arab Alevi informants saying in the interviews and doing in the social venues.

Semi-structured interviews are conducted with Hatay Arab Alevis from various occupational, class and gender backgrounds. Before going to field work, I guessed that I could reach around 10-15 Hatay Arab Alevis for interviews considering that Arab Alevis remain to be a particularly closed community (see Doğruel, 2005; Shah, 2013) even when other groups Alevis in Turkey has been through Alevi revival or opening since 1990s. The reason for that my informants felt comfortable and they talked with me is because I am a member of their community, i.e. Arab Alevis. Therefore, I managed to conduct interviews with 28 Hatay Arab Alevis in Hatay province over a month.

My Hatay Arab Alevi informants are not homogenous in class, gender, age, occupation and religiosity; however, in terms of their perceptions in terms of their economic and social relations with Syrians they display two relatively homogenous

accounts. On the one hand, local and national hegemonic anti-Syrian discourse that see the negative impacts of Syrian refugees on economic and social environment is shared by majority of my informants as I showed in my data chapter. On the other, and a small group of my Hatay Arab Alevi informants do not see Syrian refugees as a threat as I discussed in my data chapter.

My research question was about whether Hatay Arab Alevis see ethnicity as a “matter” in their relations with Syrian refugees and I found that ethnicity “matter” greatly and intricately for Hatay Arab Alevis. For instance, the term tolerance was an important theme in my interviews with Hatay Arab Alevis in referring to their relations with Syrians. At first, the term tolerance appears as a non-ethnicized concept in the narratives of Hatay Arab Alevis; however, I noticed that my informants’ accounts of tolerance actually to reproduce the power relations between themselves and Syrians. In my data chapter, I found that my informants utilize the concept tolerance to express their discomfort over the presence of Syrian refugees in Hatay and to show their objection or averseness of Syrian refugees. Hatay Arab Alevis utilize the notion tolerance indirectly or directly to discuss their difference from Syrian refugees in terms of culture and ethnic identity. Their use of the term “tolerance” and related concepts seems to deemphasize the ethnic differences. Hatay Arab Alevis neutralize ethnic differences between themselves and Syrians despite Arab Alevis carefully and instrumentally de-ethnicize their intergroup relations with Syrians. Hatay Arab Alevis mainly introduce and reproduce another mechanism of hierarchy between themselves and Syrians as a hierarchy between the local/host/citizen populations and refugees/guest/non-citizens. Furthermore, they create further hierarchies within Syrian refugees, between real/deserving/innocent refugees” and unreal/undeserving/criminal refugees.

Regarding Hatay Arab Alevis’ economic relations with Syrian refugees my findings relate to my research problem about whether Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts of Syrian refugees are marked by an essentialized notion of ethnic identity and ethnic differences between Arab Alevis and Syrians or by an economic competition between them which is masked as an “ethnic” differentiation. My data shows that Hatay Arab Alevis that are workers and small business owners utilize an instrumentalist understanding and they do “ethnicize” their relations with Syrians.

“Specifically, Hatay Alevi small business owners, in order to differentiate Syrian refugees from their economic environment, they make ethnicization and they form their social boundaries towards their economic benefits to protect their economic borders against Syrian refugees. Hatay Arab Alevis from the working class background also see Syrian refugees as a threat, which I interpreted above as ethnicization of the Syrian even though both Arab Alevi and Syrian refugees from working class share the same class background, class position and class interest. It is because my informants ignore their shared class interest with Syrian refugees and blame Syrian refugees for the unemployment and the economic stagnation instead of questioning the economic system that exploits both of them. Also I showed how Syrian local business owners are seen as a direct threat by Hatay Arab Alevi local business owners as a part of in-class competition in the same way.

Overall, the importance of this thesis in practical terms is that by hearing out Hatay Arab Alevis’ accounts on Syrian refugees from themselves I tried to challenge the existing literature that reads presence of Syrians in Hatay as an issue of -ethnic tension on Hatay (Cağaptay, 2013, 2014; Özden, 2013). Challenging to this literature, I found that in Hatay there is not an ethnic tension but a complicate process of inter-ethnic relations between the Hatay Arab Alevis and Syrian refugees. On the one hand, ethnicity was important for Hatay Arab Alevis’ identity; for instance marriage is forbidden still. However, on the other hand, Hatay Arab Alevis also use ethnic identity and differences to mask actually existing economic competition in relating to Syrians in Hatay on everyday level.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

Interview Questions

a.) Economic Relations

- 1.) What do you think about economic contribution of Syrian refugees to the local economy of Hatay?
- 2.) Do you think that they contribute the local job market in Hatay?
- 3.) Do you know any Syrian refugee who works in Hatay?
- 4.) If you know any Syrian refugee working in Hatay, which kinds of jobs do they work?
- 5.) Have you ever employed any Syrian refugee?
- 6.) If you have employed workers from Syrian refugees, have they faced any work permit issues?
- 7.) If you have not employed workers from Syrian refugees, do you want to employ them?
- 8.) Which kind of works would Syrian refugee workers be suitable regarding your business?
- 9.) Which contribution may Syrian refugee workers do to your business?
- 10.) Which contribution may Syrian refugee workers do to local economy in Hatay?
- 11.) Would there be any reasons for you not to employ Syrian refugee workers?
- 12.) What do you think about Syrian refugees having property in Turkey or in Hatay?

b.) Social Relations?

- 1.) Do you have close friends among Syrian refugees? If you have friends among Syrian refugees, how do you spend time together? If you have friends among Syrian refugees, where do you spend time together? For instance, do you make home visits; do you go to public places such as coffee houses?
- 2.) Do you have any neighbor among Syrian refugees? If you have any neighbors among Syrian refugee community, do you visit each other? How frequently do you visit each other?
- 3.) Do you have Syrian refugee colleague at your work place? If you have Syrian refugee colleague at your work place, how do you communicate with each other? Which language do you use? How effective do you communicate? How are your relations with each other? Do you hang out together beside working hours? If you do not hang out outside of working hours, why do not you?
- 4.) Do you know any local resident of Hatay who got married with a Syrian refugee? What is your opinion about the marriages of locals with Syrian refugee males or females? If your son or daughter would ask your permission to marry with a Syrian refugee male or female what would be your answer?

c.) Political Relations

- 1.) In your opinion or based on your experience, what is the legal status of Syrian refugees in Syria?
- 2.) How do you think about Syrian refugees' rights to return to Syria? If you know any Syrian refugees, do you think they want to go back to Syria if conflict in Syria ends? How do you think about Syrian refugees' rights to seek asylum to other countries?
- 3.) How do you feel about the possibility of naturalization of Syrian refugees into Turkish citizenship? What do you think about the possibility of Syrian refugees voting in local elections in Turkey?

APPENDIX B

METU Human Participant Researchers Ethical Committee Approval

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

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06.03.2014

Gönderilen : Dr. Hande Sözer
Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler

Gönderen : Prof. Dr. Canan Özgen
IAK Başkanı

İlgi : Etik Onayı

Danışmanlığını yapmış olduğunuz Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü öğrencisi Oya Gürcüoğlu'nun "An Analysis of the Hatay Arab Alevis' Accounts of Their Relations With Sunni Refugees in Hatay After the Syrian Crisis in 2012" isimli araştırması "İnsan Araştırmaları Komitesi" tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Etik Komite Onayı
Uygundur
06/03/2014

Prof.Dr. Canan Özgen
Uygulamalı Etik Araştırma Merkezi
(UEAM) Başkanı
ODTÜ 06531 ANKARA

APPENDIX C

Gender and Occupation Table of Interviewees

	Gender		
Occupation	Female	Male	Total
Lawyer	1	1	2
Teacher	5	3	8
Veterinarian		1	1
Accountant		3	3
Housewife	5		5
Self-employed		3	3
Shopkeeper		6	6
Total	11	17	28