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STUDENT REPORT

RESEARCHING THOSE WHO RESEARCH

The case of Syrians in Turkey

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Abstract

While the Syrian conflict enters its tenth year, displaced Syrians in Turkey have reached a number of more than 3.5 million. It is under this scope that both Western actors, such as the World Bank, the EU, the UN agencies, non-governmental organisations and European governments, as well as the Turkish government have extensively funded research targeting the Syrian population in Turkey, and thus resulting to over-research. The aim of this thesis is to analyse the role of the humanitarian, development and state actors in the produced knowledge and the way that this data extraction generates 'knowledge economies'. The primary data of this thesis consist of reports and research on Syrians in Turkey by the World Bank, non-governmental organisations, UN agencies, and state institutions. Through a Foucauldian theoretical lens and an in-depth document analysis, the thesis explores whether extracted knowledge in Turkey exhibits over-research. By investigating the way that categorisation affects the findings of the research, I argue that over-researched categories, such as the category of vulnerability, result to creating other silent categories. Furthermore, I examine the fact that policy driven research focuses on success stories, such as the presentation of the positive impact of the services provided. Finally, I discuss that over-research challenges the concept of humanitarianism overall. The thesis concludes that the Syrian population in Turkey has become an object of over-research. The way that this knowledge is produced, circulated and reproduced generates 'knowledge economies'.

This thesis can be seen as a stepping-stone for further engagement with the topic of 'knowledge economies' and future analysis on the phenomenon of over-research.

Keywords: over-research; 'knowledge economies'; Syrians in Turkey; Foucault; humanitarianism

Contents

List of Acronyms

DGMM	Directorate General of Migration Management of the Ministry of Interior
DK	Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
ESSN	Emergency Social Safety Net
EU	European Union
HPG	Humanitarian Policy Group
MMU	Marmara Municipalities Union
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
STL	Support to Life
TRC	Turkish Red Crescent
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VAF	Vulnerability Assessment Framework
WBG	World Bank Group
WFP	World Food Programme

1. Introduction

The civil war in Syria began in 2011 between the Syrian government and the anti-government groups against President Assad's regime. External actors, including Turkey, have supported both sides since the outbreak of the conflict and have been involved both diplomatically and directly. On the outbreak of the civil unrest in Syria during the spring of 2011, Turkey initially condemned the Syrian government (Burch, 2011), which gradually evolved into direct military interventions, namely in 2016–17 with operation 'Euphrates Shield' (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2016), in 2018 with operation 'Olive Branch' (Cavusoglu, 2018) and the latest Operation 'Spring Shield' in 2019 (Ozer, 2020).

As of the time of writing, the conflict enters its tenth year and according to UNHCR, reports resulted in a total number of 5,555,168 displaced Syrians (UNHCR data, 2020). The three main host countries of the displaced population are Turkey (3,579,008 in total), Lebanon (910,256 in total) and Jordan (656,733 in total) (Ibid.). Due to Turkey's geopolitical location, history and cultural ties, it seems inevitable that Turkey is affected the most by the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis.

Across the three main host countries for Syrian refugees[1] – Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan – the initial response was an 'open-door policy', welcoming the arrivals of refugees on humanitarian grounds based on the political assumption that the Syrian conflict would end quickly (İcduygu and Sert, 2019). The open-door approach was officially complemented by three other policy considerations: ensuring full protection, upholding the principle of non-refoulement, and providing optimal humanitarian assistance (İcduygu and Sert, 2019).

In the years spanning from 2014 to 2019, the number of Syrian refugees in Jordan remained relatively stable, declined slightly (approximately 10 thousand less over the years) in Lebanon, but grew dramatically in Turkey (an increase of almost 2 million arrivals) (UNHCR data, 2020). In May 2020, there were more than 3.5 million refugees in Turkey (UNHCR data, 2020). According to UNHCR data on provincial breakdown of registered refugees in Turkey, it is clear that the areas close to the

[1] This thesis uses the concepts of "migrant" and "refugee" for the Syrians in Turkey, independently of the legal-administrative context. Although I am aware that they are not placed legally under the "refugee" definition, the term is preferred since it reflects the situation better. For details, I consulted the Asylum Information Database (AIDA) "*Introduction to the Asylum Context in Turkey*."
https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/turkey/introduction-asylum-context-turkey

borders with Syria –Gaziantep, Hatay, Sanliurfa – and Istanbul had the largest numbers of registered Syrians (more than 300.000) (UNHCR Turkey, 2020).

Although Turkey is signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (UN, 1951), it still sustains the geographic limitation clause of the 1951 Convention. This means that the Turkish government offers the refugee status to people arriving from Europe. For people arriving from Syria, "Turkey implements a temporary protection regime, which grants beneficiaries a right of legal stay as well as some level of access to basic rights and services" (AIDA report, 2018). For Syrians, this precarious legal status of temporality, a constant fear of deportation, insufficient housing conditions, limited access to services, and exploitation by the local citizens have conditioned their lives dramatically (AIDA, 2018; İcduygu and Sert, 2019). During the last eight years, Turkey has adopted a non-encampment policy, which resulted in an increase of 'urban refugees'. Consequently, living together with the native populations in various areas in Turkey, Syrian refugees have experienced a spontaneous integration process.

On the other side of the map, the EU has also struggled with the Syrian refugee crisis. The increased numbers of irregular arrivals in Greece after 2015 revealed a deepened political crisis within the European asylum system, which came in contrast with the sentiment of solidarity that the EU promoted until then. The EU responded to this situation with slow and controversial strategies. Apart from the EU-Turkey Statement (European Council, 2016) on the return of Syrians who have arrived at the Eastern Greek islands back to Turkey, EU also established refugee camps, increased border, and mobility controls.

It is under this scope that humanitarian, development and state actors have extensively funded research targeting the Syrian population in Turkey. Both Western actors, such as the World Bank, the EU, the UN agencies and European governments, non-governmental organisations, as well as the Turkish government are funding a great number of research contracts that focus on producing information on Syrians in Turkey. These include research on the services provided by the state and local institutions (Ombudsman, 2018; MMU, 2017), the access to the labour market (Del Carpio et al., 2015), and assessments on vulnerability (Cuevas et a.l, 2019; Support to Life, 2016; MMU, 2017). It is also found that the majority of the research is focused on the Turkish regions where the majority of the Syrian population is registered; namely Istanbul and the areas close to the Syrian borders. This increased and persistent interest for knowledge production around this topic is also connecte to the 'knowledge economies' in which growth is dependent the information available.

Although research is not the principal problem in this case, the fact that research is funded and used by this kind of actors can have problematic implications, such as the funding sources, the interests behind the research and positionality. One major question this thesis is going to investigate is whether this extensive amount of research is resulting in positive outcomes for the population researched. There is no doubt that there are specific groups of populations that are being researched more frequently than others. More specifically, the Syrian population has been researched by a great number of academics, humanitarian and development organisations, governments and NGOs and one can spot a rise on the research contracts.

Even though this is to be expected, since increased numbers usually mean increased concern, it is also a matter of how this produced knowledge is being used, by whom, and to whom it is circulated and shared. As a starting point, in this thesis I problematize how the phenomenon of over-research takes place. I am doing so, while considering the case of Syrians in Turkey as an over-researched topic. I also consider the fact that the funders behind this extensive research are mainly interested in reporting the services provided to the Syrians in Turkey, and not to interact with their day-to-day experiences.

As a result, my research question is as follows:

How do development, state and humanitarian actors take part in knowledge produced about the lived experiences of the research subjects? How are 'knowledge economies' and research connected when it comes to Syrians displaced in Turkey?

In this thesis, I set out to investigate and research those who are doing research. More specifically, I am interested in the research as a phenomenon that originates from developmental, humanitarian and state actors and their reflection on the experiences of the researched. I selected my primary data from within the vast literature on the topic of Syrians in Turkey in a way to have representative cases of the funders, the methods and the modes of analysis.

The thesis first discusses how the produced knowledge and its extraction becomes part of the overall 'knowledge economies'. Furthermore, I explore the way knowledge is produced and the role of the actors involved, especially when it comes to the categorisation of the Syrian population in Turkey. In such, the dynamics between the researchers and the experiences of those researched are constantly being challenged. Lastly, I propose that the extensive research funded by humanitarian, development and state actors has an impact on the concept of humanitarianism itself.

In order to make this analysis, I am using a Foucault-inspired theoretical framework, and especially the terms ‘biopolitics’, ‘biopower’, ‘governmentality’ and the ‘regimes of truth’. In addition, I am using theoretical concepts such as ‘data extractivism’, ‘bioeconomy’ and ‘critical humanitarianism’ to help me navigate through the analysis.

2. Theory

In this section, I present the concepts that I am going to use during the analysis. This thesis addresses the research question on the relation of knowledge economies on Syrians and their lived and felt experiences in Turkey. In order to understand this relation, I first explore the theoretical components and the theoretical questions in connection to the topic of analysis. I believe that a Foucauldian perspective is the most relevant for the overall question of this thesis and thus, it is the perspective the thesis will mainly focus on.

To begin with, it is crucial to understand the Foucauldian concept of 'biopower' and 'governmentality', the way he reflects the relation between Power/Knowledge and how knowledge may govern populations. Following that, I introduce other Foucault-inspired concepts that are relevant for the analysis, namely 'knowledge economies', 'data extraction', 'data craving', 'bioeconomy' and 'financial-humanitarianism'. Lastly, I present the concept of critical humanitarianism.

Before diving into the theoretical concepts of this thesis, it is important to mention that Foucault himself denied the fact that his sayings could be addressed as theory production (Foucault, 1980; Piotukh, 2015). Thus, I am using his work as a toolkit, in order to help me understand, explain, argue, and raise more questions about my topic. In his words,

> The theory to be constructed is not a system but an instrument, a logic of the specificity of power relations and the struggles around them; (ii) . . . investigation can only be carried out step by step on the basis of reflection (which will necessarily be historical in some of its aspects) on given situations (Foucault, 1980: 145).

2.1 Governmentality and biopower

In his lectures *Security, Territory, Population* in 1978, Foucault spoke about the term governmentality (Foucault, 1978). It describes a gradually evolved phenomenon that complements theories about the state-as-sovereign and sovereignty. The demographic problem of the 18th- 19th century Western Europe pushed Foucault to develop his 'population question' in the sense that the population became a productive force in the market and it was no longer the subject of the sovereign. This new way of perceiving population unraveled a new object of study through different lenses, such as political science and statistics, through which, governments were able to construct issues of the population (Stenum, 2012). Foucault with his concept of governmentality presented the way and the strategies

through which states proceed to population management. The knowledge of the population comes in parallel with techniques of surveillance, including statistics, and numerous institutions utilise this knowledge with a view to managing a population (Piotukh, 2015: 18). In *Security, Territory, Population* (1978) Foucault introduced the three sides of the governmentality as follows,

> By this word 'governmentality' I mean three things. First, by 'governmentality' I understand the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instruments. Second, by 'governmentality' I understand the tendency, the line of force, that for a long time, and throughout the West, has constantly led towards the pre- eminence over all other types of power – sovereignty, discipline and so on – of the type of power that we can call 'government' and which has led to the development of a series of specific governmental apparatuses . . . on the one hand, [and, on the other] to the development of a series of knowledges. . . . Finally, by 'governmentality' I think we should understand the process, or rather, the result of the process by which the state of justice . . . became the administrative state . . . and was gradually 'governmentalized'. (Foucault, 2007 108–109)

This quote shows the versatility of the concept of governmentality and enables the analysis of governing in all levels (Piotukh, 2015). Foucault challenged the idea that power is wielded by people or groups by way of 'episodic' or 'sovereign' acts of domination or coercion, seeing it instead as detached and universal. 'Power is everywhere' and 'comes from everywhere' so in this sense is neither an agency nor a structure (Foucault 1998: 63). Instead it is a kind of 'metapower' or 'regime of truth' that spreads through society, and which is in constant change. According to Foucault, power is also a major source of social discipline. In shifting attention away from the 'sovereign' and 'episodic' exercise of power, Foucault pointed to a new kind of 'disciplinary power' that could be observed in the administrative systems and social services that were created in 18th century Europe, such as prisons, schools and mental hospitals.

Fascinated by the surveillance systems, he introduced the concepts of "biopower" and "biopolitics" (1978) to refer to the management of the populations via this new technology of power. In the 18th- and 19th-century Europe, population became a political issue, and birth rates, public hygiene, and the regulation of sexuality turned into state affairs and subjects of study by experts (Rozakou, 2012: 564).

Biopower is a "regulatory technology of life" characterized by an emerging care for life itself (Ibid.). Consequently, power takes control over life, regulating, caring, and managing it.

In short, biopolitics can be understood as a political issue, which takes the management of life and populations as its subject: "to ensure, sustain, and multiply life, to put this life in order" (Foucault, 1998: 138). Biopower then shows the way through which biopolitics is implemented in society, in what Foucault described as "a very profound transformation of [the] mechanisms of power" (Foucault, 1998: 136). Moreover, Foucault stated, "this bio-power was without question an indispensable element in the development of capitalism" which gave the possibility to "the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes" to form (Foucault, 1998: 140).

Biopower was a concrete method of state power, which emerged within this broader conceptual framework of governmentality. According to Foucault, biopower means

> "a number of phenomena that seem to me to be quite significant, namely, the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power, or, in other words, how, starting from the eighteenth century, modern Western societies took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species." (Foucault, 1978).

This method used biological features from humans as a means for political strategy, and it enabled a new set of governance techniques (Vaughan-Williams, 2012: 79). Concerned with the body and its relation to power, Foucault argued that, "Bio-power brought life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge/power an agent of transformation of human life" (Foucault 1990:143). In other words, the set of procedures involved in the concept of biopower were used to manipulate the biological features of human life into a political strategy to govern an entire population.

Considering Foucault's notions of biopower and governmentality, it seems interesting to examine how and if research is used by state and humanitarian organisations to monitor and manage a certain section of the population and then proceed to a transformation of the knowledge produced into policies. In research, as Foucault explains, 'population' refers not only to 'people' but also to general phenomena and variables. For this thesis, 'population' refers to the Syrian refugees in Turkey who are being researched, not for the purposes of a social change though, but for the general aim to monitor and report which also reflects the way the political power operates. In the analysis that follows, I use

the term 'biopolitics' to describe how research is part of this technology of power that Foucault used to describe the control of entire populations.

2.2 Knowledge allows governments to govern

For Foucault, power and knowledge are not seen as independent entities but are inseparably related—knowledge is always an exercise of power and power always a function of knowledge. Thus, extensive research on a population, as the over-researched topic of Syrians in Turkey, may be used to enable more control through knowledge. Foucault also argues that together with the new set of techniques and knowledge, a new 'regime of truth' emerged (Foucault, 1978). He argues that generally accepted forms of knowledge and scientific explanations of 'truth' enable power. In the words of Foucault:

> "Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true" (Foucault 1980: 131).

The 'general politics' and 'regimes of truths' that Foucault described are constantly reinforced and redefined in the political and economic spheres. Foucault (1980:131) argued that 'truth' is characterised by five important behaviors: First, "'truth' is centered on scientific discourses and the institutions that produce it" (Ibid.). In the context of this thesis, it can be the humanitarian organisations or state institutions, since they produce knowledge around the services they provide. Secondly, "'truth' is subject to constant economic and political incitement" (Ibid.). This means, that there is a huge demand for knowledge production on the field both for political reasons, such as the justification of interventions on the population researched and for economic reasons, such as the increase in funds. The actors involved need data and evidence and hence the 'truth' in order to be able to monitor and control. Next, Foucault referred to 'truth' as being widely interpreted and used under different forms. The fourth characteristic of 'truth' is that it is produced, and to some degree transmitted, among the political and economic actors. The knowledge produced is being circulated and used from different parties and for different reasons. Lastly, 'truth' is a central object in political debates, social confrontation and 'ideological struggles', influenced by the donors interests.

Hence, one can argue that 'truth' in research is not autonomous and independent, and is deeply connected with the actors involved in research. This makes it possible for policy makers to frame things in certain ways to their interests. For these reasons, Foucault in *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1985) emphasised that it is essential to ask, "Who is speaking? Who, among the totality of speaking individuals is accorded the right to use this sort of language? [....] What is the assurance, at least the presumption that what he says is true?" (Foucault 1985: 5).

While reflecting on this, it becomes clear that research and the produced knowledge, which are part of 'truth', will always be associated with the dynamics between power and knowledge. Different scholars within feminist, race, ethnicity and humanitarian studies (Fanon 1986; Morrison 1992; Frankenberg 1993; Fassin, 2013) have discussed these dynamics and whether it is possible to have an objective truth. According to Haraway (1991), there is a gap within the researcher and those who produce knowledge that can be influenced by categories of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, and other. These reflections on the relation between knowledge and power are beneficial when studying how and why development and humanitarian organisations and state actors gather extensive data and knowledge on people on the move and vulnerable populations. The concept of 'truth' is also useful when investigating the interests of the actors involved in over-research.

2.3 Foucault-inspired and other concepts

Foucault has inspired a great range of scholars and literature. Here I examine the concepts that were particularly useful for the analysis that follows. I present the concepts and then I comment on how they relate to my analysis.

The first concept that I use is the concept of 'knowledge economies'. 'Knowledge economy' as defined by Thrift (2005), and Powell and Shellman (2004) is the use of the production, circulation and reproduction of knowledge as an economic resource. The concept thus suggest a broader understanding about economy, where the processes of knowledge production have become an economic resource. 'Knowledge economies' are directly connected to the topic of this thesis, when I examine how the acquired information gained by the research translates into policies. While exploring how knowledge is produced, I argue that the information collected provide a great value to the actors involved.

In connection to the concept of 'knowledge economies', I explore the concept of 'data extractivism'. In general, extractivism in its literal sense is defined in terms of extraction of natural resources that

are mainly for export according to the central countries and that are not going through additional processing (Gago and Mezzadra, 2017). In this analysis, I use the extended version of extractivism; the concept of extraction as provided by Mezzadra and Neilson. They argue that we should expand and complement the traditional approach like mines and plantations, and they are convinced that extraction also happens in more remote activities (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2017). Referring to this expanded sense, "extraction involves not only the appropriation and expropriation of natural resources but also, and in ever more pronounced ways, processes that cut through patterns of human cooperation and social activity" (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2017: 154). They refer to a metaphor as 'the cloud' that includes current ways of dealing with information extraction, such as data storage, processing, and transmission, and it is characterised by an "intensification of extractive dynamics and related processes of dispossession" (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2017: 6). Data extractivism is also connected to the concept introduced by Lemberg-Pedersen and Haioty (2020) on 'data craving'. The concept shows "the intense desire for the extraction, storage and processing of different forms of data about displaced persons, including biometrics, and it now permeates operations in displacement contexts" (Lemberg-Pedersen and Haioty, 2020). This need to acquire even more information is repeatedly found in the topic of Syrians in Turkey.

As Ye et al. also comment, "every process of production uses (and therefore 'consumes') resources – be they natural and/or social ones" (Ye et al., 2020:4). Building on that, the production and extraction of knowledge also uses resources, natural or social ones (Ye et al., 2020). Another aspect that is worth mentioning is the fact that the process of extraction is supposed to stop when the resource is exhausted. However, in the occasion of knowledge extraction this is not the case. As a matter of fact, it is more likely that if and when all the desired knowledge is extracted, the process of extraction will be transferred to new domains and locations (Ye et al., 2020). It is thus evident that academic literature and scientific research is built on the importance of the knowledge extraction. Yet, only few analyses exist, pertaining to the political economy and dynamics that research is providing; a gap that this thesis tries to address.

Furthermore, I use the term 'financial-humanitarianism' by Martina Tazzioli (2019) as she points "to the entanglements between financial technologies and humanitarian practices in controlling, selecting, and managing asylum seekers". I argue that this term can also be used while investigating over-research of specific groups of refugee populations. Tazzioli argues that "The relations between government, politics and technology" (Barry, 2001 in Tazzioli, 2019:393) show how refugees'

mobility and presence are managed while they end up being the objects of activities of data extraction and knowledge circulation.

Andersson (2018: 414) is another scholar that refers to the "extraction and generation of value from human beings' vitality in the broadest sense". Drawing on Foucault (1998) — the term bioeconomy drives analysis toward the relations of exchange, production, and consumption. Andersson introduces a different approach to the Foucauldian framework of governmentality and biopolitics "toward a political economy account of globalized bordering practices to account for ways in which human life in its various, layered aspects may be mobilized as a resource" (Andersson, 2018: 434). A bioeconomy perspective reveals the specific kinds of value leveraged through the usage of life itself in the containment setting (Andersson, 2018). Although the concept of bioeconomy refers to bordering practices, I use Andresson's arguments about the transmission of value and data when exploring the knowledge economies within the case of Syrians in Turkey.

To sum up, I use the above-mentioned concepts throughout the analysis in order to build arguments and start discussions between my primary data and the literature. These concepts are all deeply inspired by my main theoretical scholar of choice, Foucault and especially his concepts of 'biopolitics', 'governmentality' and 'regime of truth'.

2.4 Critical humanitarianism

My analysis also builds on literature of critical humanitarianism studies that has mapped the interrelation of care and control in governing vulnerable populations (Agier, 2011; Feldman and Ticktin, 2012; Hyndman, 2000), followed by a 'humanitarian reason' in the government of populations (Fassin, 2013). As such, it takes an expansive view of humanitarianism and humanitarian government (Fassin, 2013), beyond the emergency humanitarianism concerned with providing relief (Barnett, 2011), to consider different perspectives of caring while taking a Foucauldian approach.

Broader work in critical humanitarianism studies tends to highlight what appears to be a contradiction between care and control in the practicing of humanitarianism. This paradox is characterised as one "between the normative and the instrumental rationalities of humanitarianism" (Pallister-Wilkins, 2018: 5). Humanitarianism in other words is used as a way of managing international relations. Pallister-Wilkins adds, "the modern, liberal state has thus rendered compassion into an effective instrument for the management of disasters that sees care and control as co-constitutive parts of a process of rationalization" (Pallister-Wilkins, 2018: 7).

The scope and intensity of humanitarian action in research is vastly expanding. The number and budgets of humanitarian aid organisations are on the rise, private donations intensify, and the global presence of humanitarian groups is increasingly visible. At the same time, the very purpose, mission, and methods of humanitarianism are under the microscope. Barnett and Weiss (2008) in their book *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics* introduce these debates and concerns. They discover that humanitarian agencies increasingly act like political actors; an argument that I also use in the analysis that follows especially when it comes to funding research and targeting specific populations for it.

Fassin (2013) brings the concept of 'humanitarian reason' to discuss how the government has adopted sentimental policies. He uses the concept not only to describe policies designated for 'extreme' situations such as disaster areas, but also "all conditions often referred to by the bureaucratic word "vulnerability."" (Fassin, 2013: 6).

By exploring the literature on critical humanitarianism, it feels natural to connect it with the overarching question of this thesis. By analyzing the knowledge generated by humanitarian organisations and state institutions, the 'humanitarian reason' became apparent. I also use the critical humanitarianism perspective to argue that through this production and circulation of knowledge, the very sense of humanitarianism is challenged.

3. Methodology

This chapter explains the methodological tools underpinning the overall research question of the thesis. How does data extracted from Syrians in Turkey generate and relate to knowledge economies? First, I introduce the existing literature on the topic and explain how I am converting it into my primary data in order to proceed with the document analysis. Secondly, I am mapping the actors involved in the data used and introducing the research and the cases in hand. Lastly, I am analysing the methodological notion of the phenomenon of over-research and the motivations behind it. I sketch how these issues relate to the current thesis, offering reflections about methodological questions I faced.

Figuring out what makes the topic of Syrians in Turkey over-researched was the first step of this methodology. The second step was to conclude on the specific literature that was going to be analysed and why. By selecting and analysing specific research and documents, I am using them as my primary data via the method of document analysis. As Bowen (2009) notes "Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents" and thus it is considered a very effective method for this thesis.

As in this thesis I am researching migration research, it important to mention that there is a variety of literature connected to the topic as shown below. Since I connect over-research to the process of data extraction, the thesis' primary data are acquired from those who are collecting data themselves. However, the problem arises by the way this literature is produced. The fact that the different actors used specific ways of producing this knowledge means that other questions potentially disappear.

Mosse & Lewis (2006) introduce an interesting approach that challenges the methodology of this analysis. They are referring to the way that knowledge is produced through their actor-oriented approach:

> "The starting point is the premise that ethnographic research can provide policymakers and aid managers with valuable reflective insights into the operations and effectiveness of international development as a complex set of local, national, and cross-cultural social interactions; and it is no longer possible to isolate interactions in the realm of development from those related to state apparatus, civil society, or wider national or international political, economic, and administrative practices."

Mosse & Lewis argue that the way development has progressed offers new ways of researching. By introducing the actor-oriented approach of researching, they try to investigate how development practices include social practices. This approach is relevant to this thesis since it shows that development may have different meanings, processes and interactions to the various actors involved (Mosse and Lewis, 2006). In addition, they investigated that the actors who may seem as passive, in reality they contribute as key actors in the research (Ibid.). Although, this may be true for some cases, in the research on Syrians in Turkey this has not proven to be the case. In fact, the majority of research did leave the researched Syrians as passive actors. For instance, the MMU report (2019) did not engage with Syrian refugees at all, while the WBG (2019) interviewed Syrian refugees only over the phone with a pre-fixed questionnaire. A very crucial question addressed to the actor-oriented approach would be the following: Can data be separated from the political and economic positioning of the organisations and institutions of individual researchers/research teams?

3.1 Primary data and mapping the actors

This section maps the actors behind the research on the Syrian displaced population. The following questions are addressed: Who are the actors that produced the primary data of this thesis? How were these data produced in the first place? How are they funded from whom and why and what are the results?

The literature on Syrians in Turkey can be divided into non-governmental research (Barbelet and Wake, 2017; Support to Life, 2016; Leghtas, 2019), academic research (Müller-Funk, 2019; Adalı and Türkyılmaz, 2019; Rittersberger-Tiliç, 2015; Müller-Funk et al., 2019; Baban et al., 2017; Sarı and Alkar, 2018; Cantekin, 2019), policy driven and development research (Erdoğan, 2019; World Bank, 2019; World Bank, 2020; Azevedo et al., 2016; Del Carpio et al., 2015; Cuevas et al, 2019) and state driven research (Ombudsman, 2018; MMU, 2017; TRC and VFP, 2019). In addition, as already mentioned, the research on Syrians in Turkey is not distributed geographically on the same intensity. The areas that this thesis has found to be the most researched are Istanbul (Barbelet and Wake, 2017; Support to Life, 2016; MMU, 2017) and the areas close to the borders with Syria.

Although there is a variety of literature and existing data that I could use, I decided to focus on selected projects and reports. The selection was based on the fact that they offer a realistic and holistic representation of the actors, the methods and their mode of analysis. In addition, they have been dealing with this research topic in different periods, thereby illustrating how the topic is over-

researched. I present the research below by focusing on the actors, the funders, the methodology and the reason why I found it relevant for this analysis.

Funders

To begin with, large development and humanitarian actors are involved in the research on Syrians in Turkey. The World Bank Group (WBG) is a very active development actor. They have focused on producing extensive knowledge over the years, either by working alone or by collaborating with other actors on the field (Del Carpio et al., 2015; Azevedo et al., 2016; Cuevas et al, 2019; World Bank, 2019; World Bank, 2020). The report titled 'The mobility of displaced Syrians: An economic and social analysis' (World Bank, 2020) is produced in collaboration between the World Bank and the UNHCR. The governments of Canada and Germany offered "generous financial contributions" (World Bank, 2020: xii), together with the State and Peacebuilding Fund and the Middle East and North Africa Multi-Donor Trust Fund. The study acknowledges also state officials and international state and non-state organisations for their contributions (Ibid.).

One more report by the WBG in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) is the Cuevas et al. (2019) report titled "Vulnerability and protection of refugees in Turkey: Findings from the rollout of the largest humanitarian cash assistance program in the world". The funding for the report comes from the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and Sweden (Cuevas et al, 2019: vii). The authors have also consulted the Turkish government, especially the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services. The study is focused on the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) programme, introduced in 2016 with the objective of targeting and supporting the most vulnerable refugees. ESSN is funded by the European Union member states, and implemented nationwide in partnership with the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Services (MoFLSS), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) (Ibid.)

Following, from non-state actors I decided to use the research by Barbelet Veronique and Wake Caitlin (2017) titled 'The lives and livelihoods of Syrian refugees in Turkey and Jordan'. The report is made under the supervision of the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG), which is one of the world's leading teams of independent researchers and information professionals working on humanitarian issues (ODI website, 2020). The group aims to improve humanitarian policy and practice through a combination of high-quality analysis, dialogue and debate. HPG is part of the ODI think tank, an independent research organisation, funded by grants and donations from foundations, non-

governmental organisations, the private sector, governments, multilateral agencies and academia (ODI website, 2020).

Another NGO-produced research is the one by Support to Life (2016) titled 'Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Istanbul'. Support to Life (STL) is a non-governmental humanitarian organisation based in Istanbul, Turkey and was established in 2005. STL works under the "principles are humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence and accountability" (STL website, 2020). STL mainly works on the field around areas that include relief aid, cash assistance, capacity building, livelihoods support, and overall promotion of participatory approaches to humanitarian assistance (STL website, 2020). STL works closely with the Syrian populations and manages three camps in Turkey. This report was prepared with the support of the Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DK), a Berlin based NGO and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) (SPL, 2016). Although it is not clearly mentioned how the funding for the report took place, I found through the SDC Statistics Unit an Excel sheet titled 'Programme contributions to SDC institutional partners' (SDC, 2020). There, it is mentioned that the SDC funds the Umbrella organisation Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World), a 'sister' and funding organisation of DK (DK website, 2020).

As far as the state institutions are concerned, this thesis focuses on the following. Firstly, Murat Erdogan is the author of the Marmara Municipalities Union report on 'Urban Refugees from "Detachment" to "Harmonization" Syrian Refugees and Process Management of Municipalities: The Case of Istanbul' (2017). Marmara Municipalities Union (MMU) is the oldest and the largest regional Local Government Association in Turkey with 190 members from the Marmara Region (MMU website, 2020). In 2015, Migration Policy Workshop (MAGA) was founded within the body of Marmara Municipalities Union's Center for Urban Policies. The aim of MAGA is to "conduct scientific studies on migration, set ground for share of knowledge and experience, administer the coordination between our member municipalities", and assist local municipalities run projects in cooperation with the central government, NGOs and international organisations (MMU, 2017).

The other state-funded report is by the Ombudsman Institution of the Republic of Turkey (2018) titled 'Special Report on Syrians in Turkey'. The Ombudsman Institution of the Republic of Turkey's main aim is "to investigate, research, and make recommendations on matters of compliance to justice and equity" (Ombudsman, 2018:24). The Ombudsman is a constitutional institution and was founded in

2012. This report came as a "necessary effort", after the realization that the Syrian population is increasing in Turkey (Ombdusman, 2018). The Ombudsman institution "benefiting from its close relationship with all public institutions and organisations" (Ombudsman, 2018:33) created this report to assess the process management and services provided to Syrians in Turkey and offer its recommendations. In order to do so, the institutions participated in meeting with national actors, public institutions and international NGOs such as UNHCR and UNICEF, as well as Syrian NGOs in the area. In addition, it gathered data from field trips and interviews with Syrian refugees in camps.

Methods

As far as the methodology of the reports is concerned, there is a variety of methods used in the literature. Some used third parties for the collection of data. One of them is the World Bank Group (2020) that collaborated with Ipsos Group S.A. for the data collection. Ipsos is a data supplier founded in 1975 and has worked with the World Bank in other projects, such as the Rohingya crisis (Ipsos website, 2020). The data focus on the mobility of the Syrian population in and around Syria. The report used already existing material from surveys and from humanitarian agencies' surveys for programming purposes, such as the UNHCR, UNICEF, World Development Indicators, and the World Food Programme. In addition, for this report a "novel database of physical damage and functionality of facilities" (World Bank, 2020:64) was established in order to assess the physical catastrophe and human activity remotely in 15 cities in Syria and six sectors (education, energy, housing, health, transport, water and sanitation). The team of authors and researchers consisted mainly by members of the World Bank Group (World Bank, 2020: xii).

The Cuevas et al. (2019) report uses a similar method to collect data. More specifically, they use a TRC call center team, which was trained to conduct interviews in the relevant languages. The TRC team used a Pre-Assistance Baseline (PAB) survey that was designed by the WFP with inputs from the World Bank. The report claims the PAB survey to be representative of the population of applicants to the ESSN programme at the national level but also at the subnational level, randomly selecting five regions: Southeast, Anatolia/Thrace, Istanbul, Mediterranean, and the Aegean (Cuevas et al., 2019: 12).

Another method used was the face-to-face interviews and interactions with the Syrian refugees. The HPG report by Barbelet and Wake (2017) includes refugee stories about their journeys and lives and experiences in their host communities on the one hand, and on the other hand it reports the services provided by the institutions and the way interactions happen between refugees and services. To do

so, the conducted interviews with over 100 refugees took place (56 in Turkey) which included questions around their perceptions of the host communities as well as their aspirations for the future (Barbelet and Wake, 2017:5).

The same method was used by the Support to Life organisation. The aim of the report is to assess the vulnerability status of Syrian Refugees in Istanbul, understand the needs of the Syrian population, and map the views of the host community (Support to Life, 2016). In order to do so, it uses a "qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods to determine vulnerability indicators" (Support to Life, 2016:15). A number of 200 in-depth interviews, 124 household questionnaires and focus group discussions with a total of 136 individuals took place for the data collection. STL Syrian staff or field officers from the camps that STL manages formed the team who conducted the interviews, while the interviewees were randomly picked (Support to Life, 2016).

The MMU report (2017) maps the services provided particularly in Istanbul to refugees and the obstacles found during the process management. It also provides guidelines for more effective services, based on the existing legal and administrative framework around Turkey and practices of the last 5 years (MMU, 2017). In order to draw these conclusions, they carried out semi-structured interviews with "the relevant people in Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and in 27 district municipalities of Istanbul, 24 of which have more than 2500 registered refugees and 3 of which have less than this number, provide an invaluable source of information" (MMU, 2017:48). The interviews included questions on basic data and information on Syrian refugees, activities and service and expectations of the municipalities. In addition, they carried out interviews with the central government. The research team consisted of members of Hacettepe University Migration and Politics Research Center and MMU.

The reasons I selected this specific research to focus on during my analysis are both practical and constructive. First of all, the time and space that I had available were limited to dive into more reports. Nevertheless, I believe that these reports represent the available literature on the topic adequately, as shown above.

More specifically, I chose the MMU report to be part of my primary data because it states that it is the "the first and most comprehensive report on urban refugees in Turkey" (MMU website, 2020) and the data collected is numerous. In addition, MMU is a state funded organisation, which is interesting on its own. Along the same lines, I chose the Ombudsman's special report as part of my

primary data since it is a recent report produced by an institution from within the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Turkey funds it. It is a perspective that I wanted to include in the analysis, since it will offer value to the overall aim of the thesis. In addition, this brings to perspective a strong limitation of transparency and accuracy of what is written, and a handful of doubts considering promotion of good practices of the Republic of Turkey. For example, it contains a photograph of one of President Erdogan's visits at a Syrian refugee camp in 2012 kissing a child (Ombudsman, 2018:46).

As far as reports by the World Bank are concerned, I decided to use them as part of my primary data for the following reasons. Firstly, it is evident from the report that the World Bank Group has focused extensively on the research on Syrians and tends to continue doing so. As a matter of fact, one of the reports (World Bank, 2020) is a republish from the previous year (2019), which shows the WBG's intention to keep the data updated and keep the research ongoing. Secondly, the WBG is an organisation that as overall aims has to "end extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity" (World Bank Website, 2020). In addition, the WBG points out that "The World Bank Group is one of the world's largest sources of funding and knowledge for developing countries" (World Bank website, 2020). Thus, it is a very important actor in the research field and analyzing this report offered great insights for the overall aims of my thesis.

When it comes to the non-governmental reports, Barbelet and Wake (2017) focus on the people who are being researched directly and offer an overview of their perceptions and strategies towards their mobility journey before choosing their host country, but also after. It explores a perspective, which I found not common among the literature, and I wanted to include in my analysis. Lastly, I decided to include the STL report as part of my primary data because STL as a non-governmental organisation promotes its neutrality and independency from state actors. However, the fact that the fund for this report came from the Swiss government will raise questions in the analysis that follows. Secondly, this report is directly researching the Syrian populations and their experiences and it does not have as a central focus on the services and governmental or humanitarian assistance provided to them. I found this aspect of extreme importance in a field where so much research is done on the services provided, while those who are being serviced remain under-researched. Lastly, it presents an extensive sample of data in Istanbul and includes direct quotes from Syrian refugees; an aspect that I used throughout my analysis.

In order to map the actors on the existing reports and project on Syrians in Turkey I had to search specifically and 'read the small print'. The specific terms, conditions, restrictions, limitations, etc., of the document including information on the funding and contracts are often printed in very small type and thus it is easy to go unnoticed. This information is mainly included in the very first pages or the back cover of the report. The reports produced by the NGOs and academic sources were the easiest to locate, since they offered information about their funders both on the reports and on their official websites. Not surprisingly, the reports by state actors such as the Republic of Turkey did not include a lot of information on the contracts or the specific terms and conditions of the research process.

3.2 Over-research as a methodological problem

Looking more closely at the issue of over-research itself, one can realise that the debate around it in social sciences is not new. Academic literature have suggested that over-research is an effect of constant and recurrent research of particular communities or populations, while geographers have tended to discuss over-research as an effect generated from research which has "spatial bias" (Neal et al., 2016; Sukarieh and Tannock, 2012; Clark, 2008; Boesten and Henry, 2018; Pascucci; 2016). The concern of over-research has arisen in different fields (Clark, 2008) however Sukarieh and Tannock (2012) highlight some common facts about the population researched. They underline the following characteristics:

> "communities that are poor, low income, indigenous, minority or otherwise marginalised; communities that have experienced some form of crisis (war, genocide, natural disaster, etc.) and/or have engaged in active resistance to the conditions of their poverty and marginalisation; and communities that are accessible to outside researchers, in particular, by being located in close geographical proximity to research centres and universities" (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2012: 496).

Over-research raises concerns connected to the continual and persistent research processes that have resulted in 'fatigue' (Clark, 2008). Connected to that, there is increased skepticism concerning the research's ability to contribute to social impact in the lives of the researched (Clark, 2008; Boesten and Henry, 2018). Another concern connected to research fatigue is the fact that those being researched are often promised a social change. Although this points to the overall question of the benefits of research, it also highlights the fact that there is a gap between researchers and researched (Neal et al, 2016: 494). It is also mentioned that "expectations of social change from participants tend to be higher than any research project can realistically meet" (Boesten and Henry, 2018: 5).

Geographical dynamics and political accessibility are very much connected to the concept of over-research (Neal et al, 2016). In other words, it is not always the population that appeals to research, but the place that the population is situated in may become over-researched too. According to Neal et al. (2016: 493) "places become over-researched as an outcome of the over-research of particular populations". In short, over-research focuses on the facts that extensive data collection becomes extractive and one-sided, producing limited benefit for the population being researched.

So how is this reflected in the topic of Syrians in Turkey? The key characteristics of the populations that are being over-researched reflect the Syrian population in Turkey directly. More specifically, Syrians in Turkey are de facto victims of crisis and categorized as vulnerable. Moreover, a great number of the available literature on Syrians in Turkey has also focused on policy recommendations and assessment of the services that would result in an amelioration of the lives of Syrians. As shown above, the thesis has also identified the specific areas in Turkey where the literature is targeted. To be more specific, the literature is mainly targeted in Istanbul and the border areas, which are those that the majority of the Syrian population registered in. Thus, the domino effect of places that end up over-researched as well, that Neal et al. (2016) mention, is very much evident in this case.

3.3 Limitations

In this section, I acknowledge some of the limitations and weaknesses in the approach I chose, but also justify why these were outweighed by the benefits. In this thesis, I do not engage with the displaced population myself; in contrast, I collect data about those who are collecting data themselves. Since the overall question of the thesis is how the extracted data generates knowledge economies in the case of Syrians in Turkey, document analysis was found the most relevant approach. However, it may be considered as a limitation since interactions with the Syrian refugees themselves may have offered a different perspective.

In addition, the level of this thesis is regional as the focus is placed on the Syrian population in specific areas of Turkey, namely Istanbul and the areas around the Syrian borders. Since the time and scope was limited while writing, there was not an option to expand the regional focus.

Furthermore, it is important to mention that at the moment of researching and writing (May 2020), the situation in Turkey regarding Syrians and displaced people in general is very fragile. In addition, the topic of over-research itself is very fluid, meaning that the over-researched population of today may not be the over-researched population of tomorrow. That being said, this thesis builds a stable

ground for the future studies around the topic of ‘knowledge economies’, over-research and its relation to humanitarianism.

Finally yet importantly, as Sukarieh and Tannock (2012) note it is inevitable but to approach the phenomenon of over-research with further research. Although this may be up to criticism, I believe that the aims of this thesis prove that this analysis is important to be carried out.

4. Analysis: Researching those who do research, the case of Syrians in Turkey

In this section, I will dive into the analysis of the main questions of the thesis. How is knowledge produced as part of the 'knowledge economy' involving Syrians displaced in Turkey? What is the role of the actors involved, namely developmental, state and humanitarian organisations, in relation to the displaced population, namely Syrians? In order to address the questions I first explore the topic of data extraction and the connection of over-research with the 'knowledge economies', secondly I discuss and analyse the way research is structured and the increased use of categories. Following, I include the overarching topic of how policy-driven research relates to the lived experiences of the Syrian population. Lastly, I investigate the relation between the very concept of humanitarianism and over-research. In order to address and explore the above-mentioned questions, I will start a conversation among the theoretical concepts of this thesis and especially the concept of biopolitics by Foucault and the primary data as presented in the Methodology chapter.

Analysis 4.1 Data extraction and over-research as part of the 'knowledge economies'

There is no doubt that recently data extraction, knowledge production, and their processing about displacement and vulnerable people happens in an unprecedented pace (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2017). As the humanitarian crisis progressed and the movement of Syrians to Turkey intensified, the data extraction processes conducted by governmental and non-governmental actors increased. Inspired by Mezzadra and Neilson (2017) and Gago and Mezzadra (2017), I understand extraction as a practice that expands from the economic sector. In the words by Mezzadra and Neilson (2017: 11)

> "Understood in this expanded sense, extraction involves not only the appropriation and expropriation of natural resources but also, and in ever more pronounced ways, processes that cut through patterns of human cooperation and social activity".

In doing so, I allow the analysis to focus on practices of governmentality that act in a forceful way and do not rely on "material practices of extraction" (Ibid.). Thus, this thesis refers to extraction when it comes to the knowledge production that is happening in the case of Syrians in Turkey. It shows how these forms of human cooperation and social activity, such as the research processes, become part of an overall value extraction and the 'knowledge economies'.

In this chapter, I explore how the concepts of 'data extractivism' and over-research can be seen as parts of the 'knowledge economies'. I initially investigate the link between knowledge economies and their key actors, and then by referring to the concept of 'bioeconomy' I build the argument that

monitoring behaviors through the collection of knowledge generates value to the actors involved. Lastly, I argue that the process of creating knowledge has become an economic resource itself.

In order to comprehend the concept of 'knowledge economies', one has to broaden the understanding of economy in general. 'Knowledge economies' denote economies in which growth is dependent on the quantity, quality, and accessibility of the information available (Thrift, 2005). Key features of these knowledge economies are the data extractivism and 'data craving' (Lemberg-Pedersen and Haioty, 2020). Data is produced through a wide range of means, and research is one of them. Exploring how knowledge is produced and circulated has to start by introducing the key actors of the 'knowledge economies'.

Fundamental actors within the 'knowledge economies' are a) the main financial players behind the data extraction, which in this case of research on Syrians in Turkey are the developmental, humanitarian or state actors, b) the intermediaries that conduct the research, such as research teams contracted to collect data and c) those who are benefitting from the research. The thesis does not perceive the population researched as a powerful actor in this exchange of knowledge, neither as part of those who benefit from the knowledge produced.

The link between financial and humanitarian actors is very strong and consists of strong partnerships (Lemberg-Pedersen and Haioty, 2020), especially when it comes to the example of Syrians in Turkey. These partnerships are characterised by a drive for profit and efficiency. In order for the organisations to conduct research and reports, they need funders. Accordingly, the financial actors need to have evidence of their impact and their efficiency, which is provided by the humanitarian organisations.

When focusing on the case of displaced Syrians, one can easily realise that data collection has been extensively focused on the assistance and the assessment of the services provided by the Turkish state to Syrians (Ombudsman, 2018; MMU, 2017), on their financial situation (Cuevas et al. 2019), and on their access to the labour market (Del Carpio et al., 2015). Research on these topics is extensive and repeated almost annually, funded by organisations such as the World Bank and compared between the findings of each year (World Bank, 2019; World Bank, 2020). However, the lived and felt experiences of the subjects, their livelihood struggles and hopes are not addressed in the same extent. One way to understand this conflict of interest is to reflect on the reasons behind this craving for specific information. The Cuevas et al. report (2019: 12) for example, "documents the rollout results of a unique humanitarian cash assistance program, the largest of its kind, at a time when there is a call in the international community for more cash-based programming of humanitarian aid". In

other words, one of the main reasons behind that specific report is to produce knowledge on cash-assistance programmes and circulate it within the international community as a form of economic resource. Consequently, my argument here is that in their drive to gather data, organisations such as the World Bank prove that the economy has evolved into a broader concept that includes knowledge processes as a commodity.

If the concept of extraction expands further from the natural resources and if data and knowledge becomes the new gold, then the processes and the actors who produce, circulate and control it are of an economic and political value themselves (Lemberg-Pedersen and Haioty, 2020). To elaborate on this, in the report by the Turkish Ombudsman (2018) there is an in depth presentation of the services provided to the Syrians and a further evaluation. However, according to the study the aims of this research were "to establish the role of the Ombudsman Institution of the Republic of Turkey as a national conscience and advocate and the responsibility of being a constitutional institution" (Ombudsman, 2018: 129). In this way, the report shows how the Turkish Ombudsman's political value plays an important role in the production of knowledge. Another example of this value that the processes and the actors have articulated, is found in the World Bank reports and especially the Cuevas et al. report (2019) on cash-assistance. In the way it presents the assessment of the ESSN programme, it claims that it provides knowledge to the "local and international policy actors, stakeholders, and those interested in the developments of one of the most significant humanitarian crises of our time" (Cuevas et al., 2019: 11). This quote situates the World Bank and the way it produces and circulates its data and knowledge as an economic and political valuable actor inside the international community.

Along these lines, discussions on the relations between the security industry, new technologies and migration processes are taking place (Tazzioli, 2019; Pascucci, 2019). The production and circulation of knowledge among the actors involve different kinds of processes. These processes include the data extraction and the data sharing through common databases. Consequently, they generate value and act as an economic resource themselves (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2017). Nevertheless, it is important to interrogate which new forms of value are generated and extracted from data circulation and production. These new ways of benefiting from people on the move include the extraction of value, not in the literal meaning of economic value, but in the meaning of value produced by knowledge. Thus, 'knowledge economies' are very much connected to the concept of 'bioeconomy' as introduced by Andersson (2018). In his words, "bioeconomy pushes analysis toward the relations of exchange, production, and consumption enabled by the 'logics of vitality'" (Andersson, 2018: 415). In other

words, the way of living and the livelihood experiences provide an economic production, such as an exchange of knowledge. In the case of Syrians, the extensive production of knowledge around the services offered to the Syrians by the state or the World Bank extracts this knowledge value.

More specifically, in the report by the Ombudsman on 'Syrians in Turkey', one can note how this extraction of knowledge is converted into value. That special report is perceived as important since "the likelihood that Syrians will stay in Turkey (…) increases with each passing day" (Ombudsman, 2019: 31). Thus, for the Ombudsman – a state funded organisation – this report provides value and profit since it shows that the Syrians who are under the 'temporary' scheme of management, possess "the possibility of permanence" (Ibid.). Moreover, this argument by the Ombudsman underlines the fact that returns to the home country should not be the immediate plan, but rather a more long term plan of staying (Ibid.).

The findings by Cuevas et al. (2019) are also part of this 'bioeconomy'. The report is aiming to first provide a vulnerability assessment on the eligible refugees for the ESSN programme and target errors, and secondly to assess how the programme is being effective on the protection of the vulnerable refugees (Cuevas et al., 2019:5). The data is gathered from refugees who are already assessed as eligible but have not received the assistance by the programme yet. What is shown by this report is the fact that the findings are exchanged and shared to the actors responsible of the ESSN programme, namely the EU and the Turkish government. However, the data collected is of extreme value to these actors when it comes to assess policies on the current situation of Syrian refugees and their household status. The extraction of knowledge value that is happening via this particular report underlines the importance of the analysis of the "logics of vitality" (Andersson, 2018) and proves that knowledge in the form of surveys and research is part of the 'knowledge economy'.

Another aspect closely related to 'knowledge economies' is the variety and depth of monitoring that is happening by the government via the extraction of knowledge. Registering, monitoring and surveilling the researched population is another form of biopower, as referred by Foucault. Independent of whether this is happening by the state (MMU, 2017; Ombudsman, 2018) or by organisations (World Bank, 2020; Support to Life, 2016) it always contains risks. One of the risks emerges by the categorized research in particular. Categorisation, as shown in the next analytical chapter, is problematic because it leaves behind the population that falls under the particular dimensions and scopes of the category, for example, the vulnerability dimensions (Cuevas et al., 2019). Another risk of categorisation though is the fact that it contains a form of monitoring, since

they involve calculations of the probable future of the population so that present interventions may take place to control these prospects (Broeders and Dijstelbloem, 2016). My argument here is that this monitoring is creating a set of knowledge, practices, and operations "which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination" (Foucault, 1988).

Moreover, another feature of research's relationship with 'knowledge economies' is the fact that some of the data used in the reports have been shared via third parties that gathered the data in the first place. These sources could be humanitarian actors on the field or state actors such as municipalities or even private actors, which have either created databases or gathered data for monitoring purposes. It is common that the data circulate between actors on the field and states or private actors to develop reports and surveys concerning the population in question (Tazzioli, 2019). This part of the 'knowledge economies' is of great importance for this analysis.

In such, looking closely in the reports made by the World Bank (2020) on the Mobility of Syrians, I found that they used Ipsos Group S.A. as their data supplier. This relation that the World Bank has with Ipsos shows how a private data supplier works on the field on behalf of the World Bank and is contracted to provide the necessary data. In addition, the specific World Bank report mentions that a "novel database of physical damage and functionality of facilities" was created for the purposes of this report (World Bank, 2020: 64). Although more details are not mentioned on how exactly this database is used, in which cases and from whom, the fact that the database is shared among the actors underlines the importance of data collection. The private actor Ipsos has a contract to find and collect the data, and then they share the database they construct with the World Bank as a valuable resource. This chain of events is what makes the data collection an important aspect of 'knowledge economies'.

One more report that has used a third party for the data exchange is the Cuevas et al. World Bank report (2019). They have used the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) to gather data through their call centers. The TRC team in the call center was "recruited and trained to conduct interviews in three languages: Arabic, Turkish, and English, to minimize the number of surveys that could not be completed due to a language barrier" (Cuevas et al., 2019: 12). The team conducted phone interviews with the use of a specific set of questions and thus it lacked detailed information about the household members (Ibid.). The data collection using the phone method by the TRC team reinforces the previous argument. TRC follows the same steps as Ipsos group when sharing data and knowledge. These two examples of reports produced by the World Bank show that the collection of data often happens with the assistance of a third party, which later on shares the knowledge among actors. This is a common

strategy for the creation and production of reports in an environment that is deeply affected by the 'knowledge economy' sphere.

Sub conclusion

In this section, I have shown the ways that 'data extraction' for research purposes is closely related to 'knowledge economies'. I demonstrated the way data and knowledge have become the new gold by expanding the way extraction is understood. I also argued that this expansion of the concept of data extraction enables the analysis to focus on the production, circulation and control of the research. The case of Syrians in Turkey illustrates this relationship noticeably. By bringing the concept of 'bioeconomy' upfront, I showed the way the knowledge has become a commodity and the fact that knowledge translates into economic and political value.

The main actors or funders behind the research may use the data extracted, in order to monitor and control the population researched. One way to do that is through categorisation, as for example with the application of vulnerability dimensions when reporting on the Syrian refugees in Turkey. Furthermore, this section argues that this relationship is evident in the way data is circulated and shared among actors. The Ipsos group for instance had a contract to collect data for the World Bank. The data they collected was stored in a database that was then shared to the World Bank who produced the report on the mobility of Syrians (2020). Cuevas et al. (2019) follow the same steps in the report on the vulnerability assessment by contracting the TRC. This chain of events is a critical part of the relationship between data extraction and knowledge economies.

The next analytical chapter will focus on the categorisation of the research and how this contains risks for those being researched.

Analysis 4.2: Use of categorisation as method of research and its impacts

This chapter of the analysis explores the way that research is structured when researching and reporting on Syrians in Turkey. As shown, the reports are categorizing their subjects of research. By doing so, they tend to silence parts of the Syrian population that is being researched. I show in this section that the over-researched categories cause specific questions to become silent and under-researched. For instance, the issue of deportation, the question of the Turkish military involvement in Syria, and the rise of hostility targeted to Syrian refugees; topics that are of high relevance and of great concern from the Syrian refugee perspective. Thus, this section is guided by the following questions: What is the role of the actors involved in the research? How does the categorisation affect the findings of the research?

4.2.1 The power of the actors involved in research

Building on the concept of power by Foucault, the actors involved in research use a new way of 'discipline power' to control a larger portion of the population (Foucault, 2007). The donors and their interests play a great role in the collection, categorisation and reproduction of information about displacement, which sometimes conflicts with the safety and protection of human lives (Lemberg-Pedersen and Haioty, 2020).

Going through the primary data of this thesis, it is noticeable that research focuses on the interests as provided by the funder. The World Bank Group research for example is extensively focusing on the access of Syrians in the labour market; data that is further compared with previous years findings. As stated in the World Bank Group website, "The World Bank Group is one of the world's largest sources of funding and knowledge for developing countries" (World Bank website, 2020). Hence, the WBG research interest is focused on the financial and economic aspect of the Syrian refugees' livelihoods (Cuevas et al., 2019; World Bank, 2020; Azevedo et al., 2016; Del Carpio et al., 2015). The WBG reports are focusing among others on cash assistance (Cuevas et al, 2019), the economic context of the mobility of Syrians (World Bank, 2020), the impact of the host community welfare in Turkey (Azevedo et al., 2016) and the access to the labour market (Del Carpio et al., 2015).

Therefore, this economic perspective of livelihoods and vulnerable populations presented in the reports by WBG is formulating a new structure characterized by "a pervasive craving for data" and information about displacement and vulnerable populations (Lemberg-Pedersen and Haioty, 2020: 24). The target of the research often becomes fluid and according to the funder's interests, which

results on the "normalization of data craving in displacement contexts" (Ibid). The WBG has shown particular interest in the case of Syrian displacement in Turkey. Their persistent interest is illustrated by the large number of reports on the same topic, and their willingness to continue addressing it, for example "in a forthcoming study "The Regional Economic and Social Impact of Syrian Conflict," which will benefit from the methodology and findings of this report" (World Bank, 2020: 45).

Foucauldian 'biopolitics' (Foucault, 2007) offers an explanation on this categorisation of knowledge. Biopolitics can be understood as a political rationality, which takes the administration of life and populations as its subject: 'to ensure, sustain, and multiply life, to put this life in order' (Foucault, 2007). Biopower then is the way in which biopolitics works in society. Building on these definitions of biopolitics and biopower, this categorisation of the population would 'ensure and sustain' the society, while it is place into order. Elaborating on this, the actors and funders involved in the research are portraying a society through the research based on their interests, which become transparent by the way they categorise the subjects and the results.

In the methodology chapter, I touched upon the funding conditions and contracts of my primary data, where this was available. For instance, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation have funded the report by Support to Life (2016). By comparison, the Marmara Municipalities Union's Center for Urban Policies report (2017) on urban refugees and the Turkish Ombudsman report on Syrians in Turkey are both state funded.

Although research is considered to be independent, sometimes the questions addressed are shaped by the funders. This is evident especially in the case of state funded research since they include statement of close cooperation with the government and local institutions (MMU, 2017). Also, the fact that the projects that work closely with state funders do not include questions on the importance of social networks and economic motivations for the movement of refugees is striking (Bakewell, 2006). On the other hand, they contain information on the services provided to the refugees and not the perspectives of the refugees themselves.

In the case of research in displaced Syrians, it is noticeable that research is focused on numbers (World Bank, 2020; Support to Life, 2016) and general overviews of the services provided to Syrians (Ombudsman, 2018; MMU, 2017) and not a detailed understanding over their livelihoods and lived experiences. This brings the above questions into play, since if numbers are the main focus of the research, the impact on Syrians lives will not be significant. This narrow and limited research that focuses on services, drives policies and forms official understandings goes along the Foucauldian

'problem of government'; the notion of governmentality. The activities of the government – the *"ensemble"* – " (…) formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses, reflections, calculations and tactics allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population" (Foucault, 2007: 108). Population according to Foucault does not only have the meaning of people, but also phenomena and variables such as birth rate, or in the case of research it may mean numbers connected to those researched and not their experiences or main concerns.

Connected to this is what Vollmer (2011) has named the "number games" to describe the way the civil society and state institutions "use figures depending on their own strategic interests" (Vollmer, 2011: 330). In addition, numbers seem to portray a reliable form of the truth (Lokot, 2019). The drive to gather numbers is particularly noticeable in the primary data of this analysis, and it is also very problematic in the sense that complex social and cultural issues remain silent. More specifically, the Turkish Red Crescent and World Food Programme (2019) report on 'Refugees in Turkey: Livelihoods Survey Findings' is an evidence based report that offers a survey sample drawn from the ESSN applicant pool. As the overall aim of the report is to "provide additional evidence to inform the design of the transition from basic needs assistance to more sustainable livelihoods opportunities for refugees in Turkey" (TRC and WFP, 2019: 7), it presents its findings in a numerical form with the extensive use of figures and graphs (45 in total).

Another example of numbers that are used as evidence for strategic interests is found in the WBG report (2020). In order for the WBG to assess the mobility of Syrians, the research team has used UNHCR-led surveys, namely the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) to assess and calculate. What is interesting in this choice is that in fact this 'welfare model' is based on an analysis of indicators on Cash Assistance decisions conducted by a World Bank team in 2014 (Brown et al, 2019: 12). Thus, one understands that the WBG's interest on gathering data is persistent and focused on econometric production of knowledge.

4.2.2 Research and Categories – category of vulnerability

Connected to the section above is the question of the subject of research. Migration management has increasingly focused on categories. Who fits into what category is a decision made by the policy makers (Aradau et al., 2008). 'Who decides?' is supplemented by 'Who gets to imagine the future?' which has become a new way of political stance (Aradau et al., 2008: 6). However, interest in a particular group of people is not always the primary drive behind over-research. "Place-based

dynamics such as geographical and political accessibility often play a significant role too" (Neal et al., 2016). For example, research in Turkey is extensively focused on the geographical areas that most Syrians are registered, namely Istanbul (Barbelet and Wake, 2017; Support to Life, 2016; MMU, 2017) and the border areas with Syria.

When going through the available research on Syrians in Turkey, one notices that large portions are not focused on Syrians as a whole but focused on a specific group of Syrians; the vulnerable Syrians. Either referred to as 'vulnerability dimensions' (Cuevas et al., 2019), or 'vulnerability assessment' (Support to Life, 2016), a dichotomous categorisation of the Syrian population between a vulnerable and a 'not-so-vulnerable' (Sözer, 2019) Syrian is very common. The main problem with this categorisation is the fact that vulnerability is used in a fixed way, often without including a holistic approach to the concept of vulnerability. One example is the World Bank Group report by Cuevas et al. (2019) on the Vulnerability and Protection of refugees in Turkey. In this report, the authors are using 'vulnerability dimensions' to measure the household vulnerability. More specifically these dimensions are financial such as poverty and debt burden; connected to consumption such as household resources, food security, and capacity to cope; and connected to employability such as skills and livelihood sources (Cuevas et al., 2019: 9). In addition, the report mentions that, "Vulnerability refers to a situation where the household has limited ability to meet basic needs and a constrained capacity to cope with risks that can negatively affect the achievement of those needs" (Cuevas et al., 2019: 9). Although the report offers a definition of the notion of vulnerability, it tends to simplify these vulnerabilities. Deciding in advance the 'vulnerability dimensions' proves the argument that the concept is used in a fixed way, constructed before approaching the Syrian refugees. Income, consumption and employability only measure one side of the concept. The notion of vulnerability includes, though, ideological expressions too (e.g. political affiliations, orientations, engagement) (Sözer, 2019: 8); perspectives that are left silent in the WBG report.

Although the concept of vulnerability is non-static and "as much contextual as the very refugee experience" (Sözer, 2019: 9), the Support to Life report on the vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Istanbul (2016) offers the most comprehensive overview of vulnerability. It explores the category from the perspective of access to basic needs, hygiene conditions, protection, access to education and health, income sources, expenditure, food consumption, coping strategies and aid received, while it offers a discussion on migration routes and aspirations for future mobility (Support to Life, 2016: 13). By engaging with interviews with Syrian refugees in Istanbul, they provided an

active rather than passive stance to the population and explored their vulnerabilities from their perspectives (Ibid: 12).

The problem here is not that there is a need to eliminate categories from research overall, or that new categories should be formed. It is the fact that using dimensions or pre-fixed vulnerability surveys risk leaving outside of the research scope people in need understood as 'real-life vulnerabilities' that this categorisation may not cover (Sözer, 2019). This perspective works together with Bakewell's approach of 'policy-irrelevant research' and overall research beyond categories (Bakewell, 2008). This approach suggests that the predefined politically salient categories should not be preferred, but research should be based on the existing reality. Particularly in policy driven research, as the WBG report (2020), where the categorisation is meant to inform and justify potential measures and intervention plans towards these vulnerability groups, a more holistic approach must be established.

What is interesting for the research on Syrians in Turkey is that it fails to make clear what is meant by policy and policy relevant. For example, although the report by the Turkish Ombudsman "Syrians in Turkey" is clearly policy driven since it offers, "A holistic picture of what is lacking in terms of process management" (Ombudsman, 2018: 33), it does not provide a clear explanation on what the practical outcome of this research will be. According to Bakewell, such a report would confirm the argument that "that policy is the domain of institutional decision-making by powerful actors, such as governments, aid agencies, and so forth" (Bakewell, 2006:3). The 'Vulnerability assessement' report by the NGO Support to Life (2016) would be included in a research for policy and practical relevance (Bakewell, 2006). A perspective where policy-driven research would mean that it aims to social change and practical solutions. Nevertheless, both of these perspectives could end into categorisation.

Overall, categorisation is a tool rooted in both social science and policy analysis and methodology (Bakewell, 2006; Crawley and Skleparis, 2018: 51). As shown above, categorisation is deeply embedded in various parts of the research concerning Syrians in Turkey. As a result, categories tend to form because of policies and not as an outcome of the social reality.

4.2.3 Silent categories

Up to this point, this section focused on how over-research is targeted on specific categories that the actors and funders are choosing to focus on and more precisely on the overall category of 'vulnerability'. However, the categorisation in research creates space for what I argue remain as 'silent categories'. These classifications remain 'under-researched' and silent despite the fact that the Syrian communities have actively spoken and raised their concerns on these topics. For Syrians, the

precarious legal status of temporality, the fear of deportation, the limited access to services and exploitation by the local citizens are a constant concern (AIDA, 2018; İcduygu and Sert, 2019). In general, what is missing from these existing studies is the engagement, which allows the refugees to speak for themselves. In this way, it would have been easier to present their active rather than passive stance. I present and discuss in this section some of the silent topics. One of these 'silent categories' is the fear of deportation which is analysed below.

Publicly, the Turkish authorities deny that they deport any refugees to Syria, but claim that they are all doing so voluntarily. On the contrary, the report by Amnesty International (2019) has shown that the Turkish authorities are unlawfully deporting refugees to danger in Syria. By engaging with interviews and discussions with Syrian refugees in Hatay and Istanbul provinces in 2019, it shows that the fear of deportation is well established in Syrian refugees' minds. A Syrian man for example stated that because of the fear of deportation, "*I can't leave my home because of the police – I can't work, I can't get money to buy food. I can't go to the market and my kids want food but I can't go out to buy it*" (Amnesty International, 2019: 15). However, the state funded reports are silencing this important topic. The report from the Turkish Ombudsman mentions voluntary returns and repatriation, but it also states, "return is the exception while the permanency is the rule" (Ombudsman, 2018:31). The report recommends that since "it has become a clear sociological reality that the likelihood of permanence has increased" (Ibid: 26), the Turkish authorities should focus on achieving better services for the Syrian refugees. That being said, the report does not acknowledge any embedded fear of deportation that Syrians may have during the registration process. It states though, "For those who do not pass the security investigation [during the pre-registration process], there is no option to send them back to Syria, so they must be kept at deportation centers" (Ibid: 142).
Adding to that, the MMU report describes a situation where local citizens report cases of unregistered Syrian refugees to the National Police, but in turn the "police does not interfere with the activities of such enterprises unless the complaints are filed" (MMU, 2017; 84). According to Amnesty International though, unregistered Syrians face an even more real risk of deportation (Amnesty International, 2019). This silencing on the question of deportation shows clearly how the funder and the actors behind the research have a very crucial, often political interest behind the topic of research.

Another silent topic left out of the extensive research on Syrians in Turkey is the rise of hostility towards Syrians from local citizens. As already mentioned, the MMU report shows parts of this violence towards Syrians in the form of local citizens who report to the Police unregistered Syrian refugees. The Support to Life report (2016) shows how the host community is not always accepting

the presence of Syrians in Istanbul. For instance, locals express opinions that "*Syrians are too relaxed here, if we moved there, we wouldn't be relaxed like that. When they came here, first our children were afraid of them. […] I should also add that Syrians are victims of war, but Turkish people are victims of life"* (Support to Life, 2016: 39). Waves of hostilities are also reported against Syrian-owned businesses occurred in Istanbul (France 24, 2019), while a Syrian interviewee with Refugees International describes the following situation *"I have two daughters. I gave them Turkish names, so they wouldn't have problems"* (Leghtas, 2019).

Last but not least, the Turkish military involvement in the Syrian conflict is a topic that is left silent. Since the outbreak of the war, Turkey has been actively involved in the war. Having taken control a significant territory between the towns of Tal Abyad and Ras al Ain, President Erdoğan proposed to the UN that Turkey would establish a so-called "safe zone" where Syrian refugees could be resettled from Turkey and Europe (Wintour, 2019; Lang, 2019; Gall, 2019). Evidently, it is a topic of high relevance and in my opinion, it should be taken into consideration constantly while researching Syrians refugees in Turkey. However, the literature that I found and analysed in this thesis tends to refer to the Turkish involvement very superficially. The Turkish Ombudsman states, "Operation Euphrates Shield and Operation Olive Branch in Afrin gave birth to hope for lasting peace in Syria and led to an increase in the number of voluntary repatriations to Jarabulus and Al Bab, which were cleared of terrorist organizations by the Turkish Armed Forces" (Ombudsman, 2018: 31). These operations "have created some hope" in the region and enabled voluntary repatriations (Ibid, 128). However, Support to Life confronts this statement when interviewing a Syrian refugee who states, *"I want to stay here in Turkey, because it is similar to our traditions and culture, and my family is here. I don't want to go to Europe either, because I have no one there. And I don't want to go back to Syria at all, because I lost my husband there"* (Support to Life, 2016).

To sum up, this section illustrated the way categorisation is excluding specific topics from the research. I argued that the choice of categories happens according to the interests of the funders for reasons that may often be political. Certain categories like 'vulnerability' are constructed as a pre-fixed term by the funder (Cuevas et al., 2019). I also argued that categorisation might affect the way research is produced, especially by the impact that funders as governments have in the formation of the questions and methodology.

4.2.4 'Categorical fetishism'

The following section relies particularly on the perspective given by Crawley and Skleparis (2018) on the concept of 'categorical fetishism'. They argue that the dominant policy categories do not present the relations between governments and refugees adequately. They also raise questions "about the extent to which existing categories are able to capture complex and messy social realities but also challenges us to think more carefully about the use of categories, and the process by which the boundaries between them are constructed" (Crawley and Skleparis, 2018: 50).

Research, as shown in the previous section, can be very fluid, change versions, and shape depending on many aspects, as for example the interests of the funders. In addition, the prefixed categories used in the research, such as the notion of vulnerability, are also constantly transformed and interpreted "in response to shift in political allegiances or interests on the part of refugee-receiving countries and the evolution of policy and law" (Crawley and Skleparis, 2018: 51). Foucault has also referred to that in the concept of 'truth' as a "subject to constant economic and political incitement" (Foucault, 1980: 131).

When it comes to research on Syrians in Turkey, the ones funded by development and state organisations are guided by this 'categorical fetishism'. The dominant categories of research are financial, economical (WBG, 2020), employability (Cuevas et al., 2019), skills like education and training (Ombudsman, 2019), and a general assessment of the services provided and access to them (MMU, 2017). Existing research on the Syrian lived experiences is limited and shows that the majority of refugees depend financially on insecure jobs and economic help from municipalities, while assistance by humanitarian organisations is not guaranteed (Barbelet and Wake, 2017; Support to Life, 2016).

To be more specific, one example of 'categorical fetishism' can be found while investigating the 'Vulnerability and Protection of Refugees in Turkey' report by World Bank (2019). The analysis of the report is conducted within a 'multidimensional vulnerability' conceptual framework. Vulnerability refers to "a situation where the household has limited ability to meet basic needs and a constrained capacity to cope with risks that can negatively affect the achievement of those needs" (Cuevas et al., 2019). This report provides local and international policy actors, stakeholders insights to the population that they define as 'the most vulnerable refugees'. This example reveals a tendency to refer to complex and messy social realities, such as income, with the use of categories.

4.2.5 Sub conclusion

This section has explored the overall topic of the use of categorisation as a method of research and its consequent effects. The analysis was guided by the overarching questions: What is the role of the actors involved? How does categorisation affect the findings of the research? In order to answer, first, I analysed the primary data and proved that the focus of the reports is connected to the primary interests of the funder. More specifically, the WBG reports focus on the financial and prosperity aspects and the access to the labour market. I found that the interests of the funders impact the way research is being done and ultimately the subject of the research. In addition, building on Vollmer's "number games" (2011) I suggest that narrow and limited research based on numerical findings is excluding parts of the discussion that cannot be presented in numbers. Furthermore, through an investigation of the category of vulnerability, I presented the way the reports use this category in a pre-fixed way. I argue that what is understood as 'real-life vulnerabilities' tend to be excluded from the research, which is a consequence of the funder's persistent drive for data collection. As a result, these perspectives remain silent and untouched. I then touched upon these silenced topics, namely the fear of deportation, the rising of hostility from locals targeting Syrians in Turkey and the Turkish involvement in the Syrian conflict. The last section of this chapter unraveled the notion of 'categorical fetishism' by Crawley and Skleparis (2018) and showed how it is a very much present concept in the topic of Syrians in Turkey.

The next chapter will present in depth the way that policy-driven research is illustrated in the lived experiences in the case of Syrians in Turkey.

Analysis 4.3 Policy-driven research vs the lived experiences of the researched

Following the analysis through the theoretical lens of Foucault and the Foucauldian concepts on a) how research is part of the 'knowledge economies' concerning Syrians in Turkey, and b) categorisation in research is excluding certain topics and parts of the Syrian population, I discuss below that policy-driven research is often not focused on the struggles and difficulties of the livelihoods. Opposing, I argue that it focuses on the success stories and the gaps that are found on the field. How does policy-driven research reflect the impacts that these gaps have on the lived experiences of the population researched in order to recommend and drive future policies? I will first present what I mean by 'policy driven research' and 'lived experiences' on the analysis of the research on Syrians in Turkey.

As lived experiences, I refer to the

> "representation and understanding of a researcher or research subject's human experiences, choices, and options and how those factors influence one's perception of knowledge. . . . [it] responds not only to people's experiences, but also to how people live through and respond to those experiences" (Boylorn, 2008: 490).

In other words, an experience in itself is not enough to provide knowledge but the positive or negative reaction and the way the people endure the experience plays a very important role. On the other hand, policy-oriented research is informing or trying to comprehend

> "one or more aspects of the public and social policy process, including decision making and policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation… Policymakers and those who implement policy (…) are increasingly looking to base their policy and practice on "evidence," particularly on evidence of effectiveness and "what works."" (Becker, 2005: 831).

There is a clear distinction between what research focused on policies and research focused on lived experiences are trying to accomplish. Although lived experiences may offer a great insight to policy-makers, they are not used as much for the research that they choose to fund. Driven by the pursuit of evidence of success and 'what works', they often neglect to investigate how these evidence are experienced by the subjects of research, as seen in the report by Ombudsman (2018) and MMU (2017). Building on the Foucauldian concept of 'biopolitics', I push one step further when arguing that the 'knowledge economies' and the lived experiences in the case of Syrians in Turkey are not interacting with each other on the level that they claim to do so. According to my primary data, as

shown below, the reports by large development or state organisations present evidence of how their interventions and services have an impact and in most cases a positive impact. They do so, by keeping a distance from the refugees, which does not allow for feedback on the interventions and services provided to them from the actual beneficiaries. The development and state organisations such as the World Bank and the Turkish Ombudsman Institution as the key actors of the 'knowledge economies' focus their research on assessing and evaluating the status of the refugees. For instance, the WFP and TRC developed the Livelihoods Survey (2019) to offer to the policy makers "additional evidence to inform the design of the transition from basic needs assistance to more sustainable livelihoods opportunities for refugees in Turkey" (WFP and TRC, 2019: 7).

The Ombudsman report on Syrians in Turkey offers a presentation on how the state institutions have "successfully managed and embracing the refugees" (Ombudsman, 2018: 126). The Ombudsman Institution as a state institution has gathered the data from the relevant public institutions, aiming to propose changes "not only in a numerical sense but also in content and future perceptions of the issue of Syrians" (Ombudsman, 2018: 129). While "they suggest building an integrated policy" (Ibid.) over the issue of Syrians in Turkey, they present their findings by assessing the likelihood that Syrians are going to stay permanently in Turkey. In doing so, they do not present the experiences that Syrians are currently facing with their struggles that their 'temporality' brings (Ibid). Representativeness may challenge research and its methodology radically, however it is crucial in order to gather sufficient evidence of the population in question (Müller-Funk et al., 2019).

Another report that is focusing on policies and not livelihoods of Syrians is the MMU report on urban refugees and their management by the municipalities (MMU, 2017). The research reflects the position of the Municipalities on the refugee issues focusing on success stories of process management and it concludes, "Despite some disruptions at the center, especially with strategic instability, the serious and devoted work of all local institutions and the extraordinarily high social acceptance of Turkish society have led to a successful process management" (MMU, 2017: 129). The report is also considering some policy changes for future strategies. My argument is not to underestimate the importance of municipalities' services, on the contrary, I feel that these kinds of local institutions are important for the stability of Syrians' lives. However, the fact that the report has not engaged with Syrian refugees in their data collection (MMU, 2017: 47) leaves out a very crucial perspective. The report presents that the "Urban refugees are becoming a serious problem that primarily concerns municipalities" (MMU, 2017: 47) and thus places the emphasis on the struggles from the

municipalities' perspective. By doing this, the report is leaving the refugees' viewpoint undocumented.

Lea Müller-Funk et al. (2019) found an interesting methodological approach that combats this situation of partially reported struggles and selective recommendations on future policies. More specifically, they address and acknowledge the methodological concerns as found in other reports on Syrians in Turkey. The in-depth face-to-face interviews started with an explanation and an introduction to the aims and the scope of the research. In this way, they showed to the interviewee whether they were connected with a state organisation or an NGO. The communication with the participant began with the statement that "We are doing a study in several areas of Turkey and Lebanon on adult Syrians' living conditions and their thoughts and experiences of working or living in other countries" (Müller-Funk et al., 2019: 14). This is an aspect that is crucial when collecting data, but it is missing when the proximity between the researcher and the researched is absent. For example, the reports by the Ombudsman (2018) and MMU (2017) did not collect data by using this kind of methodological approach. In contrast, they performed interviews only with the state actors involved. The 'vulnerability assessment' by Cuevas et al. used the TRC call center to gather data, which results to a remote relationship between researchers and researched.

In addition, when investigating a report that also focuses on the Syrians in Istanbul, but from the refugee perspective, I spotted these undocumented perceptions that MMU and Ombudsman reports left behind. The Support to Life report (2016) found that "Poverty, exploitation, exclusion, and discrimination are the major problems stated by the refugees" (Support to Life, 2016: 27). The STL report also acknowledges that its findings "contrast with local authorities' and security officials' observations" which report that Syrian community leaders reinforce criminality and tensions between refugees and locals (Ibid: 29). It is clear by the STL report that Syrians may offer a different perspective on the policy-driven research produced by the state or state funded institutions. Information about the refugees should be collected in order to address their vulnerabilities and build the foundation for better protection on future policies (Support To Life, 2016). What also stands out from this report is the fact that crucial questions may emerge when the proximity to the refugees is close. In addition, it proves that particular social dynamics of refugee situations are better captured in life stories and personal narratives as they allow space for essential questions to emerge. In this case, the meaning of vulnerability and how it stands out to the refugees themselves may only be communicated by this kind of life stories and lived experiences (Müller-Funk et al., 2019). As a result,

these stories and perspectives from the refugees' experiences remain unknown and undiscovered in the research produced by state institutions.

Barbelet and Wake (2017) in the report on the refugee lives and livelihoods present both the success stories but also the struggles of the people interviewed. They offer three perspectives of the people interviewed: "those focused on integration, those who were struggling and those focused on survival" (Barbelet and Wake, 2017: 7). All of these three presentations of lived experiences come with their own set of struggles. The people who are focused on integration would appreciate more respect from the locals, while the people who were struggling they were still able to have some sort of stability, such as a steady job and a household (Ibid). Lastly, the people who survival is their main focus are the people who have no networks or any sort of assistance, and they rely on short-term strategies for their everyday life activities (Ibid.). What this report shows is that none of the above-mentioned ways of living is without struggling. All the interviewees in the report have mentioned that the strategies that exist do not provide enough stability so that they can feel more assured and positive about their future lives (Ibid.). This very interesting aspect is clearly missing from the WBG and the Ombudsman reports and offers a crucial distinction between its findings and those from policy-driven research.

Sub conclusion

With the above-mentioned evidence, I showed how the policy-oriented reporting and the research with a focus on Syrian lived experiences differ. Research funded and driven by state and state organisations focuses on success stories and recommendations on future policies that may overcome the reported struggles. On the contrary, the reports that include the Syrian perspective and engage with them offer a different perspective that conflict the reported accomplishments. The fact that proximity to the subject of research is not a central focus for policy-driven research shows that the lived experiences by the subject of research are either not engaged or are found from previous reports instead of focusing on understanding the everyday experiences of refugees. Proximity to the lived experiences is crucial in resolving the imbalance of power between researchers and researched.

Although policy driven research addresses these gaps, it does so without reflecting on the impacts that these gaps have on the lived experiences of the population researched. Thus, future policies may only reflect part of the reality of the Syrian population.

The following and last chapter will discuss the relation between humanitarianism and over-research.

Analysis 4.4 Over-research and humanitarianism

The last analytical chapter of this thesis examines the concept of humanitarianism and its relation to over-research. I argue that the evolution of humanitarian agencies and their close relationship with state actors and donors has an impact and control over the subject and the amount of research that is funded and ultimately takes place, which is interlinked with the concept of 'financial-humanitarianism' (Tazzioli, 2018). I show how this is particularly evident in the case of research on Syrians in Turkey. I first refer to the concept of humanitarianism using the theory of critical humanitarianism, and secondly I address the relation between over-research and humanitarianism while reflecting on the particular case of Syrians in Turkey.

It happens that when humanitarian crises occur, Western actors' and funders' practices are heard more than the voices of those who are actually hit (Fassin, 2013). In research this is also the case, since as described before, the majority of the literature on Syrians in Turkey addresses the services of the government or the humanitarian assistance provided to the population than the actual voice describing the Syrian lived experiences (MMU, 2017; Ombudsman, 2019). 'Humanitarian reason' (Fassin, 2013) under which politics become sentimental plays a great role in this discussion, since a 'humanitarian government' shows how humanitarianism and politics are interlinked. Building on Foucault, humanitarianism is part of his 'biopolitics' in a way that the very sense of humanitarianism may force control over the population (Fassin, 2013).

While exploring the main question by Pallister-Willkins (2018) "what is humanitarianism, and who is it for?" (Pallister-Willkins, 2018: 4), my argument is that the research funded by humanitarian organisations, such as Support to Life (2016), or with the help of humanitarian organisations, like the World Bank report with the assistance by UNHCR, becomes part of the 'humanitarian government' and the 'biopolitical governmentality'. In the MMU report the municipal officials referred to their "humanitarian and conscientious obligation; [they] cannot ignore so many desperate, needy and poor people" (MMU, 2017: 66). The MMU report discusses this humanitarian obligation of the municipalities and it links it with the establishment of the Turkish Directorate General of Migration Management of the Ministry of Interior (DGMM) that "turned to a new policy where humans and their rights are the basis, civil initiative is the forerunner, and security approach is partly abandoned" (Ibid: 18). These quotes illustrate my argument there is a link between politics and humanitarianism that evolves into the 'humanitarian government'.

Although humanitarian agencies do not always acknowledge the link to politics, their activities do have political consequences (Barnett, 2005). The transformation of humanitarianism (Barnett, 2005) includes among others the fact that donors who provide the necessary funds for humanitarian research expect certain results and effectiveness (Barnett, 2005: 725). The constant competition for resources regarding humanitarian activities, including research, has pushed for a rise in funds by state actors. For instance, the Swiss government funds the Support to Life (2016) Vulnerability Assessment report. This increase brought new reporting and evaluating requirements, "developed new kinds of contracts, and demanded greater evidence of results" (Barnett, 2005: 730). The dominant actors behind research such as developmental organisations, government-funding agencies and other funders are those who form the objectives of the research. Thus, the ability of the researcher to remain critical is limited. Instead, the approach becomes rather extractive, with a focus on evidence that attracts more funding and results in an over-research on the topic. An example of this extractive approach is found in the Cuevas et al. (2019) report as they mention, "Moving forward, on the analytical front, WFP and the World Bank will jointly evaluate the impacts of the ESSN assistance on beneficiary lives. Additionally, on the operational front, as the conflict underlying the refugee influx becomes more protracted, ESSN should transition from a humanitarian-type to a development- type response to promote a sustainable exit from poverty and vulnerability" (Cuevas et al., 2019: 14). What derives from this statement is that the WBG aims to continue the knowledge production along the same lines of evaluation and assessment. In such, during this knowledge extraction, the people researched become the 'objects' rather than the 'subjects' (Foucault, 2007; Barnett, 2005).

Although not all reports are produced by humanitarian organisations, the majority of them use the help of humanitarian institutions like the UNHCR, the WFP or the TRC (World Bank, 2019; Cuevas et al., 2019; TRC and VFP, 2019) on the field, while the state funded reports claim that they work under the principles of humanitarianism (Ombudsman, 2019). More specifically, the Ombudsman Institution "was established as a public entity affiliated with the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT), to investigate, research, and make recommendations on matters of compliance to justice and equity (…) within a human rights-based framework" (Ombudsman, 2018: 24). However, the report provides information that shows a power imbalance between the state and the refugees and proves the argument that efficiency and impact are more important. Although this method comes with advantages, as for example the fact that it is an efficient and 'value for money' method, it creates this imbalance of the power relations between the data collection team and the refugees. Since the

proximity to the refugees becomes more distant, the awareness of this uneven relation of power and interaction decreases.

Another more practical connection between research and humanitarianism is the fact that in order for research to happen, humanitarian actors are already in the field in order to give access. Their presence signifies a level of safety in the area and allows, "Transnational mobility channels, accessible local transportation and a market for rental accommodations of good standard" (Pascucci, 2019: 251). The example of the Cuevas et al. report is very relevant here. The fact that they used the TRC team to collect the data underlines this argument. With the TRC team and their call center, the World Bank was able to get access to this information and assess the data (Cuevas et al., 2019). The special report from the Turkish Ombudsman also shows this connection with humanitarianism. Although it is state produced and funded, it underlines how humanitarian organisations played a great role in the process of their research (Ombudsman, 2018). More specifically, the data was gathered in collaboration with non-governmental organisations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Turkey representative offices of international organisations, and Syrian non-governmental organisations (Ombudsman, 2018).

Nevertheless, it is crucial to address the fluidity of the impact that NGOs have in Turkey. Civil society organisations in Turkey have some socio political and structural connections with the state institutions or actors. As a matter of fact, some scholars have characterized them as "pro-governmental organisations" rather than non-governmental organisations (Danıs and Nazli, 2019: 3). Especially when it comes to the refugee camps, the Turkish government has been observed to control strongly on the entry of NGOs in the area, granting access only to those who are closer ideologically or administratively (Ibid.). This realization strongly correlates with Foucault's way of perceiving governmentality. It basically proves how authorities govern with the use of closely selected partnerships with humanitarian civil society organisations operating in the field.

Sub conclusion

Summing up, the concept of humanitarianism has evolved over the years in a way that the impact by the states, politics and donors is evident. When it comes to research, humanitarian organisations or institutions driven by humanitarian principles show a focus on getting the greatest amount of information by using a 'value for money' and least time-consuming method. One illustrated example of this is the way the World Bank used the TRC call center to collect data. Driven by this urge to

gather data and evidence, interactions with those researched become distant and extractive while the power imbalance between researchers and researched increases. The ‘humanitarian reason’ (Fassin, 2013) has successfully entered the political sphere, despite the fact that most humanitarian organisations claim to be distant from politics (Barnett, 2005). The Support to Life NGO although it claims impartiality, stated that the fund for this research came partially from the Swiss government. To sum up, building on the critical humanitarianism scholars this chapter argued that although funders and actors involved do have a great impact on the amount of research being done, they also have an impact on the concept of humanitarianism itself.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to present and analyse the way development, state and humanitarian actors take part in the knowledge produced concerning the research on Syrians in Turkey. In addition, it showed how over-research becomes a crucial part of the overall 'knowledge economies'. The main funders behind this extensive research are development actors such as the World Bank Group, state institutions such as the Turkish Ombudsman, and non-governmental organisations such as Support to Life. The overall objective of the thesis was to offer an in-depth analysis on the way the actors involved are targeting the researched population, how they circulate the produced knowledge and what is the impact of this extensive production of knowledge to the research subjects and to humanitarianism overall.

The research managed to present how the interests of the funders play a great role on the specific targeting of the research. More specifically, when it comes to the reports by the WBG the topic of research is econometric and financial, connected to consumption and cash assistance. These are all topics that the WBG is dedicated to research and produce knowledge about. The state-funded reports have a focus on the services provided to the Syrian population and to a policy-driven research dedicated to produce recommendations for future policies. As shown in my analysis, it is evident that both the WBG and the state institutions choose to present the 'success stories' and the way that their interventions have worked.

In my analysis, I showed that the 'data extraction' processes are closely related to the 'knowledge economies'. In general, 'data extraction' proves that data and knowledge have become the new gold. Categorisation is one way that this relationship is exhibited, as for example with the application of vulnerability dimensions when reporting on the Syrian refugees in Turkey. Another aspect of the relationship analysed is the way data is circulated and shared among actors.

The second chapter of the analysis discusses the role of the actors involved in the research. By analysing the primary data I proved that the focus of the reports is connected to the primary interests of the funder. For example, the World Bank Group's reports focus on the financial and prosperity aspects and the access to the labour market, topics that are of high interest for the WBG. Furthermore, through an investigation of the category of vulnerability, I presented the way the reports use this category in a pre-fixed way. As a result, other perspectives such as the fear of deportation and the rising of hostility from locals, and Turkish military involvement in Syria remain silent and untouched.

Additionally, I presented the dynamics between policy-oriented research and the research with a focus on Syrian lived experiences. The analysis proved that research funded and driven by state and state organisations focuses on success stories and their presented policy recommendations only reflect part of the struggles.

The last chapter of this thesis explored the concept of humanitarianism and its relationship to over-research. Driven by their persistent desire for data, interactions between the researchers and those researched become distant and extractive while the power imbalance between researchers and researched increases. In doing so, the concept of humanitarianism is challenged. For instance, the Support to Life NGO although it claims impartiality, stated that the funding for this research came partially from the Swiss government.

To sum up, this thesis concluded that the Syrian population in Turkey are an over-researched topic by development, humanitarian, and state actors. These actors are actively engaged with knowledge production and thus generate a 'knowledge economy'. Their interests such as financial and political are the ones that are extensively researched, while others are left behind or 'under-researched'.

It should be stated that, as this is an ongoing and constantly evolving topic, various aspects need to be taken into consideration for future research on the topic. Events in Turkey considering the Syrian population are still developing. In March 2020, the Turkish government decided to lift the borders to Greece for Syrian refugees (Boffey, 2020). In such, these developments may change the power dynamics and thus the focus of the research. However, future analysis of the topic is crucial, since 'knowledge economies' are increasingly becoming politically important.

Finally, it should be kept in mind that over-research as a phenomenon is very fluid. Consequently, what makes a topic over-researched today may not be the same case in the future. However, I believe that this study could act as a stepping-stone for further engagement with the topic of 'knowledge economies' and over-research.

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