Fall 2020

The Pursuit of Capital and Movement: Systemic Barriers to Housing Access for Refugees in Contemporary Germany

Lilian Wind O'Donnell
Bard College

Bard

The Pursuit of Capital and Movement:

Systemic Barriers to Housing Access for Refugees in Contemporary Germany

Senior Project Submitted to

The Division of Social Studies

of

Bard College

by

Lilian O'Donnell

I dedicate this to all refugees—past, present, and future—who seek to overcome the merciless barriers presented by the nation-state system in search of a liveable world.
They deserve kindness.

Acknowledgements

To my Senior Project advisor, Jeff Jurgens: thank you for your patience, dedication, and brilliance. Your extensive knowledge and resourceful ideas have taken this project to new heights. Thank you for your continuous faith in me.

To Timand Bates: thank you for advocating for me when I struggled, and for cheering me on when I succeeded. Thank you for truly listening. Your support has pushed me through to the end of my undergraduate education, down to the very submission of this project.

Thank you to Malia Du Mont and Frederic Hof, who have always been open to sharing their valuable experiences, and who facilitated critical discussions about the world we find ourselves in that I am grateful to have been a part of.

Jewel, Lia, Victoria, Emily, Stella, Mikala, Morenike, and Lily C—thank you for being an essential part of my life for the last few years. You all inspire me on a daily basis and have brought new meaning to the words 'strength' and 'connection.' Keep at the growth mindset.

I am at a loss for words when I think of how to thank my family for the unconditional encouragement and love. You have imparted on me the boundless value of curiosity, compassion, and willpower. Your friendship is everything. I feel so lucky.

Finally, I thank the Lower East Side of New York City, and all of its history, culture, and residents that inspired this project. For the last ten years, the LES has influenced personal art projects, high school research projects, grassroots volunteer spaces that I found myself in, my college CommonApp essay, and now, this. The LES is a community rich with every part of humanity one can discover, and has offered me a home I am infinitely grateful for.

Table of Contents

Introduction

I. *Before the Law*

In his 1915 novel *The Trial*, Franz Kafka provides an important allegory that reveals the nature of the individual's relationship to the law. The law itself is its own allegory within the story for the deeply convoluted and bureaucratic political and societal systems that humans interact with and operate within. Here is the allegory in its entirety:

Before the law sits a gatekeeper. To this gatekeeper comes a man from the country who asks to gain entry into the law. But the gatekeeper says that he cannot grant him entry at the moment. The man thinks about it and then asks if he will be allowed to come in later on. "It is possible," says the gatekeeper, "but not now." At the moment the gate to the law stands open, as always, and the gatekeeper walks to the side, so the man bends over in order to see through the gate into the inside. When the gatekeeper notices that, he laughs and says: "If it tempts you so much, try it in spite of my prohibition. But take note: I am powerful. And I am only the most lowly gatekeeper. But from room to room stand gatekeepers, each more powerful than the other. I can't endure even one glimpse of the third." The man from the country has not expected such difficulties: the law should always be accessible for everyone, he thinks, but as he now looks more closely at the gatekeeper in his fur coat, at his large pointed nose and his long, thin, black Tartar's beard, he decides that it would be better to wait until he gets permission to go inside. The gatekeeper gives him a stool and allows him to sit down at the side in front of the gate. There he sits for days and years. He makes many attempts to be let in, and he wears the gatekeeper out with his requests. The gatekeeper often interrogates him briefly, questioning him about his homeland and many other things, but they are indifferent questions, the kind great men put, and at the end he always tells him once more that he cannot let him inside yet. The man, who has equipped himself with many things for his journey, spends everything, no matter how valuable, to win over the gatekeeper. The latter takes it all but, as he does so, says, "I am taking this only so that you do not think you have failed to do anything." During the many years the man observes the gatekeeper almost continuously, he forgets the other gatekeepers, and this one seems to him the only obstacle for entry into the law. He curses the unlucky circumstance, in the first years thoughtlessly and out loud, later, as he grows old, he still mumbles to himself. He becomes childish and, since in the long years studying the gatekeeper he has come to know the fleas in his fur collar, he even asks the fleas to help him persuade the gatekeeper. Finally his eyesight grows weak, and he does not know whether things are really darker around him or whether his eyes are merely deceiving him. But he recognizes now in the darkness an illumination which breaks inextinguishably out of the gateway to the law. Now he no longer has

much time to live. Before his death he gathers in his head all his experiences of the entire time up into one question which he has not yet put to the gatekeeper. He waves to him, since he can no longer lift up his stiffening body. The gatekeeper has to bend way down to him, for the great difference has changed things to the disadvantage of the man. "What do you still want to know, then?" asks the gatekeeper. "You are insatiable." "Everyone strives after the law," says the man, "so how is it that in these many years no one except me has requested entry?" The gatekeeper sees that the man is already dying and, in order to reach his diminishing sense of hearing, he shouts at him, "Here no one else can gain entry, since this entrance was assigned only to you. I'm going now to close it."

The story of *The Trial*, which can be seen as a fleshed-out experience of the man in the allegory, exhibits the intrusive reach of the law and the sovereign system into the personal life of the individual while simultaneously remaining remote and entirely inaccessible.

The experience of this reach goes as far as to enter the individual's home, as happens to Josef K., the novel's main character. The outset of the book takes place in Josef K.'s apartment, where several officers of the law come knocking on his door about a matter that they may not divulge to him. The breach of privacy when the officers enter his apartment is disturbing. K. rapidly grows paranoid about his neighbors, as he tries to determine how this event came to be. In a dream-like narrative, K. is placed under arrest, without being told what for. He is prevented from obtaining any information regarding the conditions of his arrest and what he is and is not allowed to do. In this way, Josef K. is subject to a set of inaccessible rules, and is forced to constantly question what crime he is being charged with.

Josef K. cannot recall committing a crime at the time of his arrest and insists upon his innocence to the officers. As he navigates a series of nonsensical law offices and appointments in an attempt to illuminate the events that led to his wrongful arrest, though, he becomes disoriented and begins to doubt if he can trust his own perspective. Everyone he encounters seems to know more about the details of his own trial than he does, and yet, they are unable to divulge any information. The continual insistence upon his guilt by strangers and familiar faces

alike seems to present itself as the only truth he can discover, and Josef K. wonders if maybe he is guilty of committing some crime.

One year after Josef K.'s initial arrest, the officers return to his apartment and escort him outside of town to execute his punishment: death. On the way there, the officers don't control his exact path. They walk closely on either side of him, but allow him to alter his course as he pleases until they eventually make it out of the town. This provides one final false feeling of agency, though Josef K. seems to know that it is a facade. His death befalls him at the outskirts of his society.

The novel was originally written in German, titled *Der Prozess*. In German, this evokes more than just the image of a trial in the court system, but also some grand and ambiguous but perhaps inevitable process. The process of refugees fleeing violence and seeking protection in a new country resembles the story of Josef K. and the man from the country in the allegory in striking ways. The flight of refugees is characterized by uncertainty, unanswered questions, multi-year waiting periods, and interrogations that require them to prove circumstances, the action of which is often not in the realm of possibility. They find themselves awashed by a sovereign system whose rules sometimes contradict themselves and whose procedures lack transparency. Refugees are left constantly questioning which authorities they can trust to help them and which authorities will send them back into dangerous situations without hesitation. The theme of simultaneous intrusiveness and remoteness presents itself again in their circumstance. Refugees are subject to the most elaborate, bureaucratic legal procedures that impact every detail of their daily lives, and yet are forced to wait for weeks on certain occasions just to speak with an individual who can guide them through a process such as finding shelter. Just as everyone that

Josef K. came across had an opinion on the proceedings of his trial, every individual and government seems to lay claim to some authority over the trajectory and experience of refugees.

Kafka's "Before the Law" allegory serves as a valuable piece of theory because it captures a feeling of coercion and perceived lack of individual agency that is incredibly difficult to describe. The story displays subjects as they relate to power structures and figures of authority. It displays how the individual becomes easily and infinitely absorbed in an obstacle immediately ahead of them, as though it is the only thing preventing their forward progress, when in reality that obstacle is just the beginning of an endless series of measures in place to keep them hacking away at the surface level, rather than seeing the entire web of limitations created by the greater system. Refugees likely relate to the experience of the man from the country who waits outside the very first gate to the law for his entire life. The seemingly infinite levels of gatekeepers, who, according to the first one, are each more powerful than the last, stand to represent the countless systemic barriers faced by refugees from the start of their journey that will be presented throughout this project.

These are only a few preliminary connections between the stories of the man from the country, Josef K., and the plight of refugees worldwide. As this project moves through the trajectory of refugees from when they leave their homes in Syria to their unending integration process in Germany, I will invite reflections back to this paradoxical framework.

II.   Why Refugees?

The matter of refugees was a main focus for Eugene Kulischer, who was one of the leading migration researchers and theorists in the mid-twentieth century. He built an impressive record of both studying and teaching at several of Europe and America's leading universities, acting as a consultant for several federal and international organizations, and of making

noteworthy contributions to the study of migration throughout the twentieth century, including the Migration article in the 1952 edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica. Although a significant amount of new writing has been published on the topic of migration and refugees since his time, I turn to his writing in particular because it laid the groundwork for a lot of the more recent thinking that followed. Much of Kulischer's work involves an analysis of migration, mobility, and reception in Europe during the post-war period, which was a formative moment in German and European refugee politics. Modern-day circumstances naturally present a unique set of challenges to the study of migration and refugees, but many concerns about the topic today parallel those of the post-war period.

Kulischer's work developed the theory of "the centrality of migration as a factor for historical development and a primary source of both conflict and its resolution" (Limbach, 138). Before he died in 1956, Kulischer was working on a publication called *History as Movement of Peoples and Civilizations*. This title is quite explanatory of his central point that carries throughout all his work—that "human mobility has been, is, and will likely continue to be the central process in world history, a process he termed 'the perpetual great migration'" (Limbach, 140). Integral to Kulischer's migration theory is this argument that movement and mobility is at the heart of the human experience. All other aspects of human history result from "the ability or inability of populations to migrate: wars, trade, internal development, and economic advances were thus subordinate to the need for mobility" (Limbach, 140). In Kulischer's work titled *Europe on the Move: War and Population Changes, 1917-1947*, he argued that migration is "at once perpetual, partial, and universal … it never ceases, it affects every people, but at any given moment it sets in motion only a small number of each population; hence the illusion of immobility" (9). Pointing out this 'illusion of immobility' was crucial, because many other

scholars and politicians during his time viewed the matter of migration as an abnormality that should be righted or prevented, when in fact, world history reveals humans and civilizations to be fluid in nature, moving in response to needs and out of desire. The 'illusion of immobility' persists today; it allows for the construction of a false notion of 'crisis,' which is harmful to the inclusion of refugees in host societies. To isolate instances of mass migration from their historical and social contexts is to 'other' those populations in motion, when in fact, they are undergoing the most human of processes.

Following Kulischer's framework, refugees represent this concept that human experience is defined by the 'ability and inability of populations to migrate' on the most massive scale. Refugees simultaneously pose a challenge to the order instituted by the nation-state system. Kulischer "theorized that individuals and groups invariably sought social and economic equilibrium through either migration or violence" (Limbach, 142). If violence is to be avoided—as is in the best interest of every population on Earth with a goal of survival and progress in any context—then the freedom to migrate must be valued and protected.

Syrian refugees are the focus population of this project because they constitute the largest group of newly-arrived people in Berlin in the last decade (primarily since 2015). Their case presents an instance of simultaneous migration *and* violence, with each factor affecting the other.

III.   Why Housing?

Throughout my upbringing, I attended schools in poverty-stricken areas of New York City that mainly consisted of public housing. Consequently, many of the friends I made had grown up in these local communities; because of the close relationships I formed, I was offered a unique frame of reference for home environments and their relation to both social and state power. My position as an outsider to these communities meant that I was able to observe this

relationship, while having the privilege of returning to my own home, rented in the private housing market. While acknowledging this truth, my time spent engaging with these communities in a personal manner was extremely valuable to my perspective on the impact that economic, cultural, and social capital has on housing access. I learned both inside the classroom and out about the conditions that public, government-funded housing created for those who lived in it. This exposure piqued my personal interest in housing as a basic facet of the human experience, and also as a human right. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) reinforces the well-known concept that "human beings have certain basic needs. We must have food, water, air, and shelter to survive. If any one of these basic needs is not met, then humans cannot survive" (1). Nevertheless, the need for housing moves well beyond the basic need for survival. My academic interest naturally followed as I studied the relationship between housing and citizenship—and therefore between housing and one's participation in the nation-state system.

Refugees are a group of people who essentially lose their ability to be participatory members of their original nation-state. Refugees are a group of people who lose their homes. Because it is attached to the idea of citizenship and acceptance into a particular political and cultural system, establishing housing is part of the process of reconstructing displaced people's membership to and capacity to participate in a new nation-state. Any individual truly invested in the well-being of their fellow humans must be cognizant of the dangers of insecure housing situations and the ways in which that impacts one's access to local, national, and global communities.

This Senior Project will aim to answer the following question in the context of Syrian refugees that have arrived in Berlin, Germany since 2015: how can recently displaced people be

most effectively 'integrated' or 'incorporated' into their 'host society'? I will seek to answer this question through an exploration of the transition that refugees make from group accommodations upon immediate arrival in Germany to long-term private rental housing in Berlin, and how that transition impacts, and, conversely, is impacted by refugees' development of social capital. Social capital refers to amassed resources that allow individuals to participate in the networks which make up the broader economic, cultural, and social tapestry of the society in which individuals find themselves. This project will rely on Pierre Bourdieu's definitions and analysis of economic, cultural, and social capital. The logic of this introduction mimics the logic of this project as a whole, moving from global to local contexts.

IV.   Defining Terms: Economic, Cultural, and Social Capital

Originally published in German in 1983, Pierre Bourdieu's "The Forms of Capital" reflects on the three most impactful forms of capital: economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. I turn to Bourdieu's writing on the matter because his breakdown of the social structures of contemporary society is incredibly thorough, and he addresses fundamental principles that contribute greatly to the perpetual inequality of people.

Capital, in its most general form, is simply *accumulated labor*. The term 'accumulation' refers to an amassing of things. It paints an image of a process of collection, or gathering, such as a farmer stockpiling firewood to keep warm through the winter months. 'Labor' is commonly aligned with the idea of work. This work can take place in a more formal environment, such as the office space of a corporation, or, alternatively, the barn of the aforementioned farmer conducting physical labor. It can also take place in a cognitive environment, such as in the mind of a student who gathers information and translates that information into knowledge and skill. In a wider sense, labor also refers to embodied, sensuous activity, such as domestic work in a

household, or hours spent practicing an instrument. When placed in tandem with each other,

these terms acknowledge the *time* and *effort* expended in order to accumulate the things that

labor allows for—such as wages, given in exchange for labor. Wages are a physical marker for

the time that an individual has labored in a certain work environment. In turn, these wages can be

used to purchase goods and services. Through this process, the goods and services one possesses

or utilizes come to embody one's 'accumulated labor.'

Economic capital is defined quite literally as wealth, or a physical currency. In

Bourdieu's words, economic capital is "immediately and directly convertible into money and

may be institutionalized in the form of property rights." Cultural capital "may be institutionalized

in the form of educational qualifications," and is largely associated with the idea of cultural

competency. This includes a wide range of things from intellectual properties, such as

knowledge and expertise, to physical properties, such as cultural possessions. Social capital is

"made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into

economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility" (243). Wages

were used to establish a link between accumulated labor and economic capital, but cultural and

social capital also constitute accumulated labor, in an unconventional way more aligned with

what I described as 'embodied, sensuous activity.'

Bourdieu references 'fields' and 'markets'[1] as the arenas in which the different forms of

capital operate; these distinct forms of capital are always defined by their relation to and

potential convertibility into economic capital. For Bourdieu, fields and markets are a

hierarchically organized structure of 'positions,' and these positions are linked with greater and

lesser degrees of access to wealth, prestige, and influence. In Bourdieu's framework, subjects

seek to accumulate and convert capital in order to move into—and remain within—more

---

[1] Note that the terms 'field' and 'market' may be used interchangeably.

advantageous and privileged positions within the field. Here I will use the interface between the fields of undergraduate education and the labor market as an initial illustration of Bourdieu's conception of markets, the role that the forms of capital plays within them, and how there is an undeniable cross-over between all three forms of capital. I will then apply Bourdieu's concepts more extensively to the challenges of securing private housing that Syrian refugees encounter in Chapter 3.

In an undergraduate setting, academic success can take the form of a high grade-point average (GPA). Academic success itself is ostensibly a symbol of the time and effort a student has invested in their studies, down to the hours spent gaining knowledge when writing a paper, studying for an exam, or reading in order to participate in a class discussion. Success in the academic market has a very clear-cut result of increased economic capital. Obtaining a bachelor's degree in good standing opens the door for jobs that require such a degree, and those jobs offer wages that are often higher than jobs that do not require a bachelor's degree. Academic success at an undergraduate institute also provides the opportunity to continue one's education at the graduate level, which again can eventually translate into higher wages at a job requiring a higher degree. Academic success in the academic field is therefore advantageous in building economic capital.

The cultural capital that is gained by having a stake in the academic market is incalculable—and yet, it is still convertible into economic capital. First, it is necessary to understand the three distinct forms that Bourdieu breaks the concept of cultural capital down into: the embodied state, the objectified state, and the institutionalized state. The embodied state exists "in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body;" the objectified state exists "in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.);" and

the institutionalized state exists as "a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee" (243).

To continue with the instance of the academic market, an undergraduate student acquires cultural capital in its embodied state by gaining knowledge and skills through accumulated hours spent on coursework and attending classes. Such knowledge and skills are a prerequisite for certain jobs—for example, one must acquire the knowledge of how to conduct scientific experiments prior to acquiring a job in which they must conduct scientific experiments. Acquiring such a job allows the former student to receive the wages assigned to the value of that job, and their embodied cultural capital becomes economic capital.

A student has the potential for objectified cultural capital gain, because there exist opportunities in an undergraduate setting for students to procure books, tools, and learning materials. Since these cultural goods are physical objects, they may be passed on to friends, family, and acquaintances of the student, and a transfer of embodied cultural capital is enabled, if individuals choose to utilize those materials. This potentially opens the door for any one of these individuals to secure a job which requires the knowledge gained from such materials, and we circle back to the economic capital gained from a job with specific knowledge as its prerequisite.

Finally, a student's cultural capital gained through their academic success and thereby in the academic market is institutionalized through the degree itself. Likely the most important takeaway from Bourdieu's designation of the institutionalized state of capital is the idea that there is some authority (in this case, a college or university) which determines or recognizes the validity of the embodied capital that the student gained (i.e. their learning). Potential employers often view the degree as a credential that stands for the embodied cultural capital that the degree

recipient has presumably accumulated. Furthermore, the amount of institutionalized cultural capital associated with a degree, and therefore its potential economic value, is dependent upon the reputation and prestige associated with the institution it comes from. Bourdieu's own words are valuable here:

> One sees clearly the performative magic of the power of instituting, the power to show forth and secure belief or, in a word, to impose recognition … By conferring institutional recognition on the cultural capital possessed by any given agent, the academic qualification also makes it possible to compare qualification holders and even to exchange them (by substituting one for another in succession). Furthermore, it makes it possible to establish conversion rates between cultural capital and economic capital by guaranteeing the monetary value of a given academic capital. (248)

In the case of embodied cultural capital, there is a more loose conversion into economic capital, because it is "constantly required to prove itself" (248). Its monetary value can differ depending on the evaluator, because there is a lack of an authority which stamps embodied knowledge with approval. Institutionalized cultural capital, on the other hand, designates membership in a certain group, such as the alumni-base of an undergraduate college. Official acceptance into such a group is meaningful to others that a former student might interact with in, for example, the labor market, and can once again be translated into economic capital through the acquisition of a job and wages. One might categorize academic success as 'profits' in the academic market, without realizing the accuracy of their metaphorical language—that the 'profits' of success in school convert quite plainly into economic capital.

Above I demonstrated just a few of the interactions between the field of academics and the labor market, and the evident convertibility from cultural capital (which necessitates an investment of time and effort in order to gain) into economic capital. In the "Social Capital" subsection of his chapter, Bourdieu elaborates on the intrinsic overlap between social capital and

the other two forms of capital, determining that while social capital is not directly reducible to these forms, it is also not independent from them. This is due to the fact that participation or membership in a certain group provides both material and symbolic benefits—services and association—which can be translated into monetary value [economic capital], and the transmission of knowledge and information [cultural capital]. Once more making use of the academic market to demonstrate this, an undergraduate institute provides students with a route to expanding their embodied social capital with the opportunity to establish social connections with professors, fellow students, and anyone associated with their institution. In the case of Bard College, students can obtain their degree from the Annandale-on-Hudson campus but are not geographically limited. Their membership to the College provides them with seamless access to the Bard Global Network, which includes campuses in Germany, Russia, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, and more. This means that their social networks gained through their institution are not geographically limited to Annandale-on-Hudson, either. A form of objectified social capital that a student might benefit from is possessing merchandise that represents their institution. If a student sports a jacket with the Harvard brand on it to a networking event, they need not explain that they attend Harvard. Their membership to the Harvard network is likely assumed, and they may receive favorable treatment because of it due to the reputation of that network, without having to prove their attendance at the university. In the institutionalized state, social capital takes the same form as cultural capital within the academic and labor market: the acquisition of a degree itself. This removes much of the need for an individual to prove the worth of their knowledge gained over several years. Instead their invested time and effort is instantly validated through this structure of official recognition.

These embodied, objectified, and institutionalized states of social capital—which can primarily be reduced to one's social network—can all lead to future employment opportunities, and therefore wages. This is the foundation for conversion from social capital to economic capital. All these examples focus on the demonstration of how capital conversions are possible from the academic market to the labor market. It is important to note, however, that undergraduate admissions is a market of its own—one in which we could also trace the functions and benefits of economic, cultural, and social capital.

V.   Organizational Sketch of the Project

This project begins by mapping the common trajectory of Syrians refugees from the departure of their homes to their eventual landing in Berlin. Once in Berlin, most Syrian refugees undertake a mission to progress from group accommodations toward better living conditions in private apartments. This transition from state-run to private housing is defined by a series of systemic barriers and lapses in the creation and implementation of policies that are supposedly in place to facilitate said transition. These circumstances are worsened by setbacks that refugees experience in their development of economic, cultural, and social capital that is relevant to their circumstances in Berlin. A successful social integration of Syrian refugees is desirable not only for refugees, but also for the German government, and can be catalyzed by optimizing patterns of urban residence and improving the gaps in instituting policy.

Chapter 1: Tracing Trajectories Across Nation-State Lines: Syria to Berlin

I.   Syria to Turkey

The summer of 2015 was one of political unrest, extreme violence, and loss of civilian lives and homes in Syria and other parts of the Middle East, not dissimilar to the previous four summers.[2] The tragedies that occurred came as an ongoing result of the Syrian civil war, beginning in March of 2011 with pro-democracy demonstrations all over the country. The Assad regime of Syria had been engaged in authoritarian practices since the presidency of Hafiz al-Assad, Bashar's father, beginning in 1971. With the goal of maintaining absolute power, the regime regularly practiced the violent targeting of potential political rivals, as well as the manipulation of public opinion through censorship and surveillance of the media. When Bashar al-Assad took office in 2000 following his father's reign, he identified himself as an actor interested in modernizing and reforming the country's political sphere in such a way that might incorporate public participation into government practices. He made an effort to liberalize Syria's economy, which had previously been dominated by the state, but for the most part, these changes only benefited those with pre-existing connections to the regime. Before long, it was clear that Assad was leaving democratic ideals by the wayside and was reinstituting the tyrannous practices that had been typical of his family's rule for decades.

The momentum for anti-regime demonstrations, which were in support of democratic practices, built over the course of many years as a severe wealth gap continued to grow. Other factors that remained unaddressed by the government can also be noted as motivation for the protests that erupted in 2011. One such factor was a four-year drought ending in 2010, which resulted in a mass migration of farmers from rural to urban areas, leaving thousands without

---

[2] The following section draws heavily on UNHCR sources listed in the Works Cited section.

proper living conditions. The first concrete seed of rebellion was planted when a group of

children were caught writing anti-regime graffiti in Daraa, a southwestern town in Syria, and

were arrested and endured horrendous abuses by authorities of the regime. An interview with

Naief Abazid, one of the boys involved in the fateful graffiti incident of February 2011, revealed

the traumatic details of his abuse: he was hung from the ceiling by his wrists, whipped with

heavy cables, forced inside a tire that was routinely smashed into concrete walls, and was kept in

a cell roughly the size of a coffin in between beatings (MacKinnon). CNN reporter Joe Sterling

described the scene of the families requesting the release of their boys: "Activists and observers

say authorities shunned and insulted the people. One official reportedly said: 'Forget your

children. If you really want your children, you should make more children. If you don't know

how to make more children, we'll show you how to do it.'" Abazid and 22 other boys who were

captured and blamed for the graffiti were eventually moved to 'interrogation headquarters' in

Damascus known as the Palestine Branch, which maintains a violently infamous global

reputation. Abazid recalled "an encounter with an elderly prisoner who burbled nonsense. The

man had been in the Palestine Branch so long that other prisoners whispered that the guards had

forgotten when or why he had been arrested" (MacKinnon). This encounter is eerily similar to

both Josef K., who has no conception of why he was arrested, and the man from the country in

Kafka's allegory, who spent the remainder of his life waiting outside the gate to the law.

This response by the government was nothing out of the ordinary, as it was essentially

standard procedure to suffocate public opinions that went against Assad's, but this torture of

children crossed the threshold for frustrated and oppressed civilians in the area. These first

demonstrations began with entirely peaceful intent, but were met with violent military force from

the government. Crowds experienced mass arrests, and government forces opened

fire—regardless of the fact that there was no threat of violence from the protesters. Civilians were beaten, oftentimes arrested, brutally tortured, and killed; Assad's forces did their best to limit media coverage of the events that were transpiring. Despite these efforts at censorship by the regime, word quickly spread and demonstrations were soon held throughout the country.

President Assad began to take advantage of sectarian divisions existing between the Muslim people of Syria and his own regime to propogate the idea that the demonstrators were the origin of violence in the conflict. He emphasized the distinction between the Sunni and Alawite populations as a way to gather support for his own forces, inciting the idea that there were 'foreign insurgents' working to mobilize rebel forces in response to these religious differences. The Assad family is Alawite, while the 'foreign insurgents' were framed as Sunni militants from Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Chechnya, and other countries. While this propaganda did not necessarily mount public support for his forces (in part due to the fact that Alawite Muslims are a Syrian religious minority, making up only about 11% of the population), it distracted from the true principle behind the demonstrations, which was the desire for political and economic reforms that would lead to a greater equality in wealth and living conditions for the people of Syria, and hopefully to a more honest and transparent government (Evason). Because the regime circulated ideas that the Sunni protesters would eventually attack non-Sunni communities, though the conflict originally had nothing to do with sectarian divisions, such propaganda induced fear in those who belonged to the religious minorities—even if they did not benefit economically or politically from belonging to the same sect of Islam as the regime. This fear, along with the censorship of the media that prevented Syrians in more remote parts of the country from seeing the predominantly unprompted brutality of the state, worked to prevent minority groups from joining the demonstrators.

Some of the peaceful groups of demonstrators transitioned into local armed militias by the summer of 2011, after being met with months of smothering tank, helicopter, and artillery attacks. This transition also came after the regime forces took up the strategy of surrounding core areas of protest in order to cut off communications and supplies to the rebel groups. The following months consisted of armed conflict between the militias and Assad's forces, as well as a power struggle on the rebel side as different local groups sought leadership roles in the revolution. By November 2012, a consensus had been reached among opposition leaders to form the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (also referred to as the Syrian National Coalition). This quickly became the internationally recognized mouthpiece for the anti-Assad forces, and allowed for better organization and collaboration among individual groups originating from all over Syria.

The Syrian National Coalition had a series of military successes in the months following its establishment. Nonetheless, the rebel groups were unable to make significant progress as weapons and other supplies dwindled. Assad's regime was also not in an advantageous position, as a great number of soldiers steadily defected to the opposition. The inability of either side to overpower the other worked to prolong the daily violence, and life for civilians proved extremely dangerous. An account from a student at the University of Damascus described how even the act of commuting to class was hazardous. He rode a bus to the university that "travelled on a road that formed the boundary between regime territory and rebel territory. Rival sniper bullets frequently pinged the sides of the bus" as the passengers ducked their heads (Schmidle). The bus quite literally drove along a threshold dividing one side of the conflict from the other. By 2013, international actors began contributing to the conflict. Terrorist leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) began launching offensive operations from eastern

Syria, expanding into the northern regions of Iraq out of personal interest. The positioning of his forces in Syria provided Russia, an ally of authoritarian Bashar al-Assad, with an excuse to carry out air strikes on Syrian rebel groups under the false pretense that they were directed at ISIS forces. Conditions continued to rapidly deteriorate as homes were shattered, towns and cities were obliterated, families were separated, and lives were taken.

The civil war had reached some sort of stalemate, and yet there was no end in sight. Syrians were (and are to this day) faced with the decision of whether to stay and hope for survival, or to try to escape the inhumane conditions produced by the war. The first wave of people fled the country as early as 2011, just two months into the conflict (UNHCR). As of 2020, nine years after the initial demonstrations, an estimated 6.7 million Syrians have fled in search of the chance of survival. An additional 6.1 million Syrians remain displaced internally, unable to seek political asylum in other countries due to a myriad of factors, including obligations to family, threats of violence, or lack of effective networks and financial means. To seek political asylum means to seek legal protection by a host country when a person is forcibly displaced from their country of origin as a result of political persecution or threat of serious harm. This political status is defined by the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (UNHCR).

Though there are countless variations of the routes that displaced Syrians took, Turkey was most commonly the first country that Syrians found themselves in when embarking on their escape. Turkey was the site of significant humanitarian assistance at the outset of the civil war, although most of it was undertaken by UNHCR rather than the Turkish government. The Turkish state did grant Syrians a temporary protection status, but it fell short of full recognition as refugees. More importantly, however, is the fact that Syrians do not need a visa to travel to Turkey. The same is true for the neighboring country of Lebanon, but it is further from mainland

Europe than Turkey, which is overwhelmingly seen as the ideal destination for those fleeing Syria. A trip out of Lebanon would mean a flight, requiring a visa to a European country, or falsified documents. The former option was virtually impossible. Generally, the latter option was too risky, and, if attempted, often resulted in being detained, possibly beaten, and deported back to Syria.

II.   Turkey to Germany

Arrival in Turkey was a momentous step for fleeing Syrians: it meant they had crossed the first nation-state threshold on their journey. While this threshold presented less legal challenges than ones further down the line because of the lack of a visa requirement, it demanded a great amount of sacrifice as Syrians left behind everything they knew to be home. It was one geographic step closer to European Union states.

An article titled "Ten Borders: An Epic Escape from Syria" by reporter Nicholas Schmidle provides a comprehensive narrative of a 24 year old Syrian named Ghaith and his fellow refugees that he encountered along his way in 2015. Although Ghaith's trajectory eventually landed him in Sweden, he passed through Germany, saying farewell to many of his travel companions there, and so his story exemplifies many of the challenges faced by refugees who make their way from Syria to Germany. Ghaith, who was a criminal law student back in Syria and deeply values his ability to study, cited the fact that "Turkey doesn't have good educational opportunities" as a reason for wanting to push onward. Turkey was also limited in its opportunities for quality medical care—something that many Syrians were in desperate need of due to injuries suffered from explosions, bullets, and beatings. Additionally, there was little hope for obtaining a visa to a European country when in Turkey, because "the European consulates

there were inundated with immigration requests and issuing very few visas" (Schmidle). Remaining in Turkey was not exactly desirable for these reasons.

The move from Turkey into the European Union marked a very distinct crossing of a political threshold due to a policy known as the Dublin Regulation and the nature of the nation-state system. The Dublin Regulation, introduced in 1990 and updated in 2003, was put forth with the intention of easing pressure on European Union Member States. It set the standard that, in most cases, individuals must apply for asylum status at their point-of-entry in the Union (European Commission). The objective was to simplify and expedite the process of determining which state would be responsible for providing asylum for refugees. Ideally it aimed to prevent the dense collection of refugees in only a few states, and instead have the responsibility of intaking refugees distributed evenly. While this seems well-intentioned, the result was nearly the opposite. Rather than easing pressure on Member States overall, pressure increased for the border countries of Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece, and Italy because the majority of refugees, who traveled by land and sea, would cross through these same few countries before reaching other parts of the EU. According to the Regulation, they would have to be registered and remain in these first points of entry.

The Dublin Regulation had dire consequences for both EU border countries and for refugees trying to gain admittance to the Union. Overwhelming numbers of asylum applications flooded the resources of these countries because the Regulation does not take into account a state's capacity for absorbing refugees. Hungary in 2015, for example, refused to welcome 'returned applicants' back into the country—referring to refugees who were initially registered in Hungary but managed to travel to other countries in the EU before they were detected again—under the guise that Hungarian authorities were unwilling or unable to expend more

resources on the integration of refugees at the time. It is important to note that Hungary's refusal arose not just from strains on the country's resources, but also from the Orbán government's right-wing populist antagonism toward people seeking asylum. At the same time, many refugees desperately sought reunification with family members and friends who were in specific countries, or chased dreams told about employment and livelihood opportunities in Central Europe. The looming existence of the Dublin Regulation forced refugees to find ways to circumvent the rule so they could reach the country they desired to get to. Clandestine methods quickly developed that allowed refugees to make their way through European Union states while avoiding detection by authorities—and that prevented authorities from identifying refugees if they were caught, so they would not be forced to remain in whatever country they were discovered in, or to return to their first EU entry-point. One such method was to burn one's fingertips with a lit cigarette, so that one's fingerprints were temporarily undetectable. Other methods involved stealth: moving at night, through forests, and staying low to the ground when making border-crossings. Social media groups developed in which refugees who had successfully made it across many nation-state thresholds without falling subject to the Dublin Regulation shared tips about their journeys (Schmidle).

Refugees who attempted the sea route from the coast of Turkey to islands in Greece or parts of Italy used parallel methods of maintaining stealth to avoid detection by the Turkish, Greek, and Italian coast guards, as advised by the smugglers who usually arranged the logistics of these trips. When smugglers transported large groups, they would shuttle refugees in smaller dinghies out to bigger ships that were waiting in international waters. Refugees were told to keep their cell phones off to prevent transmission signals from being picked up, and, when they made shorter trips on their own with small groups, to destroy their rafts upon arrival at the opposite

shore so as not to be easily turned around and sent back. After three failed attempts to reach Italy

by sea, Ghaith changed strategies and finally reached Europe on his fourth crossing attempt,

traveling the shorter distance across the Aegean Sea to Greece. Attempts to cross parts of the

Mediterranean commonly ended in failure and transportation back to the country that the fleeing

person left from. Thinking back to his third failed attempt to cross the Mediterranean from

Turkey to Italy, Ghaith recounted a moment of panic to Schmidle that is frighteningly

reminiscent of Josef K.'s senseless encounters with law enforcement:

> Bilal told me that, in the woods, "dogs were howling like wolves." Bats swooped
> amid the trees. A man cupped his hand over the mouth of his son, who was
> crying. People began to run in fear, and Ghaith sprinted to the front. Were they
> being chased by the police? What if the boat's captain decided that too many
> people had come, and took only some of them? Ghaith thought of his life in Syria.
> "We'd be on our way to work and hear sniper fire, and we'd run to get safe," he
> said. "We used to run wherever we went. That night, we were doing the same
> thing—running for our lives." (Schmidle)

Josef K. often confronted very similar questions: who was watching him? Who was following

him? Was he truly guilty of something? Even in the absence of discernible danger, terror spread

throughout the group of refugees like wildfire, akin to the anxiety that Josef K. felt constantly,

regardless of the fact that he was convinced of his innocence.

Turkey and the European Union came to an agreement in March 2016 that encouraged

Turkey to harshly police their maritime borders, making boat trips such as the one that Ghaith

took infinitely more challenging. An intended purpose of the agreement was to disrupt "the

business model of the smugglers and to offer migrants an alternative to putting their lives at risk"

(European Council), because refugees are a vulnerable population that smugglers take advantage

of. Smugglers commonly prey on refugees in the form of promised voyages that require up-front

payment, only for those voyages to never take place, or for those voyages to never reach their

destination. It can be presumed, though, that this agreement was a disguised measure to limit the steep influx of Syrians into the European Union from Turkey.

Ghaith and his companions encountered harsh treatment after crossing the nation-state threshold between Greece and Macedonia. Having been chased away from the border once, the group had circled back and successfully crossed into the small Macedonian town of Gevgelija. There they awoke from where they had slept on the sidewalk to baton beatings from a police officer; the same police officer repeated the abuse later on when he found the group of refugees trying to sleep in a park, but he never took official legal action against them or requested identification. According to Joel Millman, an International Organization for Migration spokesman, "in southeastern Europe the goal of the police was usually not to arrest refugees but to intimidate and harass them" (Schmidle). This culture of systemic harassment is for the most part encouraged because a small country like Macedonia does not have the capacity to arrest all, or even a significant proportion, of the refugees passing through. Rather than filing any paperwork, the Macedonian police escorted the group back to the Greek border, where they found an alternative route back into Macedonia that bypassed Gevgelija.

Leaving Macedonia, Ghaith's group received instructions from a local police officer about how to sneak over the northern border into Serbia. Government authorities in Europe proved to be keen on preventing refugees from entering their respective countries, but were quick to provide support if it meant those refugees were on their way out—and becoming someone else's problem, so to speak (Schmidle). This tendency to shift the responsibility of refugees onto other EU member states, known as 'asylum orbiting,' was another issue that the Dublin Regulation intended to target by establishing a clear-cut answer as to which nation-state dealt with which refugees. The Regulation was relatively unsuccessful at addressing this issue,

because, as is clear in the situation of Ghaith and countless others, most states cared not to claim and take care of refugees.

Once in Serbia, the refugees were pleasantly surprised to encounter the familiarity of Muslim culture in a halal restaurant. Ghaith reunited with another refugee in Belgrade that he had traveled with earlier on his journey, and from there they formed a plan to pass through Hungary by foot and on to Vienna in a van with the help of a couple they became acquainted with in the city (Schmidle). Crossing the sovereign threshold into Hungary represented another consequential move. It meant moving back into a territory that is a signatory to the Dublin Regulation, so the stakes were once again raised for moving beneath the radar (the Balkan states of Macedonia and Serbia are not currently EU member states, and don't adhere to the Regulation). In 2015, the year that Ghaith was making his escape from Syria, Hungarian riot police were also exposed for aggressively preventing refugees' access to trains that would transport them to Austria and Germany (Spindler) with tear gas and water cannons, with the intent of upholding the Dublin procedure. The Hungarian response was counterintuitive when compared to the words of the country's own prime minister, Viktor Orbán, who warned his people "of a 'Muslim threat' to a Christian culture" (Graham-Harrison) in reference to the thousands of refugees making their way through the country. One would think he should want to encourage the continuation of their trajectory to a different European country if he held discriminatory beliefs about the population in motion. Eventually, the refugees who had waited days, weeks, or months in Budapest for a train grew desperate to press onward, and began walking to the Austrian border. Hungarian authorities soon recognized the futility in their efforts to stop them, and unexpectedly began shuttling refugees the rest of the way to the border on public buses.

After making it safely to Vienna, Ghaith and his friends traveled to Salzburg by train, and at long last to Munich by taxi for a final price of 800 euros. When Ghaith met his brother the following day after three long years apart, his brother wept and proclaimed, "'It was the most beautiful moment in my life,'" (Schmidle).

Ghaith and his travel companions made it from Syria to Germany by taking a sea route from Turkey to Greece and then making their way north through the Balkans, but there are many other variations of the journey, all of which are subject to the same processes of traversing nation-state thresholds and avoiding detection by authorities in order to reach the desired destination. An alternative sea route lands a refugee in Italy, allowing them to bypass the Balkan states and travel a much shorter distance on land to reach Austria or Germany. Another common trajectory is the land route, which takes a refugee from Turkey up through Bulgaria and then the Balkan states. Still others are sometimes able to obtain false passports that go unnoticed by airport authorities, allowing for a relatively smooth flight to Germany, though this option has a low success rate.

Kugler, Olivier. "The Migration Route of Syrian Refugee Ghaith." *The New Yorker*, 19 Oct. 2015.

The dangers of any one of these trajectories has not been emphasized enough. In April 2015, attention was brought to the deaths of several hundred Syrians who drowned in an attempt to cross the Mediterranean by boat (UNHCR). In August 2015, the perils of smuggling became clear when 71 refugees were discovered dead in a refrigeration truck near the border between Austria and Hungary (Spindler). Though Syrians had been escaping the country since the first

year of the war, this series of publicized tragedies in 2015 was a critical turning point in global awareness of the struggles and treacherous paths endured by Syrian refugees.

As of August 2015, Germany made the decision to suspend the Dublin procedure for incoming Syrians; this was incredible news for many, who no longer had to fear deportation from Germany. The decision applied to all previously planned deportations of Syrians under the Dublin Regulation as well, effectively cancelling them (Taylor). German officials involved in the decision anticipate an eventual 'return on investment,' referring to the hope that years down the line, this wave of refugees will become integrated into the labor market and benefit the German economy. Economist Günter Hirth from the Chamber of Commerce in Hanover phrased this hope as a need to be fulfilled: "'We have real reasons — not just soft, feel-good ones — to assist and help and push refugees into vocational training … The German economy needs qualified workers'" (Witte et al.). Though it is necessary to emphasize that this potential positive impact on the economy can only happen very gradually, an article written in May 2019, just four years after the largest refugee influx to Germany during the Syrian civil war, noted the following statistics: "Germany is beginning to reap some gains. The number who are either working or participating in a job training program has been growing, and was at more than 400,000 as of the end of 2018. Of those, 44,000 were enrolled in apprenticeships, according to German business groups" (Witte et al.). Such opportunities for job training and employment are one of numerous reasons why so many Syrians made Germany their destination goal. Germany has a reputation for maintaining an inclusive welfare system as well, making it an attractive place of residence. The rhetoric of the German government and chancellor Angela Merkel regarding refugees also inspired hope in those who had been met with so much hate and exclusion at nearly every turn on their flight from Syria. Merkel made the famous remark, "*Wir schaffen das*" (Oltermann) in

2015, meaning, 'we will manage this,' which is quite contrary to the brutality faced by Ghaith and other refugees in most other nation-states they passed through.

With the open internal borders of the European Union, the final border-crossing into Germany didn't often pose a great challenge. The scene at the main train station in Munich during the summer and fall of 2015 was chaotic to say the least, often with several thousand people disembarking on a daily basis. Even with Bavarian state employees and other volunteers waiting to welcome them to the country, displaced people were forced to make the immediate adjustment to navigating the public transportation system in a new language. From the Munich station, refugees made their way to other destinations within the country by various informal means. Some refugees were able to get in touch with family members or friends that had previously arrived in Germany and had the ability to pick them up by car. Others took trains that would bring them to Berlin and other cities, while still others tried to catch rides with volunteers offering to drive them to their next port of call. Nevertheless, refugees likely felt a brief sense of relief when they finally crossed the border into Germany in 2015 and early 2016. Despite the emotional barriers they overcame to decide to flee their homes, the physical barriers of distance over land and sea, the legislative barriers of policies like the Dublin Regulation and the Turkey-EU agreement, the financial barriers of the smuggler and transportation fees, and the political barriers in place by nature of constructed borders, these refugees had arrived in their destination country—knowing that many others making the same journey would never make it. This feeling of respite probably did not last long, however, because the end of the long, complicated journey that led them to Germany merely signified the start of a new one. This crossing of the threshold into Germany evokes the feeling that the man from the country might

have felt if he ever made it beyond the very first gatekeeper—only to engage with exceedingly more powerful gatekeepers of the law at each new boundary.

III.   The Situation in Berlin

This research focuses on Berlin in 2015 and 2016 as a case-study because of the unique difficulties the city faced in the context of refugee integration. Refugees arriving in Germany were distributed among the country's 16 federal states based on tax revenue and total population (Katz). Three of the regions that fall into this category are the city-states of Berlin, Bremen, and Hamburg. In the German context, a city-state indicates a city that functions with federal state status, resulting in higher concentrations of refugees because population density is not factored into the distribution system. This oversight leads to overcrowding and a lack of affordable housing units, among other necessities, in these regions. Regardless of these disproportionate challenges, newly-arrived refugees hope for the chance to reside in these cities with the promise of greater employment and education opportunities.

Once in Berlin, asylum-seekers made their way to the neighborhood of Moabit where their first encounter with German bureaucracy would have been with the State Office for Health and Social Affairs, or *Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales* (*LaGeSo*).[3] For a new-comer to the country, navigating the train system could be daunting, and refugees often came straight from *Hauptbahnhof*, the central railway station in Berlin. This was just the beginning of a process that required refugees to jump through endless hoops with no guarantee of receiving asylum status, access to temporary and permanent housing, medical attention, or community or government institutions. Gaining admittance to the *LaGeSo* office in Berlin in 2015 and 2016 presented refugees with an opportunity to request an asylum application and be assigned to temporary

---

[3] By 2017, the role of refugee management had been passed from the *Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales* (*LaGeSo*) to the *Landesamt für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten* (*LAF*).

shelter. However, registering at *LaGeSo* was not as simple as making an appointment. There was a system in which each individual or party received a number, wristband, or card, and waited outside the *LaGeSo* building until their number (or wristband color, etc.) was called to initiate the registration process. With a waiting system that regularly changed multiple times within the span of just a few weeks, refugees were left to labor through language barriers and constantly varying rules just to figure out how to correctly add themselves to the queue that wrapped around itself in a courtyard outside the office building. Christiane Beckmann, spokesperson for volunteer group *Moabit hilft*, told reporters in early 2016 that her group had "been reporting for weeks and months that people have to stand in line here in inhumane conditions," and that "people have been standing up to their ankles in mud in the rain" (Knight). People in line waited through the freezing cold and sweltering heat while lacking appropriate clothing, food, water, and medical attention. One woman—Sarah Kohestani—suffered a severe leg burn while on her journey to Germany from Afghanistan. 14 days since arriving in Berlin, Kohestani had still not seen a doctor or been provided a decent place to sleep (Coggin).

While there was no average or predictable wait time outside of *LaGeSo* headquarters, it was often reported that people waited outside in these harsh conditions for up to 10 hours a day. This could go on for anywhere from four days to six weeks (Knight). While these asylum-seekers waited their turn, *LaGeSo* did not provide basic shelter for them to reside in. Night fell and the nearby streets would become lined refugees trying to get some sleep. Others remained directly outside the office until it opened again the next morning. In the event that an asylum seeker stepped away from the throng for just a few minutes during the day, they risked missing their opportunity to enter the *LaGeSo* office, request an asylum application, and learn about the next steps of the process.

Bensch, Fabrizio. "Migrants Queue on a Street to Enter the Compound Outside the Berlin Office of Health and Social Affairs (LAGESO) for Their Registration Process in Berlin, Germany." *Reuters*, 9 Dec. 2015.

These next steps included learning about the application for asylum and German residency—*LaGeSo* was not actually responsible for processing applications—which one must submit through the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, or the *Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge* (*BAMF*). Refugees also had to complete a medical exam at *LaGeSo* prior to submitting their application. They were informed that asylum status and German residency must be attained before they could obtain a private apartment or a job. In the last five years, asylum applications have typically taken anywhere from several weeks to a year to be processed and approved (Berlin Refugee Project). After submitting an application, all asylum-seekers aged six years and older would be invited to an in-person interview in which they had to provide proof of the persecution or harm that they were fleeing, along with other information about how they arrived in Germany (Library of Congress).

Only after the completion of these steps could a refugee receive their assignment to their first accommodation experience at an initial reception center (*Aufnahmeeinrichtung*). It is crucial to note that this means asylum-seekers in Berlin were effectively homeless until they were lucky enough to have their case addressed at *LaGeSo*.

These reception centers are operated at the federal level, and there is at least one of these centers present in each of the 16 German federal states. A refugee typically spent six months living in one of these centers after their application had been submitted.[4] In 2017, the federal government passed a provision that allowed the federal states to mandate that a refugee remain at such a reception center for up to 24 months. Asylum-seekers who arrived in any of the other 15 federal states underwent the same registration process at arrival centers (which usually doubled as initial reception centers) that asylum-seekers in Berlin underwent at *LaGeSo*.

Guidelines developed by federal states for minimum standards of initial reception centers were a helpful frame of reference early on when pre-existing reception centers still had room to accommodate refugees. These guidelines fell to the wayside quite quickly, though, as buildings filled up, and emergency shelters took shape. A typical experience at an initial reception center involved a "noisy environment, small space and a lack of privacy in certain emergency and group accommodation facilities, which has negative effects on social atmosphere and well-being" (Adam et al., 213). A recurring theme found throughout many different studies of many different reception centers was an inability to work or concentrate on learning. Refugees who were enrolled in language or integration courses found it near impossible to focus on their studies when they lived in the centers, and had no choice to leave. One refugee named Basel who previously taught Arabic at a Syrian university expressed his frustrations with the contradiction

---

[4] A reform in 2019 extended the general obligation to stay at an initial reception center to 18 months (*Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration*).

he found himself in: "'They told us 'you should integrate' but how? I couldn't study. Every day, I couldn't sleep before 3am. In the camp there were people drinking, fighting, people who were traumatized by bombs,'" (Meaker). At an even more basic level, the conditions of these reception centers sometimes had the consequence of producing psychosocial disorders. There were women who could essentially never remove their hijabs because there were no private spaces, and refugees of all demographics—men, women, and children alike—did not feel safe in these accommodations, citing reasons such as showers that had no locks (Adam et al., 213). During periods with high levels of traffic moving through these centers, "the needs of refugees with special vulnerabilities were not taken into consideration" (Adam et al., 211). This refers to the agreed-upon standard that vulnerable populations such as refugees with disabilities and pregnant women were supposed to be placed in housing that addressed their particular needs.

Since *LaGeSo* lacked refuge for all who waited outside its doors, and the city-state of Berlin did not have an established initial reception center in the earlier part of 2015, refugees were forced to navigate this new and foreign city in search of lodging. By November 2015, Berlin's Senate had opened all available space at Tempelhof Airport to refugees as one of these initial reception centers (*Aufnahmeeinrichtung*) in an attempt to combat this issue. The history of the space is menacing and grim. Though the airfield itself has been in use since the 19th century, the current airport that stands at Tempelhof was commissioned by Hitler in the late 1930s. Having taken a personal interest in the project, he ensured that the architecture demonstrated sentiments of the Nazi era (Shead). Throughout the Nazi regime, the airport was used as a production site for firearms. The space is also reminiscent of an old Gestapo prison, and concentration and forced labor camps that were set there in the mid-20th century.

The contemporary circumstances at Tempelhof are similarly grim. One reporter from the World Socialist Web Site, Verena Nees, described the 2015 conditions at the airport as follows:

> The site is a gloomy place, cold and inhospitable. The entrances to the hangars are halfway underground and unobservable from the street. They are found on a path leading through a narrow underpass. Beyond the entryways, an oppressive feeling assails the visitor as though he were entering a strange, bygone world. To the left and right stand old, yellow-grey walls, cross-barred and factory windows, with stairs leading to air force depots where armaments were once stored.

Nees goes on to describe how the area was entirely cut off from the city's nearby housing units, and that the only real neighbor to the site was the Berlin police headquarters, inevitably creating a threatening and isolating environment for those who had no other option than to seek refuge at the airport.

With the site now managed by the Berlin Senate, the federal city-state oversees the operations at Tempelhof. This is problematic when one examines the individuals who hold high positions in this sector. It was not enough for Berlin's police headquarters to be directly adjacent to the site where up to 6,000 refugees were housed—as of August 2015, the Coordination Staff for Refugee Management was led by project manager Klaus Keese, former head of the police force's Section I (Nees). In September of the same year, ex-police chief Dieter Glietsch took on the role of Secretary of State for Refugees.

The lived experience of refugees staying at Tempelhof was disturbingly unique. Because of the building's status as a protected historic monument, the temporary nature of the camp was constantly enforced. Nothing could be attached to the walls, and not a single alteration could be made to account for the fact that thousands of people began living there. Refugees hung sheets from their beds and rearranged the bunks to try to emulate some distorted idea of a household with the materials they had. In the early stages of Tempelhof acting as a reception center,

refugees took to creating art on the cloths and temporary walls they had set up. Within a few months, though, the graffiti practice was banned, which seemed to be the only thing the asylum-seekers at the airport had influence over (Parsloe). The impromptu reception center seemed to sap people of their agency. Tempelhof, with its troubled past, its strict regulations in the present regarding the movement of the people who resided there, and its federal managers with law enforcement backgrounds, lightly evoked the feeling of a panopticon. These factors created an environment suggestive of Josef K.'s world: a world of limitations, waiting, and being observed.

When a refugee's obligation to stay at one of these initial reception centers came to an end, they were supposed to be moved to a collective accommodation center (*Gemeinschaftsunterkunft*) as dictated by Section 53 of the German Asylum Act. Collective or group accommodation centers technically refer to "self-contained dwellings" with a limit of 80 people per building (Adam et al., 210), and were typically set up in sports halls, temporary building constructions, hotels with rooms occupied by multiple people, or even emergency shelters when nothing else was available. The conditions of collective accommodation centers mirrored those at initial reception centers, and fell below the same guidelines for minimum standards as soon as emergency structures were constructed. These accommodations have been shown to be detrimental to the psychological well-being of refugees, and to "limit contact possibilities with the host society" (210) which in turn results in a negative association by the local population.

Decentralized accommodation is the final stage in this process of transitioning from one type of accommodation to another, and is typically only offered to an individual or family once having been granted German residency permits (*Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration*).

These decentralized accommodations usually refer to apartments in the private rental market, and are seen as the most stable and appropriate forms of long-term housing for refugees. The relevance of the transition into a private apartment for a refugee's overall integration process will be expanded on throughout this project.

Chapter 2: Federal and State Housing Policies and Their Limits

An apartment in the private rental market is the physical end-goal for most refugees in Berlin. Often having spent years navigating the asylum-seeking process and moving between spaces assigned to them by federal and municipal governments, this transition to private quarters is a significant step and an opportunity at privacy. It is symbolic of their acclimation to life in this new host society, and hopefully provides a space in which they are finally allowed to explore the idea of home once more, after leaving their original home so abruptly. However, there exist a myriad of barriers that refugees must overcome as they seek this stability.

I. Germany's Record of Housing Commitments

Since the founding of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) in 1949, Germany has shown a historical commitment to the provision of housing for its residents, considering decent housing to be a basic right (History.com Editors). The damage and destruction caused by World War II in Eastern Europe left millions homeless, with another 9-12 million ethnic Germans expelled from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and other states within the Soviet Union's sphere of influence. These factors resulted in a massive wave of refugees migrating to West Germany. At the time, these ethnic Germans expelled from Eastern Europe were referred to as *Flüchtlinge* ('refugees') and *Vertriebene* ('expellees'). West Germany itself suffered a great loss of homes in the war as well. This combination of demolition and expulsion efforts led to a housing shortage in which there were approximately 10 million housing units for a total of 17 million households (U.S. Library of Congress). Many of the refugees, who flocked to Berlin (and other parts of the two German states) to find new homes, brought with them skills that were ready to be adapted to a new context. With the help of these refugees, both the East and West German states facilitated and

financially supported the construction of millions of households in the 1950s and 60s. As the East German socialist state became more repressive over the years, the term *Flüchtlinge* was used more narrowly to refer to East Germans who fled the German Democratic Republic to the Federal Republic of Germany.

Germany has continued striving to protect the social rights of its residents since this initial wave of postwar housing construction. Since then, Germany has worked to construct up to 400,000 new housing units per year. Financial aid programs are offered by the government to households "devoting too great a share of their income to housing costs. The aid can subsidize their rents or help pay mortgages" (U.S. Library of Congress).

Reunification in 1990 led to new efforts of improving housing conditions and affordability, but as of 1993, "the need for housing outpaced the supply" (U.S. Library of Congress). There was a high labor demand for migrants in hopes of boosting economic development. That need coincided with an incoming wave of refugees largely from Yugoslavia and other Balkan states—who fled their home countries in response to mass violence—many of whom struggled to find accommodations (Chin).

A contradiction in Germany's commitment to safeguarding these rights becomes apparent, however, when examining the protection of a refugee's right to housing in the present day. Since the country's mass influx of mainly Syrian refugees in 2015, displaced people have again struggled to gain a foothold in the private housing market. Despite Germany's efforts at the continual construction of housing units, there remains a housing shortage for migrants and permanent residents alike—particularly in Berlin—making it difficult for refugees to secure a rental apartment. The average rental cost of a Berlin apartment sharply climbed in the last decade due to the growing population and abundance of single-person households, adding to the

challenge. In response to rising rental costs, Berlin's House of Representatives instituted the

Mietendeckel (rent cap) in January 2020, which effectively 'freezes' the rent of roughly 90% of

all rental apartments in Berlin for five years. The *Mietendeckel* does not apply to buildings and

apartments that are newly inhabitable as of 2014, and to apartments that are subsidized or are in

publicly-funded developments (Senate Department for Urban Development and Housing). These

remaining apartments that are not affected by the rent cap happen to be ones that refugees

commonly resort to, in part because many newer construction projects are undertaken with the

intent of providing more housing options for refugees. The consequence is that refugees don't

substantially benefit from this new policy and continue to face challenges in their acquisition of

private housing.

II.   Policy Gaps: Failures in Manufactured Power Structures

In a study entitled *Municipal Housing Strategies for Refugees: Insights from Two Case

Studies in Germany*, Francesca Adam and her colleagues begin to question the notion that

refugees alone are responsible for their fluid integration into a host society. This group of

scholars uses the term 'structural integration' to encompass the idea of social positioning, which

references "migrants' access to the core areas of the host society, such as housing, work,

education and health," and the idea that "integration is a process that involves migrants as well as

society and the state" (Adam et al., 203). With the task of integration shared among these actors,

each must work effectively toward the common goal in order to achieve it. Adam and her

colleagues note that even though "states pursue integration policy e.g. through laws and the

funding of programmes and provisions," such policy "does not easily translate into outcomes"

(203). The West German efforts to accommodate East German refugees during the post-war

period is exemplary of the many power structures at play in the development of policies that

affect integration: "these efforts required the cooperation of organizations and agencies at several levels of government, and disagreements among the West German Länder, West Berlin, and the Federal Government had a significant impact on the reception process" (Limbach).

There are three identifiable gaps that are the origins of this contrast between the initial writing of government policy and how policy plays out in reality. The research conducted by Adam and others involves case studies specific to Germany, and policies specific to migration and integration, but the findings are relevant to any democratically organized society, and essentially to any issue that is shaped by government policy. The first gap exists between public discourse regarding policy and the policy that ends up being written and documented ('discursive gap'). The second gap exists between the written policy documents and how such policy is executed or implemented ('implementation gap'). The third gap exists between the implementation of policy and the theoretical or anticipated outcomes ('efficacy gap').

The 'manufactured power structures' I refer to in this section go beyond the politicians, or federal state actors, who are responsible for the actual written policy documents. The discursive gap brings into play 'the public,' or societal actors; I comprise this group of all members of a society along with the opinions expressed by said members. In this case, societal actors can refer to German individuals as well as the masses who may consolidate the expression of their opinions by way of media representation, or events such as public protests. A notable inclusion in this group is those with scholarly and academic input, who have the potential to influence state actors through publications, research, and events such as political conferences in which the sharing of their opinions and findings might be encouraged. In his dissertation entitled *Unsettled Germans: the Reception and Resettlement of East German Refugees in West Germany, 1949-1961*, Eric H. Limbach illustrates this historic and on-going conversation between scholars

and policy-makers. In the post-war period that he writes about, a group of hundreds of scholars and researchers from "German universities, research centers and government ministries" gathered annually with other "sociologists, demographers, historians, economists, and other social scientists from around Europe" (Limbach, 131) to discuss their studies of the refugee problem faced by Europe. In the 1959 conference of this group, called the Association for the Study of the European Refugee Problem (AER), the intention was to share developments in everyone's studies, and, for the German section in particular, how such work had real impact on West Berlin's progress in handling its refugee problem. For years, the Federal Government "provided significant funding for the organization" and "strongly supported its goal of publicizing refugee issues—German and otherwise—in the international arena" (Limbach, 132). Other collections of academics existed at the time as well, and all of these groups were oriented toward helping the federal governments of Europe resolve the refugee problem. Even so, conflicts in doctrines eventually arose, causing mistrust and rifts in the relationship between these groups and the Federal Republic of Germany. While this was certainly not the origin of the discursive gap, the German government was much less inclined to take policy suggestions that came out of the public discourse produced at conferences such as the ones held by the AER after that. Previously, "bureaucrats within the West German ministries occasionally advocated for positions more in-tune with their academic peers than the official government line" (Limbach, 137). The negative significance of this change shows itself in written policy that does not necessarily take into account the advice of seasoned intellectual authorities.

Another example of the discursive gap is clear in the fact that the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees seems to make the sweeping promise that any individual who experiences or has reasonable fear of experiencing persecution may enjoy the right to asylum.

This is an ideal, but the intense levels of the asylum application process in Germany and many other countries, including evaluation procedures that supposedly determine the validity of an asylum-seekers request, show a disjuncture between pledges and actualized policy.

The implementation gap brings into play a hierarchical array of government offices and levels, language, non-government organizations, private investors, and again, societal actors. The Federal Republic of Germany is a democratic nation consisting of 16 federal states, all of which contain many municipalities. The federal and state levels of government have legislative power; these are the levels at which laws and policies are written. The municipal levels of government oversee how policy is implemented.

The specific language used in written legislation becomes a live actor in the process because subjective phrasing allows for interpretation and flexibility at lower administrative levels of government. Adam et al. illustrates this issue well:

> The federal asylum law states that foreigners who have applied for asylum *should* be housed in group accommodation. This 'should' rule at the federal level gives leeway to the other administrative levels. Therefore, the type of accommodation provided very much depends on political opinion and structural constraints within the municipalities. (205)

There are government-employed individuals at the most local level responsible for interpreting this written policy language and deciding how to allocate available local resources to institute said policy. 'Political opinion' is relevant because it dictates the priorities of these individuals, and affects their decisions regarding the weight that they give to some policies in comparison to others. This means that recommendations and non-mandated action designed at the federal and state level, for example, cannot be relied upon as substantial measures of change. A factor as simple as the lack of emotional motivation of a single government actor to address such

recommendations can alter the course of a refugee's life. An expert consulted in the study by Adam and her colleagues described this effect: "If the man at the top does want to [support refugees' integration], it has an effect further down. There are social welfare office managers or employees in social welfare offices who euphorically helped me one year ago, (...) today they shrug their shoulders" (216).

Oversights and miscalculations made by higher administrative levels also threaten the effective implementation of policy. If a state overestimates the availability of resources in its local regions, such as housing units or municipal budgets, local governments might be unable to actualize policies that necessitate those resources.

Non-government organizations are imperative to the well-being and smooth integration of refugees because of these policy gaps perpetuated by poor management and communication between varying government levels and offices. If a municipality needs some refugees to transition from group accommodations to private rental housing in order to create more space in the existing group accommodations for newly-arrived refugees, but faces budgetary constraints and therefore cannot supply the workers to assist in this process, non-government organizations can sometimes work to fill those gaps in resources. In cases like this, "voluntary initiatives, welfare organisations, housing companies as well as municipal administration staff are involved and are ideally in close contact" (Adam et al., 215).

The interweaving influence of every actor in this process bestows a headache upon anyone who chooses to look closely at each thread. Beyond the roles of administrative government levels, written policy itself, and non-government organizations, the success of policy implementation (and therefore the integration of refugees) is further hindered by the interests of local societal actors and private investors. In many incidents, long-term local residents apply

pressure on their municipal governments regarding their opinions about refugees through phone calls, online forums, media publications, or other public avenues. Cologne was noted to have recently experienced this pressure: "neighbors express concern regarding the construction of group accommodation, since they fear the devaluation of their properties and a growing competition for childcare facilities" (Adam et al., 213). Theoretically, politicians work to serve the interests of their communities, and the way that they interpret and implement policies can be swayed if they are convinced that doing so aligns with their community's ideals.[5] Concerns such as the ones expressed in Cologne can gravely impact the integration and well-being of refugees if significant political attention is paid to them. With the added layer of leniency provided by subjective language in policies, a municipal politician who has been tasked with overseeing the construction of new group accommodations might decide to move the construction site from an accessible part of town to the outskirts of their district as a result of concerns like this. The remote locations of accommodations can be harmful to the integration process of refugees because they present challenges of accessing critical resources such as public transportation, employment and educational opportunities, or even the basic needs of medical services or supermarkets. So in this case, a policy that was intended to aid refugees in their integration process might instead impede the process by limiting their interactions with the host community because of poor implementation strategy and local discrimination.

Private investors occasionally interact with policy in a manner similar to that of local residents. Since 2015, subsidised housing construction has increased in Germany because of policies introduced at the state level. Though private investors don't exactly have influence over the implementation of traditional integration policies, they are relevant actors in the integration

---

[5] It is important to note that this notion of 'community' is exclusive; even if refugees achieve asylum status, their voices are frequently excluded from political discourse. Refugees are often set apart as 'outsiders' or 'others' through racial and cultural discrimination.

process of refugees because they have the ability to negotiate these housing contracts with municipalities (Adam et al., 216). Despite these state policies that suggest specific percentages of new residential construction that should be dedicated to affordable units, and the introduction of state programs that help to finance subsidised housing, "private investors are still more likely to focus their construction on single-/multi-family homes as well as condominiums in the upscale price segment, so predominantly expensive residential property is emerging" (Adam et al., 217). Even with financial programs available, it is up to the municipal administration to commit to undertaking these projects and facilitating cooperation with private investors and long-term residents.

The efficacy gap, which encompasses "whether and to what extent implemented policy documents have the intended effects" (Adam et al., 203), finally introduces the actors who are the recipients, or beneficiaries, of actual written policy and its consequences. In the case of Adam and others' study, as well as this project, this group involves recently-arrived refugees in Germany. This process of establishing policy—beginning with the conception, followed by the institutionalization in writing, followed by the implementation and finally an evaluation of a policy's effectiveness—constructs a strict, hierarchical chain of command involving all the actors mentioned that fastens recently-arrived refugees to a position at the very bottom. The efficacy gap can sometimes be addressed through research that pinpoints unconsidered factors which also impact the intended outcomes of certain policy.

Naturally, every locality has needs that are unique to its geography, labor market, housing stock, differing levels of tolerance by its native population, and its particular refugee population. This makes it difficult for federal and state policy to address the specific implementation challenges faced by each local region. These varying needs, however, do not justify the leniency

that occurs in the implementation of policy. Federal and state levels need not handle the details of every individual municipality if the language of original policy is objectified, and if the communication between government levels improves such that lower administrative levels understand and adhere to the directives presented by upper administrative levels.

As demonstrated, this messy network of manufactured power structures tends to work against the incorporation of new members into German society—this pattern is apparent even when the intention is the opposite, caused by these policy gaps regarding integration, housing, and many other matters. The precondition for positive structural integration of refugees is therefore the collaboration and commitment of all actors to the process.

III.   Contemporary Policy Barriers to the Private Rental Housing Market

The first section of this chapter noted that post-war barriers to refugees' ability to access the German housing market involved circumstances such as housing shortages and sharp increases in population caused by large influxes of refugees over a short period of time. This is a simplification of the barriers faced by refugees in their attempts to enter the private housing markets of East and West Germany, with the intent to instead emphasize the historical efforts made by Germany to address the issue of accessible and affordable housing. The second section, meanwhile, highlighted the policy gaps that occur as a result of the disjointed web of political actors and influences. The analysis of those failures largely focuses on the process through which policy is created and executed, rather than policy itself.

This section will center the actual written policies that critically impact refugees as they attempt to make the transition out of group accommodations—consequently, these policies serve as barriers to the entrance into the local private rental housing market. It is important to keep in

mind the framework of the previous section when examining these policies, because all of those systemic failures apply here.

The fundamental theme that serves as an undercurrent to these policies is the restriction of movement. Since the post-war period, the voices of West German scholars, made heard during AER and similar conferences, "reflected a consensus that, while reserving a role for states in organizing and regulating migration, was critical of the increased controls aimed at preventing migration that had been in place since the First World War" (Limbach, 135). Returning to Kulischer's theory presented in the introduction of this project, he contends that there is a reciprocal relationship between war and migration. To be specific, he put forth that the obstruction of peaceful migration and "the unwilling introduction of migrants into unfamiliar societies" (Limbach, 141) births conflict and violence. The inverse effect is less relevant in the context of local private housing markets, but is included here for the sake of presenting the argument in full: "war itself created migration, in the concentrated movements of armies and the dispersed flights of refugees, as well as the settlement of conquered territories after the cessation of hostilities" (Limbach, 141). Kulischer's theory can be applied to the small-scale migration and internal movement that occurs as Syrian refugees transition from group accommodations to private housing. While the small-scale obstruction of movement between living situations does not result in the warfare conditions that Kulischer emphasizes, it produces small-scale conflict, such as structural violence. Limbach notes that Kulischer's analysis covered every scale of migration, down to "limited intra-city movements" (140) such as these.

Following are several policies that restrict or prevent the movement of refugees after their arrival in Germany. While a refugee's asylum application is under review, they are obligated to stay at the initial reception center they were assigned to, as described in Chapter 1. According to

the Library of Congress, refugees at this point in the process "may not leave the area without permission. The geographic restriction generally ends after three months or after the applicant is no longer required to stay in the initial reception facility."

After receiving approval of their asylum application, a refugee's movement still remains under the jurisdiction of local government agencies. A refugee will either continue to be housed in group accommodations, or "might be granted the right to an apartment depending on public interest and personal reasons like family reunification" (Library of Congress). Because this decision is based on subjective criteria and is left to local authorities, it falls prey to the implementation gap. Regardless, the 'residence rule' of Section 12a of the Residence Act mandates that all refugees must take up residence within the federal state in which they applied for asylum (Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration). If a refugee is granted the right to an apartment, there are currently seven federal states that can "restrict his or her residence permit to a specific German state and municipality" (Library of Congress) if the state authority determines that the refugee cannot obtain their own means of survival. The unjust subjectivity issue persists as states are given the power to decide what the threshold of survivability is for refugees—a power that states do not have over citizens and legal residents. In these states, a refugee can be obligated to reside in the municipality that they were originally allocated to for one or three years (Adam et al., 206).

From the federal government's perspective, there are several positive intended impacts of these restrictive residential policies. The *Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration* (Asylum Information Database) cites an 'official explanatory memorandum,' which maintains that the 'residence rule' is in place to "promote sustainable integration by preventing segregation of communities." This is an attempt by the government to evenly spread the distribution of migrants

and refugees among its different regions. Another likely intended purpose of such policy is to allow for municipalities to improve their planning of integration infrastructures. If municipalities have a better estimate of how many housing units they need to provide for refugees, they can formulate more realistic plans for new construction projects and proportions of housing units that need to be dedicated to low-income families and individuals. However, such restrictions on the movement of refugees threaten their ability to integrate. Being restricted to renting within a certain municipality can make it more difficult to locate affordable housing, because refugees cannot move to other municipalities with "less pressure on their housing markets" (Adam et al., 215). Residency restrictions can also adversely impact access to educational and employment opportunities. Restricting movement further perpetuates the policy gaps layed out in the previous section of this chapter. Because every municipality has different resources to offer, and is in need of different skill sets depending on the prominent local industries, it is logical that people should move between them accordingly to fulfill these demands.

Despite the claim that such regulations were created with the purpose of improving the integration process, a report published in 2020 that analyzed the impact of the 'residence rule' through a government survey shows disheartening results. Section 12a of the Residence Act was introduced on January 1, 2016, and therefore only impacted those who applied for asylum after that date. The report analyzes the situations of refugees who applied for asylum prior to its introduction compared to the situations of those who applied after. Unfortunately, refugees impacted by the 'residence rule' were found to be less likely to be employed as well as less likely to live in private housing (in contrast to group accommodations) as their counterparts in the study (Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration).

Because these policies introduce additional barriers to the private housing market, they contribute to structural violence experienced by refugees. If refugees are unable to locate suitable housing in the single municipality they are assigned to, they may typically only resort to continuing their stay in group accommodations, or to homelessness. Both options have starkly negative psychological and potentially physical dangers. Vulnerable populations such as pregnant women, children, and people with disabilities encounter particular challenges in collective living accommodations, in which there is typically no privacy or access to medical care. All populations are affected by the stressors produced in these environments characterized by confined, busy spaces. By and large, it is clear that policies which obstruct the natural movement of people produce negative effects on access to the private housing market, the structural integration process, and the well-being and safety of refugees.

Chapter 3: Capital Setbacks and Urban Residence Patterns

I will use Bourdieu's framework to examine refugees' challenges in acquiring forms of capital that are pertinent to Berlin's housing market and how those challenges (including time delays and capital setbacks) make the acquisition of private rental housing more difficult. I will then apply Bourdieu's different notions of capital to the situation of refugees in Berlin in order to determine the most effective housing—and therefore social—integration strategy. Following is a variety of ways in which refugees fit into this framework of time expended on the personal acquisition of material objects, knowledge, and skills [cultural capital], and of constant reaffirmation of group membership dictated by a market of exchange [social capital].

I.   The Relevance of Capital for Refugees in the Housing Market

The benefits of being a participatory member in a society involve the ability to obtain goods and utilize services. Capital is ultimately required to access goods and services in the market of exchange: one exchanges money for food at a grocery store; one exchanges health insurance information for medical attention at a doctor's office. Certain markets are accessible to people without some form of legal status within a nation-state, while other markets more or less require legal status for access. Buying food at a grocery store illustrates the first situation, while access to health insurance illustrates the second. Capital, at its core, is therefore a resource tied to specific markets and fields, and the three forms of capital—economic, cultural, and social—are simply different embodiments and symbols of time and effort investments. The arena of private rental housing is one market which requires both legal status and a significant amount of all three forms of capital to access.

Recently-arrived refugees in Berlin face innumerable barriers in the process of accumulating capital that is relevant to their new lives in Germany. First and foremost, the

concept of time is relevant here. Bourdieu writes, "the length of time for which an individual can prolong his acquisition process depends on the length of time for which his family can provide him with free time, i.e., time free from economic necessity, which is the precondition for the initial accumulation (time which can be evaluated as a handicap to be made up)" (246). Refugees unavoidably face a significant time delay in their development of capital in Germany compared to residents who have spent their lifetime there.

Refugees experience a delay in their development of economic capital by way of financial assets that were left behind in their country of origin. Naturally, it is an emotional challenge to leave the place that one calls 'home.' 'Home' was likely a place for many Syrians in which they had established connections, family members, friends, and livelihoods. It is natural that Syrians put off fleeing their homes for as long as they can—until it seems absolutely necessary for survival. When they finally do, they cannot bring with them their houses, along with all the financial investments put into them. With the country in violent turmoil and a severe lack of demand in the housing market, there is no hope to liquidate that asset. The uncertainty of where one is headed and when one will get there is cause for Syrians to pack as lightly as possible. This means leaving behind most other financial assets as well, including properties, businesses, vehicles, and valuable cultural goods such as paintings.

On top of these economic losses brought about by leaving one's home in a hurry, possibly forever, the act of fleeing itself requires substantial financial means. Transportation, food, and shelter costs add up quickly, especially when one does not know for how long one will be traveling. Displaced Syrians commonly resort to smugglers, with the promise of secure transportation to certain European countries, who demand high fees—and such smugglers often do not deliver on their promises, stringing these Syrians out for dead, as was the case in August

2015 with the refrigeration truck near the Austria-Hungary border. These financial losses are the first major capital setbacks for refugees.

After their arrival in Germany, displaced Syrians also experience major setbacks in their access to different forms of economic capital. Refugees cannot receive legal work authorization for a minimum of three months while their asylum cases are being evaluated and processed. Following this initial time barrier, there exists a rule called *Vorrangprüfung* ('priority check'). This rule assigns employment priority to any German or European Union citizen, so a refugee only stands a chance at obtaining legal work if there are no German or European candidates, which is, needless to say, rare.[6] The *Vorrangprüfung* rule becomes obsolete after a refugee has resided in Germany for a period of 15 months, but they still must receive approval from the municipal immigration office before accepting a job offer (Hamann), and the job market remains competitive. This stands in the way of their formal participation in the German labor market. To use Bourdieu's language, this situation only further undercuts their ability to accumulate economic capital.

These financial opportunity losses and capital setbacks gravely impact refugees' ability to secure rental housing for the simple reason that rental housing costs money. With nation-wide housing shortages that coincide with population growth, research conducted in 2018 by Deutsche Bank shows that housing prices rose alongside those numbers as well (Meaker). Security deposits and monthly rental payments that are basic requirements for moving into private rental apartments, coupled with ever-rising housing costs, make it nearly impossible for the majority of refugees to afford the transition into the housing market.

---

[6] Asylum-seekers' lack of legal work authorization is included in this section that deals with economic capital setbacks because it directly correlates to the potential for economic gain, but this is also an instance of refugees lacking institutionalized cultural capital.

Displaced Syrians in Berlin also face many obstacles in the housing market due to a delay in acquiring cultural capital. Cultural capital that proves valuable when trying to secure a private rental apartment includes the ability to speak German, which allows for smooth communication with state agencies and landlords. Similarly, a certain level of 'cultural competence' (Bourdieu, 245), which encompasses knowledge of German customs and an understanding of the workings of the German housing system, is a critical aspect of locating and securing an apartment. In comparison to residents for whom German is their first language, and German customs are what they grew up with, refugees are instantly at a disadvantage in the housing market. Some refugee advocacy organizations seek to remedy this disadvantage by pairing refugees with long-term German residents and citizens who can act as mediators during the housing search. These people can be of assistance thanks to their own German cultural capital, but because such arrangements are with volunteers who may not have topical expertise in the Berlin housing market, these mediators often have to receive training related to local housing searches themselves.

Here I will briefly deal with the relevance of discrimination on refugees' entrance into the housing market. The extent of this sort of discrimination, though, goes far beyond what I lay out. Stephan Duennwald, member of the Bavarian Refugee Council, describes the racial and cultural discrimination faced by refugees when searching for housing in the private sector: "'Landlords want to have a 'proper German couple,' says Duennwald. 'Because there are so many people searching for apartments, refugees have no chance.' Research by the Berlin Institute for Integration and Migration found landlords were reluctant to rent to refugees because they worried they would not understand rules, such as when to put the bins out or that Sundays should be 'quiet days'" (Meaker). This kind of discrimination is based on the presumption that refugees do not have the capacity to obtain a very basic level of cultural competence. This is

disrespectfully inaccurate: the concerns these landlords present may be alleviated with brief conversation or instruction. Some Syrian refugees are already fluent in German upon their arrival, while others arrive in the process of studying the language and can hold basic conversation. Still others can benefit from programs such as the one mentioned above that pairs refugees and long-term German residents to ensure an understanding of simple apartment rules. The issue in these circumstances lies not in the refugee's setback in cultural mastery, which can easily be approached and overcome with time, but in the German landlord's intolerance and unwillingness to welcome the refugee as a fellow human.

In addition to the previously-mentioned lack of legal authorization to work in Germany after arrival, refugees face yet another cultural capital setback in the labor market: educational and employment qualifications acquired in Syria that do not convert to the German context. A Syrian who invested time and effort (and therefore capital) to obtain a degree in teaching, or engineering, for example, might not be able to obtain a job of the same caliber in Germany. According to Deutsche Welle, "The more documents a refugee can show proving his qualifications - vocational training or studies - the better. As a general rule, a qualification will only be recognized in Germany if the relevant documents can be provided" (Hamann). It is important to recall the treacherous journey Syrian refugees must undertake when fleeing their homes. Retaining one's documents that prove one's qualifications may seem like a simple task, but when traveling through warzones, facing abuse from smugglers, some spending weeks at sea in small, overloaded boats, or alternatively in trucks, on buses or trains, this is a difficult challenge when survival is the first priority. All of this means that a refugee who has the knowledge and qualifications to work a notable job can easily be set back years in their career path, or have that path derailed entirely.

Certificates of integration from the German government are a type of capital that can demonstrate to a landlord the cultural competency of a refugee, and could improve a refugee's chances at being approved for a private apartment. There are several kinds of German Integration Courses (such as language, legal, cultural, and history courses) that culminate in an examination, which, if passed, provides the test-taker with a certificate of integration. However, taking an integration course requires a significant amount of time (language courses alone can demand up to 600 hours), costs money, and can require an additional certificate, called *Berechtigungsschein*, just to apply to take a course (VisaGuide). If a person does not attain a minimum of the B1 level on the language portion of the test, they may only be permitted "to repeat the course on a one-off basis by attending an additional 300 lessons" (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees). The process of acquiring a certificate in order to apply to a course in which one can obtain another certificate conjures the mental image of Josef K.'s dizzying journey through the law offices, which are situated in a small apartment building, but have the capacity to contain hundreds of people in courtroom settings once he enters the building.

Though the same investments of time and effort might be made to acquire the same knowledge and skills possessed by a German native as by a Syrian refugee, the formal certificates, degrees, and qualifications that validate such knowledge possessed by the German native are significant enough to perpetually leave the Syrian refugee at a disadvantage. The time delay in establishing social connections is similarly only felt by recently-arrived persons. As demonstrated in the discussion of Bourdieu's "Forms of Capital," it is clear that setbacks in cultural capital translate to setbacks in economic capital, and a hindrance of both makes it remarkably more difficult to access the private housing market.

Finally, the delay that refugees experience in their acquisition of social capital is also a grueling impediment to their access to the private housing market—and it is largely their group accommodation living situations that prevent them from acquiring social capital. Here I will reiterate the basic profile of social capital for sake of clarity. It can be thought to be the accumulation of "actual or potential resources" (Bourdieu, 248), existing in the form of social networks and connections. One has access to the resources provided by others in their networks only if one is able to maintain one's connections to such a group. One's social capital and therefore one's potential benefits derived from this form of capital diminishes when these connections are not maintained. This is a great challenge faced by displaced Syrians in Germany, who leave the majority of their social connections in their country of origin and must forge entirely new connections in this new country. Families that are able to embark on the journey together initially are often separated somewhere along their route from Syria to Germany. Some refugees arrive in Germany with the intention of meeting family or friends that have already arrived or settled, but certain resources, such as transportation or contact information, are necessary for locating and traveling to those connections, and refugees don't necessarily have access to those resources after their arrival. Residing in initial reception centers and collective accommodations for even a short period of time gravely impacts refugees' development of social capital as well, due to the fact that social interactions with members of the host community are extremely limited. The circumstances of these group accommodations inhibit the development of the kinds of capital that would help refugees transition out of such accommodations.

Faced with so many seemingly insurmountable barriers to the traditional and legal labor and housing markets, refugees are often corralled toward parallel options: the 'black labor' (InfoMigrants) and 'black housing' (Meaker) markets. 'Black labor' refers to informal

participation in the labor market, meaning, to work without legal authorization. Since this kind of

participation requires operating in a clandestine manner, it involves a high level of risk. If such

informal participation in the labor market is detected by state authorities, it immediately

endangers a displaced person's chances at achieving asylum status, and might result in denial of

their application and deportation. This is an incredibly dangerous risk for an asylum-seeking

refugee to take after their countless sacrifices made to reach Germany. The fact that some

refugees opt for this route of employment despite the potential consequences demonstrates the

desperation for survival that is caused largely by these systemic barriers to the accumulation of

capital and therefore to a stable lifestyle. If a refugee chooses to partake in the black labor market

(as it is probably their only option for acquiring economic capital while they await the processing

of their asylum application), they enter a self-perpetuating cycle of exclusion. Working a job

external to the legal sphere likely exposes a refugee to exploitation and discrimination by their

employer. There is no legal accountability that holds the employer to the standard of paying

minimum wage, paying all promised wages, or permitting paid sick leave. This is a painful irony,

considering that a refugee's economic capital takes a direct hit if their employer does not adhere

to these standards, and that the need to accumulate economic capital would be the motivation for

a refugee to take an 'under the table' job when barred from the legal job market during their

asylum-seeking process. Furthermore, black labor excludes refugees from cultural

acclimatization as well. Lawyer Zemfira Dlovani notes this phenomenon through the nature of

this labor: "most under the table work is in a kitchen or a form of service where the worker can

not improve their language skills or integrate into society" (Hussein).

Refugees might be pushed toward the 'black housing market' option because a basic

level of social capital is required to locate private housing in Germany, which a refugee who has

only been accommodated in initial reception centers and collective accommodations might not have. A refugee interviewed by Morgan Meaker of the Reuters Foundation explains this dilemma in locating housing: "To find an apartment in Munich you have to know someone German or pay money on the black market," (Meaker). The 'black housing market' consists of black market brokers who hang around markets and parks, and "let people with money skip the queue, by offering to secure them apartments in exchange for a fee" (Meaker). Another refugee cited reasons for why he did not pursue the 3,000 euro black market option presented to him: "'I didn't want to make trouble as a refugee and of course, I don't have any work yet, so I couldn't afford it,'" (Meaker). Other refugees have reported apartment searches lasting multiple years, and black market broker offers with fees up to 5,000 euros.

II.   Effective Urban Residence Patterns for Optimal, Voluntary Integration

I return to the framing question for this project: how can recently displaced people be most effectively 'integrated' or 'incorporated' into their 'host society'? 'Integration' is a term that has a variety of connotations associated with it. The term is sometimes associated with a context of nonnative people being forced to integrate, and alternatively, circumstances of nonnative people voluntarily integrating in a manner of their choosing. Forced integration can take many forms, but generally aligns with an idea of assimilation and conformity. Historically, practices of forced integration have involved populations being made to convert their religious beliefs if they differ from that of a host society, and being stripped of cultural identities through a prevention of practices. This refers to anything from fashion to mannerisms and everything in between. Voluntary integration, on the other hand, allows populations to continue practicing and celebrating their own culture while simultaneously participating in the culture of their host society. Voluntary integration references multiculturalism and the fact that those two desired

realities are not mutually exclusive. The differentiation between these variations of the term is essential because the former can have incredibly harmful impacts on individuals and populations, whereas the latter can encourage harmony among diverse backgrounds, which is of the utmost importance in the contemporary world. In the answering of the framing question, I only consider effective integration to be that which enables societal participation but does not expect or demand cultural assimilation.

Throughout this project, entrance into the private rental housing market has served as an indicator of effective integration. The conclusion of Adam and her colleagues' *Municipal Housing Strategy* study includes a quote from a welfare organization that articulates this condition in a blunt but powerful manner: "Integration only starts when people live in an apartment" (Adam et al.). Achieving long-term housing contributes to the well-being of individuals by providing secure and consistent shelter—a basic human need—and by positioning a person within a community. I maintain that a stable living environment is a necessary precondition for one's uninterrupted participation in a society, defined by one's ability to both contribute to and benefit from said society.

With substantial networks and appropriate kinds of capital, it is possible for refugees to maneuver around the obstacles that stand in the way of transitioning into private housing and to overcome this inadequacy in Germany's integration process. The analysis of how displaced people can be most effectively integrated, however, must look beyond just the procurement of stable housing. This section will use concepts developed in previous sections of this project to examine the impact of different patterns of urban housing and residence on the accumulation of the different forms of, but chiefly, social capital, and thereby on the process of integration.

To make the transition into a rental apartment, a refugee must already have accumulated a certain, even if limited, amount of economic and cultural capital—economic capital to cover the initial rent and deposit of the apartment, and potentially to pay a black market broker for help in locating the apartment, and cultural capital to navigate the private housing system, communicate with the landlord, and present themself as someone capable of meeting the terms of the lease. After making this transition into their apartment, a refugee enters a position with an increased opportunity to accumulate embodied social capital.

The most effective pattern for urban residence is one that takes advantage of this opportunity and optimizes a refugee's accumulation of social capital, which catalyzes integration by leading to greater participation in German society.

There is considerable contention among scholars and policy-makers about determining what this pattern looks like. Geographer Francesca Adam and her colleagues present this ongoing debate in the context of migrants' proximity to others of the same ethnic background, as it relates to the development of social capital. One side of the debate takes the position that concentrating migrants in a certain residential area can have a positive effect on the goal of integration because it allows migrants to easily connect with those who share a common language and culture, and who can provide resources and information on how to navigate the host community based on their own experiences, thereby increasing the social capital of the individual and household on the receiving end.

There is undoubtable value in being in close proximity to others who share a cultural or ethnic background. However, I argue that a residential pattern which concentrates migrants and refugees of the same background into a geographic area comes along with the unintended but harmful consequences of segregation. Adam and her colleagues claim that there is little evidence

to suggest that spatial "segregation obstructs contact between migrants and the host society and thus undermines integration" (206). This is exceedingly inaccurate; one must only look at accounts from refugees who are living or have lived in areas surrounded only by fellow refugees to identify these barriers. The temporary accommodations set up at Tempelhof Airport in 2015 and 2016 are a prime example of these obstructions that come into play when migrants are physically separated from other Berlin residents, in this case. In describing refugee facilities like Tempelhof that are located in isolated and segregated areas, Adam and her co-authors seem to contradict their initial take: "refugees suffer disadvantages in reaching everyday life infrastructure, language courses and workplaces. Furthermore, these locations neither allow the development of bridging ties to the host society nor the development of bonding ties to possibly existing local ethnic communities" (219). Interviewees of Adam and her fellow researchers agreed with this sentiment, saying that they made extensive efforts to house refugees in the most decentralized ways possible "to avoid conflicts and obstacles to their integration" (Adam et al., 211). Elif Beiner, a member of the Munich Refugee Council, also emphasizes the integration setbacks caused by living among only other refugees, citing a lack of German language practice and an atmosphere that is difficult to study in (Meaker). Another significant downside to the residential pattern of concentrating migrants is indicated by the fact that "large group accommodation fosters negative attitudes towards refugees among local inhabitants" (Adam et al., 206). Government guidelines in Germany for how to best support refugees focus on increasing their 'public acceptance,' and cultivating a sense of unity throughout "all population groups in the urban society" (Adam, 210). Establishing this pattern of urban residence risks subjecting refugees to the damaging and discriminatory stigma that exists around large, concentrated groups of migrants, which would, in turn, likely work against this ideal of public

acceptance rather than toward it. The negative consequences of spatial segregation apply as seamlessly to the geographic distribution of refugees in apartments as they do to those in camps, initial reception centers, and group accommodations.

While the aspect of crowdsourcing information and receiving support from those belonging to the same ethnic or cultural group is likely appealing to newly-arrived refugees in this pattern of 'geographic concentration,' a part of Ghaith's story supplies a contemporary alternative that reaps these same benefits of physical proximity. In the age of social media, refugees can now rapidly share important details and tips for others who follow in their wake. Ghaith relied on Facebook at least four times over the course of his journey from Syria to Germany. The first time, Ghaith was contacted through the app by his brother who lived in Sweden with detailed instructions regarding a plan to escape through Lebanon. This marked the beginning of his travels. About six months after that failed attempt, Ghaith made his way to Istanbul where he found a hostel through a Facebook page called *Asylum and Immigration Without Smugglers*. The page was started by another Syrian refugee named Abu Amar, who, after a failed attempt to cross the Mediterranean, got stuck in Turkey dealing with a shrapnel injury that left him paralyzed from the waist down. A heavy heart and time on his hands inspired Amar to study the historic routes of migrants and smugglers traveling from the Middle East to Europe, and created the page to share maps and information that could help other refugees reach Europe while avoiding exploitation by smugglers. Some academics said that this use of social media 'democratized' the asylum-seeking process in a way. Ghaith made use of the Facebook page a third time when he found a voyage from Mersin to Italy, but that group of refugees was discovered and dispersed by Turkish police on the pier before making it onto the boat. Abu Amar proved helpful once again as Ghaith attempted the border-crossing from Greece to Macedonia a

second time. Over WhatsApp, Amar sent an annotated map detailing how Ghaith could circumvent authorities by going over a hill and through the bushes (Schmidle). While Ghaith's use of social media in his narrative was mostly related to his route to Europe, similar pages and sites exist with focuses on helping others navigate many more seemingly inaccessible systems and procedures. Aside from the spread of valuable information for asylum-seekers, social media also allows for communication with distant family members, which is an ability that is not taken for granted in war-torn countries.

On the other side of the debate is the idea that residential decentralization (a more even distribution of migrants across a geographic area) promotes an increase in social capital for the individual and household by maximizing valuable connections to the host community and therefore aiding in the process of integration. I argue that a critical element of this urban residence pattern is exposure. By living in a more decentralized urban residence pattern, a refugee is more likely to be exposed to a greater number of members of their host society on a daily basis than their counterpart living in a geographically concentrated pattern. Exposure can be as simple as passing someone on the sidewalk, or purchasing a drink from a shop owner, or picking up a receipt that someone didn't know they dropped to hand it back to them. This increased exposure can promote a refugee's integration across several avenues. By nature, social capital entails interactions and interpersonal relationships with others, and exposure provides more chances for such interaction. Regular exposure to long-term German residents also provides the opportunity for an increase in cultural capital; this could take the form of a refugee learning new German words overheard in their apartment building or a nearby park, or picking up on German customs through observation of their surroundings. Slow but sustained exposure can also assist the integration process through the 'public acceptance' lens. While local

inhabitants may react harshly to a large, concentrated group of migrants moving into their neighborhood, an even and decentralized distribution of new-arrivals would likely spark less of a reaction. If increased exposure eventually leads to interaction, local residents might be inclined to reevaluate their discriminatory attitudes.

The potential downside to the residential pattern of decentralization is a feeling of isolation in a new country or loss of cultural identity. A pattern of decentralization does not have to mean a detachment from communities bound by cultural contexts, but it results in less day-to-day interaction in the living environment with those communities.

In truth, the two patterns presented in this debate are overly simplistic. On the one hand, the importance of belonging to a community that has an understanding of one's background is clear, along with the meaningful sense of home that can be provided to refugees by such a community. On the other hand, it is invaluable to facilitate connections between newly-arrived residents and long-term members of a host community, which opens pathways to employment and other social benefits. It is futile to determine if proximity and connections to those who share an ethnic background are more or less important than proximity and connections to those native to Germany in the process of integration. Neither is worthwhile in the long-term integration process without the other. Despite this being the case, the concentrated model appears to exacerbate many of the economic, cultural, and social capital setbacks that refugees already face when they arrive in Germany, whereas the decentralized model presents a possibility of mitigating some of them. The urban residence pattern that facilitates the optimal integration of refugees, necessarily involving the greatest opportunity for acquiring social capital, is some combination of the two patterns presented. The ideal pattern consists of a decentralized model, but one in which a support system composed of others with both similar and different ethnic and

cultural backgrounds is maintained through regular interaction and a sharing of resources,

information, stories, and encouragement.

Conclusion

This project ultimately examines a paradox in the lives of refugees as they make efforts to achieve a life of stability. This paradox involves the concepts of capital and movement. As has been demonstrated throughout this project, a great number of obstacles stand in the way of refugees as they work toward this goal. A lack of initial capital and restrictions on movement serve to perpetuate many of these barriers. Simultaneously, amassed capital and a freedom of movement can serve as keys to unlocking many of these barriers. The paradox exists in the fact that these barriers usually must be overcome to gain the opportunity of achieving a substantial level of capital and freedom of movement, but that same capital and freedom of movement is necessary for overcoming the barriers in the first place.

This paradox is an instance of the following phenomenon that Bourdieu constructs much of his thinking around:

> Capital, which, in its objectified or embodied forms, takes time to accumulate and which, as a potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form, contains a tendency to persist in its being, is a force inscribed in the objectivity of things so that everything is not equally possible or impossible. And the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world, i.e. the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices. (241)

The key takeaway from this thinking is that the accumulation of capital does not allow for equal opportunity at each individual moment, and that the consequence of this truth is that the 'structure of the social world' exists in a state of constantly reproducing itself. In the context of refugees and their development of capital, this is an elaborate way to describe the perpetually oppressive nature of the systemic barriers they face on their road to private housing and

integration. Bourdieu's phenomenon is the same as this paradox that pertains to capital and movement. We see it clearly in the instance of a refugee struggling to make their way out of a temporary camp: it is the largely the conditions of living in collective and spatially segregated facilities that inhibit a refugee from developing capital. Simultaneously, it is the development of capital that would facilitate the transition out of these conditions—and in order to develop the forms of capital that would help one leave these conditions, one must leave these conditions, and so on and so forth. Here we find ourselves in the positive feedback loop of social structures that reproduce themselves and inequality that perpetuates itself.

A break from this positive feedback loop, if at all possible, would require a break from the structure of the social world as it currently stands. This is likely the best chance at a wholly successful social and structural integration of Syrian refugees into Germany, which could maximize benefits for all parties involved. Such a departure from the status quo of inequality would likely entail tipping the scales steeply in one direction before balancing them out. The German government could catalyze this process by beginning with minimizing restrictions on the movement of refugees within the country, with further institutionalization of certain resources and practices that are currently voluntary to improve gaps in policy implementation and outcomes, and with an optimization of urban residence patterns following some variation of the decentralized model, which would ultimately aid in refugees' development of capital and positive integration.

Bibliography

Adam, Francesca, Stefanie Föbker, Daniela Imani, Carmella Pfaffenbach, Günther Weiss, and Claus-C. Wiegandt. "Municipal Housing Strategies for Refugees. Insights from Two Case Studies in Germany." *Geographies of Asylum in Europe and the Role of European Localities*, Cham Springer, 2019, pp. 201-223. URL: www.link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-25666-1#about.

BBC. "Migrant Crisis: Migration to Europe Explained in Seven Charts." *BBC News*, BBC, 4 Mar. 2016. URL: www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911.

Bensch, Fabrizio. "Migrants Queue on a Street to Enter the Compound Outside the Berlin Office of Health and Social Affairs (LAGESO) for Their Registration Process in Berlin, Germany." *Reuters*, 9 Dec. 2015. URL: www.reuters.com/news/picture/four-in-10-german-economists-see-migrant-idUSKCN0VQ2GD.

Berlin Refugee Project. "Refugees' First Point of Contact in Germany: State Office of Health and Social Affairs" *Tremr*, 6 May 2016. URL: www.tremr.com/berlin-doc/refugees-first-point-of-contact-in-germany-state-office-of-health-and-social-affairs.

Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Forms of Capital." *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J. G. Richardson, New York: Greenwood Press, 1986, pp. 241–258.

Chatty, Dawn. *Syria: The Making and Unmaking of a Refuge State*. Oxford University Press, 2018.

Chin, Rita. *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 2009.

Coggin, Alexander. "Refugees Tell Us What Their Lives Are Like After They Make It to Germany." *Vice*, 2 Nov. 2015. URL: www.vice.com/en_uk/article/4wbewq/the-nightmarish-purgatorial-lives-of-migrants-after-they-finally-get-to-germany-111.

European Commission. "Country Responsible for Asylum Application (Dublin)." *Migration and Home Affairs - European Commission*, 6 Dec. 2016. URL: ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en.

European Council. "EU-Turkey Statement, 18 March 2016." *Consilium*, Council of the European Union, 18 Mar. 2016. URL: www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/.

Evason, Nina. "Syrian Culture - Religion." *Cultural Atlas*, 2016. URL: culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/syrian-culture/syrian-culture-religion.

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. "What Conditions Apply to Access to the Labour Market for Persons with Permission to Reside (Aufenthaltsgestattung) or Temporary Suspension of Deportation Status (Duldung)?" *BAMF*, 10 Dec. 2019. URL: www.bamf.de/SiteGlobals/Forms/Suche/EN/Expertensuche_Formular.html?cl2Categories_Bereich=asylfluechtlingsschutz.

Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress. "Germany - Housing." *Country Studies*, U.S. Library of Congress. URL: countrystudies.us/germany/93.htm.

"Germany Legal Research Guide: Government and Political Structure." *Law Library*, University of Wisconsin-Madison. URL: researchguides.library.wisc.edu/germany.

Gesley, Jenny. "Refugee Law and Policy: Germany." *Library of Congress*, 1 Mar. 2016. URL: www.loc.gov/law/help/refugee-law/germany.php.

Glorius, Birgit, and Anne-Christin Schondelmayer. "Diverging Perspectives on "Integration" in the Vocational Education System: Evidence from an East German Periphery." *Geographies of Asylum in Europe and the Role of European Localities*, Cham Springer, 2019, pp. 179–200. URL: link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-25666-1#about.

Graham-Harrison, Emma, et al. "Cheering German Crowds Greet Refugees after Long Trek from Budapest to Munich." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 5 Sept. 2015. URL: www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/05/refugee-crisis-warm-welcome-for-people-bussed-from-budapest.

Hamann, Greta. "When Refugees Want to Work in Germany." *Deutsche Welle*, 2015. URL: www.dw.com/en/when-refugees-want-to-work-in-germany/a-18737104.

Hindy, Lily. "Germany's Syrian Refugee Integration Experiment." *The Century Foundation*, 3 June 2019. URL: tcf.org/content/report/germanys-syrian-refugee-integration-experiment/?session=1.

History.com Editors. "Federal Republic of Germany Is Established." *History*, 2009. URL: www.history.com/this-day-in-history/federal-republic-of-germany-is-established.

Hussein, Mehyeddin. "What Are the Advantages of Working Legally in Germany?" *InfoMigrants*, InfoMigrants, 7 June 2018. URL: www.infomigrants.net/en/post/9741/what-are-the-advantages-of-working-legally-in-germany.

Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration. "Freedom of Movement." *Germany | Asylum Information Database*, European Council on Refugees and Exiles. URL: www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/germany/content-international-protection/movement-and-mobility/freedom-movement.

Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration. "Types of Accommodation—Germany." *Asylum Information Database*, European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2020. URL: www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/germany/reception-conditions/housing/types-accommodation.

"Integration." *Merriam-Webster*, Merriam-Webster. URL: www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/integration.

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. "Syria." *IDMC*. URL: www.internal-displacement.org/countries/syria.

Kafka, Franz. *The Trial*. Verlag Die Schmiede, 1925.

Katz, Bruce, et al. "Cities and Refugees: The German Experience." *Brookings*, 25 Aug. 2017. URL: www.brookings.edu/research/cities-and-refugees-the-german-experience/.

Keilani, Fatina, and Annette Kögel. "Senat Öffnet Alle Hallen in Tempelhof Für Flüchtlinge." *Der Tagesspiegel*, 2 Nov. 2015. URL: www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/asyl-in-berlin-senat-oeffnet-alle-hallen-in-tempelhof-fuer-fluechtlinge/12576618.html.

Knight, Ben. "Sorrow, Anger at Berlin's LaGeSo Refugee Center after Syrian's Apparent Death." *Deutsche Welle*, 27 Jan. 2016. URL: www.dw.com/en/sorrow-anger-at-berlins-lageso-refugee-center-after-syrians-apparent-death/a-19007370.

Kugler, Olivier. "The Migration Route of Syrian Refugee Ghaith." *The New Yorker*, 19 Oct. 2015. URL: www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/10/26/ten-borders.

Kulischer, Eugene. *Europe on the Move: War and Population Changes, 1917-1947*. Columbia University Press, 1948.

Kuntz, Vinny. "Berlin's Humanitarian Crisis." *Handelsblatt*, Handelsblatt GmbH, 8 July 2016. URL: www.handelsblatt.com/english/politics/asylum-seekers-berlins-humanitarian-crisis/23539888.html?ticket=ST-12744090-nEUINi2aoyhvE1Sd1fLz-ap5.

Limbach, Eric H. *Unsettled Germans: the Reception and Resettlement of East German Refugees in West Germany, 1949-1961*. Michigan State University, 2011.

MacKinnon, Mark. "The Graffiti Kids Who Sparked the Syrian War." *The Globe and Mail*, The Globe and Mail, 2 Dec. 2016. URL: www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-the-graffiti-kids-how-an-act-of-teenage-rebellion-sparked-the-syrian/.

Macleod, Hugh, and Annasofie Flamand. "Tortured and Killed: Hamza Al-Khateeb, Age 13." Syria News | Al Jazeera, Al Jazeera, 31 May 2011. URL: www.aljazeera.com/features/2011/5/31/tortured-and-killed-hamza-al-khateeb-age-13.

McCoy, Mary. "Understanding Social Capital (Definition) – Making Housing Choices." *Money Crashers*. URL: www.moneycrashers.com/social-capital-definition-housing-choices/.

Meaker, Morgan. "Germany's Housing Crisis Fuels Black Market for Refugees." *Reuters*, Thomson Reuters, 22 Oct. 2018. URL: www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-refugees-housing-feature/germanys-housing-crisis-fuels-black-market-for-refugees-idUSKCN1MW1H9.

Mercy Corps. "The Facts: What You Need to Know about the Syria Crisis." *Mercy Corps*, 9 Apr. 2020. URL: www.mercycorps.org/blog/quick-facts-syria-crisis.

Monterescu, Daniel. "The Balkan Route from the Middle East to Germany." *ResearchGate*, UK Independent, 16 Sept. 2015. URL: www.researchgate.net/figure/The-Balkan-route-from-the-Middle-East-to-Germany-Courtesy-of-the-UK-Independent_fig5_291205949.

Multitude. "Counseling For The Apartment Search In Berlin." Multitude, 2015.

NASA and Jamestown Education Module. "Human Needs." *NASA*, NASA, 2006. URL: www.nasa.gov/pdf/162514main_Human_Needs.pdf.

Nees, Verena. "Angry Protests against the Berlin Senate's Refugee Policies." *World Socialist Web Site*, 3 Apr. 2017. URL: www.wsws.org/en/articles/2017/04/03/berl-a03.html.

Nees, Verena. "Thousands of Refugees Crammed into Airport Hangars in Berlin, Germany." *World Socialist Web Site*, 16 Nov. 2015. URL: www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/11/16/refu-n16.html.

Oltermann, Philip. "How Angela Merkel's Great Migrant Gamble Paid Off." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 30 Aug. 2020. URL: www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/30/angela-merkel-great-migrant-gamble-paid-off.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. "What Is Social Capital?" *OECD Insights: Human Capital*. URL: www.oecd.org/insights/37966934.pdf.

Parsloe, Toby. "Berlin's Tempelhof: The Camp Too Controversial to Customize." *The New Humanitarian*, 22 June 2017. URL: deeply.thenewhumanitarian.org/refugees/articles/2017/06/22/berlins-tempelhof-the-camp-too-controversial-to-customize.

Pearson, Joseph. "Berlin's Appalling Conditions at Refugee Registration Center LaGeSo." *The Needle — Berlin*, 29 Sept. 2015. URL: www.needleberlin.com/2015/09/29/berlins-appalling-conditions-at-refugee-registration-center-lageso/.

Reid, Kathryn. "Syrian Refugee Crisis: Facts, FAQs, and How to Help." *World Vision*, 15 Mar. 2020. URL: www.worldvision.org/refugees-news-stories/syrian-refugee-crisis-facts.

Rueckert, Phineas. "Nearly 500,000 People Have Died in Syria Since 2011." *Global Citizen*, Mar. 2018. URL: www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/syrian-war-seven-year-anniversary/.

Saegert, Susan. "The Role of Housing in the Experience of Dwelling." *SpringerLink*, Springer, Boston, MA, 1 Jan. 1985. URL: link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4899-2266-3_12.

Sanderson, Sertan. "Asylum and Travel Restrictions in Germany: What You Need to Know." *InfoMigrants*, InfoMigrants, 5 Oct. 2018. URL: www.infomigrants.net/en/post/12444/asylum-and-travel-restrictions-in-germany-what-you-need-to-know.

Schmidle, Nicholas. "Ten Borders: An Epic Escape from Syria." *The New Yorker*, The New Yorker, 19 Oct. 2015. URL: www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/10/26/ten-borders.

Senate Department for Urban Development and Housing. "Alliance for Social Housing Policy and Affordable Rent." *Urban Development*, State of Berlin, 2014. URL: www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/wohnen/wohnungsbau/en/mietenbuendnis/.

Senate Department for Urban Development and Housing. "Mietendeckel Informationen: Kernpunkte Des MietenWoG Bln (Mietendeckel)." *Urban Development*, State of Berlin, 2020. URL: www.mietendeckel.berlin.de/kernpunkte/.

Shead, Sam. "The Story of Berlin's WWII Tempelhof Airport Which Is Now Germany's Largest Refugee Shelter." *Insider*, 18 June 2017. URL: www.insider.com/inside-berlin-iconic-tempelhof-airport-2017-3.

Sheehan, James J, and Kenneth Barkin. "Political Consolidation and Economic Growth, 1949–69." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 15 Apr. 2020. URL: www.britannica.com/place/Germany/Political-consolidation-and-economic-growth-1949-69.

Smith, Mark. "Social Capital." *The Encyclopedia of Pedagogy and Informal Education*, 2013. URL: infed.org/mobi/social-capital/.

Spindler, William. "2015: The Year of Europe's Refugee Crisis." *UNHCR*, 8 Dec. 2015. URL: www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/stories/2015/12/56ec1ebde/2015-year-europes-refugee-crisis.html.

Statista Research Department. "Total Asylum Seeker Protection Rate Germany 2005-2020." *Statista*, 8 Apr. 2020. URL: www.statista.com/statistics/912164/total-asylum-seeker-protection-rate-germany/.

Sterling, Joe. "Daraa: The Spark That Lit the Syrian Flame." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 1 Mar. 2012. URL: www.cnn.com/2012/03/01/world/meast/syria-crisis-beginnings/index.html.

Taylor, Adam. "Germany's Small Yet Important Change to the Way It Deals with Syrian Refugees." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 26 Aug. 2015, www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/08/26/germanys-small-yet-important-change-to-the-way-it-deals-with-syrian-refugees/.

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Syrian Civil War." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 31 Mar. 2020. URL: www.britannica.com/event/Syrian-Civil-War.

UNHCR. "Forms of Asylum and Refugee Protection." *Germany*. URL: help.unhcr.org/germany/asylum-in-germany/forms-of-asylum-and-refugee-protection/.

UNHCR. "Syria Refugee Crisis Explained." *How to Help Refugees - Aid, Relief and Donations*, 2020. URL: www.unrefugees.org/news/syria-refugee-crisis-explained/.

UNHCR. "What Is a Refugee? Definition and Meaning: USA for UNHCR." Definition and Meaning | USA for UNHCR. URL: www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/.

United Nations. "Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees." *UNHCR*, 1951. URL: www.unhcr.org/en-us/3b66c2aa10.

VisaGuide. "German Integration Course." *VisaGuide.World*, 14 Aug. 2019. URL: www.visaguide.world/europe/germany-visa/requirements/integration-course/.

Witte, Griff, and Luisa Beck. "Angela Merkel Welcomed Refugees to Germany. They're Starting to Help the Economy." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 5 May 2019,

www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/angela-merkel-welcomed-refugees-to-germany-theyre-starting-to-help-the-economy/2019/05/03/4bafa36e-6b60-11e9-bbe7-1c798fb80536_story.html.