



The Urban Refugee

Space, Agency, and the New
Urban Condition

Edited by
Bülent Batuman & Kivanç Kılınç

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Introduction

The Urban Refugee: Migration, Neoliberalism, and the City

Bülent Batuman

Let us begin with two statistical clichés which are often repeated but seldom together: (1) the number of people inhabiting the cities has surpassed that of those living in the countryside for the first time in human history; (2) the number of displaced people is the highest since the end of the Second World War. The first statement points at the unprecedented quantitative level of urbanization and implies that this is an irreversible threshold. The second, on the contrary, is an alarming call for an *extraordinary* situation, an emergency to be addressed and remedied. Thinking these two facts together, however, allows us to move away from both the neutral calculation of the former statement as well as the naïve warning of the latter. For once we combine the current urban condition with that of forced migration marking our contemporary world, we can conceive the permanence of the precarious refugee status – or rather *refugeehood* beyond the official status defined by the international status quo – as well as its impact on the urban condition. The reality of the refugee is precisely in its uncontainability within the legal boundaries based on the paradigm of nation-states. This paradigm is based on citizenship and the desire to have absolute control over the national territory.¹ Hence, the refugee, who is ‘out of place’, is subjected to the logic of confinement by both national and international institutions.² This spatial logic is best materialized in the refugee camp; and all other forms of containment – asylum, detention, and deportation centres, transit camps, prisons, etc. – should be understood as derivatives of the camp reproducing the spatial logic of containment. This book focuses on the urban refugee to move beyond the limits of this very logic to grasp the predicaments of refugeehood in its mutual relationship with the current urban condition.

While the recent decades – ‘the age of migration’³ – saw an immense growth of scholarship on forced migration within various fields, the recent body of work focusing on the relationship between displacement and the built environment is also remarkable. Scholars have been scrutinizing the spatial practices and forms that emerge under conditions of displacement.⁴ A significant portion of this ever-growing scholarship dwells on the refugee camps and the social and political aspects of the protracted ‘temporariness’ of these environments.⁵ Another particular field of analysis is homemaking and the complexities embodied within the migrants’ and refugees’ quest for taking shelter, which displays forms of politicization, hybridization, and transnationality.⁶ While the essays in this volume also address these issues, they intend to contribute to a relatively less-explored aspect of displacement: the interaction between the refugees and the cities they inhabit.⁷ Our intention is to underline the specificity of the urban refugee and their spatial agency as well as pointing out the irreversible effect they have on the urban condition.

Conceiving the urban refugee merely as dislocated individuals that happen to dwell outside the camp-like spaces of containment prevents us from fully understanding two aspects of refugeehood. The first is that the urban refugee is freed from not only the spatial bounds of the camp but also from the fixed identities reproduced by the camp. This blurs the boundaries of identities and simultaneously brings to the fore the agency of the urban refugee.⁸ *Agency* is a key term in scrutinizing the spaces and the spatiality of forced migration, and failure to emphasize it leads to the acceptance of the term 'refugee' as an identity marker without addressing the problematic connotations it embodies. Refugee identity at once essentializes and contributes to the othering of those labelled as such, as well as falsely homogenizing the dislocated individuals and groups.⁹ The popular term 'refugee crisis' presents the refugee as a problem in the form of an objectified person who is denied active agency and subjected to containment.

Secondly, failure to see the specificity of the urban refugee results in missing the impact of refugees on the urban condition.¹⁰ As I will detail below, the irreversible relocation of refugees in the cities of host countries must be acknowledged as a permanent component of urban life and an aspect of the new urban condition.¹¹ This new urban condition should be understood within the 'migration-neoliberalism nexus' and the multi-dimensional effects of forced migration.¹² In the past four decades, neoliberal economic policies based on deregulation and privatization went hand in hand with precarization of labour. The displaced subjectivity of refugees, who frequently 'blend in' as a hidden population within urban spaces as undocumented labour, represents a symptom of the segregation, discrimination, and general inequality inherent in the contemporary metropolis.¹³

Neoliberalization embodies biopolitics of control that stem from economic relations. As David Harvey defines the body as a site of accumulation, the neoliberal subject is defined by increasing entrepreneurialism, individualism, and indebtedness.¹⁴ The effects of neoliberalization on cities include the destruction of public space, gentrification, the emergence of gated communities, and increases in inequality in the urban sphere.¹⁵ Within this context, precarity, which marks the 'free' existence of refugees in the contemporary metropolis, is a characteristic feature of the neoliberal urban milieu. While the urban refugees have attached themselves to the urban environment through networks of informality, they are also the object of constant surveillance and the states' constant attempts to improve mechanisms of control. Nevertheless, these attempts are not uncontested. The interplay between the refugees seeking to find refuge and the states' desire to regulate their urban existence is mediated with the involvement of activist interventions, further politicizing the urban refugee. Thus, I propose to investigate the migration-neoliberalism nexus through the three interlinked themes of *informality*, *control*, and *activism*.

Informality

The informality of refugeehood is first of all related to its transgressive character vis-a-vis the current international order of the modern world based on nation-states. The refugee

movements across borders create new spaces of flow and problematize the (spatial) limits of nation(s).¹⁶ Indeed, the modern world – with the dissolution of the multi-ethnic empires in the nineteenth century – has been founded on the national borders, acting as physical and mental ‘boundaries’, that have defined the ways in which modern subjectivities have emerged.¹⁷ Thus, modern citizenship, that is, the sense of belonging to a nation, has been the primary identity of modern subjects and the essential form of modern subjectivity. This is precisely why refugeehood, although it has been a significant form of existence in the modern world, is perceived as a temporary diversion – or rather dislocation – to be put back in place (within the spaces and categories of nationhood). In a world legally and epistemologically defined by the nation-state paradigm, the camp represents the spatial logic of confining refugees and renders refugeehood as an anomaly. In this respect, the refugee camp is an extension of the territorial domination of the nation-state. Thus, the ‘outside’ of the nation-state challenging its limits shall be found not in the spaces of exception and confinement built along national borders but the heterotopic possibilities inherent to the urban realm.¹⁸ This is because the urban refugee, in contrast to camp residents, involves him or herself in the informality networks of the city and blurs the boundaries of national identities and the notion of citizenship. In this respect, as I will return in the next section, the constant efforts of nation-states to frame the statuses and mobilities of refugees result in the ethical and political questioning of the very definition of citizenship.

Secondly, urban informality provides both a social context for the refugees’ immersion in the city and a conceptual framework to reflect on it. The literature on urban informality focuses on the city as a social organization and the recent debates show that it is an effective organizational form and even a ‘governing tool’ rather than merely being the opposite of regulated forms of organization.¹⁹ As discussed in detail by Eda Sevinin in Chapter 1, urban informality simultaneously embodies possibilities of survival strategies and permanence of vulnerability.²⁰ Particularly in the context of neoliberalization, informality has become an overriding imperative turning individuals into primarily economic actors. It is within this context that urban refugees are thrown into the spaces and networks of informality they share with the urban poor.²¹ They are treated as ‘disposable populations’ caught up within social relations of entrepreneurship and debt within neoliberalization.²² Yet, even within power networks of urban informality, it is crucial to note that refugees not only withstand their living conditions but actively take part in their making. As the beginning of this chapter already underlined, agency here is a key term, since ‘refugee’ as a label implies a lack of agency on the part of the subject it signifies.²³ It is essential to see refugees as makers of not only their own experiences in the city but as agents transforming the city itself; as Mona Fawaz et. al argue, ‘there is a need to acknowledge the transformative impact refugees have on the very substance of “urban life”’.²⁴

Finally, informality should also be considered specifically in its relationship to the built environment. Ananya Roy has argued that urban informality is ‘a mode of producing and regulating space’.²⁵ Similarly, focusing on the morphology of informal

settlements, Kim Dovey maintains that urban informality presents a mode of production that works simultaneously with and against the formal structures of the city only to produce particular spatial patterns and morphologies.²⁶ What is crucial here is to consider the role of neoliberal urbanization in the reproduction of informal settlements through commodification and economic inclusion, and the growing involvement of urban refugees in this process. Additionally, the neoliberal treatment of informal settlements has produced new ambivalences – temporal and spatial gaps – of informality, which have created enclaves for urban refugee existence. In cases where existing informal settlements are targeted with urban renewal schemes, the intervals between evacuation and reconstruction in renewal zones create opportunities of surplus rent for landowners and shelter for refugees.

Turkish metropolises, where the refugees' demand for shelter coincided with the slowing pace of urban renewal projects, provide prime examples of this process. As discussed by Feriha Nazda Güngördü and Zerrin Ezgi Kahraman in Chapter 7, Önder Neighbourhood in Turkey's capital Ankara is one such case. With its proximity to the Siteler Industrial site, the neighbourhood first developed as a squatter (*gecekondu*) settlement. The squatter homes in the area were later replaced with low-quality apartment buildings (the transformation was enabled by building amnesties) and housed a new round of immigrants in the 1990s. Finally, it was designated as an urban renewal zone in the 2010s and after some of the buildings were demolished the project came to a halt. Just as landowners were pleading with the municipality to restart the process, the Syrian refugees began to arrive in the neighbourhood. Soon the area was labeled 'Little Aleppo' and the landowners were more than happy with the new tenants they could profit from.²⁷

The neoliberal interest in urban transformation through schemes of urban renewal, regeneration, revitalization, etc., which most of the time result in gentrification, is not limited to the informal settlements in the so-called developing countries.²⁸ The peripheries of Europe experiencing refugee influx – particularly Greece and post-socialist cities prone to neoliberal means of urban transformation – have also witnessed a similar convergence. In such cases, the urban renewal areas containing vacant buildings or derelict open spaces turn into refugee squats, occasionally supported by activists. A telling example is the story of City Plaza Hotel in Athens, which became a self-organized squat in 2016. Integrating itself with the local market and deriving international support, City Plaza did not only provide accommodation for refugees but also was home to Greek activists. It was viewed as a model of solidarity challenging neoliberal spatial order.²⁹ A similar case was 'Belgrade Waterfront', a regeneration project targeting Belgrade's riverside brownfields with the involvement of foreign investment making use of local deregulation. The site, which also had a history of grassroots activism in spatial interventions, became a hotspot in the refugee crisis of 2015. Similar to the case of Hotel Plaza, the area became a site of contestation between, on the one hand refugees seeking shelter and activists defending their neighbourhood and government-backed investors on the other.³⁰

Control

The international status quo of nation-states has already developed a complex categorization differentiating forced migrants. This does not only discursively establish the distance between the ‘host’ and the ‘other’ but further implements technologies of control over the displaced individuals.³¹ Therefore control of refugees begins with discursive regulation of categories with varying legal statuses as well as distinct associations in public perception.³² The management of refugee mobility and resettlement inevitably requires physical restrictions which involve border control and increased surveillance. Thus, the international buzz defining the current situation as a ‘crisis’ is a call for the fortification of the borders of the Global North as much as it is a humanitarian one.³³ In this respect, the evolution of Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, is indicative. Created as the ‘European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the EU’ in 2004, the agency’s reorganization in 2016 reflects a significant level of securitization and militarization of migration.³⁴ The new role of Frontex is based on European Commission’s ‘hotspot approach’, which transfers authority to key EU agencies once an area is declared as such.³⁵

While the evolution of Frontex has implications regarding the (re)making of the EU into a supra-state entity,³⁶ which is beyond the limits of our discussion, it is crucial to note the increasing amount of funds channelled in the growing militarization of refugee surveillance. In 2018, it was predicted that the European security market would be worth \$146 billion by 2020.³⁷ The new technologies deployed for refugee control include using military drones, AI-powered lie detectors, and high-tech refugee camps with military-grade fencing and CCTV systems where access is controlled by fingerprints and X-rays.³⁸ The clashes on the Poland-Belarus border in the last months of 2021 resulted in the Polish parliament’s approval of a €350 million wall equipped with motion detectors and thermal cameras.³⁹

Although the recent episode in regulating migratory flows across European borders has brought the technological advancements and investment into this enterprise to unprecedented levels, it is necessary to note that they are hardly limited to border control but also extend into the urban environments. In fact, we need to relate these developments to what Stephen Graham has defined as ‘new military urbanism’ more than a decade ago.⁴⁰ Drawing attention to the militarization of cities of both the Global North and the Global South within a particular division of labour, Graham has linked this specific trend to neoliberalism and imperialism and pointed out that ‘control technologies originally intended for military use have become fundamental to virtually all acts of urban life and consumption in advanced industrial cities, and that commercial modifications of such technologies are, in turn, being widely reappropriated by militaries.’⁴¹

Today, technologies of surveillance and control developed for managing migration are further extended into cities. The best illustration of this extension can be found in the mutual interaction between cities and (refugee) camps. While initially the camp represented the

anti-city, the refugee camps, especially the larger and longer-standing ones, do act as cities.⁴² There are camps that have already become permanent settlements. Such ‘camp-cities’ prevail in contexts with ongoing conflict, such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Kenya.⁴³ Yet, this seeming similarity requires us to distinguish between the urban and the city: although the prolonged existence of larger camps turns them into city-like settlements, they deny their inhabitants the political rights and benefits of urban life.⁴⁴ Although such examples have prevailed predominantly in the Global South, what is curious is the emergence of camps (in the forms of reception centres, etc.) within cities where they swing between spaces of containment and community-making.

In a sense, ‘the camp haunts the city’⁴⁵: The camp represents an ideal spatial image, one that represents the anti-city, not necessarily in terms of the spatial practices it shelters but because it distances the refugee ‘other’ safely away from the city. In this regard, the city as such is defined with the absence of refugees, for the opposite – the city with refugees – is conceived as anomaly. The urban refugee challenges this very equation. In this respect, the extension of spaces of exception into cities is a response to the existence of the urban refugee. A telling example here is the city of Berlin. The city received approximately 80,000 refugees in 2014–15, to which the city administration responded with emergency measures, settling the refugees in factories, barracks, etc.⁴⁶ The most spectacular of these measures was the transformation of the empty hangars of the historic inner-city Tempelhof airport (which was closed in 2008) into an emergency shelter in late 2015.⁴⁷ Following criticism regarding the inhumane conditions of the camps inside the hangars, the city administration introduced more substantial community shelters, which they called ‘Tempohomes’, to replace emergency shelters in 2016.⁴⁸ These were 20-foot standard containers organized in groups and planned to be used for three years. The city administration’s initial plan was to build 30 Tempohome villages for 15,000 people, which was later decreased to seventeen sites for 5,300 people.⁴⁹ The typical Tempohome site comprised 244 containers; 64 flats made up of three containers each and the rest to be communally used. They contained outdoor spaces but were surrounded by fences and guarded by security personnel.⁵⁰ Although they were an improvement in terms of living conditions, the Tempohomes were also criticized for strict control and monitoring, which frustrated inhabitants.⁵¹ The city’s latest proposal forwarded in 2018 was the ‘Modular Accommodation for Refugees’ – MUFs. These prefabricated concrete buildings did not abide by Berlin’s public housing regulations and instead made use of exceptions to speed up construction.⁵² Nevertheless, the MUFs are located at marginal sites and are separated from the neighbourhoods with fences, dictate regulations to the refugees and deny them tenants’ rights.

The story of the successive proposals for refugee accommodation in Berlin illustrates the incorporation of the logic of the camp into the metropolis. Berlin has been the leading city in terms of the increase of housing rents and the severity of the shortage of affordable housing in Europe since the 2010s.⁵³ With growing public discontent, the financialization of the housing market in Berlin was put to a referendum in 2021, where the people of Berlin voted for the expropriation of properties owned by large corporate landlords.⁵⁴ The question, here, is whether

the referendum would have been conceivable had the urban refugee not made the issue of housing injustice more visible. Thus, the Berlin example should be understood with respect to the migration-neoliberalism nexus, where migrant accommodation converges with austerity-urbanism, resulting in the commodification of housing.⁵⁵

Activism

Finally, a curious dimension of the migration-neoliberalism nexus is the recent episode of activism involving the mutual augmentation of political organization among refugees and local activists. If we consider the historical circumstances that triggered the current wave of forced migration, it becomes possible to see the link between the recent episodes of war and destruction and the crisis of neoliberalism, the predicaments of which led to the global wave of mass protests that took place between 2011 and 2013.⁵⁶ These protests were often responses to economic impoverishment and took the form of the Occupy movements in the Global North and the so-called 'Arab Spring' in the Middle East and North Africa. In broad terms, these were globally connected and mutually inspired revolts against commodification and authoritarianism.⁵⁷ There is a curious link between the figure of the refugee and the urban focus of these protests. The refugee represents a generalized condition of the urban politics that marked the protests. The refugee-as-nomad seeks and produces new spatialities – ambiguous architectures of precarity – and in this respect opens room for the consideration of alternative urban experiences and the possibility of reimagining the city as a commons.⁵⁸

A major spatial form of activism in response to neoliberal urbanism in Europe has been squatting. It has become the method of claiming space and a trademark of today's urban social movements. The appropriated locales turn into centres of organization in the face of housing inequalities, corporate urbanization, and the privatization of public spaces.⁵⁹ In the last decade, this tradition has gradually converged with the refugees' spatial practices in terms of both seeking accommodation and raising activism of their own. Refugees have been active in organizing to demand changes in spatial politics.⁶⁰ As I have already mentioned above, there have been many instances where local activists collaborated with the refugees in grassroots mobilizations. In other cases, such as the 'Refugee Protest Camp Vienna',⁶¹ which began in late 2012 and lasted for almost a year, the ad hoc refugee camp built in the Maximilian Park⁶² across from the Foreign Office in Brussels in 2015, or the struggles along the 'Balkan Route' to open up borders in 2015–16,⁶³ the alliance between refugees and activists targeted restrictive asylum policies and inhumane conditions imposed on the asylum seekers. Yet, the emancipatory effects of these mobilizations go beyond the limited themes of individual protests. They challenge notions of citizenship and come up with new forms of subjectivities based on collective action and (often transnational) solidarity, further expanding forms of 'insurgent citizenships'.⁶⁴ They also change forms of urban interactions disrupting the mundanity of everyday life in public spaces. That is, the emergent forms of social ties not only challenge

the international status quo of citizenship and refugeehood but also that of the contemporary urban life and the meaning of urbanity.

An outcome of the progressive initiatives that aim to collaborate with forced migrants has been the gradual rise of the idea of the city as a space of sanctuary. The mantle of 'Sanctuary City' emerged in the United States to provide protection to Central American refugees. The main focus of the sanctuary city model was to offer access to municipal services regardless of status. Today numerous cities in the United States and Canada have adopted sanctuary city principles. A more recent, similar trend in the UK is the City of Sanctuary Movement, which was launched in Sheffield in 2005.⁶⁵ The movement aims to encourage interaction and mutual understanding between asylum seekers and residents in order to foster a culture of hospitality.⁶⁶ More recently, the EU policy of further securitization of migration has led to the emergence of a Solidarity Cities Network in 2016. The part of this network consisting of city administrations addresses the European Commission and demands extra funds for cities hosting larger numbers of refugees. Finally, there is also a European-wide grassroots initiative called 'Solidarity City', which brings together refugee organizations, activist groups, and many others.⁶⁷ While these movements politicize (with varying degrees) the inequalities and injustices faced by urban refugees, they also bring the city to the fore as a new reference of belonging that challenges the concept of nation. This is a call for a politicized form of cosmopolitanism centred around the notion of 'citizenship'.⁶⁸

The urban refugee, then, should be understood as a component of such new urban condition: one that is mutually transforming and being transformed by the urban system. They become a part of urban informality with the commercial activities as well as their labour power. But they also disrupt the quotidian of the public life in cities. The emergence of refugee activism as an interface between refugees and local activists has triggered new forms of urban interactions forcing new patterns of citizenship. Moreover, such activism transgresses national borders: It produces new cultural interactions and platforms of solidarity which have a transnational character. The urban refugee also makes visible, and thus open to criticism the neoliberal framework imposed on cities. As Wanda Vrástí and Smaran Dayal argue, the convergence of sanctuary and solidarity movements with the 'right to the city' movements, which fight neoliberal urbanism, suggests a utopian vision of a unified citizenship.⁶⁹ In Saskia Sassen's words, by 'repositioning the immigrant and the citizen as urban subjects, rather than essentially different subjects', the city can become 'a space where powerlessness becomes complex and in so doing enables the powerless to make a history and to make the political'.⁷⁰

Structure of the Volume

Responding to the issues outlined above, this volume aims to underline the spatial agency of the urban refugee and the irreversible effect they have on the contemporary urban condition.

In order for this, the case studies from different geographies included in this volume present interdisciplinary approaches deployed by scholars from various fields including architecture, urban planning, history, anthropology, and cultural studies.

The volume is composed of three main parts, which address different facets of refugee existence in the city. Part I, entitled 'On Identity: Informality, Imagination and Belonging', looks at the making of refugee identity in urban environments. Rather than legal and bureaucratic mechanisms defining the 'refugee' status, the chapters in this part focus on the urban experience *per se*. In this way, the chapters in this section illustrate the spatial practices and the cultural making of refugee identities. Part II, 'On Place: Transnational Homemaking Practices', pays attention more specifically to the issue of refugee shelter. Under conditions of displacement, homemaking presents urgency – even immediacy. Yet the trauma of displacement also postpones (often indefinitely) homeliness in the sense of belonging. Thus, the tension inherent to homemaking away from home is an essential aspect of the spatial practices of the urban refugees. Finally, as the urban spatial agency of the refugee is not limited to homemaking, Part III, 'On Site: Space of Transience and Endurance' looks at the spatial practices of urban refugees in shaping their environments beyond homemaking. The chapters in this section present cases of interaction between the city and the urban refugee and show that the precarious and temporary existence of refugees also marks urban sites with the same qualities: transience becomes a permanent condition in the life of the cities.

Part I begins with Eda Sevinin's investigation into urban informality in its relation to the making of refugeehood. Defining informality not as the opposite of the 'formal' urban system but rather an 'organizational form' governing urban labour relations, Sevinin adapts this approach to the integration of the refugees to the urban system. She argues that urban informality operates as a mode of 'differential inclusion'; i.e., a social mechanism of selective integration. In her investigation of this mechanism, she focuses on the role of Islamic humanitarian networks in Denizli, an industrial centre in southwestern Turkey. The focus on Islamic charity allows the author to investigate the cultural and ideological dimensions of the reproduction of urban informality and their role in the differential inclusion of refugees.

In Chapter 2, Roula El Khoury and Paola Ardizzola focus on refugee children's appropriation of the spaces they inhabit. Through a comparative analysis of the play areas of children in inner-city neighbourhoods of Beirut and Burj Al-Barajneh – temporary camp-turned-informal neighbourhood at the outskirts of the city – the authors scrutinize the children's cognitive relationship to space. Whether within the inner-city urban voids or the narrow alleys of the informal neighbourhood, the children display a significant capacity to re-imagine, re-semanticize, and appropriate space. Through this imaginative and playful occupation of space, the children overcome some aspects of the trauma caused by their displacement and produce spaces that are their own in different districts of the city that constantly alienate them as refugees.

In Chapter 3, Maria Curtis discusses the contemporary Arab refugee experience in the United States within the historical context of Arab American community-building along the Gulf

Coast. Providing a background from the early twentieth century to the Trump Administration's 'Muslim Ban', Curtis scrutinizes the racialization of migration and the diaspora's attempts at maintaining identity. In providing a historical panorama, the chapter reveals the changes in the legal and cultural conditions and the deterioration of refugee status in recent years. Simultaneously, it shows the significance of cultural venues and community spaces in the making of diasporic identities through the case of the Arab American Cultural and Community Center located in Houston, Texas. Linking these two lines of analysis, Curtis illustrates the relations between 'the history of exclusionist immigration policy, racialized ethnic hierarchies of whiteness, and Arab American cultural space-making practices.'

Part II opens with Stéphanie Dadour's discussion of homemaking as an interactive process. Departing from the recent legal battle in France over the cases of civil disobedience by sheltering exiles, Dadour questions the daily experiences of home and homemaking beyond cohabitation. Through an ethnographic analysis she scrutinizes the practice of hosting exiles organized through citizen initiatives and civil organizations. Looking beyond superficial depictions of cultural interaction, Dadour uses the case of exiles to investigate the exchanges between hosts and hosted along with the notion of hospitality within the intimate and everyday space of home.

In Chapter 5, Howayda Al-Harithy, Abir Eltayeb, and Ali Khodr investigate the housing conditions of Syrian refugees in Saida, Lebanon, from the perspective of spatial justice. Despite Saida's historical identity as a host city for refugees without spatial segregation and containment, the country's current 'no camp' policy and the government's denial of refugee status to the Syrians fleeing civil war have forced the displaced refugees into rental apartments or collective shelters with substandard and deteriorating conditions. The study shows that, in both cases, the refugees face stigmatization and marginalization, and housing provision turns into a mechanism of social exclusion. For spatial justice, the authors call for the recognition of the refugees as active agents of urban transformation.

In Chapter 6, Huda Tayob looks at the transnational character of homemaking in the case of refugees from Somalia and other African countries. Analysing the so-called 'Somali Malls', mixed-use spaces flexibly used by the refugees for various functions including residential use, Tayob argues that these sites present an ambivalent yet innovative spatial typology of homemaking and domesticity. Following an in-depth ethnographic study of the Somali Malls in Cape Town, South Africa and Minneapolis, Minnesota, the author traces the origins of this typology to Nairobi. She concludes that the practices of homemaking in these spaces based on familial and faith-based networks rest on the transnational circulation of spatial narratives and imaginaries illustrating the agency of urban refugees in creating spaces of refuge.

Part III shifts focus from home to the city to investigate urban refugees' settlement practices and their navigations across urban space. In Chapter 7, Feriha Nazda Güngördü and Zerrin Ezgi Kahraman investigate the factors that determine urban refugees' settlement site selections. Based on fieldwork interviews conducted in Turkey in the Önder neighbourhood of the capital city of Ankara and the Yunusemre neighbourhood of İzmir on the Aegean

coast, the article presents a comparative analysis of the dynamics of location choices of Syrian refugees. Both neighbourhoods, situated close to inner-city industrial sites, display common context-dependent socioeconomic, socio-cultural, and socio-spatial themes. Yet they also embody different characteristics, particularly in relation to the ethnic compositions of the neighbourhoods. The authors present the findings of their study regarding the factors of location choices of urban refugees as insights for policy makers.

In Chapter 8, Are John Knudsen discusses the appropriation of multi-storey buildings in Beirut as architectures of precarity sheltering urban refugees. Looking at the example of the Gaza-Ramallah hospital, Knudsen traces the complex's history from hospital to shelter and later a self-managed refugee squat. Interpreting the spatial transformations of the buildings as 'vertical migration histories', he combines urban ethnography with visual tools of spatial documentation to map the temporal and spatial transformation of the area. The author argues that the case presents an example of 'emergency urbanism', a process replicated by urban refugees across the Middle East.

In Chapter 9, Kıvanç Kılınç and Şebnem Yücel analyse the Basmane Hotels District of Izmir, Turkey, which has historically been a site of transience, with the train station as its focus. While the railway served the rural immigrants arriving in the city throughout the second half of the twentieth century, today the district shelters Syrian and African refugees seeking to transit to Europe across the Aegean. The hotels as well as other building types such as the remaining Cortijos – large low-income family houses of the Ottoman Jewish community – have all been adapted to temporal accommodation for refugees. The authors illustrate how the transformation of the district into a hub of informal interactions – particularly that of refugee mobility across borders – result in a continuous spatial adjustment swinging between temporality and permanence.

Notes

- 1 Kathleen R. Arnold, *Homelessness, Citizenship, and Identity: The Uncanniness of Late Modernity* (Albany: State University of New York, 2004).
- 2 Jennifer Hyndman, *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).
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