



Adulteresses and Slaves

Women in the war and under militia's rule

Warnings to Syrians outside the country:
your real estates are at risk.

Syrians are abandoning a national economy that
let them down to develop Europe's economies

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and Human Rights

To contact and send
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Email:

info@suwar-magazine.org

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website:

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info@ccdsyria.org

www.ccsdsyria.org

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Fares Cachoux



dialogue with the researcher
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War widows: stuck between
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The Syrian on the way to Europe
Questions without answers and
infinite stations



Among the exiled

Europe and the Price of Silence on the Syrian Massacres

Countless images are reported by the media of Syrian refugees crowds as they flock by the thousands on international borders to cross into Western Europe in search of a life and a secure future. The tragedies that accompany this perilous journey, speak deeply about the catastrophe that befell Syrians fleeing one death to another. From bombardment of explosive barrels to drowning in the sea on death boats, the story of death did not stop for even a moment in Syria for more than four years. The Syrian migration will not stop as long as the fires continue raging in their country, eating it piece by piece, home by home and stone by stone.. The international community did not intervene to stop it and defuse it, until the conflict in Syria turned into a ticking time bomb, threatening to explode and create many more crises in the world.

The Syrian refugees crisis that shook the conscience of the world and turned into an international issue. After the sinking of hundreds of migrants on the high seas, photographs of the victims highlighted the screens. This prompted several European countries to open their doors to refugees under the pressure of its citizens who have shown broad solidarity and an unusual welcoming culture towards refugees. However, this policy has created a crisis in Europe itself about the ways to accommodate the new arrivals, where European countries found themselves with the tens of thousands of refugees. This is because of its failure to meet the needs of the Syrian crisis.

The prolonged crisis in Syria has led to a loss of hope in finding a radical solution satisfactory to the parties of the conflict. In light of international and regional conflicts and the clear absence of serious desire from the international community in finding a way out of the crisis in the near term, Syrians are pushed to migrate in large numbers. They are conquered by despair. They had no choice but to flee from war and bombing in Syria, only to face harsh economic conditions in neighbouring countries.

Until we reach a viable solution, everyone must shoulder its responsibilities towards the Syrian people. The European countries should review their foreign policies and try to reach for radical solutions to ensure the Syrians safety in their own country, to prevent the arrival of arms to the conflicting parties, and to pressure all parties stopping this obscene war. They need to search for a political solution, because the logic of violence is confirmed in its failure and bankruptcy.

Therefore, the desired solution will not be a military intervention of more countries, such as Russia and France. The two had their aircraft drop more bombs on the heads of civilians under the pretext of fighting the so called Islamic State, but we need to find a real solution for this crisis through peace and security, reconstruction and overall development, under a democratic governance system that accommodates all Syrians. This solution may seem far away and expensive, but it is certainly more realistic and less expensive than the absurdity of war and its ineffectiveness against the Islamic State, or attempt to absorb the millions of Syrians in distant asylum countries.



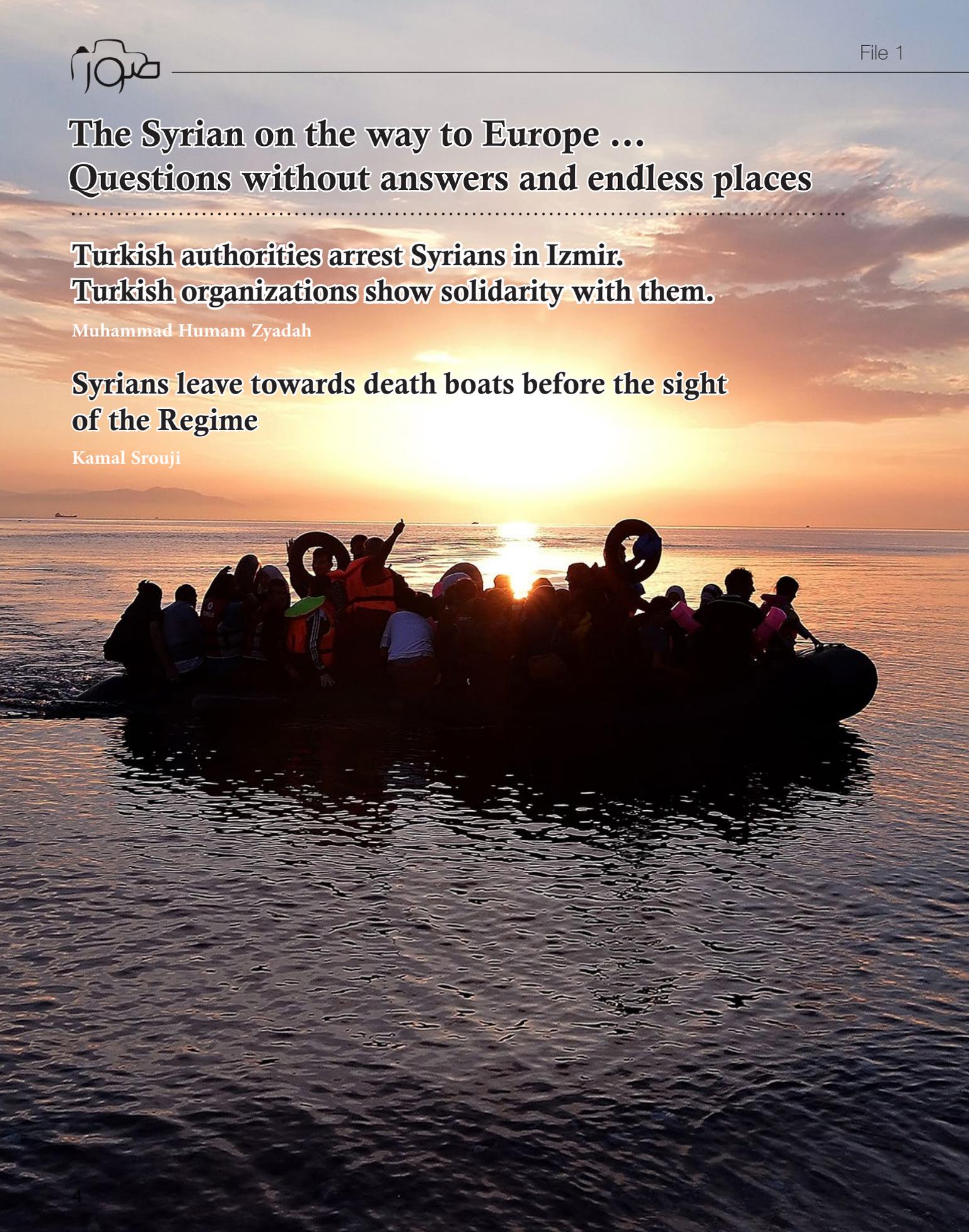
The Syrian on the way to Europe ... Questions without answers and endless places

**Turkish authorities arrest Syrians in Izmir.
Turkish organizations show solidarity with them.**

Muhammad Humam Zyadah

**Syrians leave towards death boats before the sight
of the Regime**

Kamal Srouji



Turkish authorities arrest Syrians in Izmir Turkish organizations show solidarity with them

Muhammad Humam Zyadah

Turkish authorities recently launched series of arrests among Syrians in Izmir City, the largest gathering location for refugees before they head to Greece. The police are moving the detainees to camps in the south, without differentiating between those who have legitimate residence documents (such as passports or the AFAD card, an ID issued by Turkish government to Syrians,) and those who do not.

“Muhammad Khalil” tells his story to “Suwar” Magazine: “I was visiting my brother. While leaving a restaurant, a Turkish policeman (Jandarma) entered and asked me: “Are you Syrian?” I said “yes”, and he took me to a bus loaded with Syrians!”

Muhammad continues: “Arrests are done randomly; they arrested me only because I am Syrian. I have nothing to do with smuggling/trafficking, I live with my family in Mersin where I work.”

“Omar Al-Lazkani”, an activist and observer of this phenomenon, says: “detainees are transferred to a police-run center. When a large number is gathered, they are transferred to camps in Mardin and Adhana. A few days ago, 400 Syrian persons were transferred, among whom there were children, women, and old people.”

Detainees are distributed randomly in camps. Some of those camps are good, like Alothmanniyah Camp, and some are so poor and lack the basics of a decent life, such as Mardin Camps.

“Om Omar”, a woman in her forties, who was transferred to a camp built recently near to Alothmanniyah, tells the magazine: “we arrived there after a 12 hour-long journey. We did not know where we were taken. It was a very



long journey and we were not given any meals. Turkish police are very cruel with us”

She continues: “the camp is more like a big prison. We were distributed on caravans. Medical care is poor. Yesterday a man died of a liver disease due to lack of treatment!”

“Jamal”, a young man who was transferred to the same camp, says the camps are like a big detention camp. He says: “We are not allowed to enter or leave. I tried to escape many times, but in vain. There is only one way that leads to a nearby village about 2 kilometers away. But the police/Jandarma patrols would catch any Syrian seen around the area and bring him back to camp”.

Jamal continues: “the camp management tell us that those who wish to leave the camp should sign a paper indicating that they are deported to the place they came from to Turkey! Two days ago, 12 young

men were deported to Lebanon. They are in danger because the Lebanese authorities will deliver them to the Syrian Regime, most of them are wanted in Syria”.

On the young men in the camp tells the magazine: “I arrived three weeks ago to Izmir coming from Damascus. I wanted to go to the Netherlands. Three days after my arrival I got arrested. I do not know when I will be released from here. My dreams to go to Europe are gone now. Winter has come and it is so dangerous to try the boats!”

Campaigns of Solidarity

The recent arrests caused resentment among Syrians in turkey on social media. Syrians demanded to have better treatment for those who are fleeing Syria because of war. They have also advised their fellow Syrians to be cautious and not to gather in public

squares and mosques, places where traffickers usually gather.

Al-Lazkani advises the youth who arrive at the city not to carry a lot of luggage or anything that shows they are planning to travel, along with avoiding gathering in public squares and near mosques. He also advises those who desire to travel to Greece not to spend more than one day in the city, to avoid being arrested.

Moves of Turkish Civil Society

Due to the Syrians' suffering in Izmir, there was anger among Turkish civil society organizations that sought to demand quick solutions to this crisis. Eleven civil society organizations organized a local stand to protest near Mosque Jurak Kapi in the middle of Izmir where solidarity speeches were given. Mr. Jeem Tarzi, chairman of the "Peoples' Bridge of Friendship" society said in his speech that "20 volunteers, who conducted a survey/questionnaire about Syrians arriving at the city, have concluded that Syrians are living in very harsh circumstances where they suffer from hunger, thirst, and diseases. They also need to have toilets and bathrooms". He also added that "children represent quarter of the population of Syrians spreading on the street and they suffer respiratory diseases in addition to lice and scabies. The majority of newborn babies have not received any kind of vaccination. The elderly also suffer chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes".

Organizations in other cities also held similar activities that included stands of protest and electronic campaigns that demanded the reactivation of the "open doors" policy to allow all refugees, regardless of their status, to cross the marine borders, and to put an end to the violations against refugees on the borders, and to grant them rights equal to those of Turks. The organizations participating in the campaign that

was launched on July 10th in Istanbul said that it was about time to start a public campaign demanding to establish a legal status for refugees as per the internationally recognized standards, including granting them the right to work and improve their lives, in addition to protecting them from being deported as well as protecting them against racist attacks.

Legal Perspective/Opinion:

The vague legal status of Syrian refugees in Turkey is the major problem in recent events. The Turkish government does not recognize Syrians as "legitimate" refugees as stated in international laws and rules. According to the repeated statements made by Turkish government officials, Syrians are "guests". Despite the remarkable aid submitted by Turkey, compared to other neighbouring countries, the prolonged period of refuge and the lack of any foreseen political solutions in the near future in Syria make it a priority to have legal legislations protecting refugees. This is a pressing issue that Turkey should be called upon to implement in regards to the about two million Syrians living in Turkey.

Lawyer Rajih Ata says: "transferring Syrians from Izmir to Camps is a violation of the Turkish law. According to law, those people are trying to escape illegally. They should be arrested by police and referred to court, not to camps"

Lawyer Ata continues to say: "the right of Syrians are being lost amidst the political chaos. Refugees have become a card played by politicians as leverage. I only interpret the conduct of Turkish government, by unofficially legitimizing illegal migration to Europe to make leverage for a greater role of European counties in Syria, as negligence".

Mr. Ata demands that the Turkish government implement international laws and human rights laws for Syrian refugees, with which they can maintain their dignity and ensures their rights.



Syrians leave towards death boats before the sight of the Regime

Kamal Srouji

Regime controlled areas witnessed have lately a large wave of travel towards Turkey as a first step, followed by illegal immigration across the Greek island towards Europe. Sham Wings travel agency is flooded with arranging trips to Turkey to massive cues of citizens wishing to leave. The company is owned by Rami Makhlof, the cousin of head of the regime "Bashar Al-Assad". Due to the increasing pressure, the ticket prices within few days reached 145 thousand lira for adults and 125 thousand for children / minors.

Activist "Imran Damascus" says to Suwar: "The length of the cue yesterday before the company's office in Al Maza area in Damascus has reached one hundred meters, and there are no bookings until mid October, I heard from one of the those who are cueing that there's a broker who receives 50,000 lira to secure a date for traveling".

Imram adds: "All those who are waiting want to travel as soon as possible, before winter gets intense and the marine smuggling trips towards Greece are suspended."

On the factory borders

Those who were not fortunate enough to secure a plane ticket to Turkey, or do not have enough money, decide to travel by road towards the port of Tripoli. Movement has returned to the factory-crossing border after a suspension that lasted for months, where buses and cars were overflowing. Recently companies that offer buses and ships catering to the whole trip have sprung up in Damascus and Latakia.

Al Damashgy says: " Previously there were strict security procedures and extra security checks on young men. In last few weeks there was more facilitation from Customs and Syrian Security at the border crossing, as if the regime is encouraging the largest number of Syrians to leave the country".

In Tripoli

The harbour area in Tripoli is witnessing noticeable activities, and is filled daily with hundreds of Syrians who carry light luggage that demonstrates their intention to travel illegally. The shipping companies increased the number of their



ships traveling towards Turkey, where Syrians arriving to Tripoli attempt to travel as soon as possible to avoid accommodation costs in Lebanese hotels. The price of the boat travel ranges between \$180 - \$300 depending on the travel class, and it takes about 18 hours.

In Mersin

Using simple Arabic words Turkish taxi drivers waiting for the arrival of ships at night from Lebanon yell: "Syrian Istanbul. Syrian Izmir." All the Syrian passengers want to reach Istanbul in preparation for travel to Izmir due to obstacles preventing Syrians from entering Izmir directly.

Jamal, who is a refugee from the city of Idlib, says, "I started a food cart where I sell fast food in front of the port. On a

daily basis about 300 Syrians arrive at night, and their arrival has become a source of income to Turkish taxi drivers.”

Various reasons for traveling

There are many reasons that drive Syrians to leave the regime controlled areas such as the economic factors, lack of security and escaping military service.

Samah, the mother of two children from Barza area talks to Suwar, saying, “Life is no longer safe in Damascus, shells are falling daily, and the battles are approaching little by little. About a month ago a shell fell near me that almost killed me. We sold our house for ten thousand dollars but the trip will cost us about 7 thousands dollar.”

Salahuddin, a man in his forties said to Suwar, “The economic crisis is stifling, and my salary is not enough for a week. Winter is just around the corner. Last year we spent it without any means of heating. At least in Europe the fundamentals of life will be available to us, as well as safe schools for my children.”

The young people who dream of a

better future compose the largest percentage of travellers. Salaam said to the magazine: “Life is no longer bearable in Damascus. There is no electricity, no water, and the danger surrounds you every moment. The traffic on the regime barrier takes half an hour. We hear the Iraqi and Lebanese dialect daily and war ravages our souls little by little. Despite the fact that my work was considered good and I do not have great responsibilities, I decided to drop everything and travel to Sweden to start a new life away from the noise of the war.”

While Muhammad says, who just finished his dentistry education this year, “I did not wait to receive my graduation certificate, I made sure I passed all the final year materials and travelled immediately. I do not want to be hauled away to serve the mandatory military service, and I do not want to kill and be killed, so I decided to migrate to Germany to study due to the difficulty of traveling regularly”.

Syrian bleeding

No one knows the exact size of

numbers of Syrians who leave Syria daily, but the high prevalence of the Syrians in the cities of Izmir and Istanbul gives a dangerous sign.

Ahmed, a street vendor in Istanbul, says to the magazine Suwar, “I sell coffee on a daily basis in the gardens of the areas of Fatih and Aksaray, all filled with the Syrians and smugglers, the only conversations that I hear are about the smugglers and Greece. Now I’ve memorized of all them.”

According to reports issued by international organizations, the world has not witnessed such density of migration movement since World War II.

Journalist Imad Kirks says, “Syrian migration is the most serious thing happening today, the country is losing its children, if the situation continues as it is only the elderly and the regime mercenaries will continue to fight their countrymen”.

Kirks warns that the fate of Syria will be similar to the fate of Lebanon’s civil war days where a lot of people abandoned their country leaving only war lords.



Why Do Immigrants take their Children with them on the “Journeys of Death”?

Lubna Salem

Despite the high risks immigrants are facing during their attempts to reach Europe, and the death of thousands in sea between Turkey and Greece many Syrians still take their families with them. Despite the fact that immigrants who obtain asylum in one of the Dublin Regulation Countries have the right for reunion with wife and children under 18, many of the immigrants are still taking their children with them. It should be said, however, that some are forced to do so, while others did have the choice not to do so.

Abdulkader, a survivor of an inflatable boat that capsized, said, “When the boat capsizes, the risks of children drowning are very high because they cannot swim, which makes it difficult for their parents to rescue them. I have seen it with my own eyes. We have stayed for eight hours in the water. Many children drowned in front of their parents who watched them helplessly. Some of the parents drowned after their children because they could not survive anymore. Some were saved, but their lives have become like hell since then. I myself could not forget this shock, so how could a father or a mother who lost their own children? They should be blaming themselves because it was their call to bring their children with them.”

Hanadi Abdulkareem works on aiding refugees in Izmir, the city where the majority of immigrants use as their base to travel by sea. Hanadi says, “I have recently noticed that more than half of the immigrants were entire families composed of couples and their children. When I ask them why they are all travelling together I find that they have different reasons. Some of them have no other choice, some are not really aware of the risks, some are just doing like others who did

that before. People usually tend to say that they rely on Fate of God”. Hanadi adds: “Unfortunately, those children cannot make their own decision; their parents are putting them into danger without their knowledge. Parents regret it when something bad happens. I think no one would think that there is a chance to lose one child or more in the sea, for there is NOTHING that convince anyone to take such a risk, no matter what”.

Money

Money is the major reason that makes families take such risks. Most of them do not have enough money to afford living costs until they get reunion. “Yaser” sold his house in Homs and migrated with his wife and two daughters. He says: “I had only the amount I received for my house, which was 7,000 US Dollars. We paid the whole amount to the trafficker. First I thought to leave my wife and daughters in Lebanon, but we could not afford the costs of house and living. So, we decided to migrate together. We did not hesitate”. He adds: “We were lucky to arrive safely. When at the sea, I regretted my decision and was afraid to die with my family. I prayed to God to forgive me for what I did to

them. If I had to do this again, I would do it alone, without my family”.

Despair

Many of the immigrants believe that the dangers they are facing at sea are less than those they used to face in Syria. Kawtar from Dara'a says: “We were living under siege and bombing by barrels for more than one year. We have suffered humiliation. My neighbours and their children were killed. Three entire families of my relatives died. I did not feel afraid of the sea. Getting on board that inflatable boat was a gamble that we had already had to deal with on daily basis in Ghouta. This is the bitter reality; we had no choice or options.”

Widows and wives of lost persons

Many ladies were forced to migrate with their children after their husbands died or were lost. Asala is a mother of three, whose husband disappeared three years ago. She lived a bitter life in Lebanon after they left Syria. She was afraid that her children might be arrested. She says, “There was no sign of hope. I tolerated the situation for three years with a hope that my husband would come back, but in vain. My children have only me to look after them. I was not able to support them in Lebanon so I decided to migrate. There was no way I could

leave them alone until I could get them thorough reunion. We had no relatives or friends to take care of them. It was a heavy burden, but I would not have done that if I had any other options”.

Social Constraints

Some husbands cannot accept to have their wives and children live alone in a strange country. Samir believes it is difficult to leave his wife and child alone in Turkey, and that Syrian women are now vulnerable and compromised due to their circumstances. He prefers to take the risks with his family rather than live anxious and worried about them. He says: “A woman cannot take care of everything in the absence of her husband and family. I will never put my wife in such situation, especially with a child, and in a strange country. If anything bad happens to us, then it is God's will/Fate”.

On the other hand, some women said that they did not want their husbands to live without them in European “free, open-minded” countries. Huda, who lived with her husband and family in Turkey, accompanied her husband in

the “boats of death journey” with their six year-old child without thinking that she was risking her child's life. She could have waited with her family while her husband applied for reunion. She says: “to be honest, I felt I would be jealous thinking of him surrounded with German girls. I was afraid someone would take him from me. I do believe Arab men can NOT be trusted when he lives alone in foreign communities. I had to come with him. However, after the painstaking journey I thought maybe if I waited it would have been easier. We had to wait for five months at the gathering center and my child got sick for a long time.”

Hanadi Abdulkareem points out that “Some women do not want to assume responsibility, and this is because of social traditions and ideas that do not allow women to be independent and take care of things without a male supporter. That is why some women face great difficulties in living alone, or with their children, without their husbands. On the other hand, some husbands do not trust that their wives can assume such responsibilities. Some husbands are forced by traditions not to leave their wives live alone, especially with the absence of his or her family in the country. In all cases, it is the same result: children are the ones at risk!”

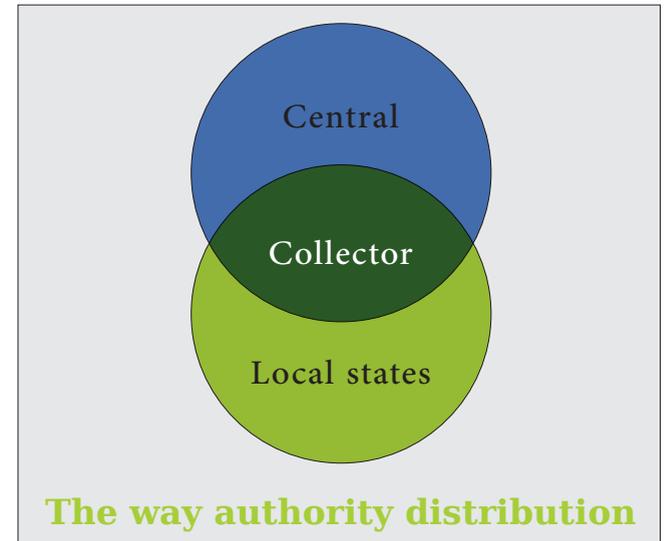


Decentralization: A Democratic Choice Aiming at Fair Distribution of Power, Wealth, and Power Resources

Jad Alkareem Aljibaie

People's inclination towards gathering and meeting is the inclination of the social relations to be organized or mobilized in organizations or institutions based on rules set by the gatherers themselves. People are inclined to gather and can do this best when they determine the rules for themselves. This immediately evolves to become common values and known rules that emphasize the necessary relation between the scientific rules and ethical values. It's certain that rules and values all stem from the vision of people and societies to the world in general, and their world in particular. It is specified by the way of thinking, recognition, representation, appreciation, and work, which means by norms, customs, traditions that are mental, cultural, social, political, styles of work, patterns of behaviour that are inherited or acquired, according to the given historical conditions. These norms, customs, traditions, styles of work, and patterns of behaviour are basic elements in the formation process or structuring process and in the process of “reproduction”. Institutions, from this point of view, are the picture of the social life or the clearest picture of the social and cultural capital that are based on a material foundation. The differences between the processes of the societies self-production and the processes of reproduction specify the criteria of the society's advancement or backwardness, and whether it is: lively and dynamic or static and bogged down; unified in solidarity or fragile and fragmented. These differences are natural, social, economic, cultural, political, ethical, noticeable, and measurable.

This is the logic of the social, economic, and political formation based on the institutions, whether domestic society and civil society institutions or state institutions. It is not based on the formation process and reformation or reproduction or depending on the power relations of what happened to Syria in the past decades. The difference between the logic of formation and structuring processes is that the first relies on the free participation in general life because of the human nature as well as its communicative and reciprocal characteristics, while the other one depends on the logic of power and defeat-- considering the differences between individuals, groups, or classes. I have to acknowledge the controversial relations between the logic of formation and processes of structuring. People produce their history by themselves, but they don't produce it according to their whims because the socio-political act clashes with frustrating actions and others resistant and hindering. The third one is



unexpected and is subject to the principle of self-idleness. The contradiction between the subjective and the objective constant and permanent, and all changeable things are related.

Montskio noticed that when a new regime is born, leaders (or initiative takers) form institutions, and then the institutions later on form the leaders. Then the institutions are a framework for forming leaders and professional politicians (on the local level) and on the national level, in addition to changing their cultures as they tend step by step to avoid ideological polarization and following a realistic policies (pragmatic) in the public affairs. The thing which leads to moderation, mutual recognition, and mutual respect between the political stakeholders. The ideological current's retreat from the arena is a precondition for its rationalism and connection with the public interests. This way pragmatism changes from an ideological characteristic into a way of work.

Institutions have always been the subject of interest of the political sciences, but the “new institutions” used the tools of “Game Theory” and the pattern of the rational choice considering that institutions are long-term games stakeholders'. Behavior is formed depending on the rules of the game. Founders of the theory of organizations stressed the roles and styles of work and the symbols and institutional duties, while followers of the historic school focused on the continuity of the rules and politics and emphasized the timing of the institutional development and its sequence. However,

The Importance of De Mistura Initiative: A formula to implement realistic mechanisms to resolve conflict and negotiate

Suwar Magazine: a dialogue with the researcher Dr. Samir Aita

Interviewed by: Majid Mohammed

Dr. Samir Aita is a famous Syrian writer and the Editor-in-Chief of Le Monde Diplomatique newspaper, a highly-esteemed Arabic-language newspaper distributed throughout the Arab world. Dr. Samir is also a writer, intellectual, and Head of the Economic Forum. He has lived and studied in Paris, France for many years. He is currently working on the Democratic Forum for the Change of Syria, which is a platform of the Syrian opposition.

Five years have passed in the crisis in Syria. The political and military formations are still in confusion on what to call and how to describe the crisis. Some of them still see it as a revolution and others see it as civil war. How can you evaluate the general scene of Syria after all these years and the victims and destruction? Is the path to a solution out of Syrian hands? Have Tehran, Ankara and Riyadh, Doha, Washington and Moscow become in control? What is your vision to exit this impasse after all these obstacles?

In my opinion, what is happening in Syria is a revolution and a plot at the same time. It is a revolution because it is the product of a social movement, which includes the entire Arab region in the so-called "the Arab spring" and also because it has a demographic, economic, political and intellectual roots. It is also a plot because the existing authorities in the regional countries and other countries far away been engaged in the course of the movement since its inception, even before it begun, for fear of the consequences to themselves, or to secure their influence in the region if the change becomes dramatic. Syria is at a crossroads of the Arab Spring; either through mobility comes a state of equal citizenship and freedoms and identities in a multi-sect country, or it will end with an Autumn that would take it to extremism, division and a struggle over sovereignty.

Unfortunately, Syria today lives its Autumn even in Winter. The first and basic responsible party is the head of its regime which defined it bet, since his first speech, when he said that he will discipline the " Arab Spring" in Syria to give a lesson to the people in the region, so the countries that oppose him will thank him because he is serving their interests in the end. As all of them believe that equality and freedom are dangerous for their existence in power. Syrian political elites also bear a historical responsibility as well, because they did not know how to keep their purity from the states game and how to keep the revolution for all Syrians and not to one part even if albeit a large part of them. But a patriot position, such as the attitude of the founding fathers of the state, the owners of the slogan "Religion is for God and the homeland is for all," requires a lot of courage to rise above the desire for revenge against the crimes of repression.



Unfortunately, the head of the power is international, as most of the opposition spectra placed the fate of their country's in regional and international powers, especially when the conflict turned into a war that must constantly be funded. An end will not come to the conflict in Syria unless these force collaborate to reach a solution between the disparate interests even for those that are "friendly" to the revolution! Perhaps there is a window now, for a few months, to reach such a solution starting with the Russian American agreement which produced the Iranian nuclear deal, through what he called the UN envoy Staffan de Mistura "International Contact Group." But there is also the fear that this solution will be a division, especially since the souls in Syria have been crushed as stones.

You have participated in numerous international conferences on the Syrian issue, such as Cairo and Moscow, and you came out with work papers or road maps that didn't result in any practical solution, it also didn't contribute until now, in bringing the views of the Syrian oppositions fragmented components. Where can these conferences lead? Is it actually a waste of time, in the shadow of no political solution and the large differences in visions? What is the best solution to reach a political agreement,

which opens the road before the international community to place an end to this struggle?

I do not like "political tourism", nor to participate in regional or international political activities unless I see that they can offer something in the public interest. In fact, I only participated in two activities and I will describe them in detail. In the first, I was a member of the Syrian Democratic Forum in preparation for a unifying conference in Cairo, in summer of 2012. We drafted two documents: the document National Covenant and the document of the transitional phase. This conference remains the only time the Syrian opposition were united, and the documents that were produced were the most important released by the opposition so that history can record that the revolution had a noble goal in its pursuit towards a country of equality of citizenship and freedoms. Everything that was produced later didn't extend past the contents of these documents. However, countries have failed the unity of the oppositions, which we worked so hard for and removed things from the hands of the political opposition, and transformed the conflict into an open war at the start of the battle of Aleppo and its countryside.

The second activity was in my meeting in Moscow with representatives of the

Syrian power. I have been involved as a citizen, so I won't embarrass anyone, and not as a representative of a political group. I have seen in these two rounds of the negotiations the first move to end the war by Russian and US agreement since the failure of two rounds of Geneva 2 and the occupation of Daesh and Al Nusra of a part of Syrian territory. In fact, these two rounds in Moscow went far from Geneva and established the initiative undertaken by the United Nations now.

Otherwise, I maintain constant contact with most of the spectrum of opposition in the society, even if I disagree with them in visions such as the political opposition coalition and the Committee of Cairo and the coordination assembly and others. I am also in constant contact with active civil society organizations, and the armed opposition groups which believe in the equality of citizenship. I consider it my duty to always try to push everyone to converge around a national project and stay away from the hegemony of states. The national project is what everyone can unite around and not just part of. It penetrates the sectarian and ethnic divisions that were led by the regime and foreign countries.

And in my opinion the most effective solution is to re-produce a "National Bloc", which fought for the unity and independence of Syria in the last century. It was not a party nor a national council, but rather a set of political and social figures partnered to carry the concerns of their homeland, and snubbed by their religions for that, who refused to intervene in the affairs of foreign countries, and united effort for the triumph of the cause of its people. They made a great effort for this purpose at the founding of the Democratic platform in 2012, especially by giving priority to young people who set off mobility and paid a heavy price. I still strain today through continuous communication, but it is very difficult, and perhaps more difficult today than in 2012.

De Mistura proposed his initiative for a solution in Syria. How can the regime and opposition form joint work groups in the absence of a will for a solution by both sides, and without guarantees and basic introductions to sit down to the table of negotiations? Does this initiative represent an appropriate formula to the Syrian crisis? What are the obstacles in the process applied under the dispersion of the position of the oppositions politically and militarily, the absence of political opposition, and the in the big power of the armed factions that control areas beyond the regime controlled areas?

In my opinion there is a misunderstanding of all the Syrian parties to what can be negotiated for as a political solution. In the shadow of war and the actual division of Syria, and the occupation of Daesh and the Al Nusra of part of the homeland, and the chaos of foreign militias on both sides; the negotiation is no longer between two coherent parties; the regime and the state apparatus which is controlled by one side, and the opposition, which the dream of uniting it has long left on the other end. Today negotiating is multilateral, must take into account the de facto forces and the fragmentation of the pro-regime party as well as the parties of the so-called opposition, including the armed opposition. While all fighting parties still hope to enhance their positions on ground and the continued support of the countries that back them reject a political solution as compromise.

The main dispute is a transitional governing body. The regime is arguing as the Syrian state and its institutions, and we must explain this article corresponds to Geneva 1 with the existing constitution, while interpreted by the political opposition, as well as armed, as the transfer of power to it, and that the army and security services must be resolved, quite simply, while the article of Geneva 1 stipulates that the transitional governing body must create

a neutral climate, not with any authority, and thus not with its president, nor with the opposition. Sharing the power between the two is a possibility and is not inevitable.

Basic introductions to negotiate are known. It is in all the documents that have been developed in 2012; Geneva document 1 to Cairo documents. Any talk about guarantees before negotiating does not make sense but to impose this or that interpretation by the States before embarking on negotiations between the Syrians. Placing any result to a negotiation as a condition for negotiations won't happen.

The question remains about how to negotiate in light of all this. The importance of De Mistura's initiative, which put up the initial idea to confront the regime in Moscow, they propose a realistic formula for the development of mechanisms to resolve and to negotiate. The humanitarian committee representatives from the concerned NGOs also participated with providing relief and health services, civic organizations; that doesn't mean for the topic to be subjected to political debates, including political polemics. The military and security committee representatives of fighters from all sides are also involved. That also doesn't mean for this committee to be controlled by political bodies, which have no power on the ground. The time this committee will take to work in their field is a time that would allow regional and international agents to generate agreement and to find a solution. Especially that details are so much and the fronts are numerous and the issues of security. The importance of de Mistura initiative is that it issued a statement that received the consensus of the Security Council. The refusal of the regime or the opposition of this or that political solution that is compatible internationally means moving on to a military solution.

Many Arab countries live a real crisis in terms of social justice, even though it was living in a state of stability for quite sometime. Until today they couldn't face unstructured work and the increasing number of labour. How do you see the future of justice towards unstructured labour after the crisis in Syria? Are there any political and economical indications and other awareness measures that indicate that the reality of labour will be different from what the regime had implemented?

This is a very important and complex issue. I was, as an economic researcher, made a great effort towards this topic and to raise awareness of its importance.

The lack of the ability of the dense population of Arab countries to face the growth of youth, leaving newcomers plotting conditions in the work that does not give them minimum rights, were two main reasons in the Arab spring explosion. It is what lies behind the dignity of freedom, which is required in this spring's logo. And dignity is the dignity of the university student Bouazizi who owned a vegetable cart and was disgraced in what gives him his living.

So I insisted that the National Covenant, which was drafted in 2012, referring to the International Charter on the Social and Economic Rights, to ensure the employment of the Syrians and the residents, mostly Palestinians in Syria. As well as to state policy that is based on social justice and balanced development between regions, which also guarantees the rights of workers, including comprehensive health insurance, pensions and unemployment benefits.

There is no magic solution to this big problem in the coming decades, except for employees to organize themselves and defend their rights, and that the development within the administrative decentralization, and that the state is working on the restructuring of investment, employment and the

distribution of national wealth between regions and between the population. It will be a fundamental problem in Syria after the war, as the economy is devastated, the economy of war is prevailing, and everyone will accumulate their wealth by land and real estate investments.

Thus, the reconstruction is not only a reconstruction of housing, but to rebuild what was destroyed by the power of the economy through policies in the ten years that preceded the revolution, and the legacy of war of destruction in the economic and social structures.

After the political opposition failed in marketing their projects and plans of the solution, is it possible that we will see a positive investment for the current crisis of refugees, which occupies the political and popular circles in Western countries, in terms of re-prioritization of the Syrian issue in its human dimension after the recession to deal with it even though it is one of the largest man-made disasters since World War II, according to the United Nations? Can we talk about the political maturation in this direction after

five years of failure?

The political opposition, known in the media as the Coalition, didn't have a real role in the Syrian refugee issues originally, not even in Turkey. They also weren't interested in the Palestinians of Syria even though they claim to represent the Syrian State. The Syrian civil society is active, in all sects, especially in Jordan and Turkey, especially the Kurds of Turkey. There is no relation to the political opposition with the big wave of refugees that is going to Germany, and they are being quiet about this wave now, and on countries policies that support this opposition towards refugees.

Syrian refugees are the ones who changed the European public opinion through what has been recorded in the media on their pride and solidarity with each other in the midst of their tragedies. This change is an important transformation after the western public opinion refused to side with the Syrian revolution, as with the rest of the Arab Spring countries, because the political opposition and the countries supporting it were silent for quite so long in regards to extremism and terrorism until it got

worse.

Syrian refugees remobilized the European and American public opinion in solidarity with them and with their country by showing that they are educated people. Asylum seeking is a right given by International Humanitarian laws, preceding European regulations and laws. This made Europeans show extraordinary solidarity that overcame their political divisions within their own countries that then embarrassed decision makers in their governments. This made the governments not only receive refugees properly even with their large numbers, but also to actually mobilize to solve the conflict in Syria even if that meant changing previous policies, that includes supporting parts of the oppositions due to geopolitical reasons.

Syrian refugees are the ones who took with their bodies and suffering the crisis of their country so it becomes a crisis for all of Europe, and to place European countries that messed with the " Arab Spring" as it happened in Libya before their historical obligations today, as to also reconstruct the future.



Zaatari refugee camp/ Jordan



Some Are Wives for “Muhajirs”, Others Get Whipped ... Tales of Women from Deir ez Zor!

Adel Al-Ayed

If a woman wears a colorful pair of shoes in Deir ez Zor, this is enough to irritate ISIS Hisbah (“accountability”) enforcement members and have them punish her. This was exactly the case with (S), 22 years old, in Bukamal city market. Hisbah members scolded her and hit her, but she chose to hit back.

This is only one of the simplest kinds of violations committed against women. Violations against women come in many forms, such as forcing little girls to get married in early ages, or forcing them to marry Muhajirs. However, these are not the only problems facing women in Deir ez Zor since ISIS gained control over the city. Women may get fined or even punished through whipping if they violate the “decent” dress code, as defined by ISIS. This comes, of course, in addition to other problems like the absence of education and the prohibition on women to work. ISIS have a very strict policy that constrain women to the extreme.

The Child Wife!

Being from a poor family, and with no hopes of education after dropping out school three years ago, the orphan “Shaima” (16 years old) got married as a second wife to a man who is 19 years older than her. “Samar,” one of Shaima’s relatives, says: “she is still a child and knows nothing about this harsh life. For many months after getting married, she used to play with her husband’s daughters from his first wife!” Samar, who used to work as teacher, adds, “Before ISIS shut down the education process for good, this early marriage phenomenon came to the surface about three years ago. This was due to several reasons, like the discontinuing of education, the resurfacing of old traditional ideas (for example, saying

that girls belong only to their husbands’ homes). All this served as justifications for early marriage of girls.”

According to local people, Deir ez Zor has witnessed increased cases of early marriage during the past years. Married women’s ages range between 14-17 years. “Rashid,” a 25-year-old local activist, says, “The majority of married men are 4-5 years older than their wives, and some are more than 10 years older.”

He adds, “Generally speaking, the culture of marriage has changed in Deir ez Zor among both males and females. Most of the males tend to like the idea that one should marry girls as young as possible so that he can raise her according to his wishes. As if those girls are not already raised in their parents’ homes!! Strangely and painfully enough, the child

wives and their parents tend to accept such opinions and ideas!”

Wives of Muhajirs

The “Sawt & Soura” (Sound & Picture) project has documented more than 166 marriages between girls and ISIS Muhajirs since ISIS gained control over Deir ez Zor, a figure second only after Raqqa city.

Muhammad Hassan, an activist from “Sawt & Soura,” talks about this phenomenon: “There are many reasons (for a girl to marry an ISIS Muhajir), such as financial reasons, in which parents are tempted by the money paid by Muhajirs for their approval. Other reasons may be loyalty to ISIS, where people demonstrate their loyalty by giving their daughters or relatives for marriage to Muhajirs.”

On the other hand, many of the Muhajirs’ wives soon become widows. Ahmad, from Deir El-zour, says that this is because the majority of those Muhajirs get killed in the frontlines of combat.

Financial Fines

Three weeks after gaining control over Deir ez Zor, ISIS issued several proclamations to regulate life in the city. Among those decisions was enforcing women’s wearing of the niqab, or, women’s face covering, in addition to enforcing restrictions on women’s movement, by which women have to be accompanied by muhrum, or male relative companion.

Afraa, a 57-year-old woman, was in a garment shop in her village in western Deir ez Zor. She wanted to try on a pair of shoes, so she removed her Niqab “face cover,” and an ISIS member spotted her, scolded her in public, and issued a financial fine against her “guardian”!

Her eldest son, Amer, says, “I was surprised when I learned about the fine. The shop is only for women, and workers are only females!” He adds, “They did not consider my mother’s age, and they also scolded her. When I went to pay the fine, ISIS members insulted me and my family as if we were honorless!”

Large cities and towns in Deir ez Zor witness extreme restrictions from Hisbah members regarding “legitimate” dress, while some small villages have a better margin of freedom in this concern. Abdussalam, from Bukamal City, says, “In one day only, female Hisbah members in Bukamal arrested more than 50 girls because they put on colorful

abayas. The girls were gathered in one of the city mosques and their guardians were asked to pay a fine and sign a written undertaking not to repeat this behavior, and then they were released.” Still, it is difficult for ISIS to control all violations in the countryside, due to its large area. It happens, though, but on a smaller scale.

Punishment May Escalate to Whipping!

The “legitimate” dress, which ISIS force women to wear, consists of Abaya, niqab face covers, khimar eye covers, vests, and hand covers. Any violation of any of the above components will be punished. Punishment has many forms: warning, undertaking, fine, arrest, and might also escalate to whipping the woman or her guardian!

Bushra, a 22-year-old from Deir ez Zor western countryside, was one of the women who got whipped. Her cousin says, “Her niqab was faulty and a part of her face was exposed for a moment. One of Hisbah members saw her and the situation escalated. He said some harsh words and she replied back. ISIS members whipped her brother and then ordered her brother to whip her to teach her a lesson.”

Samar says that women in Deir ez Zor consider ISIS as a temporary thing that will, in the end, go away sooner or later. This makes the women not to feel keen about implementing ISIS decisions.



War widows: stuck between losing their husbands and life challenges

Hadia Almansour

While shedding tears, Nuha said goodbye to her three children whom she left with her dead husband's family as she had decided to remarry and start a new life. Nuha Alsweid, 28, from Kafr Nubul in Idlib southern countryside, one of many women who have lost their husbands during the war in Syria and have started suffering a difficult life full of poverty and need under the pressure of traditions and customs which still control in the rural communities in that area.



Nuha says, "I have lived very hard circumstances after one of the checkpoints had detained my husband, Ahmad, on 25/10/2013. Then I started bearing poverty, homelessness, and my family's control of my life. They would tell me, "don't do that, don't go to any place, don't look for a job..." many NOs I had to adhere to in addition to my husband's family's control on me too."

Nuha would bear all of that for the hope of her husband sound return one day, but things didn't go as she wished after she received the news of his death in Adra Prison in Damascus where he was detained under the charge of terrorism. Nuha felt that the world was dark and couldn't bear her sufferings with her children, as she said.

Nuha tried to find a job through which she could provide for her three children; Alaa, 5, Ola, 3, and Sara, 6.5, but she wasn't successful in finding a proper job, especially because she didn't have any degree or experience.

She was living with her husband's family who could barely earn their daily living. Because she didn't have a house to live in with her children and had to bear her mother-in-law's difficult moods as well as her sisters-in-law who would always quarrel with her, she would go to her parents' house to spend a couple of days with them. She says, "My parents are also poor and their house is small. When I go to them with my children the place becomes more cramped despite their attempt not to make me feel it, but I knew the burdens my visits would cause them." Nuha says that all of these factor had pushed her to get married after a well-off suitor proposed to her. She wanted to put an end to her homelessness and sufferings even if that was on the expense of her children. She says bitterly with a sigh, "my children will grow up one day and understand my situation

and will lead their own life, but I will not have another choice because my situation was getting worse and worse." Nuha is one of eight wives who had to marry after their husbands' death in the area of the villages of Alzawiyeh Mountain where the population is 850 thousand, and widows are 25% of them based on the local council's estimates in Kafr Nubul, which administratively supervises those areas.

As for Nour, 25, from Maarret Hirneh, one of Alzawiyeh Mount villages as well, she is one of many women who refused remarriage and lived to care for their children. Despite all the circumstances she has been through after her husband's death during the shelling of the warplane on the village on 5/9/2013 leaving behind three little daughters, Amal, Ahlam, and Sabeen.

Nour says she is not ready to abandon her daughters despite everything, and although many suitors have proposed to her, she refused. She talks about her life after her husband's death, "At the beginning, I faced some problems with my in-laws. I had to be obedient at the beginning until one of my friends found a job for me in one of the women's centers in Maaret Hirneh."

Nour had to convince her parents and in-laws of the necessity of her work as they were against this idea because of traditions, customs, and gossips as traditions restrict women's movement in rural areas and hinder their ability to go out and look for a job. However, Nour didn't give up and was able, with a relative's assistance, to convince her parents of the necessity of work, especially she found the suitable job which involves registering the names of women who sign up for the center to learn vocations like tailoring, embroidery, weaving, and others. Nour draws the attention to the fact that she only had a middle school certificate (till grade 9) and that the center's female manager wanted to

employee her due to her difficult circumstances.

She says, "My life has become better with my new job as I can afford to provide my daughters with their needs without anyone's help. The important thing here is that my husband had left a small house for us to live in without having to live with others."

Abu Omar, 45, Nour's husband's brother, says, "We didn't agree about her work; what would people talk about us? They will say we are unable to sponsor my brother's family after his death. We would have been able to collect an amount of money enough for her and her daughters from our relatives every month."

On the other hand, Sahar, 48, Nour's mother, says, "I stood by my daughter and helped her to convince her father and brothers of her work because this is better than having to wait for others to spend money on her and her daughters."

Sumaiya, 38, is from Jbala village. Her husband died because a shell was dropped in front of his house. He left six children, four daughters and two sons. Sumaiya talks about her suffering, "I was frustrated after my husband's death and asked myself how I would provide for my children after their father's death, and I only have little money. Besides, I don't have a university degree or any vocation that helps me in this situation. My children are still young and can't work either." At the beginning, she received aid from a charity organization, but that aid was not enough and constant. Sumaiya didn't give up, especially after

opening the special branch for women for the vocational training center in Jbala village. She directly signed up and took tailoring classes. With the female center manager's support, she bought a sewing machine and started working in this field. Sumaiya expresses her happiness and says, "I was really happy about my work which prevented me from asking others for help and avoided me poverty and destitution and made me feel happy and self-confident."

Aum Abdo, 40, one of Sumaiya's neighbors, says, "I was happy about our neighbor's life improvement after mastering the tailoring craft, and to encourage her, we all, my daughters, relatives, neighbors, and I get our clothes tailored by her." Aum Abdo adds that we are in time of war, and women are the ones who bear the biggest portion of responsibility of facing the challenges of these difficult times. She wishes that all affected women were like Sumaiya who doesn't surrender to bad circumstances but keep working to improve her life challenging all obstacles.

Abu Husein, 42, a member of the local council in Kafr Nubul, talks about people's circumstances within this current crisis. He says, "The percentage of widows has risen to 25%, and the number of orphans and needy people is more than half of the population. We in the council try to distribute aid we receive to the affected people including widows. In spite of that, they can't depend on aid only due to the sharp increase in prices and deterioration of the economic situation."





Photo By: Hakam Abo Sara/ Atme camp



Photo by: Anas Kholi / Al Ghoti Al Sharqeye



Photo by: Jian Haj Yusif / Aamoda



Photo by: Judi Al Homsye / Al waar -Homs

Adulteresses and Slaves: Women in War and Under Militia Rule

Stories of stoning and honor killings in Syria

George. K. Meiala

Captivity ... between reality and the media and religion

Kamal Srougi



Stories of stoning and honor killings in Syria

George. K. Meiala

A stoning video from the countryside of Hama, which recently spread on social websites, as "Thuria stoning", tells a story of a French journalist of Iranian origin, whose car broke down in one of Iran's remote villages. He meets a woman named "Zahra" who tries to talk to him without the knowledge of the villagers. In complete secrecy, she tells him the story of her niece, "Thuria", and the circumstances of her bloody death in 1986.

Zahra tells the journalist that Thuria's husband accused her of adultery to get rid of her, after she refused a polygamy request and a divorce, so he framed her up. The authorities then sentenced her to death by stoning. The film is taken from the true story of a Thuria Mntchehra.

To return to the stoning video in Hama, "Lugo" shows the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, in the right corner of the screen. This prompts us to believe that the video was made a few months ago and not these days, because the name of the organization changed from "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant", to "Islamic state

What did the video show?

The video shows a member of the Islamic State. He has a Syrian accent and is called Abu Islam. He demands a woman with her face covered to surrender to the order of God.

Abu Islam confirms that his victim is the first woman to which they applied the punishment of adultery in this region, and wishes for the judgment to be a good lesson for years to come. He added to her "Implementation of the punishment is the result of acts committed she committed herself." He then asked her, "Are you satisfied

with the judgment of God?" she her nodded head in approval.

Then Abu Islam addressed a man said to be her father, and asked him to say a word to his daughter. In the meantime, the girl asked her father to forgive her, but the father refused and disowned her, then agreed, under pressure from members of the state.

Abu Islam requested from the girl to say a word before they applied the "law of God", she said: "I would advise all women to maintain their sanctity and virtue of her soul." Also she appealed to every father to ask about the

circumstances of the husband before marrying his daughter to him. Abu Islam concluded the talk by saying that the shortcomings of Muslim men and married couples, and their absence from the women, is prompting women to err. And recommended that men commit to their wives.

Her father then led her by a rope tied to her leg to a hole and tied her into it. He then began the process of stoning by throwing the first stones. The fate of the woman was unknown after that but most likely that she died.

Media activist Shadi salmoni, confirmed to the magazine "Suwar" that the person who appeared in the video is "Saddam Khalifa" nicknamed "Abu Islam", of the city of Hama, and he belongs to the clan of "loyal successor" which is of Bedouin roots.

With his fellow members, Saddam formed a brigade for Islamic punishment, which has 150 members. It is considered to be one of the most powerful factions in the region. It has eight tanks and 40 military vehicles.



scenes from the Film «stoning of Soraya»



It is located at "Qasir Ben Werdan" area, the eastern countryside of Hama.

Shadi adds that the banner of Islamic Punishment hides the direct relationship with the "Islamic state", as a result of fear of the Free Army, that exists heavily in the nearby areas, which has already arrested Abu Islam earlier, and after his release from Jabhat Al Nosra. Shadi pointed out that Abu Islam is the de facto ruler of the region is the decision-maker.

Since the advent of Daesh, many YouTube clips were published, showing such atrocities as flogging and stoning carried out by the organization. The most recent was a death sentence by stoning of a married man, accused of adultery by IS, in the town of Abu Kamal, east of Deir al-Zour activists said to the magazine "Suwar."

The Court of Daesh in Abu Kamal sentenced a man to stoning, after being accused of marrying a married woman. A witness said that the ex-husband is a law-maker in Daesh, and knew when the marriage happened so he filed a complaint; bringing witnesses from his clan that lead the judge to order the sentence the man to death by stoning.

Honor killings an old modern phenomena

Syrian society is witnessing dozens of crimes under the pretext of honor. The issue is not particular to a single social group, or sect itself. Al Swedia county had an incident in 2007, where a family killed their daughter by stoning, because of her marriage to a young man who belongs to the Sunni sect. The increase of these cases is generally happening in closed tribal areas that lack education.

Through videos, Daesh is applying the laws of Islam through their own understanding, under the light of the ongoing war and the popular hostility against it. They've created a lot of hype and reopened the tradition of killing women under the pretext of honor, religion, and customs.

Activist Mohammed Oweini, from Deir al-Zour, says that "Daesh returned Deir Ezzour and Raqqa and areas under its control to the stone age, so much that you would think yourself in Somalia or Afghanistan." This made it easy for those opposing the Syrian revolution and regime supporters to exploit these incidents and amplify them in the media, to accuse the revolution of being the revolution of backwardness, killings, and bloodshed.

The rule of Islamic law

Mr. Riad Dirar, who has worked for many years as a Sheikh and Speaker at mosques in Deir al-Zour said, "Adultery is forbidden in Islam. There is a proverb by the Prophet: "No adulterer is a believer. " It is a way out of the faith to commit fornication." He adds: "The punishment of fornication is a hundred lashes, in the event of approval or the presence of witnesses who saw the incident visibly." But the Prophet stressed on the issue of witnesses, to the point of impossibility to check the conditions. For the punishment of a fornicator /adulterer to be viable "four witnesses, all of whom saw the full act." If conditions are met, the sentence of the single and married people is one, because the Koran did not differentiate between them. The judge rules the rest of the details, according to the incident and its implications. Dirar is basing his argument on a verse of the Koran contained in the verse of Al Noor: "The adulterer (fornicator) and the adulteress: Scourge each one of them with a hundred lashes and take no mercy in the religion of Allah, if you believe in Allah and the judgment day then let a community of believers witness their suffering."

Dirar accuses Daesh of contributing to the corruption of religion, and to increasing people's hatred of Islam and Muslims. He adds they are "acting without jurisprudence, without knowing the nature of the provisions of the punishments executed therefore all they do is void".

The subject of the oppression of women and harming women due to social and religious purposes are not new topics in Syria, there are plenty of precedents to attest to this. But what the Islamic State specifically does comes from the war and social destruction witnessed by Syria. Ending the war will not create a difference in the general situation of women immediately. First we must increase the social and cultural awareness, through the struggle of women themselves to improve their conditions and protecting their basic right especially the right to life and protection from physical and social violence, as a minimum.

Captivity: Between Reality, Media, and Religion

Kamal Srougi

The stories about the Islamic State capturing Yazidi women in the Sinjar Iraqi region opened a door to massive media attention. Inaccurate news filled social media and even some of the "professional" media outlets. Additionally it stirred a great controversy in various circles, around many social, political and religious issues, associated with the concept of "captivity".

Below we will try to investigate the case from its original sources, especially the literature of Islamic State, and the reports of human rights organizations, and certified testimonies of victims of the Islamic State. We will also look into the position of international law and the Islamic religion of the topic.

The Islamic State admits...

An article titled "the revival of slavery before the end of times", in the fourth issue of the magazine "Dabiq", issued by IS in English, stated, "It is not normal that the Yazidi minority continues to exist

in Nineveh, and in Iraq and the Levant. We follow what is recommended by the Prophet Muhammad 1,400 years ago, in terms of dealing with the infidels, who refuse to convert to Islam. "

The article added that "the Yazidis are devil-worshippers", based on the writings of Orientalists and Western researchers, to lend credibility to the "information" they brought about that community.

Activist Mohammed al-Dairi says to Suwar, "The Islamic State depends on the legitimacy of the fatwas issued by the Sheikhs, and the texts of the Qur'an and the Hadith. It has a special understanding of the subject and self-interpretations of those texts." He adds that the members of the organization "are not random people. For every action, there is a document to justify it to us, whether we agree with them or not."

The official spokesman for the organization of Islamic State, Abu Mohammad al-Adhani, admitted in one of his speeches broadcasted

on YouTube, to committing captivity operations. He said in the sermon that this war is the last. He said that there will be an invasion of Rome and that they will capture its women. This gives a real indication of the faith of the organization's leaders in the idea.

Recently a clip emerged on YouTube, with pictures near the city of Ain Arab (Kobane), shows a conversation between members of the organization of the Islamic state on the subject of captivity.

Human Rights Watch documents cases

Human Rights Watch single handedly conducted dozens of interviews with Yazidi women who fled from the "Islamic state" prisons, some of whom recounted how they fought attempts of sexual abuse by members of the organization. Also dozens of young girls were forced into marriage and were shipped to the cities controlled by the organization in Syria.



Fifteen year-old Rousha, described what she overheard in the prison conversations between members about how the Islamic State is selling their prisoners. She explained in detail how a fighter from Raqqa said he bought a girl for one thousand US dollars, and how the guards said that fighters bought 20 women that were detained with her.



Navin, who fled from an "Islamic state" prison with her four children, said that the group detained her for about 10 days, at the end of August, at a school in the Iraqi city of Tal Afar, with more than a thousand other people. She watched the men, who she described as "friends" of the Islamic state, come to school and buy young women and girls.

The organization also documented the stories of 19-year-old Sefi, who escaped from detention. She explained how "Islamic state" fighters, on the night of August 14, took 26 young teenagers from the house where they were detained in Mosul. They said they came from Syria, and took the girls "to sell them in the slaves market there."

International humanitarian law

International law considers the persecution crimes committed against any religious group, sexual slavery, the selling of women, unlawful imprisonment, and any other form of sexual violence as war crimes when committed in an organized, intentional and widespread manner, against a specific religious or national group.

Also, forcing women into forced marriages violates the right of freedom of Consent to Marriage, in accordance with Article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Bill, and in accordance with Article 10 of the international economic, social and

cultural rights of individuals Convention.

Islamic religion and its opinion

The issue of slavery and detainment of certain people has existed before Islam within communities' customs and traditions. It also existed in the United States, for example, and rescinded by President Abraham Lincoln in 1860.

On the topic, Dr. Muhammad Habash Islamic thinker of the magazine "Suwar" says: "Captivity is a social crime that was prevalent before Islam, and committed by many Muslims in the age of the message. I am convinced that the last thing that came down from the Koran criminalizes captivity, absolutely, a verse in Surah Muhammad that espouses "either forgiveness or redemption." This is limited to prevent any third option other than forgiveness or redemption. Unfortunately, not all Muslims applied this divine text. Captivity has remained widespread in wars and invasions, despite international efforts at prohibition. The Ottoman Sultan Mehmed also had a role in criminalizing all forms of captivity."

The religious scholar Dr. Mohammad Shahrour emphasizes that the Prophet Muhammad did not take slaves or captives. He says: "I do not understand why women are detained, whatever their religion is. It is against her will and she is displayed in the slave market against her will, and sold like an object, and bought by a man against her will."

Shahrour adds "Daesh did not come to this understanding themselves, but it is the understanding of the that in the case of those "owned" as slaves, that to be "owned" is based on coercion. While in the Qur'an the "owned" is for both men and women, and did not have a presence in former messages, it is a new legislation of the law of Mohammed."

Media and amplifying the events

The expansion of of the Islamic state and their control over large parts of Iraq and Syria, is accompanied by significant global media surge. The media played a significant role in amplifying the Islamic State, which is undoubtedly distinguished from other terrorist organizations that have emerged in the twentieth century. It is to the point where we now think that it's supported by a superpower.

The air bombing of the International Alliance came alongside a media machine that has not been seen for a long time. As The Western coverage of the Syrian war was not even a quarter of what we have reached in the coverage of the issue of the captivity of women in Iraq. This raised the suspicion and rebuke of many observers of the Syrian and Iraqi wars. While international human rights organizations were unanimous on the occurrence of these incidents, but this was not how it was portrayed by the Western and Arab media.

No one knows the goals of these amplifications, but it certain that it serves the long-term policies. Especially since this media war caught fire after Daesh executed a number of American hostages, which gives some indications that the media machine production is part of the military war, initiated by 44 countries around the world, against the organization.

Warnings to Syrians Outside of the Country: Your real estate is at risk. Legal loopholes and forgery networks able to change the official legal possession of real estate without their owners' knowledge.

Message from the Syrian Government: You need security approval to sell and buy real estate.

Nidal Yusuf

(Randa Alazem) was surprised that the house she possesses in Tilyani area in downtown Damascus, which contained many antiques, was not hers anymore as another person took ownership of it. He has all the rights provided by law to do whatever he wants with it. Ms. Alazem, who estimated the price of her house to be 100 million Syrian Lira, 200 square meters, found out that the forgery process which led to transferring the property of the house and conducting the sale processes without her knowledge had been done by a car dealer in collusion with a lawyer in the same area, and the house was sold for 12 million Liras. The case of that lady, whom the Syrian populace sympathized with, is one out of hundreds or maybe much more of the cases in which Syrians find their right which is guaranteed by the constitution to possess a real estate is not protected and guaranteed by the government. The current situation of the lack of security, chaos, and severe entrenchment established a fertile environment and suitable climate for falsifying networks that are big and connected with influential powers to be active and work on forging real estate property documents.

Weaknesses

For a while, the Syrian courts have been registering claims about transferring the property of real estates through forgery methods fabricated cleverly and very accurately based on what one of the judges in the ministry of justice in Damascus told Suwar magazine. He stressed that courts are crowded with such claims which take long time to decide on as well as the procedures that are long and overlapped. This means that whether falsification happened or not, issuing a clear sentence which is conducive to returning rights to their owners after others had tried to loot them is also difficult.

The judge who preferred not to mention his name didn't want to give statistics about the number of claims looked at before the judiciary in relation to real estate property falsification. He stresses the seriousness of this crime (falsification) and warns property owners not to give general powers or be lenient in notifying others about their properties and relevant documents, or give the possibility to others to use their IDs, or leave their houses empty without any residents. He also drew the attention to the fact that in most claims he deals with, the falsifier exploits these weaknesses to transfer the possession of a property then they sell it to others.

Within the international rates

The general real estate directorate is considered to be among the oldest Syrian institutions as it is more than nine decades old and has rich experience in the field of preserving people's properties. Its general manger, Abdulkareem Idrees,



acknowledges that "there are falsification cases regarding real estate property." He considers this phenomenon not to be new to the work of the directorate and that the detected cases so far are not alarming or threatening that falsification is increasing and widely spreading. Idrees underestimates the gravity of this phenomenon which does not exceed, according to him, the international rates (without specifying them). He thinks that the directorate is very keen on practicing its role strictly and seriously to preserve people's real estate rights. He mentions the big burden on its shoulders, but that they are up to the responsibility. This big burden is represented in following up 4.7 million real estates in the city and more than 100 thousand real estate records, at the time when work is still conducted on papers in most directorates around the provinces because the projects of automating paper real estate records hasn't yet finished.

Exploiting Circumstances

"How does falsification happen?" Suwar magazine asked the

lawyer, Yunus Ibrahim. He is specialized in such cases and explained in details the stages followed by real estate property falsifiers and how they exploit many weaknesses. Ibrahim says that the falsifier may get the property owner's ID card in one way or another. He goes to the notary and obtains a power of attorney under the name of a certain person.

This power authorizes him the freedom of legal actions related to the property or the sale of the real estate immediately to another person. Falsifiers often take advantage of the bad security situation in the country, as well as the fact that many people are abroad and their properties are not inhabited. So those people (falsifiers) know about that and claim before the property buyer that they are the owners and offer very low prices under many excuses, like having to travel abroad, having to have an operation, or pay a ransom for their kidnapped or detained relative. Such low prices tempt some people to buy the property without investigating about the real price or the real possession of the real estate, so the falsifier prepares

a false authorization and sends it to the real estate directorate which in its turn moves the possession of the property based on the papers submitted to it supposing good intentions and considering the owner's freedom of choice. Responding to the question of the possibility of real estate directorate's official's collusion, corruption, or lenience in registering properties, the directorate's general manager, Idrees, emphasized that this is not true and has no proof on the ground, and no official has been caught colluding in this regard. Idrees said that the workers in the directorate may be lenient in extracting real estate registry statement or any document, but regarding registering or moving a property possession, they are very careful, and they implement the procedures that preserve rights. Besides, this process is not individual, not done by one official, but it's done by a series of operations, which require the signatures of many officials, and they have to review the file and real estate possession document. He added that the directorate's work is based on checking papers and assuring their validity. If they are correct and meet

all conditions, and the signatures they have are recognized, especially the seller's, the workers in the directorate do not have the right of hindering the property possession's movement. Real estate directorate's data show the huge amount of paperwork that is achieved; in the first half of the current year, the number of registries and records reached 604 thousand, and the number of contracts exceeded 111 thousand, and the numbers of statements and charts exceeded 85 thousand.

Good intention in the judiciary

A real estate judge in the ministry of justice in Damascus, with whom Suwar magazine met, said that when the judge looks into such claims, he handles different and contradictory factors as all sides of the case claim they are aright, the thing which requires ample time to study the case and check all the documents and their validity and legality. He also says that in case someone buys a property in a falsified way, and then they sell it to another person, but it turns out later that the first owner hadn't sold the property in the

first place, and he (the first owner) claims that there was a process of falsification, the procedure followed currently is to confirm the property ownership for the last buyer supposing good intentions in this process of selling and buying. Then the process of prosecution starts as well as the process of investigating the process of the first sale between the first owner and the first buyer. This way all the details of the case are uncovered, and how the process of falsification took place; who facilitated it and who took part in it? Responding to a question: in case the judge comes to the conclusion that falsification took place, what will the sentence be? The judge emphasized that the last buyer, who proved his good intention and that he had no relation with the falsification process, will be aright and the property will be registered under his name.

As for the first buyer from the first owner, the judge will sentence him and require him to pay the amount of money which is the price of the house in addition to prosecuting him for the crime of falsification. Suwar asked the judge, "If he abstains from paying, and

this is what usually happens, because he is a falsifier in the first place, what does the judiciary do?" He responded "Unfortunately, this is what happens. Then the adversaries go into a new maze related to the other legal ways to pay off the debt the sentenced person has to pay off," the judge responded.

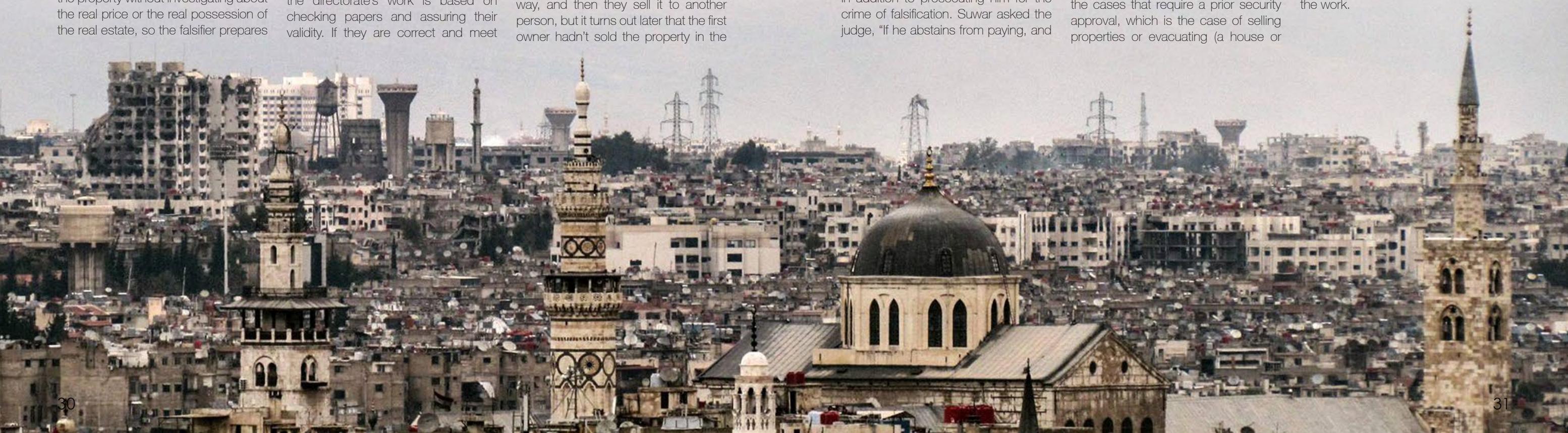
Partial Remedy

The government followed two ways to combat such processes; the first is through issuing a circulation by the ministry of justice which involves not accepting any power of attorney by the notary unless by corresponding the body that issued it to assure the validity and accuracy of the power and that the notary has really issued this document in a way that ensures its legality. The second way, which is more important, is a circulation by the prime minister issued on August 4th, 2015, which includes not organizing any buying or selling process unless by obtaining a security approval. The circulation also included that "a new case is added to the cases that require a prior security approval, which is the case of selling properties or evacuating (a house or

shop in exchange of money) in the regulated and non-regulated areas in order to prevent the infiltration of the armed groups and their exploitation of this gap to reside in the safe neighborhoods.

An environment for falsification

That's what happens then; networks for falsification that exploit the circumstances of war in Syria to sell and buy people's properties illegally, while regulations and laws, which are supposed to protect property owners, are easily broken. The governmental bodies that have the responsibility of documenting the owner's rights do not have the adequate tools to ensure this right and not to allow others to approach or change this right illegally. The thing which nurtures the activities of falsification and corruption networks and encourages them to do more illegal practices in addition to founding more networks like this is the big returns they achieve as well as the presence of the suitable environment and climate for the work.



Human Rights Activism in Documenting Violations and Its Relation to Transitional Justice in Syria

Isam Al Zubi

Before the revolution, human rights work only known in Syria as something related to judiciary and lawyers' work. Human rights activism did not exist. Human rights were considered to be the crimes that can result in a life sentence in prison.

Human rights violations increased dramatically after the Syrian revolution in 2011. The regime and even some factions related to the armed opposition, both Islamic and moderate ones, have performed human rights violations, including murder, torture, all kinds of detention, and other violations.

Therefore, systematic plans have to be set to document these violations and to categorize them according to the methods adopted by the international legal forums. In Syria today, many organizations work in the

human rights field, but they still lack the ability to do such work correctly because they remain novices in this domain without enough experience, and because many of them have only weak legal information.

On the topic of documentation, documentation is the stage of accurate registry of the details of the incidents, events, and pieces of evidence that prove the violations of the rules and laws of human rights and international human law.

Therefore, work has to be done correctly at this stage. The basis of such professional work is following clear criteria.

Though there is still uncertainty about them among human rights organizations, the most important

criteria are neutrality and objectivity. Activists and organizations still get mixed up between them. So we have to show the difference as follows:

Neutrality: the researcher must not be biased to any party at all. This principle is often adopted by the human rights organizations.

Objectivity: the researcher's commitment to non-discrimination principle based on any of the following biases:

1. Religion, sect, or ethnicity
2. Gender or age
3. Political thoughts

Work is most likely done based on this principle in human rights



organizations.

After commencing work on these bases, the following stage comes. This stage involves categorizing the subjects that have been documented. This takes place through evidence collection, then storing, and then categorizing into either evidence based on people's testimonies, material evidence or chain of custody.

Crimes during war are further divided according to their kind: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and normal or simple crimes.

Here we notice the frequency of the crimes and whether they are systematic or not in order to give them their correct description later on.

In Syria, we are trying to achieve justice above all. This is done through the correct implementation of transitional justice, which is one of the new concepts in Syrian society and of which we didn't know much about in the past.

Transitional justice: a set of judicial and non-judicial procedures a country

implements in order to cure the human rights violations inflicted on it.

These procedures include prosecution, inquiry commissions, reparation programs, and different aspects of institutional reform.

So, transitional justice is an approach to achieving justice in the transitional period following the conflict or state suppression by trying to achieve accountability and compensate victims. Thus, transitional justice helps to acknowledge the victims' rights, encourages civil trust, and enforces the rule of law and democracy.

The importance of transitional justice is that, because systematic violations of human rights do not only affect the direct victims but the whole society, it is the country's duty to ensure that those violations will not be repeated. The most important duty of transitional justice is to reform the institutions that either took part in the violations or were not able to avoid them.

Elements of transitional justice:

1. Prosecutions:

Prosecutions must be directed

against these violations.

2. Reparation:

Governments acknowledge, through reparation, the harms and takes steps to treat them through cash payments for example, in addition to through symbolic gestures like public apology and commemoration.

3. Institutional reform:

"Institutions" includes the suppressive institutions in the government, like the armed forces, police, and courts.

4. Fact-finding committees:

Fact-finding committees, or other means of investigation into the types of violations, who then report them and conduct amendments to help to understand the reasons for the serious violation to human rights.

So, in Syria, after the end of the crisis, the process of treating the regime's suppressive heritage of human rights violations and destroying the society will not be easy. The same mistakes must not be repeated, and this can be achieved by employing the correct human rights work, based on implementing the correct transitional justice.



Syrians are Abandoning a National Economy That Let Them Down to Develop Europe's Economies

- Number of Syrians in Europe is less than quarter the number of those in Turkey.
- Fake passports lead to exaggeration in numbers.
- Al-Shihabi: the control of warlords and “committee thugs” over industrial investors forced them to migrate.
- 15 million US Dollars are the profits of networks trafficking people to Greece in three months.
- Migration of Syrians is depleting 420 million US Dollars of Syria's economy.
- Assad: there are two reasons for migration.
- Hamo: students are more prone to be integrated into European communities, followed by workers, and the elderly.

Raneem Salem

A video of Falafel shop in Germany has gone viral on social networks recently. This success is one of the main reasons behind Germany's will to receive Syrian refugees.

Economy is the keyword. It is why Germany has suspended the Dublin convention to allow immigrants who have already fingerprinted in other countries to come to Germany. Economic reasons were also behind Germany's suspension of the implementation of the Schengen Agreement, which calls to cancel border surveillance, following a wave of migration to its lands, which it claims to have caused burdens on its economy.

Germany and Europe have a great opportunity, says Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). In the light of the dropping rate of population growth, it is expected that the workforce will be 13 million short in 2030.

To avail itself of such an opportunity, Germany has announced that it would pay 10 billion Euros to receive

immigrants, four times more than it paid last year.

Those immigrants are not always welcome in the same way in other EU countries. This is due to different economic situation of each country. Britain, for example, prefers to provide humanitarian aid, and refuses to receive more than 10,000 Syrian refugees. Hungary has built a barbed

wire fence along its borders with Serbia to stop the flow of immigrants.

However, the first comment (about refugees) to come from inside Syria was shocking! Humam Al-Jazairi, Minister of Economy in Wael Al-Halaqi's government. According to the minister, the loss suffered by Syria due to the immigration was that every immigrant took with him/

her 7,000 USD, which – according to him – caused the local economy to lose foreign currency! The minister said that the total amount reaches about 420 million US Dollars and the immigrant had to sell their properties like houses, cars, jewelry, etc. to cover the expenses, which is a loss.

What gains do European states get from receiving Syrian immigrants? And how would immigrants' flow affect those states? How is that affecting the Syrian economy? And what are the economic reasons for this immigration? We will try to answer these questions in the following investigation.

Capital Flight in Aleppo

Capital flight seems to be more dangerous to the economy than the migration of middle and poor classes. Industrial investors leave the country, taking with them huge amounts of money to start projects and factories, leaving a lot of people unemployed behind them. Aleppo Chamber of Industry Chairman, Faris Alshihabi, says that capital flight is happening because of the government's negligence in addressing the issue. The government does not consider the investors as victims of the current situation, which forces them to leave the country. Alshihabi said, “Two years ago we demanded that the government declare Aleppo (a disaster area) and give it the same privileges given to Hama city in 1982 or more. Aleppo is considered by the United

Nations as the most devastated and damaged city since World War II. We have submitted all studies, suggestions, and recommendations in this regard. This effort aimed to ensure the maintenance of life and work and launch a reconstruction project to indemnify people for the damages and losses they have sustained and the risks they are facing in order to encourage them to work and produce under those terrible conditions. This could have helped remedy their situation and their city, which is considered the locomotive of economic growth city in Syria.”

Alshihabi continues to say, “We have not asked for money. We asked for care and protection instead of forcing us out of the country. We received a lot of promises, and waited, but in vain. Aleppo was emptied of its people gradually. It has become the number one homeless city in the world.”

Alshihabi does not believe that this capital flight has political reasons. He claims that most of those who left were Assad supporters because they left recently, they did not leave in the beginning of the war. He believes they have left because they were afraid of inflation and had no confidence in the future due to corruption and the control of warlords and “committee thugs” over their lives. He believes that Al-Halaqi's government has failed

and disappointed all the Syrians who chose to leave. The government failed to secure jobs, despite all of its promises. Moreover, the government in some case seized the money of citizens due to financial difficulties they had with taxes and banks. Instead of helping them, the government punished them for trying to survive inside the country.

While the Syrian Coalition mentions other reasons for the Syrian migration, most of them are political, like the youth fear from being taken in involuntary military service conscription, and the arrests and bombings by the Assad regime. The head of the regime, Bashar Assad, in his speech to the Russian media, said that Syrians are migrating because of terrorism and because they want to earn a living somewhere else in the world after the destruction inflicted on Syria's infrastructure, an implication that the reasons of migration are both political and economic.

Three Forms and Six Theories of Syrian Migration:

To talk more about economy-related reasons, economic researcher Juan Hamo divides Syrian migration since the start of war into three kinds: legal migration as per the sponsorship law, illegal migration, and migration as per the reunion applications submitted by migrants.



Hamo talks about the theories explaining the Syrian migration phenomenon, as follows:

1. Traditional Theory:

This theory focuses on the fact that Syrian migration will grant them an opportunity to secure jobs and a significant increase in income, compared to the lack of opportunities and poor wages in Syria.

2. Structural Demand Theory in Advanced Countries:

Economist Douglas Massey (Massey, 2003) says that job markets in advanced countries create a structural demand on unskilled migrant workers to fill in jobs that native/indigenous workers do not apply to, regardless of the wages they offer. He also says that post-industrial economy has increased the gap in income between white-collar jobs, which require high levels of education (social capital), which are usually available for native workers and legal immigrants, and blue-collar jobs or unwanted jobs that do not require education. Such jobs include harvesting crops, building and construction, housekeeping, and hotel and restaurants services. These jobs attract a lot of illegal immigrants. So, what we see in Europe is a continuous expansion in industrial and service operations. Therefore, the governments of European states are willing to absorb a migrant workforce and integrate it within their societies and markets. Many of the immigrants, Syrian included, work in such sectors (building and construction, cafes, restaurants, hotels, factories, etc.).

3. Poverty Theory:

More than ten million Syrian citizens live below the poverty line. Seven million live at the poverty line, while only about one million enjoy welfare. Therefore, poverty, coupled with unemployment, has forced people to migrate and seek asylum in Europe where they can secure jobs gradually.

4. Family Reunion Theory:

This theory says that all Syrian migrating to Europe aspire to live with their relatives who are left in Syria. Family reunion is done in a legal way through formal applications. Refugees who have legal residence in Europe are eligible to apply for family reunion, which does not cost a lot of money. Many of them arrive illegally to European countries and later try to legally get reunited with their families. This theory is generally accepted by people.

5. War and Asylum Theory:

Civil wars, suppression, and persecution in the native country are among reasons for migration. Other reasons include non-economic reasons such as religious and racist persecution, continuous harm and bullying, genocide, and other risks during civil wars. This will force some countries to change the status of some illegal immigrants to Asylum Seekers, especially those fleeing wars, persecution, or genocide (Fleming, 2006).

This theory applies fully to the Syrian situation. There is religious persecution executed by ISIS against Yazidis, racist persecution by ISIS and Nusra Front against Kurds, bullying from Assad supporters, and genocides executed by many of the conflicting parties.

6. Continuation of Study Theory:

This theory focuses on the fact that many of the immigrants are young people who seek to continue their education and higher studies. They were forced to discontinue their study because their universities and colleges were bombed and destroyed, while others could not travel to the cities where colleges are.

That is why we see that many Syrian students who arrived in Europe are working hard to learn the host country language and then get enrolled in universities. No one can tell if those students will return someday to Syria. This is contingent on the circumstances in Syria, as well as on the student's personalities.

This is the line of journey:

Europe is witnessing the largest wave of migration since decades. This is done with the help of specialized trafficking networks that carry Syrians to Europe. A report made by Washington Post says that people are trafficked via trucks used usually to smuggle cigarettes. Refugees can check on social media to choose their method of transport, ranging from inflatable boats to private jets getting directly to Sweden!

Refugees fleeing from war, whether Syrians or Iraqis, prefer the long journey through the Western Balkan countries. This route has gained significant importance recently, instead of the sea route from the Libyan coasts to Europe. The latter is full of dangers and takes a long time at sea.

There are reports that Swedish government can detect many routes and plans followed by refugees to reach Sweden, starting from conventional modes of transport like cars and ending with sophisticated methods like chartered jets from Turkey, for which each person pays about 10,000 US Dollars.

It goes without saying that asylum seekers prefer rich European countries like Germany or Sweden. People are usually afraid of getting trapped in other European countries because

if they are arrested in countries like Hungary they will have to apply for asylum there, which is very bad if compared to rich countries.

Within the trafficking system, each service has its specific price. Prices range from 1,000 US Dollars for inflatable boats to thousands of dollars for longer, more sophisticated journeys. In this age of technology and smart phones, many trafficking services are available through social media and even in Arabic language. People can communicate with each other during the journey, using software like WhatsApp, to warn each other away from police or border guards. Legal observers assure that traffickers participate at least in one of the parts of those long journeys that stretch over a thousand miles of land, starting from Turkey and reaching to Germany. Methods vary from inflatable boats to walking, using railways, and buses. Swedish authorities believe that 90% of the refugees who come to Sweden have received help from traffickers at least once during their journeys. European officials estimate that this business provide trafficking networks with profits worth millions of dollars.

The infographic published by Washington Post about trafficking prices shows that the cost for moving

from Turkish coasts to Greek islands is about 1,000 US Dollars per person. This is done in inflatable boats where about 40 persons are put aboard boats that are not supposed to carry more than 20 persons. According to statements, about 150,000 refugees arrived to Greece in the past three months. This means that traffickers have gained 150 million dollars! Refugees also have to pay an average of 1,000 dollars to cross Serbia-Hungary borders to reach Austria via private cars managed by trafficking networks. People can also travel by air, with a cost around 12,000 dollars per person, directly from Turkey to Germany or Sweden.

Isabelle Cooper, European Border Control Police Spokesperson, said that traffickers in Turkey use more advanced approaches and can accommodate the demands of refugees of all categories and with a variety of options. People can choose the most appropriate method. There are fixed dated and different prices.

Shocking figures and counterfeiting:

Numbers of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries vary depending on the organization issuing the statistics. This variation increases



in European countries. UNHCR has recently mentioned that there are 400,000 refugees in Europe, of them 164,000 are in Sweden and Germany.

While Turkey has the lion's share of Syrian refugees, with approximately two million, with also two million distributed in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon. This means that Syrians in all of Europe are only about quarter of the number of Syrians in Turkey alone!

Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), says that Germany is the third international migration destination. One fifth of Germany's population, and one third of its children, come from immigrants' origins. He also highlights that about 350,000 refugees have arrived at Italy and Greece in the first eight months of the past year.

However, all the news about numbers of refugees and the amounts allocated by European countries to take care of them seems to be exaggerated, according to specialists. There was an incident that unveiled the fact that Syrian passports are being faked to be used in asylum applications. Dutch journalist Harald Dornbus managed to get a fake Syrian passport in the name of Dutch prime minister in less than two days and for 750 Euros, which proves a lot.

German customs also confiscated quantities of Syrian passports. The

police believe the passport were supposed to be sold to asylum seekers. An official in the German Ministry of Finance said that most of the fake passport users speak Arabic and might come from MENA region. They are classified as economic migrants, i.e. those who want to go to Europe to earn living.

Despite the reports that confirm the exaggeration in the numbers of Syrians, European countries did not open their doors to Syrians for a long time. Germany has recently suspended the Schengen Agreement which allows free movement in Europe for immigrants, and deployed its army on the borders with Austria. Also, countries like Bulgaria, Hungary, France, and Austria have not abided by their basic obligations towards refugees.

Future Integration:

Regardless of the real numbers of refugees in Europe, there is still a phenomenon that cannot be ignored. Boats are crossing the sea every day, and while we could forget about those who drowned in the sea, we cannot ignore those who need to be integrated after they have arrived safely to European countries. Economic researcher Juan Hamo believes that the first step of integration is to learn the language of the host country. This will take about six months for basic

language learning, then students can move to more advanced stages. Children are then enrolled in schools.

He adds, "In Europe, the constitution is determined by consensus, whether all ethnic groups and races coexisting in the country reach a consensus about constitution. Constitutions have clear texts about individual freedom, as well clear texts about human rights in general. Constitutions allow anyone, whether a citizen or from another country, to resort to courts of law. Those texts fight fascist, Nazi, and racist trends and opinions and treat everyone, whether citizens or not, with equality and give everyone equal opportunities."

Therefore, Syrian refugee integration in European societies will, according to Hamo, ensure them a comfortable future because of the democracy, freedom, and the superior social security systems.

Hamo believes that the most successful category will be the school students because they can learn fast, then after that are the students in institutes and universities, then workers, and finally the elderly. Hamo emphasizes the fact that Syrian refugees are required to preserve their ideal traditions and morals in order to reflect a good image of Syrians and not to cause them criticism.

The Syrian Dilemma and the Euclidean Plane

Narat Abdulkareem

Let us wonder, for example, what if someone believes, while in anger, that what he sees in the mirror is not a reflection of his own image, but another person who wants to do evil things and cause him harm. Here we, or he, has two choices; to either feel afraid and run away or feel more anger and take on the challenge and attack the enemy and retaliate.

This might not help shed light on our dilemma. On the contrary, this might add insult to injury. But, is it not this exactly our case with the international community? Whenever we try to find a solution for this crisis, things get worse. Whenever we feel we are getting close to reach our goal, we discover that we have just got more far away from it. For that, we are now trapped in a bottleneck, with only a few, incomplete explanations. It is either that we, and they as well, are not sincere or honest in our pursuit to reach an end to this situation. It looks like an impossible-to-solve situation. However, may be the solution is somewhere else where we have not looked yet. In this case, it looks like no matter how hard or how long we try, there will be no solution. It is like the case of two parallel lines that will never meet as long as they exist in the same Euclidean Plane? So, is this really what the case is?

The continuation of the Syrian crises, with all its consequences, wars, extremism, and large-scale migrations achieve the interests of multiple parties at the same time, contrary to what media say. On one hand, arms industry keeps growing in the developed countries, and on the other hand, the flow of migrants will help adjust the balance of population growth in the industrial European countries. Those countries already have low percentage of population growth, e.g. Germany is almost endangered because of low rate of births. What would be the case if the GCC countries, for example, had the same population growth as European Union countries?



Among the exiled

A reading of the book: *Gates of the Land of Nothingness*, by Syrian novelist Samar Yazbek

Enjil Al Shaer

We did not inhale the smell of cinnamon from the words of Syrian writer Samar Yazbek¹, and she did not touch with her palms the basil. All her hands and feet touched was clay², Syrian-wired with human blood and other human remains. This time, she did not tell a story from her own ideas and fertile imagination, she told us a story she really lived with true heroes in the North of Syria. I touched the pain of her story, I imagined her hopes and I entered her gates one by one in a land that was violated, the sanctity of human beings was lost and humanity was exterminated by the hands of its Sultans, until I reached the land of nothingness.

The writer says:

"There is no champion but death. No stories are told by people but of him. Everything is relative and possible, except the absoluteness of death's championship, or a moment outside the context of time, which is the moment that we cross the barbed wire at night. We wander into the wildness, where young men dug a gate for our passage, we were running then, but walk slowly sometimes. That moment swaying in the question of oblivion and home, there on the barbed wire, there were bodies coming out of the darkness suddenly, we walk like the blind, a shoulder brushes another, we hear a voice that says, "Good evening." A voice fades, and another comes, as if we were black cats, but our eyes do not shine, the border distance, which Syrians disappear into at night, is not big anymore, people come in and

go out, they cross the distance at the peace of night." - *Gates of the Land of Nothingness*, page 14

Only a Syrian can cross the road to their own Syrian-ness under the wing of night, disguised to their existence, afraid that this existence would take the bus of death scheduled on the daily life time table.

We start to tell the tale, extending to Atareb and Taftnaz and Kafr Nabl, to the Turkish borders and vice versa, to the story of children who have been displaced and killed, to detentions and death under torture, to the hunger and thirst of Syrians.

There is no room for interpretation or narrative or allegorical language to beautify terms and manipulate labels. Here, the truth is constant, but its bitterness drives one to rage and pain, each at a time. And one wonders another time: why all these brutal practices from a Syrian against the human Syrian?

"The demonstration in 'Binch' is empty of women, and there are flags that had, " There is no God but God and Muhammed is the Prophet of God." I was alone among men; they were looking at me strangely. I met some young men, they were very polite, they sang and clapped, then a Sheikh came and spoke (...) I asked a woman who was observing the demonstration from her home: we used to participate in demonstrations, not anymore, our men fear the bullets and the bombings. (...) they come at night and first at dawn they shoot and run, children, elderly and women die mostly, the families



and brigades do not tire of the fighting. 'This is our destiny' the young men say in 'Binch.'" - *Gates of the Land of Nothingness*, page 17

I did not see a face of an unveiled woman among them. This is part of the traditions of this place, they follow Islamic practices, and I stood in a demonstration as the only unveiled. But when we moved between villages and towns I wore the veil so as not to attract attention.

Here the author went to describe the Hijab that it is just not a piece of cloth to cover the head only, it is the veil of mind and knowledge, an ideological veil placed by the Sharia and fed by traditions and customs. It is that which placed the Syrian woman aside and isolated her from participating in demonstrations under the pretext of fearing for her.

"Here no one speaks about the establishment of an Islamic caliphate, but for a civil state." - *Gates of the Land of Nothingness*, page 18

This statement is an ambiguous beginning to a mysterious ending. Civil state, according to its definition in

Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, is the "state that guarantees and protects all of its members regardless of their intellectual, religious, political, ethnic belonging, and all members are equal before the legal constitutions and in civil rights." In the opinion of "Saeed Outb," it is a civil state with Islamic references, as mentioned in a speech addressed to the Egyptian foreign minister in one of issues released by the "platform of the East" on the separation of church and state:

"I would like to talk a little bit to your Excellency on this issue: that this expression [separation of church and state] has a meaning in the European Christian life, but no meaning at all in Islamic countries. I think that you know it –as do a lot of our intellectuals and educated men - through their readings of the European history, then it became frequented by their tongues without their thinking and without considering its significance in view of the meaning it contains or does not contain for the Islamic country."

Here lays the ambiguity in the concept of the civil state, which the writer spoke of by the lips of revolutionaries of "Binch;" they embrace Islam and follow the rules, which in the texts are clear and explicit. The battalions of jihadist extremists, such as the "Islamic State" and the Al-Nusra Front, which have a large proportion of supporters in the North, derive their laws from these clear and plain texts. What civil state will Syria have?



Through developments in the Syrian Revolution, and the entry of different nationalities to it under the name of Islamic Jihad, some parties have begun to blackmail the people using emotions and feelings, taking advantage of oppression and hunger, deprivation, and being sidelined for several decades.

The author says: "I heard a conversation of fighters. As I began to try to understand what happened in the battle of 'Wadi Al Def,' during the search in the rubble, the younger one of them said, 'The battle of the Wadi Al Def could have finished a long time ago, but the battalions received financial support to extend the life of the battle to take advantage of it ... which explains what happened in the "Abu Aldhor" airport between Maher al-Naimi and Syrian Martyrs Brigades,' and then said: (emitting a spitting expression), 'Is this why we came out for the revolution?'" - *Gates of the Land of Nothingness*, page 88

In war the poor always pay the price. War thieves are the owners and crowned kings of dictators, they excel by force of arms on the one hand, and the strength of religion on the other.

Again, Arab writers look in general, and Syrians in particular, at their affiliations, their identities amputated, and themselves usurped and dispersed between the homeland and the diaspora, like the rest of the people because they are part of this people. The writer says:

".... When I looked at that moment, I knew the meaning of exile and country. I sneak as a fugitive and illegally cross the borders of my homeland. The home is now staring at a plane that will bomb us, and I stare at it steadily, intently and without fear, then I follow where it will drop death. The exile to sit at the "Pastel" in the middle of Paris, drinking my coffee under a pleasant sun, on my left side two lovers are kissing, a bird lands on my knee, and I jump out of fear and panic." - *Gates of the Land of Nothingness*, page 37

The writer wrote at length about everything that is happening in the North of the Syrian, of humanitarian violations by all parties, including the brutal practices of the regime against the people under the pretext of terrorism. Between the jihadist brigades and the entry of different nationalities, among them those who are only interested in the implementation of their fixed beliefs on the one hand, and on the other hand in being mercenary.

All of what the author wrote was real, as she indicated in her book, which is a long, deep topic that would require many pages to study. So, while the reader can know what this book contains, the study needed to contain long sections of it and divide the study into more than one part.

Therefore, this study is the first of the two gates of the three gates of the land of nothingness, the last and most important gate remains, a Syrian migration season into the unknown.

1- The scent of Cinnamon a novel by Samar Yazbek

2- The clay a novel by the same author

Razan Zaitouneh From Resisting the Regime to Residing in the Opposition's Prisons

Suwar team

Razan Zaitouneh started her professional life as a lawyer defending detainees of freedom of opinion and expression, as she had been a member of the defence team for defending political and opinion detainees since she graduated from law school in Damascus in 1999. She was also a co-founder of Human Rights Association in Syria. Razan Zaitouneh, the human rights activist and Syrian writer, had to hide her human rights and media activism. She has been nevertheless reporting through international media what has been happening in Syria regarding violations practiced by the Regime against demonstrators and detainees in its prisons since the beginning of the Syrian crisis.

However, her activism didn't start with the outbreak of the protests in Syria, rather, it started when she graduated and engaged in defending political detainees. In 2005, Zaitouneh founded The Association of Human Rights Information in Syria to be a database of the regime's human rights violations. Her further activism involved participation in the committee to support the families of the political detainees in Syria.

Her activism was not only directed at human rights; she was also among the most active writers in Syria. She published dozens of articles and reports in the Arab and foreign press that observed the reality of the lack of general freedoms and human rights in Syria.

With the beginning of the revolution, she participated in founding the local coordination committees. For this, the Syrian intelligence broke into her house in Damascus, inspected the things inside, and confiscated many of her papers and personal belongings. They also detained her brother-in-law, who was there by coincidence. He was taken as a hostage in exchange for her and her husband.

After that incident, Razan moved to live in Eastern Ghuta, which is under the control of the Islamic Front led by Zahran Alloush. Beside the daily shelling Eastern Ghuta is exposed to, it is considered to be completely closed due to the siege imposed on it by the Regime.

On the tenth of December, 2013, Razan was kidnapped from her work center together with the team of the Center of Documenting Violations in Syria, which includes her husband, Wael Hamada, and two of her colleagues, Sameera Alkhalil and Nazem Alhamadi. They were kidnapped by unknown armed people in the Eastern Duma area, where the team worked documenting the violations and assaults the oppositionists and activists are exposed to in Syria.

Razan Zaitouneh had gained many rewards in the field of freedom of the press, including Anna Politkovskaya's reward for human rights' defenders and Andrei Sakharov's reward given from the European Parliament.



The Patience Stone: A Film about Women and War If Scheherazade had told all of her stories, Shahriar wouldn't have had slaves to worship him anymore.

Ammar Akkash

"Those who don't know how to make love make war," said by the film's heroine. This quote summarizes the film in which the Iranian actress, Golshifteh Farahani, plays the lead. The film recounts the story of an Afghan woman who cares for her sick husband who used to be a fighter. He was in a coma as a result of a gunshot in his neck. She starts narrating her story and secrets as she has the chance to speak freely for the first time. The name "Afghanistan" is not mentioned actually all through the film, neither is the heroine's or her husband's name. The result is the film sheds light on similar patriarchal societies torn by war. The screenplay uses the symbolic echoes of Scheherazade to represent a voice of a marginalized woman's voice, which, once unleashed, owns unlimited powers. The film also draws from the Afghan myth, the Stone of Patience, in which a jewel (the stone of patience) absorbs the cares of those who trust it until it is filled up with their sad stories and explodes.

At the beginning, the wife starts by supplicating to God to save her husband/ tormentor in an image that can be used universally for all people who fear freedom and get used to their tormentor, their patriarch and dictator. The Mullah's visits are frequent to recite his supplication for the husband's recovery. The wife recalls her childhood when she was brought up by a tough father who liked his birds, and betting in bird fights, more than his wife and daughters. He had no problem marrying his daughters off to an elderly man just for paying off his losing bet. Then he marries off the heroine to a fighter on the frontline, but the groom doesn't attend the wedding. In his place is his photo with his dagger, in a scene which is kind of similar to surrealism. When the wife finds out later that her husband is sterile, she finds herself forced to go to her prostitute aunt, who arranges meetings for her with blindfolded men to impregnate her, preventing her husband from marrying another wife. While telling the story about her husband, she starts playing with his body and body parts for the first time, and after she had gotten used to being subject to his desires, he then becomes her tool. After this purifying narration, her body is turned on, and she takes the lead in a sexual relationship with a young man. He comes from a militia he was recruited to as a child, and he suffers from speech difficulties and was exposed to torture by his leader. The relationship grows between the two defeated victims, restoring part of their lost dignity and regaining control on their bodies and desires.

The film director, Atiq Rahimi, also the author of the novel the movie is based on, employs minimalism, using minimal places and focuses, like the house curtain that is embroidered with birds and the change of shade and light with the change of daytime. The film has only one revenge scene, which summarizes the war atrocities.

The film has many characteristics of mono-drama as the heroine's voice is predominant, but, despite that, we don't feel bored. The use of suspense, which depends on the showdown, keeps the viewer interested. Also, the actress's charming performance captivates us, as her voice is poetic and attractive. In

addition, in the zooming shots of the heroine's eyes and face there are thousands of words expressed which are full of the feelings of joy, sadness, confusion, and fear...

The film ends with a symbolic scene. The husband, who is the "patience stone," after being overinflated with his wife's stories, bursts and gets up to take revenge against her. She stabs him, and he suffocates her, so they die together. The camera focuses on her smiling face. Scheherazade has revived her status and restored herself, so she left victorious. It is as if we hear the resonance of the feminist poet's voice saying, "What will happen if the woman narrates her real life story? The world will be shaking." So if Scheherazade had told all of her stories, Shahriar wouldn't have had slaves to worship him anymore.





The Transplanted Heart

Malaz Al Zu'abi

There had to be a celebration that matched the magnitude of the event. It was the first heart transplant surgery the country witnessed in its history, along with the most prominent example about the quantum leap the world of medicine had achieved during the time of Mr. President. In attendance that morning were representatives from the three main newspapers, Tishreen, Althawra, and Albaath, a representative from Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), a news team from the Syrian Arab TV Channel, a Damascus Radio reporter, Robert Fisk, and a crowd of Syrians.

At six o'clock the same evening, the press office in the Ministry of Health distributed the following announcement:

"Under the generous patronage of the health caregiver, Mr. President Hafez al-Assad, and under the instructions of the Health Minister, the first heart transplant surgery will be done tomorrow morning for a citizen of the Syrian Arab Republic.

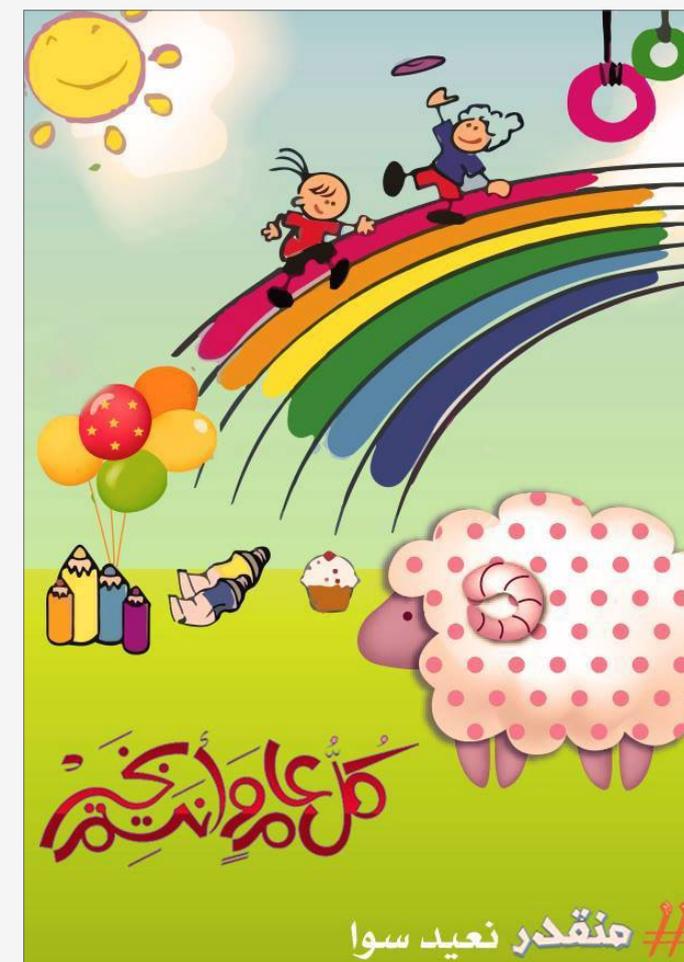
This comes as an unprecedented national accomplishment and a product of the glorious Corrective Movement (Al Haraka Al Tashihya)."

The surgery had been delayed for many days due to the difficulty of finding a donor of a sound heart. This was sorted out by torturing to death a detainee from the Syrian coast from a communist background. The torture was inflicted by a tormentor from Deir Alzor and a jailer from Daraa in a prison which was supervised by Mustafa Tlas with a direct approval from Abdulhaleem Khaddam. Afterwards, Mahmoud Alzu'abi was made aware of that. Ali Duba, Ali Haidar, Ali Khuzam, Ali Aslan, Ali Habib, and Ali Aldeek were completely unaware of the incident of torture and violations. (Of course, Rifaat Alasad was not aware of all of those violations, either.)

Once the detainee breathed his last, his heart was preserved, and then the date for the surgery was set. The medical team was composed of a group of the most skilled Syrian doctors, who graduated from Bucharest, Moscow, Kiev, Sofia, and Eastern Germany. They came with assistance from a group of nurses (Mercy Angels) who wore sensational make up. Then they chose the military hospital and butchery, Tishreen, as the state institution where this unprecedented national accomplishment would take place. The beneficiary patient who received the surgery was a policeman from Idlib province.

They had already sterilized the patient's room and brought clean beddings for his bed when they brought the bucket, also sterilized and filled with chlorine, that contained the heart. President Assad watched the live broadcast surgery for a couple of minutes then asked the senior surgeon, who had put the scalpel aside, a question: "What can you see while you're looking at this Syrian transplanted heart?"

The senior surgeon replied, "As a matter of fact, I am really happy and overjoyed because I can see a beating Syrian heart. I can see it as it is in reality wonderful and beautiful." Then, he continued talking about his observations honestly to Mr. President, "I can see its beautiful and wonderful arteries. I can see its beautiful red blood, and I can see its curves. I can see the lofty right ventricle rising to a great height and our beloved left atrium. I can see that every spot in it is beautiful and wonderful. I am immensely happy about this scene." The senior surgeon resumed work after the end of the live broadcasting and got busy looking for the scissors a nurse had lost somewhere in the patient's body. After a couple of hours, they announced that the surgery was completed successfully while the crowds who had gathered spontaneously started cheering and shouting that they were ready to sacrifice their lives and blood for Hafez. On the following morning, the Idlibi policeman's family took their deceased to the graveyard.



We Can (#wecan)

#wecan is a Syrian interactive media campaign launched by The Aman Network.

#wecan is a space for Syrian individuals and organizations to express what they hope for and what they are going to do to build Syria.

#wecan is a campaign that aims at focusing on the positive productive power, peaceful coexistence values, and acceptance of others which are part of the Syrian society's values.

Join the #wecan media campaign by sharing with us what you can do for Syria, and what is going on in your area. You, your group or your organization can share your answer by writing it, taking a picture, or recording a video. Then, share your answer one of the following ways:

Send it to the network's email: Amannet.peace@gmail.com

Sending it to our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/aman.network.peace>

Aman Network is a Syrian network made up of active and influential people and organizations. We work to build local and national peace in Syria through avoiding, managing, and resolving conflict according to the values of peace, freedom, humanity, honesty, transparency, accepting others, and justice. Aman Network participates in building national peace in Syria by reinforcing local peace efforts in different areas in Syria.



Une mouette en Méditerranée

SYRIAN

Seagull in the Mediterranean

By the Syrian Artist: Fares Cachoux