

Experiences and Attitudes toward Migration among Syrian Migrants and Refugees

TAKAOKA Yutaka

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シリア人移民・難民の越境移動についての経験と意識

高岡 豊

シリア紛争の勃発以来、多数のシリア人が移民・難民として移動を強いられた。シリア人たちの移動先は、トルコやヨルダンをはじめとする隣接国から、EU諸国に至るまで多様だが、移動についての彼らの経験や意識、教育水準などの属性も彼らの移動先ごとに様々である。彼ら紛争に追われるだけの無力な人々で、移動先について検討・

選択の余地がないならば、このような差異が生じるとは考えにくい。本稿は、筆者らがシリア人を対象に実施した世論調査の結果を基に、このような多様性が生じた原因を解明するものである。

シリア人の意識は多くの機関・研究者の関心の対象となっており、世論調査の手法を用いた調査も多数実施された。その一方で、紛争という困難な状況下で、調査の意図や手法で学術的に問題のある調査も見られた。本稿で依拠した世論調査は、ヨルダン、トルコ、スウェーデン、そしてシリア国内で学術的な手法に則って抽出したサンプルを対象にして実施したもので、調査の手法、規模、成果の面で世界的にも珍しいものである。

調査の結果、教育水準や、諸外国に対する評価、越境移動の際に重視する要素で、調査実施国ごとに顕著な差異が見られた。例えば、トルコに在住するシリア人は、スウェーデンに在住する者と比べて著しく教育水準が低かった。諸外国への評価でも、シリア国内とトルコとは、評価される国とそうでない国が著しく異なった。また、スウェーデン在住者は移動に際し、移動先の移民受け入れ政策を重視する傾向が強かった一方で、トルコ在住者には共同体維持志向が強く見られた。ヨルダン在住者についても、地理的な近接以外にも移動先選択に影響した要因があることが示唆された。本稿の考察を通じ、シリア人移民・難民が、移動を行うか否かと移動先の決定に際し、利用可能な資源の量・質の検討、入手可能な情報の分析を相応に行っていることが、移動先ごとに経験・意識の多様さに影響していることが明らかになった。

I. Introduction

Since the outbreak of the Syrian conflict in 2011, large numbers of Syrians have been forced to leave their homes. Some have taken refuge elsewhere in Syria, while others have fled to neighboring countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. A considerable number of these migrants have attempted longer, cross-border migration, seeking refuge in EU countries. The experience and attitudes of these migrants toward migration vary according to their new locations. If it were the case that Syrian migrants or refugees were powerlessly pushed or moved blindly by the conflict, any patterns in the diversity of their perspective would be difficult to explain. This article aims therefore to reveal the reasons for such trends. To this end, we rely on findings from surveys and field research in the relevant countries.

International treaties provide clear definitions of migrants and refugees. For

example, Article I (B) of the “Text of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees” of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines a “refugee” as a person who meets the following description:

“As a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to [the] well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.⁽¹⁾”

Meanwhile, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines migration as follows:

“The movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification.”

As for the definition of “migrant,” the IOM states the following:

“IOM defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person’s legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is. IOM concerns itself with migrants and migration-related issues and, in agreement with relevant States, with migrants who are in need of international migration services.⁽²⁾”

Therefore, understanding migration includes seeing refuge seeking as a pattern of movement of human beings across an international border or within a State. Certainly, making a clear distinction between migrants and refugees may be necessary

in the legal or administrative arena; however, the nature of movement and motivation of Syrians who have recently moved internationally seems to be diverse, such that a single classification of “migrant” or “refugee” is not appropriate for the purpose of this study. Furthermore, this study will show some similarity between experiences and perceptions of Syrians and those of conventional cross-border migrants. Of course we should not ignore nature of those Syrians as victim of the conflict, meanwhile they practice similar consideration and decision for their cross-border migration at least in a part of their journeys as conventional migrant does. From this view point, it is necessary to avoid putting simply those Syrians with ordinally migrants in a class at same time, it is important avoiding stick to those Syrian’s nature as victim of the conflict till refusing comparative studies or academic generalization. Therefore, it is required to take both of their nature as an actor of cross-border migration and as a victim of the conflict into the research. Hence, this article does not strictly define “migration” and “refugee” and uses the terms “migrants/refugees” and “migration/refugee.” This expression is adopted to emphasize dual nature of the Syrians in their cross-border migration.

II. Previous Surveys of Syrians

The catastrophic developments of the Syrian conflict and miserable journey of Syrian migrants/refugees have attracted wide attention. Particularly, the large influx of Syrian migrants/refugees has caused political arguments in host countries related to demography, ethnicity, and integration into the host community [Cagaptay and Yalkin 2018]. Furthermore, the problem of serious decline in living standards in Syria and challenges stemming from the long, tough journey of Syrian migrants/refugees require urgent measures in humanitarian fields. In addition to qualitative research on individual Syrians, quantitative approaches to Syrian populations are needed for a better understanding of these above-mentioned problems.

Many surveys and studies have examined experiences and perceptions of Syrians of the conflict. Some were conducted inside Syria by official or pro-government institutes, and foreign research institutes have attempted to conduct surveys both inside and outside of Syria. After the EU refugee crisis in 2015, several surveys have focused on migrants/refugees from Middle Eastern countries, especially Syria. Even opposition propaganda organs have attempted to use survey-style articles to promote their political

or military visions. Thus, it is natural that every research team or survey has its own context and intentions. In addition, some researchers have failed to disclose their methodology (such as the sampling method), and others have appeared to disregard scientific protocols for surveys.

For our study it is useful to review some of the recent surveys on experiences or opinions of Syrians. The Syrian state-run newspaper *Al-Thawra* has published three surveys over the past few years concerning Syrians' book-reading habits⁽³⁾ [*Al-Thawra* May 25 2016], monthly salaries or income⁽⁴⁾ [*Al-Thawra* January 29 2017], and attitudes toward television⁽⁵⁾ [*Al-Thawra* May 9 2018]. In addition to these works, the Syria Opinion Center for Poll & Studies (SOCPS), a local research institute, published the results of polls on political opinions and perceptions of Syrians of the future.⁽⁶⁾ Cooperation with this kind of institute, which we will describe later, was useful for our survey.

There has also been significant work undertaken by non-Syrian institutes. For example, SADA, an NGO based in Turkey, surveyed opinions of Syrians of opposition political bodies and peace talks.⁽⁷⁾ However, the survey results provided vague information only on the locations where the surveys were conducted [Aoyama 2016: 78]. The British research institute, ORB International, which specializes in quantitative and qualitative research in fragile states, conflict zones, post-conflict zones, and developing nations, published several important results of surveys on Syrian public opinion toward actors in the conflict, and on Syrians' perceptions of solutions to the conflict.⁽⁸⁾ The Turkish research project "Syrians – Barometer" tracks opinions among Syrians in Turkey, focusing on perceptions of Turkey as having responsibility for provision of refuge to Syrians,⁽⁹⁾ and the integration of Syrians into Turkish society.⁽¹⁰⁾ The NPO organization, the Center for Civil Society and Democracy (CCSD), that is located in Turkey, also published the results of their poll on Syrian views of peace talks.⁽¹¹⁾ However, although survey-centered articles on Syrian opinion have emerged on several occasions, some have failed to explain their methodology (such as sample selection, location).⁽¹²⁾ For example, The Day After (TDA), which defines itself as "an independent, Syrian-led civil society organization working to support democratic transition in Syria," carried out several surveys of opinions of Syrians in Syria and Turkey, but acknowledged the impossibility of pulling a representative sample of the Syrian population due to the war [The Day After 2016: 8]. Therefore, careful treatment is required when referencing such articles or documents.

Concerning the focus of this paper, previous research⁽¹³⁾ has targeted Syrian migrants/refugees in Germany with the aim of shedding light on factors encouraging their migration and also their perceptions of returning to Syria. Although the survey sponsors seemed to take a pro-opposition stance toward the Syrian conflict, this study offers important information on experiences and attitudes of Syrians regarding migration/refuge seeking. Abrahms in their study also provided important perspectives on Syrian migrants/refugees in EU countries. Describing some of the discourse about Syrian migrants/refugees in EU countries as a myth, their research relied on a relatively large number of interviews with Syrian refugees and revealed interesting reasons for them having left their homes [Abrahms et al. 2017].

Certainly, much work has been done in this area. However, even more work remains to be done in order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the migration/refuge phenomenon of Syria. Therefore, this study examines and attempts to account for differences in attitudes and experiences of migration of Syrians toward migration/refuge by their current place of residence via a comparative analysis of past surveys.

III. Major Factors in Conventional Cross-Border Migration

Although the issue of Syrian migrants/refugees may be considered unique given its large scale and political circumstances, we should not ignore its nature as a case of cross-border migration. Therefore, it is useful for us to briefly review literature on cross-border migration, including cases of Arab populations, and also to identify important contributing factors. Since the issue of migration from Middle East and North African countries has been considered an important one, many studies have addressed the topic. In particular, this study refers to the studies by Baldwin-Edwards (2005), de Silva (2004), and [EUROSTAT 2000], which focused on tendencies and motivations of contemporary Arab people. Particularly, since [EUROSTAT 2000] adopted a survey-style methodology to study migrants and their families, including Arabs (Egyptian and Moroccan), its analysis is noteworthy for this study.

The above-mentioned works clarify several influential factors for migration. Firstly is the social status of migrants. Migrants tend to be young and educated. When a migration is motivated economically, younger age and professional skill lead to job opportunities. Migrants are frequently single males and originate from a distance

relatively close to the host country or from areas with cultural, linguistic, and economic ties. For Arab people, former colonial ties with European countries and cultural or linguistic ties with Arab peninsula countries seem to influence the choice of destination.

Secondly is the attractiveness of the receiving countries. For example, they might offer higher incomes, more job opportunities, and chances to develop one's skills or abilities. In addition to economic circumstances, socio-cultural or socio-economic considerations contribute to a country's attractiveness. When a migration is motivated by family-related reasons such as family reunification or marriage, the health care and school system, cost of living, child allowance, attitude toward foreigners, and admission regulations are possibly taken into consideration. From this viewpoint, a migrant need to obtain detailed information regarding the receiving country.

Thirdly, networks are considered as the next influential factor in migration. The existence of a network itself may be a motivating factor in migration; for example, family reunification or marriage. Yet whether a migration is motivated by economic or familial considerations, one's networks affect one's selection of destination. As the study by de Silva [2004: 7] mentions, migrant flows tend to be self-perpetuating: once a migrant network has been established in a country, it attracts new migrants from within that country. A potential migrant may expect assistance from his or her predecessors in finding opportunities for jobs or for development of skills. Preceding migrants may aid their relatives who want to follow them in that migration. Furthermore, a network can help a potential migrant access credible information for migration. Compared with other sources such as the government, or television, radio, and newspapers, migrants attach higher credibility to information from trusted friends and relatives [EUROSTAT 2000: 92-93]. Thus, it is possible to see how networks strongly affect decisions of migrants.

As a migrant's level of education, physical or cultural/mental distance to the destination, and network may be a means to reduce costs for migration [de Silva 2004: 7], and information from a migrant's acquaintances minimizes uncertainty about the destination [EUROSTAT 2000: 93], these can be considered significant resources for Syrian migrants/refugees to utilize in their migration/refuge seeking. Therefore, they are major topics of our surveys and field.

IV. Research

The data for this study comes from several research projects in which the author participated, and which were conducted by JSPS KAKENHI, Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in Japan. In these projects, a total of five opinion surveys were administered between 2014 and 2017. Three surveys focusing on Arab migrants/refugees were administered in Jordan, Sweden, and Turkey, respectively. Two surveys were conducted in Syria. Additionally, dozens of interviews with Syrian and Arab migrants/refugees were conducted in Jordan and Sweden.

These studies aimed to reveal the political attitudes of Syrians in the current circumstances, as well as their migration experiences and attitudes toward migration. A study by Nishikida pointed out the importance of information and of a strategic, active attitude by Arab migrants/refugees in Sweden [Nishikida 2017: 19-22], referring to interviews that were held in our surveys and field research. Below is a summary of the five surveys:

1. Jordan (2014)

This survey was conducted in August 2014 in Jordan in coordination with the Center for Strategic Studies (CSS) at the University of Jordan. The purpose of the survey was to understand perceptions of refugees with regard to migration and their process of seeking refuge. The targets of the survey were male and female Syrians and Palestinians over the age of 18 who resided in Jordan (of a total of 1,190 surveyed, 493 were Syrians and 697 were Palestinians). In the survey methodology, 40 locals conducted face-to-face interviews under CSS supervision in the local colloquial Arabic in the participants' homes. Syrians were selected as the focus group of the study.

Twelve qualitative interviews were also carried out. The participants were selected from the Mafraq region and from Hashime Shamali areas in the city of Amman. The questionnaire was included 17 questions and 15 demographic questions.

2. Syria (2016)⁽¹⁴⁾

This survey was conducted from December 2015 to January 2016 in Syrian territories under the control of the Syrian Government in coordination with the SOCPs. Its aims were: (1) to understand how Syrians view other countries in terms of their

politics, social economy, and culture; and (2) to propose potential contributions to Syrian politics, social economy, and culture. The survey subjects were 1,625 male and female Syrian nationals aged 18 to 65 years who resided in the Syrian Arab Republic (data of 1,500 questionnaires were collected, excluding 125 people who did not respond). Participants were selected from five regions of Syria (the Jazeera region, northern region, seashore region, central region, and southern region) by a random sampling method (cluster sampling in the second stage, with systematic sampling from each cluster). Door-to-door individual personal interviews in Arabic were conducted by 20 local assistants. The questionnaire was edited by two questions and 18 demographic question.

3. Sweden (2016)⁽¹⁵⁾

This survey was conducted from December 2016 through June 2017 in Stockholm and Malmö, Sweden, in coordination with NOVUS, a Swedish research institution. Its purpose was to reveal: (1) perceptions of migrants and refugees of cross-border migration; and (2) routes these migrants followed on their way to Sweden. The targets of the survey were men and women over age 18 from Syria, Iraq, and Palestine who resided in Sweden. Samples were selected from 12 Syrian migrants after 2011, and the participants were recruited in SFI schools in Stockholm and Malmö (six schools in each city) by the Paper and Pencil Interviewing (PAPI) method.⁽¹⁶⁾ A total of 364 participants were interviewed by this method; among them, approximately 230 were Syrians. Syrians were selected as the focus group for this study.

Prior to the questionnaire survey, nearly 20 qualitative interviews were also conducted. All the interviews were conducted in the local colloquial Arabic language. Participants were selected from several SFIs in Malmö and Stockholm, Haparanda in coordination with the headmasters of the school and under onsite consent. The questionnaire included 20 questions and 20 demographic questions.

4. Syria (2017)⁽¹⁷⁾

This survey was conducted in March 2017 in Syrian territories under the control of the Syrian Government, and in coordination with SOCPs. It aimed to capture: (1) how Syrians evaluated their own way of living; and (2) how Syrians viewed humanitarian and economic aid from foreign countries, including Japan. The survey subjects were 1,500 male and female Syrian nationals aged 18 to 65 years who

resided in the Syrian Arab Republic. They were selected from five regions of Syria (the Jazeera region, northern region, seashore region, central region, and southern region) by a random sampling method (cluster sampling in the second stage, with systematic sampling from each cluster). Door-to-door individual personal interviews were conducted in Arabic by 20 local assistants. The questionnaire was edited by 8 questions and 18 demographic questions. Some questions allowed free description to the participants.

5. Turkey (2017)⁽¹⁸⁾

This survey was conducted from October to November 2017 in Turkey in coordination with INFAKTO, a Turkish research institute. The purpose of the survey was: (1) to understand how Syrian refugees viewed other countries in terms of their politics, social economy, and culture; and (2) to propose contributions that could be made to Syrian politics, social economy, and culture. The target of the survey was Syrians residing in Turkey, defined as “Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTPs).” Since it is necessary to obtain permission from Turkish authorities to conduct surveys in Syrian refugee camps under the control of the Turkish Government, the scope of the survey was limited to Syrian refugees living outside of the camps. In the survey, seven provinces were selected in Turkey as target areas (İstanbul, Şanlıurfa, Hatay, Gaziantep, Adana, Mersin, and Kilis) in which many Syrian refugees were thought to be living. In those provinces, the neighborhoods targeted were selected in consultation with the local authorities, and the number of interviews conducted in each neighborhood was fixed at 12. In these neighborhoods, three streets were selected using a Kish table and four interviews were completed randomly on each street through walks. The total number of participants was 812.

The uniqueness and significances of these researches are summarized in three points. Firstly, these researches aware effectiveness of collaboration between survey and field interviews. Although circumstances in Syria did not allow carrying out field research, the surveys tried to get feedback from local staffs or institutes for the surveys. Thus, these researches made efforts for supplemental approach of quantitative research and qualitative research as much as possible. Secondly, these researches endeavored to secure representativeness of its samples. As mentioned above, some surveys about Syrians seem to be biased, and failed to provide sampling method. In contrary, these

surveys largely relied on scientific sampling methods. Finally, these researches sought comparability of the results during compiling process of the questionnaires. Consequently, these researches succeed providing diversity of experiences and attitudes toward cross-border migration/refuge among Syrians in Jordan, Syria, Sweden, and Turkey.

Certainly, these researches suffered from several difficulties which kept the surveys from introducing unified questionnaires, conducting field interviews. In that cases, the researches put priority to safety for the local institutes and their staffs. However, even taking these difficulties into consideration, the surveys had been done under common objective to reveal experiences and attitude toward cross-border migration/refuge among Syrians in different places and managed to provide outstanding information.

V. Results and Discussion

This section will compare the survey findings on Syrians. As the surveys used different questionnaires, direct comparison is difficult. However, distinct characteristics are observed that correspond to different current places of residence.

1. Education Level

The most significant difference distinguishing Syrians in Syria, Jordan, Sweden, and Turkey is their levels of literacy. As Table 1 shows, surveys in Syria (2016, 2017) showed that over 95% of the participants finished at least elementary school; thus, only a small percentage were illiterate or had a low level of literacy. Syrians in Sweden also seemed to report high levels of literacy. By contrast, Syrians in Turkey were likely to be quite poorly educated and therefore have low levels of literacy. In a survey taken in Turkey (2017), 17.1% of the participants reported being illiterate, and 13.8% of the

Table 1: Comparison of illiteracy rates and low literacy rates among the surveys

	Jordan (2014)	Sweden (2016)	Syria (2016)	Syria (2017)	Turkey (2017)
Illiteracy (%)	9.9	1.3	1.3	1.5	17.1
Low literacy (%)	3.4	1.7	2.0	2.7	13.8
Total (%)	13.3	3.0	3.3	4.2	30.9

(Source) Author.

participants likely did not finish elementary school. The illiteracy rate and the low literacy rates reported in the survey in Jordan (2014) were 9.9% and 3.4%, respectively.

The poor education levels found among Syrians in Turkey may be due to the refugee crisis in EU countries from 2015-2016. In addition to Turkey's status as the largest host country of Syrian migrants/refugees after the start of the Syrian conflict, a large number of Syrians also headed to EU countries via Turkey. Syrians who could go to EU countries merely passed through Turkey, but those migrants who could not go to EU countries stayed there. To summarize, educated Syrians who qualified for migration to EU countries succeeded in going there, and their relative education levels could reflect this. In Turkey, only 6.8% and 1.2% of the participants in this study reported their education level as university and graduate school, respectively. By contrast, 30 and 28 Syrian passport holders among the participants of our survey in Sweden indicated their education level as university and graduate school, respectively. Thus, approximately 13.3% and 12.4% of Syrian passport holders in Sweden, respectively, had an education above university level.

Furthermore, although surveys in Syria (2016, 2017) were conducted in locations representing all regions of Syria, responses from large cities such as Damascus, Aleppo, and Latakia, tended to show higher levels of education. While the research team for the survey in Turkey found that a clear majority of participants came from rural areas in the northern part of Aleppo prefecture. A majority of the participants in the survey in Jordan came from the rural governorate Dar'a, with a considerable number of participants coming from the urban areas of Damascus, Aleppo, or Homs. The presence of urban, relatively well-educated individuals may have been reflected in the education levels reported in Jordan.

For instance, in the survey in Syria (2016), 49% of respondents who were born in Damascus prefecture reported having an education level above that of university. Among those who came from Latakia, Aleppo, and Homs, 40%, 42%, 45.8%, respectively, responded that they had an education above university level. Meanwhile, only 38% of participants who were born in Hasaka prefecture reported attending or having attended university. The same tendency was observed in Syria (2017). The percentages of those who had education above university level were as follows: Central district of Damascus, 80%; central district of Latakia, 51.5%; Al-Sam'an district of Aleppo, 52%; and central district of Homs, 49%. For those in the central district of Hasaka, this figure was 38%. Therefore, it is possible to say that differences in education level may also reflect the

participants' place of origin before their migration/refuge.

2. Evaluation of Countries

There are clear tendencies in the survey participants' evaluations of and perspectives on the countries involved in the Syrian conflict (see Table 2). Because the survey in Syria (2016) used different questions from those of the other two surveys, a direct comparison of the countries was difficult. However, the survey in Turkey (2017) revealed a clear evaluation of other countries. Respondents in Syria (2016, 2017) showed their approval of pro-Syrian government countries, such as Iran, Russia, and China, and disapproval of countries supporting the opposition, such as the US, UK, Saudi Arabia (K.S.A.), Qatar, and Turkey. The average evaluation score (Max:5.0, Minimum:0.0) of Russia was 4.2 (2016) and 4.0 (2017). This means high approval by Syrians inside Syria of the role of Russian in the Syrian conflict. The same tendency of approval is observed for Iran, 3.8 (Syria 2016) and 3.9 (Syria 2017), and China, 3.9 and 3.5, respectively. The participants in Syria also expressed clear disapproval of the US (1.6 and 1.7), UK (2.1 and 1.8), K.S.A. (1.5 and 1.7), and Qatar (1.4 and 1.6). Thus, it is possible to say that the evaluations by Syrians inside Syria of the countries involved in the Syrian conflict reflect the political and military framework of that conflict.

If the participants' current place of residence reflects their political position in the conflict, it is easy to assume that Syrians in Turkey would have different attitudes toward countries than their counterparts in Syria. Thus, their obvious disapproval of pro-government countries and their approval of opposition-supporting countries was to a certain extent expected. Indeed, they expressed strong disapproval of Iran (1.3), Russia (1.3), and China (1.3). However, their approval of opposition-supporting countries was not uniform. While Syrians in Turkey uniformly disapproved of the US (1.7), UK (1.5), and K.S.A. (1.7), as they disapproved pro-government countries, they expressed approval of Qatar (2.6) and Turkey (4.5).

Why did they not support other supporters of the opposition, such as the K.S.A. and US? One could assume that Turkish and Qatari agencies monopolized aid activities for Syrian refugees in Turkey, and this influenced participants' responses. However, American agencies such as USAID have also been active, not only in refugee camps, but in urban areas as well. Therefore, the survey respondents likely considered other factors when evaluating foreign assistance to Syrians. This suggests that Syrians in Turkey acknowledged the discrepancy between diplomatic and military policies among

countries supporting opposition groups in Syria.

Table 2: Evaluations of countries involved in the Syrian conflict; Means The average evaluation score (Max:5.0, Minimum:0.0) (standard deviations)

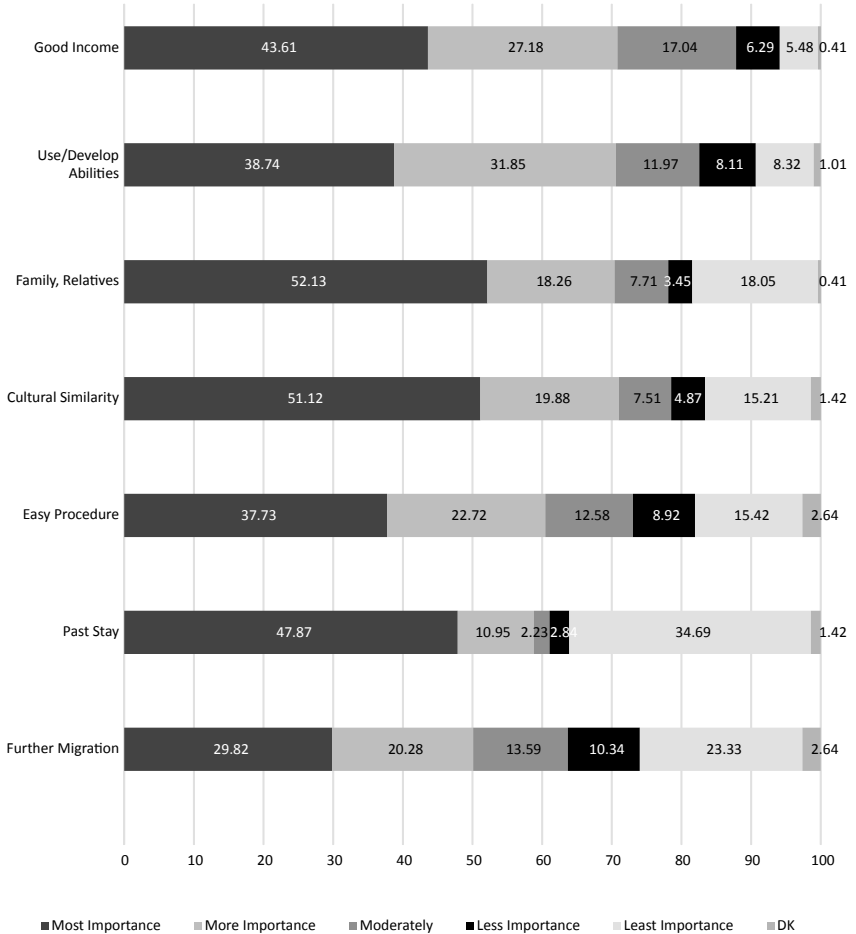
	Syria (2016) Do you think that Japan and other foreign countries have made an active contribution to responding to political problems in the Middle East and materializing safety in the region?	Syria (2017) How do you evaluate the following countries, including Japan, from the perspective of giving aid to Syrian people?	Syrians in Turkey (2017) From the viewpoint of assistance to Syrian people, how you evaluate these countries?
Turkey	1.5 (0.84)		4.5 (1.00)
Iran	3.8 (1.09)	3.9 (1.20)	1.3 (0.75)
U.K.	2.1 (0.91)	1.8 (1.24)	1.5 (0.94)
Syria	4.5 (0.79)		
Russia	4.2 (0.99)	4.0 (1.32)	1.3 (0.70)
Saudi Arabia	1.5 (0.84)	1.7 (1.27)	1.7 (1.15)
Lebanon	3.0 (0.90)	2.5 (1.21)	1.9 (1.32)
China	3.9 (0.89)	3.5 (1.27)	1.3 (0.61)
Iraq	3.4 (0.89)		
France	2.0 (0.95)	1.8 (1.19)	1.7 (1.09)
Palestine	2.9 (0.99)		
Qatar	1.4 (0.78)	1.6 (1.17)	2.6 (1.71)
North Korea	3.4 (0.95)		
South Korea	2.8 (0.91)		
Israel	1.1 (0.41)		
Egypt	3.0 (0.89)		
U.S.	1.6 (1.04)	1.7 (1.24)	1.7 (1.16)
Japan	3.3 (0.97)	2.54 (1.27)	1.4 (0.87)
Germany	2.8 (1.21)	2.7 (1.37)	2.4 (1.55)
Jordan	2.0 (1.05)	1.8 (1.21)	1.8 (1.24)
Sweden		2.7 (1.26)	1.7 (1.14)
Greece			1.5 (0.95)
Hungary			1.4 (0.78)

(Source) Author (in cooperation with Prof. Shingo Hamanaka).

3. Kinship and Friendship

Furthermore, variations were observed in experiences with and opinions about cross-border migration/refuge. In response to the question: “How important would you rate the following choices for your longest stay?” Syrians in Jordan tended to consider the presence of acquaintances and cultural similarity as important factors in determining their destination outside of Syria (Figure 1). As Figure 1 displays, 52.13% of Syrians in Jordan responded “most important” to the presence of acquaintances, and 51.12% in Jordan responded “most important” to the presence of acquaintances, and 51.12%

Figure 1: Importance for Longest Stay (Syrians in Jordan 2014) (%)



(Source) [Nishikida et al. 2018]

of these Syrians answered “most important” to cultural similarity. This tendency likely affected their choice of Jordan as their refuge destination. The religious and linguistic customs of Jordan are similar to those of Syria, and kinship ties connecting southern Syria and northern Jordan may attract Syrians who value the presence of family and a familiar culture.

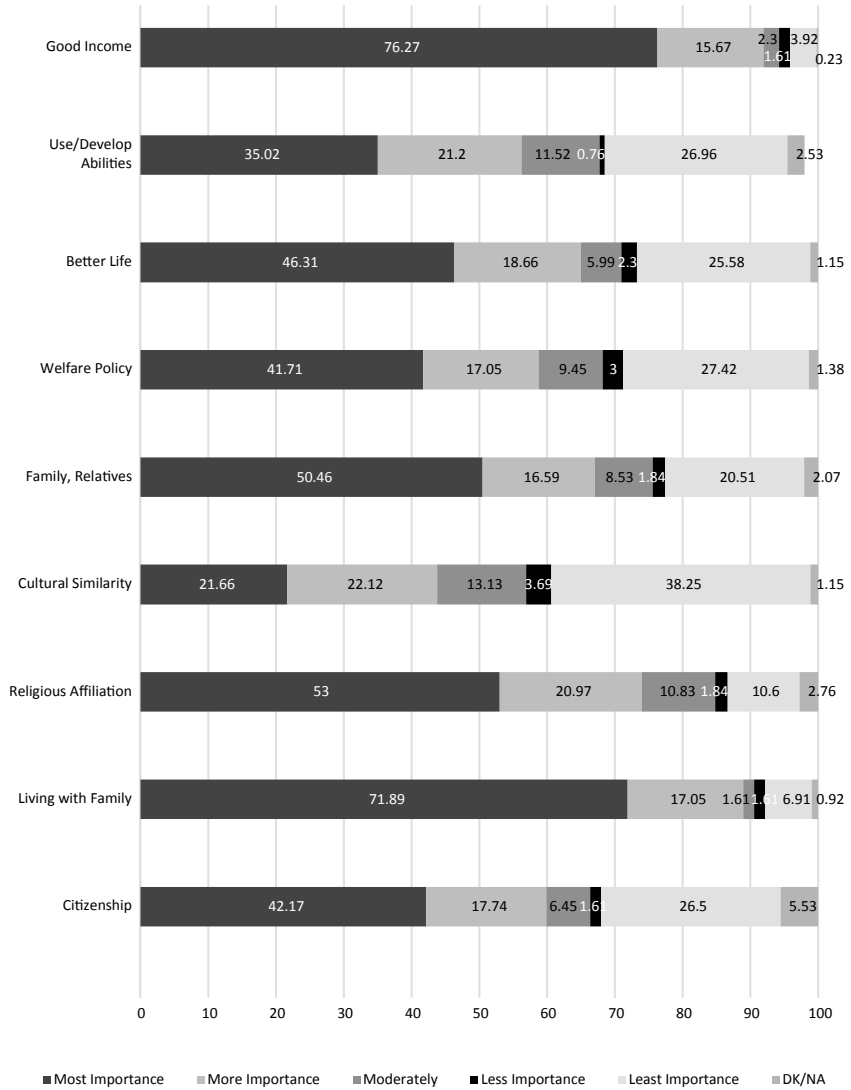
On the other hand, Syrians in Turkey attached importance to the potential for a good income as well as for living with their families; 76.27% and 71.89% of the participants considered these factors “most important,” respectively. The factors presence of acquaintances (50.46%) and religious affiliation (53.0%) were also important for determining a destination (Figure 2). This tendency reflects family or community-directed attitudes toward migration/refuge among Syrians in Turkey: They may perceive it to be difficult to migrate further to countries where they have no acquaintances or where religious practices are completely different from their own. Thus, their attitude to important factors for their migration or refuge may explain why they remained in Turkey.

For Syrians in Sweden, the migration policy of the host country was an important factor in their migration/refuge seeking with Sweden as their destination (Figure 3); 50.82% of the Syrian respondents in Sweden saw this factor as “most important.” Furthermore, 39.01% indicated that obtaining a Swedish ID card or passport was “most important.” Meanwhile, good income (24.18%) and opportunity for using/developing their professional abilities (44.23%) were considered relatively less important factors. This suggests that Syrians who successfully migrated into Sweden had gathered and analyzed information about the migration policies of possible host countries prior to their departure. Obtaining such information requires reliable information sources and literacy.

They maintained this analysis-orientated tendency to a certain extent when asked about important factors of further migration (Figure 4). In addition to good income (40.66%) and opportunity for using/developing professional abilities (43.13), a considerable percentage of the participants attached importance to the migration policy of the possible host country (44.78%) and to obtaining an ID card or passport (35.99%). This pattern reflects the attitudes of conventional (economically motivated) migrants and their families coming into EU countries.

By contrast, Syrians in Sweden did not show a strong interest in the presence of acquaintances or in being reunited with family. This finding was somewhat unexpected,

Figure 2: Importance for stay or migration (Syrians in Turkey 2017) (%)

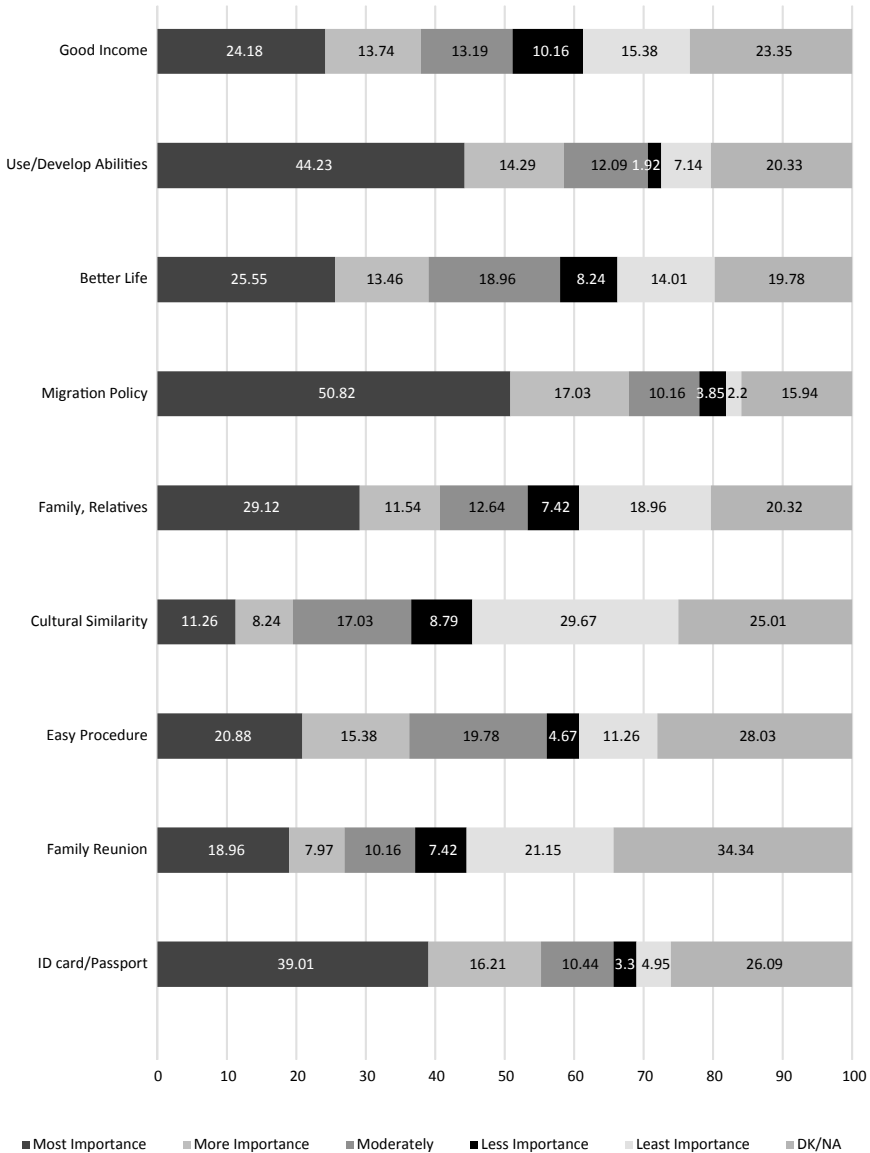


(Source) [Nishikida et al. 2018]

as the majority of interviewees in the field research in Sweden (2015, 2016) had referred to these two factors.

Moreover, data from the supplemental interviews in Jordan (2014) suggested

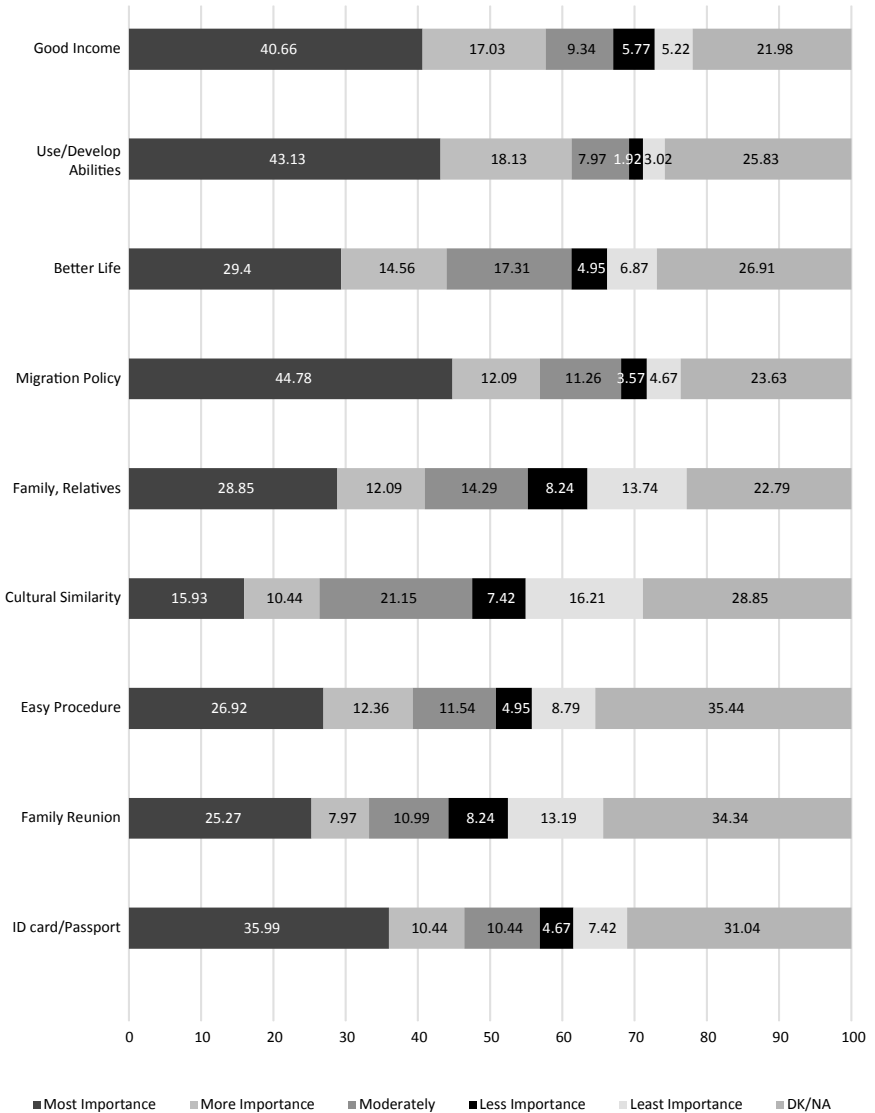
Figure 3: Importance for coming to Sweden (Syrians in Sweden 2016) (%)



(Source) [Nishikida et al. 2018]

that there were widespread rumors of better treatment of migrants/refugees in north

Figure 4: Importance for migrating further (Syrians in Sweden 2016) (%)



(Source) [Nishikida et al. 2018]

European countries. The interviewees seemed to have obtained their information from relatives or acquaintances who had already experienced life in these countries. In

Sweden, the majority of interviewees revealed having family members or relatives who already had permanent resident status there.

The results point to the possible limitations of surveys of migrants/refugees in EU countries: Social factors and contexts affecting immigration, as well as the composition of the survey team, might also influence responses. As Nishikida pointed out, holding intimate conversations in colloquial Arabic helped the interviewees to express their experiences and perceptions of migration/refugee seeking [Nishikida 2017: 19-22].

VI. Conclusion

This comparative study showed that quality and quantity of resources (such as education level and social capital⁽¹⁹⁾) of individual Syrians affected their mobility. Although the successful use of social capital by Syrian migrants/refugees in Sweden suggests that they had relatively rich social capital and other resources, Syrians in Turkey seemed to have limited resources, which prevented them from attempting further migration from Turkey.

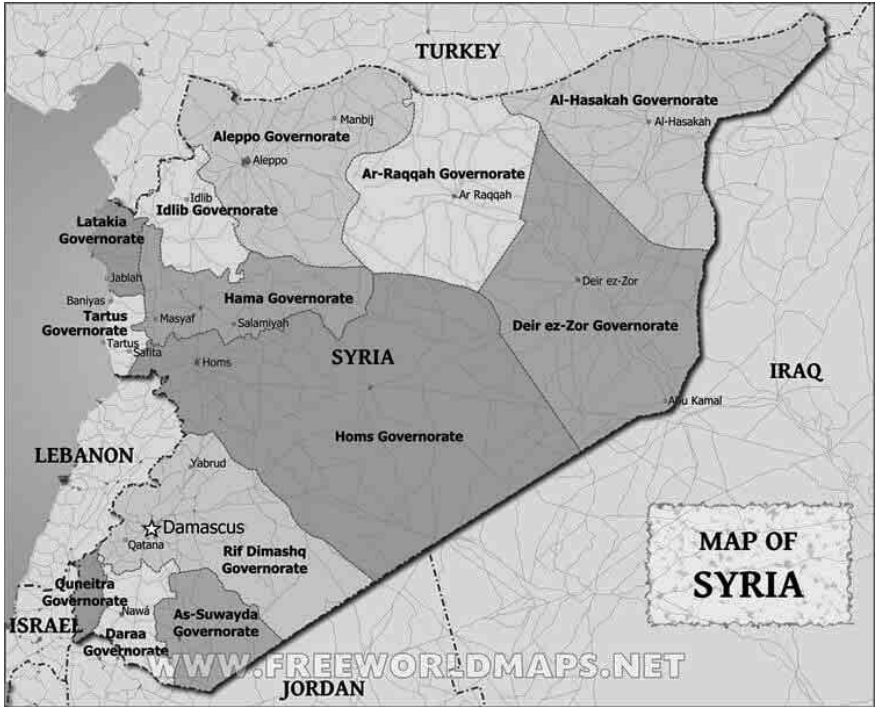
From the perspective of education level, it is possible that Syrians who moved to EU countries were more educated and those who stayed in Turkey were less educated. Nevertheless, Syrians in Turkey were not obliged to stay in Turkey because of their education level. They may choose Turkey as their destination because of other considerations, such as family or community-related factors.

Political considerations and political preferences may drive Syrians' choices in some cases. As noted earlier, the respondents in Syria clearly approved of pro-Syrian Government countries. Of course, their concerns about expressing their opinions honestly in surveys were unavoidable; this tendency seems to be affected by the atmosphere in Syria. Thus, the choice to not leave Syria might be motivated to a certain extent by attitudes toward the conflict. Syrians in Turkey, as "Syrian's Bolometer 2016⁽²⁰⁾" showed, may or may not oppose the Syrian Government. However, their evaluation of countries involved in the Syrian conflict clearly reflects their political preferences. Meanwhile, it is still unclear whether these opinions developed before their departure from Syria or after their stay in Turkey. In the future, evaluating changes in Syrians' political thinking over time will be important for a better understanding of the

factors driving them.

Political considerations or preferences also affect Syrians' choices of destinations in migration/refugee seeking. The relatively high ratio of those who migrated or sought refuge in Jordan from Damascus, Aleppo, and Homs is noteworthy. From the perspective of physical distance and social ties, it would seem convenient for residents of Damascus, Aleppo, and Homs to select Lebanon over Jordan. Furthermore, at the time of the survey and field research, it was likely easier to find employment in Lebanon as compared to Jordan. The interviewees in Jordan (2014), especially those who had escaped from military service, preferred Jordan to Lebanon, citing fears of the Syrian security apparatus and pro-Syrian Government agents in Lebanon. Therefore, the choice of Jordan by residents of Damascus, Aleppo, and Homs did not reflect blind flight from the conflict but rather a rational choice to escape from it. In other words, some Syrians in Jordan, their political positions and the political circumstances of possible

Map: Syrian Arab Republic



(Source) <https://www.freeworldmaps.net/asia/syria/>

destinations were factors in their choice of destination.

Resources, political considerations, and personal initiative led Syrians to their choices to migrate or stay in Syria. These factors are reflected in their diverse experiences, attitudes, and consciousness of migration/refuge and cross-border journeys, as well as in their choices of destination. In this context, Syrians affected by the conflict are not always vulnerable or powerless and, to a certain extent, they chose their destinations.

Acknowledgement: This study relied on the surveys which carried out by

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Notes

- (1) <https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/documents/11982/55726/Convention+relating+to+the+Status+of+Refugees+%28signed+28+July+1951%2C+entered+into+force+22+April+1954%29+189+UNTS+150+and+Protocol+relating+to+the+Status+of+Refugees+%28signed+31+January+1967%2C+entered+into+force+4+October+1967%29+606+UNTS+267/0bf3248a-cfa8-4a60-864d-65cdfce1d47> (last accessed August 23, 2018)
- (2) <https://www.iom.int/key-migration-terms#Migration> (last accessed August 24, 2018)
- (3) <http://www.thawraonline.sy/index.php/news-list/local-news/108705-2016-09-25-08-22-37> (last accessed May 22, 2018)

- (4) <http://thawraonline.sy/index.php/news-list/local-news/118088-2017-01-29-09-03-27> (last accessed May 22, 2018)
- (5) http://thawra.sy/_print_veiw.asp?FileName=11343713320180508201446 (last accessed May 22, 2018)
- (6) <http://www.soc.sy/ar/Subjects28531/> -حول-رأي-المواطنين-السوريين-بالدعم- السوري-الروسي (last accessed May 22, 2018)
<http://www.soc.sy/ar/Subjects27330/> -حول-ما-يتوقعه-المواطنون-السوريون-من-العام- الجديد2016-وأمنياتهم (last access May 22, 2018)
- (7) <http://www.sadasy.org/sy/?p=65> (last accessed September 29, 2016)
<http://www.sadasy.org/sy/?p=101> (last accessed September 29, 2016)
- (8) <https://www.orb-international.com/2017/04/05/syria-conflict/> (last accessed May 25, 2018)
<https://www.orb-international.com/2018/03/15/syria-public-opinion-snapshot-2018/> (last accessed May 25, 2018)
- (9) https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_DHS_SyriaBarometerSurvey_30June2016.pdf#search=%27Syriansbarometer%27 (last accessed May 25, 2018)
- (10) Full research report of this poll “Syrians-Barometer – 2017” is forthcoming.
- (11) <http://ccsdsyria.org/arabic/الاستبيان-نتائج.pdf> (last accessed May 25, 2018)
- (12) <https://hibrpress.com/استبيان-يؤكّد-استمرار-السوريين-بإسقاط/> (last accessed May 25, 2018) may be considered an example of this kind of article.
- (13) <https://www.adoptherevolution.org/ar/survey-arabic/> (last accessed May 25, 2018)
- (14) Details of the survey and its simple tally report are available at
https://cmeps-j.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/report_syria2016_eng.pdf
- (15) Details of the survey and its simple tally report are available at
https://cmeps-j.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/report_sweden_2016_en.pdf
The primary analysis is published as “What Do the ‘Winning’ Immigrants and Refugees Have to Say?” https://cmeps-j.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/cmeps-j_report_40.pdf (last access September 4, 2018).
- (16) A popular method of collecting data by personal interviews with printed questionnaires.
- (17) Details of the survey and its simple tally report are available at
https://cmeps-j.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/report_syria2017_eng.pdf
The primary analysis is published as “How Should One View the Current Status of Syria and the Awareness among Syrians?” https://cmeps-j.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/cmeps-j_report_39.pdf (last access September 4, 2018).
- (18) Details of the survey and its simple tally report are available at
https://cmeps-j.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/report_turkey2017.pdf
The primary analysis is published as “The Return of Syrian Refugees in Turkey: Outlook and Concerns” https://cmeps-j.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/cmeps-j_report_42.pdf (last access September 4, 2018).
- (19) Social capital refers to those resources that are embedded in social networks [Uzelac et al. 2018:

28]; however, the social networks of Syrians in the surveys seemed to be concentrated within their extended family and kinship networks. Therefore, this paper focuses on Syrians' kinship networks as a form of social capital.

- (20) https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_DHS_SyriaBarometerSurvey_30June2016.pdf#search=%27Syriansbarometer%27 (last accessed May 25, 2018)

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ABSTRACT

TAKAOKA Yutaka

Experiences and Attitudes toward Migration among Syrian Migrants and Refugees

The experience and attitudes of migrants toward migration vary according to their new locations. If it were the case that Syrian migrants or refugees were powerlessly pushed or moved blindly by the conflict, any patterns in the diversity of their perspective would be difficult to explain. This article aims therefore to reveal the reasons for such trends. To this end, we rely on findings from surveys and field research in the relevant countries.

The study relayed on a total of five opinion surveys which were administered between 2014 and 2017. Three surveys focusing on Arab migrants/refugees were administered in Jordan, Sweden, and Turkey, respectively. Two surveys were conducted in Syria. Additionally, dozens of interviews with Syrian and Arab migrants/refugees were conducted in Jordan and Sweden.

Resources, political considerations, and personal initiative led Syrians to their choices to migrate or stay in Syria. These factors are reflected in their diverse experiences, attitudes, and consciousness of migration/refugee and cross-border journeys, as well as in their choices of destination. In this context, Syrians affected by the conflict are not always vulnerable or powerless and, to a certain extent, they chose their destinations.

Chief Research Fellow, The Middle East Institute of Japan
公益財団法人中東調査会主席研究員