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The Practice of Belonging: Can Learning Entrepreneurship Accelerate and Aid the Social Inclusion of Refugees in the United States

Jabra F. Ghneim
Brigham Young University

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Jabra F. Ghneim

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
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Doctor of Philosophy

Stephen C. Yanchar, Chair
Robert V. Bullough
Greg Thompson
Paul Godfrey
Chad F. Emmett

Educational Inquiry, Measurement, and Evaluation

Brigham Young University

ABSTRACT

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Jabra F. Ghneim
Educational Inquiry, Measurement, and Evaluation, BYU
Doctor of Philosophy

This dissertation examines the role that culinary entrepreneurship communities of practice, using Lave and Wenger's Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP) model (Lave & Wenger, 1991), can lead to better social and economic inclusion for Middle Eastern Muslim refugee chefs in Utah. The life history approach was used to construct life histories for two Middle Eastern Muslim refugee chefs in Utah who joined the Spice Kitchen Incubator (SKI) program. SKI is a community of practice funded by the International Rescue Committee to assist refugee chefs in the resettlement process. This was an exploratory study, and given the limited number of cases reviewed, the conclusions cannot be generalized. However, this study concludes that SKI, as a community of practice, despite the many difficulties faced by refugee programs in the period 2016-2018 (the study period), had a positive impact on the social and economic inclusion outcomes for the participants.

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with me discussing the different theoretical frameworks that I can use to interpret its workings. I also appreciated his cultural anthropological insights, which enriched my ideas and encouraged me to seek answers outside the learning theory realm. As to Dr. Godfrey, I am very grateful that he added me to the Spice Kitchen research team, which offered me the opportunity to look at the issues from a business academics' perspective. Finally, Dr. Emmett has been a friend for almost three decades. He was the first person I befriended at BYU when I worked on my Economics MSc as he was starting his career as a Professor. As a political geographer, his insights were indispensable to this work. He spent years living in the Middle East and has an excellent understanding of Arab-Islamic culture and refugee and migration issues.

I would also like to thank Dr. Richard Sudweeks, EIME's Program Director, for his mentorship and support over the years. All of us at the EIME program knew well his high standards and expectations of each of us, and we strove to fulfill those standards. I am grateful to Dr. David Williams for his passion for qualitative research methods and the many hours he gave me. I learned a lot from our conversations about research methods and myself, including the value of listening deeply to others, a skill he exemplified.

The lessons I learned from writing this dissertation will be with me for a lifetime. I met wonderful people dedicated to the service of refugees. Their stories will always inspire my heart, mind, and soul. As the son of refugees and as an immigrant, I was no stranger to the life of a sojourner. However, spending five years observing and working with refugees as they started a new life in the United States in the second decade of the 21st century has enlightened my life and touched it for good. I hope that this work will help all those involved in alleviating the troubles of refugees around the world.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Who Is A Refugee?

There are slightly over 60 million displaced persons in the world today. Among this vast number of people are 21 million refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2016). If the current geopolitical situation in the world is a valid predictor, these numbers are destined to go up. Refugees occupy a unique place in the classifications of human migration. This uniqueness is not only derived from the physical and emotional sufferings refugees confront, neither is it determined solely by the distances they move, even though in numerous cases such moves can be to the edges of the inhabited world, and sometimes it can be just a few miles away from the village or city where one is born. In some cases, people can be refugees in their home country, as is the case with many Palestinians who, after 69 years, still live in refugee camps constructed on their own land. Thus, one can see the difficulty of defining what a refugee is, which in turn leads to the difficulty many countries face in deciding what to do when displaced people appear at their borders claiming that status.

For now, and according to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees: "A refugee is someone who 'owing to a 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.'" (UNHCR, 1951, p.1) This definition, a product of the post WWII and cold war eras, has many deficiencies (Millbank, 2000), most of which do not relate to the topic of this dissertation. One criticism, however, is relevant: it does not establish responsibilities of host countries towards the refugees they receive. One might argue that this is not the function of a "definition." The counterargument is that by not specifying

responsibilities, some countries have been excused from needing to alleviate the conditions that create refugees, thus condemning them to perpetual refugee status. Sheltering refugees protects them from immediate threats, but if no effort is made to invite them into established communities, they are left exposed to new threats, the most important of which is the threat of not being able to become self-reliant. In many countries of the world, refugees end up constrained to isolated camps and condemned to perpetual dependency, are restricted, sometimes for decades, to the informal economy. Such situations expose refugees to new threats, while undermining their ability to learn what they need to survive and contribute to a new society, not to mention forming a feeling of belonging to it.

How Refugees Get Resettled in New Countries

Refugees are also unique in the sense that they have very little control over most aspects of their lives: whether because of war, a famine, political instability, economic uncertainty, or even climate change, refugees are displaced for reasons beyond their control; once they are displaced, their final destinations are determined by random factors ranging from national quotas that countries accept, to the luck of the draw. And, once in the resettlement country, support services are contingent on random factors from political will to socioeconomic environment. So, unlike traditional migrants who either choose, or are chosen by, destination countries, or, unlike internally displaced populations that still reside in their home country where they are familiar with the language, the economy, the culture, and who might have some sort of support, refugees generally have minimal control over their circumstances, which makes their situation very precarious generally.

The matching of refugees with their country of final resettlement is bureaucratic, based on political factors that do not take into consideration the refugees' work and language skills, or

how well they may seem to fit the country in which they will resettle. Most settle in places where their employment options are limited because they cannot gainfully use their established economic skills in the new country; this can be due to institutional requirements in the host country, or because the trade that the refugees worked in does not exist in the host country (or the part of the host country in which a refugee is asked to settle). Even in the few cases where skills do transfer, licensing and other requirements require time and money that the refugees do not have. The recent refugee crisis has made it painfully clear that most countries had ineffective options for the training and education of refugees (Trines, 2017).

Refugee Inclusion

Clearly, the worldwide refugee situation has become urgent. Failure in achieving a greater measure of refugee inclusion not only can negatively impact their socioeconomic situation but can also lead to security risks created by forces that prey on vulnerable populations. These factors combined make the inclusion of refugees a very timely and critical research topic.

In December of 2018, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (GCM) was adopted by the UN General Assembly[1]. The GCM consists of 23 objectives and commitments. A number of these objectives and commitments are associated with ensuring migrants access to basic services and resources, but two are most important for the purposes of this study. Objective 16 is concerned with empowering migrants and societies to realize full migrant inclusion and social cohesion (International Organization of Migration, 2016, pp. 23-24). This objective aims to define both a host society's and the refugees' responsibilities vis-à-vis social inclusion. The objective covers all aspects of social inclusion—cultural, economic, and political. Objective 18 calls for an investment in skills development and facilitating a mutual

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[1] The United States did not join the GCM.

recognition of skills, qualifications, and competences of the migrants (International Organization of Migration, 2016, pp. 25-26). This objective carries the potential and hope that ratification will bring greater interest in the field of education. Driven by government agencies, one hopes for greater commitment to adult refugees for the purposes of social inclusion. One hopes that such a commitment would be in the form of policies that are attentive to the impact on the refugees' lives and not just on numbers.

Refugee Social Inclusion: Personal Troubles, Global Issues

Sociologist C. Wright Mills postulated that many personal troubles must be understood in terms of public issues, and conversely, issues need to be understood in terms of troubles (Mills, 2000). Problems of refugee social inclusion can be understood within Mill's framework. Understanding the public context of the host country, and the global context that generates the refugee situation is essential for analyzing the difficulties that refugees encounter after resettlement in a host country. The fields of refugee research and sociology are rife with works discussing the global issues (Anderson, 2013; Betts & Collier, 2017; Helton, 2007; Lamey, 2013; Marfleet, 2006; Standing, 2014; Steiner et al., 2003). In their book *Refuge: Rethinking Refugee Policy in a Changing World* (2017), scholars Betts and Collier argue that the global issues can be summarized as follows: (a) A broken and outdated refugee system that was designed post WWII and the cold war that followed. The system, in their opinion, is incapable of adjusting to troubles stemming from new issues around climate change and the rise of religious extremism. They also posit that a new refugee system should be about more than just providing food and shelter but rather "restoring people's autonomy through jobs and education" (Betts & Collier, 2017, p. 10). (b) A rise in the number of fragile states globally[2] due to the vacuum created by the collapse of

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[2] A fragile state is an economically poor state whose government lacks legitimacy (Betts & Collier, 2017, p. 18)

the Soviet Union, the spread of democratic impulses globally and the spread of information technologies, the rise in the prices of natural resources which favors autocratic states, and the rise Islamic extremists in Middle Eastern societies made increasingly fragile by western interventions and arms sales (Betts & Collier, 2017, pp. 15–24).

The largest flights of refugees from fragile states to Europe and North America coincided with the great global recession in the aftermath of the financial crisis of (2007-2008), which is a period during which most countries in the developed world faced serious economic strains. Such strains included unemployment due to layoffs and severe government budget cuts, especially to social and safety net programs, sparking waves of populist protest that was, in general, anti-immigrant associating immigration with lost employment. The refugee crisis ensuing from wars in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Mali, Yemen, and Eritrea and the convergence of millions of refugees on the developed world overwhelmed economic systems that were already laboring under huge strains.

The personal troubles of modern refugees happen in the wider context of such issues. The literature reviewed in this dissertation will explore many of the personal troubles that refugees face. However, the public, or global, issues are seldom discussed. Neither do writers try to connect the private troubles of the refugees with the global issues. As far as this dissertation is concerned, having a good grasp on the global issues will be extremely important for understanding the participants' private troubles as well as the importance of the programs in which they participate which are intended to be ameliorative.

Social Inclusion of Adult Refugees, Work, and Adult Education Studies

The current lack of interest in refugee adult education was apparent when I started investigating the topic of refugee inclusion. Refugee studies span a wide range of fields: urban

studies, sociology, anthropology, ethnic entrepreneurship, geography, cultural studies, sociology of work, ethnic racial studies, and education. However, my review of the available research revealed that interest in the topic in the field of education is almost exclusive to child refugee education; and it is silent on educating adult refugees as a pathway to social inclusion (with a few exceptions in language learning literature). Issues of adult refugee social inclusion are generally absent in education literature. This omission is troubling given that one of the prime directives of educational systems, especially in developed liberal democracies, has long been to facilitate a sense of inclusion in society leading to greater feelings of belonging, and eventually, full citizenship.

John Dewey, among many others, nicely makes the point that, broadly conceived, citizenship and education are tightly linked. Dewey, in Provenzo (2009), posited that:

Citizenship is not something people learn in one kind of classroom or course, but all through the home, community, and school life. For Dewey, democracy is more than a political system or a technical description of the way government is run; it denotes a way of living, teaching, learning. (p. 129)

Accordingly, there are many approaches to learn how to be and how to belong in a new country. Dewey's perspective implies that there are as many ways to learn to become a citizen as there are "ways of living." Work, or in the vernacular "making a living," as I shall argue, is one of the primary desires of refugees after admission into a host country. Work is also central to social inclusion. According to the *Encyclopedia of the Sociology of Work* by Smith (2013):

Work is embedded in complex social phenomena in which individuals seek approval, status, sociability, and power. The social context also generates constraints, including social norms that define acceptable behaviors and work roles, along with power relations

that affect resource allocations. . . . work [is] a set of human interactions experienced in and shaped by social networks, social norms and institutions, and socially constructed power relation. (p. 986)

Thus, when a refugee starts working in the host society, (s)he does not only get included economically in society, but also learns norms, roles, and behaviors that enable cultural inclusion. Moreover, work plays a prominent role in gaining understanding of the power structures and institutions of society.

Since the early days of America, starting with the pilgrims, then in colonial America, and afterwards in the independent United States of America, inclusion and learning to become self-reliant, by mastering whatever work was necessary to build the nation, were intertwined. Work and self-reliance, as key political and economic values, are engrained in the American fabric; success at work has offered an open pathway to acceptance in society. Work was so important in the early years after American independence that appearing to be idle, no matter how wealthy one was, raised calls for stripping such "indolent" people from participation in government and legislation.

Their "idleness" rest[s] on other men's toil. Gentlemen who do not labor, but who enjoy in luxury, the fruits of labor, had no right to 'finally decide all acts and laws' as they had in the past because their interest is at such a remove from the common interest. (Wood 1991, p. 316)

Echoing a widely shared view, Benjamin Franklin argued, "a prosperous nation is built on the virtues of individual, hard-working, and productive citizens, not on the characteristics of the ruler or a social class such as the aristocracy." He also "regarded entrepreneurship to be a personal trait that had important virtue . . . [as long as] it promoted the public good" (Atkinson et

al., 2013, p. 113). To promote work and entrepreneurship, Franklin, for example, established the Junto Clubs, which were America's first example of citizenship communities of practice for "mutual improvement . . . [and debating] questions of morals, politics, and natural philosophy, and to exchange knowledge of business affairs" (Franklin, 1779, pp. 533–536). Franklin suggested 24 questions for club member discussion, including: "Has any citizen in your knowledge failed in his business lately, and what have you heard of the cause? Have you lately heard of any citizen's thriving well, and by what means? Have you lately heard how any present rich man, here or elsewhere, got his estate?" American historian Gordon Wood points out that "by the early decades of the nineteenth century working in some useful occupation was widely regarded as the new source of fame. In fact, . . . talented workmen and inventors of carding machines were now receiving the public applause and civic wreaths that rightly and classically belonged to government leaders" (Wood, 1993, p. 277).

The idea of work, and learning to work, as a requirement of membership in American society, was and remains all pervasive. Noted educator, Liberty Hyde Bailey wrote in 1909 in *The Training of Farmers* that

> all citizenship must rest ultimately on occupation, for all good citizens must be workers of one kind or another. A good member of society 'must be actively interested in the public welfare and be willing to put himself under the guidance of a good local leader.' (p. 14)

Alas, even though Bailey wrote these words during the last years of the third great immigration wave (1880-1914), his focus, which has been the focus of education and citizenship literature since then, was on children in school rather than the adult newcomers to society. Perhaps the reason for his neglect was that the newcomers of that era were entering an economy

that depended more on brawn than brain. Contrary to the economy today, which is information and knowledge oriented, the economy of the 19th and most of the 20th century was industrial and product-based—the cultural knowledge content required to work in a call center, or even taking orders in a restaurant is richer than what's involved in being on a car assembly line or picking fruit in an orchard. The fact that even modern industries, which are product-based, have a substantial knowledge and informational content requires that fresh thinking about education as it relates to work and social inclusion is required.

Inclusion in a new society is a multi-faceted and complex process. Inclusion involves building social networks of friends and associates who provide emotional and material support. Inclusion requires the ability to understand and negotiate the new culture to achieve desired personal and social aims. Hence, work is essential to successful inclusion. Yet, work and self-reliance also set a hard expectation that every newcomer to the United States must meet.

After reviewing the history of different migrations to the United States, it is evident that the ability to work and sustain one's self and dependents is, for the resident population, followed closely by the ability to learn the language, the single most significant determinant of a positive attitude toward immigrants and immigration.

Personal Statement

The topic of this dissertation is personal to me. As a Palestinian refugee I was born and grew up in a country that did not recognize me as a citizen even though I was born and educated there. Not only did I speak the local dialect of Kuwait, I also knew the history and the traditions of the people better than many Kuwaiti citizens. It was the only place I knew for the first 17 years of my life. Yet, till my very last day in Kuwait I confronted daily reminders in the community and culture of the fact that I didn't belong there, and that the moment I graduated

from high school I had to leave the only country I've ever known. Luckily, even though I was a refugee, my father had managed to attain Jordanian citizenship which allowed us to travel, and eventually live in Jordan after leaving Kuwait. However, though Jordan was my country of legal citizenship, the identity of a foreign born Palestinian Christian is treated with suspicion. After moving to Jordan in 1986 I had to learn a culture that was largely foreign to me. My first years in college were a baptism by fire, alas, that baptism never yielded a full conversion. My relationship with Jordan was always a difficult one, and I never truly integrated with the society there. And in the eyes of the natives I remained a stranger. In 1990 I joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Jordan. In the church I felt the true meaning of belonging for the first time. I subsequently moved to Provo, Utah for graduate studies, then back to Jordan followed by a few years of living in the United Arab Emirates, then, finally, I immigrated to the United States in 2002. Through all those moves, my membership in the church and activity in its organizations alleviated my issues with belonging to and coping with new societies. Skills I acquired through participation in the church made it possible for me to acquire jobs in the societies I lived in, establish my career, and even get higher education.

My life experience has deeply affected the topic of this dissertation and the questions I ask in it. In a strong sense, by seeking answers to questions of integration and assimilation, I am seeking clarity about my own life history.

In addition to religious affiliation as an influence on my life, I have also been an entrepreneur since 1994. I have started and run my own businesses since then, mainly in the field of language services. My first business was in Jordan, and I have started two businesses since arriving to the United States. The current business is Global Language Systems which has been in existence since 2005. Involvement in entrepreneurial activities in the United States has largely

influenced my integration into American culture. Cultural sensitivity, developing the ability to read between the lines in daily conversations, and marketing products and services to customers are all helpful ways to come to understand the deep culture of a place. My personal assumption is that if one chooses the path of entrepreneurship but doesn't invest the time and effort to understand the culture and integrate in it, then success is unlikely.

Since I arrived in the United States in 2002 as an immigrant, not a refugee, I sought opportunities to volunteer with organizations serving refugees and migrants. I have also employed and trained refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, and China. I taught English to refugees from nine different countries working at Deseret Industries in Salt Lake City. Thus, I have pondered questions regarding integration and assimilation for at least the last sixteen years. In the beginning, my questions centered around the topic of cultural literacy as a tool to accelerate language learning, and thus, integration in society. However, as I examined this assumption, and later began the doctoral program in Educational Inquiry, Measurement, and Evaluation at Brigham Young University, I realized that the topic is deeper than issues of literacy. I have also become aware of theories that attempt to address my questions. The variety of fields, methods, and theories that are involved in this endeavor is simply overwhelming. The current study is an initial attempt on my part to answer some of my questions. I believe that the question "What does it take to belong, to be included in society, to be a citizen?" will always be with me. I am not alone in asking it. It is a bidirectional question. It's not just about me feeling a sense of inclusion, belonging and citizenship somewhere, but also one about what it would take for the society around me to consider me a full member.

The Research Question

Based on the background presented above, the main question I explored in this dissertation is: how does "learning entrepreneurship" in a community of practice influence a refugee's social inclusion of Muslim adult refugees in Utah? In order to answer this question, I studied adult refugees in a community called the Spice Kitchen that is focused on teaching culinary entrepreneurship in Salt Lake City, Utah. I analyzed refugee experiences within the United States in general, and the experience with learning entrepreneurship of two refugees in particular in relation to their social inclusion in Utah. Guiding my inquiry is a theoretical model developed by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991), associated with the formation of "communities of practice," especially their theory of learning as peripheral participation. The reasons that led me to using this particular theoretical framework will be presented shortly.

Dissertation Organization

The dissertation is composed of five main sections:

1. An introductory chapter which will acquaint the reader with the topics of refugee and refugee resettlement and the issues of refugee social inclusion, work in a new country, and adult refugee education. The chapter also includes a personal statement and presents the research question this dissertation seeks to respond to.

2. The second section is a review of the social inclusion literature including the rather sparse literature on refugee adult education. The review will explore four trends of thought and practice identified in the literature, namely, teaching critical thinking, collaborative instructional design, volunteerism and informal learning, using Free Digital Learning tools (FDL), and the impact of education and training, including language learning, on the expectations of adult refugees.

Next, the literature on the role of both community and government programs in the social inclusion of refugees will be reviewed. This topic is important because all programs that work on refugee inclusion happen within a community or government program, or a partnership. Understanding how these programs work, and how to evaluate them will be important in data analysis.

Then, I will consider studies of entrepreneurship as a social inclusion tool for refugees. The literature reviewed describes both the challenges and opportunities faced by refugees in relation to work and entrepreneurship vis-à-vis social inclusion.

Finally, I will present the theoretical framework used to guide the study. Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of communities of practice (CoP) and of legitimate peripheral participation (LPP) have not before been used to frame the study of education of adult refugees. Nor has the framework been used to study entrepreneurship as a tool for achieving refugee social inclusion. As I will show in discussing the framework, CoP and LPP, with its focus on identity, belonging, and increased participation—as aspects of turning an outsider to an insider into a community—are useful for exploring how the identities of migrants change as they participate in a community.

3. The third section presents the study's context and in it I explain what the Spice Kitchen program is, the mechanisms by which it works, and the services it provides to the refugees who get chosen to participate.

Following the study's context, I will describe the research methods I used including data sources, interview procedures, observation procedures, artifacts collected, and analytic procedures employed to assure trustworthiness and credibility.

4. In the fourth section I discuss the results of my study comprising of two life histories of two refugees, Abed and Zahi. In the life histories I portray the socioeconomic circumstances they lived through in their home countries and the conditions that led to their seeking of refuge away from their homelands. I also portray their journeys to belong in their new country through work and entrepreneurship, assisted by organizations such as the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and its subsidiary, the Spice Kitchen Incubator (SKI).

5. The fifth section of the dissertation is a discussion of my findings using the theoretical lens of Lave and Wenger's Communities of Practice and Legitimate Peripheral Participation (CoP-LPP). Following that, I present my recommendations as well as the limitations of this study.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

The question this dissertation seeks to address is how does "learning entrepreneurship" in a community of practice influence a refugee's social inclusion of Muslim adult refugees in Utah? A vast academic literature in education is dedicated to the inclusion of refugee children in schools and the wider community. However, there is scant literature addressing the social inclusion of adult refugees via adult education programs (formal and informal); and, as I will show, there is no literature addressing the achievement of social inclusion through communities of practice as articulated by Lave and Wenger (1991; see also Chaiklin & Lave, 1993; Wenger 1998). The research question then deals with adult refugee learning, emerging entrepreneurship skill, and social inclusion seen through the theoretical lens of communities of practice and legitimate peripheral participation (LPP).

LPP, with its focus on issues of community, identity, belonging, increasing participation, and access to resources—as aspects of outsiders becoming insiders—is well suited to study how the identity of migrants changes as they participate in a community. According to Wenger (1998, p. 4), participation applies "not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities" (emphasis in original). I will have more to say about LPP in the theoretical framework chapter.

In conducting this research, I originally intended to investigate the phenomenon of refugee integration. However, an initial review of the literature revealed that in addition to lacking a solid, agreed upon definition by social science, "integration" is an outcome that often

takes years, if not decades, to achieve. This study's time horizon would not allow the gathering of data to conclude whether or not integration had occurred for participants. Social inclusion, in contrast, has a standard United Nations (UN) definition agreed upon by all countries that participate in UN refugee programs. Moreover, sociological theories (the most prominent being that of Milton Gordon in his book *Assimilation in American Life*, 1964)[3] make it difficult to evaluate a person's civic, social, economic, and political inclusion.

Organization of the Review

The organization of the literature review will be as follows. First, I will briefly describe my literature search method. Then I will then examine the literature dealing with the education of adult refugees in the context of social inclusion. In order to achieve self-sufficiency, migrants have to learn not only the language and culture of their new home, but also workways and forms of work that differ from those of their homelands. As I noted earlier, existing literature on refugee adult education (formal and informal) is thin but emerging along several dimensions.

When reviewing the refugee adult education literature, I will focus on four different educational emphases. The first investigates teaching that involves critical thinking, independent decision making, and open-mindedness, as ways to enhance adult refugee social inclusion. Second, I will consider research on collaborative instructional design as a tool for furthering refugee social inclusion. As I will show, this idea is rooted in traditional notions of instructional design and adult education. Third, I review the literature that investigates informal learning experiences through volunteerism and its meaning for social inclusion. Applying this approach to refugees is quite recent. Finally, I will review research on Free Digital Learning resources (FDLs), also known as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCS), in the education of adult

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[3] Other important work includes: Alba & Nee (1997), Gibson (1988); and Robert E. Park (1922, 1928, 1939, 1950).

refugees. Using FDLs that started in 2008 (Sanchez-Gordon & Lujan-Mora, 2015), and has become a robust area of educational research (Jona & Naidu, 2014).

Following the review of the four emerging emphases in research on refugee education, I consider literature that deals with educational and training credentials of refugees prior to arrival in the host country, how such credentials are perceived in the host country, and the impact of those perceptions on the refugees' job prospects. Additionally, in this section I look into the issue of job expectations when refugees decide to pursue education in the host country, and how those expectations are impacted by instructors and pedagogy.

I end the section on refugee education, with a review of the literature on the role of language acquisition in inclusion. Language learning is an important part of the refugee education literature. However, much of it is dedicated to language learning by children rather than adult refugees. As I will show, the importance of learning a new society's language by adults is beyond doubt. In fact, the importance of language acquisition would seem to be acute for adults who bear the burden of providing for their dependents—an issue that will be discussed when reviewing the literature on economic inclusion. Nonetheless, research on language learning and adult refugee inclusion is relatively limited. Due to the importance of language learning by adult refugees to virtually every aspect of social inclusion, I will review research in the area of refugee language learning that specifically addresses social inclusion, and that raises some unique questions related to education that are not sufficiently investigated in the literature.

After reviewing the literature on the education of adult refugees, I will present the literature on the effectiveness of community-based refugee programs vs. government-based programs in terms of the social inclusion of refugees. This issue is important to the research question, which involves a community of practice that relies heavily on both community and

public support. The literature reviewed in this section provides an understanding of some of the criteria by which refugee programs are evaluated. Having a sense of what the literature says on these topics will provide helpful context when discussing the community of practice that is the subject of this study.

The last section of the review will examine the literatures on economic inclusion through work, and economic inclusion through migrant entrepreneurship. Although limited, this literature focuses on issues such as access to the labor market, including searching for work, access to credit, and access to job training. Economic inclusion through work, and inclusion through migrant entrepreneurship are not only among the main pillars of social inclusion, they are also at the core of this study's research question. Economic self-sufficiency is a main concern for our species, but its necessity is felt more acutely when one is in a land where language, customs, and workways are all unfamiliar. I will interrogate the economic inclusion literature for insight regarding the impact of economic self-sufficiency on social inclusion.

Literature Search Process

I began my literature review by focusing on social inclusion. I first searched for literature that addressed the question: what are the necessary elements to create an inclusive society? I searched both Google Scholar and ERIC databases. Due to the multi-disciplinary nature of the question, I included most fields of social science including political science, economic sociology, psychology, urban studies, geography, anthropology, sociology, education, economics, and cultural studies. Table 1 includes the mix of search descriptions used.

Each term in the first column was joined with one term from the second. For example, "situated learning" AND "refugee job training" etc. After exhausting all the table's possibilities, each term in the first column was joined with one term from the second. For example, "situated

Table 1

Search Terms for Literature Search Process

Theoretical Framework Terms	Study Domain Terms
• Situated learning	Refugee(s)
• Lave and Wenger (1991)	Refugee social inclusion
• Communities (community) of practice	Refugee integration
	Refugee assimilation
• Learning as peripheral Participation	Refugee incorporation
	Refugee resettlement
• Access to resources	Refugee adaptation
• Belonging	Refugee cultural participation
	Refugee job training
	Refugee adult education
	Refugee economic inclusion
	Refugee job market inclusion
	Refugee entrepreneurship
	Refugee civic inclusion

learning" AND "refugee job training" etc. After exhausting all the table's possibilities, the search yielded 233 articles and chapters, and 19 books. After reviewing the articles, 60 of them were clearly relevant to the topic. However, all the results were related to the second column's terms rather than the first column's terms. This material will be reviewed in the following section.

Inclusion and Refugee Education

The greatest challenge I encountered in the review was finding relevant sources. I am not alone in encountering this challenge. Pinson and Arnot (2007) described their experience in a paper entitled "Sociology of education and the wasteland of refugee education research" (pp. 399-407). After spending two years searching for literature pertaining to the topic it is clear research in the field mostly represents a wasteland, especially when it comes to adult refugee education. Only very recently (2015-present) are there signs of increased research interest. Thus, it is hoped this study will help fill a significant void. In what follows, I will review the few relevant articles and chapters I located.

Refugee Social Inclusion Through a Curriculum Based on Teaching Critical Thinking

There is a sizeable amount of education literature that emphasizes the importance of critical thinking, not only for developing educational outcomes in general, but also in developing citizenship and participation in society (Ten Dam & Volman, 2004; Terenzini et al., 1995; Tsui 1999). However, as ten Dam and Volman (2004) point out, after a review of the literature on the construct, critical thinking lacks objective assessment and measurement, is based on self-report, and it is not transferable (Ten Dam & Volman, 2004, p. 370). Moreover, critical thinking is typically informed by a traditional, western mode of thought (Burbules & Berk, 1999), which is often problematic in that it is not sensitive to indigenous ways of knowing and reasoning due to barriers of language and cultural understanding, or due to power structures[4].

Ten Dam and Volman (2004) posit that democratic citizenship requires more than mere critical and political thinking, but also "care, empathy, commitment, . . . and the ability to

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[4] A good discussion of this issue is found in Smith (1999), p. 42-74.

participate in a meaningful way in concrete real social practices and activities" (p. 371).

Additionally, ten Dam and Volman (2004) point out that,

> Becoming a more central participant in society is not just a matter of acquiring
>
> knowledge and skills. It also implies becoming a member of a community of practice.
>
> This requires people to see themselves as members, taking responsibility for their own
>
> actions (including the use of knowledge and skills) in that position. The learning process
>
> thus implies a change in personal identity, in the way one presents oneself to others and
>
> to oneself. (cf. Holland et al., 1998). (p. 371)

A study of adult refugee women in Australia suggests how the concept of teaching

critical thinking can be embedded in the education of adult refugees in order to enhance their

inclusion (McPherson, 2010). McPherson drew on Foucault's (1990) concept of "Care for the

Self" which positions self-development (formal and informal learning) "not as an instrumental

act of liberalism, but as an ethical act of citizenship" (McPherson, 2010). McPherson (2010)

described how refugee women she studied perceived self-development thusly:

> For these women, education offered a means of coming to 'know the self' as an act of
>
> Caring for the Self. In particular, engagement with other minds was seen to build self-
>
> knowledge, and also to build bridges with those others. The process of active engagement
>
> and learning about oneself through exchanging ideas with others presumed agency and
>
> potential in both subjects to the encounter. (p. 20)

McPherson (2010) advocated that the purpose of any educational program for adult

refugees should not be to "fix" the refugees by imposing on them the cultural norms of the host

society, seeking to assimilate (or even to integrate) them, or asking them to conform. Rather, she

issued a challenge to "re-imagine" the concept of citizenship by appealing to new sets of

research and thinking tools. The women interviewed in McPherson's study (2010) felt that meaningful adult education needed to "extend beyond instrumental skills such as English (although language acquisition is pivotal), to include building knowledge for independent decision making, critical thought, and the creation of an open mind" (p. 566). McPherson believes that such an act would lead to better inclusion outcomes for adult refugees and better social cohesion.

McPherson (2010) concluded that adult educational policies leading to better social inclusion for refugees would:

reside in assisting individuals to understand and distinguish themselves; that is, building a process for self-knowing—a self-directed (but supported) process, educational or otherwise, to assist with learning about and understanding self, distinct from, and in concert with, others. Such activities would be premised on a platform of respectful and mutual engagement, rather than one which positions 'others' as deficit. (p. 566)

A curriculum such as this, based on critical thinking, and in conjunction with ten Dam and Volman's (2004) view of situating the curriculum in communities of practice, might be the basic building block of an education in which better social inclusion for newcomers to society is the outcome. Other research that I review later seems to support this view.

Collaborative Instructional Design for Social Inclusion of Refugees

The idea of collaboration in instructional design has roots in the traditional literature of instructional design (Collis, 1994; Lehtinen et al., 1998; Littleton & Hakkinen, 1999); and these roots are spreading into the field of adult education. Portelli and McMahon (2004) proposed a model of adult student engagement that focused on participation, dialogue, and active citizenship, with learning that extends beyond the workplace. Barnett and Coate (2011) proposed

a model to design curriculum in higher education settings that is based on teacher-student collaboration resulting in the development of their own self-awareness, self-confidence, and capacities for self-critique, self-direction, and an increase in their capacities for lifelong learning and acting in the world (Barnett & Coate, 2011). Johnson et al. (2007) emphasized the need for curriculum designers to understand the contexts that their students come from, including past experiences and their present view of the world, as a prerequisite for design.

Would designer-learner collaboration, when designing an educational program aimed at facilitating inclusion, succeed in aiding the social inclusion of refugees? And, what about the cultural gap that might exist between the designer and the end-users of those programs? Lygo-Baker (2001) argued in favor of such a proposition. He agreed with McPherson (2010) that the key to constructing effective education programs aimed at social inclusion is found in reappraising dominant ideas of citizenship, and how to achieve inclusion[5], upon which many adult refugee programs base their learning outcomes. Such ideas and definitions, according to Lygo-Baker, often impair program design, and prevent its refugee participants from achieving inclusion. The key to change, he argued, begins with a collaborative instructional model that involves those providing the training refugee participants.

An example that illustrates Lygo-Baker's ideas would be an acculturation program which focuses on host society's expectations around housing, would take into consideration the way refugees understand their responsibilities toward caring for their residence in their homeland, and then use those differences to compare their understanding with the host nations. On the one hand, this would help the refugees' adaptation within their neighborhood—as it would help them

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[5] Lygo-Baker specifically mentions T.H Marshall's concept of citizenship and the stages of full participation in a community which are as follows: first, civil citizenship, which is marked by the recognition of individual rights to property, liberty and justice; second, political citizenship, which encompasses the right to participate in political activity; and third, social citizenship, which provides citizens with rights to economic and social support.

understand society's expectations—and on the other, it would provide the course designer with cultural context that would help in anticipating barriers to social inclusion. Lygo-Baker (2001) concluded that by basing the training on knowledge acquired through this collaboration, rather than on stereotypes and preconceived notions, educational programs could "concentrate and intervene in areas where they had the skills, knowledge and resources to impact."

Lygo-Baker (2001) argued that in order to successfully adapt the idea of collaboration in designing curriculum that serves adult refugees, the diversity of modern society (due to globalization) must be fully acknowledged and engaged, which will, in turn, according to McPherson (2010), allow a proper understanding of terms such as "participation" and "inclusion" in society. Acknowledging diversity implies that host societies should abandon projects with outcomes aimed at recreating the migrants in the host society's image and focus instead on productively incorporating them in the social and economic life of the society.

Volunteerism as an Informal Learning Tool for Adult Refugees

Learning is usually an expectation when one volunteers to work for an organization (Kerka, 1997; McCabe, 1997, p. 18; Ross-Gordon & Dowling, 1995). Another expectation is that the informal learning acquired through volunteering would improve job prospects (Geber, 1991; Rumsey, 1996). Volunteering might also aid in building social networks within a community (Freedman, 1994).

Research suggests that the benefits of informal learning through volunteerism extend to adult refugees. Halliday-Wynes et al. (2009) suggest that this finding is "common across Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom" (p. 5). Research by Miralles-Lombardo et al. (2008) suggests that volunteering helps refugees expand their networks and create "comfortable learning spaces" (as quoted in, Halliday-Wynes et al., 2009, p.5). Informal, volunteer-based,

learning experiences can be thought of as a scaffolding that prepares the migrants and refugees for more formal work and learning experiences. The importance of informal learning opportunities, such as those offered by volunteering, to social inclusion is addressed by Morrice (2005, 2007) who held that social inclusion for refugees "requires a shift away from focus on formal, individualized education provision to greater recognition of informal and social learning opportunities" (Morrice, 2007, p. 155).

Slade et al. (2005) found that refugees considered informal learning, acquired through volunteer work, to be more significant than the formal job-related training they received previously in the host country. They also found that such informal learning enhanced the volunteers' communication and English language skills, networking skills, knowledge of workplace practices, adapting to and understanding Canadian culture (host society of refugees), and increased self-confidence (Slade et al., 2005). The researchers (Slade et al., 2005) observed,

> Participants reported that in the volunteer placement most of the learning was acquired through informal contacts with others, including discussions with other volunteers and staff members, observations and unofficial mentoring. Even when the volunteer position involved mainly working on their own (e.g. computer programming, contacting people over the telephone), participants still indicated that the most valuable input to their learning process was the time spent informally with others. (p. 3)

Thus, informal learning through volunteer work appears to be a fruitful way to help refugees achieve economic and social inclusion. However, this approach is not without complexities, and its implementation seems to require careful consideration. Results of a research project in Holland (Rast & Ghorashi, 2018) highlighted the need for collaborating with the refugees in order to gain a deeper understanding of the expectations and goals associated

with this activity. These researchers found that refugees in Holland considered volunteering to be a leisure activity which distracted from finding jobs offering adequate payment and benefits. Since volunteerism is considered a key value in Dutch society, such rejection by the refugees is interpreted by the society as anti-inclusive (Rast & Ghorashi, 2018). Even though these researchers give no recommendations on how to solve such cultural conflicts, observations made in research reviewed earlier (Lygo-Baker, 2001; McPherson, 2010), point to the need for collaborating with refugees in designing such programs to gain a deeper understanding of their goals and priorities on the one hand, and the goals and priorities of the programs on the other, with the intent to bridge the gaps between the two.

Some research points to another issue with regard to learning and volunteerism: the need for strong foundational skills, such as basic literacy and numeracy, which are necessary for informal learning to yield benefits (Nordman & Hayward, 2006). A lack of skills may lead to benefits that are not equal to those that accrue when refugees possess strong skills (Masterman-Smith & Pocock, 2008). Refugees who have spent decades in refugee camps, or countries that restricted their ability to perform professional work, might have deteriorated foundational skills. Women refugees who lived in countries where their ability to work was restricted might lack such skills as well. An implication of the research is that those who seek to involve adult refugees in volunteer programs need to evaluate their skills and create opportunities, or involve them as volunteers, in projects that focus on foundational skill-building.

Others recommend that in order for volunteer, informal learning, opportunities to be beneficial to the refugee participants, trainers need to understand the context of the working environment, make sure that work practices are sound, and tailor the work environment according to the volunteers' level of skill and knowledge. Otherwise, the refugee volunteers

might risk learning inefficient work habits that would negatively impact future job opportunities. (Halliday-Wynes et al., 2009, p. 6)

Contexts that might influence the effectiveness of volunteer, informal learning opportunities include: the work environment, business goals, business area, social relations within the workplace and outside of it, and the attitude of management towards learning (Chappell & Hawke, 2008). Including adult refugees in a business, especially when they do not have language fluency, or when they have different cultural and religious needs during the workday, makes considering the context of great importance[6].

Education for Social Inclusion Using Free Digital Learning Resources (FDL)

Due to the demands that the refugee crisis has imposed on European education systems for adults, a few educational researchers have explored the role that free digital learning resources (FDL) can play in fostering inclusion through education and training. This is an emerging trend in research, with some evidence suggesting that the digital divide for refugees can be overcome in ways that help them build social capital, and consequently, help improve their social inclusion (Alam & Imran, 2015).

FDL, however, is not without challenges. In a study addressing questions regarding the technological, linguistic, and cultural challenges of FDLs, Moser-Mercer (2014) reported that FDL refugee users faced challenges with linguistic issues, and that instructor support was essential for them to continue with the courses offered. Refugee users also mentioned that the learning materials "while referring to the global south, were still anchored in the global north

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[6] Such a need became apparent in a 2016 dispute between Somali assembly line employees and their employers over the need for several prayer brakes during the workday (Collis, 2016). Such requirements may, or may not, affect volunteer opportunities for refugees. However, it should be taken into consideration when designing such programs.

[requiring] considerable effort . . . to transform examples to . . . their fragile context" (Moser-Mercer, 2014, p. 120).

Some further challenges to FDLs were revealed by a large study conducted by the European Commission's Joint Research Center (JRC) between July and December 2016 entitled "The Moocs4Inclusion Project," with the goal of addressing the design of FDL resources for specific education levels and specific learning purposes (language learning, civic integration and employment, and higher education; Castaño-Muñoz et al., 2018). This study reported that even though there had been many European initiatives to address refugee education using FDLs, participation has been less than expected (Liyanagunawardena et al., 2013; Glass et al., 2016).

Castaño-Muñoz et al.'s (2018) study also found that many of the European projects overlapped in purposes, implying that this resulted in confusion and uncertainty in the refugee community, leading to underutilization. Thus, the study recommends that instructional design principles and support services should be made paramount and goes on to recommend design principles for FDLs for migrants and refugees based on recommendations offered by other studies concerned with instructional design specific to refugees (Colucci et al., 2017; Lewis & Thacker, 2016; Mason & Buchmann, 2016; Moser-Mercer et al., 2016; de Waard et al., 2014).

Additionally, the study showed that across all learning purposes (language learning, civic integration and employment, and higher education) refugee participants could not fully relate to instruction solely based on FDL resources; the participants needed to have more interaction with instructors and preferred a blended learning approach. In many cases (unanimously in the case of training for higher education), refugee participants felt that certifications from online sources had less value than certificates granted by brick-and-mortar institutions (Castaño-Muñoz et al., 2018).

These results support recommendations by Lygo-Baker (2001), McPherson (2010), and Moser-Mercer (2014) about the need for participation, input, and feedback from the refugee community when designing new initiatives for the education of adult refugees. Even though the study by Castaño-Muñoz et al. (2018) sought the refugees' input and feedback (through focus groups), it did not recommend using such input and feedback when designing FDL programs.

Learner-centered instructional design, an approach whose value is well established in the literature (Gifford & Enyedy, 1999; Reeves, 1999; Vinicini, 2001; Wilson, 1995), might be exactly what FDLs need. As opposed to Domain Centered Design models, which focus on the organization and presentation of knowledge objects, learner-centered design is situated, activity-centered, and participatory (Parchoma, 2003; Sims, 2001)[7]. Learner-centered design models "focus on demographic and cognitive profiles of learners, prior knowledge, perceptions, preferences, needs, goals, characteristics and experiences of learners" (Parchoma, 2003). Results of research on the use of FDL resources to educate refugees, especially around the need for a better understanding of the refugee population, and soliciting their feedback in instructional design, seem to support the view that a learner-centered approach is needed. Such an approach should be accompanied by an expansion of the designers' knowledge horizons to include the perspective of the global south.

Educational Credentialing and Refugee Expectations of Economic Inclusion

An important factor when considering the issue of education and job expectations is that a refugee's prior training and credentials (especially ones acquired in the home country) do not, in a majority of cases, translate into immediate or better jobs in the host country. The refugee

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[7] Parchoma (2003) points out that learning theorists "draw distinctions among learner-centered, activity-centered, situated, and participatory models (Gifford & Enyedy, 1999; Reeves, 1999; Vinicini, 2001; Wilson, 1995)."

research literature is unanimous that the education of adult refugees and migrants is highly discounted in the host countries (Adamuti-Trache, 2011; Adamuti-Trache & Sweet, 2005, 2010; Chiswick & Miller, 2009; Reichenberg & Berhanu, 2017; Stewart, 2007). It is also widely acknowledged in the literature that--if financially feasible--obtaining host country educational credentials would help them avoid a downgrading of their socio-economic status (Adamuti-Trache, 2011; Adamuti-Trache & Sweet, 2005, 2010; Chiswick & Miller, 2009; Chiswick et al., 2003; Reichenberg & Berhanu, 2017). In almost every case, home country credentials are not acknowledged by host countries, which makes migrants, including refugees, feel obliged to improve their original credentials by obtaining ones from host country institutions (Adamuti-Trache & Sweet, 2005; Adamuti-Trache et al., 2013; Reichenberg & Berhanu, 2017; Shakya et al., 2010). It has also been observed that if such education is related to in-demand work (in the host country), then it will improve the migrant's chances and expectations of gaining employment (Adamuti-Trache et al., 2013).

There is a sizeable body of research on adult immigrants' expectations after receiving education and training in the host country (Adamuti-Trache, 2011; Adamuti-Trache & Sweet, 2005; Basu, 2004; McKenzie et al., 2013; Shakya et al., 2010). However, research does not address the impact of the quality of such learning, or the learner's perception of its quality, on their expectations of gaining employment. This translates into a question that can be considered from two angles: first, from a student's perspective, a teacher's skills are among the factors that determine the quality and value of education (Emanuel & Adams, 2006; Merisotis & Phipps, 2000, pp. 2–3); That being the case, do perceptions of the teacher's skills influence a refugee's future expectations regarding jobs? Second, does the relationship between the refugees and their instructors, and the instructor's skills, translate into better job expectations for the refugees? If

that's the case, then it would have significant implications for how educational institutions, that work with adult refugees, should recruit and professionally develop their instructors. This is based on observations by multiple researchers that teachers and trainers of adult refugees play an important role in their lives (de Costa, 2010; Norton, 1997; Sandwall, 2013; Zachrison, 2015). Such a role becomes more important if the instructors have a high level of cultural competence (Banks, 1994; Gillette & Boyle-Baise, 1996; Nieto & Rolon, 1995; Sleeter, 2012; Villegas et al., 1991) and they become a part of the refugees' social network.

Reichenberg and Berhanu (2017) are pioneers in researching job expectations in relation to participation in educational programs and the migrants' age, all of which are associated with the issues of acknowledging refugees' prior training and accreditation. Though the phenomena they study do not explicitly include the relationship between the education of adult refugees and inclusion, their work is relevant to the question of inclusion because high job expectations provide motivation and hope of faster social inclusion. In particular, Reichenberg and Berhanu ask: how does formal education in host countries impact refugee expectations of getting employment? To what extent does age at arrival in host country affect participation in educational programs? And, does the teaching style of those who instruct adult refugees impact the job expectations of refugees?

Reichenberg and Berhanu's research suggested that highly educated immigrants in Sweden did not have high job expectations. They attribute this to the fact that the immigrants' home country credentials couldn't be recognized, which was a source of frustration (Reichenberg & Berhanu, 2017). They further explain that such results were in line with research on Norwegian immigrants (Valenta, 2008) who were in a similar situation. Moreover, Reichenberg and Berhanu (2017) found that participation in educational programs was higher before the age

of 35 and dropped after 35. They attribute this to the difficulty of learning Swedish at an older age, and that "arriving into a host country at a late age makes it more difficult to get exposure to the host language as making new friends becomes more difficult with age (McKenzie, Gibson, & Stillman, et al., 2013)" (as quoted in Reichenberg & Berhanu, 2017, p. 380). Reichenberg and Berhanu offer no support from the literature for their speculations regarding immigrant's motivation, for those who are above and below the age of 35, to participate in education and training programs. Literature on the subject indicates that participation in adult educational programs is subject to many factors and influences including social background, social roles, personality traits, intellectual capacity, and other situational variables (Boeren et al., 2010).

Finally, Reichenberg and Berhanu found that there was no teacher, or pedagogical, effect on improving job expectations. They attribute this lack of effect to the difference between Sweden's progressive education model (Adamuti-Trache & Sweet, 2005; de Costa, 2010; Norton, 1997) and the "old [teaching] traditions" of the countries the refugees came from (Reichenberg and Berhanu, 2017). Reichenberg and Berhanu (2017) do not give any detail about the difference in pedagogy that hinders its embrace by the refugees. Whereas research reviewed earlier recommends learner-centeredness, and collaboration in instructional design, Reichenberg and Berhanu seem to not advocate reaching out to the adult refugee students in order to overcome the suggested cultural gap.

Nonetheless, it appears that one implication of Reichenberg and Berhanu's (2017) study is a need to rethink adult refugee education pedagogy in countries like Norway and Sweden, with a focus on creating stronger connections with adult refugee students. It also appears that addressing the universal problem of non-recognition of refugee educational credentials is

paramount. As should be clear, this is not an educational problem per se, but rather a policy issue that governments of host countries must resolve.

Language Learning and Social Inclusion

The belief that learning the language of the host country is an essential factor in social inclusion is supported by several studies (Di Saint Pierre et al., 2015; Rangvid, 2007). Almost every article cited in this review, to this point, touches on the importance of learning a host society's language. Thus, my search for research on the role of language learning, and its role in social inclusion, yielded relatively abundant results. In what follows, I survey studies that answered questions not usually asked regarding language learning and inclusion.

According to Leith (2012), learning the host society's language not only facilitates integration, but increases a sense of self, enables a better understanding of the host society's culture, allows immigrants to have the perception of an easier life in general, and increases their ability to influence social and political events in their community. He observed that in some cases migrants did not want to work in situations that made them interact with people who spoke their first language for fear that it would hinder their integration. This conclusion is consistent with other research (Valenta & Bunar, 2010) which shows that some refugees, wanting to escape the past, desire to focus on building new lives and associations that distance them from their old lives. Other research has treated language as a "form of social capital that provides social power in addition to economic opportunities, and facilitates access to resources in the community" (Nawyn et al., 2012).

Other lines of inquiry doubted the value of language learning for social inclusion if it is not done with a view taking the refugees' long-term needs into consideration. In several papers, Warriner (2004, 2007, 2010, 2016) concluded that finding employment is prioritized over

"creating opportunities for learning English and finding a job that will foster true economic and social mobility . . . stress[ing] immediate needs of refugees over their long-term needs and goals" (Warriner, 2004, p. 192). Warriner suggested that ESL programs should consider those long-term needs if they are to serve the refugees' social inclusion (Warriner, 2004, p. 193; 2007, p. 356). According to Warriner, no matter how well-intended ESL programs might be, unless they take a long-term view, the only achievement they will accomplish would be to "prepare [. . .] workers for minimum-wage, entry-level employment across sectors of the economy" (Warriner, 2016, p. 1). Warriner was highly suspect of the positive correlation that is often drawn between a migrant's mastery of the English language and improvements in their socioeconomic outcomes (Warriner, 2016, p. 2). Warriner (2010) found that even with engaged participation in local communities of practice where adult learners of English managed to "learn and adopt the practices" of a community of practice, they "remained excluded from legitimate membership in other communities of practice" (Warriner, 2010, p. 23). She suggested that her analysis raises "questions about the limits and possibilities of a teaching curriculum that values 'real world' experiences . . . in theory but does not prioritize them in practice" (Warriner, 2010, p. 23).

The location of language instruction might also affect inclusion. As I discussed earlier, many governments are trying to leverage free electronic resources to provide language and job training. One potential downside to learning using electronic resources is that it isolates the individual from the wider community. On the other hand, language learning centers, in addition to being a place for language instruction, play an important role in providing new immigrants with community information, thus combating the risk of social isolation, marginalization, and loneliness (Riggs et al., 2012). It was also found that cultural constraints hindered attendance, such as in the case of mixed gender classes, where women were either discouraged, by cultural

tradition, from attending, or by lack of trust in the childcare opportunities available to them (Riggs et al., 2012). In some instances, it seems that male refugees prioritized their attendance to enhance their employment opportunities (Riggs et al., 2012). Other research suggests that the elderly and female refugees have the highest risk for being socially excluded and not learning English (Beiser, 2009).

These insights point to the importance of a physical place for language learning—that is, a place in which refugees can socialize and get exposure to the larger community. Such language learning classes offer opportunities to interact not only with co-ethnics, but also with refugees, instructors, and staff who represent other segments of the wider society, and who have experiences that would help the refugees in their pursuit of inclusion into the host society. This research also suggests the need for inquiry into the area of language instruction and social inclusion of elderly refugees. However, this is an area severely lacking in research.

Inclusion Through Community and Government Programs

In addition to host governments and the United Nations, the inclusion journey of a refugee in the United States is initially facilitated by Mutual Aid Associations (MAAS), and voluntary agencies VOLAGs (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2006, p. 1)[8]. As mentioned in the introduction, these organizations provide refugees with foundational legal and material aid introducing the refugees to the new society, including housing, language lessons, identification cards, food stamps, community-based programs, and the safety net institutions that aid refugees materially after the VOLAG's role expires. Some VOLAGs, such as the International Rescue Committee (IRC) have programs, such as the Spice Kitchen, that provide longer term assistance

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[8] VOLAGS INVOLVED WITH RESETTLEMENT IN THE U.S.: Church World Service; Ethiopian Community Development Council; Episcopal Migration Ministries; Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society; International Rescue Committee (IRC); U.S. Committee for Refugees & Immigrants; Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Services; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; World Relief Corporation; State of Iowa, Bureau of Refugee Services

in the form of language programs and development of vocational skills. In the United States, refugees receive assistance (financial as well as housing, training, and orientation) from federal and state governments for a period that ranges from 3-6 months after which the refugees are either on their own or receive help from VOLAGS and MAAS that usually coordinate with community organizations (Nawyn, 2006, pp. 1509–1510). Due to the impact that community organizations and government programs initially play in the inclusion of refugees—including educational and training programs—this part of the literature review begins with a discussion of the literature regarding program efficacy.

The issue of whether to support refugee inclusion via community programs, as opposed to national government programs, is contested. Mahoney and Siyambalapitiya (2017) evaluated a sample of both kinds of programs and showed that the success of programs aimed at refugee inclusion depended on several factors: communication skills, whether or not the programs built on the participants' skills prior to resettlement, the involvement of mentors and volunteers, and whether or not the participants engaged in projects that enabled them to form diverse connections in society. These results were supported partially or wholly in other work (Alam & Imran, 2015; Ott & Montgomery, 2015; Riggs et al., 2012). Mahoney and Siyambalapitiya (2017) state that community-based programs can "positively increase social inclusion. However, more extensive evaluations are needed to identify the effectiveness of these interventions." They further contend that the programs they evaluated need to embed language and communication skill instruction.

Community programs aimed at social inclusion of refugees usually have limited funding (Brown & Scribner, 2014), which limits the numbers of refugees who can participate. Even though there is a lack of evidence-based studies on the effectiveness of community resettlement programs (Northcote & Casimiro, 2009), there is emerging evidence that such programs provide

more positive outcomes than government-lead initiatives (Keel & Drew, 2004). Studies from Scandinavia (Olwig, 2011), Australia (Peisker & Tilbury, 2003), and Europe (Korac, 2003a; Korac, 2003b) propose that the early stages of resettlement, community-based programs perform better because they work within the refugees' culturally defined priorities such as employment and stable housing (Peisker & Tilbury, 2003). In Scandinavian societies, where the state's model of resettlement takes on many of the social and economic functions of the family (Olwig, 2011), such interventions hinder the inclusion and resettlement process, especially when family relations play a key role in providing psychological stability in the early stages of resettlement. The limited literature available on the efficacy of government resettlement programs suggests that for government resettlement policies to be more effective, they need to take into account the refugees' feedback and involve them in policy making which "would provide the refugees with a sense of rootedness and wider social inclusion" (Korac, 2003a; Korac, 2003b; Lygo-Baker, 2001; Strokosch & Osborne, 2016).

Critics of inclusion programs have provided some evidence that such programs can become "mechanisms of exclusion" (Eastmond, 2011, p. 286) and "revolving doors with no exit" (Eastmond, 2011, p. 282). Some government inclusion programs look at refugees as traumatized victims with incomplete agency who are unable to fully participate in society due to past trauma: "Trauma and its connotations of disability, like 'cultural distance' or 'wrong skills,' easily become markers of significant difference according to which individuals may be sorted out, seen not (yet) to qualify, and referred for further interventions As a result, welfare and housing services are offered but no opportunities to work" (Eastmond, 2011, p. 291).

Furthermore, a paradox emerged in some research where the respondents discovered that "the longer they trained [people] to become self-sufficient, the less likely they were to succeed in

obtaining firm employment" (Eastmond, 2011). One explanation for this paradox was offered by

Faist (1995) who found, in a comparable study conducted in Germany and the United States, that

"special training programs are often, in themselves, a problem, signaling that participants are

vulnerable categories and a liability to potential employers" (Eastmond, 2011, p. 291). Thus,

Eastmond (2011) concluded that "the interventions addressing 'problematic difference' reinforce

the boundaries they seek to overcome, turning egalitarian ambitions into mechanisms for

exclusion" (Eastmond, 2011, p. 291). In other words, when the host society insists on providing

special training for jobs, it signals to potential employers that the refugees' past training,

professional degrees, and experience are of a lesser caliber, thus creating a difference that is

problematic in the sense that it deems these refugees worthy of lower pay or are less competitive

in the job market.

Eastmond (2011), and others (Brekke & Borchgrenvik, 2007; Carlbom, 2003; Graham,

2002; Gullestad, 2002; Norman, 2004), point to what they term the 'paternalistic dilemma,'

which is faced by Scandinavian societies that equate equality with 'sameness' or 'conformity.'

Eastmond (2011) describes this "paradox" as follows: "'equality' should apply to all but is, in

reality, predicated on (cultural) sameness. While cultural diversity has been celebrated as a goal,

ethnic and cultural differences are understood as the inherent and inescapable characteristics of

groups" (Eastmond, 2011, p. 291). This paradox produces a situation in which refugees have to

meet an impossible "sameness" criterion (at least in the first generation) that keeps them

permanently locked in a system that can't fully accept or include them.

This demand for an increase in "sameness," as a measure for the success of inclusion

programs, can be a formidable limitation to inclusion. Pardo (2018, p. 149) presents empirical

evidence that the higher the barriers to immigrant inclusion, the more detached they become

from formal state institutions. He also asserts that when the responsibility for inclusion is placed solely on migrants, as in demanding sameness and conformity, the result is an increase in polarization between the migrants and the host population (Pardo, 2018, p. 149). Millere and Dobelniece (2018) concluded that a refugee's successful inclusion in society is "largely influenced by a refugee's motivation as well as available support [from the host society];" in other words, inclusion is a two-way process where both the refugee and the host society have to work together to achieve success (Grooteman, 2016).

The goal of social inclusion is one that is agreed upon by all the nations that participate in the United Nations Refugee Treaty. Most of these nations either provide their own funding for refugee programs or receive funding from the UN. The need for organized, well-planned programs to facilitate refugee social inclusion is enshrined in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (DESA, 2009). The main challenge facing those responsible for implementing these programs is getting them started—mostly by overcoming logistical and bureaucratic challenges (DESA, 2009, p. 5); and more specifically, whether to rely on community-based programs, government-based programs, or a mix of the two. The challenge for evaluators and researchers is to point the way to what is most effective.

Economic Inclusion Through Work

The limited amount of research on economic inclusion of refugees shows that economic self-reliance restores a sense of stability to the lives of refugees and their families (Eastmond, 2011; Ives, 2007). For example, a study of Bosnian refugees in Rome reported that "[Bosnian refugees] who found paying jobs were more confident and took pride in being self-reliant" (Eastmond, 2011). A similar study of Bosnian refugees in Sweden reported that the refugees "resented being welfare clients" as it deprived the adults from feelings of normalcy which are

usually derived from the ability to provide for their own families (Eastmond, 2011, p. 288). Another study in the United States reported that refugees, who have a more positive job search situation, experience higher physical and mental health, stronger social ties, and higher life satisfaction (Campion, 2018; Pajic et al., 2018).

Unfortunately, the economic inclusion literature suggests that such inclusion tends to be the exception, and that migrants in general, and refugees in particular, are "relegated to undesirable jobs regardless of the human capital they possess [in their nation of origin]" (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006; Duke, 1996; Flam, 2007, p. 180; Korac, 2003a; Korac, 2003b; Sherrell et al., 2005; Tousignant, 1997). This body of literature portrays precarious employment conditions characterized by low wages, and employment that is either temporary, or that does not match the prior training and experience of the refugees (Anderson, 2010; Turchick-Hakak & Al Ariss, 2013; Ives, 2007; Knappert et al., 2018; Marfleet & Blustein, 2011; Yakushko et al., 2008). Literature offers numerous examples of work as means for social inclusion of refugees and migrants (Colic-Preisker & Tilbury, 2006; Titzmann et al., 2011; Yakushko et al., 2008).

These negative employment conditions are not limited to the private sector; it appears that, according to research conducted in eight European countries (Flam, 2007), in all but two (Sweden and the UK):

> agentic discrimination (by authorities and/or employers) which plays a major role in barring migrants from access to jobs. In all countries that we studied (but perhaps less so in the UK where the anti-discrimination laws and supervision are very strong) the official authorities granting work permits and job access are the major institutions of discrimination. (p. 175)

There is also evidence that national stereotypes about migrants in general play an important role in deciding whether to grant a job and what type of jobs migrants get (Flam, 2007, pp. 185–187; Moss & Tilly, 2001; Tilly & Tilly, 1994).

For refugees who are resettled in the United States, especially for those who are unfamiliar with the language and culture, working for co-ethnics or co-religionists, might feel safer and more familiar. However, some evidence suggests that, despite this perceived safety and familiarity, such a choice might hinder inclusion and resettlement. For example, Campion (2018), in work done in the United States, concluded that refugees, as a method of adaptation, prioritize:

> the generation of networks of social safety over acquiring jobs that align with their skillset. [However], doing so limits their objective resettlement success, characterized by lower status jobs than previous employment, low pay, and fewer opportunities for host country language ability growth. (p. 3)

These conclusions seem to align with recent research by Gericke et al. (2018) who, when investigating the use of social capital[9] by refugees, found that they use different forms of social capital to integrate: those who rely on vertical bridging social capital have access to resources that allow them to secure adequate employment, while those who relied on horizontal bridging social capital secured low-skilled work, or were underemployed.[10] Such results find support in work by Allen (2009) and Bach and Carroll-Seguin (1986) who found that access to co-ethnic social capital decreased earnings for female refugees.

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[9] Social capital can be defined as "the collection of resources owned by the members of an individual's personal social network, which may become available to the individual, as a result of the history of the relationships the individual has with the members of his network" (Van der Gaag & Snijders, 2004, p. 200 via Gericke et al., 2018).

[10] Vertical social capital is associated with social ties among individuals with different social backgrounds who have access to different knowledge and resources, whereas horizontal social capital can be derived from social ties among individuals with similar social backgrounds and with similar knowledge and resources (Patulny, 2015; Ryan, 2011 via Gericke et al., 2018).

There seems to be unanimity in the literature that, for new immigrants in general, and refugees in particular, achieving economic inclusion for these groups is difficult. Refugees face unemployment or underemployment, they are not satisfied with their jobs, and face difficulty working with co-ethnics. Recent research in the United States suggests that when such dissatisfaction reaches a certain threshold, the refugees consider abandoning the "American dream" (Baran et al., 2018), or the dream of becoming a part of any host society in general (Amit & Bar-Lev, 2015; de Vroome et al., 2011; Di Saint Pierre et al., 2015;). Despite the importance of employment in the inclusion and resettlement process, research on the subject is in its infancy (Baran et al., 2018); what is available is limited to specific demographic groups such as Latino gays (Morales et al., 2013), black Africans (Stebleton, 2012), and Afghans and Syrians (Eggenhofer-Rehart et al., 2018).

Other research suggests that despite the difficulties faced by migrants, some can adapt and reinvent themselves (Al Ariss & Syed, 2011; Erel, 2010), or capitalize on underappreciated skills by making them valuable. Such examples include Asian doctors in the UK who found their niche in less popular areas and became influential there (Raghuram et al., 2010), or ethnic minorities in the Dutch police force whose cultural and language knowledge became an asset for them (Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010; Eggenhofer-Rehart et al., 2018). In the United States, examples of this reinventing include Arabic, Farsi, and Pashto speaking migrants and refugees who found their language skills in high demand by U.S. government agencies and U.S. government contractors (Takeda, 2009).

Inclusion Through Entrepreneurship

One other promising direction for refugees and migrants is entrepreneurship. Ethnic entrepreneurship has long been the path of choice for all types of migrants who face difficulties

in the local job market (Bankston & Zhou, 1995, 1996; Basu, 2004; Chiswick et al., 2003; Gold, 1992; Portes & Zhou, 1992; Zhou, 1992). Research on inclusion, integration and ethnic entrepreneurship shows that migrants achieve better integration outcomes when they start their own businesses (Dana & Morris, 2007, p. 808; Sanders & Nee, 1987; Zhou, 2006). Indeed, recent research suggests that entrepreneurship is a promising path for those who want to be a part of the economic life of a society but have limited opportunity (Hisrich et al., 2007; Obschonka et al., 2018). Moreover, research has suggested that refugees often have strong entrepreneurial tendencies (Baycan-Levent & Nijkamp, 2009; Collins & Low, 2010; Kloosterman, 2010) and that entrepreneurial activity is positively correlated with an ability to integrate in a new country (Obschonka et al., 2018).

Despite the promise of entrepreneurship as a tool for refugee inclusion in host societies, refugees face some major obstacles such as access to credit that, in western societies, is dependent on having an established credit history as well as assets to back loans; the ability to understand laws and regulations that govern the establishment of a new business; the ability to acquire certifications and licenses; and understanding the business culture in general. Effectively overcoming these obstacles requires considerable knowledge of language and culture that refugees do not have in the immediate term after arriving at a new country; and developing this knowledge requires a significant amount of learning and training (formal and informal). Some researchers have suggested that these obstacles faced by refugees could be surmounted by active local and national government involvement by facilitating training and the process of acquiring licensing and certificates (Eggenhofer-Rehart et al., 2018). They have also suggested that "volunteering and publicly sponsored internships should be promoted as steppingstones to regular employment" (Eggenhofer-Rehart et al., 2018). This is where the issue of adult refugee

training and education meets issues of work and entrepreneurship as a social inclusion tool, a literature discussed earlier.

Literature Review Conclusion

I have reviewed literature regarding the social inclusion of refugees in a host society. First, I looked at the "wasteland" of adult refugee education research (Pinson & Arnot, 2007), which is, for the most part, dominated by research on the children of refugees rather than the adults. Those working on issues of adult refugee education and social inclusion call for a reimagining of the field by appealing to alternative inquiry and evaluation methods (McPherson, 2010; Lygo-Baker, 2001). They also suggest that refugees be included in the process of designing educational programs (Lygo-Baker, 2001; Moser-Mercer, 2014; Castaño-Muñoz et al., 2018), so that these programs can better match the demands faced by the refugees in their everyday lives as they struggle for inclusion in their new society. Volunteerism as a path of informal learning was found to be effective (Halliday-Wynes et al., 2009; Miralles-Lombardo et al., 2008; Slade et al., 2005) even though refugees in some societies thought it distracted from finding good paying jobs (Rast & Ghorashi, 2018). Another path pursued by educational researchers is that of relying on free digital learning resources to aid in adult refugee education and their inclusion in their new societies. The literature reviewed showed that goals and purposes of current FDL programs in Europe were not clear for refugee users, who also expressed the need for human instruction to accompany the use of such material. According to the study by Castaño-Muñoz et al. (2018), blended learning seems to offer better promise. However, up to the time of this writing, no research is available that addresses the impact of blended learning approaches on the social integration of refugees.

Next, I reviewed literature addressing job expectations of refugees (Adamuti-Trache, 2011; Adamuti-Trache & Sweet, 2005; Basu, 2004; McKenzie et al., 2013; Reichenberg & Berhanu, 2017; Shakya et al., 2010). Even though the literature did not address social inclusion directly, job expectations do play a role in enhancing a refugees' sense of inclusion as they to exert more effort into an endeavor if they have hopes for good outcomes (Snyder, 1994). The literature also addressed the question regarding the role instructors and their pedagogy play in the job expectations of refugees. The research showed that due to the fact that refugee credentials are often not acknowledged by host societies (Adamuti-Trache, 2011; Adamuti-Trache & Sweet, 2005, 2010; Chiswick & Miller, 2009; Reichenberg & Berhanu, 2017; Stewart, 2007), the job expectations of refugees are impacted negatively (Reichenberg & Berhanu, 2017). Additionally, instructors and their pedagogy did not affect job expectations (Reichenberg & Berhanu, 2017).

In concluding the discussion on education and the inclusion of adult refugees I considered the field of English language learning and adult refugee inclusion. The literature confirms that learning the language of the host society is of tremendous benefit to refugees and migrants in general (Di Saint Pierre et al., 2015; Leith, 2012; Nawyn et al., 2012; Rangvid, 2007) as long as the refugees' long-term needs and priorities (Warriner, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2016). The research literature is unanimous regarding this conclusion.

The literature shows that language learning centers play an important part in inclusion (Riggs et al., 2012). The literature also demonstrates the role that the refugees' cultural traditions play in their participation in such programs (Beiser, 2009; Riggs et al., 2012). Having a physical location for language learning appears to be important, even though it might in some cases be impacted by the desire of some refugees to avoid contact with co-ethnics and the desire to build a new life and social network (Leith, 2012; Valenta & Bunar, 2010). It also appears that attendance

of language learning classes is motivated by the desire of the male refugees to be able to find a job.

Next, I reviewed literature regarding community-based and government-based social inclusion programs. There is no doubt that refugees need a program to assist them as they take their first steps in a new land, and aid in their inclusion in the host society. The literature discusses the challenges and frustrations of refugees, program administrators, and citizens of the host society. As is the case with refugee research in general, the studies on this topic are few and generally inconclusive. As described, there is some evidence to support the effectiveness of government-based intervention (Alam & Imran, 2015; Ott & Montgomery, 2015; Riggs et al., 2012) and community-based interventions (Keel & Drew, 2004; Korac, 2003a; Korac, 2003b; Olwig, 2011; Peisker & Tilbury, 2003). There is also evidence against both types (Eastmond, 2011). One observation made by multiple researchers, is that irrespective of program type, refugee involvement in its design and implementation facilitates success (Korac, 2003a; Korac, 2003b; Lygo-Baker, 2001; Strokosch & Osborne, 2016). There is also a need to rethink the theoretical and conceptual basis of such programs, especially when it comes to ideas of citizenship and how to include newcomers into a society (Lygo-Baker, 2001; McPherson, 2010).

Next, I discussed the concept of economic inclusion, which is important to the question this dissertation asks. The literature establishes the importance of economic security to refugee inclusion (Colic-Preisker & Tilbury, 2006; Eastmond, 2011; Ives, 2007; Titzmann et al., 2011; Yakushko et al., 2008). In many studies, refugee participants stress the importance of finding a job to restore stability and dignity to their lives and making them feel a part of their new society (Campion, 2018; Eastmond, 2011; Ives, 2007; Pajic et al., 2018). The research in the field is unanimous that refugees face huge challenges in this area; they are, in general, dissatisfied with

the jobs they get; they are usually relegated to low-paying jobs regardless of the human capital they possess (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006; Duke, 1996; Flam, 2007, p. 180; Korac, 2003a; Korac, 2003b; Sherrell et al., 2005; Tousignant, 1997). Working for co-ethnics or co-religionists, despite the apparent social safety it appears to provide, is fraught with challenges and may hinder social inclusion (Allen, 2009; Bach & Carroll-Seguin, 1986; Campion, 2018; Gericke et al., 2018). There are some exceptions when migrants succeed in the labor market by capitalizing on underappreciated skills by making them valuable (Al Ariss & Syed, 2011; Boogaard & Roggeband, 2010; Eggenhofer-Rehart et al., 2018; Erel, 2010; Raghuram et al., 2010; Takeda, 2009). That, however, is an exception, and may lead to abandoning efforts to become members of the host country (Amit & Bar-Lev, 2015; Baran et al., 2018; Di Saint Pierre et al., 2015; de Vroome et al., 2011).

One path that refugees follow, which impacts their social inclusion, is that of entrepreneurship. Research shows that migrants achieve better social inclusion results when they start their own businesses, and that it is a promising path for those who want to be a part of the economic life of a society but have limited opportunity (Dana & Morris, 2007, p. 808; Hisrich et al., 2007; Obschonka et al., 2018; Sanders & Nee, 1987; Zhou, 2004). However, access to credit and the ability to maneuver the institutional bureaucracies can be a challenge, especially to newcomers with limited language skills and knowledge of the new society's institutions (Eggenhofer-Rehart et al., 2018; Gold, 1992, p. 180).

Based on this review, there is a need for further inquiry into the topic of the education of adult refugees in general, and education as a tool to further refugee social inclusion in particular. Within the latter domain, researchers have begun to study different approaches such as focusing on analytical thinking skills, challenging existing concepts of belonging and citizenship in

educational contexts in order to achieve better inclusion, collaborative learning, informal learning through volunteerism, and MOOCS. The common theme that emerged from this review is that there is a need to involve the refugees in designing all aspects of the programs intended for them. As explained in the introduction, Lave and Wenger's LPP theoretical framework is well-suited to address refugee social inclusion. What makes the approach most appealing is that its concepts were conceived by observing people at work or learning to work. And as I've shown above, entrepreneurship has historically facilitated the inclusion of generations of migrants and refugees, which makes studying how refugees are impacted by learning entrepreneurship in a community of practice, in addition to being a phenomenon that has not been studied in education literature, an ideal combination to investigate. In the study that follows, I attempt to help fill the gap using the notions of "communities of practice" and "legitimate peripheral participation" offered in the widely-cited work of Lave and Wenger (1991).

Theoretical Framework

Following from Lave and Wenger's (1991) notions of communities of practice (CoP) and legitimate peripheral participation (LPP; see also Chaiklin & Lave, 1993; Wenger, 1998), this study is based on the assumption that people are surrounded by learning opportunities and experiences; learning is continuous and doesn't terminate after a time period dedicated to study and testing. Learning is "a part of our human nature, . . . and . . . in its essence, [is] a fundamentally social phenomenon, reflecting our own deeply social nature as human beings capable of knowing" (Wenger, 1998, p. 3). The notion of learning in the context of LPP and CoP is rooted in four concepts: 1) we are social beings; 2) knowledge is competence in an "enterprise" valued by the learner; 3) knowing is participating in the pursuit of that enterprise, and active engagement in the world; and 4) meaning is our ability to experience the world and

our engagement with it as meaningful—meaning is what learning is to produce (Wenger, 1998, p. 4). In this vision, learning is looked at as active involvement in activities, or in Wenger's words, "social participation" (Wenger, 1998, p. 4), where this participation is not about people receiving an abstract set of instructions, or observing people performing an activity, but rather participation in the "practices" of social communities, and constructing "identities" in relation to these communities (Wenger, 1998, p. 4).

This vision of learning is relevant in the case of migrants (refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, etc.). Arriving in a new society with different customs and traditions introduces new experiences into the migrants' lives, thus requiring them to create new meanings and interpretations of their lives. These new experiences also introduce the migrants to the frameworks, perspectives, activities, and historical and social resources shared by members of the host society; in other words, what Wenger calls "practice" (Wenger, 1998, p. 4). Whether it's work, education, safety, or any other ambition that migrants have (what Wenger calls enterprises), they are worked on, and accomplished, within social configurations that are called "communities," which recognize the aspirations of the new arrivals and their participation as "competence" (Wenger, 1998, p. 4). These communities shape "identity," which Wenger defines as "a way of talking about how learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of our communities" (Wenger, 1998, p. 4).

This view of learning, as expressed by Lave and Wenger, shapes the social inclusion process of migrants even before they arrive in the host country. What migrants learn about the host country, before they arrive, shapes and changes their views of their abilities regarding what they will be able to make of their lives once they are in the host country. For example, migrants' plans are shaped by a range of factors they learn about potential host countries. This learning

determines courses of actions they take before migration, including the choice not to migrate to specific countries. In the case of refugees, UNHCR nowadays provides, in some instances, acculturation classes to prepare refugees for social inclusion before they arrive into the host country, which helps them to start planning for living in the host country[11].

Another example is refugees who want their families brought to the host country after they themselves are approved to stay in it, and who might give up on social inclusion and return home if the country's laws suddenly reject such unification. Such a scenario changes the meaning of the experience, and thus impacts the inclusion process. In a similar manner, migrants get exposed to the "practices" and "communities" of the host society even before they arrive; whether it is the visa application process, or the refugee vetting process, these experiences happen within communities (an embassy, a consulate, or UNHCR for example) that either recognize positively the worth of the migrants' "enterprise" (granting them admission), or it doesn't (denying them admission). This in turn begins to shape their identities via creating "personal histories of becoming" (Wenger, 1998, p. 5)—for example, a refugee who is admitted into a host country is on the path to becoming a Canadian, Australian, American, and so on, whereas a refugee who is rejected continues to be a refugee. Each trajectory has its own learning path: the first trajectory leads, for example, to starting acculturation classes. The second trajectory might lead to learning about other host country options, or legal options that can be followed to gain admission.

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[11] An extended discussion of factors affecting migration decisions is found in (Geis et al., 2008; and Geis et al. 2013). Those papers do not refer to refugees but rather migration decisions in general; however, they were instructive for the example I give. Bohmer and Shuman (2008), and Kynsiletho and Puumala (2015) present case studies that show how refugees and asylum seekers learn about the expectations of host country bureaucracies after arrival, which were also instructive for my example.

The migrants who arrive in the host country continue in this process of being exposed to new experiences which cause them to interrogate their abilities, thus changing the meaning of the experience of migration. As was the case before arrival in a host country, the migrants get exposed to more of the host country's "practices" (see the definition above) and "communities" that shape their identity. Thus, the social inclusion process, being located in the economic and social spheres that have their own "communities" and "practices," is a learning process for the migrants whatever their type or origin.

On the other hand, host societies experience this learning process as well. As migrants arrive in a host society, its institutions find that they have to adjust their practices to accommodate the newcomers through new policies, regulations, statutes, and practices, all of which have to be learned by the host society's different communities of practice.

The concept of learning as "legitimate peripheral participation" (LPP) expands on the ideas explained above by characterizing the process by which "newcomers" become included in communities of practice (Wenger, 1998, p. 100). This "characterization" is a modification of the learning process away from a "reified" curriculum (one based on tangible elements such as books, tests, lists, etc.) to a process that is based on opening the "practice" to nonmembers. The two types of modification that Lave and Wenger focus on are "peripherality" and "legitimacy" (Wenger, 1998, p. 100):

- Peripherality is the provision of actual practice that approximates full participation (Wenger, 1998, p. 100); the learners are not learning about the practice, but rather they are involved in an activity that approximates it. Peripherality necessitates actual engagement. Observation, by the nonmembers, can only be a prelude to the engagement (Wenger, 1998, p. 100). According to Wenger (1998), "to open up a

practice, peripheral participation must provide access to all three dimensions of practice: to mutual engagement with other members, to their actions and their negotiation of the enterprise, and to the repertoire in use" (p. 100). This approximation of full participation lessens the risks, intensity, and costs associated with full participation (Wenger, 1998, p. 100).

- Legitimacy is the other component of LPP. Having legitimacy, according to Wenger (1998, p. 101), is important because newcomers are likely to not meet the expectations of the community, or, in his words "what the community regards as competent engagement" (Wenger, 1998, p. 101). When legitimacy is conferred, "the [newcomers'] inevitable stumblings and violations become opportunities for learning rather than causes for dismissal, neglect, or exclusion" (Wenger, 1998, p. 101). Lave and Wenger (1991, p. 110) provide an expanded elaboration: "productive peripherality requires that the newcomers have "broad access to arenas of mature practice, [and the tasks they are assigned to be] short and simple, with less demands on time, effort, and responsibility, for work than full participants [which will ensure that] the costs of error are small."

Learning, as peripheral participation in a community of practice, is effective not because it is pedagogically better, but rather because it is "epistemologically correct," due to the close-knit relation between "knowing and learning, between the nature of competence and the process by which it is acquired, shared, and extended" (Wenger, 1998, p. 101).

Central to LPP are the concepts of access, transparency, and sequestration:

- As shown above, access is a key word when speaking about legitimacy. In the LPP framework "access" is essential to the reproduction and continuance of a community

of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 100). Full membership in the community of practice requires access to "a wide range of ongoing activity, old-timers, and other members of the community; and to information, resources, and opportunities for participation" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 101).

- Transparency is concerned with the participants' access to, and understanding of, the inner workings technologies and artifacts used in practice, since encoded within these technologies and artifacts (through design and use) is the practice's heritage. Having access to knowledge about the inner workings of these technologies, using them, and participating in the information flows and conversations about them, is key to the learning process (Lave & Wenger, 1991, pp. 101–102). In a very broad sense, transparency, according to Lave and Wenger, is a way of organizing the community's activities in a way that makes their meaning clear to the participants (Lave & Wenger, 1991, pp. 104–105).

- Sequestration refers to situations when, depending on the organization of access, the newcomers participate legitimately but not peripherally by not giving them productive access to activity in the community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 103). This sequestration, according to Lave and Wenger, is not just an issue of excluding legitimate participants from legitimate peripherality, but it is also an issue of creating an abstraction, or a dichotomy between "abstract" and "concrete" knowledge, in other words, the "theoretical" and the "hands on" or "practical" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, pp. 104–105).

If one broadly applies these concepts to include the social inclusion process, refugees are legitimate participants in the host society. This legitimacy, in a broad formal sense, has been

conferred upon them by international organizations and host country government; this, in turn, is what makes them potentially legitimate participants in a community of practice dedicated to assisting refugees. Initially, through welfare organizations, they are provided with the necessary services to ease their inclusion into society and protect them from what Wenger referred to, as quoted, as "initial stumblings and violations" thus affording them learning opportunities as they learn to be members in the host society. Additionally, this legitimacy affords them many possibilities for peripherality through membership in different communities of practice, whether it is through English language classes, volunteerism, acculturation classes, or programs like the Spice Kitchen, which is the subject of this study.

No matter what community a refugee joins, it functions as more than just a learning community; it functions as launchpad to social inclusion in the society as a whole. For example, Riggs et al. (2012) and Beiser (2009) showed the importance of language learning centers as places that connect the refugees with their new society by providing them with information about the wider community and contacts needed to find job leads. The refugee's trajectory in these communities, transforming from a newcomer to an old-timer, is also a trajectory that transforms the refugee from an outsider into a more fully participating individual in the host society. Learning a language (through a language learning community), as shown in the literature review, tremendously facilitates social inclusion. Similarly, starting a business, through participating in a community of practice that supports entrepreneurship, facilitates economic inclusion.

Issues of access, transparency, and sequestration can also be applied broadly to include refugees in communities of practice. As noted previously, access to credit (a resource) is a major issue for would-be refugee entrepreneurs. A community of practice for entrepreneurship learning among refugees will provide more than theoretical instruction on credit history and applying for

credit, but would also have the refugees engage in activities that help them establish a credit history needed to eventually get the credit necessary to establish business. Later in this study I will show how the Spice Kitchen community facilitates this process for refugee participants.

As shown in the literature review, the need for transparency was expressed by the researchers recommending that the refugee participants be included in the design of the curriculum (Castaño-Muñoz et al., 2018; Lygo-Baker, 2001; McPherson, 2010; Moser-Mercer, 2014). Given the evidence discussed in the literature review, which shows that migrants (including refugees) are either excluded from employment altogether (in which case they don't join any potential CoPs), or they are often relegated to low-level jobs with little likelihood of upward job mobility, then sequestration is also very likely for refugees who work in organizations that have CoPs. Yet, as shown in the refugee expectation and economic inclusion section of the literature review, these legitimate participants are sequestered in two ways: the first, is by heavily discounting their prior training, education, and work experience, and not granting a job; and the second, when they are given a job, they are often relegated to undesirable employment that limits their social inclusion trajectory.

Communities of practice are tied to the process of social inclusion because, as Wenger (1998) states:

> communities of practice cannot be considered in isolation from the rest of the world, or understood independently of other practices. Their various enterprises are closely interconnected. Their members and their artifacts are not theirs alone. Their histories are not just internal; they are histories of articulation with the rest of the world. (p. 103)

Because the products of a community of practice often cross its boundaries to the wider community (Wenger, 1998, p. 105), and at the same time the wider community often influences

the community of practice, this close interconnection means that the refugees' participation, and the products of that participation, contribute to their economic, social, and cultural inclusion. For example, a community of practice dedicated to teaching aspiring culinary professionals how to run a business will be deeply rooted in the laws, statutes, language, and ways of doing business. As Wenger (1998) states:

> Services and goods provided by formal communities have value and meet standards generally set by the larger professional communities to which they belong. The larger professional communities are responsible for their codification and certification and are empowered to evaluate and sanction performance. (pp. 14–15)

Wenger (2003) asserts that as long as communities of practice properly facilitate access, transparency, and prevent sequestration, participants in those CoPs must take "personal responsibility" to learn what is necessary for membership. According to Wenger (2003), "If learning capability is a desirable characteristic of social systems, then attempting to contribute to this capability as much as we can is a personal responsibility that comes with social participation" (p. 90). One has to have the drive and passion for learning the ways of the community one wishes to belong to. This is the essence of Wenger's concept of "learning citizenship," which he defined as "the ethics of how we invest our identities as we travel through the [social] landscape" (2003, p. 90). Examples of "learning citizenship" include the following:

- Managing one's membership in existing communities: how do I contribute to communities I belong to or could belong to?

- Seeing a boundary to be bridged and becoming brokers using multi-membership as a bridge across practices.

- Being in a unique position to see the need for a community with the legitimacy to call it into being and becoming conveners.

- Connecting someone, like a patient or a student, to a community that will enhance their learning capability. (Wenger, 2003, p. 90)

The idea of "learning citizenship" does not refer to a "political" form of citizenship that is concerned with a political right to vote and the duties attached to that, but rather refers to situations where the participants include themselves in other communities of practice "providing transversal connections in a context where vertical and horizontal accountability structures are disjointed" (Wenger, 2003, p. 90). In a practical context, an example would be a refugee who is learning culinary entrepreneurship and who gets involved in practices, maybe within other communities, that organize cultural festivals and events; or, a refugee, who starts a separate community of practice to help co-ethnics or co-religionists with issues regarding their own social inclusion. Such apolitical citizenship promotes social inclusion.

Summary of Theoretical Framework

Discussion of the theoretical framework began with presentation of the concept of learning as peripheral participation in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). As argued, learning in the context of a CoP is an act of social participation in the practices of social communities, and constructing identities in relation to these communities. I've described how, according to this definition of learning, participating in the social inclusion process is an act of learning for both the migrants and their host societies.

LPP characterizes the process by which newcomers come to be included in communities of practice. As noted, if applied broadly, peripherality and legitimacy are the mechanisms by which such inclusion occurs. Peripherality is concerned with engaging the newcomers in

activities that approximate the actual activities of the community. Peripherality aims at lessening the cost, risk, and intensity associated with full participation, while providing the newcomers with access to all dimensions of the community's practice. Legitimacy on the other hand is concerned with endowing the learner participants with acceptance, one purpose of which is to facilitate the turning of occasional errors of performance into opportunities for learning rather than dismissal, neglect, or exclusion.

Access, transparency, and sequestration are central concepts in LPP. They express LPP's concern with providing access to all community resources in a manner that makes the meaning of the community and its activities clear to the participants. Their place in, and commitment to, a CoP shows when newcomers are included in these activities and not excluded by obscurities in the community's technologies or artifacts, or by the old-timers relegating the newcomers to observers of practice or to the role of recipients of abstract instruction that is not tied to hands-on application in reality. For Lave and Wenger, access, transparency, and sequestration are essential for the continuation (regeneration) of the CoP.

Finally, the framework clearly applies to the process of refugee social inclusion, as I have argued, since, according to Wenger (1998), the work of communities of practice cannot be separated from the wider world within which they exist, communities of practice that work with refugees become launchpads into wider social inclusion processes whether they are economic or cultural. In a social inclusion context, communities of practice aimed at social inclusion assist in the regeneration of a society's language, value, and economic imagination. This dissertation studies one such community and investigates how a Utah community of practice influenced the social inclusion process of newly arrived Muslim refugees.

CHAPTER 3

Method

Study Overview

This study examined the life histories of Muslim refugees in Utah as they participated in a culinary community of practice and the influence of the experience on their inclusion into an American community. In doing so, I situated refugee biography in history and their persistent troubles and issues. I will use the life history method, as outlined in Cole and Knowles (2001) to construct the life histories of two purposefully-sampled participants. The life history approach has been extensively used to study and describe migrant lives. Miles and Crush (1993) and Kazmierska (2003) offer exemplars of such work. This approach has also been used to study working lives (a landmark example being Bertaux & Bertaux-Wiame, 1981). The basic value for life history was offered by Thomas and Znaniecki in their study of 1918 posited that:

> If we are forced to use mass phenomena as material, or any kind of happenings taken without regard to the life histories of the individuals who participated, it is a defect, not an advantage, of our present sociological method. (p. 7)

By drawing on elements of the life history approach, I will be able to incorporate the push and pull factors in individual refugees' decisions to migrate, the challenges they faced on arrival, and the adjustments they make as they adapt to life in the United States (Bheenuck, 2010). The life history approach enables understanding the impact of government and international policies and practices on the lives of refugees in a manner similar to Down's (2012) study that used life history to show that policies shape and influence the behavior, actions, and self-definition of adults (Down, 2012, p. 619).

By utilizing a set of semi-structured interviews and observational data focusing on life and business history before and after arriving in the United States, I will tell the stories of the participants and of the Spice Kitchen community, and how learning entrepreneurship through that community influenced the participants' inclusion in the wider Utah community. The main focus of the stories is key, or critical, events in the lives of the two participants, with an emphasis on elements of their stories that correspond to or are illuminated by Lave and Wenger's LPP framework. Specifically, I emphasized the transformation of participants from outsiders (newcomers) into insiders (old-timers) not only to the community of practice, but also to the wider Utah community. A central theme of the stories is refugee access to resources, whether from within the community of practice (the Spice Kitchen), or from the community as a whole. My goal is a rich portrayal and increased understanding of the role that learning entrepreneurship through communities of practice plays in the inclusion experience of refugees, and to explore what that role might be.

Study Context

The entrepreneurial training community to be studied is the Spice Kitchen, which is a local organization sponsored by the International Rescue Committee IRC (Salt Lake City branch) and Salt Lake County. The IRC is an 83-year-old international organization which "responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises, helping to restore health, safety, education, economic wellbeing and power to people devastated by conflict and disaster" (IRC, 2017). Utah is home to 60,000 refugees with approximately 1,200 refugees coming to the state annually; most settle in Salt Lake County. The mission of the Spice Kitchen is as a business incubator that, among many things, provides up to five years of training, mentorship, and support services to refugees with promising culinary talents until they can establish their own culinary service businesses in a

manner that fits their life plan and goals. The Spice Kitchen advertises its program in Salt Lake County via sister organizations and alliances. In order for an applicant to become a part of the program he/she must pass a screening program that involves cooking a variety of dishes for focus groups. Once an applicant passes the initial screening they are guided through multiple programs aimed at instructing applicants in health code, federal and state regulations, marketing, finance, and assistance with acquiring the necessary licenses to operate a culinary business. Additionally, the Spice Kitchen advertises the talents of these entrepreneurs and provides them with subsidized kitchen space to cater for Spice Kitchen customers, thus helping the cooks to build a positive reputation and a customer base.

Once a participant is accepted into the Spice Kitchen program, they start a five-year journey of apprenticeship that will hopefully culminate in the participant being able to launch and maintain a successful business. During the first six months of the program, each cohort spends time fulfilling the requirements of federal, state, county, and city authorities including getting health department food worker licenses. Also, during this stage the Spice Kitchen gives the participants access to experts who help with establishing a commercial identity, a marketing program, planting financial roots by building credit and starting a relationship with financial institutions. The second phase involves helping participants to build a customer base, or expand their existing one, by promoting the participants' services and foods. The Spice Kitchen and the participants explore how the participants can start their own business and determine what size would best fit his/her means (catering, food bus, small restaurant).

Participants

For the purposes of this study, the Spice Kitchen gave me access to a cohort of trainees consisting of seven individuals from seven different countries. Even though I interviewed all

members of the cohort, I report data from only two participants in this study. These two participants were chosen based on criteria sampling. The criteria of selection were religious affiliation (Muslim); having refugee status (according to UNHCR's definition); and degree of business success (based on Spice Kitchen administrators' report, self-report by the participants, and their advance in terms of establishing their own independent business). To enhance comparison, one of the participants was a refugee who had a higher degree of business success than the other. The reasoning behind this decision was to see how participation in the Spice Kitchen influenced social inclusion in cases of success as well as limited or no success. Both participants were male Muslim refugees, in accordance with the selection criteria.

After the Spice Kitchen board, as well as Brigham Young University's IRB, approved the study, members of their most recent cohort were approached to determine their willingness to participate. For participation, credits in the form of a time allowance to access the Spice Kitchen facility and kitchen were offered. Spice Kitchen caterers usually pay a subsidized fee for use of the facility for catering purposes. For every hour of interview time the participants were offered one hour of facility use.

In addition to interviewing the refugees, I also interviewed the three main administrators of Spice Kitchen in Salt Lake City to gain insights into the participants' experience. These administrators ran the day-to-day operations of the Spice Kitchen, acted as the entrepreneur's instructors and guides, and, as will be shown, played a key role in the entrepreneurs' lives during the incubation process[12]. All of the administrators were women between the ages of 25 and 35

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[12] According to the Blackwell Encyclopedia of Management and Entrepreneurship business incubators refer to "economic development tools and programs designed to promote and accelerate the growth of entrepreneurial companies through the provision of a variety of services and resources (Barrow, 2001). Incubators help new ventures overcome the liabilities of newness by offering start-up firms many benefits not available to the typical new venture. These benefits include flexible, low cost office or lab rental space, access to sources of capital, and a number of business and support services, such as a secretarial pool or administrative staff, shipping, receiving, and copying services, and human resource, finance, legal, information technology, and accounting services. Members of

years old, Caucasian, American citizens, and employees of the IRC. They did not speak the languages of the participants but used interpreters and translators as needed. One administrator was a former chef with an extensive background in running culinary businesses. The second and third administrators came from social work backgrounds that involved work with refugees and migrants.

Data Sources

Multiple sources of data were used (see Table 2), all IRB approved. The main source for the data were interviews conducted with the participants at the Spice Kitchen location in Salt Lake City, Utah. The nature of the interviews and their structure will be discussed in the interview procedure section of this chapter.

The second source of data was observations of some of the participants as they catered to customers in different events around Salt Lake City, including cultural festivals as well as presentations about their work to officials in the IRC and local organizations that were interested in their work.

The third source of data were observations of participants (with related field notes) through their social networks, including Facebook, done with their permission, as means for exploring inclusion. Promotion through social networks is a part of Spice Kitchen's marketing strategy for participants. During the study period, the participants shared a wealth of information on Facebook regarding their work, events they participated in, and bits related to their personal lives and their experiences in the United States. Conversations with friends, acquaintances, associates, and customers were abundant. Some conversations were especially revealing

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incubators can also benefit from the flow of skills and resources across multiple members within the incubator's network or ventures. Business expertise, however, is perhaps the most valuable resource incubators provide, as they can offer consulting services and help incubatees develop business and marketing strategies." (Neubaum & Zhang, 2005, p. 149)

regarding refugee difficulties adapting to life in the United States and their feelings about leaving

their home countries. Facebook was also useful in determining whether or not the participants

were expanding their social network to include American neighbors as well as the status of their

English proficiency. All this information was shared in a "public" mode.

Finally, the fourth source of data were artifacts consisting of the study materials that the

Spice Kitchen uses to instruct the participants on topics ranging from marketing, finance,

licensing, and other aspects of their business. This material, despite its technical nature,

contained information that was cultural in nature (Hall, 1959) and mastering it was essential to

for participants to gain insider status in the community.

Table 2

Data Sources Summary

TYPE	DETAILS
Entrepreneur Interviews	5 per participant using an IRB approved interview protocol, including a network questionnaire.
Administrator Interviews	1 interview with each of 3 administrators of the Spice Kitchen
Entrepreneur Observations & Fieldnotes	Farmer markets (3 observation sessions) Social media observation (Facebook feed). Fieldnotes were written during and after each observation session.
Entrepreneur Conversations with Friends and Family	2 conversations that I had with friends of the participants.
Artifacts	Images from social media, Curriculum for instruction provided by the Spice Kitchen, Correspondence via email and text messages with participants, research colleagues, and program administrators.

Interview Procedure

Semi-structured interviews focused on biographical and professional histories of the two entrepreneur participants. A network questionnaire[13] was used by which the participants shared information about their networks of professional and personal contacts who are key to their entrepreneurial life. Even though this questionnaire is concerned with professional relationships, it also provided insight into the refugees' network of social and professional contacts, which is where the real work of inclusion occurs. Additionally, interviews were conducted with the Spice Kitchen's three administrators (one interview per administrator).

Pre-Graduation Interviews

During the first phase, I conducted two semi-structured interviews with the two entrepreneurial participants. The first interview was focused on the participants' personal history including their family, education, business history, everyday work and business practices, and any particular events, life challenges or issues relevant to gaining greater inclusion.

The second interview, using the network questionnaire, asked each participant to mention all the people in his current network of business relations. They were asked to rank these in order of importance to their business. Questions in the network questionnaire include frequency of interaction with each person, effectiveness of interaction, and types of interactions. The participants were also asked about the history of their relationship with each of these people. The network questionnaire provided a rich picture of the inclusion process as it revealed aspects and changes in the dynamics of the relationship between the participants and the wider society as they have interacted with bankers, customers, trainers, neighbors.

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[13] For the text of interviews and questionnaire see Appendix 1.

Follow-up Interviews After Graduating From Initial Program

Six months from initial interviews, after the entrepreneurial participants graduated from the initial stage of the program and had formed their initial business plan, I conducted an additional semi-structured interview with each entrepreneur participant. In this interview I asked them about developments in both business and network relations.

After graduation, these participants started either catering through the Spice Kitchen, participating in cultural events, or laying the foundation for their own businesses. This is when they put their learning into practice under the guidance of the Spice Kitchen mentors. In addition to interviewing the participants about their current business situation, I also used the networks questionnaire to update mentors in the network of relations.

Further Follow-up Interviews With Participants

Two more interviews were conducted with each entrepreneur participant at 3-month intervals. They were asked about the development of their business plans, their business, and their network (via the network questionnaire). Thus, there were a total of 5 semi-structured interviews per entrepreneur participant. The participants were paid $25 in cash per interview to cover the cost of their time and travel to some interviews.

Administrator Interviews

The administrator interviews included questions about their work history, qualifications, what lead to them working for Spice Kitchen, their roles, and their evaluation of the Spice Kitchen program. The program administrators played a key part in the life of the participants and mentoring their business activities both at the Spice Kitchen and during catering events; their role in the participants' inclusion, at least into American business life, was crucial. Thus, getting their views was essential to achieving a better understanding of the participants' experience. The

administrators played a direct role in helping participants learn American business and culinary ways, which means that they were able to give informed evaluations of how the participants adopted views and practices to American ways (or not), thus providing an additional perspective on the entrepreneurial participants' inclusion process.

Observations

Gathering additional data about the entrepreneurial participants, by observing them in multiple settings, was necessary to enhance my ability to interpret the data. Observing them in work settings gave clues about their progress, whether in terms of speaking English, or the adaptation of their business skills to an American context. I also observed them in virtual environments as they interacted with friends, family, and acquaintances, both in the United States and abroad, anticipating that this would offer additional context about their issues, which I used to construct their life histories.

Participants were also observed in some work settings, including Refugee Days fares and Farmers' Markets, while interacting with customers. One of the first activities that the Spice Kitchen encouraged participants to do was establish a presence on social media such as Facebook. These were not only ideal venues for affordable or free marketing, but also provided the refugee entrepreneurs with a feedback mechanism and a venue to interact with, and learn from, the larger society. These virtual venues provided a versatile platform for the newcomers to make new acquaintances in the host country, as well as maintain contact with those who are still in the refugees' country of origin. I observed the activity of Facebook accounts of both Spice Kitchen and the refugee entrepreneurs over a six-month period, which provided me with a "live" record of their inclusion experience, or at least some clues regarding it.

Artifacts

Artifacts, the background of such artifacts, and the stories they told, gave access to information that might not have been discerned through observation, interviews, or other forms of qualitative data collection (Rowsell, 2011, p. 332). Artifacts "can be ways into family histories, stories, and narratives that can translate and transform into rich meaning-making" (Rowsell, 2011, p. 343). Thus, artifacts were used to enrich the life histories.

The Spice Kitchen provided me with copies of some of the curriculum materials they use to educate and train the participants. These materials are written in English; the Spice Kitchen uses interpreters and translators to help the participants throughout the program. These materials function as an indoctrination of sorts into the American way of running a culinary business. Thus, the information therein is a part of the cultural tradition that the refugees are being taught.

I also had access to artifacts (pictures, event announcements, and public posts by the participants on social media) that were used in my analysis. Pictures and images, gathered from social media, provided information about participants' circle of friends and acquaintances, the food they cook, the places they visit, and other indicators of their social inclusion. The language used when posting on social media offered some evidence of their linguistic progress as well as expressions of hopes, dreams, opinions, and ideas not expressed in the formal interviews.

The final artifact type in this study was correspondences among members of the research team, including myself, who participated in the data gathering process. We exchanged scores of emails, text messages, and chats about the participants and our impressions after meeting them. Studying other team members' perspectives on the participants enriched the analysis.

All artifacts were analyzed using the same process that I used to analyze interview and observation data as discussed in the data analysis section.

Data Analysis

I interviewed the two entrepreneurial participants using two dialects of Arabic: Levantine Syrian and Iraqi. After these interviews were transcribed and translated into English [by a research assistant], I reviewed the translations for fidelity to the original.

The life history data analysis procedure consisted of several stages[14]: the first stage involved constructing a text that provided the context in which the participants' life histories occurred. This text consisted of relevant historical, political, and social background in which the lives of the participants were situated. The second stage consisted of reshaping the interview data into a chronologically-organized life history emphasizing critical events. Based on Cole and Knowles (2001), the steps of this process were as follows[15]:

1. Immersion. I read the interview transcripts and field notes (which included thoughts written after observing participants in different settings as well as after looking at their social media posts) and watched the interview videos. During this process, I wrote my initial thoughts and highlighted recurring phrases, key events, characters, and critical events.

2. Identifying troubles and issues. In this step I made connections between each participant's life story and elements of the theoretical framework including, for example, critical events that impacted the participants ability to start a business, changes in work practices brought about by experiences within the Spice Kitchen or in the community, or realizations and epiphanies regarding being in host society. The

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[14] Even though I used Cole and Knowles (2001) as my main reference conducting life history studies, I also drew on insights and clarifications of the method from other valuable references including Goodson and Sikes (2001); De Chesnay (2014); Plummer (2001); and Creswell (1998).

[15] This particular outline for the steps used in data analysis are from (Sparkes & Smith, 2013, pp. 132–133). All the steps are included in Cole and Knowles (2001); however, they are more accessible in Sparkes and Smith (2013)

critical events, turning points, or epiphanies as Cole and Knowles (2001) called them, were the significant experiences that changed lives and perspectives, influenced the direction of a person's life, or marked the passage of time. They were the "organizing points around which lives can be retold" (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 120). After the themes were selected, and key events identified, I looked for links or interplays between the themes and how they connect to the theoretical framework.

3. I wrote the story for each participant including the contexts in which these stories happened (outside and inside the United States).

4. I then compared and contrasted the themes in the participants' stories highlighting the similarities and differences.

5. Finally, using the life histories, the context, and the thematic structures that emerged, I generated my findings.

Trustworthiness

To establish the trustworthiness and credibility of my research, I utilized Lincoln and Guba's (1985) widely used criteria for credibility, namely: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, and thick description. In what follows, I describe how I will conduct each:

- Prolonged engagement. My engagement with the participants lasted a little over a year.

- Persistent observation. I observed the participants in as many functions as possible, including farmers markets and other public catering events where the participants engaged with the general public. Access to social media feeds of both the participants and Spice Kitchen added richness to the data set.

- Triangulation. I used multiple data sources, collected via different methods for analysis. Thus, I used data triangulation to check for the consistency between what the participants were expressing to me in the interviews and what they were saying in public. Interviews with Spice Kitchen administrators were helpful in understanding the Spice Kitchen experience from a different perspective. Having access to some of the curriculum that the participants studied enriched and enhanced my understanding of what participants made reference to in interviews.

- Peer debriefing. Because I conducted this research with a group of other graduate students and faculty who are interested in different aspects of refugees' lives, I had access to alternative views on my findings and receive helpful feedback on how I conducted the study.

- Thick description. In creating the life histories, I sought to provide a thick description of participants activities and experiences as well as circumstances under which the study occurred, which should allow others to transfer insight from this study into their own context. In my notes, I kept a detailed record of conversations and correspondences with everyone involved in the project.

CHAPTER 4

Results

Case Study 1: Abed

Abed is a 45-year-old refugee from Syria, a Sunni Muslim, an Arabic speaker, a father of five children (three of whom have severe disabilities); he is a butcher, a chef, and a culinary entrepreneur who has been in the United States for five years. Abed is a refugee in the United States during a period witnessing a populist reaction against refugees from Muslim countries. Abed is in the United States at a time when the country is grappling with the question: what does it mean to be an American? And, how can a democracy integrate (incorporate, assimilate, include) migrants who are from cultures with cultural and religious values that are different? The questions become more challenging when such values are often stereotyped and aggressively treated by public opinion.

Abed's experience of learning to set up a business in Utah as a gateway for his inclusion requires an understanding of the value system and cultural background which forged him: "The role of values, perspectives, dispositions, orientations, and practices originating in a group's pre-immigration history and culture cannot be discounted in accounting to some extent for immigrant education behavior and outcomes in the United States" (Olneck, 2004, p. 310). There are three entry points to understand Abed's worldview regarding belonging and inclusion: The first entry point is the history of Syria. Abed is a product of a multicultural society dominated by a minority group that endeavored for 40 years to keep a delicate political balance that had on average one coup a year between 1949 and 1970 (Leverett, 2005, p. 23). In such a society the way one responds to and navigates issues of identity and belonging has life and death implications. Such

an experience can be a beneficial training ground for a refugee with three children with severe disabilities seeking refuge in a region consumed by revolutions and wars.

The second entry point is the Arab side of the global refugee crisis which reached a zenith in the period 2011–2016. During this period, after a long period of being internally displaced, Abed tried to resettle his family in Libya and Egypt, two countries that were having their own social and political turmoil. His attempts at integrating into these societies shaped his eventual resettlement experience in the United States.

The third entry point is the rise in populism in Europe and North America causing fissures in the European political fabric, and a deep divide in the United States. This upheaval led to changes in the way refugees are perceived with doubts emerging in some quarters about the ability of American society to incorporate them and whether the current criteria for inclusion/exclusion are sufficient. These doubts and the socio-political changes surrounding them shaped and continue to shape both Abed's experience as he tries to integrate into Utah society and economy and the organizations that assist in Abed's economic and social inclusion in the United States in general, and in Utah in particular. These entry points are complex to disentangle, so, in telling Abed's story, only the concepts, details, and events, that further the narrative of Abed's life history are included. To facilitate understanding, several key events require explanation.

Heritage, Community, Worldview

Abed is no stranger to multiculturalism and diversity, for he is the product of a society that is a kaleidoscope of ethnicities, languages, dialects, and religions; each being an equally important aspect "overlapping with—sometimes even eclipsing—sectarian loyalties, as do ties of region and class" (Sahner, 2014, p. 82). Syrian identity is formed within such a melting pot.

Thus, the key to understanding Abed's interaction with America is understanding Syria and its evolution. I will give a brief overview of this history.

In 1516, when the Ottoman armies defeated the Islamic Mamluks to control the Levant, including the area known now as Syria, the Ottoman Empire was politically organized according to a *millet* (nations) system (Lesch, 2019). The millet system in Syria was a relatively tolerant and prudent one due to the large number of Ottoman subjects who were non-Muslims (Lesch, 2019). The millet in Syria consisted of large numbers of Greek Orthodox Christians, Armenian Orthodox Christians, and Jews. These groups had jurisdiction over matters of religion and family law (Lesch, 2019). This tolerant system led to mostly peaceful and amicable coexistence among the different religions throughout the 500 years of Ottoman rule. This arrangement continued even when in the early 19th century the Ottoman empire started losing control of the area with Arab nationalists in Syria demanding more autonomy (rather than complete independence from the Ottoman empire; Lesch, 2019). The Ottoman's response was initiating the *Tanzimat,* or reorganization, era (1839-1876) in which the Ottomans sought to stem the tide of nationalism by emancipating non-Muslim subjects and enhancing the civil liberties of non-Turks while granting them political equality throughout the empire (Guler, 2014).

Resistance to the *Tanzimat* by conservative Ottomans, who saw it as a result of foreign influence, prevented these reforms from reaching their full potential (Davison, 2011; Sahner, 2014). Arab nationalist forces continued to agitate for autonomy which lasted until the start of World War I (Lesch, 2019, p. 34). That was the moment Arab attitudes started changing, especially in Syria (Lesch, 2019, p. 34). Immediately preceding the war, some fissures appeared in Muslim-Christian relationships caused by the resentment of the Muslim majority of the socio-economic benefits Christians seemed to receive from European powers. After the War, Syria fell

under the French mandate which for the first four years ruled with extreme brutality and dismantled the harmonious interreligious relations that the Turks cultivated over the previous four centuries (Nutting, 1964, p. 348).

The French mandate divided Syria into the countries we know today as Syria and Lebanon. Syria was made a majority Muslim Sunni nation, and the second a Christian majority nation (Nutting, 1964, p. 349). In Syria, the French mandate promoted a politics of identity aimed at sowing division as a means for weakening native resistance. Such acts included the concentration of political and economic power in the hands of loyal Muslim Sunnis and marginalizing other minorities such as the Shiites (including the Alawi sect) and the Christians (Seale & McConville, 1989, p. 31). Furthermore, the French tried to implant a Francophone culture in Syria by elevating the study of French and increased the funding of French schools while reducing it for Arabic schools, as well as minimizing Arab historical achievements and delinking Syria from its Arab heritage (Nutting, 1964, p. 349). These acts motivated a strong Syrian response which crystalized in a strong Arab nationalist feeling and unified resistance across all religious and ethnic sects. This situation continued until September of 1936 when France signed the Franco-Syrian treaty of alliance giving Syria its independence.

Despite the treaty, France delayed full implementation. The outbreak of World War II and the Nazi occupation of France guaranteed maintenance of the status quo until after the war when Arab nationalists resumed their fight against the French mandate and gained full independence in 1946. Arab nationalism has had a great impact on Arab attitudes towards religion and ethnicity during the eight decades following World War I. Arab nationalism "incubated first among Christians and Sunni Muslims" (Sahner, 2014, p. 98) and "offered a new identity that aspired to embrace certain universals (ethnicity, language) [that transcended] certain

particulars (religion)" (Sahner, 2014, p. 98). The strain of Arab nationalism which Syrians embraced was called the *Baath* (resurrection), an Arab nationalist ideology created by Michel Aflaq, a Syrian-Christian who called for the creation of a pan-Arab state with an identity that "transcended conventional sectarian cleavages among Arabic speakers. Henceforth, there would be no distinctions among Sunnis, Shi'is, Christians, or Jews, or among the particular denominations within . . . larger groups" (Sahner, 2014, p. 103). With the *Baathist* vision Islam retains a special place as the source of Arabness (*'uruba*), and the prophet of Islam an Arab exemplar "through [whom], the Arabs had 'conquered their souls, plumbed their depths, and come to know their inner selves; and before they governed the nations, they governed themselves, controlled their passions, and mastered their desires'" (Sahner, 2014, p. 104).

This movement was enthusiastically embraced by the 'Alawi minority, a group that was economically and socially marginalized both by the Ottomans and the French, although the latter used the military-age 'Alawis (and Christians) as special troops for deployment in troubled areas (Sahner, 2014). This was a part of the French 'divide and rule' strategy that was used to control the Sunni majority (Sahner, 2014, p. 107). When the French left Syria in 1946 the 'Alawi's enthusiastic embrace of *Baath* and, by extension, Arab Nationalism, was a mechanism of defense against expectations of inevitable Sunni control (Sahner, 2014, pp. 107–108).

Eventually the Baath Party, led by 'Alawis, seized control of Syria in 1970. Centuries of economic and social marginalization proved to be a stronger inspiration for their model of governance than the ideals of *Baath* and Arab Nationalism. Under Hafez Al-Asaad, the first 'Alawi President of Syria (1970–2000), economic and political power were redistributed to benefit 'Alawis at the expense of the Sunni majority.

Assad built alliances with other minorities in Syria such as the Christians and the Druze who were placed in political positions of power and control. The Sunnis were allowed to hold some high political positions such as the office of Prime Minister (Phillips, 2016, p. 12). Through land reforms, Assad tried to win the loyalties of Sunni peasants by "making them dependent on the state rather than the landowners" (Sorenson, 2014, p. 792). Assad's Baath also tried to strengthen relations with Syria's Kurdish minority (11–12% of the population), which is largely Sunni, though the Kurds were not granted citizenship. Assad controlled the Kurds through the creation of the "Arab belt" policy which constructed Arab villages surrounding Kurdish ones and separating them from the Iraqi borders (Halhalli, 2018).

The period between 1917 and 2000 was instrumental in shaping Syria. Syria moved from a society whose identity was shaped by the Ottoman *millet* system, where minorities lived mostly harmoniously, to one under French rule that encouraged and nurtured division along ethnic and religious lines. Later, Syrians embraced unity based on shared Arab values and culture while at the same time concentrating power in the hands of a minority ethnoreligious compatriots. Syria under Hafez Assad's Baath simmered, but through political shrewdness and manipulation it was never allowed to boil uncontrollably.

This is the historical background in which Abed grew up. And even though he is a Sunni Muslim, who was never a member of the Baath party, Abed is committed to Baath's vision of the brotherhood of Arabs. One of the first things he said in our first interview was, "We lived in Syria with no differences between us, whether one was Christian or Jew [it didn't matter]. In Syria it was brotherly coexistence between all of us. I had friends from all sects, Christians, and 'Alawites. We visited together and laughed [together]. . . . I am non-aligned. Anyone who treats me kindly is my brother and friend. I don't care about religion. I care about how I am treated."

Then he immediately lamented the current conditions saying, "Syria has become like Lebanon, [rife with] sectarianism; Islam has become [divided] into 20 sects." In this exchange, Abed reflects living conditions that generally existed between 1971 and 2006, the years during which he grew up, joined the military service, traveled the Middle East working in the culinary trades, and then going back to Syria to marry and start a business. It is significant that Abed referred to Lebanon because in Syrian minds, indoctrinated under Ba'ath with the idealized principles of Arab nationalism, sectarian wars are a taboo.

Abed's Life and Work in Syria

Abed's Arab-nationalist, non-sectarian sense of identity stems from the place where he was born and raised, the Damascene neighborhood of Al-Qaboun, which is located about four miles from Dmascus in the northeastern part of the capital's center. Al-Qaboun's 80,000 residents are a microcosm of Syria's sects and ethnicities, with the majority being Sunni Muslims. Abed describes growing up in this neighborhood in a family compound: "My parents' house and all my siblings lived in separate homes next to each other. We were always visiting each other, eating together, cooking together, and entertaining together." This is typical of life in the Arab Levant (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine). Families tend to stay together within a city neighborhood, and family is "at the center of social life regardless of the difference between tribal and settled populations, town, and country and class" (Hopwood, 1988, pp. 170–171).

According to Abed, once he turned 10, he was required to "learn [apprentice in] a profession during summer breaks." Abed was not clear about who made this requirement but a study by the International Labor Organization (ILO) showed that for many families in Syria, especially those in rural areas, having children join the workplace is a part of the culture (ILO, 2012). According to the study 18% of Syrian children (ages 9–15) hold full or part-time jobs

(ILO, 2012). Child labor is illegal in Syria; however, according to the ILO, the Syrian government, as of 2012, needed to do more to enforce the law (ILO, 2012). Abed chose to follow in his grandfather's and brother's footsteps and learn how to be an animal butcher, "I *had to* join a profession, and I joined him and learned how to be a butcher '*Dhabeh*' and flayer '*selakha*'." The Butcher profession in the Arab/Islamic Middle East is a critical one and has a central cultural role in daily life as well as in religious feasts such as the *Feast of Sacrifice*, which is the most important Muslim holiday. Muslims can't eat meat unless it is *halal* which translates as "permissible" in Arabic.

In Islamic dietary laws, *halal* is associated with how meat is processed and prepared according to the requirements stated in the Quran. Slaughtering an animal is a complex procedure in general, but in the Islamic world, it also involves specific rituals that must be observed, such as mastering a prayer, pointing the head of the slaughtered animal in the direction of Mecca, cutting the throat of the animal in a specific manner that minimizes (preferably completely preventing) the suffering of the animal, and draining all the blood. While it's easy to assume that the butcher assumes the whole task, the reality is that butchering is a very specialized task undertaken by several people. In the Arab Middle East, *butcher* is an umbrella term that includes: the *bishkar,* whose job is to restrain the animal and cut its throat; the *sallakh,* whose job is to separate the skin of the animal from the meat; the *jawwaf,* whose job is to open the carcass in a manner that gives access to the internal organs for removal without spoiling or damaging it; the *shattat,* whose job is to cut the animal in half, which is a very tedious process since most butcher shops in the Middle East are small family operations that do not have the capital to invest in the industrial saws used for the job; and finally there is the *uramji,* who is usually the frontman/woman at a butcher's shop. The *urmaji's* job is to cut the meats and

separate them according to type and quality. The *uramji* has to also know about cooking and be able to dispense recipes to customers. This job also requires special skills and training in the use of knives.

Thus, for Abed to start learning to slay, flay, and clean at age 10 indicated that he was taking on a particularly demanding apprenticeship. Abed said that his "ambition [to advance and improve] drove him to learn "grilling meats," which indicates that he had some training as an *uramji*. At age 18 Abed was conscripted in the Syrian military for his two years of mandatory service. Given his eight years of experience as a butcher and a cook, he said that he "didn't have to handle weapons or do guard duty" but was "sent to the kitchen for *It'am* (feeding) duty." His main duty as a cook was preparing three meals a day for thousands of soldiers. Given Syria's ethnic and religious diversity, Abed's experience in the military provided him with skills in preparing food at a large scale for a diverse group of people, a knowledge that would prove useful later in his life.

After his military experience, Abed was free to leave Syria for work. He found a job opportunity in Saudi Arabia and moved there for five years when he was 20 years old. The mid-1990s was a time of economic stability and growth in Syria; oil had just been discovered in Eastern Syria making the country an oil producer (Ziser, 2007, p. 110). Syria also received financial aid from Saudi Arabia ($2-$2.5 billion) due to Syria's support of the international coalition against Iraq in the first Gulf War (Ziser, 2007, p. 110). Syria also received $1 billion in aid from Iran (Ziser, 2007, p. 110). Despite this financial boom and the general prosperity of the economy, this period was a part of a longer one of general uncertainty and caution for Syrians in general, and Sunnis in particular, becoming suspicious of the government (Beitin, 2012, p. 6).

These conditions made immigration in order to work a preferred option for many young Syrians (Beitin, 2012, p. 6).

In the Arab Gulf states, such as Saudi Arabia, the meat market is dominated by Syrians and Egyptians. Abed, with his long experience in the culinary business, easily found a job in Saudi Arabia. There he worked in a restaurant that exposed him to Saudi and Yemeni culinary practices. After 18 months, Abed started working for an Indian restaurant and learned Indian culinary practices. That was where he learned some English since all his coworkers spoke English and Hindi. A year later he began working for a five-star restaurant in the city of Khobar, which catered to *al-ajaneb* (foreigners from Europe and America). There, Abed learned the art of food presentation and was exposed to the demands of the Euro-American pallet.

By the time Abed returned to Syria he was a chef with 15 years of experience as a butcher and a cook. He also had experience with different kinds of cuisines and cultures. These skills were well-suited for the revival of the tourism industry in Syria. At first, Abed worked briefly as a cook in an *istiraha* (a Syrian outdoors diner). The *istiraha* industry has always been at the core of the tourism industry in Syria, serving road travelers and tourist buses. According to Abed, the *istiraha* he worked for was not doing very well, but soon after he started working there his food attracted new customers and led the owner to "add many more seats." Abed said that he started receiving repeat customers in addition to "passerbys." His success in the *istiraha* attracted the attention of a Christian restaurant owner in the town of Zabadani.

Zabadani is a mountain town and a center for tourism in Syria, especially from the Gulf Arab states, due to its mild summer and its snow-rich mountains in winter. With a population of approximately 26,000, Zabadani was a cross-section of Syria's religions, ethnicities, and political

leanings, with the majority of the population being Sunni and a large population of Christians. Zabadani is also known for its diverse, high quality, and unique culinary culture.

Abed worked with his Christian partner for seven years, which Abed described as "seven beautiful years." He felt that the Christian owner appreciated his skills and contributions. This was manifested by paying Abed "five times more than any of the other cooks." Abed rented an apartment on the top floor of the restaurant and was dedicated to his work; he said his daily routine was "home to work and vice versa." In 2007, Abed started his own restaurant in Zabadani, but moved his family back to Qaboun. At that point he had three children, two with severe health challenges. Abed's children play a central role in his life history. They also contributed significantly to his migration decisions, within Syria as well as when he finally left after the civil war started. Moving his family to Qaboun was motivated by the need to have the emotional and physical support required to take care of the children. His decision to start his own restaurant was motivated by his desire to earn more income in order to better provide for the children and their medical care.

Interlude: Some Reflections

Even though Abed never had a chance to go to college, he managed to earn his *Baccalauréat* (Syrian equivalent to a high school diploma). Abed didn't pursue higher education because of "difficult circumstances and lack of money." The higher education system in Syria is free, but Abed had obligations to contribute to the support of his family, which meant full-time work. Abed said he was educated by the "school of life." He received thorough training as a butcher from age 10 to 18. Despite the importance of the butcher in the life of Arab society, those who do this work are derided and stereotyped harshly in the media and the Arab mind. In some Arab countries, butchers have a hard time marrying outside of their class and profession. It

is not surprising, then, that Abed sought opportunities to learn cooking first by learning to "grill" or being an *uramji*, a higher status role within the butcher profession, rather than as a cook during his military service and his expatriate years in Saudi. This training provided him with better work and life opportunities once he returned to Syria.

It is also notable that Abed's worldview is one of regard for diversity. He grew up in a very diverse society in which the government, at least at that time, worked hard to inculcate the populace to look beyond religious identity and embrace a unified Arab identity. During his expatriation in Saudi Arabia, Abed's coworkers and customers belonged to multiple ethnicities, religions, and national identities. Upon his return to Syria, he worked in an *istiraha*, the type of establishment frequented by foreign tourists. Following his work at the *istiraha*, he worked and lived in an area and a business that catered to foreign tourists throughout the year.

The effect of all these experiences on Abed can be summed up in his repetitive affirmation that he judges people by how they treat him rather than by religion or ethnicity. He has learned to work and live with people who are different and evaluate his interactions using criteria not based on religion, ethnicity, or color. This background formed much of Abed's reaction later as he became a refugee and arrived in Utah.

Becoming a Refugee

It was fortunate for Abed that the period 2002–2011 in Syria was marked by a series of economic reforms that elevated the importance of the service sector, which saw its share in the economy rise from 42 percent in 2000 to 55.5 percent in 2008 (Daher, 2019, p. 58). The sector was also responsible for 84%of the registered economic growth during this period. Abed's business was closely tied to the services sector. Abed's restaurant had a capacity of 300. He had over 1000 customers every day. The business was profitable. By 2011 Abed and his wife had

two more children; a boy who was healthy, and a daughter, born in 2011, who was diagnosed with the same genetic disorder as two of her older siblings. She was later diagnosed with Autism and paraplegia.

In early 2011 the Syrian economy was growing in a small sector of its population, mainly those who were loyalists to the *Ba'ath* regime (Daher, 2019, pp. 78, 81, 103, 109). By 2010 the Syrian tourism sector was witnessing spectacular growth and accounting for 14% of the national economy (Sands, 2011). The tourism sector was aided by a culinary industry which had a competitive advantage (Leverett, 2005, p. 83). Zabadani, where Abed's restaurant was located, is a center for tourism in Syria. Later in 2011, however, everything changed.

In March, major demonstrations started in Syria against the ruling regime. The Arab Spring arrived in Syria on March 15, 2011; it arrived in Zabadani on March 25, 2011 (Darweesh, 2016, p. 9). University students living in two communities in the old part of the city were the main instigators of the demonstrations. Abed's business was in the new part of Zabadani where most of the state's institutions are located. Abed said he was "neutral;" he was a businessman who didn't want to get entangled in the conflict. On May 2, 2011 the Syrian army entered Zabadani and conducted house to house searches looking for demonstrators. There were also looting by the demonstrators and random arrests by the military. Given Zabadani's economic standing, the Syrian government didn't want to wreak havoc in the city, so it chose to practice a lighter touch than what was employed elsewhere. The purpose of the government's first campaign against the city was to intimidate and deter any future protests. But rather than putting an end to the peaceful demonstrations, the Syrian people across the country came out in greater numbers against the government between May and mid-July 2011. In response, the government initiated a three-day violent campaign against the city using 9,000 heavily armed soldiers and

leaving behind many casualties (Darweesh, 2016, p. 15). After three days the troops were withdrawn, undoubtedly a decision motivated by Zabadani's economic importance and the government's desire to spare the city. Again, demonstrators in Zabadani went back to the streets. In January 2012 the government blockaded Zabadani and unleashed heavy artillery fire against the city.

Abed spoke bitterly about Zabadani. His business was lost. "I was neutral. When the events happened both parties would say, 'if you're not with us then you're against us.' Each party would say, 'if you are not with us, you are with them.' The [demonstrators] were asking for freedom, but they were not allowing [me to have] it. I decided to leave." Abed was not able to continue working. The situation in the town where his family lived, Al-Qaboun, was not any better. Starting April 2011 violence broke out in the city leading to several massacres. The city eventually fell under the control of the opposition's Syrian Free Army and was blockaded by government forces. Under these conditions, Abed and his family became internally displaced, moving from one town to another looking for safety and resources. Abed described this period as one of despondency. With five children, three of whom have severe disabilities, his situation became desperate. He left for Libya in October 2011.

Attempting to Find Refuge in Libya

The Arab Spring reached Libya in January of 2011. By October 2011, Libya's strong man, Muammar Qaddafi, was ousted and killed after 40 years in power. On October 23, 2011, Qaddafi's loyalist forces were defeated, and the country came under the control of a National Transitional Council that would govern the country until a General National Congress was elected on August 8, 2012.

Abed said that his decision to move to Libya was driven by his sense that "Libya was now open for business and restaurants were 'working' [busy/profitable] . . . [I felt that this] would enable me to endure." At the time, the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt led to transitional [?] governments and stability. The transitionary governments, and the elected governments that followed in 2012, welcomed Syrian refugees by giving them access to their labor market, schools, health, and housing. Libya also seemed to be a good choice for Abed because of its economy. Libya is an oil-rich economy and is an important supplier of "light sweet crude" oil. In 2012, despite the revolution, Libya's economy grew by 122% according to the IMF.

Abed arrived in Libya early in 2012. He started a small restaurant in partnership with a paternal cousin and commenced building his brand. However, within a few months Libya also began to descend into chaos. In Abed's words, "[the situation] became like Syria, even a little worse than Syria because weapons were more accessible." Eventually, 16 months after arriving in Libya, Abed and his family were compelled to leave, Abed's fear for the safety of his family being the main motive.

Abed's decision to move to Libya seeking safety as well as a business opportunity is an example of his risk-taking behavior, which is a very important personality trait for an entrepreneur (Westhead & Wright, 2013, p. 153). Despite the uncertainty of the situation in Libya, Abed's tolerance of uncertainty is another personality trait that is prominent among entrepreneurs.

Moving to Egypt

Abed and his family arrived in Egypt early in 2013. At this point Egypt had emerged from its first-ever democratic elections. The elected government was friendly to the Syrian rebels (Qāsim et al., 2016, p. 419). The new Egyptian President, Mohammad Morsi gave his full

support to Syrian refugees granting them rights to work, reside, and obtain an education equal to those of Egyptian citizens (Qāsim et al., 2016, p. 419). Syrians were given visas without any fees or prior application through a consulate (Qāsim et al., 2016, p. 420).

Having lost the remainder of his funds in Libya, Abed started freelancing as a cook in the *villas in Egypt* [mansions owned by the elite class]. At that time, there were between 200,000 and 300,000 refugees in Egypt, many of whom were also working in the culinary sector. Competition for work was intense (Qāsim et al., 2016, p. 419). Abed said that because Egypt had a surplus workforce, it was hard to find employment. According to the World Bank, Egypt's unemployment rate in 2013 was 13%. Abed said that despite the difficulties, he was able to provide for his family's needs.

In June 2013 the Egyptian military executed a coup d'état and removed President Morsi. Eight days after the coup its leaders declared that Syrians had to get a visa to enter Egypt (Qāsim et al., 2016, p. 419). Syrians, like Abed, who lived in Egypt had to get residency permits, otherwise, they couldn't work legally or send their children to school. The Egyptian authorities also confiscated 700 million dollars of investment by Syrian refugees (Qāsim et al., 2016, p. 420) and started a campaign of nondiscriminatory arrests (Qāsim et al., 2016, p. 420). Loyalists of the new government started a campaign of harassment and bullying against Syrians (Qāsim et al., 2016, p. 420). To deter Syrians from applying for visas to Egypt, the new government set visa fees for Syrians at $2,500 per person, which was, according to Abed, a huge sum.

Abed's contacts told him that his best option to be able to stay in Egypt was to apply for refugee status with the UN. Once the family gained refugee status, they would be able to stay legally in the country until they were resettled in another nation. According to Abed, gaining refugee status in Egypt usually took around 40 days. However, he said that once the United

Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) employees "looked at the children [the disabled one] they granted us [refugee status] cards on the same day."

Gaining refugee status with UNHCR enabled Abed's family to get financial and food assistance as well as some help taking care of the disabled children. This assistance was crucial since the new Egyptian government deprived Syrian residents of access to such services. Within a few weeks, Abed's case was approved for resettlement.

Resettlement is not granted to all refugees. UNHCR must determine that resettlement is the most appropriate solution for the refugee(s) in question (UNHCR, 2011, p. 173). UNHCR prioritizes refugees with disabilities, especially children, for resettlement (UNHCR, 2011, p. 197). The choice of a country for permanent asylum is based on a number of objective standards defined by UNHCR and countries that are a part of the refugee convention (UNHCR, 2011, p. 216-217). UNHCR interviewed Abed and his family three times over a period of 15 months, after which they were told that they would be resettled in the United States. His case was passed to the International Organization of Migration (IOM) which held more in-depth interviews with Abed questioning him about his history and political beliefs. In March of 2015 Abed and his family arrived in Utah as one of the first two Syrian families to be settled in the state.

Life in Utah

Before resuming Abed's history, it is important to review briefly the history of the Syrian settlement in Utah. From its earliest history, Utah was a state settled by religious refugees, and later depended on migration to populate and settle the state. This history shapes attitudes in Utah towards refugees and migrants. A quick review of this history, with a focus on early Syrian migration, will contextualize the state's response to Syrian refugees in 2015.

Syrians, or Syro-Lebanese as they were called in the 19th century, were the first Arab immigrants to the United States (Whitehead, 2015). In 1899, 3708 Syrians were admitted into the United States (Papanikolas, 1976, p. 389). In 1914, directly preceding WWI, the number topped at 9,023 Syrians (Papanikolas, 1976, p. 389) which then included people from Lebanon. By that time, one could find a "Syrian colony in every, however small, in every American city boasting a population of 500,000 or more" (Papanikolas, 1976, p. 390).

Peddling, or selling wares (personal goods) door to door, emerged as a profession of choice for new Syrian migrants who moved to the southern and western parts of the United States (Papanikolas, 1976, p. 390). The first of those peddlers arrived in Carbon County in 1896 (Papanikolas, 1976, p. 392). By 1905 there were several Syro-Lebanese "colonies" concentrated in Salt Lake and Weber counties (Papanikolas, 1976, p. 393). By 1936 the United Syrian-American Society was chartered in Salt Lake City (Papanikolas, 1976, p. 395). Papanikolas (1976) observed that adaptation to the American ways of life was stronger in Syrian colonies outside of Salt Lake and Weber counties (p. 394). Despite the Syrian refugees' adaptability, they endured "the full range of nativistic hostility and bigotry" (Papanikolas, 1976, p. 395). Even though the majority of Syro-Lebanese immigration to the United States before 1914 was by Christian Arabs, those immigrants were Catholic and Eastern Orthodox. Despite Utah's heritage as a state settled by religious refugees, early settlers were hostile to non-Mormon immigrants to the state (Stone, 2013, p. 20–26).

Despite significant immigration to Utah from the mid 19th to the end of the 20th century, the share of immigrants from the Arab Middle East and North Africa was small. The record shows that between 1920–1940 Utah received a total of 434 immigrants from Syria. In 1990, Utah received 84 immigrants from Syria. There is no record for immigrants from Syria between

1990 and 2015 (Jensen, 1994). By 2015, Utah was home for about 60,000 refugees who have come to the state since the end of the Vietnam war in 1975, and the state had its own agency and several international NGOs working on refugee resettlement. State politicians are, for the most part, welcoming of refugees. Until 2016 the state took in about 1,100 refugees a year from places such as Iraq, Burma, and Congo. In 2016 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which is headquartered in Utah, called on its members in Utah and around the globe to be active in helping refugees and engage in refugee projects wherever practical to do so (Weaver, 2016). This was the situation in the state when Abed arrived in Utah in 2015.

Abed said that Utah was what he hoped for. When he speaks about Utah, Abed speaks about the kindness of the people. The manner in which the host population receives refugees can have a significant impact on resettlement and inclusion efforts (Lawrie & Van Damme, 2003; da Silva Rebelo et al., 2018). Abed and his family were provided with housing for the first six months, the children were admitted into schools, and the three children with special needs were admitted during the day into a care center. Abed's family was supplied with clothing, food, and household items. Abed and his wife, Zeyna, were enrolled in an institute to start learning English. Learning the host country's language facilitates integration (Leith, 2012), and the language resources of communities are a key component of immigrant integration (Nawyn et al., 2012).

Compared to his wife, Abed had access to more opportunities to practice what he learned in the classroom, mainly because Zeyna was, in his words, overwhelmed by all she had to learn about their new community and was intimidated by the language. In one meeting with the family, she told me that she married young and didn't have the opportunity to graduate from high school. Abed says she picks up words very quickly when listening to him communicate with

others through an Arabic interpreter. When I interviewed Abed for the first time, he had been in Utah for almost 11 months and his evaluation of his English language capability was that he could understand 60–70% of conversations he was a part of. He also felt that he could communicate the gist of his ideas to people he had conversations with. During Abed's early life, when he worked in Saudi Arabia, he learned some English to communicate with co-workers at the restaurants where he worked.

Within three months of being in Utah, Abed obtained a Utah driver's license, aided by an interpreter. Mobility is key to integration and acculturation for any refugee (Bose, 2014). Abed said that almost immediately after arrival in Salt Lake he ventured outside of his apartment to explore the neighborhood. He couldn't figure out how the street addresses worked and at one point he could see his apartment building but wandered for four hours until he found his way back to it. He also started using public transportation and with his survival English he would ask people about bus and Trax lines (local tram service) until he understood how the system worked. In addition to all the paperwork that Abed had to process with his caseworker, he had four or five doctor appointments every week for his disabled children. Getting an official diagnosis by American doctors is a part of establishing social services that they receive and the requirements they will have to fulfill for their legal residency.

Abed said that in the first few months, the culture of Utah and communications challenges presented the most significant difficulties. His family's social life was limited to their language classes, working with social workers on meeting state and federal requirements, and taking care of their children. The disabled children were enrolled in special day-care programs. Since Zeyna could neither speak English nor drive, Abed had to bear the responsibility of transporting the children to school, as well as communicate with the school's teachers and

administrators. The family's social worker arranged for some resources to help; however, Abed was bearing much of the responsibility in this area which eventually impacted his availability for jobs that required him to be on-site during a certain block of time during the day.

Even though there were two other Syrian refugee families in Salt Lake by that time, there wasn't much social interaction between them. Abed felt that "life was too fast here" and it hindered establishing the kind of social interaction he wanted and was used to in Syria. While in Syria every night was filled with interactions with family and friends, things were not the same in Utah. Detachment from extended family, reduced social status, diminished housing conditions, lack of English language fluency and a diminished social support network are all factors that lead to stress among migrant families (Price et al., 2017, p. 182). Within three months of Abed's arrival in the United States, the country's politics took a turn that significantly impacted Abed and the efforts of the organizations that support him.

Nativism in U.S Politics: A Brief Background

Since the rise of Nativism as a key issue in the 2016 American presidential election plays a key role in Abed's story, a very brief history is in order, especially that the populist argument has scarcely changed since the 1800s (Wolfe, 2018). Nativism, as defined by the American Heritage Dictionary, is "A sociopolitical policy, especially in the United States in the 1800s, favoring the interests of established inhabitants over those of immigrants." Hints of nativist sentiments could be found in statements that can be traced to the American colonial period when people such as Benjamin Franklin expressed lamented over German immigrants' lack of English language skills, religious beliefs, and being "generally of the most ignorant stupid sort of their own nation" (Gerber, 2011, pp. 17–18). Practical considerations however, and the intense need for labor to build a new nation, prevented such sensibilities from hindering immigration (Gerber,

2011, p. 18). For 85 years after independence the newly formed United States government continued to do very little regarding immigration beyond setting citizenship requirements and regulating the transatlantic movement of immigrants to contain the spread of disease and protect passengers from abuse (Gerber, 2011, p. 19).

The first traces of popular anti-immigrant sentiment started to appear in the 1840s and 1850s following the European agricultural crisis that drove hundreds of thousands of poor German and Irish peasants to U.S. shores (Gerber, 2011, p. 21). However, nativist objections in the 1840s and 1850s did not demand reform of the immigration system, but rather reform of immigrants themselves (Gerber, 2011, p. 22). During the American civil war (1861–1865) nativist sentiments receded as immigrants and nativists fought side-by-side for the North and South alike, but after the war the nativist feelings returned driven by the old economic, political, and social fears (Gerber, 2011, p. 23).

Between 1865 and 1917 several federal laws were instituted regulating immigration that barred people who were perceived as mentally ill, disabled, poor, or otherwise physically impaired, and those who couldn't speak English from immigrating to the United States (Gerber, 2011, p. 22). Driven by the gold boom in California in the 1840s, Chinese workers started immigrating to the United States in large numbers. After the gold boom ended, large segments of the White population started feeling economically threatened by the drop in wages, and the fact that the Chinese were willing to accept them (Gerber, 2011, p. 28). This started an anti-Asian movement which culminated in the 1875 Page Law (Immigration and Ethnic History Society, 2019b) and the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act (Immigration and Ethnic History Society, 2019a) which prohibited the immigration of Chinese women and laborers to the United States.

By 1907 half of the world's population was excluded from immigration to the United States; except for a limited agreement which allowed for Japanese laborers to enter the country, all Asian immigration was halted (Gerber, 2011, p. 31), not to resume until the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. As the United States kept growing, it kept attracting migrants from southern, central, and eastern Europe. The immigrants' physical appearance, which was different (in-between-people or provisional white people), and the fact that they were less protestant than even the earlier waves of migration (Jews, Muslims, Eastern Christians), signaled to the native population lack of racial kinship with Anglo-Americans (Gerber, 2011, p. 35). More laws targeting these immigrants were put in place to limit the numbers of such immigrants. In 1919 for example only 231 Syrians were admitted to the United States compared to 9,023 in 1914 (Papanikolas, 1976, p. 389).

During the first six decades of the 20th century U.S. legislators passed numerous laws, quotas, and regulations to control immigration, but they had very limited success in limiting numbers (Gerber, 2011, p. 43). Even with the immigration and nationality act of 1965, nativist feeling and politics stayed alive, ebbing and flowing with the ebb and flow of national and international politics and the changes in the U.S. economy.

In June of 2015, only three months after Abed's arrival in Utah, nativism became a driving factor of the 2016 Republican presidential nominee, and later President of the United States. One of the new Administration's first acts was to halt immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries, excluding approximately 218 million people from immigrating or visiting the United States.

In Utah, leaders of state government and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints issued statements of support for refugees, and the populace was largely supportive of them as

well (Witte, 2019). Abed said that while his life became better in many ways, there was a gradual change after the 2016 election: "It's like, people we thought were nice and were your friends . . . they always had that certain hate in their hearts but just never expressed it. And now is their chance." Populist anti-refugee feelings in Utah were on the rise but they were countered by statements of support by the state government and ecclesiastical officials (Kutz, 2020).

Working in Utah

Abed said that in 2011 his monthly income in Syria was about $2000. Syria's per capita income in 2011 was $2,807. This means that Abed made 8.5 times the average income in Syria. Making a high income is a priority for Abed because of the medical situation of his three disabled children. He also needed a job that allowed him the flexibility he needed to take care of his disabled children's needs (transportation to day-care, doctors' appointments, and visits with social workers).

His quest for work in the United States started by approaching members of the Muslim community in Salt Lake City, offering his services as a butcher and a cook. The Muslim community in the area hosts several communal meals every month, making someone with Abed's skills valuable for the community. Abed was hired. He was offered a reasonable salary for his work. However, some members of the community, seeking to curry favor with the leadership by demonstrating bargaining skills, tried to get Abed to accept much lower pay. Abed refused because he felt he was being subjected to wage abuse, especially when compared to prevailing wages being paid for similar tasks. Abed also felt that the leaders of the Muslim community weren't being sensitive to his family's needs. These events led to Abed's break with the Muslim community and he stopped attending mosque services.

Following his experience with the Muslim community, Abed met Nabil, an Iraqi immigrant who owned a restaurant in Salt Lake City. Abed was not impressed by the quality of what Nabil was offering. He said, "The quality of what they were offering was 40% lower than the quality offered by the lowest-grade restaurant in the [Middle] East." Abed also noticed that the workers had 'no background' in serving and preparing Middle Eastern food. Abed said that Nabil appreciated his experience, but he wasn't able to hire him to work for the number of hours that Abed needed to support his family.

At Nabil's restaurant Abed started learning how the restaurant business works in the state. He also began noticing the rhythms of the restaurant business in America: the importance of quick and superior customer service; the eating-out and take-out culture; and cultural cues such as the difference between service at lunchtime (has to be quick) as opposed to dinner time (focused more on the quality of the dining experience). Abed also started forming ideas about ideal menus for American customers. One day while at the offices of the International Rescue Committee in Salt Lake City working on his documents, Abed noticed an announcement on the billboard inviting refugees with culinary skills to apply for the Spice Kitchen incubator.

Joining the Spice Kitchen Incubator

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is a global, humanitarian, aid, relief, and development nongovernmental organization, which provides aid and long-term assistance to refugees and those displaced by war, natural disasters, and persecution. The Spice Kitchen Incubator (SKI) is a project of the IRC. It was founded in cooperation with Salt Lake County. SKI describes its mission this way: "SKI provides support to refugees and other disadvantaged community members who are interested in starting a full or part-time food business. SKI is a community that provides these communities with technical assistance and training to learn the

steps to establishing a successful food business. SKI also provides those who join it with affordable access to commercial kitchen space" (SKI, n.d.). In Abed's words, "SKI doesn't teach you the work [cooking] but rather teaches you things that benefit your project . . . they teach you what the project needs."

Abed was introduced to KSI by his IRC social worker. His assigned social worker conducted a skill and career survey in which she asked about his past career and what he would like to do for work. The purpose was to try and match him with one of the career programs that IRC runs in Salt Lake City. Given Abed's past career, SKI was the best match. A successful outcome at SKI would enable Abed to start his own culinary business, which would enable him, he hoped, to make the high income he needed to support his family and have the flexibility to shape his own workday, in order to take care of his disabled children.

In what follows, I will describe Abed's experience with SKI based on Abed's own description in the interviews. Once someone is accepted into SKI they are expected to be a part of the program for six years. I interviewed Abed after he was into the program for six months and continued engagement with, and observing, him for two years following that first engagement. At the time, SKI was new and had a staff of four providing business, marketing, and financial support.

Abed at SKI

Candidates have to be qualified to join SKI. The candidate has first to produce a sample of home-cooked food to be evaluated by SKI staff. If the sample gets a favorable evaluation the candidate is invited to SKI's kitchen to produce several dishes that are evaluated by a focus group of randomly selected people from the community. While preparing the food for the focus group, SKI staff observes the candidate without intervention except when the candidate deviates

from hygiene standards set by the state. The food is then evaluated by the focus group and a vote is cast. Candidates who pass this review are admitted to the SKI program.

After admission, SKI helped Abed obtain a business license (with the help of an interpreter). SKI staff also helped Abed enroll in an online class designed to help him learn food safety regulations as specified by the state government. SKI provided an interpreter who worked with Abed for three hours during which Abed took the test which consisted of 100 questions and passed it.

Abed's computer skills seemed to be well-developed, which helped him navigate the online test with the help of the interpreter. The first time I saw Abed he was equipped with a smartphone, and he demonstrated during our conversations his ability to use technology smoothly (as long as the phone interface was in Arabic). Information and communication technologies are ubiquitous in the lives of refugees (Patil, 2019). After arriving in Utah, Abed relied heavily on his smartphone as a business tool to communicate, find his way in Salt Lake City, schedule appointments, and pay his bills.

The experience of studying health regulations, and taking a test consisting of so many questions, was unexpected to Abed. In all the Arab countries he worked in, he had only to undergo physical exams to confirm that he had no communicable diseases. The experience of learning food regulations, such as the temperature different meats should be stored at, is limited to colleges that have programs for tourism and hotel management in the Middle East, something that Abed's family couldn't afford to enroll him in after he graduated from high school. Abed thought that such programs hindered the creativity of students teaching them rigid recipes and rules.

Passing the test, Abed was enrolled in several courses given by SKI staff and volunteers who are skilled in different areas of the culinary business. During that period, he was asked to visit different restaurants in the area, evaluate their work, and submit a report to SKI administrators on the strengths and weaknesses of their offerings. The information that Abed gathered from this exercise was used by the SKI team to help him learn how to formulate a business strategy.

Recognizing the complexity of the American financial system, the IRC provides refugees with financial education aimed at building foundational financial skills. This education is provided via classroom instruction and individual financial coaching and counseling (IRC, 2017, p. 14). The IRC (2017) also has access to varied financial products that help refugees build credit such as credit-building loans, auto loans, and microenterprise loans that provide refugees with capital to start or grow small businesses (p. 18). As a part of IRC, SKI utilizes these resources to instruct its refugee members. According to Abed, he received "two lessons" on these subjects. SKI however, gives the members access to this expertise whenever needed.

SKI provides marketing and promotion counseling services to entrepreneurs. Abed worked very closely with Mary, a marketing expert at SKI, who promoted his business on social media, worked with him on branding his catering business, and designing items such as business cards and the menu. Marketing, especially the social media presence, was Abed's linkage to the community outside SKI. Abed is an avid user of social media and he welcomed feedback and encouragement from early customers. Mary taught Abed how to take pictures of the meals he cooked, and how to produce images that attract customers on social media. Before an event SKI posts a promotion on their social media pages, which Abed links to his social media pages. As comments come in, Abed interacts with followers, who are usually English speaking, in English.

He relies on the translation services that are built into social media which gives him a chance to see the translation and compare it to Arabic. Abed told me on more than one occasion that this helped improve his English. Abed also follows the posts that Mary writes. He translates those posts to learn the "correct words" to use in promoting his catering business. Social media posts also helped promote Abed's story to the public.

As the first refugee to arrive in Utah, Utah's newspapers wrote a total of 12 articles about Abed and his family. One local organization awarded his wife Utah's Mother of the Year award. This helped Abed establish and extend relationships with the local community. There is evidence that such recognition can both help the integration process of refugees and simultaneously help citizens of the host society adapt to refugees (Daley, 2007, pp. 158, 167). In one marketing session, for example, Mary and Abed were trying to decide the name of the business and how it will be branded. When Mary suggested that the business be labeled as a "Middle Eastern restaurant" Abed told her that he wanted to be more specific and label the business as a provider of "Syrian cuisine." Abed explained that the "Middle East" is associated with terrorism, violence, and intolerance. On the other hand, Syria, in Abed's view, is a place where religions and people coexisted and intermarried, Muslims and Jews (the Syrian-Jewish minority) ate the same things and liked the same things. Abed wanted to convey, through his brand, similarities between Syria and Utah. A year after joining SKI, Abed's catering business was doing relatively well. He was doing three to four orders every week through SKI. The revenue wasn't enough to make him self-sufficient, but it was helping him build his brand and customer base, which was SKI's main goal for Abed at that point.

Bridge Building and Crossing Bridges

Through direct business, SKI's direct sale of food via catering events, and the promotion of its chefs at farmers' markets and local festivals, opportunities came to test menus with different demographics, which helped the chefs hone their menus to boost profits. These events also helped introduce the refugees to the community as working and productive people. These events also allowed refugees to build relationships and name recognition in the community. During those events Abed stretched his limited communication skills to their limits since no interpretation was provided. SKI's core team was always available to aid the refugees with tasks such as alerting them which foods were popular, helping with cashier duties, and mediating communications with customers.

During this period, Abed made new acquaintances in the community who suggested to him the idea of collaborating on a non-profit organization to help other refugees. The idea was that the non-profit would host dinners for large groups. The profits from these events were going to support the needs of new refugees such as furniture, food, cleaning supplies, and information about life in the community. At the time the total number of Syrian refugee families reached 12. Abed was in touch with many of them, making acquaintances, helping them through the settlement process, and sharing with them his experience in Utah as well as the lessons that he learned. A Latter-day Saint family that Abed met donated a car to his family which significantly expanded his movement and reach in the community.

Ironically, Abed's voluntary activities were problematic for Utah's Department of Workforce Services (UDWS). According to Abed, when he reported his volunteer activity, UDWS officials told him that he is "wasting his time." I didn't interview any UDWS officials about this point; however, what they most likely meant was that since Abed wasn't making

enough income, and due to his great needs, he needed to spend more time in paid work. In response, UDWS directed Abed to Joe at the Refugee Center who in turn provided Abed with the paperwork needed to create a non-profit organization. Abed's idea was that the non-profit would host dinners, made by him, generating proceeds to help refugees in Utah while at the same time generating some income for his business.

Abed knew his limitations, namely his lack of fluency in communicating and not having enough knowledge about the laws of the country and the state; thus, he sought to involve people whose counsel he trusted, and who had the skills he lacked. When he filled out the application, he included another Syrian refugee as a co-founder. Later he included three other Syrians, two of which were refugees and the third was a naturalized Syrian immigrant who lived in Utah for 30 years. Later on, the non-profit's board members added both a female member to the board who acted as an interpreter and a Catholic member. Abed was thrilled with the diversity on the board. According to Abed, the non-profit's main purpose was to help "integrate" the refugees in society and help them be "self-reliant." He thought that refugees received many advantages from being in this society, so "why shouldn't they be useful [to the society] as well."

The non-profit was approached by a retired business professor who offered to give 14 classes in business management and entrepreneurship to refugees. A local ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints offered access to its facility for that purpose. The same LDS ward, knowing about Abed's family situation, approached him with an idea of helping him host a charity dinner. Abed said that he wanted the proceeds, exceeding the cost of preparing the dinner, to go to the non-profit that he has just established. Members of the non-profit's board liked the idea and they set to work. Abed was in charge of food preparation, while other members of the board and volunteers managed event logistics and communications. The event

was promoted in local media and drew 400 attendees. The event also produced about $2,400 in profits for the non-profit.

This revenue caused sharp disagreements among the refugee members of the board, who thought that the profits should be distributed in cash, similar to what Islamic charities in Utah do. Abed, acting on legal advice, wanted to distribute the money in the form of gift cards. Abed is respectful and deeply law-abiding. This was an observation made to me by his wife and many people who worked with him. When he was establishing the non-profit, he wanted to learn all the laws that apply and quizzed SKI, IRC, and UDWS agents constantly with questions. When starting the non-profit, Abed made sure that he issued proper receipts for the donations received and distributed. He made sure that he understood what tax laws applied to his situation, and what papers he needed to file on a quarterly and annual basis. In one conversation Abed was very upset with the Arab members "who still live in the 'Arab shell' not trying to adapt to the rules of this new society, and who, despite [our attempts to integrate them in this society] want to do things as if they are still living in Syria, Iraq, or Jordan." When the non-profit board members wanted to distribute the profits in a manner similar to mosques, Abed responded by saying "this [country] is a democracy not a theocracy . . . we [the non-profit] have rules and regulations set by the laws of this country that tell us how to properly distribute this money." The money ended up being distributed in kind and as gift cards to needy families. Abed made sure he distributed both personally to each family.

Despite this first success and the success of the business classes, turmoil was brewing within the non-profit. Some members organized against Abed, accusing him of using the organization to bolster his own business. They also started a smear campaign against him via WhatsApp (a social media app), bringing up his disabled children and implying that he was

being greedy using the disability of his own children to make money from the government and the local community. Such statements hurt Abed deeply, and he resigned from the non-profit and severed ties with the many refugees he has helped in the prior ten months.

Conflict such as this among refugees is discussed in the literature (Lokot, 2020). Refugees who believe they are in competition for limited resources tend to engage in competitive behavior and rivalry (Lokot, 2018, p. 11). In Abed's case, despite his attempts at transparency, other refugees felt that he was using the society to enrich himself at their expense. Abed's conscious effort to detach himself from the Islamic community and mosques might also have played a role in the conflict, making him less trustworthy in the eyes of the Muslim refugees in the organization. The fact that Abed's family was receiving government assistance to help with their three disabled children, they were getting more than their fair share in assistance given to refugees.

Abed's disabled children are the main motivator in his life. Contrary to Arab society's expectations (Barriga et al., n.d.), Abed and Zeyna have no issue with their children living a public life. Zeyna said that this was a problem in Syria where, like most places in the Arab world, disability is a taboo. According to Zeyna, they could never take the children to visit friends because their friends didn't want the disabled children around. She said, "we were always alone." When Abed and his family came to the United States, they were extremely happy and surprised by the level of care and acceptance offered to disabled children. Unfortunately, care for disabled refugees and its impact on resettlement efforts is generally absent from literature (Soldatic et al., 2015, p. 501). However, there is evidence of a significant correlation between services provided to disabled refugees, as well as their families, and their level of social participation and empowerment (Yamamoto & Matsuo, 2017). In Abed's case, statements, in

which he expresses his desire to integrate and be a productive self-sufficient citizen, are always associated with a reference to the services his disabled children receive in the United States.

The new Syrian refugee families learned quickly about Abed's children, and while Abed and Zeyna were welcome to visit the Syrian families, the children were not. The fact that the non-profit members attacked Abed's children made him withdraw from engagement with the Arab community. Additionally, Abed's engagement with the Syrian refugee community diminished because of the ban on Syrian Refugees that the U.S. administration imposed in 2017. On the other hand, Abed's family was making new friends in the community. He felt that families in Utah prefer what he called "family-to-family friendships." His disabled children were not a barrier to making new friendships, but rather, in some cases I observed, families in the community established those relations because of the children.

Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

Two years after Abed joined SKI, the organization enrolled him in the federal Individual Development Account (IDA). The program is a "matched savings" opportunity for qualifying low-income families to build financial assets. The program in which Abed participated limited the match to $4000 to be used for one of three purposes: buying a vehicle, buying a house, or investing in a business. This match would not be given in cash to the refugees but rather to the financial institution managing the refugee's transaction.

Given that their children were growing up, Abed and Zeyna wanted to buy a house. Zeyna said, without going into detail, that they had to "make a lot of sacrifices" to save the money. For Abed the choice was hard. He wanted to invest the money in his business, but the well-being of his family had priority. Two years after arriving in the United States, Abed and his family achieved a small part of the American dream by purchasing their first home.

Programs such as IDA, the program Abed used, are dubbed "livelihood strategies." Their purpose is to enhance the economic inclusion of refugees and help them have feelings of permanency in the country of settlement (Jacobsen & Fratzke, 2016, pp. 1, 6). IDA-like programs also aim to help enhance the refugees' income, skills, and assets (Jacobsen & Fratzke, 2016, p. 4). In Abed's case, buying the house, with a backyard and more room for the children to play, gave him and his family an immense sense of comfort, in his words, the feelings of "being settled." Abed and Zeyna often described their home in Syria, especially its roomy courtyard (a feature of traditional Damascene homes) and garden. For Abed and Zeyna, the backyard of their new home provided a similar feel. By American standards, the house was in a middle-income neighborhood in Salt Lake City.

Within the neighborhood, Zeyna said there were some outreach efforts made by ladies from the local church who gave her a copy of the Book of Mormon in Arabic. However, Zeyna's Arabic literacy is at 8th-grade level and she does not read much; however, her religious conceptions are deeply rooted in Sunni Islam, which recognizes Muhammad as the "seal of the prophets" (the last prophet sent from God). This makes the Latter-day Saint religion, with its belief in living prophets, a hard one to accept despite other shared beliefs and practices.

In several interviews with Abed and Zeyna, I noticed that while they know about the LDS church's humanitarian efforts, its health code, and sabbath observance, they do not know much else about the religious culture of dominantly LDS neighborhoods like theirs. Abed and Zeyna accepted the Book of Mormon given by neighbors, but they were also wary that the contact might be transactional in nature, aimed at conversion or conditional upon it.

Abed reported that his journey as a refugee before coming to the United States made him more discerning when people offer conditional help as opposed to the offering of help without

expecting a return. Abed and Zeyna are very open to people in the community who approach them, yet cautious in their interactions. This cautiousness seems to be characteristic of Syrian refugees (Lokot, 2018). Abed and Zeyna are very thankful for whatever good people try to do for them and keep their judgments well-concealed, as will be shown later when discussing some of their interactions with neighbors and community volunteers.

Abed loves to exclaim that his house is open to anyone who wants to come and visit. Abed and Zeyna often spoke about the stark contrast between their experience in Syria, where people didn't want to see their children, and the experience in the United States where people want to visit them specifically to help with their children. Abed and Zeyna, in true Syrian hospitality, always offer those helping visitors a large meal cooked by Abed. Research by Vandevoordt (2017) in Belgium shows that this generosity is typical of Syrian refugees who seek through this act not only to show hospitality and openness but also to play the role of the host who gives rather than receives, demonstrating that they are not dependent but capable of giving back to the host community (Vandevoordt, 2017, p. 5).

While lack of knowledge regarding Mormon culture was an issue for Abed and his family, they have managed, through activity in SKI and IRC, to build friendships and contacts within the wider community in Utah. Because Abed and his family were the second Syrian refugee family to arrive in Utah, they received significant attention in the local media, promoted by IRC. In 2016 Abed was the subject of six news stories in the state's main newspapers. Abed's Facebook account is inundated with requests for connection from complete strangers who shared his story and promoted his business. Abed and Zeyna were receiving frequent inquiries and offers to teach Zeyna English, help her with the children, and help with house chores. They accepted many of these offers; however, Zeyna said that the task of caring for three severely

disabled children proved to be daunting for volunteers; the language barrier made it hard for Zeyna to communicate what was needed with the volunteers. On the other hand, the volunteers I spoke with were not certain whether they were meeting Zeyna's needs, or worried if they were doing things in a culturally appropriate manner. Abed said that many well-meaning people showed up to help with "fancy-looking toys and books that were for use while the volunteers were there. When they left with their fancy toys, the children would cry because they couldn't keep them, and [Abed] couldn't afford to buy them."

Future Possibilities and Challenges

The community embrace that Abed and his family received made them committed to staying in Utah even though Abed by that time had a brother who was resettled in Chicago and wanted him to join him there. Abed and Zeyna though have become attached to Utah.

Due to the events at the non-profit society, Abed and Zeyna limited their social contact with the Arab community to a small number of families who lived nearby. Abed hires some people from the local Arab community to help him manage large catering orders. Even though he trains them and guides them in the process of getting food-handler licenses, he generally distrusts them and his relationship with them is strictly professional.

The situation at SKI was also changing. The election of Donald Trump as president, and his administration's subsequent policies, resulted in dramatically slashing numbers of refugees admitted to the United States from 85,000 in 2016 to less than 20,000 by the end of 2017. This change led all non-governmental aid agencies which participate in settling refugees to reassess their resources, cutting down staff and offices. Even though SKI made $500,000 in its first year of operation, most of this profit was reassigned to other uses. The biggest change however was IRC's decision to relinquish its kitchen's location and outsource the kitchen to a local for-profit

kitchen. IRC's kitchen had been a central place for the practice of refugee chefs; it was a safe space where they collaborated on a regular basis with IRC's staff, where they were mentored, where they paid a low hourly rental fee to cook meals for their customers, park their food carts and trucks but above all, in Abed's words, it "felt like home." In the new kitchen, on top of paying an hourly rental, Abed and his fellow chefs were paying extra fees that encroached on their meager profits. The kitchen owners didn't seem to care about SKI's work. To the owners of the new kitchen, everything was a business transaction. SKI's staff who worked previously as mentors were now doing other functions at IRC's main office in Salt Lake. However, they still offered some mentoring during events, helping the refugee chefs with paperwork, licenses, and the refugees' finances. They also still showed up to help the refugee chefs with big catering orders and some weekly events.

The biggest point of contention for Abed was that IRC was now using the refugee chefs to conduct fundraising events whose purpose was to raise funds for a new kitchen. He felt that the relationship became transactional. That SKI "uses [them] for begging [from the community]." Another point of contention for Abed was that SKI started to deliberately ration orders that came for him. According to Abed, customers that he knew would call SKI asking for catering by him, but SKI would tell them that Abed wasn't available for that week, then suggest that they cater their events with a different refugee chef. The disappointed customers would call Abed and tell him this, which made him angry. I could not verify this story with SKI. I suspect that SKI was trying to give other refugee chefs work opportunities during a difficult period for the program; however, it seemed unfair to direct orders, coming specifically to Abed, to other chefs.

The last time I interviewed Abed about this subject he was frustrated with many parts of the program and felt he had very little choice regarding how to proceed. He was feeling that rather than being a member of the community, he and other chefs in the program were turned into "cash cows" for IRC and that the organization did not provide him anymore with the kind of support that would enable him to be able to sustain his family's needs.

Summary

This case study examined the life history of Abed, a Syrian refugee, a chef with a rich and long experience who found himself and his family thrown into a vicious civil war in Syria in 2011. They were forced, like millions of others, to leave Syria looking for a safe place to live. As shown in this chapter, Abed was a product of a multiethnic, Arab-nationalist society led by an ideology, *the Ba'ath,* which emphasized Arab cultural unity and sought to minimize religious and ethnic differences.

Abed was, by Middle Eastern standards, an expert chef, and a man who has managed, using his culinary skills, to provide well for a family of seven including three severely disabled children. Rather than seeking safety in Europe or America, like millions of Syrians were doing, he left to another Arab country, Libya, which was emerging from a civil war, and where the prospects for business seemed to be good. Unfortunately, the stability in Libya didn't last long; Abed found himself starting again, this time having exhausted his capital, in Egypt. In Cairo, Abed had a promising start as a freelance chef but a military coup d'etat in the country resulted in a government hostile to refugees, forcing Abed and his family to finally apply for refuge through UNHCR. Given the health status of Abed's children his application was given priority status leading to the family being admitted to the United States.

In the United States, Abed and his family were sent to Salt Lake City, Utah, where, initially, they were received warmly by a community that opened for the family a path towards stability and prosperity. The children were back in school for the first time in years, and the disabled children were admitted to specialized institutions and looked after by professional caretakers. Abed found work as a cook with a local mosque then with a local refugee-owned restaurant. Those arrangements did not work well due to conflict regarding wages and not having enough work to provide for his family. Through his contacts Abed learned about the Spice Kitchen Incubator (SKI), a business incubator, and a community of practice, that helps refugees with culinary skills to start their own culinary business in Utah. After successfully gaining admission into the SKI program, Abed acquired the logistical and technical knowledge that he needed to start his own business in the United States. Volunteer experts at SKI helped Abed learn about marketing and financing a culinary business. They also helped introduce his business to the community through participation in community events, farmers' markets across the state, and catering events promoted by SKI.

After a few months in the SKI program, Abed had the insight that he can use his newly found business skills to benefit the local refugee community. He joined with other refugees he met in Utah to form a charity organization which raised money for refugees by hosting dinners in local communities. Even though this attempt was successful and raised some much-needed aid for refugees in Utah, it also led to conflict between Abed and the charity's board members. This led to Abed scaling down his engagement with the refugee community.

Through SKI Abed was able to participate in a finance program that enabled him to buy a house in the suburbs of Salt Lake, giving him and his family a space that was more accommodating of his three disabled children. Coverage in the local press of Abed's life and

story resulted in many new acquaintances from the host community. Many people were touched by Abed's story and wanted to help him, and his family, to adjust to life in America. Results were mixed due to cultural and communication barriers.

Just as Abed's life seemed to be on the right track, a socio-political change occurred in the U.S with the election of a new administration in 2016. The administration's policies were hostile to refugees and refugee organizations resulting in a decrease in the resources available to organizations such as SKI, leading to a change in how the program was run and managed. These changes caused new conflict in the life of Abed and his family. At the time the interviewing and observation process was concluded, Abed was not happy with his situation and his progress in the program was hindered.

In lieu of Abed's story, I included a description of the historical and social contexts that influenced Abed's life and the directions it took. His socio-economic background led him to be a butcher, then a chef. The economic situation in Syria led him to immigrate to other Arab countries and work with multiple nationalities thus honing his culinary skills and learning how to adapt them to a wider audience and a more international pallet. He returned to Syria at a time it was experiencing a tourist boom enabling him to continue improving his skills to satisfy international tastes. This in turn helped Abed after the Arab Spring to start businesses in two Arab countries (Libya and Egypt) after the Arab Spring. This background and preparation helped Abed join SKI, passing a test in which success depended on satisfying a pallet that is not necessarily used to the taste of Middle Eastern food. At the time the interviews and observations with Abed were concluded, political changes were posing challenges not just for him, but also for every refugee in the country and the organizations that support those refugees. The consequences of those challenges have yet to be seen.

Case Study 2: Zahi

Zahi is a 65-year-old Iraqi Shi'ite male. He is the father of seven children—six females and one male. He is also the husband of two wives. Due to the laws of the United States, only one of them was able to claim refugee status and move with him. He is a member of an Iraqi Shi'ite tribe, the Khazraj, whose ancestors were the first allies of the prophet Muhammad. Zahi's life spans a tumultuous period in the history of Iraq and the Arab world. Like Syria in the previous section, the modern country of Iraq was the product of post-WWI British and French scheming via the Sykes-Picot agreement. This agreement, as I explained before, shaped the borders of the modern Arab Middle East and the ethnic and religious composition of each of those countries in a manner that has created tension throughout the Middle East.

Zahi's life was deeply shaped by the modern history of Iraq as much as it was shaped by its ancient history. This will become increasingly apparent as I discuss Zahi's life and the circumstances that led him to finally end up as a refugee in the United States with one of his wives and two of his daughters.

I will start this chapter with the history of Iraq during the beginning of the Islamic period. Even though this is ancient history it played a crucial role in shaping Zahi's life and his outlook. I will follow this with a look at the geopolitical forces that shaped Iraq from the 1500s to 1946. This is another crucial period in Iraqi history that had a direct and significant impact on Zahi's ancestors and eventually determined many aspects of his life.

After discussing those two historical periods I will discuss the historical period into which Zahi lived until he migrated to the United States, 1955–2014. This is a period of revolutions and war. This will be followed by a review of the life of Iraqi Shi'ites between 1979–

2014. During these 35 years Zahi, like all Iraqis, witnessed constant war and economic difficulty. Thus, the impact of this period on his life cannot be overstated.

Following the historical discussions, I will tell the story of Zahi as a refugee and the circumstances that led to his arrival in the United States. Since I wrote in the previous case about the state of the American society regarding immigration and refugees during the period of 2014 to the present, I will not reiterate those points here. However, I will write briefly about the history of Iraqi immigration to Utah. After that, the stage will be set to describe Zahi's journey as a refugee and entrepreneur in Utah, which started when he joined the Spice Kitchen Incubator (SKI).

Iraq and the Origins of Shi'ism

Shi'ia Islam is the second-largest sect in Islam with 400 million believers (Lipka, 2014). The name refers to the followers of Ali (*Shi'at Ali*) who was Muhammad's cousin and one of his closest aides. He was also the husband of Muhammad's daughter Fatima and the father of Hussein who is a central figure for Shi'ia Muslims. The origins of Shi'ism start 24 years after the death of Muhammad. It is a story central to the life and religious practice of every Shi'ite Muslim (Hazleton, 2009, p. 2). It's the framework by which they have analyzed events in the Islamic world for the last 1300 years. It's the interpretive frame by which they understand the injustice and oppression they've been subjected to in the Sunni world as well as the degree of their inclusion and exclusion in those societies. Thus, this story is always in the background and it is central to Zahi's life, who was born in *Karbala* the holiest city of Shi'ite Muslims and traces his ancestry to the early periods of Islam.

Islam's great schism and the rise of Shi'ism is rooted in three important events. The first one is Muhammad's succession; the second is the assassination of Muhammad's third successor

(*Caliph*), Othman; and the third is the death of Ali the fourth *Caliph* and his son Hussein. Shi'ites are raised learning this story, memorizing it, and enacting it every year. It's the story of a poor minority fighting state corruption and oppression and being martyred in the process.

Shi'ites believe that shortly before Muhammad's death, he told some of his followers at a place called Ghadir Khumm that those who accepted him as their leader, should also accept Ali as his successor and leader (Amir-Moezzi, 2014). After Muhammad's death, while Ali and the rest of Muhammad's family were preparing his body for burial, Muhammad's closest companions met in a place called *Al-Saqifa* and chose Muhammad's closest friend and one of the first converts to Islam to be the Caliph; his name was Abu Bakr (Muir, 1891, p. 2). Historical sources (Holt, 1992, p. 57) differ on Ali's response to Abu Bakr's election, but all agree that Ali was not satisfied with the decision and was forced into accepting the decision.

Two years later, after Abu Bakr's death, a council of Muslim elites elected another man who was also one of Muhammad's companions. His name was Omar. Omar's rule lasted a little over 10 years during which the Islamic empire expanded to include all the territory of the Persian Empire and two-thirds of the Byzantine empire (Hourani, 2013, p. 3). Omar mandated that no Arab Muslims should move into or settle the newly conquered lands beyond the Arabian Peninsula. He also mandated that non-Muslims from the newly conquered lands should not be allowed to settle in the Peninsula (Nutting, 1964, p. 55). Furthermore, historians observe that Muslims did not conduct any missionary work among newly conquered people since non-Muslims had to pay a poll tax and their conversion to Islam would have diminished imperial revenue (Nutting, 1964, p. 56). Omar was following Muhammad's rules of conquest which mandated that the disturbance to the lives of those conquered be minimized as much as possible

(Nutting, 1964, p. 57). This also prevented the corruption that would result from the abuse of power and corruption that seems to accompany colonialist ventures (Nutting, 1964, p. 57).

During Omar's rule, he kept Ali close at hand as an indispensable advisor (Ashraf, 2004, pp. 107–110). Omar made Ali his chief jurist and the latter's counsel proved to be crucial for the organization of the emerging Islamic empire. When Omar was on his deathbed, he nominated six of Muhammad's companions as possible successors. When Omar finally died, the Muslim elders (*Shura council*) charged another companion of Muhammad to choose the new Caliph. That man offered the caliphate first to Ali on the condition that Ali would abide by the rules of the Koran and Sunnah (teachings of Muhammad) and follow the policies of Abu Bakr and Othman. Ali refused the latter of these conditions (following the policies of Abu Bakr and Othman), most likely because he was opposed to some of the policies of the two previous Caliphs. At that point, the caliphate was offered to Othman who accepted it. Ali gave his allegiance to Othman reluctantly (Madelung, 2006, pp. 70–72; Dakake, 2007).

Othman was Muhammad's son-in-law. He was from the Umayyad tribe *Banu Abd Shams*, which was one of the largest, wealthiest, and most influential tribes in Mecca. Their conversion to Islam was late and happened only after Muhammad conquered Mecca. To secure their allegiance, Muhammad, followed by Abu Bakr and Othman, elevated them within the new Islamic state and kept their wealth and trade intact. However, the Umayyads perceived Omar's rules on acquiring land and settlements in newly conquered regions outside the Arabian Peninsula as a lost economic opportunity (Nutting, 1964, p. 57). Othman's ascension to the Caliphate was accompanied by his abolishment of Omar's restrictions. Additionally, Othman's administration consisted largely of Umayyad operatives who rushed into the foreign conquered lands in North Africa, Persia, and Central Asia (Nutting, 1964, pp. 57, 62). Nepotism, corruption,

and extravagance were the norm under Othman which led to growing discontent among Muslims.

During Othman's rule, Ali retreated to the newly built city of Kufa in Iraq. It must have been ironic for Ali that the reason he couldn't become Caliph was his refusal to vow to uphold all of Omar's and Abu Baker's policies, for the caliphate to end up in the hands of a person who dismantled most of those policies. Rebellion against Othman's policies started in Kufa. After the rebellion was suppressed in Kufa it spread to Egypt led by Muhammad, the son of Abu Bakr, who marched with his brother Zubair on Medina, the capital of Islam at the time, to depose Othman. When Othman called on Ali for counsel, the latter's advice was that Othman should put his house in order by ending corruption and nepotism. The counsel from Othman's family in Syria where they ruled was that Othman should escape to Syria (Nutting, 1964, p. 63). Othman refused to leave Madina and despite Ali's attempts to protect him from the rebels, Othman was assassinated by Muhammad and Zubair.

After Othman's death, Ali was proclaimed a Caliph by his allies in Madina and Kufa. He accepted the caliphate reluctantly (Hamidullah, 1988, p. 126) and only to prevent a schism among Muslims. The Umayyads were already asking for the punishment of Othman's killers. Within a few months of Ali starting his rule, Muhammad's wife, 'Ayesha, and other dissenters marched against Ali in Iraq. Ali emerged victoriously, but soon afterward had to face the Umayyad Syrian Army which was directed by another of Othman's relatives, Mu'aweya. The Syrians refused to give allegiance to Ali or accept his control over that part of the empire. In the battle that ensued, the Umayyad's army was close to defeat when their leader had his soldiers raise copies of the Koran on the tips of their spears, a sign of peace, and asked for *tahkeem* (mediation). Each party chose a mediator and after lengthy deliberations, they agreed that both

Ali and Mu'aweya should renounce their right to the caliphate and go back to the *shura council* which would decide who was the rightful Caliph. Shi'ites consider this a brilliant ruse by the Umayyads for Mu'awyah was just an administrator over Syria, he was never even in consideration for the caliphate, Ali was the duly elected Caliph. Naturally, Ali rejected this resolution. Many in his camp denied the validity of the mediation and asked for him to continue the battle until he defeated the Umayyads and restored unity to the empire. Ali had a strong resolve to prevent bloodshed among Muslims and refused to resume the battle against the Umayyads. As a result, many of those who wanted the war to continue left Ali's camp and became known as the *Kharijites*. In the meantime, the Umayyads tightened their grip on Syria and then went on to kill Ali's administrator in Egypt who was also Othman's killer. Two years later Ali was forced to fight the *Kharijites* and defeated them.

Ali's rule ended two years after the battle with the *Kharijites* when one of them managed to assassinate Ali while he was leading morning prayers in Kufa. Ali was buried in the Iraqi city of Najaf, which, as a result, became one of Shi'ism's two holy cities and a center for Shi'ite learning and governance to this day. The expansion of the Islamic empire stopped during Ali's reign. The strength of Islamic armies was drained by dissents, internal wars, and schisms. Ali left behind him two sons, Hasan and Hussein, the direct descendants, and grandchildren, of Muhammad. Thus, the people of Kufa pledged allegiance to Ali's oldest son, Hasan, and proclaimed him Caliph after his father. Hasan's reign lasted eight months after which he abdicated to Mu'aweyah whose armies have avoided war and have strengthened their grip on the Levant and Egypt. Thus started the Umayyad Islamic Empire and the final chapter in the Shi'ism's foundational story.

The Martyrdom of Hussein Son of Ali

Hasan abdicated peacefully to Mu'aweyah on five conditions that Mu'aweyah accepted. The conditions were as follows:

1. Mu'aweyah should rule according to the Koran, Sunnah, and the policies instituted under the previous Caliphs;

2. Mu'aweyah's successor would be determined by a council of Muslim elders;

3. Muslims who were allies of Ali and Hasan would be secure wherever they are;

4. Ali's family both immediate and extended would be safe wherever they live in the Islamic domain; and

5. Mu'aweyah would covenant that he would not conspire against or intimidate Hasan, Hussein, and their families, either in public nor in private. Hussein was not pleased with the abdication but yielded reluctantly to his brother.

Both Hasan and Hussein lived peacefully under Mu'aweyah's rule which lasted 19 years. However, upon his deathbed he broke his agreement with Hasan and made the people of Syria and Medina pledge allegiance to his son Yazid. By doing so Mu'aweyah abandoned the principle of election by Muslim elders, *shura*, and started a monarchical dynasty in opposition to the tradition that Muhammad's caliphs started.

Hasan was dead but Hussein was still alive and experiencing pressure to declare himself a caliph, especially from his father's stronghold in Kufa. Yazid was also demanding that Hussein pledge allegiance and acknowledge him as Caliph. Rather than responding, Hussein left quietly to Mecca to be closer to a staunch ally, Abdullah son of Zubeir. In Mecca, letters kept coming from Kufa pledging support and demanding that Hussein leave immediately to Iraq. Hussein was not very trusting of the support in Kufa so he sent a representative to investigate. When the

representative arrived 12,000 Kufans pledged allegiance to Hussein. At this point, Hussein's mind was set; he left immediately to Kufa despite warnings from his closest advisors in Mecca who did not trust the steadfastness and resilience of the people of Kufa.

When Hussein arrived outside of Kufa he was told that Yazid appointed a new ruler over Kufa, Ibn Zeyad, who has executed Hussein's representatives and has, both by force and persuasion, disbanded Hussein's allies. Ibn Zeyad gave Hussein the option either to surrender and declare his allegiance to Yazid or die in battle. Hussein had a small force of fewer than one hundred men which was joined by thirty men from Kufa. He was facing an army of 4000 men. Hussein knew that he had no chance of winning but insisted on fighting the battle. The battle was joined in a place called *Karbala*, an old Babylonian village whose name originally meant "village of Ba'al"; however, that day, when Hussein inquired about the name of the place he said, "that's right, this will be a place of *karb* (Arabic for 'sorrow') and *bala* (Arabic for 'affliction')." Hussein was the last to die in that battle. He lost his oldest son and scores of close family members. His enemies approached him, stabbing him multiple times, then beheaded him. It's told that Yazid cried bitterly when he saw Hussein's head saying, 'he was the most similar in appearance to the Prophet of God (Muhammad), may Allah curse Ibn Murjana (the man who beheaded Hussein), for I would've spared him." It is also said that Yazid and his house mourned Hussein for days and that he financially compensated Hussein's family many multiples of what they lost and made every arrangement for their comfort. However, Yazid was forever stamped in Shi'a memory as Hussein's killer; an evil man, an infidel, and the prototype of all dictators and oppressors that Shi'ites would face in the future. Karbala, Hussein, and Yazid are an essential part of Shi'a memory. For 1300 years, during *'Ashura,* Shi'ites re-enact and remember this battle followed by days of mourning. It's how the Shi'a in Iraq, Iran, and Asia in general interpret and

react to events in their society whether they be political or economic. Since that day in Karbala, Shi'a Islam became a revolutionary ideology that resists authoritarian and monarchical regimes, with Hussein standing as a symbol for the oppressed and the stranger. Karbala, where Zahi was born, became the main center for this ideology and continues to be so.

Shi'ism After Karbala

After the battle of Karbala, those who wanted Muhammad's descendants through Ali to rule Muslims continued to fight against the Umayyad authorities and they were instrumental in the fall of the Umayyad dynasty which ruled the Muslim world for 88 years. The Abbasids, relatives of Muhammad through his uncle Abbas, wrested control from the Umayyad and moved their capital to Kufa, then to Baghdad. The Abbasids were not Shi'ites, neither did they believe in the right of Ali's grandchildren through Hasan and Hussein to rule the Muslim nation. Shi'ite operatives realized that and continued their fight against the subsequent caliphs in Baghdad. The Abbasid rule lasted 767 years, and even though it ruled large swaths of the world from India in the east to Morocco in the West, it was not as effective as the Umayyad empire in preserving the unity of the Islamic empire. One of the consequences of Abbasid ineffectiveness was the rise of nine Shi'ite sub-states in Morocco, Central Asia, Iraq, the Arabian Peninsula, India, Persia, Egypt, and Syria. Many of these states challenged the imperial Abbasid Sunni hegemony and lasted longer than the Umayyad empire. During this period, Shi'ism suffered from splits and descensions. The Karbala narrative however remained the common theme that united all of its sects. In 1517 AD, the last remnants of the Abbasid empire were defeated by the Ottoman Emperor, Salim I (the Magnificent), effectively ending almost 900 years of Islamic rule by the descendants of Muhammad's tribe, Quraish, and starting the rule of the house of Ottoman, or the Ottoman Caliphate, which was a Sunni, anti-Shi'ite, dynasty that was to rule Muslims for 600

years. The Shi'ites, however, were not without an ally; in Persia, another empire was rising ruled

by the Safavid dynasty established by Shah (king) Ismail. The Safavid king was of a Turkish,

Kurdish, Greek, and Georgian descent. He was also a great zealot for his Shi'ite faith. Ismail

started the war for hegemony over the Islamic world, a great game whose central theatre was

Iraq. This war and its consequences continue to influence life and politics in Iraq to this day. It's

also most likely that during this war Zahi's ancestors converted to Shi'a Islam along with many

Arab tribes from the Arabian Peninsula. It was also during this period, and because of this war,

Iraq acquired much of its multicultural and religious diversity.

A Great Game: The Ottoman-Safavid Struggle to Control Iraq

In the second half of the 13th century, Islamic militaries started implementing the use of

gunpowder and muskets. By the early 16th century, muskets, canons, and gunpowder were the

main weapons of Mulsim soldiers. The Ottomans and the Safavids monopolized the manufacture

of guns and artilleries in their areas earning them the nickname "Gunpowder Empires"

(Streusand, 2011, pp. 3–4). While the Ottomans were consolidating their power in Europe and

tightening their grip on Constantinople, the Safavids managed to conquer large swaths in Iraq

taking Baghdad and Mosul in 1508 controlling access to territory and trade routes coveted by the

Ottomans (Robertson, 2015, p. 454). Before the conquest of Iraq, Shah Ismail declared Shi'ism

as his empire's religion and forced the Iranian population to convert or face persecution

(Robertson, 2015, p. 455). These actions by the Safavids inflamed the Ottoman's Sunni zeal

(Robertson, 2015, p. 455).

In 1514 Sultan Selim directed the Ottoman military might east towards Iran. As a result,

the Ottomans occupied Mosul as well as the mountain region of northern and northeastern Iraq

(Robertson, 2015, p. 456). Central Iraq and Baghdad remained under Safavid control until 1534,

ten years after Ismail's death (Robertson, 2015, p. 456) when the Ottoman's conquered Baghdad. In 1546 the Ottoman's entered Basra and in 1555 a peace treaty left Iraq in Ottoman hands (Robertson, 2015, p. 456). That was not the end of Shi'ite ambitions. Shah Abbas the Great (ruled 1587 to 1629) took Iraq back from the Ottomans in 1623 and started exacting revenge against the Sunni population killing Sunnis and destroying their mosques (Robertson, 2015, p. 457). In 1638 the Ottoman's occupied Baghdad and executed thousands of Persian Shi'ites (Robertson, 2015, p. 457). This time, the Ottomans firmed their control over the country, and a peace treaty with the Safavids in 1639 established the current borders between Iran and Iraq (Robertson, 2015, p. 457). Despite the end of the Safavid era in Iraq by the middle of the 17th century, the memory of their presence is still alive in Iraqi consciousness (Robertson, 2015, p. 457). The term "Safavid" is a term of derision and denigration that the more Orthodox among the Sunni population still uses to describe Iranians and even Shi'ite Iraqis (Robertson, 2015, p. 457). The Ottoman rule of Iraq was never firm. Throughout their 290-year rule of Iraq, they were always challenged by the Kurds in the north and the southern parts of the country, especially in Basra and Mosul (Robertson, 2015, p. 458). The Ottomans, unintentionally, were about to change the history of Iraq in a way that strengthened and increased Shi'ite influence in the country beyond any of their expectations.

Growth of Iraqi Shi'ism

The Safavid empire produced a Shi'a domain that lasted longer than any other before it (Nasr, 2007, p. 79). Because of this accomplishment, Shi'ism became closely associated with Iranian identity (Nasr, 2007, p. 79). Shi'ism in Iraq however went a different way. During the 18th century, the Ottomans were starting to lose their grip on many centers of power across their vast empire (Robertson, 2015, p. 462). During the period, thousands of Arab tribesmen migrated

from the Arabian Peninsula to southern and central Iraq including in and around the sacred Shi'ite cities of Najaf and Karbala (Robertson, 2015, p. 463). The Ottomans hoped that by allowing this massive migration of Sunni Arabs into Iraq their hand would be strengthened over the Shi'ite population (Robertson, 2015, p. 463). To encourage the tribesmen to settle, the Ottomans built a major new water canal to provide irrigation water (Robertson, 2015, p. 463). What the Ottomans never anticipated was that due to the active Shi'ite missionary programs in Najaf and Karbala, thousands of Sunnis started converting to Shi'ism (Robertson, 2015, p. 463). The spread of Shi'ism among the Sunni tribesmen was faster than the Ottomans could control (Nakash, 2003, p. 69). The general peace in Iraq during the period, aided by the uncaring attitude of the Ottoman viceroy Ottoman Pasha, were other contributing factors to the success of the Shi'ite missionaries (Nakash, 2003, p. 68). By the early 20th century Shi'ites constituted 56%. Not all tribesmen settled; many opted to continue moving, especially to the western part of Iraq. Such tribes remained largely Sunni (Robertson, 2015, p. 464).

Thus, the Ottoman tactic to create a Sunni majority in Iraq led to unexpected consequences. Their intent to weaken Shi'ism in the country failed. However, their plan to weaken the Iranian (Safavid) influence succeeded. Because the new Iraqi Shi'ites descended from tribes ruled by an Arab value system that values family relations, clan identity, and tribal laws, Iraq's new Shi'ites were less prone to fund the traditional Shi'ite institutions in Najaf and Karbala (Nakash, 2003, p. 22). This was a problem for the Shi'ite religious institutions in those cities because they depended on income associated with grants by wealthy Shi'ites to these institutions as well as payments for burial in Karbala near the burial shrine of Hussein.

Another problem the Shi'ite leadership faced was that the new converts were used to the simplicity of Sunni observances and not comfortable with the elaborate religious rituals and

worship of the Imams (Shi'ite saints) that characterized Iranian-Safavid life (Nakash, 1996, p. 64). The Shi'ite institutions reacted by changing and adapting Shi'ite rituals to Arab habits of religious remembrance (Nakash, 1996, p. 74). One important change was the use of the Arab style of poetry to dramatize the heroism of Hussein and his companions in the battle of Karbala with a focus on Hussein's simplicity and Arab tribal values (Nakash, 1996, p. 74). Arab values and tribal laws became the essence of Iraqi-Shi'ite life with the Shi'ite clergy maintaining their authority in the areas of marriage and divorce (Nakash, 1996, p. 76). In political affairs Shi'ites, both in Baghdad and in southern Iraq, deferred to the authority of Shi'ite religious leaders in Najaf and Karbala (Nafisi, 2012, p. 12).

These events shaped Iraqi-Shi'ite identity to be rooted in Arabism (*'uruba*) which shaped the relationship between them and the nationalist-Sunni forces that would later rule Iraq and the Shi'a majority.

Shi'ism in Iraq After the Ottomans

By 1918, Ottoman Sunni rule over Iraq and its majority Shi'ite population came to an end. According to the Sykes-Picot agreements Iraq was to fall under British control. Iraq and Iran, with their supplies of oil and their closeness to India, the crown jewel of British colonies, were of extreme importance to the British. The British military wasted no time moving into Iraq and occupying Baghdad on 11 March 1917 (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 157), followed by the more oil-rich Mosul on November 10, 1918 (Knight, 2013, p. 153). By 1918 the British had occupied most of Iraq (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 157).

The insurgency against the British was almost immediate, culminating in the great revolt of 1920 (Robertson, 2015, p. 487). The revolt was not coordinated, but Najaf and Karbala emerged as major locations for resistance (Robertson, 2015, p. 487). To quell the resistance, the

British were brutal in extinguishing the resistance, killing thousands of Shi'ites; the resistance was so fierce that Winston Churchill authorized the use of chemical weapons against the population (Robertson, 2015, p. 488). The rebellion made the British realize that even with all the economic benefits that came from occupying Iraq, their venture there would be very costly unless they found an alternative that would enable them to maintain power without confronting the natives (Robertson, 2015, p. 488). Their attempt to impose calm on the country cheaply by using airpower was not a success; hence, they intended to assert their control over Iraq by imposing a government that would have the appearance of an independent actor but would be a puppet state of the British crown (Robertson, 2015, p. 488-490).

The British solution was to bring in Faysal son of Sharif Hussein of Mecca, the leader of the Arab revolt against the Turks. Being a Hashemite, Faysal had common ancestry with the prophet Muhammad going back to Muhammad's grandfather. The Hashemites were Sunni though, and the British forced them on a population that had a Shi'ite majority by eliminating their rivals and creating the Emirate of Kuwait to establish a buffer zone in Southern Iraq to secure the area from Ibn Saud, the founder of Saudi Arabia, a British ally, and an enemy of the Hashemites (Nutting, 1964, pp. 336–338; Robertson, 2015, pp. 491–494).

These moves angered the Shi'ites for multiple reasons: First, the Shi'ite wanted an Islamic rule in Iraq after the Turks left (Nafisi, 2012, p. 155). The British did not trust the Shi'ites due to their role in the Great Revolt; they might have thought that by installing someone from the house of Muhammad they were appeasing the Shi'ites and Sunnis in one stroke (Robertson, 2015, p. 488). However, from the Shi'ites' perspective, this government represented a continuation of the domination of a Sunni minority over them (Robertson, 2015, p. 490). Other than his role in the Arab Revolt against the Ottomans, Feysal was not Iraqi and didn't have

strong influence or clan support in the country. He would have gone into in exile after the French took control of Syria, over which he was supposed to rule, if it weren't or the British need to add a cosmetic veneer to their colonialist ambitions in Iraq (Robertson, 2015, p. 489).

The other injustice the British committed against the Shi'ites was confiscating large swaths of land from communal ownership and assigning it to individual landlords (Robertson, 2015, p. 494). The British believed that Iraq would achieve better development with individual rather than collective ownership (Robertson, 2015, p. 494). This led to the creation of massive poverty in the Iraqi countryside and, later, in Iraq's major cities (Robertson, 2015, p. 495).

By imposing a Sunni monarchical rule over the Shi'ites and imposing an economic system that ignored generations of tradition, the British and the Hashemite dynasty earned the distrust of the Shi'ite community in Iraq and resulted in a social dynamic that lasts to this day, influencing generations of Shi'ites such as Zahi.

Shi'ites in the Age of Arab Nationalism

In order to bring stability and peace to Iraq, the Hashemites embraced Arab nationalism. The Iraqi brand of Arab nationalism developed along two paths that I will explain momentarily. However, to understand why that had to be the case, one has to appreciate that for hundreds of years, the population of Iraq was shaped by its rulers. As shown above, the Ottomans tried to impose demographic change by bringing in Sunni Arab tribes into Iraq. Many of those tribes converted to Shi'ism producing an effect contrary to the one intended. Before the Ottomans, the Safavids brought in Armenian Christians from the Eurasian parts of their empire. The Armenians were successful merchants who the Safavids hoped would end the commercial dominance of Iraqi Jews (Robertson, 2015, pp. 462–463); the attempt however did not produce the intended effect. When the British took over the country, they introduced a clan of royal puppet outsiders

to rule the country further antagonizing the Shi'ite population (Robertson, 2015, p. 502). By 1930, following the Anglo-Iraqi treaty and Iraq's independence, the demographic situation was as follows:

> Iraq's peoples were divided by a plethora of conflicting identities. Relations among them were often plagued by mutual distrust and antagonism born from long historical experience. Iraq's Arabs, Kurds, Persians, and Turkmen were all proud of their distinctive identities. They professed a variety of religious affiliations: Sunni and Shi'ite Muslim, Assyrian and Chaldean Christian, Jew, Yazidi, Mandaean, and others. Compounding this were deep-seated rivalries among the dozens of tribes, as well as the distrust that for millennia had characterized urban-rural/nomadic relations. This was hardly a good starting point for constructing a nation. (Robertson, 2015, pp. 501–502)

The growth of diversity in Iraq was not organic. The various ethnic and religious groups were usually introduced by outside forces and they were meant to be antagonists rather than allies. As seen from this historical narrative, an excessive and brutal force was used to keep the cohesion. The new rulers of Iraq and their British masters understood that that was not a sustainable long-term solution. During the Arab Revolt, the Hashemites embraced an early version of Arab nationalism, *'Uruba* (Arabism). It was inspired by Arab thinkers and philosophers visiting Europe starting in the 1830s (Khalidi, 1991, pp. 4–5). Those thinkers believed that much of European progress was the result of belief in rationalism and love of fatherland or motherland rather than attachment to a religion (Khalidi, 1991, pp. 4–5). However, this idea was at the core of the Arab Revolt that the Hashemites led. Faysal and his acolytes believed that Arabism was the best way to bridge the ethnic and religious divides in Iraq and forge a united nation (Robertson, 2015, p. 503). The man in charge of embedding Arabism into the Iraqi hearts and

minds was Sati' Al-Husari, Feysal's director of education since 1921 (Robertson, 2015, p. 504). Husari's Arabism was a precursor to Michel Aflaq's nationalist Ba'ath ideology; however, Husari's efforts were critical for the rise and dominance of the ideology of Arab nationalism over the next four decades (Robertson, 2015, p. 504). Husari and his followers espoused a nationalism which believed that Iraq's greatness stemmed not only from its role in Islamic history but also due to its historical role as a cradle of ancient civilizations such as Sumer and Akkad (Robertson, 2015, p. 505). In Husari's view, Iraq was the homeland of Iraqis regardless of their religion and sect; they were the descendants of those great civilizations (Robertson, 2015, pp. 505–506). Iraqi nationalists argued that due to this ancient heritage that preceded Islam, Iraq was the natural leader of the Arab people (Robertson, 2015, p. 506). This view of Arab nationalism would later clash with the pan-Arab view that emerged in Iraq and throughout the Arab world after 1941 (Robertson, 2015, p. 506).

Because pan-Arabism was embraced by the British-imposed Sunni monarchy, as well as Iraqi Sunni intellectuals, it became increasingly suspect to Shi'ites (Robertson, 2015, p. 507). They thought their suspicions were confirmed when a book was published in 1933 identifying the Shi'ites as "Sassanids," a reference to one of the royal dynasties of ancient Iran, causing riots and violence (Robertson, 2015, p. 507). That book, and other publications released by Sunni, pan-Arabist intellectuals throughout the 1920s and 1930s, both raised doubts about the ethnic origins of the Shi'ite tribes and attacked Shi'ite complaints about social injustice casting them as attempts to promote sectarianism in Iraq (Nakash, 1996, p. 210). These attacks alienated the Shi'ites who were as Arab in terms of ethnic origin as any of the Sunnis; they also heightened the Shi'ites' 1300 years sense of being the victims of oppression by the Sunni minority still ruling over them.

During the period between the two world wars, the Shi'ites were not represented in government in proportion to their share in society (Nakash, 1996, p. 228). The Shi'ite response to lack of representation in government was to seek education in order to qualify for employment in government (Nakash, 1996, p. 228). By the early 1950s, Shi'ite representation in government rose to 36% from 18% in 1920 (Nakash, 1996, p. 229). In addition to joining the government ranks, Shi'ites increased their political participation by joining the communist party as a way to gain influence on Iraqi political, economic, and social life (Nakash, 1996, p. 237). The religious authorities in Najaf and Karbala opposed communism, however, ordinary Shi'ites who have been discriminated against for centuries embraced the communist rejection of economic inequality and saw in communist principles a way to build a more equal society (Nakash, 1996, p. 237).

Towards the end of the 1950s, more Iraqis were embracing an Arab nationalism that leaned towards socialism and communism. This trend was out of step with a conservative, Sunni, monarchy. After WWII Britain was no longer a colonial master but rather an ally of Iraq in a "partnership of equals" (Nutting, 1964, p. 344). Britain was now at the forefront of the Cold War and wanted the new Arab nations to join in the fight against the Soviet Union; these desires for the Arab world were futile (Nutting, 1964, p. 344). In 1955, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Al-Said joined Britain and Turkey in the Baghdad Pact, a move that was frowned upon by Arab states, especially by Egypt (Nutting, 1964, p. 345). The alliance was also not popular with Said's military commanders who were getting increasingly agitated with the stagnation of the Iraqi political establishment which has become completely controlled by Said (Nutting, 1964, p. 345). In 1958, after the victory of the Arab nationalist leadership in Egypt over British, French, and Israeli forces in the Suez war of 1956, two secular Sunni-Iraqi nationalist officers, Abdul Karim

Qasim and Abdul Salam Aref, ousted Said and the Hashemite monarchy and the Republic of Iraq was born (Robertson, 2015, p. 525).

The Shi'ites in the Iraqi Republic

Qasim wanted to build a Republic for all its people; his first government included Sunnis, Shi'ites, Kurds, and communists (Robertson, 2015, p. 525). Qasim instructed his government to end the land monopolies which the Hashemites instituted and was a main cause of poverty; this earned Qasim the resentment of the landlords (Robertson, 2015, p. 527). Most relevant to the Shi'ites was Qasim's support of communists and new laws he instituted to improve women's rights (Robertson, 2015, p. 528). Qasim's secularism and women's rights actions earned him the displeasure of the Shi'ite clergy in Najaf and Karbala (Robertson, 2015, p. 528). By 1963, Qasim's government was too divided and he was ousted by a military dictatorship that lasted for five years until it too was ousted by the Ba'ath party under the leadership of Ahmad Hasan Al-Bakr (Robertson, 2015, p. 529). Al-Baker ruled Iraq for eleven years until his deputy Saddam Hussein ousted him in 1979 (Robertson, 2015, p. 529). Under Ba'ath's control, the Shi'ites started a new chapter in their history in Iraq. The Sunni masters of Iraq tried for centuries to tame the Shi'ite community using forced demographic change, exclusion from government, then inclusion in government, but nothing seemed to win Shi'ite acceptance. Even though Iraqi Shi'ites placed a higher value on Arab traditions, other forces prevented the Shi'a community from embracing any of the governments of Iraq or secular ideologies whose aim was to unify the Iraqi identity. Loyalty to the religious scholars, *Al-Mujtahidoun*, in Najaf and Karbala, and the rise of Shi'ite conservative political parties to counter Arab nationalism, secularism, and Ba'ath, are all factors that prevented such an embrace. Saddam will continue the attempts to unify the

Iraqi identity. I will discuss those efforts shortly, but first I need to speak about Zahi who was born right before Qasim ousted the monarchy.

Interlude: Positioning Zahi

Zahi was born in 1955, shortly before Qasim ousted the monarchy. However, Zahi grew up in Iraq during the crucial years when Iraqi governments were trying to unite Iraqis from different ethnicities and religions by appealing to their identity as Iraqis and Arabs. The pan-Arabists preferred that the appeal be sole to the Arab identity. Qasim, and Nuri Al-Said before him, preferred an Iraqi-centrist Arab-nationalist approach that drew from Iraq's past, especially its pre-Islamic greatness. Sati' Al-Husari did not believe in the approach and stated that Iraqi-centric nationalism is akin to "trying to restore flesh to a mummified corpse" (Robertson, 2015, p. 535). The Ba'ath Party, especially under Saddam, continued the focus on Iraqi-centric nationalism in a public campaign that emphasized to Iraqis that their nation descends not only from the great Islamic empires but also the pre-Islamic ones (Robertson, 2015, p. 535).

Zahi was born in Karbala, a place where Shi'ite religious leaders resisted the Iraqi-nationalist vision and promoted an Islamic Shi'ite ideology (Nakash, 1996, p. 240). During our interviews, Zahi did not reveal much about his upbringing, only that he was born in Karbala and later moved to Baghdad which I will discuss in a later section. As an Iraqi Shi'ite, Zahi grew up in an era where there was conflict over the nature of Iraqi identity between a secular Sunni minority that held the strings of political and economic power, and a Shi'ite majority which has held for centuries a delicate balance between its Arab values and conservative religious beliefs. The Ottomans and the Hashemites made sure that Shi'ites were excluded from economic and political opportunities. Qasim's secular government which overthrew the Hashemite monarchy tried to integrate Shi'ites in society, but the influential Shi'ite religious bodies rejected Qasim's

secularism and reforms to improve women's rights. The Ba'ath government attempted to root Iraqi identity into an Iraqi history that was then dominated by the glory of Sunni empires. Zahi and Shi'ites like him felt they were aliens in their own country. This identity crisis was to be stretched to the limit under Saddam Hussein, which I will discuss next.

Shi'ites Under Saddam Hussein

By 1972 Iraq's oil industry was nationalized. When the government completed the nationalization process in 1975, it had access to tremendous financial resources (Robertson, 2015, p. 539). The Ba'ath government used the newfound riches to develop education, health services, electricity production, and large-scale industry, all of which were considered among the most advanced in the Arab world (Robertson, 2015, p. 539). It was also a period of large-scale building projects in Sunni and Shi'ite urban centers (Baghdad, Tikrit, Basra, and Najaf; Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 231). The military-security establishment also received a sizeable investment amounting to 40% of the total revenues (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 212). In 1975 Zahi was a high school graduate and had just finished his two years of military conscription. He didn't talk about these years. Iraq was a place of opportunity and he was living in Baghdad in a place called Al-Mansour working in the stationary business catering to schools and universities. The Ba'ath party made education free to all Iraqis regardless of ethnicity or religious belief. Iraqis who qualified for university received a free college education, and those who qualified for higher education were sent to Europe and the United States to acquire advanced degrees (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 213). Trading in stationery was a business with low entry costs and one that made sense to Zahi in a booming education market.

The Al-Mansour neighborhood, where Zahi settled, was an area built for the affluent Iraqis; major international embassies and homes for embassy staffs were located in that area.

Given the wealth concentrated in that area of Baghdad, Zahi's business must've performed well. When I asked Zahi about the location of his business and home in the area his answer was that he was located "very close" to where the American embassy stands today. This is a very exclusive area of Baghdad that only very wealthy Iraqis can afford. Zahi either did very well in business at a very young age, or he didn't provide me with correct information, which would reveal identifying background that he didn't want me to know. Given that Zahi's family left Iraq fearing for their lives, the latter-scenario is more likely. There is also the possibility that Zahi did actually live on the outskirts of Al-Mansour after 2005. I will get to this part of the story in a later section.

Rebelling Against Ba'ath

The relationship between the Ba'ath government and Iraqi Shi'ites went through different stages. In the first stage, the Ba'ath party used the 'stick and carrot' approach, *al-tarhib wal-targhib* (Baram, 1991, p. 18). When the Ba'ath party came to power for the first time in 1963, about 53% of its membership was Shi'ite (Momen, 2017, p. 225); by 1968, the Ba'ath party was dominated by Sunni Iraqi-nationalists and Shi'ites constituted only 6% of the party (Momen, 2017, p. 225). A part of their agenda was molding the Iraqi identity in one, drawing on Iraq's history and the role it played in the development of human and Arab civilization. Standing in their way was the Shi'ite religious establishment in Najaf and Karbala which never accepted the secularism of the Ba'ath party nor the Sunni dominance in it or their lax attitude towards alcohol consumption (Baram, 1991, p. 18). The Ba'ath put those institutions under the direct control of the Iraqi government and prevented the ritual of transporting the Shi'ite dead to be buried in the holy cities, a practice that was a major source of income for Shi'ite organizations (Baram, 1991,

p. 18). After clashes in 1969, the Iraqi government closed down the Shi'ite religious institutions and deported hundreds of scholars and students (Baram, 1991, p. 18).

In 1974 the Shi'ites revolted again due to the heavy casualties among the Shi'ites in the government's wars against the Kurds. In response, the government executed five of the leaders of the *Al-Da'wa* party, a conservative Shi'ite political-military organization that was dedicated to resisting the Iraqi government and instituting Islamic law in Iraq (Baram, 1991, p. 18). This happened around the time the Ba'ath party was investing large sums of capital in advancing education, medical services, and infrastructure in Shi'ite majority urban and rural areas (Baram, 1991, p. 20). The Iraqi government's motive was not to just attract Shi'ites away from religiously conservative bodies, but also to prevent the Shi'ite intellectuals from joining the communist party, which was a popular destination to poor Shi'ites (Baram, 1991, p. 20). To show that the Ba'ath party was serious about integrating Shi'ites in politics the party promoted a number of Shi'ite Ba'ath activists to high profile jobs within Ba'ath's elite levels of leadership (RCC and RL; Baram, 1991, p. 19). By 1977, slightly more than a quarter of Ba'ath's top leadership were Shi'ites (Baram, 1991, p. 19). The Iraqi government's efforts were not enough to either lure the Shi'ite scholars in Najaf or to break their ties to the Shi'ite scholars and politicians in Iran (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 217). On the contrary, those ties grew stronger, and the Shi'ite scholars shifted the focus of their political activities from covert advocacy for an Islamic government to direct action on the streets (Holden, 2012, p. 220). The instrument of this resistance was a Shi'ite political party called *Al-Da'wa* (an Arabic word that means 'the call'). The head of the party and its founder was a Shi'ite scholar named Al-Sadr; *Al-Da'wa* was approved by a majority of the Shi'ite clerics in Najaf and Karbala, as well as by Iranian Shi'ite authorities (Momen, 2017, p.

226). *Al-Da'wa* led street protests in 1974 and 1977; each time the protests were suppressed and a handful of the *Da'wa's* organizers executed (Momen, 1985, p. 263).

By 1978-1979, the relationship between the Iraqi government and the Shi'ite community was on the brink of conflict (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 71). In addition to his anti-government activity inside Iraq, Al-Sadr was building a closer alliance with the leader of the Islamic revolution in Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini, and advocating for him publicly (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 71). After Khomeini rose to power in Iran in February 1979, Sadr attempted to try some of Khomeini's tactics in Iran on Iraqi streets (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 74). The Iraqi government did not move against Sadr's activities until June 1979, after Sadr revealed his intentions and Iraqi intelligence knew all who was involved (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 71). First, Sadr was arrested, then released to house arrest where he took his movement underground and started organizing para-military activities against the Iraqi government culminating in two assassination attempts in 1980, the first was against Christian Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz, and the second against Saddam Hussein himself (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 76). The Iraqi government's response was swift; Sadr and his sister were arrested and executed (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 77). When news about the executions leaked via Iranian radio, some Shi'ite clans led demonstrations in Baghdad which were suppressed, followed by arrests and executions of all of Sadr's relatives, including distant ones (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 78). By doing this, the Iraqi government not only suppressed Shi'ite rebellion but also thought that the Iraqi interior was now secure and ready to settle the scores with Iran's Shi'ite government.

Iraq's Shi'ites During the Iran-Iraq War

As noted earlier, due to the historical developments of Shi'ism in Iraq, the loyalty of Iraqi-Shi'ites to their tribes and clans precedes their loyalty to the religious authorities in Najaf and Karbala. As explained earlier, Iraqi-Shi'ites prize Arab values and consider themselves as Arabs first. Thus, when Saddam launched the attack against Iran they fought loyally against their Iranian-Shi'ite coreligionists (Robertson, 2015, p. 555). Even though there were some desertions, they never did mutiny en masse; during the war, Iraqi-Shi'ites developed a stronger bond with their identity as Iraqis (Robertson, 2015, p. 555), ironically achieving what the Ba'ath party, the nationalists, and the Hashemite monarchy wanted since the early 20th century.

Like many young Iraqi-Shi'ites, Zahi was conscripted in this war. He refused to talk about that part of his life. When the war started Zahi was starting in life and working hard in his stationery shop, enjoying the fruits of a booming Iraqi economy that provided plentiful economic opportunities for everyone. When the Iraqi leadership launched the war against Iran, they thought it would be a quick war resulting in a swift victory against a country that was emerging from its own internal turmoil, and whose military had been weakened by losing its top leadership during the 1979 coup. This was a huge underestimation. The Iran-Iraq war lasted eight years resulting in millions of deaths, economic devastation for both Iran and Iraq, and the destruction of major urban and industrial centers (Robertson, 2015, p. 564). Iraq emerged from the war with huge debts that prevented its government from restoring previous levels of investments in infrastructure, health, and education (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 226). Zahi lost his business, and since employment opportunities were scarce after the war, he had to change his line of work. The perfect option for him was to get into the restaurant business, more specifically into the falafel business, which his family had been involved in for 70 years. Falafel is a popular food in Iraq.

It's cheap to produce, is consumed by lower-income Arabs everywhere in the Middle East, and the startup capital required is minimal. Higher paying government and private sector jobs were not available for Zahi; his religiously conservative family in Karbala was opposed to the Iraqi government's secular education. As a result, Zahi never tried to take advantage of the free university education that was being offered in the early 1970s, choosing instead to follow an entrepreneurial path. His choice of trades to pursue reflects the socioeconomic conditions he faced. After the war with Iran Zahi started his new business and started rebuilding his life in a shattered economy. The peace was temporary; another war was about to start.

The Invasion of Kuwait and the Shi'ites

By the end of the war with Iran, Iraq owed Kuwait and Saudi Arabia over $60 billion. Those two states are Sunni majority monarchies with significant minority Shi'ite populations. In Saudi, the Shi'ite population suffers from discrimination in every aspect of their lives. After the Islamic revolution in Iran, the Kuwaitis and Saudis provided the Iraqi government with billions of dollars in aid because an Iranian victory, they thought, would lead to large-scale rebellions by their Shi'ite minorities. When the war ended, the Iraqi government asked the Saudi and Kuwaiti governments to forgive the debts it owed them in recognition of Iraq's role in securing the Sunni Gulf monarchies. Not only did they refuse to do so but started overproducing oil causing Iraq to lose $6 billion in annual revenue (Holden, 2012, p. 265). On 2 August 1990 Iraqi troops invaded and occupied Kuwait, prompting Saddam Hussein to announce that Kuwait was the nineteenth province of Iraq (Holden, 2012, p. 265). This was another war that was devastating to Zahi's life, not only was he once again conscripted in the military, but the international economic sanctions that the international community imposed on the country threatened his new business, and the

impending war against an international coalition led by the United States threatened devastation upon the whole country.

After the war with Iran, in recognition of Shi'ite loyalty to Iraq, the Iraqi government tried to mend the relations with the Shi'ite community with gestures such as infrastructure investments in majority Shi'ite provinces and the renovations of holy Shi'ite sites in Najaf and Karbala (Robertson, 2015, p. 579). The Iraqi military provided employment opportunities for Shi'ites; Shi'ite soldiers represented 80% of the Iraqi military's infantry and 20% of the military leadership (Robertson, 2015, p. 555). Shi'ites emerged from the Iran war with a stronger Iraqi identity. Iraq's defeat against the international coalition on 28 February 1991was a devastating blow to all Iraqis and weakened the Shi'ites' feelings of belonging. It led to the deaths of three thousand Iraqi civilians, and twenty thousand Iraqi soldiers who were retreating from Kuwait to Baghdad (Robertson, 2015, p. 571). The coalition forces "subjected Iraq to the most intensive air bombardment in military history" (Holden, 2012, p. 273) destroying whole residential blocks and businesses including Zahi's.

In a Voice of America radio broadcast, President Bush asked Iraqis to depose Saddam, a message that for Iraqis carried within it an implicit promise of help from the international coalition (Robertson, 2015, p. 571). The Shi'ites in the southern Iraqi town of Zubeir in Basra were the first to rise when a Shi'ite tank commander fired a shell against a statue of Saddam Hussein (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 103). As more defeated soldiers came back from Kuwait the Shi'ite revolution spread to the cities of Najaf and Karbala aided by well-armed Shi'ite soldiers and citizens (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, pp. 103–109). The Shi'ites hoped that the United States and the international coalition would intervene to remove Saddam Hussein. However, the international coalition signed a ceasefire with the Iraqi government which ended

hostilities but allowed the Iraqis to keep their helicopter gunships (Robertson, 2015, p. 572). Furthermore, when the Shi'ite rebels radioed American troops for assistance, the American response was that because the rebels were Shi'ites, they must be collaborating with Iran and would not get help from the Americans (Robertson, 2015, p. 572). By 8 March 1991, the Iraqi government lost control over 14 of Iraq's 18 provinces (Muir, 2017). The government tried to establish peace with the rebels by offering the Shi'ite and Kurdish minorities more shares in the central government, but the groups rejected the offer (Muir, 2017). That same day the Iraqi government launched a widescale attack against Kurdish and Shi'ite cities across Iraq committing, according to all those who documented the period, widescale massacres using helicopter gunships, chemical weapons, and mass executions of civilians (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, pp. 127–131; Robertson, 2015, p. 572).

Shi'ites in Baghdad did not participate in the rebellion against the government due to lack of organization (Jabar, 1992) as well as the historical tendency of city Shi'ites being more loyal to the central government as opposed to tribal Shi'ites whose loyalty is to the religious authorities in Najaf and Karbala (Nafisi, 2012, p. 12). Even though the Shi'ites were now terrorized and demoralized, the Iraqi government wanted to end once and for all their ability to rise up against the government ever again; thus, it spent the years 1991 and 1992 killing, imprisoning, and deporting any Shi'ite activists or intellectuals it could capture (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2014, p. 133). These were dark years for Iraq's Shi'ites including Zahi who refused to talk about his life during this period except to say that they were years when "everybody in the family was working from dawn to sunset trying to make a living." Zahi was more worried about the economic survival of his family than Iraqi politics.

Following the war, the United Nations imposed comprehensive sanctions on Iraq that debilitated the economy and prevented the government from restoring any of its infrastructure including power generation, medical systems, and sanitation, leading to the spread of disease and malnutrition and the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, including 880,000 children (Fattah & Caso, 2009, pp. 235–238; Robertson, 2015, p. 578). The sanctions lasted throughout the 1990s resulting in a complete breakdown of every aspect of Iraqi society, leading to the exodus of at least 1.7 million Iraqi Shi'ites and Kurds (Miller, 1993). Unemployment reached 20%, exacerbated by U.S.-led international sanctions (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 142). The Iraqi Shi'ite community hated the Ba'ath regime and Saddam Hussein, but they hated the United States even more due to its role in creating economic misery in Iraq; the sanctions created a generation of Iraqis filled with rage against the United States (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, pp. 144, 147). Many Shi'ite peasants also immigrated to Baghdad from Southern Iraq to escape the heavy dues imposed on them by their landlords (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 227). Their destination was a neighborhood in Baghdad east of the River Tigris that separates the city; the neighborhood was called Saddam City, which was effectively controlled by a Shi'ite cleric called Muqtada Al-Sadr, a relative of Muhammad Baqer Al-Sadr (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 227). Saddam City was eventually renamed Sadr city after the U.S invasion. If Saddam City was an independent city of Iraq, it would have been larger than Mosul or Basra (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 227), and even though most tribal leaderships were represented there, the real political control was in the hands of the clerics (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 227). Sadr used the considerable resources of the Shi'ite clerical establishment to "keep the Iraqi Shi'ites alive [economically]" during the dark years of the sanctions by paying the living expenses of the needy as well as providing care and education that the central government couldn't provide

anymore (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2000, p. 271). Sadr continued to play that role even after the U.S invasion.

During the sanction years, Zahi's business benefited from being located in the luxurious Al-Mansour neighborhood where he catered to diplomats and Iraqi elites. He and his family worked hard, but they managed to eke out a living. During that time Zahi pursued another business opportunity as a *khattat* or calligraphist. Because the material used to make electric business signs as well as printing cartridges was now included in the sanctions, calligraphists were in demand producing posters, advertising, wedding announcements, and business signs. Calligraphy was a hobby that Zahi practiced when he was younger. If one had calligraphic skills the business was not a hard one to enter and, like all Zahi's ventures, not much capital or equipment was needed. Now, he joined a certification course and after a few months, he was a certified calligrapher. Sometimes people paid cash for the work, but most of the time it was barter where he was paid in kind. During the sanctions, millions of Iraqis were reduced to selling the doors of their homes for food (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 238). Some streets in Iraq became open-air flea markets and Zahi became a *khorda* seller, or a flea market seller, another business with no expertise or barrier to entry. All you needed was to have something to sell or barter, even if it was the door of your own house. During the sanction years, Zahi spent most Fridays, after prayers, in the *khorda* market selling or bartering the goods he received in other barter deals. Zahi's economic life was better than most Iraqis. He had two wives who gave him six girls and one boy. Following the Gulf War reprisals against Shi'ites in Iraq, many women were not only widowed but also left with fewer male relatives who could support them; surviving Shi'ite males took second wives to raise seed (as Zahi calls it) and protect women from destitution in a very harsh economy (Campbell, 2016, p. 54). Zahi and his family were dedicated to working in the

restaurant and helping with the other ventures as well. Zahi and his family continued to live in Iraq through the turmoil of the Iran war, then the Gulf War, and its aftermath. They hoped, prayed, and looked forward to the day when the sanctions are lifted. What they did not know, what the world was not expecting, was that a new war would erupt in the region and change their lives forever.

Iraq War 2003–2008

By 1998, the removal of Saddam Hussein from power became an official American policy when Congress passed the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 (Robertson, 2015, p. 576). The United States wanted Iraq to abandon its nuclear and chemical weapons programs. What was not known then was that Iraq had already done so after the Gulf War. The Iraqi leadership feared that knowledge of this would encourage Iran to take advantage of Iraq's weak state (Robertson, 2015, p. 576). That was Iraq's best-kept secret, and it would be disastrous for Iraq in 2003.

After the tragic events of 11 September 2001, the Bush administration set its eyes on Iraq trying to connect the Iraqi leadership with the attacks using bogus intelligence (Robertson, 2015, pp. 585–586). In January 2002, George Bush announced in his state of the union address that Iraq was a part of an "axis of evil." The American and British governments were convinced, based on what turned out later to be very poor evidence, that Saddam, a secular leader, has conspired with the perpetrators of 9/11, and that he had a stockpile of weapons of mass destruction (WMD; Robertson, 2015, p. 586). In April 2003 Bagdad fell to a narrow international coalition led by the United States. In the beginning, the management of Iraq fell to the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Affairs (ORHA) which was a part of the U.S Department of Defense (DoD; Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 250). When ORHA failed to execute any of its programs the United Nations stepped in on 22 May 2003, authorizing a Coalition Provisional Authority

(CPA) to be in charge of Iraq's reconstruction (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 250). The U.S reserved the right to appoint the head of the CPA; Paul Bremer was chosen for the task (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 250). The CPA was effectively the governing body of Iraq; however, it was assisted by a 25-member Governing Council with a slim majority of Shi'ites, and both Kurds and Sunnis each holding a 20% share as well as representatives of the Turkomen and Christian communities (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 251). The CPA and its masterminds in Washington soon realized that the pre-war expectations about Iraqi re-construction were too optimistic; a decade of brutal American sanctions, followed by a *shock and awe* campaign in 2003 had left the Iraqi economy and infrastructure completely devastated (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 251). Mismanagement of the invasion and failure to secure key government buildings led to the loss of important documents that would've been helpful to manage post-war Iraq (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 251). Paul Bremer fired all Ba'athist government officials and employees rendering millions of Iraqis unemployed without the meager subsistence salaries they used to earn (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 251). The needs of the Iraqi people were beyond what the coalition could provide, which led to the insurgency.

The Iraq Insurgency

There is no doubt that the end of the Ba'athist regime threatened the Iraqi-Sunni community deeply. After centuries of Sunni dominance, it was clear to Sunnis, based on the composition of the Governing Council, that Iraq's new government would be dominated by Shi'ites (Fattah & Caso, 2009, pp. 254–255). With Bremer's "de-Ba'athification," both Sunni and Shi'ite military personnel were suddenly unemployed. During the decades of Ba'ath's control, being a card-holding member of the Ba'ath party was a necessary condition for employment in Iraq. Thus, millions of people who were not active Ba'athists were members of

the party. The result of Bremer's move was deepening unemployment and destitution. By August 2003 Sunni insurgents were attacking coalition troops, United Nations installations, and interests of coalition partners; violence was out of control (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 256).

The Shi'ites were also wary of the occupation. They've seen the British government ignore their majority after WWI and turn the rule to the Sunni Hashemites and feared that the Americans would do the same especially with the declared secular intentions of the Bush administration (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 257). In Najaf, Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Al-Sistani, the highest Shi'ite religious leader in Iraq ordered the Shi'ite scholars not to accept positions with the coalition authorities, an end to criminal activity, and an end to revenge killings (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 250). In Baghdad's Saddam City, now called Sadr City, Muqtada Al-Sadr ordered his militias, the Mahdi Army, to defend the area from coalition troops (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 257). Soon after that, the Mahdi Army's influence expanded to the other Shi'a majority cities of Basra, Kufa, Najaf, and Nasiriya (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 257).

The early days of the invasion and the insurgencies that followed was a hard period for Zahi and his family. His flea market activities stopped, and his sign-making business almost ceased. The Falafel business was Zahi's only source of income; people still had to eat. The revenue was inconsistent but enough to sustain the family. Al-Mansour, where Zahi worked and lived, is on the west side of Bagdad, close to the Green Zone where the CPA was located. Thus, it was relatively safer. Iraqis who had jobs working for the CPA had to pass by Al-Mansour, and because falafels are affordable, they were what people ate for breakfast, lunch, and dinner (according to Zahi). However, Zahi and his family had another source of income; their only son was somewhat fluent in English and he started working secretly for the Americans as an interpreter.

Iraq: 2008–2014

During the years 2003–2008, the economic and the security situation in Iraq continued to deteriorate despite free elections and the organization of a new government. The head of the elected government was a Shi'ite, the elected Iraqi parliament had a significant representation by Sunnis (Fattah & Caso, 2009, pp. 264–265). The Iraqi presidency was rotated among three elected officials, one Sunni, one Shi'ite, and one Kurd. The country became a federal union where the Kurds had more autonomy in areas where they represented a majority, the same applied to Shi'ites and Sunnis. Alas, after almost thirty years of wars and sanctions, the economy seemed to have irretrievably lost its heartbeat: water shortages were rampant with "a little more than half of all Iraqis had access to potable water" (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 264); the healthcare situation was worsening with doctors and nurses leaving Iraq in droves (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 264). Actually, Iraq was losing skilled labor and knowledge workers in all fields; by 2007 UNHCR estimated that 2.2 million Iraqis were refugees in neighboring countries (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2014, p. 31). There were also questions about the appropriation of the $18 billion in the Iraq Reconstruction Fund with blame directed at the government (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 266). Other challenges included the rise of the Shi'ite Mahdi Army, which by 2007 has controlled 50% of Baghdad and 80% of the Shi'ite neighborhoods in the city (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2014, p. 279). Extremist Sunni elements allied with al-Qaeda have also risen and were in control of Iraq's third-largest city, Mosul (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 266). Even though the Iraqi government managed to defeat the Mahdi army in 2007 and take control of the areas Al-Sadr controlled both within and outside of Baghdad (Fattah & Caso, 2009, p. 266), victory over the extremist Sunni resistance groups kept eluding the Iraqi government until, in 2007, the Sunni population and politicians wearied of the violence and decided to join with the Americans and

the governments to defeat the extremists and evict them from their areas (Eriksson & Khaleel, 2019, p. 56). The Iraqi security situation seemed promising for a while.

Even though Iraq had an elected government that seemed to fairly reflect the demographics in Iraq, the increased Shi'ite influence in government led to a rise in the living standards of Shi'ites (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2014, p. 271). Many Shi'ites started going back to schools and colleges including Zahi's only son, Radi, who studied electrical engineering while working as an interpreter for the CPA. Zahi's daughters were also able to go back to school and improve their English because they were hoping to also work for the CPA. Nobody outside of Zahi's household knew about Radi's employment situation. Any collaboration with the CPA would've been an immediate death sentence for the collaborator and his family. Interpreter turnover at the CPA was very high, especially in 2006-2007; because of the danger, many left the job but there was always a supply of young university graduates who couldn't find work in a depressed job market (Campbell, 2016, p. 69). Zahi lived and worked very close to the American Green Zone and the American Embassy. He also catered to customers within the Green Zone, which meant that Radi's presence in or around the Green Zone wouldn't raise suspicions.

After the American withdrawal from Iraq, the Shi'ite government of Noori Al-Maliki was re-elected. One of its first orders of business was disbanding the Sunni coalition that evicted the extremist groups out of Iraq (Eriksson & Khaleel, 2019, p. 49). The government also started to give loans to Shi'ites based on fake documents; loans which the borrowers later refused to pay back causing multiple financial scandals (Cockburn & Cockburn, 2014, p. 270) and Sunni resentment of such economic favoritism. The Arab Spring was in full swing in the region, and Sunni extremist groups were gaining strength in Syria, especially one that originated in Iraq under the name of Islamic State in Iraq (ISI). The leaders were now calling their movement ISIS,

The Islamic State in Iraq and Sham (Sham is the Arabic name for Syria). As the name indicates, they had their eyes on both Iraq and Syria. ISIS's aims were to establish Islamic rule across the Arab world. More importantly, ISIS rejected the Sykes-Pecot agreement that divided the Arab world and created its modern borders. ISIS believed that the United States, with the help of its European allies, were planning further divisions in the Islamic world by dividing Iraq and Syria into smaller countries. The group was ejected from Iraq in 2007; however, after Noori Al-Maliki broke off with the Sunni coalition, and used anti-terrorism laws to remove the Sunni Vice President of Iraq, Tariq Al-Hashemy, from power in 2011, Sunnis believed that their rights were in danger and welcomed ISIS once again into Iraq (Eriksson & Khaleel, 2019, p. 49).

By 2014, Radi was a university graduate employed as an engineer as well as helping Zahi manage the business. Zahi always wanted to have several restaurants across Baghdad with each being run by a member of his family. However, since 2011, Iraq's economy remained stagnant, violence was escalating, people were leaving. Zahi's Khazraj clan was fully involved in the fight against extremist Sunnis and ISIS. The Khazraj were actually working with the American troops who were back in Iraq to help the government defeat ISIS, which had succeeded in invading large parts of eastern and northern Iraq and was now threatening Baghdad. Radi was helping interpret for the Americans and feeling uneasy about the situation in the country. If ISIS got into Baghdad, he and his family would pay the ultimate price not only because of his work for the Americans but also for belonging to the Khazraj clan.

Applying for Asylum and Exiting Iraq

The failure of the United States Government to protect and resettle the local interpreters who helped the war efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq is well documented (Baker, 2010, pp. 197–222; Campbell, 2016; Packer, 2007). The ethnic and religious profile of Iraqi interpreters is as

varied as Iraq itself (Packer, 2007). These interpreters worked in an environment of suspicion--

them of each other and their employers of them (Campbell, 2016, p. 8; Packer, 2007). Generally,

they worked as interpreters because they could not find employment in a depressed job market

(Campbell, 2016, p. 69).

Zahi and his family have managed to keep Radi's employment secret for many years. It

was a source of income that enabled the family to survive the economic hardships that were the

fate of millions of Iraqis; the money Radi earned also enabled Zahi to keep his Falafel shop

going in lean times. Then, one day in 2013, Radi told the family that he believed that they need

to apply for asylum in America. Because of his work in the Green Zone and the American

embassy, Radi had access to reports about the security situation that only the people who worked

in that sphere could have. Radi told the family about the American skepticism regarding the Iraqi

government's ability to defend Baghdad, and that there was a high likelihood that ISIS would

end up in Baghdad. Zahi refused to speak about what happened next; all he said was that Radi

applied for asylum for himself and his whole family, including his father's second wife and her

children. He didn't want to say whether the application was through the United Nations or

through the American government directly (given Radi's connections). Most likely, Radi never

applied for asylum directly through the American government, especially with the American

government's known reluctance to grant interpreters asylum (Packer, 2007). When the asylum

decision came back, the approval included Zahi, his first wife Nadia, and two of Zahi's

daughters. Zahi's understanding was that the rest of his family were going to be on a waiting list

and would follow later. The United States was the country assigned to Zahi and his family; Utah

was the state chosen for settlement.

There are many reasons that would've prevented Radi from being able to leave with his family; after all, he was the interpreter, the collaborator with the Americans, a profession despised by all the warring parties in Iraq. It's true that his whole family would have been in danger if his work for the Americans was ever revealed, but he was the one in most imminent danger and had a "well-founded fear of being persecuted" which is the criteria that UNHCR applies to determine whether one should be given refugee status (UNHCR, 2016, pp. 19–20). Zahi and his wife left Iraq to Utah, thinking that Radi would join them shortly. They gave up on the situation ever being stable in Iraq and looked forward to a new future with the whole family reunited in Utah.

Iraqi Refugees in the United States

Iraqis started arriving in the Americas as early as 1675 when the Iraqi Catholic priest Elyas son of Hanna, a Chaldean Christian from Mosul, arrived in South America to preach Christianity to the native people. In modern times, an Iraqi Christian by the name of Yousef Shamam, from the village of Talkeef in Mosul arrived in Fort William in Canada in 1899. His immigration was motivated by economic reasons and personal ambition. He was followed in 1914 by 41 individuals who were seeking refuge from Ottoman persecution. During the same period between 1901 and 1914, other Christian Iraqis from Mosul immigrated from Mosul to Mexico City where they sought refuge from Ottoman persecution as well. Finally, in 1914, the first Iraqis arrived in Chicago in the United States coming from Fort William in Canada. There is no indication of why they left Canada to the United States. Most likely, they were seeking employment opportunities. Despite the post-Ottoman tribulations in Iraq, the record doesn't show heavy immigration from Iraq to the United States in the period 1919–1970. This can be explained with two lines of reasoning: First, in the period 1919–1958, Iraq was under the British

mandate, and as such a part of the British empire. Iraqis seeking education and business opportunity would have had access to any country in the British domain. In the 1960s through the 1970s, despite the political turmoil, Iraq was making good economic progress due to its oil industry. However, between 1989 and 2001 close to fifty thousand Iraqis immigrated to the United States (Powell, 2008, p. 151). After the Iraq war of 2003, the United States took charge of the immigration of Iraqi refugees to the United States with UNHCR only referring and recommending refugees. Priority was given to refugees associated with the U.S government and religious minorities. Since 2007 the U.S resettled a little over forty percent of Iraqi refugees referred to it by UNHCR (Powell, 2008, p. 151). Since 2002 Utah resettled 1,974 Iraqi refugees[16]. However, according to a leader of the Iraqi community in Utah, the state has about ten thousand Iraqi refugees (Neely, 2017). Thus, when Zahi and his family arrived in Utah, there was a budding Iraqi community that could provide them with some support. There was also a group called the Mesopotamia Community which is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping the Iraqi diaspora.

Arriving in Utah was bittersweet for Zahi; on one hand, there was the hope for a better future, but there was also bitterness and uncertainty for leaving the rest of "his seed" in Iraq, especially his only son, in a very dangerous environment.

Zahi at Spice Kitchen

Since Zahi didn't give many details about the agencies resettling him, it's hard to describe his resettlement process during his early days in Utah. The only information he shared about that period is that he learned about the Mesopotamian Society and that he started going there to spend time watching TV and talking to fellow members of the Iraqi community in Salt

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[16] This data is taken from the *Omaha World-Herald*. The original page no longer exists but can be retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20171104152518/https://dataomaha.com/refugees/state/ut

Lake City. Zahi was also spending time learning English and working with an IRC caseworker to do the paperwork required to receive his identification cards and other needed documents.

Zahi's two daughters joined local schools. He said that they both spoke good English even when they were in Baghdad; thus, being at school and studying in English wasn't very difficult for them. His youngest daughter, Fayeza, who was 16 at the time, embraced American society with enthusiasm. She went to school during the day and found a job at a local Walmart from 4-9 PM. She also started exploring American food and was talking to him all the time about starting a restaurant in the United States. Zahi said that his children are very ambitious in terms of free enterprise, and they "want to be their own masters." Zahi had no idea how to start a restaurant in Utah. He had neither capital nor information on how to pursue such a project. Most importantly, he didn't know the language.

In those early days, Zahi discovered the Swap Meet market, which is a weekend market in Salt Lake and a hub for immigrants and minorities who sell or trade crafts and used goods. He was selling some used goods he bought at Deseret Industries in addition to some of his Arabic calligraphic artwork. In a social media post, one of his Bagdad relatives commented on how the swap market was somehow a step backward instead of forward. Zahi's response was a depressed acknowledgment. Zahi also experienced heart problems that required surgery. These circumstances, and the fact that his family was still in Iraq where a civil war raged, made him depressed.

One day, while at the Mesopotamia Society, a fellow Iraqi who knew Zahi's background, told him about the Spice Kitchen Incubator project (SKI). Zahi said that the information gave him "hope and happiness." He set up an appointment and attended a meeting at the office of the

International Rescue Committee (IRC). Within a few weeks, Zahi and his wife Nadia passed the focus group taste test and were on their way to start their business in Utah.

Even though Zahi never chose to leave Iraq, he spent the post-2003 invasion of Iraq serving falafel sandwiches to international customers. His business was located in the Al-Mansour neighborhood in Baghdad which before the 2003 war was the location of, or close to the location of, foreign embassies. After the war, it was in close proximity to the Green Zone where the headquarters of the international coalition was located. The area was also a hub for foreign journalists, NGOs, and other international organizations. Zahi has spent his career catering to these customers and adjusting his product to adapt to his customers' tastes. Zahi claimed that his wife invented the "meat falafel" and the "cheese falafel," among other variants. He and his wife developed these products to appeal to their non-Iraqi customers. By the time Zahi and his family arrived in Utah, their product and skillset were pre-adapted to match the culinary tastes of an American audience.

At SKI, Zahi and Nadia felt that they had strong support. They worked on earning the necessary licenses with the aid of interpreters provided by SKI, but they also learned about all aspects of the American approach to running a restaurant business. Zahi and Nadia were learning about technical aspects of the restaurant business in the U.S, including basing their ingredient purchases on demand, predicting demand, building credit, licensing, and even the hygiene requirements as set by the health department. Zahi was astonished by how technical and precise the hygiene requirements were, including specific instructions on how to dry cookware. The hygienic rules and regulations presented Zahi and Nadia with a steep learning curve. He said that these requirements, as well as the rules and laws associated with the restaurant business, were

starkly different from those in Iraq. To him, though, these rules and regulations helped him learn about the expectations of the customers in Utah.

Zahi and Nadia developed an affinity for the staff at SKI. After eighteen months in the United States, their relationships were limited to the staff at SKI and some of the members who frequented the Mesopotamia Society. The society's members were monitoring the progress of Zahi's venture and asking him about developments. Zahi said that was a source of pride for him. Zahi said that his association with SKI gave him increasing confidence personally and in the organization's ability to improve his family's future in the United States. Zahi was also dreaming of the day when Radi and other family members would join him. When the time came to expand the business, he wanted it to be all operated by his family members.

After Zahi and Nadia finished their initial training, they started participating in catering under the supervision of SKI staff as well as farmers' market events. At some events, Zahi and Nadia were involved in preparing the food mentored by SKI staff. I also noticed that even though Zahi wasn't communicating in English he nevertheless understood what was being communicated to him. Zahi and Nadia's main assistant was their youngest daughter, Fayeza, who Zahi described as his "right hand" and one with which he has a special relationship because of her industriousness and initiative. Zahi was proud that even though his seven children spoke English, Fayeza was the one who "sounded" most like Americans. For all these reasons, Fayeza was the family's interpreter, receiving all phone calls and translating all paperwork. Zahi and Nadia were making progress at SKI; Nadia and Fayeza were thinking about expanding the menu to include traditional Iraqi cuisine in addition to falafels. Zahi dreaded period when work was scarce. Such periods always triggered thoughts of his family members who were still in Iraq, especially his only son. The other thought weighing on Zahi was the lack of financial means.

After 18 months in the U.S, the family finances were dependent on income from SKI events and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) granted by the U.S government to qualified refugees above the age of 65.

Zahi was starting to understand the complexities of doing business in the U.S; paying for quarterly taxes and licenses was becoming an issue. Additionally, Zahi started to worry about the prospects of financing because he and SKI hadn't (and still have not) been able to find a business sponsor. Throughout his entrepreneurial career in sanctioned and war-torn Iraq, Zahi practiced entrepreneurial bricolage which is "making do by applying combinations of the resources at hand to new problems and opportunities. . .. in resource-constrained environments . . . by exploiting institutional, social, and physical resource inputs" (Westhead & Wright, 2013, p. 83). In the U.S, Zahi had little opportunity for bricolage; in Zahi's own words, he was completely dependent on SKI to help him with all aspects of his business, especially when it came to helping him find funding for his operation. Zahi was becoming increasingly frustrated with his inability to realize all of his aspirations. When he started at SKI, he thought that since he had managed to continue to work and provide for his family through wars and sanctions, he would definitely be able to work and provide in America. In our first interview, he said, "nothing is difficult, especially in America. So far, nothing is difficult. Everything happens quietly without any problems." However, he was gradually discovering that, in America, the credit system, and fulfilling regulatory requirements, can be huge obstacles for a refugee who has no credit and little mastery of the language.

Getting Credit

The longer it took for Zahi to get self-sufficient the more withdrawn he became. He stopped going to the Mesopotamia Society because every time he went there, people would ask

him about his progress, and he had nothing new to report. He said that he felt a sense of shame for not being able to accomplish much after 14 months of being in the United States and he didn't want to answer any questions. In our initial interviews, Zahi hesitated to share clear information about his business's credit situation. I attributed that to his lack of understanding about the credit system and the fact that we needed to build more trust with him before he felt he could share more information. In our third interview, Zahi mentioned that he met a private investor who is an Iraqi-American who has lived in Utah for twenty-two years, who was a participant in the SKI focus group which examined Zahi's food prior to his admittance into the program. Zahi gave me only the man's *kunya* (the name of an Arab man derived from the name of the oldest child), which was Abu Manar. Zahi said that Abu Manar invested $5000 to help Zahi build a food cart that he can use to sell food. However, Zahi still needed the necessary city licenses to operate the cart in Salt Lake City.

While I was collecting data, I observed the SKI staff while they were helping Zahi and others to obtain the licenses. Street vendors in Utah need to tailor their vehicles to abide by very strict standards and measurements ranging from vehicle dimensions to the size of the water tanks in those vehicles. Zahi never made it clear whether the food cart that Abu Manar financed met the regulatory requirements. Zahi seemed to be unaware of those requirements when he talked about the food cart. Zahi was not clear about the nature of the financial arrangement. It seemed, initially, as if Abu Manar was playing the role of an angel investor. Then Zahi changed his statements and made it sound as if Abu Manar intended the investment as a charitable donation to Zahi and his family. In my final interview with Zahi, he said that Abu Manar was losing patience but that their relations remained cordial and that he trusted Abu Manar implicitly.

Early in 2017, a few months after I spoke with Zahi about Abu Manar, the IRC came through for Zahi and he was able to close on a small business loan. The amount of the loan was not disclosed, but as the months followed, Zahi did not move ahead with his plans to be a food cart vendor. Rather, he continued to rely on catering and farmers' markets as his main lines of business.

The last time I interviewed Zahi he was still frustrated and seriously considering 'retiring' and leaving the U.S to go back to Iraq. However, that didn't seem to be possible because Zahi was torn for many reasons: Nadia and Fayeza wanted him to stay and pursue the business. Zahi's other daughter got married and had a child, Zahi's 10th grandchild. His wife and two daughters have embraced American life, feeling happier and safer in Utah. Zahi also had some health challenges and surgery. He wasn't sure that he would get adequate medical treatment if he went back to Iraq. Zahi's social circle was still as narrow as it was when I first met him, limited to his family and SKI. His social media posts, and occasional messages he shared with me, seemed to indicate a stronger embrace of his Shi'ite religious identity and strong nostalgic feelings for Iraq. His son, Radi, was still in Iraq with a minuscule likelihood of him coming to America after the U.S government placed travel and immigration limits on Iraqi nationals. However, when I checked Radi's public posts and family public exchanges on social media, it didn't seem to me that Radi was in any kind of danger. He seemed to live his life in Iraq very publicly. It also seemed that he did not work for the U.S government anymore. In our last interview, Zahi expressed profound unhappiness and disappointment about his new life. Zahi, a man who provided for his family amid wars and sanctions, a man with dreams of building a falafel franchise in America operated by his children, realized that his dream was suspended. He said that he was 'stranded' with no exit or hope.

Summary and Conclusion

In this case study, I told Zahi's life history. He is an Iraqi who, like many Iraqi Shi'ites, is the product of a complex ethnoreligious history that is important to understand if we are to understand Zahi's experience in the United States. He is a part of a majority that has always been ruled by a forceful Sunni minority which, throughout Iraq's history, has tried to impose assimilation on the population using various forms of Arab nationalism. Shi'ites on the other hand have always resisted these assimilation attempts and struggled to maintain a Shi'ite identity that defers to Arab tribal values and customs. This identity was developed over centuries, starting in the early days of the Islamic empire. As the Islamic empire evolved, its different rulers tried to assimilate the Shi'ites of Iraq, and other parts of the Islamic empire, into the Sunni mainstream using varied methods of coercion and containment. Those efforts failed in the sense that Shi'ites, though always in the minority, continued to exist, and occasionally thrive, in the Islamic world in general, and in Iraq and Iran in particular. For a brief period, the Safavid empire played an important role in strengthening the Shi'ite community in Iraq, especially in the towns of Najaf and Karbala, but ultimately lost to a stronger Ottoman empire. The Ottomans attempted to alter Iraq's religious identity by importing Sunni-Arab tribes into Iraq; however, due to the strength of Shi'ite missionary work, those tribes converted to Shi'ism producing an effect contrary to the one that the Ottomans desired.

After the end of WWI, the British colonialist mandate imposed the Hashemite Sunni rule on the Shi'ites of Iraq. The Hashemites tried to alter Iraq's identity using Arab nationalism. Shi'ites were skeptical about the Hashemite family and Arab nationalism. The Arab tribes who converted to Shi'ism embraced loyalty to the tribe and clan rather than the Arab nation. When Iraq gained its independence, the new socialist and Ba'athist leaders embraced a new version of

Arab nationalism that magnified Iraq's role in Arab history and attempted to use that to mold all Iraqis in one national identity that supersedes religious identification. Ba'athists attempted to use coercion as well as persuasion with mixed results. Ironically, the war against the Shi'ite Islamic Republic of Iran achieved this goal. However, the destruction of the Iraqi economy caused by this war, and the international sanctions which followed the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, led to a rebellion by the Shi'ites. The rebellion was brutally suppressed leading to a decade of misery for Iraqi Shi'ites.

Zahi and his family survived the wars and the sanctions aided by their presence in a relatively prosperous neighborhood where they had a successful falafel restaurant. Family, clan, and tribal unity also played a great role in the survival of Zahi's family with all pooling resources and skills to make ends meet. In 2003, Zahi's life was further disrupted by the international coalition's invasion of Iraq. The invasion left millions of Iraqis unemployed, the infrastructure completely destroyed, and no opportunities for work except with the coalition forces. This led Zahi's son, Radi, to work as an interpreter for the coalition forces, a profession frowned upon by Sunnis and Shiites alike in Iraq. Radi's work helped sustain the family but it was extremely threatening and dangerous. In 2009, after U.S troops left Iraq, the security situation became more unstable, and by 2011 the country was on the path to civil war. Radi was working for the American troops which were brought back into Iraq to help maintain the government. Realizing the danger his family would be in if the Iraqi government fell into the hands of the extremist Sunni ISIS, Radi applied for asylum in the United States. Zahi, his first wife Nadia, and their two daughters, were approved for asylum; Radi and his family had to wait longer[17].

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[17] Zahi would not share with me whether there were plans for his other wives and children to join him and whether UNHCR was considering them for asylum.

Zahi arrived in Utah in 2014 with his family where they started a new life aided by IRC. Eventually, Zahi learned about the Spice Kitchen Incubator (SKI) where he was accepted into a program for refugee chefs aspiring to start a culinary business in Utah. At SKI, Zahi learned about the legal and business requirements that need to be met by owners of culinary businesses in Utah. SKI promoted Zahi's catering business and provided logistical support during Farmers' Markets and other events in the Salt Lake area. However, Zahi needed to build credit and a business reputation in order to qualify for a business loan that would allow him to acquire a food cart. When such a loan came from a benefactor that he met during an SKI event, Zahi was still confronted with multitudes of legal requirements to approve his food cart. After months of waiting, Zahi was approved for a small business loan. However, he didn't start the food cart business and chose to use the funds to support his catering business relying on SKI and word-of-mouth to acquire customers. This infusion of capital seemed to have come at a time when Zahi has lost his ambition because he realized that he was reaching a "retirement" age where he is not able to put in the work that is necessary to meet the procedural requirements that are necessary to start a culinary business in the United States. The other factor contributing to Zahi's despair is that he has lost hope that any of his children who are left in Iraq, especially Radi, would be joining him in the U.S after the U.S government instituted very harsh restrictions on the immigration of Iraqis to the country.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

As refugees, Abed and Zahi have several commonalities in term of their backgrounds but the differences in their life paths and the circumstances they lived under also shaped their journey as refugees in America, and their experiences in different ways. When they arrived in the United States they brought along a diverse set of skills and potential as well as difficult personal and cultural challenges. As a community, SKI aims to harness the unique skills and culture that the refugees bring with them as well as alleviate the difficulties refugees face because of the unique challenges they bring with them.

In this chapter, I will summarize the challenges that Abed and Zahi brought to SKI and how SKI helped them accommodate in their new society as seen through the lens of Lave and Wenger's theory of legitimate peripheral participation. First, I will profile Abed based on his life history by discussing his potentialities as well as his challenges. Following that, I will profile Zahi. Finally, I will juxtapose those summaries against a profile of SKI as a community of practice using the lenses of legitimate peripheral participation using the theory to understand both Abed's and Zahi's experience of learning and inclusion in Utah. I divided this juxtaposition into segments describing Abed and Zahi's experiences before and during incubation, including two sections on their identity development as part of their learning.

The end goal is to provide those interested in educating adult refugees using the CoP-LPP theory, to achieve a better understanding of the challenges that refugees bring with them and how to utilize LPP to help and serve them better.

In this work, I investigated the impact of a community of practice, SKI, dedicated to providing training and assistance to adult refugees who desired to establish a culinary business in

Utah. In particular, the impact studied was the social inclusion of Middle Eastern, Muslim, adult refugees in the local community, socially and economically. At the end of this chapter, I will discuss the limitations of my study, recommendations to improve the SKI program, and recommendations for future research.

Abed

Abed, 45, is a Sunni Syrian man who grew up in a family of butchers, a profession that Abed inherited and apprenticed in in his youth. Ambitious Abed wanted a better status in society especially given the stigma associated with butchers in most Middle Eastern cultures. The butchery business was a steppingstone for him that led him to cooking. He started cooking in the Syrian military, and when his military service was complete, he traveled to Saudi Arabia where he worked as a cook and a chef in several restaurants serving different menus and catering to western expatriate communities. Abed is comfortable working in a multiethnic and religiously diverse environment. This can be attributed to growing up in a secular Syria that embraced a version of Ba'athism which focused on the unity of all Arabs regardless of religion or nationality.

Abed's entrepreneurial drive was originally motivated by wanting to be more than a butcher, which his ancestors were. However, after he married and started having children, his entrepreneurial drive was supercharged by the urgent need to provide for his family, especially because three of his children had severe disabilities at birth that require substantial financial resources in a country where the healthcare system is ill-equipped to meet their needs. Supported by members of his extended family living nearby in Syria, Abed pursued a successful career as a restaurateur. That was cut short by the Arab Spring of 2011 and the crisis in Syria which led to civil war. Abed tried to continue his entrepreneurial endeavors in other Arab countries.

Unfortunately, the turbulence of the Arab Spring encompassed every country within which he sought a new beginning. Eventually, Abed and his family were approved by UNHCR for emergency resettlement in the United States on humanitarian grounds.

Abed and family arrived in the U.S at a precarious time in the country's history. Racial tensions were high and suspicion and animosity towards immigrants and refugees increasing. Scenes in Europe of millions of refugees overwhelming the nations of the European Union shown in the background. As refugees, the family faced common and unusual challenges; they had little proficiency in English and were unfamiliar with Utah's culture. These are common challenges. They also had three children with severe disabilities requiring specialized medical care and attention, which was unusual. Zahi and his wife had their own health problems resulting from diabetes. Communication with doctors, specialists, and social workers who could provide services to the family was a critical need. There was also the challenge of finding employment immediately to provide the family's basic needs of food, shelter, transportation, and clothing. Fortunately, Utah's refugee ecosystem supplemented by assistance from national programs would cover family expenses for six to twelve months, but then Abed would be on his own. Accomplishing basic tasks, like shopping and navigating the city, were initially confusing for Abed who took care of all the basic needs of his family including taking the children to medical appointments because Abed's wife spoke little English and she preferred staying home to focus on taking care of their apartment. This role is enforced by Muslim culture even though when Abed spoke about it he attributed it mainly to her inexperience with the city and poor English. They both felt that Abed was more capable because of his prior travel experiences and his English language skills, however limited those skills were. Courageously and with determination, Abed went about the work of caring for his family, grateful that they were finally

safe from the ravages of revolution and war. Recognizing how limited the assistance was for his family, Abed desperately looked for work where his skills and entrepreneurial drive would be valued so he could be able to provide for his family's immense needs. He appreciated the support and guidance he received from the several agencies in Utah dedicated to refugee support.

Zahi

Zahi, 65, is a Shi'a Muslim who comes from a heritage that is deeply rooted in Islam and southern Iraq. Throughout Zahi's life Iraq has been ruled by Muslim Sunni minorities who, with the blessings of old colonial powers, clung to power. As opposed to the Alawite Shi'ite Baathist government of Syria which encouraged ethnic and religious diversity under the banner of Arab unity, the Sunni Iraqi minority attempted to eliminate religious diversity in order to achieve its vision of Arab nationalism. Despite those attempts, Iraqi Shi'ites resisted assimilation and clung to their uniqueness through a tight knit network of family and tribal relations. Zahi is a product of that dynamic. He is a traditional Shi'ite Muslim Iraqi. He is suspicious of people outside his immediate clan and prefers to keep all his business affairs within the family. He is introverted, withdrawn, and suspicious of others. Only reluctantly does he engage in conversation with outsiders including me. As a result, my understanding of Zahi necessarily relies heavily, in addition to our conversations, on observations and analysis of public interactions on social media and at SKI.

Zahi's career consisted of a series of small enterprises in fields of work that did not require much training or skill (his endeavors into Arabic calligraphy are an exception). Zahi also relied on bricolage and his own family for labor to support his entrepreneurial endeavors.

Zahi's life and career in Iraq was interspersed with civil war and wars that imposed tremendous burdens on Iraq's economy and its people. However, Zahi and his family managed to

eke out an existence. Zahi was committed to staying in Iraq despite the circumstances, but fate and politics decreed otherwise. After the American invasion of Iraq, Zahi's only son started working as an interpreter for the occupying international forces. Zahi and his family lived in a location close to American military forces which allowed his son to do the job without being noticed by the locals. Knowledge that his son worked for the Americans would have meant certain death and maybe the death of other members of the family. The job provided significant income for the family in a country whose economy was in shambles. It also allowed Zahi and his family to continue living in Iraq. The situation changed in 2012 when the terrorist groups ISIS rose to power to claim large swaths of Iraq while facing virtually no resistance from the weak and newly elected central government. Zahi's *Khazraj* clan played a key role in resisting ISIS, while Zahi's son worked as an interpreter for the American special forces which were working with the Iraqi military to defeat ISIS. ISIS however proved to be a formidable foe. For a time, the Iraqi capital was threatened. As Iraq disintegrated, Zahi anticipated endless and violent civil war between the Shi'ites in Baghdad and ISIS. He feared for himself and his family in light of possibly irreversible damage to his economic situation in an uncertain future.

Zahi concluded that he and his family should leave Iraq immediately. Because of Zahi's son's work with the U.S military, the son was eligible to immigrate to the U.S through a special visa program for interpreters who worked with American forces. The program, however, was unreliable, even failing to deliver for the majority of interpreters who worked for U.S forces. Zahi's son applied for the visa. When the approvals eventually came, the son was excluded. Visas were provided for the parents and sisters. Zahi at the time had multiple wives and daughters but just the one son. Because these were polygamous relationships, only Zahi and the son's mother and his sisters were eligible and given priority on humanitarian grounds. The son

and his own family were left in Iraq with no set date to join Zahi's family. The heartbreak resulting from this episode in Zahi's life is a source of great anxiety to him as he said several times: it prevents him from "enjoying life in the U.S as he is always thinking about the fate of [his] family in Iraq."

Like Abed, Zahi and his family arrived in the U.S at a time when immigration was a hot button issue. At the time, the world was becoming aware of ISIS and the atrocities it was committing across the Middle East. The American public was sympathetic with ISIS's victims but weary with concern over the overwhelming number of refugees from the Middle East. In contrast to some parts of the country, Utah's dominant Mormon, refugee-friendly culture was largely supportive of refugees like Abed and Zahi. Zahi arrived in Utah burdened with worry and grief about the fate of his only son, and the rest of his large family in Iraq. He also had several physical illnesses including heart failure which necessitated immediate surgery and felt at a loss when he thought of his options for generating income given his age and lack of English language skills. He tried to build relationships within the local Utah Iraqi community, but he failed to engage with members of the community who were mostly Sunnis and Christians[18]. As a result, Zahi felt increasingly isolated with little resources to allow him and his family to enjoy all the new society has to offer.

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[18] On a couple of occasions Zahi mentioned casually that he had no issues regarding working and associating with people who belonged to other faiths. However, his social media accounts focused almost exclusively on Islamic content, including a cover photo of him performing prayers. He later added me to an electronic mailing list which was also Islamic in nature. Based on my cultural perception of the situation, I think that Zahi didn't want to reveal to other Arab immigrants the extent of his vulnerability due to his diminished fortunes. His social media accounts focused on positive experiences such as outings with friends and family. Whatever vulnerabilities he revealed during our interviews were probably calculated to get my sympathy and even intervention with SKI staff to speed up processes, especially those related to finance.

Spice Kitchen Incubator, Abed, and Zahi Through the Lens Legitimate Peripheral Participation

Pre-Incubation

The way both Abed and Zahi learned about SKI reveals the value of social networks and community organizations for refugees, especially in terms of giving them access to resettlement information about the host society that their government resettlement agents might not be aware of. Abed learned about SKI through the IRC social worker assigned to the family. As explained in earlier chapters, IRC is a part of Utah's extensive refugee ecosystem (see Appendix 1). Zahi on the other hand was introduced to SKI through the Mesopotamian Society, a community established by Iraqi immigrants[19] who came to Utah as refugees in the mid 1990s. Even though Zahi wasn't connecting with the place or the people, he was interested in the information he got there including promotional material about the Spice Kitchen which ignited his hope that he might be able to get back into the food business without much of an investment upfront.

SKI gave both Zahi and Abed the opportunity to celebrate their heritage and leverage their cultural knowledge, more specifically their knowledge of their culture's culinary practices. They both recognized that their past culinary experiences in Syria and Iraq gave them the opportunity to introduce to the Utah market new products and tastes that were not offered at the time of their arrival. Sensing an opportunity, Abed visited many Middle Eastern restaurants in the Salt Lake area, sampled their food, and studied the competition. His knowledge of the market was astounding as I listened to him tell me menu details of the Middle Eastern restaurants that he visited, none of which offered the unique Damascene cuisine he favored. Abed's training

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[19] I couldn't find data detailing the religious affiliation of Iraqi refugees and immigrants to Utah in the 1990s. However, given the Ba'athist government's history of genocide against the Sunni Kurds and Iraqi Shi'ites, it is most likely that these two groups constituted almost all of the Iraqi immigrant population to the United States in general and Utah in particular.

sessions at the Spice Kitchen also introduced him to American tastes, and in response he introduced some twists to his Damascene Shawarmas and sold them as "Fajitas." Zahi was also conducting his own investigations into the market. At SKI he decided that he didn't want to deal with all the multiple ingredients of Middle Eastern food and, as he did in Iraq, planned to specialize by offering a low-cost falafel sandwich. He also started introducing innovations of his own such as "cheese falafels" which is an innovation that some Arabs (like me) would consider a heresy, but he was tailoring his product to better match what he perceived to be an American obsession with "adding cheese to everything." In contrast to Abed, Zahi partnered with his wife who was an enthusiastic supporter of the project.

The first requirement for Abed and Zahi was to study for, and pass, the necessary exams to acquire the licenses that would enable them to practice their profession. This experience was completely new to them. In both Iraq and Syria food handlers are hired by owners of restaurants as long as they can prove their ability and experience. In both Syria and Iraq, minimal licenses are required by the state, and no tests need to be taken to verify knowledge of hygienic practices. For Abed and Zahi the concept of a multiple-choice standard exam is unknown and slight explanations of the concept were needed. The preparation for the state's exam involves preparing the participants to understand the inner workings of the technologies and artifacts used in the culinary business. This covers everything from how and when to use industrial grade stoves, refrigerators, food warmers, to safety instructions, and dense material on food safety and cooking temperatures. Abed and Zahi had problems understanding the complex terminology involved in the exams, a problem that was resolved through others who translated the questions and answers during the exam.

I had the opportunity to participate as an interpreter and observe some SKI participants prepare for the exam. I also helped some take it. As a professional interpreter, I was surprised by the level of the specialized terminology used. The role of professional interpreters and translators was crucial in this situation. Even though nominally their task is to interpret the mentors' instructions and translate test preparation documents and mock tests, the interpreter/translator becomes effectively the instructor as they disentangle and unwind the complex subject matter in order to explain it clearly. SKI didn't have enough interpretation/translation resources but the ones available were good enough to help the participants. With the help of translators, which Zahi resented[20], he and his wife acquired the necessary licenses.

The knowledge embedded in these food safety codes are a part of American heritage dating back to the days of Theodore Roosevelt's 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act and Federal Meat Inspection Act of the same year, both of which were triggered by Upton Sinclair's novel, *The Jungle*, which described the unsanitary conditions that plagued the food supply industry in the early 20th century. Even though Abed and Zahi didn't have that historical and cultural background, they were now a part of this tradition. Based on several conversations with them, they deeply understood its importance and were fully committed to it, thanks to the instructions of SKI mentors. This understanding of the technologies and artifacts of hygienic practice is what Lave and Wenger refer to as "transparency" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 100).

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[20] Zahi resented SKI translators because he didn't think they were good enough and thought they didn't explain things to him clearly. They were also often late, or never showed up to key appointments. I could not reach any of the SKI translators for interviews, and I never observed SKI translators at work. However, I know that SKI had a shortage of qualified Arabic translators/interpreters. I also know that the rate of pay they offered to translators and interpreters was far below market rates, which makes it unprofitable for well-trained translators/interpreters to do contract work for SKI.

Incubation

Once Abed and Zahi acquired the necessary licenses with the help of SKI, they were immediately involved in actual practice, or the incubation period which lasts from one to five years. Once this stage started, Abed and Zahi were catering events and community events such as farmers markets across the state and fund raisers[21]. SKI mentors and staff helped Abed and Zahi through all the business setup processes and were always on hand at the events to help with everything from food preparation to communicating with customers. Abed and Zahi also had access to a fully equipped industrial kitchen, that was donated to refugees and located in a rental property whose owners offered for a low rate. Through SKI, Zahi and Abed were able, within six months of starting at SKI, to be involved in resuming their career in the culinary field without the need for capital investment and minimized risk. They also had, through SKI mentors, access to help with designing marketing materials, menus, social media profiles, and promotions during catering events and community activities. This marketing support further minimized risk by attracting customers to events and maximizing sales.

When portraying peripherality, Lave and Wenger described it as "provision of actual practice that approximates full participation [where] . . . learners are involved in an activity that approximates it" (Wenger, 1998, p. 100). On the surface, it seemed that Abed and Zahi were engaged in full practice. However, because they would not have been able to perform that work without the facilitation, guidance, and marketing support provided by SKI, their practice was only *peripheral,* or an approximation, as they would have had to manage or hire the staff needed for such activities. Their practice was also *legitimate* not only because Abed and Zahi had the

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[21] The pre-incubations stage at SKI lasts 6-12 months and it encompasses completing a business plan, product development, creating a brand identity, and establishing a legal business (including acquiring licenses and certificates from the State). Abed and Zahi spent about six months each in that stage.

full support and acceptance of the mentors and staff at SKI, but also because through SKI's facilitation and supervision Abed and Zahi were able to provide products in a manner that the community "regards as competent engagement" (Wenger, 1998, p. 101). In other words, they provided their products in ways that met health department regulations and they packaged and delivered it in a manner that met the expectations of their customers. A particularly vivid example of this concerns Abed's hair net. Abed is person for whom laws and regulations are sacrosanct. SKI chefs are drilled on the importance of hygiene while cooking and delivering food as well as making sure that the food is kept at certain temperatures until delivered to customers. I accompanied Abed on several occasions as he delivered food to customers ordered through SKI. Regardless of distance to the customer, Abed would wear his hair net as long as he had the food and would insist on renting a food warmer, a giant and costly device that keeps food at safe temperatures, until the food was delivered to customers. Abed always wanted to make sure that his delivery and presentation of the products were professional and that he conveyed competence to his customers.

I observed Zahi on a fewer number of events. He was not as strict with his hair and I did not see that he used food warming machines in the process. During events he always stayed in the background preparing and cooking food emerging only when someone he knew showed up[22]. When I observed his events, he had his wife or a local Iraqi entrepreneur who owns a bakery in Salt Lake help with delivering and presenting to customers. Those two excelled at this task. However, in many of our conversations, Zahi would mention how important hygiene is to him

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[22] Zahi was very generous with the Arab customers he knew. He would give samples and even offer to give food for free. This gesture is cultural and should not be taken literally by accepting such offers; it is meant to show generosity even in poverty or that a person is doing well financially to afford such generosity. Zahi resented his lack of resources in private but in public he wanted to convey a different image, especially to people from the Mesopotamian society whom he felt doubted his ability to succeed.

and how surprised he was to learn about U.S. standards at SKI because "in Iraq we didn't do [hygiene and food safety] this way."

Another area that is important for a culinary business is finance--more specifically, access to credit. This is another arena of practice with which both Abed and Zahi needed experience. In Syria and Iraq, there is no credit rating system. Most small businesses are financed with the entrepreneurs' private capital or savings from family and friends. When banks finance businesses they use the entrepreneur's private assets as collateral. Business failure usually means losing personal assets. SKI helped both Abed and Zahi register with programs aimed at helping refugee entrepreneurs raise capital through a system that matches their savings. SKI also introduced both to the credit rating system in the United States and helped them through the process of opening business bank accounts and acquiring debit and credit cards with small lines of credit. Again, SKI helped both Abed and Zahi by instructing them on the process, helping them fill out the proper documents, advised them on banking practices and how to choose a banking institution as well as the process of building good credit. SKI mentors also instructed Abed and Zahi on how to sign up with credit card payment gateways that would enable them to accept credit card payments. All of this knowledge was new to both of them as they came from economies where credit card acceptance is still low especially in culinary businesses. Abed and Zahi had to complete the application process, but thanks to direction and guidance from SKI, they did this in a manner that would be perceived as competent engagement by bank branch managers and loan officers helping them with their applications. Enabling Abed and Zahi to understand the artifacts used to acquire credit for their businesses (applications, credit, credit ratings, payment gateways, etc.) is another way SKI provides their participants with transparency

through an understanding of the inner workings of the technologies and artifacts used in practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 101).

Incubation Blues. The most dramatic event that happened during my observation of the SKI and the participants was the organization's decision to move from the original location they occupied when the program started doing business from a commissary kitchen owned by a local business. The original location was like a second home for the founding SKI cohorts, which included both Abed and Zahi. The equipment in that kitchen was donated to SKI by charities and private donors. According to Abed, the program participants helped to raise the funds which were given with the assumption that the equipment would aid refugees. The move to the commissary meant that the participants would lose access to the equipment they formally had liberal access to and that they would now have to pay hourly rates for the privilege of using the older equipment available at the commissary[23]. Furthermore, the original location was easily accessible from the main I-15 highway in Salt Lake in a strategic location close to several businesses and neighborhoods whose occupants were SKI customers. In contrast, the commissary was tucked into a Salt Lake neighborhood far away from the highway exit and wasn't easy to find. The neighborhood was far from any businesses and in a low-income area where it is less likely that SKI's presence would generate new customers or encourage existing customers to go there because of the relative difficulty of accessing the location.[24]

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[23] I never inquired about the fate of the equipment at SKI's original location after the move to the commissary kitchen. SKI always claimed they planned to have a permanent location for which they raised funds. The most reasonable assumption is that the equipment from the original kitchen was held somewhere else in storage until a permanent location was found and a kitchen constructed.

[24] The commissary kitchen's location is reasonable for entrepreneurs who owned food trucks or carts since all they needed was a location where they could prepare food before leaving to their locations in the city. However, for participants like Abed and Zahi whose customers usually picked the food at SKI the commissary's location was not ideal.

When I asked SKI staff about the reasons for the move, the program managers indicated that the owner of the original location was no longer willing to subsidize the rent which made the location unaffordable to SKI. Abed countered that SKI was making enough money to be able to afford the lease. To his point, in 2019, SKI's 45 participants generated a gross revenue of $3.2 million (Stephenson, 2021). At a seminar with SKI staff in 2017, presenters claimed $500,000 in profits for the previous year. In addition to raising questions about the claim of affordability, the most compelling argument raised against the move to the commissary was that they felt the decision to move was made without consulting the participants or letting them have any influence over the decision. Having to pay for the use of the equipment at the commissary didn't make sense when they already had free access to equipment that participants and Salt Lake City's local government helped to finance.

Lave and Wenger (1991) label situations when newcomers are not given "productive" access to activity as "sequestration" (p. 103). The location change situation might not fit perfectly with the Lave and Wenger's description of sequestration, since SKI's chefs could still participate in the same activities as before. However, this participation was no longer productive from the participants' perspective. Having to pay fees to use storage and equipment at higher rates than the chefs did at the original location placed pressure on their profit margins, a fact made bitter for Abed when thinking of the free equipment they had access to before. Furthermore, the less-than-ideal location of the commissary further hindered the productivity of the chefs' businesses[25].

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[25] I focus in this part on the theoretical issue of "sequestration" in the LPP literature. In simpler terms though, the financial issues associated with the move were less relevant compared to the larger issue of depriving the participants from having an influential role in decisions that upset their present and future lives.

There was also the question of how SKI managed its profits. In the refugees' minds, the SKI brand stood for caring for, supporting, and sympathizing with refugees, their cultural heritage and its reflection on the quality of the products they produce. This brand drove the profits. Abed and Zahi were very appreciative for everything SKI did for them. However, Abed felt strongly that he had to have a say in how those profits were invested, including paying for the increased cost of staying at the original location. Zahi couldn't understand why some of the profits couldn't be reinvested in a savings matching plan or some other means that would help the entrepreneurs finance their own independent operation.

By excluding the refugees' voices, SKI disturbed the practice of the community and limited its educational value. In the literature review, I pointed out several research findings that point out this phenomenon and the need to consider the input and feedback of refugees who are part of educational and training programs (Lygo-Baker, 2001; McPherson, 2010; Moser-Mercer 2014). Lave and Wenger also predicted that "conflicts between masters and apprentices . . . take place in the course of everyday participation" (1991, p. 116); however, they stress the importance of *resolving* the conflicts "through a shared everyday practice in which differing viewpoints and common stakes are in interplay" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 116). In other words, generally speaking, participants' viewpoints and perspectives need to be heard and resolved, which is crucial to learning to be part of a pluralistic society.

SKI staff were not aware of situated learning or legitimate peripheral participation concepts. However, it might be useful for them to gain some awareness of them, as the insight they provide would, I suggest, help the project fulfill its enormous potential and help the refugees thrive. Taking these concepts seriously would help bring benefits to participants such as providing "broad access to arenas of mature practice, [with tasks being] short and simple, with

less demands on time, effort, and responsibility for work [which will ensure that] the costs of error are small" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 110).

For the refugees, the move to the commissary, with its several cost structures and complex rules, came too soon for the entrepreneurs and didn't fit with the organization's goals for the incubation period. The costs of errors at the commissary were not small. In one case, Abed made a very elaborate desert for a refugee event. The desert needed to be refrigerated overnight. When Abed arrived at the kitchen to pick it up the following day, he discovered that the managers at the commissary have discarded it hours before it was to be served to Abed's clients. The commissary manager did that because Abed didn't inform them beforehand that he was planning to use the refrigerator, which caused a conflict with another user, and he hadn't paid for the usage. Such an incident wouldn't have happened at the original SKI location. Changing the kitchen location thus created a kind of broad sequestration, the reverberations of which generated strong feelings of frustration among the participants. Here it is notable that Abed and his fellow participants worked with SKI in 2018–2019 to raise money for a new kitchen. Abed and other program participants were successful in raising the funds. At present, the new kitchen location isn't available to the participants, which makes Abed wonder about the reasons for the delay.

Abed's and Zahi's Identity Development. Both Abed and Zahi were consistently positive about their involvement in the SKI community. Zahi frequently mentioned that even being inside the SKI building gave him hope and something to work for. His, and his family's, American experience was clearly tied to the progress they achieved at SKI. When that progress stalled, because financing wasn't forthcoming, Zahi became frustrated and said he considered leaving to go back to Iraq to be with his beloved only son. His wife and daughter, however,

seeing great potential, wanted him to stay and continue in the project. They consistently gave him ideas and advice and urged him to stay and make the project succeed. It was obvious that they held high hopes that success at SKI would bring success in America. Zahi expressed frustration that his work at SKI wasn't helping him achieve the kind of financial success he anticipated. He wanted to earn enough money to take his family on vacations and be able to afford the luxuries of life that he saw others around him enjoy. Zahi often said to me that limited access to financial means limited the ability to participate in the wider community's activities. However, when I observed Zahi on social media it seemed that even though his associations remained limited primarily to family members, he was able to enjoy low budget activities with his family utilizing their access to what writer Eric Klinenberg (2018) called "palaces for the people" (public parks, national parks, public libraries, etc.). Despite several attempts by their American neighbors to associate with Zahi and his family, including on social media, no strong relationships seemed to develop. Zahi kept to himself. The great majority of Zahi's interactions on social media were with family and friends back in Iraq, with Zahi often expressing yearning to be back home. Zahi was also facing renewed health challenges. Late in 2018 he had to be hospitalized for his heart condition. It became obvious that his age and health have dampened his enthusiasm for business. His social media posts about his SKI business dwindled and it was apparent that he was not pursuing it actively anymore.

Abed offers a different story. As pointed out in his life history, SKI membership opened many doors to Abed which he confidently walked through. As the second Syrian family to find refuge in Utah, and given the severe disabilities of the children, the community embraced them with newspaper articles profiling the family, and honors such as giving Rana, Abed's wife, Utah's Mother of the year award. Abed's business received coverage in several newspapers in

the state, local religious communities used Abed's business to cater events to help build the business. SKI mentors and staff provided Abed with the infrastructure and tools necessary to do the work and develop the skills needed for success. Also, because of the mentorship and assistance provided by SKI and IRC, Abed and his family were able to raise funds that enabled them to buy their first home and vehicle. Abed's initial successes attracted other refugees in the Salt Lake area who came to him both offering partnership or asking for help in setting up their own businesses.

During our many interviews, and on social media, Abed frequently expressed his gratitude for the local community, and the United States, expressing deep and positive sentiments about his adoptive country and using the pronoun "we" when associated with the word "Americans." There is no doubt in the mind of Abed and Rana that they were Americans, and that they belonged to the country and to the community. Abed's ambitions as an entrepreneur evolved as well. The last time I spoke with Abed he told me: "when I came here, my sole ambition was to save my kids and family. To establish roots and enable my children to have a better future. Now, I am dreaming big. I dream of a restaurant where I can serve hundreds. I have so many ideas I didn't know I had until I joined the program (SKI), understood the system, and realized what I can do."

His participation in SKI, though it was not complete at the time this study was concluded, had a significant positive impact on Abed's and Zahi's position in society, belonging, and identity. The impact varied, more tangible in Abed's case than in Zahi's, but it was significant, for both nevertheless.

The Development of Abed and Zahi as Knowledgeable Identities. In the discussion on sequestration above, I discussed some aspects of Abed and Zahi's knowledge development in

terms of the technologies and artifacts of practice. In this section I will expand that discussion to consider additional areas of learning and development.

Both Abed and Zahi brought with them to the United States a wealth of experience and knowledge. Both of them, even though they lacked knowledge about the operations of the culinary sector in the U.S had rich and masterly knowledge of Middle Eastern cuisine. Both of them also brought a strong desire for success in their new country. This desire was driven by personal circumstances, such as Abed's need to pay for the medical needs of his disabled children, and Zahi's desire to enjoy life with his family in the United States in his "retirement" years after they lived a hard life in Iraq. They also brought with them "fresh eyes" with which to evaluate the local Middle Eastern culinary market, which they thought was wanting for innovation. Both of them expressed in our conversation a confidence that the products they saw in the market were lacking in authenticity and taste. The many innovative products on their menus were a testament to that.

The experience at SKI changed Abed and Zahi's perception of what it means to be a business proprietor. The institutions, the rules and regulations, managing the expectations of the consumers, and the technologies used to manage business, were all revelations to these two entrepreneurs who come from economies where small business owners operate under less developed conditions. Their perception of their service responsibilities to consumers and their understanding of business management radically changed. With these changes came a change in their understanding of what it means to be an entrepreneur.

When I interviewed Abed and Zahi, especially when discussing plans for the future, it was clear that their knowledge about concepts such as credit scores, constructing a business plan, awareness of the importance of budgeting and financial planning, as well as their skills, such as

shopping for ingredients in ways that minimized cost and increased profit had grown dramatically. Abed became a consummate user of technology running his business from his smart phone, and even attempting to raise funds for his business online.

Both Abed and Zahi often shared their perceptions of the American consumer, what they like, and when they eat out, and other behaviors. What they were learning from these observations factored into their future business plans for their restaurants or catering businesses.

For Abed, the increase in knowledge was motivating, exciting, interesting, and challenging. He was constantly discussing possibilities, and active in suggesting to SKI staff ideas to improve the performance of the community—his community. Abed's increase in knowledge, and the relationships he developed through SKI with entrepreneurship academics, gave him the idea and the courage to help start another community of practice, the Jasmine Society, through which he hoped to help newly arriving refugees in the resettlement process to start their own businesses. By doing this, Abed modeled a view of learning that Lave and Wenger described as follows:

> As an aspect of social practice, learning involves the whole person; it implies not only a relation to specific activities, but a relation to social communities—it implies becoming a full participant, a member, a kind of person. In this view, learning only partly—and often incidentally—implies becoming able to be involved in new activities, to perform new tasks and functions, to master new understandings. (Daniels, 2005, p. 148)

Unfortunately, as described in Abed's life history, conflict and suspicion among some members of the new community led to a negative experience for Abed and his family leading to his withdrawal not only from that community but from the Muslim community in Salt Lake as a whole. This however didn't impact his welcoming attitude towards Arab newcomers to SKI or

his willingness to be a sort of mentor to them within SKI. He even hired them when he needed to fill orders independently of SKI.

For Zahi, however, the challenge to increase his knowledge often seemed overwhelming. There were several reasons for this. He faced health problems incident to age. He was also emotionally distressed by the fact that his son, his other wives, and his other children, who he deeply missed, never managed to leave Iraq. Finally, he and his wife in the United States started receiving SSI payments from the state (which he perceived as "retirement" pay). Each of these factors contributed to his decision to abandon the business and, instead, to encourage his youngest daughter to join SKI and establish her own culinary business. Even though I have not interviewed Zahi's wife or daughters, but rather observed them through their social media profiles, I can say that Zahi's SKI experience had a more dramatic impact on their identities than his. The youngest daughter and the mother embraced SKI, took the food handlers' exam, and passed it; they developed new ideas for recipes and menus catering to different audiences and customers. Both of them spoke with confidence on social media and celebrated their newfound identities as entrepreneurs in America. The daughter is fluent in English, something Zahi took special pride in. He touted her English language skills as a factor that would help her succeed in life and business in the United States.

Overall, by being a part of SKI, both Abed and Zahi acquired a vast amount of knowledge and an upgrade to their skills in the area of managing, financing, and promoting a culinary business. In Abed's case, this newfound knowledge generated drive and enthusiasm. In Zahi's case, it seemed to help him realize that success in business requires energy he no longer had.

SKI Participation and Inclusion Outcomes for Abed and Zahi

Lave and Wenger's classic study, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* does not explicitly discuss "inclusion" as a construct. However, one can argue that the process of turning a newcomer into an old-timer who has full and equal access to practice represents inclusion at the micro level that is the community of practice. As elaborated in the theoretical framework section of this work, Wenger discussed the ties between the work of communities of practice and society as a whole, positing that "communities of practice cannot be considered in isolation from the rest of the world, or understood differently from other practices" (Wenger, 1998, p. 103). Wenger also emphasized the interconnectedness between the products of CoPs and the communities in which they live (Wenger, 1998, p. 105). A look at Utah's refugee ecosystem (Appendix A) and the position that SKI's parent organization, IRC, occupies gives a sense of that interconnectedness. In other works, Wenger speaks of "learning citizenship" which he defined as "the ethics of how we invest our identities as we travel through the [social] landscape" (Wenger, 2003, p. 90).

Abed's Jasmine society is an example of "learning citizenship." SKI as a vehicle promoting self-reliance and self-sufficiency among refugees also contributed to building understanding and respect for refugees in a largely Latter-day Saint community where such principles are at the core of the religion's teachings. On social media, one of the many articles about Abed's struggles before arriving in Utah and his entrepreneurial pursuits since evoked this response: "That's how someone can pull themselves by the bootstraps, well done." The poster affirms what many consider an American value that makes Abed, in the eyes of those who embrace the concept, someone worthy of respect and of assistance. However, despite Abed's great efforts, his story isn't necessarily about pulling oneself by the proverbial bootstraps, but

rather about several interrelated communities of practice and the hundreds of volunteers, social workers, mentors, neighbors, educators, and so on, who are indispensable to the running of the refugee ecosystem.

If one accepts the United Nation's definition of social inclusion as "creating conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of the society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as participation in decision making processes" (DESA, 2009, p. 12), and then juxtaposes it with both Abed and Zahi's life histories, it is evident that SKI enabled them to make significant strides on the path of inclusion and thriving. Through promotions and marketing, they built a brand name and acquired a customer base. Furthermore, Abed and his family managed to purchase home in a middle-class suburb in Salt Lake City, enabling all of his children to attend high school and elementary schools in a good and supportive school district. In June 2020, Abed's son Hosam graduated from high school and started attending Salt Lake Community College, which, according to Abed, makes Hosam the first member of Abed's family to ever go to college. Abed's three disabled children get counseling and supervision by professionals in facilities the likes of which do not exist in Syria except for the society's elite. These children, even with their disabilities, are thriving. In July 2020, Abed and his wife became U.S. citizens and they voted in the 2020 elections, achieving voting and political rights they never enjoyed or even imagined having in Syria. Citizenship applications take years and thousands of dollars paid to lawyers and other legal professionals. IRC and other community organizations were heavily involved in helping Abed and his wife acquire citizenship and facilitating the process. In the last event I witnessed, where Abed was the caterer, he managed to give a 10-minute speech, in broken but comprehensible English, about his life and his family. It was obvious to me that this achievement

would not have been possible without Abed's constant engagement with his customers and business.

As for Zahi, he had access to several finance opportunities, including one by an acquaintance who was encouraged to invest because he knew that Zahi was connected to SKI and because of that association, Zahi was more likely to succeed. However, Zahi had other options for credit facilitated by SKI and even though he didn't save as much as Abed did, he eventually saved enough to get a modest investment that would've assisted him in building a food cart[26]. Additionally, Zahi, though dependent completely on SKI's catering orders, made enough income to afford an apartment in a new building block. He was also continuing to participate in English language classes, and as I helped in interpreting for him in some meetings at SKI, I noticed that he understood more of what was happening compared to previous occasions. His association with the SKI program inspired his daughter's and wife's American entrepreneurial dreams. She is now a SKI participant who chose to continue using the same brand name her father used and is determined to turn it into a successful restaurant. Despite the many setbacks in Zahi's entrepreneurial journey, his inclusion outcomes would have probably been less positive without them. Like many refugees I know who are in Zahi's age category he and his wife would have probably lived in their apartment with their SSI checks as their only source of income. Without the knowledge about the hope SKI offered (owning a culinary business) the youngest daughter would have continued working low-wage jobs with her entrepreneurial dreams unfulfilled.

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[26] Zahi was very secretive about what happened to the funds he received. I only knew that the SKI funds came through a post on SKI's social media. As to the money he received from the local Iraqi businessman, Zahi hinted in one of the interviews that the investor told Zahi that he can cook meals for the investor's family in return for the money.

As I mentioned in several places earlier, both Abed and Zahi arrived in America at a very peculiar time. The rhetoric sparked by candidate and then President Trump in the period 2015–2020, caused widespread tension and suspicion. However, even though the anti-refugee, anti-Muslim, animus and rhetoric spilled into Utah, the position of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which dominates the religious landscape in Utah, provided a shield and cover for the refugees that minimized hindrances to their inclusion. The Church's several charitable arms are integral to Utah's refugee system. The Church's pro-refugee and pro-immigrant public messaging was immediate, affirmative, and consistent. Significant financial contributions to refugee causes were essential at a time when the Trump administration cut off federal and international contributions to refugee organizations. Utah's Republican governor shunned the anti-refugee rhetoric and was very supportive of refugees. He made a point of visiting refugee food carts and restaurants including a food cart where Abed was working helping a fellow SKI Syrian chef. As a result, refugee programs in Utah were not severely affected and continued unhindered, including SKI and other IRC projects. SKI chefs made millions of dollars in gross revenues and even in 2020 with COVID restrictions, the organization managed to make over five hundred thousand dollars in revenue at a time when many local restaurants were shuttered.

So What?

In the previous section, I discussed the lives of Abed and Zahi in the context of their participation at SKI. Both of them brought with them to this country skills, knowledge, and ambitions that would help them to thrive if nurtured. But they also brought with them a set of challenges (health, language barriers, age and lack of financial resources) to the resettlement process. Abed and Zahi were fortunate to be resettled in Utah. They had no say in the matter as explained earlier. The state's refugee system is well organized and supported by state

government and non-governmental organizations. Due to the state's culture, for the most part, refugees were embraced even though the general political environment in the country was, in many parts, skeptical, even hostile. As I've shown above, SKI gave Abed and Zahi an opportunity (within a short time from arriving in the United States) to leverage and further develop their culinary skills, while minimizing the negative impact of their inherent challenges, either by providing resources directly or by directing them to other sources of help. As noted, they responded differently to these offerings. And even though SKI staff, mentors, and founders showed no indication that they were aware of Lave and Wenger's theory of legitimate peripheral participation, the constructs of the theory help illuminate the workings of SKI. Through participation in SKI's program, Abed and Zahi were able to resume, although in different ways, the practice of their professions under the guidance of a supportive community of mentors who, on the whole, made sure that the participants' engagement was competent and legitimate while minimizing the costs of any errors made by the participants along the way.

Abed seemed to have a more positive experience than Zahi, most likely due to the advantage he had as someone who traveled outside of Syria and, when he returned to Syria, having worked in a prosperous tourism sector that attracted millions of visitors a year. Abed also lived in a country that encouraged religious minorities to thrive and emphasized an integrated Arab identity. Zahi on the other hand, lived all his life before arriving to Utah in war-torn Iraq as a part of an oppressed and cautious minority that resisted assimilation and integration into a Muslim-Sunni identity. The religious and national identity issue did not seem to be a factor influencing the daily working of refugees at SKI per se. However, the way it shaped Abed and Zahi's personalities and preferences was notable and pronounced. While Abed was fully committed to his culinary entrepreneurship, Zahi pursued "swap-meet" markets selling

calligraphy and other items, thus pursuing an endeavor he was more comfortable with and that, in his mind, was more suitable for a man his age.

In the discussion above, I described the conflict that ensued when SKI changed its location without feedback or consultation from the participants. The incident highlights the urgent need for organizations such as SKI to seek buy-in from *all* its stakeholders. This need is supported by refugee literature in general and by Lave and Wenger in particular. Despite the conflict, SKI's staff and mentors were constantly supportive and provided a high level of service to the participants. During my observation and study period, I immersed myself in observing SKI's workings whether via social media or during community events and by volunteering to interpret and translate. I also did in-depth interviews with five more participants in the program as well as mentors and staff. I witnessed positive social inclusion and learning outcomes in the lives of all these participants who each managed to get their businesses in running order even before their businesses' incubation period ended. I cannot begin here to discuss the data that led to that conclusion, since those participants fall outside of my population of choice for this study. Regarding Abed and Zahi, overall, SKI led to positive inclusion outcomes for both.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on my interactions and observations of Zahi and Abed, as well as interviews I had with staff and volunteers of the SKI program.

As I explained in previous chapters, the SKI program, despite its limited resources, even in the incubation stage showed great promise by helping the participants make very concrete steps towards establishing their businesses by building personal and business relationships within the local community. Both participants felt connected to, and involved in, the community

because of SKI. Having said that, it is important to present a few recommendations that hold promise for making the program even stronger going forward.

1. The language barrier was a problem for my participants, both of whom spoke Arabic. SKI mentors relied on the skills of untrained linguists and interpreters, which was frustrating to the Arabic speaking participants. As someone who has worked as a professional applied linguist for almost three decades, I could see that many of the misunderstandings were caused by lack of an interpreter who not only could communicate the spoken words, but also who understood the mission of SKI and was in tune with the goals of the program. SKI would do well by hiring a professional interpreter(s)/translator(s) to be on staff. The services of such language professionals are also needed for help with translating training material into the languages of the participants.

2. Transparency and involvement of participants in decisions that affect the whole community is essential. As explained earlier, SKI's decision to change location and impose a different higher fee structure was a source of deep tension for the participants. Abed felt that the decision was made without consultation with the participants or preparation for what lay ahead, especially the significant changes in the fees. As I pointed out in the literature review, this seems to be a common problem in programs that serve refugees. The participants felt that much of the tension that ensued after SKI's move could have been alleviated if they were involved in the decisions that led to the move. The organization also needs to be transparent with the participants about how profits are made and spent, and how funds donated for equipment purchased are used. When SKI moved out of its old premises, the

participants lost access to equipment that was donated to help their cause, so they felt that they were taken advantage of and, in the words of one participant, they were used as "begging props" to raise money rather than members of a community. I believe that SKI's mentors and managers can benefit greatly from paying closer attention to the ideas and opinions of the refugees and making them at least feel heard and taken seriously. For example, Abed was always brimming with business ideas and innovations. I am not a culinary business expert, so I cannot judge how feasible his ideas were. However, giving such ideas serious attention and jointly evaluating them with someone like Abed would have been powerful for both Abed and his mentors' learning.

3. The mentors circle could be usefully expanded to include more contact with local business leaders (from within and outside of the culinary sector), especially those of immigrant and refugee backgrounds. At the time I was observing the program, SKI mentors accomplished their task through fund raising and community events. However, involving more local business leaders in the program would provide the participants with deeper perspectives on, and a connection with, the local culinary sector. These perspectives and relations would help the participants build more realistic plans for their businesses. They can be enriched further if the mentors are from refugee and immigrant backgrounds because that group will have deeper understanding of the strengths the refugees bring and the challenges they face. Building such relations in the business community will be a boon to social and economic inclusion. This needs to be done in an organized and systematic way and not occasionally or randomly.

Limitations of the Study

From the beginning, I knew that the main limitation of this study would be my ability to perform member checks after I finished the work of writing the life histories and associated analysis. Both Abed and Zahi were diligent about improving their English but didn't achieve enough fluency to read such a work by the time it was done. Initially, I thought that I would be able to take the work to them and explore my findings with them in person. Alas, Zahi, for unknown reasons, was not responsive to my contact attempts. As for Abed, there were several difficulties associated with a temporary move he made to California in search of better opportunity. Even though Abed's California excursion didn't last long, and he was back in Utah, COVID-19 happened and consequently we couldn't arrange for an in-person meeting to discuss the study. Given the condition of his disabled children and the fact that he and his wife have co-morbidities that make him a higher risk for the disease, he preferred to not meet. Discussing the results of this work with him on the phone was difficult.

Another limitation of this study is that it was impossible to observe the full six years of the incubation period. While I observed positive social inclusion outcomes for the participants during the time of the study it was also a time when their experience suffered high and lows that left the final outcome in question. Thus, this study cannot determine the full and final impact of the program on inclusion outcomes. During the study, I observed others in the SKI program who started with Abed and Zahi who also managed to achieve impressive outcomes in terms of owning their own restaurants and food trucks, thus achieving opportunities for a more advanced practice and less reliance on SKI for customers. However, their outcomes in terms of housing or building social networks and relationships were not better. Besides limitations on my time and resources, the other factor which prevented an expansion of this study to include such

participants was that I wanted to focus on studying Middle Eastern Muslim refugees and Abed and Zahi were the only two who met this criterion in the pool of participants I interviewed. I believe the results would've been more expansive if I had more observation time.

Finally, the results of this study, cannot be generalized or considered conclusive. During this study I accumulated an extensive dataset of interviews with the participants and their mentors, observations of events and activities, public social media posts by SKI, the participants and their family members, as well as artifacts, and approximately 300 field notes. Even though I am confident that my results can be replicated and validated, I maintain for the present that this work is exploratory and my purpose from the beginning was to investigate the terrain and determine whether there was indeed merit to the idea that communities of practice, based on LPP, can offer a more productive path for developing programs to support the social and economic inclusion for adult refugees. After spending five years observing, studying, thinking, and writing, I can conclude with confidence that this line of research is worth pursuing.

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APPENDIX A

Utah's Refugee Ecosystem
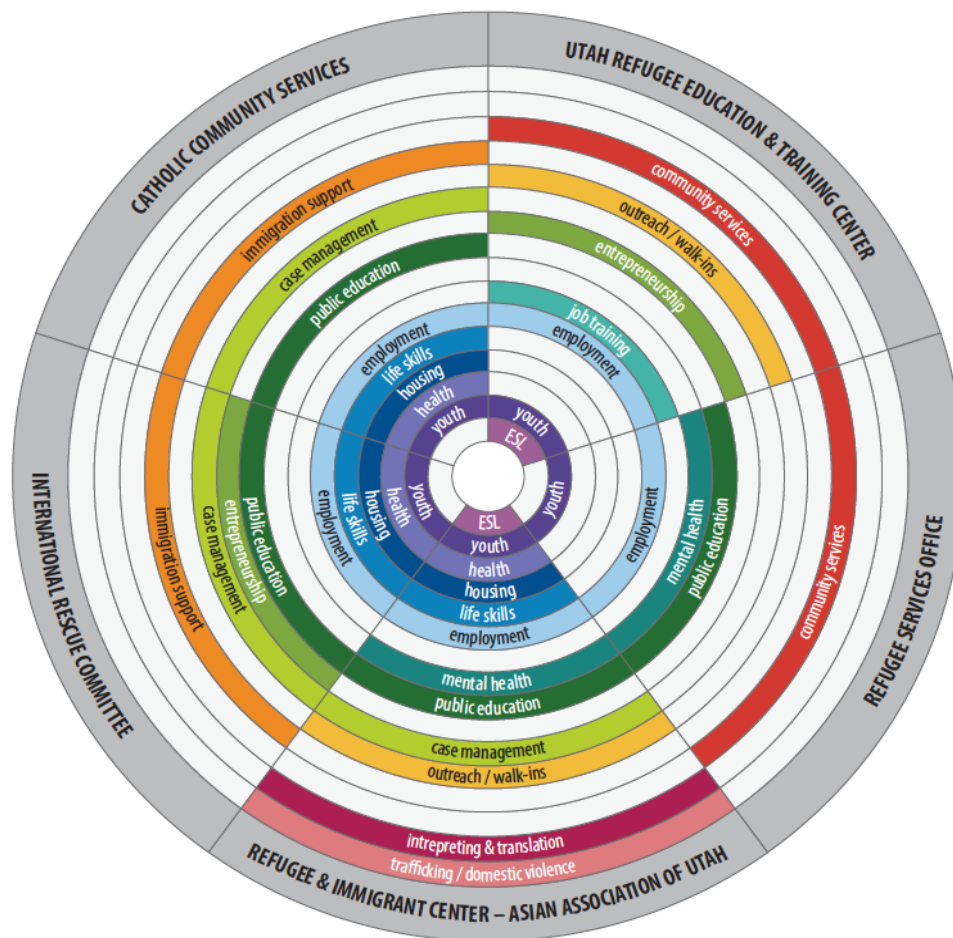
Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.

https://jobs.utah.gov/refugee/about/board/assetmapmultiwheel.pdf

APPENDIX B

Interview Protocol: Administrator Questions

AT THE START OF THE INTERVIEW:

1. Assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. Respondent's name and background will be disguised in any published account of this research.

2. Overview of the research project, to help the respondent understand our purpose. We are researchers who work at Brigham Young University. We want to understand a bit about how the Spice Kitchen works and how small businesses get started.

CAREER HISTORY: *"Tell me the story of your professional life"*

1. What level of education have you attained? Where did you get your degrees?

    1. Tell me about any training or work experience you've had to help you do your work at the Spice Kitchen.

2. What brought you to this type of a career?

3. How did you come to work for the SPICE Kitchen Incubator, Salt Lake County, or the IRC?

    1. How long have you worked for the Spice Kitchen?

4. What is your work role?

5. What types of tasks does your work involve?

6. Which of these tasks do you perform in your role with the SPICE Kitchen Incubator?

    1. How frequently do you interact with individuals in the Spice Kitchen program?

    2. How effective is this interaction?

    3. What types of interactions do you typically have with these individuals?

1. To exchange work related news or gossip (discuss confidential issues or problems)

2. To help them obtain resources or get something done

3. To brainstorm or discuss ideas

4. To get information necessary to do their job (new business)

5. For mentoring or job-related advice

6. For help or advice with work (new business) related matters

7. In your opinion and observations, what parts of the SPICE Kitchen Incubator work well?

8. In your opinion and observations, what parts of the SPICE Kitchen Incubator do not work well?

9. Can you tell me about what you consider the greatest success (or accomplishment) at the SPICE Kitchen Incubator?

10. Can you tell me about what you consider the greatest failure (or disappointment) at the SPICE Kitchen Incubator?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:

1. Describe the process an individual goes through to be accepted into the Spice Kitchen program?

2. Once accepted into the Spice Kitchen program, describe the process (stages) an individual goes through in the Spice Kitchen program?

3. Once an individual finishes the program, what role, if any, does the Spice Kitchen continue to play in the entrepreneur's new venture?

4. What changes, if any, have been made to the Spice Kitchen program in the past?

5. What changes, if any, do anticipate making to the program in the future?

6. What are some of the biggest challenges the Spice Kitchen program has faced? How have you dealt with these challenges?

7. What are some of the biggest challenges the entrepreneurs in the program have faced? How does the Spice Kitchen program help them overcome/deal with these challenges?

8. What concerns you most about these individuals trying to start a new business?

9. What other organizations/programs does the Spice Kitchen work in connection with? Expand on how you typically work together to accomplish certain tasks?

10. Which of these organizations, if any, have been most helpful to the entrepreneurs in the Spice Kitchen?

11. What have been the defining moments in the program so far?

APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol: Refugee Questions

AT THE START OF THE INTERVIEW:
1. Assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. Respondent's name and background will be disguised in any published account of this research.
2. Overview of the research project, to help the respondent understand our purpose. We are researchers who work at Brigham Young University. We want to understand a bit about how the Spice Kitchen works and how small businesses get started.

I.PERSONAL HISTORY: *"Tell me about your journey here to SLC"*
   1. Where is your family from?
من أين أسرتك؟
2. How long have you been here?
كم صارلك هون؟ (أنت هون من متى؟)
3. Could you share with me a bit about your experience as a refugee?
ما هي تجربتك كلاجئ؟ (انت جيت مباشرة على أمريكا من . . .)
4. Do you have family here in the U.S.? Please tell me a bit about them.
هل عندك عائلة في أمريكا؟ ممكن تحكيلي شوي عن عائلتك؟
5. What are some of the biggest challenges you faced in coming to the U.S. from your native country?
شو هي التحديات اللي واجهتك لما جيت لأمريكا؟
6. What do you enjoy about being here?
شو هي الأشياء اللي بتعجبك أو بتسمتع بها في أمريكا؟
7. What do you miss most about your homeland?
ما هي الأشياء التي تشتاقلها في بلدك؟
8. Have you thought about your future plans? Tell me a bit about them - your goals, hopes, dreams, etc.
هل فكرت بمخططاتك المستقبلية؟ ممكن تشاركني مخططاتك المستقبلية-أهدافك، أمنياتك، أحلامك، الخ.
9. Aside from Spice Kitchen, tell me about some of the groups you belong to (or identify with, or are a member of).
إضافة إلى السبايس كيتشن هل عندك نشاطات أو علاقات مع مؤسسات اجتماعية من هذا النوع؟
10. What are some of communities that you've found most helpful or supportive to you (and your family)?
شو هي المؤسسات الاجتماعية اللي بتعتقد أنها دعمتك، ساعدتك أو كانت مفيدة لحياتك إنت وعائلتك هون؟
II. BUSINESS HISTORY: *"Tell me the story of your business"*
   1. What kind of work did you do before coming to the U.S.?
شو كانت طبيعة عملك قبل ما تيجي إلى أمريكا؟
2. What kind of work did you do when you first arrived here?
شو اشتغلت أول ما جيت هون؟
3. When did you first have the idea to start a business?
متى خطرتلك فكرة تفتح شغل؟
4. How did you get your business started?

كيف بديت الشغل؟

5.   (If had similar business in home country): Please tell me about the similarities/differences about running a business here vs. in your home country.

(إذا كان عمله مماثل في بلده الأم): ممكن تحكيلي عن الشبه والاختلاف بين إدارة الأشغال هون وفي بلدك الأم.

6.   When you meet someone for the first time and they ask what you do, what do you say? How do you describe to other people what you do?

لما تلتقي شخص للمرة الأولى وبيسألوك عن شغلك، شو بتحكيلهم؟ كيف بتوصف للناس شو شغلك؟

7.   Describe your business: what you make/sell, where you're located, who are your customers, any other people involved (employees, investors, etc.)

اوصفلي شغلك: شو بتعمل وبتبيع، موقعك، مين زباينك، ومين بيشتغل معك (موظفين، مستثمرين، الخ.)

8.   Describe a typical work day for you: what time you get up, what your role is, what you do, breaks, when you're done, etc.

اوصفلي يوم شغل عادي: متى بتصحا، شو دورك، شو بتعمل، فترات الاستراحة، ومتى شغلك بينتهي، الخ.

9.   What concerns you most about your business? What are your biggest worries?

شو هي الأشياء اللي بتقلقك بالنسبة لشغلك؟ شو أكثر شيء بيقلقك؟

10.   How did you come in contact with the Spice Kitchen?

كيف عرفت عن السبايش كيتشن؟ وكيف تعرفت عليهم؟

11.   Aside from the Spice Kitchen, what other groups, communities, or resources have been helpful in starting and running your business?

إضافة للسبايش كيتشن هل توجد مجموعات أخرى أو جمعيات أو مصادر نفعتك لما بديت مصلحتك؟

12.   Tell me about any training or business-related experience you've had.

احكيلي عن أي تدريب حصلت عليه أو خبرات عندك في مجال إدارة الأعمال

13.   What have been the defining moments in the story of your business so far?

شو هي أهم لحظة أو لحظات بالنسبة لك في تاريخ مصلحتك حتى الآن؟ (لحظات نجاح أو خسارة أو انتكاسة)

14.   Where do you see your business going from here? What are your aspirations, hopes, or dreams relative to your business?

شو توقعاتك بالنسبة لمستقبل مصلحتك (شغلك)؟ شو هي طموحاتك، آمالك، أحلامك بالنسبة لمصلحتك؟

15.   What have been the biggest obstacles or challenges so far relative to your business? Tell us about how you have dealt or are dealing with them.

شو كانت أكبر العوائق أو التحديات بالنسبة لشغلك؟ قوللي كيف تعاملت أو بتتعامل مع التحديات.

APPENDIX D

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

SPICE KITCHEN INCUBATOR REFUGEE ENTREPRENEURS STUDY

SPICE KITCHEN INCUBATOR VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM

Hello. A group of researchers from Brigham Young University are conducting a research study of how refugees create, develop, and grow food businesses. You are invited to participate in this study. Please listen carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study. At the end of our conversation, if you agree, you'll be asked to sign a form agreeing to participate in the study.

The purpose of this study is to learn how refugees create, develop, and grow food businesses. The researchers also hope to learn how programs such as the SPICE Kitchen Incubator assist individual business owners in this process.

If you agree to be in this study, one or two researchers will conduct an initial interview with you. They will ask questions about your business, its origins and history, and your future plans to grow the business. They will also ask you to describe and list the social contacts you use in your business life, from family and friends to SPICE Kitchen Incubator personnel, to others such as bankers or accountants. They'll also ask you about how your business has performed in the past and is performing now. Specifically, they'll ask about your sales, expenses, profits, assets, liabilities, and past and future investments.

A researcher will conduct a follow-up interview with you about every three months over the next year or two to understand how your business, your social contacts, and your performance are changing.

The researchers may also observe many of the training sessions or work activities you perform in association with the SPICE Kitchen Incubator program.

There is the risk that you may find some of the questions about your job conditions to be sensitive. The researcher will ask, for example, if you operated your business and made sales before you formally registered your business, or whether or not you have employees who work in your business without going through a formal hiring and payment process.

The research team appreciates your time and willingness to participate in this study, and they realize that your time is valuable. To thank you for your participation, they've agreed with the SPICE Kitchen Incubator that for each interview you do with them (approximately one hour), they'll cover the cost of one hour's time at the SPICE Kitchen Incubator (approximately $15).

	Institutional Review Board	
BYU	9-17-2015	5-11-2016
	Approved	Expires
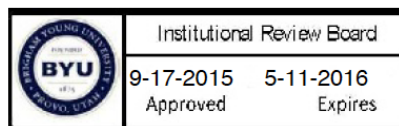
SPICE KITCHEN INCUBATOR REFUGEE ENTREPRENEURS STUDY

The process of creating, developing, and growing a food business is very demanding and has a risk of failure. The researchers hope to learn more about different ways you make failure less likely. Your contributions may help others who follow in your footsteps.

Your answers will be confidential. The conversations or notes of this study will be kept private. In any sort of public report, the researchers will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Their records will be kept in a locked file or secure computer hard drive; only the researchers will have access to the records. If they tape-record any interviews, tapes will be destroyed after they has been transcribed, which they anticipate will be within two months of its taping.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide not to take part or to skip some of the questions, it will not affect your current or future relationship with the SPICE Kitchen Incubator. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

The researcher supervising this study is Paul Godfrey. His associates are Jeff Bednar, Gibb Dyer, Jim Oldroyd, and Kurt Sandholtz.   Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Paul Godfrey at Paul_Godfrey@byu.edu or (801) 422-4522. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the BYU Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (801) 422-3606, or access their website at http://www. http://orca.byu.edu/IRB/.

You will be given a copy of the written form to keep for your records.

Do you agree to take part in the study? (If yes). Thank you. Let me show you the consent form. It contains the information I just communicated to you.

	Institutional Review Board	
BYU	9-17-2015	5-11-2016
	Approved	Expires
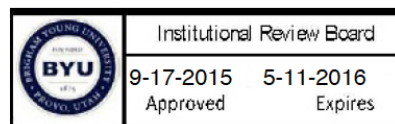
SPICE KITCHEN INCUBATOR REFUGEE ENTREPRENEURS STUDY

SPICE KITCHEN INCUBATOR VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM

You are being asked to take part in a research study of how refugees create, develop, and grow food businesses. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The purpose of this study is to learn how refugees create, develop, and grow food businesses. We also hope to learn how programs such as the SPICE Kitchen Incubator assist individual business owners in this process.

What we will ask you to do: If you agree to be in this study, we will conduct an initial interview with you. The interview will include questions about your business, its origins and history, and your plans to grow the business. We will also ask you to describe to us the social contacts you use in your business life, from family and friends to SPICE Kitchen Incubator personnel, to others such as bankers or accountants. We'll also ask you about how your business has performed in the past and is performing now. We'll ask about your sales, expenses, profits, assets, liabilities, and past and future investments.

We will conduct follow-up interviews with you about every three months to understand how your business, your social contacts, and your performance are changing over time.

We will also observe many of the training sessions or work activities you perform in association with the SPICE Kitchen Incubator program.

Risks and benefits: There is the risk that you may find some of the questions about your job conditions to be sensitive. We will ask, for example, if you operated your business and made sales before you formally registered your business, or whether or not you have employees who work in your business without going through a formal hiring and payment process.

We appreciate your time and willingness to participate in this study, and we realize that your time is valuable. To thank you for your participation, we've agreed with the SPICE Kitchen Incubator that for each interview you do with us (approximately one hour), we'll cover the cost of one hour's time at the SPICE Kitchen Incubator (approximately $15/ hour).

	Institutional Review Board	
BYU	9-17-2015	5-11-2016
	Approved	Expires

SPICE KITCHEN INCUBATOR REFUGEE ENTREPRENEURS STUDY

The process of creating, developing, and growing a food business is very demanding and has a risk of failure. We hope to learn more about different ways make failure less likely. Our learning will help others who follow in your footsteps.

Your answers will be confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we make public we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file or secure computer hard drive; only the researchers will have access to the records. If we tape-record any interviews, we will destroy the tape after it has been transcribed, which we anticipate will be within two months of its taping.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide not to take part or to skip some of the questions, it will not affect your current or future relationship with the SPICE Kitchen Incubator. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

If you have questions: The researcher supervising this study is Paul Godfrey. His associates are Jeff Bednar, Gibb Dyer, Jim Oldroyd, and Kurt Sandholtz. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Paul Godfrey at Paul_Godfrey@byu.edu or (801) 422-4522. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the BYU Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (801) 422-3606, or access their website at http://www. http://orca.byu.edu/IRB/.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.
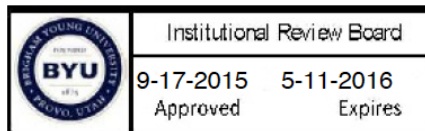
Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____   Date _____

Your Name (printed) _____

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having the interview tape-recorded.

Your Signature _____   Date _____

BYU	Institutional Review Board	
	9-17-2015	5-11-2016
	Approved	Expires

SPICE KITCHEN INCUBATOR REFUGEE ENTREPRENEURS STUDY

Signature of person obtaining consent _____ Date _____

Printed name of person obtaining consent _____ Date _____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study.

BYU	Institutional Review Board	
	9-17-2015	5-11-2016
	Approved	Expires
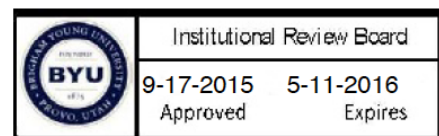
SPICE KITCHEN INCUBATOR REFUGEE ENTREPRENEURS STUDY

SPICE KITCHEN INCUBATOR STUDY INVITATION SCRIPT

Hello. A group of researchers from Brigham Young University are conducting a research study of how refugees create, develop, and grow food businesses. You are invited to participate in this study. The process of creating, developing, and growing a food business is very demanding and has a risk of failure. The researchers hope to learn more about different ways you make failure less likely.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. If you agree to be in this study, one or two researchers will conduct a series of interviews over the next year or so. They will talk with you at a time when you are already at the Incubator. They will ask questions about your business, its origins and history, and your future plans to grow the business. They will also ask you to describe and list the social contacts you use in your business life, from family and friends to SPICE Kitchen Incubator personnel, to others such as bankers or accountants. They'll also ask you about how your business has performed in the past and is performing now.

There is the risk that you may find some of the questions about your business may be sensitive. The researcher will ask, for example, if you operated your business and made sales before you formally registered your business.

Your answers will be confidential and the researchers have taken precautions to make sure your privacy and identity will be protected.

The research team appreciates your time and willingness to participate in this study, and they realize that your time is valuable. To thank you for your participation, they've agreed with the SPICE Kitchen Incubator that for each interview you do with them (approximately one hour), they'll cover the cost of one hour's time at the SPICE Kitchen Incubator (approximately $15). They will also pay any interpreter costs for performing the interview (approximately $20/ hour).

Do you agree to take part in the study? (If yes). Thank you. Let me show you the consent form. It contains the information I just communicated to you.

Institutional Review Board	
BYU 9-17-2015	5-11-2016
Approved	Expires
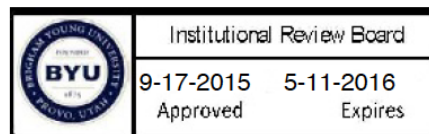
IRB # 15202: 2018 Application Renewal

Protocol Summary:

The SPICE Kitchen Incubator is a business incubator sponsored by the International Rescue Committee "that brings together refugees and other disadvantaged community members interested in starting a full or part-time food business. Spice Kitchen Incubator ensures participants receive technical assistance and training, have affordable access to commercial kitchen space and learn the steps to establishing a successful food business" (spicekitchenincubator.org). Our team has identified several research questions that we believe we can answer by studying the administrators and participants in this program, including but not limited to:

- How do immigrants and refugees move from informal to the formal economic activity and organization?
- How does an intervention like the SPICE Kitchen Incubator help in that transition? How do those in the intervention outperform a comparison group, in terms of business performance, personal income, sociopolitical legitimacy, or social capital and standing?
- How do the social networks of individuals change as they enter the mainstream economy? How do these networks contribute to personal and organizational success?
- How do personal, ethnic, organizational, and professional identities form and change as people move through a social entrepreneurship program such as the SPICE Kitchen Incubator?
- How are refugee entrepreneurs a unique population?

Participation in our research project will be completely voluntary on the part of all participants. We will use several methods of data collection methods, including a series of longitudinal interviews, direct observation, and survey instruments. We envision conducting a number of in-depth interviews at the beginning of our work with each cohort and a number of regularly-spaced, shorter interviews as they move through program. A part of the interview and tracking process will identify and map participant's social networks and how they change. We also hope to track the business transition and performance of each cohort in terms of sales growth, employment growth, profitability, and other business metrics.

Research methods and procedures:

Interviews: Initial interviews will be administered using a semi-structured format. This first wave of interviews will explore the participants' personal and career histories, as well as the histories of their respective businesses (see the attached interview protocol). The structured questions will allow for standardized comparisons across interviews while unstructured questions will allow for depth and individuality in each interview as pertinent themes begin to emerge (Spradley, 1979).

Follow-up interviews: we intend to conduct follow-up interviews with participants every three months after the initial interview. These quarterly interviews may occur for up to 2 years, depending on the cohort involved in the study. These interviews will use all three instruments.

Observations: Once we have gained the trust of the participants (judged to be when they will allow us to watch them work), we will observe them in their place of business as they go through a normal work day (Barley, 1990). With participants' permission, we will take field

notes that document what is happening, who is involved, how the participants describe what is going on (i.e., how they make sense of daily activities), etc.

Status Report:

We began interviewing refugee entrepreneurs at the SPICE Kitchen in 2017. Thus far working with the SPICE Kitchen Incubator, we have conducted interviews with 8 individuals, 3 total interviews per individual. This is a total of 24 interviews. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes to 90 minutes in length, depending on the individual and the number of previous interviews. The initial intake interview varied from 60 to 90 minutes, and the subsequent interviews were approximately 45 minutes in length. We are beginning to understand how their business networks evolve. The initial network consists primarily of SPICE Kitchen staff and administrators. We terms these vertical relationships as they involved knowledge transfer from those "in the know" to participants. We are beginning to see the evolution of horizontal networks between the participants themselves and with other individuals and entities. These networks feature problem solving advice through experience sharing and communication. The team has started modeling these relationships and the next year of our inquiry will focus on the development of these relationships as well as the changing social identities of the SPICE Kitchen participants.

Thus far there have been no adverse events, or unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others. There has been no withdrawal of subjects from the research or complaints about the research since the last IRB review. The research team maintains a strong relationship with the administrative team of the SPICE Kitchen and associated sponsor, the International Rescue Committee in Salt Lake City. To ensure protection of our research participants, we have monthly meetings with the administrative team at SPICE Kitchen to discuss participants, ask questions, and to ensure a rapport with the team. We have conducted interviews with more than a dozen SPICE Kitchen Participants, and we have conducted initial and secondary network mapping exercises with many of these individuals.

Our interim findings were presented at the Western Academy of Management 2018 conference in March 9, 2018. Thus far, we have used the interviews to fuel a theoretical paper on the definition of refugee entrepreneurs. The working paper is entitled, "Toward a Theory of Refugee Entrepreneurship." One prominent response to the arrival of refugees, from both public and private organizations, is to encourage entrepreneurship among these newly relocated individuals (Bizri, 2017; Brown & Scribner, 2014; Koltai, 2016). Facilitating refugee self-employment and new business creation remains a key element in the effort to integrate refugees culturally and economically into new locations. For example, in the United States, part of the Refugee Act of 1980 requires helping refugees become "self-sufficient" within the first year of arrival; self-employment on the part of refugees represents a major route to achieving this goal (Brown & Scribner, 2014). Related efforts to incubate entrepreneurship are spreading across Europe, the U.S., the Middle East and beyond (Mitzner, 2016; Ormiston, 2017).

However, much of the advice, support, education, and funding practices adapted from efforts to support traditional or immigrant entrepreneurs create practical challenges when applied to relocated refugees. This paper seeks to understand how the refugee experience is different than that of a migrant or immigrant entrepreneur, and also how this contrasts to a classic entrepreneur (Fisher, 2012) creating a business in their home community. In response to this situation, we use a resource-based lens and focus on the unique characteristics of relocated refugees to offer a theory of refugee entrepreneurship. This theory-building effort integrates multiple theoretical perspectives and extends the topic of entrepreneurial success. Our work

helps inform our collective understanding of business creation in extreme conditions and offers theoretical and practical insights on the issue of incorporating many types of non-traditional entrepreneurs into communities. Herein, we clarify the concept of "refugee entrepreneur" and explore the resource configurations typical of this population. We argue that refugee entrepreneurs deserve study in their own right (i.e. separate from immigrant entrepreneurs) and suggest that a theory of refugee entrepreneurship can increase our understanding of discovery versus creation entrepreneurship (Alvarez & Barney, 2007), entrepreneurial bricolage (Baker & Nelson, 2005) and resource (re)allocation after extreme loss. Such an understanding has implications for the linkages between entrepreneurship and resilience (Williams, Sutcliffe, Gruber & Sheppard, 2017) as well as for extending the study of entrepreneurship in the face of severe resource constraints.

We are including our consent and recruiting materials in this application, which remain unchanged. As you recall, given the nature of the population we are dealing with, we used a recruiting script and obtained verbal commitment, after which we gave participants a copy of the consent materials. As we continue this research, we would like the IRB protocol to remain the same. We have no further modifications or amendments to the IRB.

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