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To cite this article:

Published online: 1st November 2020

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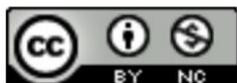
Equitable Education: Opportunity and Entrepreneurship within the Spatio-Temporal Liminality of the Refugee Camp

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Abstract

Refugees are spending increasingly protracted amounts of time in refugee camps, 'waiting' for a distant future outside of the camp to arrive. The notion of the camp as a temporary space of transition is contradicted by a reality in which this state of being 'in limbo' becomes indefinite, and at times even permanent. This essay presents a critical literature review to investigate what 'equitable education' means within this spatio-temporally liminal context of refugee settlement camps. While Amartya Sen's capability approach and John Rawls' theory of justice underpin many conceptualizations of equity, these do not hold in the inhumane condition of 'bare life', where refugees' freedoms and rights are limited, and futures are continually delayed. Alternative reconceptualizations of the camp as a 'third space' of opportunity – with its refugee inhabitants as entrepreneurs rather than helpless victims – are supporting currently popular policies of (neo-liberal) self-reliance. By examining different interpretations of the triangle of concepts of 'equity', 'refugee camp' and 'refugee' within a framework of spatio-temporal liminality, this essay attempts to show that none of the various approaches discussed are unproblematic. Non-formal, self-led entrepreneurship education, however, may provide a chance to soften the ambiguous tensions of living in time-spaces of liminality, and facilitate a shift from education focussed on indefinitely delayed futures outside the camp towards supporting refugees' creation of possible futures within the camp, 'here and now'.

Resumen

Los refugiados pasan cada vez más tiempo en campamentos, 'esperando' por un futuro distante fuera de esas instalaciones. La idea del campamento como un espacio temporal de transición está en contradicción con la realidad en la que la condición de estar 'en el limbo' se convierte en indefinida y, algunas veces, permanente. Este ensayo presenta una revisión crítica de la literatura que estudia el significado del término 'educación equitativa' dentro del contexto de la liminalidad espacio-temporal de los asentamientos de refugiados. A pesar de que tanto el enfoque basado en las capacidades de Amartya Sen como la teoría de la justicia de John Rawls apuntalan diversas conceptualizaciones de equidad, ninguno de estos se sostiene en la inhumana condición de 'nuda vida' en la que las libertades y los derechos de los refugiados se encuentran limitadas y sus futuros son continuamente postergados. Reconceptualizaciones alternativas de los campamentos como un 'tercer espacio' de oportunidad –con los refugiados residentes vistos como emprendedores más que como víctimas indefensas– respaldan políticas de autosuficiencia populares vigentes (neo-liberales). Este ensayo pretende mostrar mediante el análisis de diferentes interpretaciones del triángulo formado por los conceptos de 'equidad', 'campamento de refugiados' y 'refugiado' dentro del marco de la liminalidad espacio-temporal que todas las aproximaciones discutidas son problemáticas. Sin embargo, la educación no formal emprendedora podría proporcionar una oportunidad para amortiguar las ambiguas tensiones de vivir en tiempo-espacios de liminalidad, y facilitar el desplazamiento desde la educación enfocada en futuros indefinidamente postergados fuera de los campamentos hacia el apoyo a los refugiados en la creación de futuros posibles dentro del campamento, 'aquí y ahora'.

ملخص:
يقضي اللاجئون على نحو متزايد فترات مطولة في مخيمات اللاجئين" مترقبين "حينونة مستقبل بعيد خارج المخيم .إن فكرة المخيم كمساحة مؤقتة للانتقال تتناقض مع حقيقة أن العيش داخل المخيمات في" حالة معلقة "أصبحت حالة لأجل غير مسمى وفي بعض الأحيان حالة دائمة .يقدم هذا المقال مراجعة نقدية   لدراسة معنى" التعليم العادل "سياق الحدود الزمانية والمكانية لمخيمات توطين اللاجئين .ففي حين أن نظرية "منهج القدرات" ل "أمارتيا سن" ونظرية جون راولز للعدالة تعززان العديد من المفاهيم حول مفهوم المساواة، إلا أن هذه المفاهيم غير قابلة للتطبيق في ظل الظروف اللاإنسانية المتمثلة بـ "الحياة المجردة" للاجئين، حيث حرياتهم وحقوقهم مقيدة، ومستقبلهم قيد التأجيل باستمرار . إن إعادة صياغة مفاهيم المخيم على أنه" مساحة ثالثة "للفرص – حيث يكون اللاجئون رواد أعمال بدلا من ضحايا لا حول لهم ولا قوة - تدعم السياسات الحالية التي تؤكد على الاعتماد على الذات) الليبرالية الجديدة). يحاول هذا المقال -من خلال دراسة التفسيرات المختلفة لمثلث المفاهيم المتمثل بـ "المساواة" و"اللاجئين" و"مخيم اللاجئين" ضمن إطار الحدود الزمانية والمكانية -ايضاح أن المنهجيات المختلفة التي تمت مناقشتها غير معقدة. ومع ذلك، قد يوفر التعليم غير الرسمي للمشاريع الذاتية فرصةً لتخفيف التوترات المبهمة الناجمة عن الوجود ضمن قيود زمانية ومكانية، كما أنه يسهل الانتقال من حالة التعليم الذي يركز على مستقبل مؤجل إلى أجل غير مسمى خارج حدود المخيم، إلى دعم اللاجئين في خلق مستقبل ممكن داخل المخيم منذ اللحظة الحالية ومن داخل المخيم.

Introduction

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) describes the refugee camp as "intended as a temporary accommodation for people who have been forced to flee their home because of violence and persecution" (UNHCR, n.d., What is a Refugee Camp[1]?). In reality, however, many camps turn into spaces of permanent settlement and start to resemble cities of their own. The UNHCR acknowledges the 'evolution' of the refugee camp into a 'protracted' living situation and the accompanying need for refugees to receive long term care (para. 2). Camps are now "communities filled with people preparing for brighter futures", with new challenges like ensuring access to education for children and helping prepare refugees for life after the camp (para. 2).

UNHCR's discursive emphasis on phrases like 'preparing for the future' and 'life after the camp' shows that the camp is spatio-temporally treated as a place of liminality.[2] Spatially, the camp is designed as a point of passing-through, a mere lay-over spot on the way to a final destination elsewhere. Temporally speaking, 'the future' is situated outside the camp, turning the camp into a spatio-temporal 'waiting room' (Arvanitis, Yelland, & Kiprianos, 2019). Time itself becomes suspended for an undefined duration, such that even life itself is put on hold – even though the clock continues ticking. Education in this context of waithood is focused on preparing for 'life after' the camp, while it is uncertain whether that future will ever arrive.

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[1] While this essay takes educational 'equity' as its main concept of focus, I use the concepts of 'the camp' and 'the refugee' as framing devices to push my discussion of equity beyond discourses of state-based development and into the ambiguous localization of statelessness in time and space.

[2] In this essay, I use 'discursive' as a Foucauldian concept, whereby 'discourse' refers to ways of constituting knowledge and meaning-making that are shaped by power relations (such as those between UNHCR and refugees)

The ambiguity of UNHCR in their dealing with 'the camp' gives rise to further paradoxes with regards to the dire position of refugees. The increasingly common reality of refugees spending decades or even lifetimes in settlement camps requires us to reimagine the potential for equitable educations, futurities and mobilities within the camp, to start enabling 'individual destinies' without forever delaying them. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) already stress the importance of education becoming more 'equitable'. Yet what does equitable education mean in the context of stateless refugee education in settlement camps? This is the core research question that this essay will seek to address, in relation to the described tension of delayed futures and suspended presents.

One way in which governmental structures of camps have dealt with increased waiting times, has been to encourage the liberal value of 'self-reliance' rather than aid dependency (Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018). While much of the research on refugee education has focused on how to 'empower' the powerless, entrepreneurial refugees in camps are often overlooked and not met with adequate support to develop their potential. Yet simultaneously, this shift towards modern 'innovation' risks being a mere cancellation of humanitarian support resembling neoliberal state withdrawal. The changing conceptualization of the camp as a space that harbours within itself the opportunity for development and the possibility of self-reliant future life clashes with depictions of the refugee camp as inhumane and lacking opportunity. Amongst these different, opposing approaches to understanding the space of the refugee camp and its inhabitants, where does that leave the admirable, yet admittedly vague, SDG goal of 'equitable education for all'?

In this essay, I grapple with these complex conceptual interconnections in a structural approach that may be visualized as a triangle, made up of the concepts of 'equity', the 'refugee camp', and the figure of 'the refugee', with the question of education placed at its centre, surrounded and shaped by the interrelations between these different concepts for which various interpretations exist. This triangle in turn appears against the backdrop of my guiding concern with spatio-temporal liminality, and the problem of continuously postponed futures, and therefore indefinitely suspended presents. Instead of education preparing for a future *elsewhere* that never arrives, how can education become more equitable by addressing present educational needs *here and now*? My methodological approach to investigate these conceptual conflicts is a theoretical one, presented in the form of an extensive literature review that examines some of the different ways in which these various concepts have been dealt with in scholarly work thus far. My critique focuses in particular on Amartya Sen's capabilities approach, and John Rawls' theory of justice, as these theories – with their heavy focus on 'distribution' – have deeply influenced academic work on (educational) equity and justice thus far. As I will argue in this essay, these approaches become problematic in the liminal space of the refugee camp, where futures are continually delayed. While much has been written to address the issue of liminality in refugee camps, and to theorize the question of equity in education, these debates have been insufficiently put into conversation with one another. I therefore seek to address this literature gap with my essay.

Whilst working at a theoretical level to develop this critical literature review, it is undesirable to speak in general terms encompassing all refugee camps, or all refugees, without acknowledging the diversity that exists between and within particular country contexts, camp infrastructures and refugee communities. In this essay, I aim to emphasize that there is no single, unified answer to the question of what equitable education means within refugee camp contexts. Through an examination of different operationalisations of the triangle of concepts of 'equity', 'refugee camp' and 'refugee' within the framework of spatio-temporal liminality, I attempt to show that none of the various approaches discussed in this essay are unproblematic. By exploring the conceptual issues arising, however, I hope to contribute by adding more nuance and complexity to the theoretical discussions around equitable education.

Essay Outline

My core research question asks what the concept of equitable education means within the spatio-temporal liminality of the refugee settlement camp. In order to investigate this principal question, this essay follows a triangular structure, with each of its three parts focusing on the research question from a different conceptual angle. [3] The first part examines key theories and definitions surrounding the concept of equity. Taking a closer look at equity through the lens of social justice, I will discuss Amartya Sen's theory of capabilities next to John Rawls' theory of distributive justice and John Roemer's ideas about equal opportunity to form a framework through which to think about equity and fairness in an educational context.

In the second part, I unpack the concept of equity in relation to education within the refugee camp. With the help of Hannah Arendt, I approach the idea of 'the camp' as a stateless and extraterritorial landscape located in suspended time and transitory space. I also discuss the concept of 'liminality' in depth. Next, I indicate ways in which the influential theories from Rawls and Sen become problematic when applied to the camp context. I use Giorgio Agamben's biopolitical notion of 'bare life' as a theory that addresses the extra-societal and inhumane aspects of the camp.

The third part critiques dominant discourses around 'the refugee' to emphasize the heterogeneity amongst those who are stateless. I critique the reconceptualization of liminality as a (third) space of hybridity, possibility and opportunity with the help of Homi Bhabha and Eugenia Arvanitis, and I argue that the connected value of self-reliance ambiguously clashes with dependence-focused discourses. I point into new directions that the concept of equity might take in this context of 'do-it-yourself' (DIY) approaches to education and examine the emergence of refugee-led entrepreneurship education. Returning to the central issue of time and temporality, I stress the potential that lies within non-formal, self-led spaces of entrepreneurship education as a way to support refugees' present educational needs to work

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[3] I opted to divide the main body of my essay into three parts, because this structure most effectively accommodates the triangular constellation of terminology upon which my argument relies: the concept of equity, the context of the camp and the figure of the refugee.

towards better futures *here and now*, rather than towards indefinitely delayed futures *elsewhere*. Yet I also raise critical questions concerning this turn to self-sufficiency, particularly its problematic links to neoliberalism, and how this risks burdening refugees themselves with the responsibility to accomplish social justice without taking past injustices into account.

The conclusion will restate the argument made that there is no singular or straightforward answer to the question of what the concept of 'equitable education' means within the spatio-temporally liminal refugee camp. Instead, attempts to answer this question depend firstly on the adopted understanding of equity, which in this essay has been a social justice approach. A second factor such an answer depends on is the conceptualization of spatio-temporal liminality in relation to the refugee camp context. Finally, the value of 'self-reliance' replacing 'dependency' changes expectations around the conceptual figure of the refugee and shifts their role from *receiving* access to opportunities to *creating* opportunities oneself through entrepreneurship. It remains necessary to approach these developmental 'innovations' with critical cautiousness, due to their neo-liberal resonance and historical neglect. Nevertheless, this approach may provide a way out of the ambiguous bind of waiting for futures that may never arrive, towards a form of equitable education focused on creating livelihoods in the here and now.

Part 1. Equity in Education: Perspectives on Justice, Distribution and Opportunity

In 2015, the SDGs were presented as key areas of focus for development for the next fifteen years. Goal 4 aims to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". Yet the terminology used in this statement is contested. I therefore firstly discuss definitions of equity employed by organisations and academic sources, to then more narrowly approach 'equity' through the lens of social justice.

Equitable Education (Un)defined

Institutions of global governance involved with education and SDG implementation have attempted to define what 'equity' is and how it can be measured. These definitions typically focus on how resources, opportunities and/or capabilities are distributed across the population.[4] Embedded within dominant institutional discourses of economic development, 'equity' is seen as instrumental to employment and market growth. The World Bank explicitly connects inequality of opportunity to underdevelopment, and emphasizes links between equity and distribution, leading to the eradication of poverty (World Bank, 2006).

The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) established the International Observatory on Equity and Inclusion in Education, which specifies 'equity' in target 4.5 of SDG4: "Eliminate gender

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[4] This focus on distribution of resources and/or capabilities heavily relies on theories put forth by John Rawls and Amartya Sen, which I will unpack and critique in depth further on.

disparities and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations" (UIS, Equity in Education, n.d.). The OECD also points to equitable education as a defining factor for growth of wealth, with high financial costs of 'educational failure' for society (OECD, 2008). They identify two aspects of equity: fairness and inclusion. Fairness means that personal or social circumstances should not be an obstacle to achieving educational potential, while inclusion ensures that a minimum standard of education is obtained by all learners.

Following the OECD, some scholars have focused on equity as inclusion (Ainscow 2016). Others point out that equity is closely connected to quality (Rose and Alcott, 2015). Defining 'equity' quickly becomes a messy undertaking in which entanglements with other concepts such as inclusion, fairness and quality are bound to occur. While these concepts are indeed related and partly overlapping, research into equitable education would benefit from clearer distinctions between terms used (Rodriguez & Morrison, 2019). Following the formulation of the fourth SDG in its separation of 'inclusion' from 'equity' and 'quality', I find it most useful to consider equity in the light of the second aspect that the OECD mentions, namely that of 'social justice', while juxtaposing equity to 'equality'.

In his chapter *What is Equity?* for the World Bank report, Stephan Klasen points out that while 'equality' for economists is an idealistic concept and negatively associated with communism, 'equity' is less radical, better achievable and positively associated with fairness (World Bank, 2006, p. 70). While equality of distribution is concerned with quantity and therefore a more objective matter of fact, equity depends on an ethical judgement of what is a fair distribution, which is a more subjective matter (Bronfenbrenner, 1973). I follow Jacob and Holsinger in taking equality to refer to "the state of being equal in terms of quantity, rank, status, value or degree", while equity "considers the social justice ramifications of education in relation to the fairness, justness and impartiality of its distribution at all levels or educational sub-sectors" (2009, p. 4).

Does Unequal Distribution Equal Equitable Opportunity?

The question now arises what this understanding of equity means when applied to the question of education. Building on equity as social justice, Oghenekohwo argues that "equity in educational provision, unlike access to education, is determined by resource allocation and distributive efficiency" (Oghenekohwo & Torunarigha, 2018, p. 12). Here again, it is helpful to understand equity by contrasting it with equality. An equal distribution of educational provision would suggest that available resources are equally divided amongst all members of a community. Yet in an unequal society, where learners differ in terms of socio-economic status, gender, race, ethnicity and ability, an equal distribution of resources fails to address such inequalities. Equality therefore does not equal equity, since the more privileged learners already have a head start and face less barriers. Oghenekohwo points out that *equitable*

education establishes a "reversal of discrimination against those who are already disadvantaged for any exclusion reason" (p. 12).

He furthermore states that equitable educational provision requires provision of equal opportunities regardless of social, ethnic or religious circumstances determined by birth (p. 12). This view echoes the theory of distributive justice developed by John Rawls, which lies at the heart of many of the above listed interpretations of equity. Rawls uses the thought experiment of the 'veil of ignorance' to imagine what makes a just society. When decision makers do not know the physical, biological and social circumstances they would be born into, they will distribute 'primary goods' in a way that benefits the most underprivileged (Rawls, 1999). In order to 'reverse' discrimination, an unequal distribution of educational provisions is according to Rawls only justified when this benefits the most disadvantaged and when such inequalities would gain democratic approval within this hypothetical society. This makes Rawls a political egalitarianist in favour of *equal* participation in democracy, while social justice hinges on *unequal* distribution. As such, inequality can lead to equity.

The problem here though, is that social justice encompasses more than mere distribution models of primary goods. For in Rawls' theory, it becomes the individual's responsibility to effectively use the distributed goods. Inequity is likely to reoccur at this stage, since final outcomes depend on motivation and personal investment, as well as natural capacity, talents or preferences. Some have argued that 'equity' regards only the absence of socially constructed inequalities, not the natural ones (Oghenekohwo & Torunarigha, 2018). Roemer similarly argues that biologically rooted differences are a form of 'acceptable inequality'. He proposes a 'responsibility-sensitive egalitarianism', according to which each society assigns a level of accountability to its members (Roemer & Trannoy, 2016).

Yet others, most notably Amartya Sen, criticise Rawls' approach and argue that individuals vary greatly in their ability to transform resources into results. Sen coins the term 'functionings', which are different desirable states of 'beings and doings', and the term 'capabilities', which are sets of functionings that a person effectively has access to (Sen, 2001). A person's capability represents the freedom and agency one has to choose and pursue the 'functionings' of their desired life. Sen defines 'poverty' as capability deprivation and argues that 'human development' ultimately comes down to having the freedom to live the life of one's own choice (2001). Equity for Sen thus focuses on a fair distribution of capabilities rather than of 'primary goods'.

A common issue with both Rawls and Sen, however, is the underlying assumption that people are members of political communities through citizenship, with logistical structures in place that enable any kind of 'distribution' in the first place. In refugee camps, such assumptions do not apply, which problematizes any attempts to think about equitable education in terms of distributive justice. The next part therefore illustrates how Rawls and Sen lose validity when applied to the exclusionary, inhumane, unfree context of the refugee camp. What happens to

'social justice' when the 'social contract' is taken away? What does 'fair' education mean in liminal places where time has slowed down to the point that 'future life' is no longer a given?

Part 2. In(de)finite Temporariness: Stuck in Transitional Space and Suspended Time

This part looks at the limits of distributive justice theories in the context of the refugee camp. To do so, I firstly conceptualize the 'settlement camp' as a stateless place characterized by spatio-temporal liminality and waithood. I then argue that Rawls' and Sen's approaches become problematic within spaces of transition and times of stagnation. Due to being excluded from political society and deprived of the Arendtian 'right to have rights' (Arendt, 2017, p. 338), a more suitable theory comes from Agamben's notion of 'bare life'. In this part of my essay, the pressing issue of spatio-temporal liminality features prominently. For when education prepares refugees for futures *outside* the camp, which are increasingly unlikely to ever arrive (due to transitory spaces turning into permanent homes), social justice *within* the camp remains forever awaited yet always out of sight.

Existing in the Here and Now of a 'Nowhere' to Be Found

Much educational research literature describes refugees as a disadvantaged group within contexts of resettlement and integration into a host society (see, for instance, Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Mzayek, 2019; Ryu & Tuvilla, 2018). Understanding equity as a just distribution of educational provisions, equitable refugee education would require allocating a relatively higher amount of resources to this group within a (host) state. Yet those living in refugee camps find themselves falling 'in between', or right at "the threshold between states" (Mountz, 2011, p. 382). Refugees are stuck at the border between their place of departure and their place of arrival, without belonging to either (Dale & Burrell, 2007). Indeed, rather than inclusion into society, what defines the camp is the way in which it "contains unwanted populations separately from society" (Katz, 2017, p.2). Camps are places where 'undesirables' are kept confined, controlled and out of sight (Agier, 2010).

More so even, camps are places of 'double exclusion', for refugees inhabiting them are excluded both from their countries of origin as well as from the local population of the state in which the camp is situated (Agier, 2010). Since access to any jurisdictional territory - and thereby any political community – is denied, what is ultimately denied to refugees is 'the right to have rights' (Arendt, 2017). The denial of citizenship, identified by Wacquant as a "central pivot of exclusionary closure and of entitlement to transfers, goods, and services of the national collectivity," causes a gap in basic access to rights and benefits (Wacquant, 1996, p.129). No longer a political figure, the refugee becomes a 'humanitarian case', with UNHCR and NGOs stepping in to form 'humanitarian governments', which have undemocratically turned 'against politics' (Agier, 2010).

The 'camp' is not a homogeneous category either. Arendt distinguishes between 'displaced peoples' camps, labour camps, and concentration camps (Arendt, 2017). When looking closely at the first category, 'camps' are often distinguished from 'settlements', whereby differences include the duration of stay, severity of control and amount of free mobility (Malkki, 1995). Yet UNHCR often lists 'settlements' as 'camps' and the combined notion of 'settlement camp' is not uncommon either (Schmidt & Bakewell, 2006). Indeed, UNHCR's definition of camps as 'protracted living situations' is merely a safer way of saying 'long term' refugee situations (Jamal, 2003). Institutional use of terminologies is highly political, since acknowledging the camp as a 'settlement' brings about a need for more durable solutions, which is costly and politically charged (Schmidt & Bakewell, 2006). What is conveniently framed as 'temporary' from the outside, is realistically lived as 'permanent' from within. The notion 'settlement camp' is therefore an ambiguous time-space of in(de)finite temporariness. When refugee education remains directed towards continuously delayed, or even fully cancelled futures outside of these 'permanently temporary' spaces, without acknowledging the likelihood of futures being located inside the camp, such education is only removing itself further from the objective of attaining any kind of equity at all.

To understand the ambiguity of this conflicted time-space more fully, the following analogy may bring some clarification. Given the intended purpose of refugee camps as temporary places of stop-over where people pass through on their way from A to B, they arguably resemble spaces of transit found in airports. Although geographically within the territory of the state in which that airport is located, passengers passing through this space are not entering its legislative territory. Similarly, refugee camps are characterized by a "legal and jurisdictional ambiguity that inhibits access to rights and protections encoded in domestic and international law" (Mountz, 2011, p. 381). While in transit, the passenger gets temporarily trapped in a 'non-location' situated in an unlocalizable 'nowhere'.[5] Yet this spatial vacuum is simultaneously heavily bordered, with movement restricted and highly monitored, since as soon as one leaves the realm of the unacknowledged 'nowhere' to enter into a sovereign 'somewhere', some (state) body becomes responsible for their rights and wellbeing.

Such spaces of transit are designed to be spent only limited time in, yet when that outgoing connecting flight gets delayed or even cancelled entirely, one is forced to stay 'in limbo' for an undetermined amount of time. A state of waithood begins, which is associated with liminality, in-betweenness and ambivalence in time and space (Mzayek, 2019, p. 369). While the present is put on hold, the inhabitants of such spaces are forced to look forward to the end of endless temporariness. Most efforts to settle within this space are discouraged, unwanted and actively restrained. As UNHCR points out, the camp is defined by "some degree of limitation on the rights and freedoms of refugees, such as their ability to move freely, choose where to live, work or open a business, cultivate land or access protection and services" (UNHCR, n.d., p. 12). The camp is thus also a space of fundamental unfreedom.

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[5] 'Kakuma' (Kenya), one of the largest refugee camps in Africa, literally means 'nowhere' in Swahili

The concept of 'liminality' has anthropological roots and was initially used by Victor Turner to describe rites of passage (Turner, 1967). Liminality is seen here as a momentary threshold, which is crossed over while individuals move into a new state of being, before getting reintegrated back into society as transformed community members (Turner, 1969). Yet when stagnation occurs right at this stage of becoming, which is 'neither here nor there', the passenger gets stuck in a solitary state of confinement, separated from its past society while not yet part of a new one. Not only can one speak of 'temporal' and 'spatial' liminality, but also of 'ontological' liminality since the liminal persona internalizes liminal being and starts to identify with it (O'Reilly, 2018, p. 834). In this ambiguous state of being within a space of becoming, one's 'beingness' is simultaneously denied. For how can one exist in the here and now of a 'nowhere' to be found? As the present becomes suspended, consequentially life itself becomes suspended too, arguably along with any possibility for equitable education. For where to find fairness in preparing for a future indefinitely placed on hold?

Problems of 'Bare Life' Laid Bare in Rawls and Sen

This localisation of the refugee camp as a spatio-temporally liminal place disconnected from society poses powerful challenges to the question what equitable education means. One issue with Rawls' theory of justice is his assumption that the groups of people amongst whom the 'primary goods' are distributed, are all part of society. Yet as seen above, refugee camps are often excluded from the legislature of the state whose territory the camp is geographically, but not jurisdictionally, located in. Rawls' idea that 'justified inequalities' would gain democratic approval, loses its validity in the extra-societal context of the refugee camp. When it comes to Sen's capabilities theory, the context of the refugee camp does illustrate the importance of capabilities, freedom and choice. Based on UNCHR's previously cited account of the camp as a place of 'limited freedom' to move or create a desired livelihood (lack of free choice), the camp may well be seen as a place of *poverty par excellence* when adopting Sen's definition of poverty as 'capability deprivation' (Sen, 2001).

A key problem with Sen, however, is the tacit assumption that all people have certain 'beings and doings' they freely aspire to. To set goals in life, such as farming a plot of land or starting a business, what you need first and foremost is the prospect of a future. For Sen, human development revolves precisely around the evolvement of this free will, developing as such the defining trait of what it means to be *human*. Yet for refugees living in protracted circumstances, this 'future' – explicitly located by the UNHCR outside of the camp – is highly uncertain, hypothetical and distant (O'Reilly, 2018). Caught in between past and future, the present becomes filled by what Brekke calls 'directionless time' (Brekke, 2004, p. 28). When the freedom to envision a future is taken away and replaced with waithood, temporariness and delay, this often results in boredom and lethargy (O'Reilly, 2018).

To explain this severely *inhumane* feature of life in camps, numerous scholars have turned to Giorgio Agamben's distinction between 'bare life' and 'good life' (see, for instance, Edkins,

2000; Ek, 2006; Katz, 2017). The state of 'bare life' results from being excluded from state and society, where the figure of the 'homo sacer' is deprived of his rights, his citizenship and human dignity. Bare life is what is left of human life "when the prospects of life, with all of its potential, possibilities, and forms are reduced to sheer biological life" (Katz, 2017, p. 2). In other words, when life is stripped of future prospects, it is stripped of its humanity. Within the resulting 'inhumane' contexts, life revolves around surviving biologically (Agamben, 1998). In contrast, the 'good life' allows one to thrive as a human being, due to being included in a political society with all benefits of rights and citizenship. Characterizing the refugee camp as an extraterritorial and extra-societal place without citizenship, sovereign jurisdiction and legislature, the camp is a place where the state of 'exception' becomes the rule (Edkins, 2000, p. 6).

This ambiguous condition that the context of the camp puts its inhabitants in, has problematized both Rawls and Sen. I previously showed that equitable education in this extra-juridical, extra-societal landscape of spatio-temporal suspense cannot be achieved through fair distribution of resources or capability enhancement. In search of a solution, some scholars critiqued the reductionist characterisation of the camp as a 'waiting room' where refugees depend on aid to survive this 'bare life'. Alternatively, the liminal camp has been reimagined as an (urban) space of hybridity and opportunity, with education increasingly focused on refugees' needs and livelihoods here and now. The next part will explore this argument and critically assess what equity as social justice means when the refugee becomes seen as an 'entrepreneurial' figure of agency capable of self-reliance, within the camp now seen as a (neo-liberal) landscape of undefined possibilities.

Part 3. Rethinking the Liminal Camp: A Space of Opportunity for Entrepreneurship

This third part firstly interrogates how literature has dealt with the figure of 'the refugee'. I discuss how, instead of seeing refugees as a problem to be solved and the camp as a place to be controlled, the refugee camp can be reconceptualised as an urban platform of opportunity. I will critique the promotion of 'self-reliance' linked to the idea of creating one's own opportunities through entrepreneurship. Education can play an important role in supporting and preparing refugees for a 'future' of self-sustainable livelihood in the 'here and now' of the camp. Yet here too, I will point to limitations of this approach, particularly the link to neoliberalism and historical neglect.

Liminality as a Space of Hybridity, Possibility and Agency

Commonly employed discourses and imagery of 'the refugee' tend to be heavy with victimhood, passivity, helplessness and marginalisation (Ryu & Tuvilla, 2018). Refugees are portrayed as a problem or even danger, while the increasingly popular phrase of 'real refugees' shows increased suspicion with regards to who is 'genuine' and who is 'fake' (2018, p. 541). Malkki warns against essentialisations that are commonly made about 'the refugee' and their

'refugee experience', as they feed into rigid expectations as to what a refugee should be, act, look or behave like (Malkki, 1995, p. 510) . Ryu and Tuvilla (2018) raise important concerns with regards to the ways in which schools educating refugees are influenced by such discourses, and point to the dangers of internalisation when disempowering narratives around themes like trauma and hardship are overemphasized. With regards to Agamben's 'homo sacer', similar critiques have been expressed (Katz, 2017; Ramadan, 2012).

Arvanitis asks how these dominant discourses can be resisted and builds on the notion of 'speechless emissary' coined by Malkki, which indicates the image of the refugee as someone whose voice and story are irrelevant to institutional powers (Arvanitis, Yelland & Kiprianos, 2019, p. 135). Arvanitis (2019) identifies a tension between victimhood and agency within the figure of the 'refugee' and argues that liminality can be conceptualized not just as a space of ambiguity, but also of possibilities, negotiation and hybridity. This undetermined and indeed open-ended character of being 'neither here nor there' but rather 'in-between', is indicated by Homi Bhabha as the 'third space' (Bhabha, 2004). Liminal space is one of hybridity, where cultures, identities and ideas meet, interact, and interrogate each other, resulting in the creation of new forms of 'cultural hybridity' (2004). As such, the liminal can alternatively be seen as a space of undefined openness and opportunity.

My main objection against this understanding is that the refugee camp now becomes heavily idealized. Although the 'third space' presents us with a theoretically attractive way of imaging liminal spaces, in practice the lived reality is far from ideal, free or open. What this new approach does effectively accommodate, however, is a move away from camps as purely biopolitical spaces of Agambian 'bare life' towards ways of reconceptualising them as urban spaces offering new political horizons, similar to other spaces of urban marginality (Sanyal, 2014). Agier refers to this as "socio-spatial city-camps", where new identities emerge (Agier, Nice, & Wacquant, 2002). Understanding the camp as a city, with refugees having a 'right to the city', leads to new conceptions of politics, urbanity and citizenship (Grbac, 2013).

The DIY-Approach to Creating Opportunities

The focus in educational research on refugees as 'helpless' brings about at least three risks: besides disempowering internalisation effects, a second issue lies in making gross generalisations with regards to refugees. Thirdly, the focus on the figure of the 'helpless' refugee risks overlooking those refugees who are proactive and self-empowering from within. For research has shown that refugees no longer wish to become too independent, for fear that UNHCR may take support away (Kaiser, 2002). Organisational support thus relies on the need to look, act and behave like the stereotypical image of the refugee as a 'dependent' figure. As such, an exclusive focus on the 'marginalised' risks committing social injustices towards those who refuse to fit that image. To restore refugees' dignity and agency, the promotion of 'self-reliance' has become increasingly popular in camp management (Easton-Calabria & Omata,

2018).[6] This shift forms a sharp contrast with dominant discourses of passivity and dependency.

Concrete examples of this approach applied to education can be found in the refugee-led educational innovation hubs for sustainable development, which have opened up in camps as non-formal spaces of learning.[7] Initiatives like 'Opportunigee' in Nakivale camp (Uganda) or 'SINA Loketa' in Bidi Bidi camp (Uganda) are examples of non-formal education spaces founded and run by refugees, to provide entrepreneurship training to other refugees in the form of mentorship, workshops, self-development courses and access to learning resources like laptops. These educational organisations support their students in building up sustainable livelihoods within their present contexts, here and now, rather than preparing for an indefinitely delayed future elsewhere.[8] In settlement camps like Nakivale, where 'settling' is indeed common among refugees, the cause of social justice is in large part upheld by refugees themselves, and revolves around creating one's own opportunities, without 'waiting' for organisations like UNHCR or the government to step in.[9]

This DIY- approach, however, is not free from issues either. Some scholarly work has already pointed out concerns regarding problematic links between self-sufficiency and neoliberalism (Betts, Chaara, Omata, & Sterck, 2019; Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018). For while a focus on dependency may be inequitable towards self-reliant refugees, the neo-liberal model of self-reliance does not necessarily encourage independent refugees either – in fact, support may merely be taken away from those who rely on it, rather than become extended. The tendency to focus on marketization of the camp and capitalisation of refugee productivity, combined with a reduced aid contribution from UNHCR, seems to benefit rich countries sponsoring UNHCR more than refugees themselves (Easton-Calabria & Omata, 2018). Refugees would instead need to be properly assisted in attaining self-reliance, which requires from the international community to remain committed, invest in resources and design livelihood programmes (Aleinikoff, 2015).

The question arises about what equity means in the context of this informal, 'DIY' approach to educational opportunity. Returning to equity through the lens of social justice, the issue shifts from what it means to have *access* to opportunities to what it means to *create* one's own opportunities. In the light of equity, new concerns arise. For as we move towards more durable solutions of camps as 'political spaces', 'cities' and 'communities' – with refugee populations reconceptualized as 'residents' that are increasingly 'empowered', 'responsible' and

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[6] Self-reliance is defined here as "the social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a community to meet essential needs in a sustainable manner" (UNHCR, 2005).

[7] I visited several non-formal educational hubs for entrepreneurship during my visit to Uganda and one of its refugee camps 'Nakivale' in 2016.

[8] In the case of 'Opportunigee', the name of the organization is composed out of the words 'opportunity' and 'refugee', to reflect the view that refugees have agency and ability to create their own opportunities.

[9] As pointed out in part 1 of this essay, (non)-governmental organisations are often reluctant to acknowledge the permanence of the temporariness and the likelihood of futures being located within the camp.

'entrepreneurial', such shifting terminologies threaten to hold refugees accountable for their futures and force them to "adapt to, rather than resist, the conditions of their humanitarian suffering" (Ilcan & Rygiel, 2015, p.339). As such, this would constitute a neoliberal turn away from Arendt's 'right to have rights' towards refugees as entrepreneurs now carrying the responsibility for their own social justice.

Furthermore, this effort to recast refugees as entrepreneurs arguably constitutes a return to the issue of portraying the figure of the refugee in a particular way without acknowledging the diversity of identities, cultures, personalities and characters that exists within the group of refugees. Similar to the generalizing trope of the refugee as a 'helpless' passive victim deprived of agency, the trope of the refugee as an active changemaker and entrepreneur is deceiving and treats refugees as a homogenous mass. In reality, the DIY-approach will suit the specific needs of some refugees more than it does for others.

A further issue with seeing refugees as entrepreneurs becomes further unpacked through the concept of 'responsibilisation' (Dean, 2009). Ilcan draws on Mitchell Dean's term to indicate how the neoliberal subject can no longer rely on its identity as social citizen, but is held individually responsible as autonomous participant (Ilcan & Rygiel, 2015, p. 336). In addition to Easton-Calabria's question of who is responsible for refugee self-reliance and Ilcan's question if refugees are responsible for their own futures, it should also be asked who is responsible for injustices committed in the past. Refugees that have been expulsed from their homes due to conflicts, crises and threats of persecution arrive to camps having already lived through large injustices.

Equitable education seen from this perspective requires not just a focus shift from future to present, but needs to also take into account the injustices of the past and potentially their continued impact on the present (see, for instance, Charlier, Duverger, & Abdallah, 2018; Felman, 2002)[10]. These limitations arguably show that the DIY-approach is not free from critique either. Nevertheless, these examples of non-formal, self-led learning spaces provide an alternative educational pathway for refugees who seek to build sustainable livelihoods in the here and now and act as changemakers within their local communities in the context of the refugee camp. As such, they may provide a softening of the ambiguous tension of living in a liminal time-space of permanent temporariness and indefinite delay. This 'DIY' reconceptualization of the refugee camp as a neo-urban space of opportunity inhabited by agents of change, instead of merely transitory spaces of waithood inhabited by passive victims, is admittedly too idealized and comes accompanied by dangerous pitfalls. Simultaneously, however, this approach does open up conceptual space to think about equitable education in

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[10] There is a large body of theory exploring the historical dimensions of social justice, featuring concepts like restorative justice, reparative justice and retributive justice. The scope of this literature review does not allow for exploration, but these concerns will need to be addressed in future research on equitable education in refugee camp contexts.

ways that have the potential to support refugees in taking ownership over their futures here and now.

Conclusion

This essay presented a critical literature review connecting a triangular constellation made up of the concepts of equity, the refugee camp and the figure of the refugee, in relation to educational debates. The principal research question asked what 'equitable education' conceptually means within the spatio-temporally liminal context of the refugee settlement camp. My main argument attempted to show that this question cannot be resolved with one simple and straightforward answer, but that any approach taken to answer this question is shaped by multiple possible interpretations of its core concepts, and their interrelations, instead.

In the first section, I discussed literature focused on defining the term 'equity', focussing on the social justice lens in particular. I contrasted the concept to 'equality' and connected it to ideas of 'distributive justice' and 'equal opportunity' in relation to education, particularly inspired by Rawls and Sen. Secondly, this essay has shown that the context of the spatio-temporally liminal refugee camp impacts the conceptual meaning of 'equity' in educational contexts, and that this space of the camp can be conceptualized in various ways. This second part connected 'liminal spaces' to ambiguous waithood and transition, placing the issue of postponed futures and suspended presents at the forefront. With the refugee camp located in the 'nowhere' of an extraterritorial, extra-societal domain of jurisdictional exclusion, I exposed assumptions in Rawls' theory of justice and Sen's capability approach, which became problematic in the camp context. I used Arendt's 'right to have rights' and Agamben's notion of 'bare life' to address the lack of citizenship and inhumane living conditions in the camp.

The core tension that ran throughout this literature review has been the problematic localization of a continuously postponed, or even fully cancelled, 'future' *outside* the camp. This focus on the future, with the present spent 'in limbo', causes a protracted state of waithood in which the 'here and now' becomes suspended, with refugees often portrayed as helpless, passive subjects. The third part of this essay therefore explored an alternative conceptualization of the camp as a 'third space' of opportunity, with refugees recast as entrepreneurial agents of innovation and active changemakers themselves. I discussed the rise of 'self-reliance' as a popular policy, with non-formal and self-led education centres opening up in refugee camps to support the idea of creating one's own opportunities in order to build a future 'here and now'. Yet this DIY-approach to equitable education is not free from critique either, as I pointed out the problematic ties to neoliberalism, the question of responsibility connected to social justice and the role that past injustices play within this complex temporal framework of delayed futures and presents put on hold. Nevertheless, this approach may provide a possible way out of the ambiguous bind of living within a context of permanent temporariness, with education preparing refugees for futures that may never arrive. Non-formal, self-led spaces of entrepreneurship education arguably have the potential to support refugees in settlement camps to take the lead in creating

their own futures 'here and now'. Future research would therefore benefit from further investigating the strengths and limitations of this DIY-approach to equitable education in refugee camps.

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