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Towards The Study
of New Kurdish Migration in Turkey[5]

ABSTRACT:

The paper proposes a new approach to the study of Kurds in Turkey, it focuses on the new wave of voluntary migration. The article begins with a general overview of theories on migration to provide scientific context, then, the history of forced Kurdish migration in Turkey is explained including its potential impact on new migration. The third part of the paper is devoted to the flow of voluntary migration in the Turkish Republic, their circumstances and significance. The fourth and final part defines the scheme of voluntary migration in Turkey and some characteristics of Kurdish migration in 20th century.

As Minoo Alinia (2004: 80) states, „Kurdish Migration is basically involuntary, and Kurdish communities mainly consist of war refugees and political refugees (of course disregarding the labour migration of the 1960's)". However, one can argue that since the beginning of 21st century voluntary migration played a substantial role in the mobility of Kurds, owing to stabilization in Southern Kurdistan (Autonomous Kurdistan Region in Iraq) and improvement of democracy in Turkey. Most of the existing studies on Kurdish migration are focused on displacement and expulsion experienced by this group especially between 1970 and 1999. It appears that there is a shortage of works examining voluntary migration and new spatial movements of Kurds in the 21st century. This article proposes such types of studies and will provide some background for them as follows:

Part 1, some theories used in analyzing Kurdish migration and internal-migration in Turkey are cited providing conceptual framework. Part 2, is devoted to

general information on Kurdish forced migration in Turkey and overall spatial mobility. Part 3, examines internal-migration flows within Turkey and undertaken studies of this topic. Part 4, sketches the characteristics of a potential new wave of Kurdish migration in Turkey to categorize the trends of internal migration in different decades.

Although some factors on micro and meso level are cited below, the analysis is limited to illuminate general settings on a macro-scale.

MIGRATION – A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

According to Stephen Castles and Mark Miller (1998: 283) migration had a key role in: colonialism, industrialism and globalization of capitalism. As the migration after the second world war increased and it played a significant role in creating a global market some scholars such as Castles, Miller and Edward Said have called the 20th century the age of migration. Minoo Alinia (2004: 76) also notes that some scholars point to some kind of continuity between 15th century colonialism and modern international migration as often the majority of modern immigration to western countries comes from their previous colonies (see Sassen 1996: 80-85).

For many social scientists and demographers there is an important distinction between voluntary and involuntary migration. Although many voluntary migrations are in a way forced by needs (e.g. economic, educational), Abu-Lunghold (1988:61-62) underlines that there is still a substantial difference between such a migration where the need pulls someone to the host area and an exile when the migrant is pushed from his homeland. As Said (2000: 182) pointed out – involuntary migration creates difference not only on relation towards the arriving place but also to native areas as refugees may be prevented from returning or their fatherland may even not exist anymore. Said has put special emphasis on this expulsion from the motherland, theorizing exile as a „state of mind" (see Alinia 2004: 80).

Most theories of voluntary migration concentrate on rational calculation of potential loss and gain posing migration as an economical dilemma. Larry Sjastaad (1962) theorized migration as an investment and has shown that when age increases the probablity of migration lowers . This is because potential time for gain owed

to migration is smaller. Sjastaad notes that risk of migration venture increases also with distance. Michael Todaro (1969) underlined that it is the probability of finding a job that is a dominant factor taken into consideration when choosing a place of migration. Oded Stark (1991) and other researchers inspired by him treated migration as diversification of risks by families, as they send their members to different locations of varied labour market conditions , (see Chen et. Al 2003; Filiztekin and Gökhan 2008: 6). Some scholars have also indicated that it is not a mere inequality of salaries and job opportunities but rather a combination of them and income uncertainties, driving migration from their area (see Ghatak et. al 2006).

Scholars theorizing network migration concentrated on chain-migration as a phenomenon connected with the decrease in risk of moving to another location due to established social relations with migrants in the place of destination. An early or first wave migrant has a fragile situation but later he can create a network of migrants (usualy his relatives or people from the same village or district), helping them to find a job and accommodation (see Massey and Espana, 1987; Bauer and Gang, 1998) . Jacob Mincer (1978) – identified a rise in costs of migration also with a number of members of a household, but also stressed that the more income-earners among them, the greater are potential gains.

Ceren Coban proposes the use of Mike Parnwell's (1993) multi-level analysis to the problem of internal migration in Turkey. Such an approach enumerates micro factors which are mirrored in personal decisions, meso-level constituted by socio-economic conditions and macro level on which large scale development processes and transformations occur. Situation of labour market, its requirements and state policy towards reinforcement of certain sectors of the market and potential encouraging employment are important components on a macro level. Therefore, state and local government can support or aim at blocking immigration.

The most often cited push factors of rural areas are: overpopulation, domination of non-effective ways of land cultivation (e.g. not mechanized) while other means of sustenance are underdeveloped, expected scarcity of land to cultivate due to increase in rural inhabitants. These main circumstances create a situation in which the perceived chances of supporting a family and achieving economic fulfillment are low. The pull factors of large cities provide much more optimistic perspectives

on ones future living – perceived large demand of labour, vast diversification of employment, better educational, housing and health-care opportunities.

Despite other obstacles (such as: family situations, distance, legal restrictions in changing a place of living and policy against immigrants) one of the most frequent hardships of rural-urban migration (or from less to more economically developed areas) is the diffrence of daily costs which frequently force migrants to survive periods of time under much worse conditions than those which are standard for most inhabitants. Economic migrants are usally more tolerant to this urban deprivation as it is perceived as a temporal situation on a road to better ways of sustaining oneself and his or her family (see Coban 2013: 3; Todaro 1969).

Pull factors can also be connected with cultural and social advantages in cities that provide a wider range of free time activities, access to art, opportunity to engage in various activist organizations. So called „social advantages" are the result of heterogeneity of migrate-society, this notion is understood as different norms and interaction schemes that may be perceived by migrants as more open, and, bringing chances to easily form relations with other people. It is certain that perception of these cultural and social factors can vary much more frequently (making them micro factors rather than meso-level ones) than evaluation of economic, educational and health care standards of the place of migration. Individual evaluation of norms and importance of cultural life may be dependent on ones personal socialization, ethos, attitude towards tradition and relations with primary groups. Other, probably more inluential micro factors are for example: education, amount of income in the family, social status, ties with family and social environment, age and marital status. As a result of , among others, social obligations to the family, young unmarried men generally migrate more frequently (see Parnwell 1993, Coban 2013: 3). Despite complex circumstances of migration on a micro-level, it is the political and socioeconomic situation in the host area that determines the treatment and general atmosphere of migrants (see Alinia 2004: 82).

Young Kurds in Turkey can create their ethnic identity based on participation in many public organizations, economic, political and artistic ones, which usually have their centres in Istanbul. Cultivation of their ethnic identity can also be practiced through contacts with Kurdish diaspora and transmigrants (por. Khayati 2008: 79-83).

DISPLACEMENT OF KURDS IN TURKISH REPUBLIC

A vast proportion of overall Kurdish spatial mobility in Turkey was in fact – as pointed out by Alinia (2004: 80) – involuntary. Resettlement was part of a policy towards gaining control of remote and relatively hard to control areas even before the establishment of the Turkish Republic that was based on nationalistic principles (see Ayata 2011). Emigration took part after the first Kurdish uprisings, among them notably Ararat (*Agirî*), rebellion (1927) which was led by – *Xoybûn* – political organization formed in Syrian (Western) Kurdistan (see Tejel 2009: 4). Internal deportations were the result of Sheikh Said's (1925) revolt and one of the reasons the Dersim rebellion was held in 1937 and bloodily suppressed. Since the beginning of the Turkish Republic this region was treated as the cradle of subversive ideas and movements that can be overcome only through intensive resettlement and military intervention. The reaction of the Turkish army left an estimated 10% of the Dersim population dead (including women and children), thousands of houses and livestock were burnt (see Bruinessen 1994).

Apart from the state of emergency in Dersim, the following two decades brought a relatively peaceful development in the country which included the rise in voluntary migration in Turkey. As rural-urban migration intensified in 1950s, many Kurds migrated to cities due to the change in traditional relations of production in their villages. Those changes occured owing to modernization of cultivation, land reforms by government and previous resettlement conducted by authorities (see Romano 2006: 111-112). In Daivd Romano's (2006:112) opinion, urban migration and participation in socioeconomic life of influential middle-eastern cities allowed the creation of a Kurdish bourgeoisie and emergence of a new well educated and politicized class among them. Owing to the emergence of this new class, relative democratization and opening of a political sphere after the post 1960-coup constitution, several Kurdish associations and movements flourished throughout the 1960's and 1970's (see Özcan, 2008: 75; Romano 2006: 47). However, after every military coup (which occurred subsequently on: 27th May 1960, 12 March 1971 and 12 September 1980), Kurdish societies were targeted with arrests and bans. This suppression led many activists to emigrate, especially after the 1980 coup, that practically resulted in leaving only the PKK on the Kurdish political scene. As

the result of tense political atmosphere after the 1980 coup groups of Yezidis living in Turkey emigrated abroad (see Kreyenbroek 2009: 33-38).

The expulsion of thousands of Kurdish villagers was part of a counter insurgency war doctrine by the Turkish authorities during the 1980s and especially in the 1990s. As the remote countryside in the Southeast was perceived by the military and authorities as the hotspot of guerrilla warfare training. The resettlement plan envisioned eliminating the PKK from rural areas of the Southeast by gaining intelligence and local insight as a result of spatial control lead by military operations and formation of a paramilitary „village guard". This initial way of fighting the PKK included evictions, imprisonment without a trial, burning of villages, executions, destruction of households and livestock (see Jongerden 2007:43-44; Göç-Der 2008). Turgut Özal in 1984 modified the Village Act (*Koy Kanunu*) enable the hiring of Temporary and Voluntary Village Guards (*Geçici ve Gönüllü Köy Korucuları*). This institution apart from instigating inner-conflicts between Kurds, also created a situation under which villagers were often forced to decide whether they want to join the government service or leave their homeland. Moreover, often providing help to either village guards or guerillas was punished by each side of the conflict (see Jongerden 2007: 79).

The policy of resettlement in Southeastern Turkey (Northern Kurdistan) was inspired by Turgut Özal's ideas which was included in one of his last letters in 1993 to prime minister Suleyman Demirel. He had stated that there should be a plan for encouraging people from remote mountain areas to migrate to more densely populated locations. Özal also underlined the importance of state control over migration from Kurdish inhabited areas in order to prevent the situation where only those having a better economic situation would have migrated leaving the lower classes and creating an environment open to further conflict and dissent. Joost Jongerden (2007: 50-51) points out that although the majority of means proposed by Özal have been implemented, the resettlement was not conducted on a basis of deliberate planning of settlement in chosen western provinces and providing the necessary facilities for migrants.

Large scale industrial dam projects – GAP (Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi) in the southern part of Turkish Kurdistan and DAP (Doğu Anadolu Projesi) its slightly smaller counterpart and provinces of North Kurdistan, provided knowledge on

the area, its inhabitants, their culture and patterns of behaviour, being a source of information to improve the control of the state. These industrial projects may also pose as a part the policy retaining central power over the Kurdish inhabited lands as Özal had also written about the possibility of constructing dams in order to prevent evacuated Kurdish people from returning to the southeastern mountains (see Jongerden 2007: 46).

Turkish authorities have been accused of deliberately downsizing the number of expelled people in order to diminish the size of the problem of IDP's (Internally Displaced Persons) in the eyes of interntional opinion. Estimations of the total number of evacuated and displaced people vary widely. Reports from the Turkish Ministry of Internal Affairs place it below 400,000 while the Kurdish Human Rights Project activists reported a number between 3 and 4 million a more accurate one. Estimates of Turkish social scientists (from Hacattepe University of Population Studies and Turkish Economical and Social Studies Foundation – TESEV) point to a number between 900,000 and 1,5 million IDP's (see Jongerden 2007: 79-81). According to the survey by scholars from Hacattepe University, 80% of forced migrants were from villages and only 20% from urban areas (Jongerden 2007: 80). Kurdish IDPs migrated mostly to the provinces of: Malatya, Adana, Mersin, Antalya, Izmir, Manisa, Bursa, Ankara and Istanbul (Jongerden 2007: 81).

The majority of village evacuations were took place in 1994, at the end of the decade the number of resettled areas decreased and after the capture of Ocalan in 1999 and the end of the state of emergency in southeastern regions in 2002 resettlement stopped being the main policy towards potential danger of guerilla warfare. Consequently, forced migration began to play a lesser role giving way to the pull factors as substantial agents in Turkey's internal migration in the new millenium.

Being an IDP throughout the years created problems in everyday life as Turkish authorities, treating Kurdish IDPs as criminals, refused to recognize displaced people and also denied them services and social help. Moreover, most of them lacked the previously existing social networks that could help them in the destination area, many had problems in the proper use of the official Turkish language as Kurdish was often their sole language in remote mountainous areas. These characteristics put them in danger of under-class deprivation and potential engagement of criminal activities. Ayşe Betül Çelik (2012) categorized types of problems of

IDPs as: economic, political, social, relational and security issues. Circumstances of their legal recognition improved in the beginning of the 21st century due to Turkey's bid for accession into the European Union. The Law on Compensation for Losses Resulting from Terrorism and the Fight against Terrorism (Law No. 5233) was proclaimed in 2004.

In april 2005 a strategy framework towards IDPs was released by the Council of Ministers – 'Measures on the Issue of Internally Displaced Persons and the Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project in Turkey". In accordance with this framework an action plan was issued that envisioned delivery of the services to IDPs and even an encouragement for return-migration (but only to larger state controlled areas rather than remote villages – see Jongerden 2007: 119-172 , Çelik 2012: 8-9).

The problem of forced migration in 1990's also remains relevant for the new wave of migration. It can affect it in a way that voluntary migration can follow previous deportation (as forced migration creates a multi-step migration), new migrants can be also children of IDP's and finally IDP's may have created a network that poses as source of support for voluntary newcomers.

INTERNAL MIGRATION FLOWS IN TURKISH REPUBLIC

Although Kurds in Turkey experienced heavy displacement throughout the years of Turkish Republic existence, it would be untrue to think that involuntary migration is the only type of migration undertaken by this group. Even in the decades of 1980s and 1990s when forced migration dominated in the country there was a substantial number of voluntary migrants. To a large extent the problem of internal migration in Turkey is a Kurdish problem, as leaving less urbanized and economically marginalized (remaining at the same time a place of military conflict especially in late 80s and 90s) South-East of the country (considered by Kurds as the northern part of Kurdistan) was one of the dominating tendencies in population movements in Turkey. Therefore, in order to understand Kurdish voluntary migration in Turkey it is vital to look at the migration flows and tendencies inside the country.

Substantial voluntary internal migration took place also in the times of Ottoman Empire. The flow of officers that gained another step in the bureaucratic hierarchy is seen as a major factor in modernizing the country by Kemal H. Karpat (2004). His argument is that this mobility have transformed existing local relations and created new elites. Internal migration flows also played a major role in times of Turkish Republic, changing its population structure and making it an urbanized country circa 1985.

According to the census of 2000, over 62% of Istanbul inhabitants were born outside of the city, while in the whole country almost 28% of population moved to a different province and the annual migration rate was 1,58% (Filiztekin & Gökhan 2008). By the 2011 immigration to western and south-western provinces even increased: 84% of Istanbul residents were arrivals, 68% of people living in the capitol – Ankara were not born there and 39% of Turkish citizens were migrants. This number can be treated as very high as its even above the tripled percentage of migrants in 1950 (12%) and a significant rise to 17% in 1975 (Akaraca & Tansel 2014). Summing these tendencies Ali T. Akarca and Aysıt Tansel (2014) noted that since 1950 for every five years around 7 to 8% of population changed of their place of living within the borders of Turkey.

 Surprisingly, according to analysis of worldwide macro-scale studies (conducted by Gallup between 2011 and 2012) made by Neli Esipova, Anita Pugliese and Julie Ray (2013), for the International Organization for Migration, 5% or less of respondents in Turkey had answered "yes" to the question „Did you move from another city or area within this country in the past five years?". Affirmative answers were most frequent in New Zeland (26%) and United States (24%) but even Poland was included in the group of countries with a higher rate of internal migration (between 6 and 10 percent) (Esipova, Pugliese and Ray 2013).

The rapid increase in internal movement that was mentioned earlier, coincided with Turkish urbanization. Although one can argue that from the foundation of the Republic until the end of the Second World War, Turkey was a definite rural country with a relatively limited pace of urbanization, after 1945 urbanization was more intensive (Özcan 2008: 57-60; Karpat 2004).In the 1950s only a quarter were Turkish citizens living in the city, in 1975 this proportion was higher but still be-

low a half (45%), at the turning of the centuries the majority lived in metropolises (65% in 2000) and by 2011 more than three-quarters (77% in 2011).

Lack of services, inadequacy or low standard of infrastructure are often cited push factors, but according to Ayşe Gedik (1997) who analyzed internal migration in Turkey in the years 1970, 1980, 1985, the same impact on the decision of migration is made because of the pull factors such as: job-opportunities, communication and transportation facilities, existing ties with family members or people from the same village in the migration area. Psychological distance may be more important than physical ones as places where family members, neighbours or friends resided are preferred with no regard to proximity. Generally, the three biggest metropolises are preferred (which are – Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir).

Differences in gross national product, industrialization, rate of tourism, coastal location and socioeconomic development are the factors increasing the probability of migrants coming to the area, while military conflict and terrorism has a reverse effect (see Gezici and Keskin 2005; Filiztekin and Gökhan 2008: 6-7).

Migrants from ages 15 to 29 constituted more than a half of internal migrants in 2000 while the average age of a migrant was on the decrease (Filiztekin and Gökhan 2008: 10). Dependent migration and changing residence for marriage were the frequent reasons of internal migration for women.

The general information cited above is meant to summarize internal migration in Turkey, but the circumstances of spatial mobility were different in different decades. In the 1950s the development of industry began to play a substantial role in the economy of the country. Industrialization and mechanization of agriculture lead, on the one hand, to a boom of cultivation and its efficiency but on the other hand made landowners more powerful and widened the group of landless and deprived people. In the same decade production and usage of motor vehicles were popularized and relative liberalization of markets brought development of private entrepreneurship. At the end of the decade urbanization increased by 6% (Coban 2013:4).

In the 1960's the pace of industrialization grew and transportation facilities were developed. The government introduced Import Substitution Industrialization policies aimed at strenghening internal economic markets. These policies achieved a growth of internal economy but further deepened the inequalities as they were fo-

cused only on industrial sectors of the economy. This created a demand for labour in urban areas but not necessarily providing facilities for newcomers. During this decade migrants coming in hope of improving their income and live conditions created basic housing structures on state-owned land in the outskirts of big cities prompting inhabitants of the city to call these buildings – „built during night" – *gecekondu*. Because of disparity in income and services between migrants and the rest of city's population, a second market emerges. Since this decade international migration from Turkey also increased (Coban 2013:5; Karpat 2004).

Analyses by Nilay Evcil, et al. (2006) and Ayşe Gedik (1997) have shown that migration from city to a city, since the 1970's had become the most popular type of internal migration even in the least urbanized provinces. That may be also true for the Kurds as the popular pattern of their migrations in the 1990's forced by military conflict was a multi-step (from the South-East to some city closer to the region but situated usually in a more western part of the country, and from that city to other urban areas located at a further distance, often Istanbul). In the period of 1975-1980 some urban to rural migraiton appeared which may be explained by the worsening economic situation in the cities (see Gedik 1996).

In the beginning of 1980s almost half of the population lived in the cities (45%). Studies on the phenomenon of migration carried out by Bilal Ciplak (2012) and Ayşe Betül Çelik (2005), show that during the 80s and the 90s of the 20th century, the wave of migration took place in Turkey, which in contrast to the previous ones (between 1940-1980), was enforced. This migration was related to conflict between the PKK and the government of the Republic of Turkey. Consequently, many Kurds were forced to leave south-eastern agricultural regions and move inside the country. Apart from the dominating push factors, such as lack of security and enforced migrations, voluntary migrations also occurred – these are related to the so-called pull factors, such as better economic conditions, educational opportunities and higher quality of medical care in Turkish metropolises (Ciplak 2012: 4-7). While voluntary migrants could rely on help based on their relationships with people coming from the same region of Turkey (*hemşehri*), people who were forced to migrate were not provided with such assistance during their adaptation to life in big cities. During 1995-2000 there was an increase in rural to urban and

decrease in urban to urban migration, as a result of the resettlement policy in the Southeast see Eryurt and Koç 2012).

Previously described internal-migration flows in Turkey in addition with new the migration of the 21stcentury can be summarized as proposed migration waves depicted on the table below.

1923-1949	Low urbanization, deportations connected to Kurdish uprisings
1950's	Voluntary migration, steady industrialization and urbanization
1960's and 1970's	Intensive industrialization and urbanization, voluntary migration and rise of Gecekondu's
1980's and 1990's	Forced migration due to struggle with PKK, resettlement policy
2000's and onward	Economic and educational migration, economic growth

Table 1. Internal-migration flows in Turkey

Source: Author's compilation

NEW WAVE OF KURDISH MIGRATION IN TURKEY

Considering that the government of Turkey eventually abstained from the policy of obligatory migrations at the end of the 90s of the 20th century, it was foreseen that young migrant Kurds will be voluntary migrants, who decided to change their place of living mostly because of economic and educational reasons. Owing to democratization connected with the Turkish EU bid and substantial growth of the economy in the country, there was a further increase in the internal migration rate in the country in the 2000s.

Urban to urban migration remains the dominant type of migration, but at the same time the urbanization rate grew in the first decade of the 21st century. Contemporary voluntary Kurdish migrants can study (or complete a part of their studies e.g. undergraduate) in one city and then move to another (as was the case with some of my respondents in Istanbul).

News studies on migration and trans-nationality underline the possibility of ethnic group's functioning and preservation of symbolic culture even under condi-

tions of radical spatial separation from the land traditionally inhabited (ref. Khaya-ti 2008: 24-28). Social processes connected with the development of new ways of communication with native villages (tur. *memleket*) will also take place among Kurdish migrants.

Changes in migration to the Istanbul province may serve as an illustration of migration growth since the beginning of the new millennium. In the first decade of the 21st century, migration to Istanbul has increased very quickly – it reached its peak between 2010-2011 (450 thousand migrants), and then, it decreased to 384,535 registered migrants (TurkStat 2013). This data coming from the Turk-ish Statistical Institute covered statistics of the official institution called „Address Based Population Registration System" (Turkish shortcut ADNKSS), while the number of migrants without registration could significantly increase the total num-ber of migrants.

It is also important to note that while some provinces are popular places of mi-gration (6 out of 81 provinces make up a third of country's population) other are depopulated – only 25% of people born in Bayburt, Çankırı and notably Tunceli (formerly Dersim, inhabited by a Kurdish Alevi majority) still live in the same province (Akaraca & Tansel 2014). Negative net migration of Southeastern (or Norhtern Kurdistan) regions implicate that there is still an ongoing migration flow from these areas. As shown in the table below regions of Southeastern Anatolia, Middle-eastern Anatolia and Northeastern Anatolia are all characterized by nega-tive net-migration for the period of 2012-2013.

TURKISH STATISTICAL INSTITUTE

ADDRESS BASED POPULATION REGISTRATION SYSTEM (ABPRS) DATABASE

SRE-1 regional in-migration, out-migration, net-migration and net-migration rate
(the period of 2012-2013)

Nuts1 region		Population ABPRS 2013	In-migration	Out-migration	Net-migration	Net-migration rate
	Turkiye	76.667.864	2.122.454	2.122.454	0	0.00
TR1	İstanbul	14.160.467	437.922	371.601	66.321	4.69
TR2	Batı Marmara	3.278.705	118.803	99.543	19.260	5.89
TR3	Ege	9.897.313	204.839	189.098	15.741	1.59
TR4	Doğu Marmara	7.198.284	220.469	173.425	47.044	6.56
TR5	Batı Anadolu	7.362.247	228.304	200.077	28.227	3.84
TR6	Akdeniz	9.766.093	212.491	219.509	-7.018	-0.72
TR7	Orta Anadolu	3.873.470	113.920	132.541	-18.621	-4.80
TR8	Batı Karadeniz	4.499.102	161.961	187.639	-25.678	-5.69
TR9	Doğu Karadeniz	2.553.647	105.175	114.398	-9.223	-3.61
TRA	Kuzeydoğu Anadolu	2.207.602	69.019	111.784	-42.765	-19.19
TRB	Ortadoğu Anadolu	3.774.582	107.275	134.247	-26.972	-7.12
TRC	Güneydoğu Anadolu	8.096.352	142.276	188.592	-46.316	-5.70

Table 2. Net-migration in the regions of Turkey during 2012-2013.

Source: TurkStat 2014

CONCLUSION

Kurds experienced severe forced migration in the Turkish Republic throughout the 20th century but they also participated in waves of voluntary migration. Substantial population flows change social structure and relations. Kurds were also a part of that process. In the 1950s and 1960s Kurdish migration to urban areas and their education in universities allowed the emergence of new political activists. In the 1980s and 1990s due to military struggle with the PKK and rise of policy in evacuations from Kurdish inhabited villages, forced migration was dominated spatial mobility in the country. After the end of the resettlement policy in the 2000s migration and urbanization continued, owing to economic growth and relative democratization of the country in the beginning of the new century. As illustrated by statistics showing depopulation in the southeastern regions (Northern Kurdistan) these new movements may constitute another wave of Kurdish migration.

Although educational and economic pull factors seem to play a major role for these new migrants, they can be also affected by displacements in previous decades being children of IDP's or IDP's themselves who decided to change place of their living. Newcomers may also benefit from social networks created by IDP's. Taking into consideration criterion of exile and relation with the motherland underlined by Edward Said, some of the new migrants may visit their parents and family having lost contact or being unable to enter their place of birth (as it could have been burnt down in 1990s). Other new migrants may freely travel between their city or village and migration destination. Some of the migrants may stay in western cities just because of economic reasons while others feel the benefit of more social freedoms. Nevertheless, contributing to social life of their new places of living, and being able to participate in Kurdish organizations, these new migrants may in the future change social structure in Turkey again, constructing new political groups. For these reasons studying this new group appears to be vital for modern scholars of social sciences.

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