BORDER
CROSSING

Migration of highly educated Belgian and Dutch Turks: 'Young Brains' of Turkey

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to reflect the social imaginaries of highly educated Turkish migrants on their migration to their parents' home country. Based on fieldwork and interviews with 19 Turkish-origin Belgian and Dutch citizens in a post-migration setting, this study demonstrates their pre- and post-migration lifestyles, and propounds the way they attribute meaning to their movement. The gap between personal wills of the actors of migration and expectations of them clearly shows how policies are flawed in their considerations of socio-cultural and economic development through 'development agents'.

Keywords: *migration; development; Turkey; Belgium; the Netherlands.*

Introduction

Studies on migration have been common in various disciplines of social sciences, one of which is anthropology. Similarly, development studies have also been prevailing in anthropological discourse (see Edelman and Haugerud, 2005; Venkatesan and Yarrow, 2012a; Mair, 1984), and anthropology of development was founded on a belief in the notion of critical deconstruction as a means of uncovering the myth claiming that development was a Western invention (Venkatesan and Yarrow, 2012b:3). However, looking at the big picture, it cannot be denied that development has been regarded as a tool used to control the powerless, in other words, 'the other' (see Cooper and Packard, 1997; Ferguson, 1994; Escobar, 1995). The notion of transferring the 'the right' from developed countries to less developed ones is not a new issue; it takes its roots from the nineteenth century idea of Europe's 'civilizing mission', even though these attempts ended up with failures, today's neoliberal globalization theory, as Castles and Miller (2009:63) point out, holds a similar perspective by arguing that the Western way of enterprises and privatization are of central import for development. Also, anthropology has been criticized because of the idea that it paves the way for the imposition of power on the other (Venkatesan and Yarrow, 2012a). Apart from evaluating these two different fields separately, they have been studied in relation to each other since the 1960s (Glick Schiller and Faust, 2010). Although the field of

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economy mostly deals with the effect of migration on development, or vice versa, there is also a considerable number of sociological and anthropological studies, even though the latter is very limited in terms of theories (Bjerén, 1997). Seeing that development is a debatable issue and anthropologists do not focus on migration development studies much (Bjéren, 1997), this paper suggests that an anthropological gaze might be helpful to find a broader approach.

The rising number of people preferring to move to Turkey from various European countries, including Belgium and the Netherlands, has brought out the need to configure these movements within a different framework. Literature on return migration mostly focuses on first generation (some examples are Chacko, 2007; Ghosh, 2000; Harper, 2005; Long and Oxfeld, 2004; Markowitz and Stefansson, 2004; Razum et al., 2005). However, research on the experiences of second generation's emigration to their parents' home country is limited (King and Christou, 2008). Conway and Potter's (2009) edited book has been a good example about next generation's migration to ancestral roots. In addition, Sirkeci, Cohen and Yazgan's (2012) work on second and third generation German Turks' migration to Turkey examines how Turkey has become a destination country not only for first generation returnees but also for next generations. They depict push and pull factors of migration. Unlike to some studies defining next generation's first time emigration to their parents' home country as 'return' or 'reverse' migration, King and Christou (2008) problematize this definition while analysing experiences of Greek-Americans' and Greek-Germans' migration to Greece. These studies are not merely based on remittances and return; to the contrary, they are discussed within a wider perspective. However, most of them fall short of mentioning the perspectives and imaginaries of migrants' themselves. This research steps into this void by approaching the migration-development nexus from a different perspective. What is the difference of this new migration flow to Turkey from previous ones made by first generation guest workers? Simply, it has created expectations in a Turkish context, and notions of 'new brains' and 'new talents' have been used in government policies and especially on the media.

Migration of highly educated Turkish-origin Belgians and Dutch might possibly be studied within a range of different topics, but there are many reasons for focusing on this particular subject. Firstly, migration policies in Turkey, Belgium and the Netherlands are worth to be examined. Secondly, the questions about potential changes migrants can provide the country of origin makes this particular topic interesting. Thirdly and most importantly, it should be examined whether these people are aware of what is expected from them.

The Migration Development Nexus

Migration and development have been attached to each other within academic and public discourses since the 1960s (Faist, 2010; Faist, 2008;

Raghuram, 2009); however, according to Wise and Covarrubias (2010), these academic debates have not gone beyond the reproductions of said discourses, or they always keep a critical distance from the issue. Great importance has been laid on migration and development researches, and yet disconnection between migration theories and development theories is apparent. Such inclination to disconnection results in exceedingly limited studies that cannot gain a clear understanding of the context in which migrations are recorded (Wise and Covarrubias, 2010). Apart from Wise and Covarrubias, there have been other serious critics of migration-development studies. Even though the migration and development debate seems to be constituted from migration theory, it is actually an individual unit whose goal is to focus on the processes of migration or the effect of development in receiving societies (De Haas, 2010). Hence, general migration theories become insufficient to provide an insight to understand the effects of migration on development in sending societies, and it is also worthwhile to specify that these effects are not homogenous (De Haas, 2010). Therefore, De Haas emphasizes going beyond classical migration theories and constituting a specific approach on the migration and development debate. A similar perspective belongs to Glick Schiller and Faust, who criticize that 'analytical tools, conceptual framework or political stance,' through which migration- development interaction has been framed, are neglected (2010:1).

The effect of migration on development has been analysed in different ways, changing from community to national levels (Taylor et al., 1996). Some researches centre on the migration-development link within labour migration paradigms (Appleyard, 1989). Cohen and Sirkeci (2011), on the other hand, define the complexity of migration with its dynamic nature, social, cultural economic factors, individual abilities and expectations as well as structural features of both sending and receiving countries. In their framework called 'culture of migration', potential development should be considered in relation to aforementioned factors (Cohen and Sirkeci, 2011). In addition, some studies hold a different perspective and analyse the relationship between conflict and economic development in transnational migration (Sirkeci et al., 2012; Sirkeci, 2009). Sirkeci, Cohen and Ratha's (2012) edited book and Ratha and Sirkeci's (2010) article are also good examples to show how external factors such as a financial crisis can be effective in understanding migration development ties. Moreover, De Haas (2010) adopts a different perspective and claims that the impact of migration on development is on the micro- level scale, but if migration is claimed to affect national development, it would be inaccurate to transfer inferences made on a micro-level scale of analysis to a macro-level scale. In reference to De Haas (2009), development has been attributed various meanings, so an explicit meaning of development is missing; however, development on the national level, or economic development of a particular nation-state, is the aspect of development most commonly referenced.

Most of the scholars criticize the first and second phase of migration-development studies and address the problems within current understandings of this interaction. There are alternative approaches, but it is impossible to decide which one is better than the others. As such, the aim of this study is not to unleash harsh criticisms on these perspectives but to develop a new understanding by benefiting from existing ones. Kearney (1986) says that modern- day migrants leave the countries where they were born with the intention of earning more money compared to their previous living situation. This is the predominant perception of migration: people seeking a better life choose to migrate to another place. However, this 'better life' does not always have to be focused around monetary gain. Migration in our times cannot only be explained by the pursuit of better economic conditions that cannot be acquired in the country of origin. Since the early 2000s, policymakers and academics have alleged that movements of a group of people create development; however, Schiller and Faist (2010) point out the importance of social changes affecting migration and development and so emphasize a deeper analysis of the issues. For example, in their research on migration of Samoas who were born in New Zealand to Samoa, Macpherson and Macpherson (2009) identify various types of emigrants including family care and service providers, cultural heritage seekers, social idealists, professionals and explorers. It shows the significance of adopting a wider perspective in understanding the relationship between migration and development. The problem with the recent optimistic approaches to migration-development interaction is that they fail to represent 'the complexity, heterogeneity and socially differentiated nature of migration-development interactions' (De Haas, 2010:256). Furthermore, using migration as a 'policy tool' to promote development is thought to be another fallacy (Skeldon, 2008:3).

In his research paper, De Haas (2009) points out most research has anticipated that economic development would be brought about by migration, but the possible individual development thanks to migration has been ignored. On discussing the relationship between migration and development, one should take notice of both structure and agency: being able to migrate to somewhere is an indication of 'human development', according to De Haas (2009:2). Skeldon (2008) and Nyberg-Sørensen et al. (2002) also discuss how attention from structural deficiencies and instrumental problems have been diverted, and primacy has been put on migrants' agency in the sense of development.

Migration and Development: Turkish Case

Turkey's migration history as a sending country started in the 1960s. In 1964, bilateral agreements were signed between Turkey and Belgium and the Netherlands (İçduygu, 2009). Although the intention was to have 'reciprocal' and 'temporary' migrants, receiving countries turned out to be permanent settlements for most migrants, and it kept going through 'circular migration'

(Reniers, 2000:64). Development economists emphasized the effect of migration on development during the 1950s and 1960s when they considered labor migration as an essential part of modernization (Castles and Miller, 2009). However, labour migration from Turkey to Belgium and other European countries was not a brain drain for Turkey; however, when some of the second and third generation migrant children immigrate to Turkey, it is considered a brain gain (if this movement is to be explained in such terms).

One can claim that both return migrants and remittances provided obvious changes in Turkish economy, politics and society (İçduygu, 2009); however now there has been a different kind of development discourse. While the so-called "development" that return migrants and remittances provided is still questionable, it is important to note that considering the movement of Turkish-origin Belgian- and Dutch-born people within the same context as their parents may not give insightful information about development issues. Expectations from this new group differ greatly when compared to previous migration flows, in that the former migrates to Turkey with qualifications in hand and they are collectively considered to be 'new brains' for Turkey. Seeing that this movement has been a very recent occurrence, talking about transformation or change thanks to them is out of question. However, they are still expected to shoulder some responsibilities in their homeland. The question is to what extent they can find a place for themselves within these explanations and expectations. On the other hand, the problem with the Turkish case is that Turkey is certainly happy to have highly educated young talents coming from Europe; however, there has not been enough good governance to turn their qualifications into "development". Therefore, the theories outlined above might remain insufficient and too unrealistic to analyse the Turkish case in the migration-development nexus. This paper adds alternative approaches, including people's life trajectories and imaginaries.

Research Methodology

Formal or informal conversations, questioning and interviewing are some of the common methods to gain information. I conducted elaborate interviews with 19 people in İstanbul, only three of whom are male, which might be considered as a weakness in reaching male perspectives. I interviewed each of them at least twice. We mostly met in cafes or restaurants, yet there were some with whom I met in their offices. Conversations lasted at least 90 minutes and were recorded on my mobile phone. Interviews started as semi-structured and unstructured, but with some informants, I turned to more structured interviews with direct questions. I prepared a list of questions, including general information, their pre- emigration lives, migration decisions, expectations, post-migration lifestyles and encounters in Turkey. However, I did not always stick to the questions; rather, they functioned as mnemonic devices for important points I wanted to raise and as steering points to lead the conversation; furthermore,

having 'a set of statements' might be practical to evade gathering 'inconsistent or non-comparable data across informants' (Weller, 1998:366).

I turned to various ways to reach my informants, which was one of the challenges of this study since I could not get support from any single official organization. I started with people whom I reached through the Turkish communities in Belgium and the Netherlands, then they helped me find other people; in other words, the snowball sampling method played a significant role in my research. Although organizations could not provide me with a list of people for interviews, some international organizations and civil initiatives working on the relations between Turkey and Belgium or Netherlands helped by leading me to these people.

After I finished data collection, the next step was to find the most suitable theoretical framework to analyse these data. Reading the interviews line by line and transcribing them, I discovered some general themes out of field notes. The next step, according to Bernard and Ryan, is to 'identify how themes are linked to each other in a theoretical model,' and with 'memoing', I found the interactions between themes (Bernard and Ryan, 1998:609). The theory needs to be discovered from the data systematically, as it is done in the grounded theory developed by Glazer and Strauss (1967). Being familiar with the main concerns of informants in an ethnographic research requires going beyond the preconceptions and superficial representations (Glazer and Strauss, 1967). Therefore, I came up with a grounded theory from my data since both the researched and the researcher have substantial roles in the course of the research. Taking theoretical sensitivity into consideration, I developed codes and categories from the data I collected during research. I combined interview parts together so that they might give similar results. Life histories of my informants assigned to categories considering specific situations, such as pre- and post-migration experiences, economic and social conditions in the new setting, and their roles on development. Thanks to the theoretical sampling method (Glazer and Strauss, 1967), existing data led to new data over the course of interviews. Apart from giving conclusions, it is of considerable import to contextualize all findings in the research process to depict how they emerged; therefore, ethnographers should include their intellectual paths in the course of the research (Davies, 2008).

Understanding Migration Decisions of Second and Third Generation Belgian and Dutch Turks
Rooted Causes of Migration Story: Life in Belgium and the Netherlands
Memories and Strong Transnational Ties with the Home Country

According to the information accumulated during conversations, ties with the home country have been so strong that children who were not born in Turkey can still feel a sense of belonging to the country of origins. Memories relayed by their parents and their somewhat Turkish lifestyle in a different

country have possibly encouraged these people to orientate toward Turkey. It does not mean that all children whose families are first generation migrants in Belgium and the Netherlands have plans to move to Turkey in the future; instead, I consider the possible effect of family memories and transnational ties on the migration decisions of my respondents.

Almost all of the participants in this research mentioned their lifestyles in Belgium and the Netherlands as under the effect of Turkey. That is, since their childhoods, they have felt bonds with Turkey one way or the other. Some of the reasons for their familiarity with Turkey have been indispensable family holidays; Turkish media, including Turkish satellite television; unlimited communication with Turkey; access to Turkish ways of life (e.g., food, restaurants, and fashion that can easily be found in Belgium and the Netherlands). Regular visits to the home country make them feel attachments to that place. For example, Melek says, 'We spent our summer holidays in Turkey, and we were staying at least six weeks'. Fatma also emphasizes the effect of these visits on her Turkish identity:

> We always went to Turkey at least once a year. My family has always made us remember where we are coming from, our traditions, and most importantly our language. Thanks to my family, I have never forgotten Turkey, my culture and my festivals.

Banu is another person who feels close to Turkey, even though she cannot find any explanation for this feeling. When I asked her about her relationship with Turkey when she was in the Netherlands, she immediately said, 'Yes, I am Turkish. During the summers when we could not go to Turkey, I always complained and cried because of the longing. This has been a yearning for me since my childhood'. Making comparisons between Turkey and Belgium or the Netherlands was a common feature of almost all participants, and Banu used those comparisons while explaining her feelings that made her to migrate to Turkey. 'I do not know a Dutch song, but I know songs from every region of Turkey. It is just a feeling. And feelings do not have reasons all the time' (Banu).

This feeling of belonging mostly results from the families' strong connection with Turkey:

> Belonging, I feel, takes its sources from my parents because they have given it to me. Every summer, we came to Turkey for at least one month. The information that I had about Turkey was limited to summer holidays we spent there, other things were coming from my parents. (Ayla)

The touristic image of Turkey appeared in their dreams and they desired to live in Turkey, thinking that everything would be the same when they settled down there. That is the reason why Ayla emphasized the 'summer holiday' image of Turkey when she was still in the Netherlands. On the other hand, the longing parents feel to their home country has made their children see the

country as their parents do. Kübra also stated that she imagined Turkey 'as a holiday place' where they had a great time. 'When we travelled by car, the moment when we passed the border gate, we rejoiced. We always said, here we come to our own country' (Kübra).

The explanations for regular visits to Turkey might be different for each of them, but almost all of them come to the same point: the nostalgia families feel affects children, and they start feeling a deep longing for the country. For this particular subject, the male perspective differs greatly from that of the female respondents. Mehmet who started his career in the Netherlands did not pay regular visits to Turkey. 'Once, I could not go to Turkey for five years. After that, we started going to visit our relatives there twice a year. Three to four weeks was enough for us'. While most of the participants were single or newly married and they did not have working experience in Belgium or the Netherlands, Mehmet is married and had children while living in the Netherlands, and he was both studying and working. Therefore, his responsibilities had not allowed him to spend much time in Turkey. He had to think about his family, so the economic situation is significant in his case. When compared to other people in this study, his story has led me in a different direction, and I have realized that women might have a greater option for the spur of the moment. Economic conditions have played a crucial role on males' decisions for movement. It does not come to mean that these people did not have any connection with Turkey while they were living in the Netherlands, but they did not see Turkey as a dream country. They organized their lives in a practical way where they had to take their families into consideration.

'Is There any Migrant Who has not been Exposed to Discrimination?'

Besides the effect of transnational lifestyle on their migration decisions, discrimination has played a part in some of my informants' decision-making process. Many told stories about discrimination; however, some do not want to accept that they have been discriminated against in the country in which they were born and raised. Five people said that they have not been exposed to discrimination on any account, but even so, their assumptions about discrimination differ from one another. The idea that appearance is a reason for discrimination has been propounded by some of the participants. Even though they do not specify it explicitly, their sentences go one way or the other through this dimension. Since Canan does not look Turkish in appearance, she thinks that it is the reason why she has never been discriminated against:

> When people learn that I am Turkish, they are surprised because I do speak without accent and my skin is not tan. These are the stereotypes about Turkish people in Belgium. A small number of people made me felt discriminated after they learned that I am Turkish.

Moreover, the headscarf plays a crucial role in discrimination, as some participants agreed. Feride does not wear a headscarf, and she has never been exposed to discrimination; she believes that discrimination is an issue for women wearing a headscarf.

The most common area in which they think of being discriminated against is, ironically, education. 'One of the professors did not let any Muslim students talk during the discussions for five years. They do not want Muslims to get higher' (Betül). Sevgi is also claims to have been discriminated against explicitly within different arenas. Because she is half Belgian, half Turkish, she interprets negative reactions to her as a result of Belgians seeing her as betrayal to their culture and religion because she has changed her religion. This is her own perception of unfavourable attitudes toward her: "I had to change my university for professors said to me that they would not allow me to get through just because they see me as Belgian Muslim who has converted to Islam afterwards". As she gave an example of her experiences, even her facial expressions reflected how disturbed she was because of these events: 'Once a drunken man shouted at me, swore and said 'go to your own country!' By the way, he was speaking into a microphone in the main road. Everyone was looking at me'.

Almost all participants had something to say about discrimination, since it is a hotly debated issue in migrant populated countries. They barely made a correlation between discriminatory behaviours in Europe and their decisions to migrate to Turkey. It should not be forgotten that there might be sub-factors constituting main motivations to migrate to a different country. In this case, discrimination might have an impact on their decisions one way or the other, but participants do not place this factor at the centre of their decision for movement.

Migration Decisions: 'Leaving Home'
Marriage Migration
In traditional Turkish migration, migration flows continued through marriages in which brides were brought from Turkey, and this is still the case for a large number of Turkish people living in Belgium and the Netherlands. However, in this research, there is a vital change; educated Belgian- Turks or Dutch-Turks have chosen their marriage partners from Turkey before migrating there, leaving their families, social environments, and job opportunities in Europe behind. These people do not deny that Turkey is not a foreign country for them because of their familiarity with it during their lives in Europe. They also accept that their lifestyles in Europe have made it easier for them to make the decision to settle in Turkey, yet at the same time, they explicitly state that if marriage were not involved, they would not have migrated. 'I came to Turkey before marriage but my aim was to get married. I had a boyfriend who is my husband now. He has been living in Turkey since his birth; therefore, I moved to Turkey to live with him' (Canan). The youngest

participant, Demet, also did not have any other explanation for her migration. One word was enough to describe her situation: 'marriage'. She told me that it was a surprise for her to find herself in Istanbul; 'I was not planning to leave Belgium, no way. But I fell in love with someone living in Istanbul and found myself here. Of course it was a difficult decision, well, I mean living in Turkey, but now I am happy to be here'.

Feride told me that she was not ready to live in another country; she had very serious doubts and fears before migration. She said:

> Living in Turkey never occurred to me before. I felt myself belonging to Belgium since I was born and raised there. Turkey was unfamiliar for me, but now I am here because my husband has been living here. It was meaningless for me to stay in Belgium. I thought that we could make our living by working in our own country.

There is a contrast in her statement; actually her transformation might be recognized here. At first she was feeling like a Belgian and she felt herself a foreigner in Turkey. But after she moved to Turkey, she referred to it as 'my own country'. It might be a process of acculturation, or she might have already adapted to Turkey after migration. Nearly all of the participants had such dilemmas immediately before the actual movement to Turkey; however, this particular group of women who have made a marriage migration did not have any doubts about the economic conditions in which they would live in the future.

Economic migration

As the section title alludes, here I analyse the situations of people who migrated to Turkey with economic concerns. In this case, actors of migration make a choice between Turkey and Europe; the latter provides them with the primary necessities, but they preferred the former in consideration of having better opportunities. The reason for putting these accounts under the title of 'economic migration' is that they are the only ones who referred to economic motivations for their migration. In other respects, though, they also share most of the feelings expressed by other participants.

> The idea of migration to Turkey came out in 2004. I could not work in a job that I wanted. Job opportunities were limited. I anticipated a better future in Turkey. I felt like I was embedded in the Netherlands. On the other hand, Turkey seemed to be more promising. New universities have opened and they needed academic staff; therefore, I decided to move to Turkey. (Mehmet)

He made a comparison and a decision of what was better for himself. Stability in Turkish economy and politics also appealed to him: 'In Turkey, there has been a stabilized economy and politics for the last 10 years' (Mehmet). The second male participant, Barış also had economic concerns for

his migration, but he gave some other reasons that motivated him to move: 'I had concerns about my children's future. I wanted to provide a better and more secure life for them; in other words, we can say that it is the problem of not being able to be Dutch'. Barış made another interesting point: 'The economic conditions in the Netherlands affected my decision to migrate, not Turkey's'. His situation creates a gap between pushing and pulling factors of migration, and he felt he was pushed from the Netherlands because of insecure economic conditions; however, if we consider the current situation of Barış, who has not have a job recently, Turkey also did not pull him in terms of a better financial life. The third male participant, Cengiz, noted the economic crisis as the reason for his migration, and he considered Turkey to be in a better condition than the Netherlands.

To a certain extent, two other female participants also had economic motivations for their migration. However, theirs were not as serious as the ones mentioned above. 'I love Istanbul. When I was looking for a job, I only looked for jobs in Istanbul and Belgium. I did not think that I could live any other place. Istanbul was an imaginary city for me' (Fahriye). The recent economic crisis in Europe had impacts on Fahriye's movement to Turkey to a certain extent; that is, she started looking for a job immediately after graduation, but she had doubts about finding a good job: 'While I was applying for jobs in Belgium, I also made a few applications in Turkey. In other words, ten applications in Belgium, one application in Turkey, the rate was like that'.

To sum up, economic motivations for migration are present in these life stories, but there are still other aspects of their movement to consider.

Migration for a Better Social Life

Besides migration for marriage and because of economic concerns, the next most populous group is formed by those informants whose only motivation was the active social life in Turkey.

By and large, all of them pointed out that economic and political conditions of both countries did not have an impact on their decisions. However, for these people, living in Turkey is making their dreams real; they do not feel any pressures or responsibilities to worry about. None of them was married before migration, and their aim was not marriage, as discussed above, although some of them are married and have children now. For example, Kübra said, 'I wanted to get a different experience at first. My plan was to stay one year and then go back to Belgium, but now I have become *Istanbulite* I met my husband, and we got married'. She told me her story about how she decided to settle in Turkey: 'I visited Istanbul with one of my friends in 2007. I was mesmerized by the city. … I saw a different Turkey. I felt like a European there'. At that moment, she decided to live in Istanbul and achieved her goal afterwards. Selen also did not attribute her decision to move to economic or marital affairs: 'the rhythm of the country is more suitable for me; there is a spontaneous and warmer social life in Turkey. People have more real lives.

The Netherlands is much too sterilized and monotonous for me'. She does not see a big difference between the Netherlands and Turkey in terms of opportunities offered by the social state. 'Unemployment is a big problem in Turkey, but the ones with insured employment have similar conditions in both countries'. Banu also cited social reasons for her decision to migrate:

> Before I finished my university education, I had three or four job offers, yet I refused them all without hesitation. Normally students go after such offers, but I said no. I did not want to live in the Netherlands. People want to live where they feel happy. I was not happy there. I felt restricted, even though I was a social person.

Although her main motive for migration was marriage, Sevgi also made a comparison between Belgium and Turkey in terms of social life:

> Economic conditions might be better in Belgium, yet social conditions are not as developed as in Turkey. Here, you can find things to do every time. In Belgium, even if you have much money, you cannot find ways to spend it. Viewing the Bosporus makes me relieved from the stresses of life. You can have an active life here. The economic crisis in Europe did not affect my decision.

Moreover, the closing time of markets and shopping centres has been criticized by most participants, who declared that they felt limited in their social lives. On the other hand, the always muggy weather of Belgium has also been considered as a negative effect on people's lives. As an example, Feride says, 'Life in Turkey is different. Its weather is enough sometimes. In Belgium, the weather is always grey and it unavoidably affects one's psychology'. The significance of tea houses and a view to the Bosporus were also emphasized in other conversations.

To conclude this section, even though there are diverse meanings attributed to migration by different people, their common goal is to have a better life in Turkey. They claimed economic, social and religious concerns behind migration. Some have all of them but some others are merely interested in having a socially active life. Strictly speaking, all the factors mentioned by participants are interrelated with each other. The ones who did not think about economic conditions before migration have become concerned with both political and financial circumstances since migration. On the other hand, the ones who made a marriage migration also mentioned that they wanted to have a more social life, which they could not find in Belgium or the Netherlands. Therefore, during the processes of deciding to migrate, people might think about every possibility, even though they do not put all of them into words.

Post-Migration Period
Expectations and Encounters

Before carrying out migration plans, the vast majority of my informants did not make a profound investigation into living conditions in Turkey. As mentioned in previous sections, some of them moved immediately after marriage, and they did not search for a job for a period of time. A few others arranged their plans according to job offers in Turkey. Fahriye, for instance, stated the impact of economic crisis in Europe on her migration decision. As a woman on her twenties, she made a radical decision to take a risk and leave her family to work in Istanbul, which is still a dream city for her. On the other hand, my male respondents moved to Turkey without arranging their jobs. For instance, I found the story of Mehmet very interesting because he was one of the male respondents whose main aspiration for migration was finding a better job. He, however, was unemployed for two years after moving to Turkey. It was a big risk for him since he was not alone in that journey. Like Mehmet, Barış also had troubles acquiring a good job, and he was still unemployed when I met him for interviews.

> Despite my university and master degrees, Europe could not give me a proper job. Education facilities were excellent; I think that I took advantage of them. Yet, I did not want to live with unemployment compensation with such an education background. I needed a guaranteed job, and I thought that I could find one in Turkey. First years were difficult because of adaptation problems, but finally I found a job suitable for me. (Mehmet).

Mehmet is content with his life in Turkey, and he says that he does not regret having moved there. It has been seven years since he left the Netherlands, and like other participants, he had adaptation problems at first, but he got used to his new life. After two years, he found a job with which he is content, and his family is also accustomed to living in Turkey. As another example, Esra made plans before moving to Istanbul for offering her own project to interested businessmen in Turkey. Regardless, she had set her mind on migrating to Istanbul in any case. When I first met her, she was not sure whether her project would be accepted, but I later learned that it was accepted, and she has begun her professional life in Istanbul.

Adaptation problems, comparisons and disappointments will help in explaining their current situation in Turkey.

> I do not want to say that here is completely bad and Belgium is completely unproblematic; yet in Belgium, I am talking about my country (laughs), the system is grounded. There is an order and we get used to this order. Here, everything is up-and-down. It afflicted me at first. (Betül)

Banu also speaks of the disorder in Turkey, as she had been accustomed to doing everything by the book in Netherlands. However, she speaks of her experiences in Turkey and says, 'In Turkey, you regulate the rules yourself'.

Some of my respondents told me that adapting to a Turkish lifestyle has not been an issue for them. Fahriye, for instance, said: 'The day I moved to Istanbul, I felt as if I had been living here for years'. Ayla also told me that she had adaptation problems at first, but after some time, she got used to living in Istanbul: 'I think I have caught ideal combination now. I live in Istanbul, a magnificent city, but I have a job connecting me to the Netherlands. I have Dutch friends, I am in Turkey, but I also live in the Netherlands'.Sevgi, on the other hand, stated a different point of view on adaptation by making a division between Turkishness in Belgium and Turkishness in Turkey. The former was unfamiliar for her before, but then she realized that the Turkish culture she had been familiar with in Belgium was not the same as Turkish culture in Turkey. That is what makes adaptation difficult for Sevgi. Additionally, two of my respondents continued their education in Turkey. Ayla, for instance, told me that she wanted to have another university degree in Turkey, but she encountered a number of challenges she had to deal with:

> I did not have a social environment and a regular life. The system was so different when I moved to Turkey. I felt like my education rights were taken from me. I was working, but I wanted to get a university degree at the same time. I had never had an education in Turkish, and it was also a problem for me.

Encounters have not always been the same as the expectations, and imagining living in Turkey is almost always different from the reality, which is why comparisons are inevitable.

> If you have money, life has been good to you in Turkey. In the Netherlands, however, money is not of concern. Well, I mean even if you do not have money, you can be treated well in hospitals, banks, etc. That is what I have found out in Turkey. (Demet)

Apart from such negative encounters, there are also emotional sides of migration, especially for those who migrated by themselves.

> Sometimes, when I get up in the morning, I ask myself, what the hell am I doing here? why am I here? All my friends and family members are in Belgium. I understood what my parents meant with *gurbet* (absence from home). I keep returning to Belgium in the corner of my mind. I do not want to lose it. It is hard to put up with absence of my friends and family here. (Kübra)

Others told me that the dynamism of Istanbul, its crowdedness and traffic, have tired them out. Even though they chose Istanbul only for its social dynamics, when they started living there permanently, they realized that there is a difference between how they imagined Istanbul and what they have experienced as a resident.

'They know everything; they do not need us': Development or Disappointment?

After presenting the life trajectories of my respondents in former sections, I can now go back to the discussions of the migration- development nexus and see the place of development in these people's lives, if there is such a thing. According to many studies, migration positively relates to development; for some, development brings out migration, while for others, migration is an important reason for development. For some, however, they are not separate units at all, but interrelated. The first thing I want to point out is the difficulty in defining development, which is not clearly defined in plain words (Skeldon, 2008). Supposing that migration has an impact on development, we should specify at the outset which kind of development we are talking about. Is it economic development, socio-cultural or merely human development? The International Organization for Migration offers an alternative definition:

> Development, meanwhile, is a dynamic process implying growth, advancement, empowerment and progress with the goal of increasing human capabilities, enlarging the scope of human choices and creating a safe and secure environment where citizens can live with dignity and equality. In the development process, it is important that people's productivity, creativity, and choices are broadened, and that opportunities are created. (International Organization for Migration)

This comprehensive definition has given indications of the gap between theories and realities, policies and practices, expectations and encounters. Listening to their pre- migration processes, I came to the point that almost all of them did not think about the contributions they could provide for Turkey. Of course there might be exceptions, like Mehmet, who has had such intentions in his mind without them ever being his main motivation. Especially those who migrated to Turkey for their marriage partners were worried about their future lives. It is meaningless to consider them as 'agents of development' since they have doubts about their own decisions.

> Living in Turkey had never occurred to me. I was living in Belgium, and I felt myself belonged to Belgium, because I was born and raised there. Turkey was a foreign country for us, but now I am here because of my husband. (Feride)

Feride is not alone on this point, as most of my respondents who made a marriage migration were not concerned with Turkish development since they did not have any prior plans to settle there. Apart from marriage migrants, others who moved to Turkey for a better social life also did not take note of economic and political conditions in Turkey. Such structural factors were not a matter of interest for them.

As I mentioned before, the pre-migration lives of my participants did not reflect any hint about their intentions for contributing to development of

Turkey. For some, this notion has come into view after settlement in Turkey, but there are still others who have not made any mention of their roles in development. For example, Fahriye said, 'I have never thought about this before. I do not know if I can do something beneficial for Turkey'. Therefore, it might be better to say that they did not take a step to be "social idealists" who go back to ancestral roots with the intention of improving things there (Conway and Potter, 2009:8). While they are not social idealists, there is always the chance that later, they could become potential contributors somehow. Through the direct questions I asked about development, I heard what my informants think about this issue.

> The interviewer: Do you think that you can do something good for your society in Turkey?
>
> Nermin: Well, I am working for earning my own keep; well actually I am not sure whether it is a development because I am working just like other people living in Turkey. But if it creates a development anyway, it is all the same to me.

Nermin is one of the psychologists who cannot use her language skills in Turkey because the language used in medical fields is generally Turkish. It is an important factor for most of my respondents because they desire to create a difference with their language skills. Another psychologist, Melek, complains about the absence of arrangements in which she can use English or Dutch in her professional life. Their being disposed to make contributions to Turkey is not enough unless necessary structural factors are provided. Mehmet, for instance, makes endeavours to be a beneficial individual in Turkey, but institutions are not receptive toward his contributions. This attitude discourages him, and he says, 'They already know everything'.

Concluding Remarks

This research, through an anthropological gaze, works to fill the blank spots within analyses of the migration-development nexus. Based on an ethnographic study with 19 Turkish-origin Belgian and Dutch citizens, it aims to demonstrate the shortcomings of existing approaches toward migration and development. Contrary to the policies and taken-for-granted opinions of individual actors behind this movement, it focuses on how people evaluate their pre- and post- migration lives. As an anthropological study, it does not look at the issue as merely economic and political; rather, it maintains a broader perspective, including social, cultural and personal aspects. Through its methodology and qualitative analysis, this research does not try to provide generalizations; on the contrary, it tries to give voice to real people's imaginaries about their migration by referring to their life histories.

The findings obtained through unstructured and semi-structured deep interviews with people have shown that being 'new brains' for the receiving country has not been a concern for them. Every single one of my informants

has his/her own dreams, expectations, disappointments and adaptation problems in a post-migration setting. Although reasons for migration are various, there is a common point in all the stories: they take advantage of having dual citizenship, knowing several languages and having qualifications that can be used everywhere. Therefore, some of them define themselves as 'world citizens', which is one reason why they do not have certain plans for the future. When they wish to seek other opportunities in another place, they are free and open to move in the future. Namely, social or maybe economic changes are mostly not in their agendas. It is absolutely true that a transnational lifestyle and memories affected their decisions; however, they are all aware of their freedom to move when they wish. This relief, therefore, makes their decision-making processes easier.

Of course it is possible for these people to contribute to changes in Turkey, and some of them aim to do so; however, structural deficiencies in the country both discourage and barricade them from making use of their qualifications there. Also, constituting only a small number of people, they are a true minority in Turkey, and their differences get lost among the millions of people living in the country. Additionally, they have to deal with the identification changes of a post migration setting. They already faced problems in defining their pre-migration identities, and they hope to fill the identity gap in Turkey. At the same time, most of them informed me that they see themselves as different from other Turkish people in Turkey because they think and do things in a different way.

Their potential roles in social change in Turkey should not be underestimated, but their perspectives should also be accounted for before making policies. All of them define development in a distinct way; for some it is their own social improvement, whereas for others, it means changes in the country where they live currently. Most of the participants to this study do not correlate their migration with the potential developments they can provide. For this reason, there is a need to come up with new theories to understand the issue of new migration flows, such as the one studied in this thesis. For this research, it might be helpful to look at these "development agents" in a different way by regarding them as people who both do things differently from their fellow citizens, and who have the possibility to move to another country in the future. Also, before setting expectations for these 'young talents', it should not be forgotten that they still have not completed their adaptation processes in the post-migration setting

Appendix: Information about the Participants

I interviewed with 19 people three of which are males; their ages differ between 20s and 30s, in other words, they are either young generation or middle aged. The youngest participant is 22 years old and the oldest one is 41. Their professions are various; three psychologists, lawyer, export specialist, academician, official in consulate, foreign trade specialist, accountant, business administrator, doctor, teacher, office manager, education consultant, medical secretaryship and editor.

The time periods they have spent in Turkey after migration differ from one another, changing from one-year settlement to ten years. Looking at their marital status, only five of them are single, other 14 participants are married. However, most of them are newly married. Seven of them have children; other 11 informants are without children.

Even though there are some exceptions, their siblings got at least a high school degree. The reasons behind their families' migration to Belgium and the Netherlands were based on economical motivations. Most of them migrated as low skilled workers in the first stance, and then while some of them changed their occupations, others retired from their low skilled jobs. As an exception, fathers of two participants were sent to Belgium by Turkish government to be Islam teacher. They did not have any working experience under difficult conditions as mineworkers of factory workers. The father of one of the informants migrated to Belgium to escape from the political upheavals in Turkey during 1980s when there was a military coup and economy was collapsed.

Apart from children who were born and educated in Belgium and the Netherlands, more than half of the family members, in other words parents and grandparents cannot speak French, Flemish or Dutch depending on the region they live in. However, the mother of one of the participants is Dutch and the father of another participant is Flemish; therefore, there is no local language learning problem within these two families.

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