ARMENIAN MIGRANTS IN TURKEY: HISTORY OF A JOURNEY

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2010

ARMENIAN MIGRANTS IN TURKEY: HISTORY OF A JOURNEY

Thesis submitted to the

Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

by

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Boğaziçi University

2010

"Armenian Migrants in Turkey: History of a Journey," a

thesis prepared by Nıvart Taşçı in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the Master of Arts in History degree

from the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History at Bogaziçi University.

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An abstract of the Thesis of Nıvart Taşçı, for the degree of Master of Arts

from the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History to be taken

December 2010.

Title: Armenian Migrants in Turkey: History of a Journey

This thesis covers a decade-long story of Armenian migrants (from Armenia) living in the Kumkapı neighborhood of Istanbul. Based on nine months of ethnographic work by the author, it treats their way of settlement, employment, and integration in their new location by referring to well-known notions of immigration sociology and economic sociology. Actually, the presence of Armenians (from Armenia) in Turkey dates back from the early 1990s. Those were the most dynamic years of the shuttle trade, though newly rising circular migration between the countries of the Former Soviet Union, many of them on the threshold of economic collapse, and Turkey, the inevitable host for these people due to its proximity, easy entrance and suitable market conditions. Armenians from Armenia, one of the countries that experienced the consequences of the breakup of the Union the most severely, formed part of this crowd, too, after a long-running interruption since World War I. However, things had changed since then. Newcomers had been added to those who had grown old during the shuttle trade years, nearly all of them women above the age of 45, in order to engage in a quite different area of the informal economy, carework. Therefore, the actual residents of this old Armenian town of Istanbul, Kumkapı, form both one of several local branches of feminized migration relating in its turn to the globalization of domestic work, and a settled rather than circular community, with its specific social networks facilitating the acquisition of vital needs such as shelter, job, and protection for those already inside, as well as for the newcomers. Owing to the presence of many cultural institutions of local Armenians nearby, together with the historical meaning of the Kumkapı-Gedikpaşa-Grand Bazaar line for the Armenians (of Turkey), the use of two major concepts, social capital and ethnic economy, serve to reveal what kind of links exist between the local and migrant Armenians, and to explain the deterministic relationship between social and economic sphere. Finally, this work, i.e., the lives considered here, having in its background the global economic transformations, will help to reconsider both the concepts of migration sociology and the ethnicity, solidarity and identity in the pale light of (Armenian's most recent wave of) migration.

Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü'nde Yüksek Lisans

derecesi için Nıvart Taşçı tarafından Ekim 2010'da teslim edilen tezin özeti.

Başlık: Türkiye'deki Ermenistanlı Göçmenler: Bir Yolculuğun Öyküsü

Bu tez, İstanbul'un Kumkapı semtinde yaşayan Ermenistanlı göçmenlerin on yıllık hikayesi üzerinedir. Yazarın dokuz ay süren etnografik çalışmasına dayanarak, göçmenlerin yerleşim, iş bulma ve yeni konumlarına uyum süreçleri, göç sosyolojisi ve ekonomi sosyolojisi alanlarının temel kavramlarıyla ele alınmaktadır. Ermenistanlıların Türkiye'deki varlığı aslında 90'lı yılların başlarına kadar uzanmaktadır. Bavul ticaretinin, dolayısıyla sirküler göçün en hareketli olduğu bu yıllar boyunca, birçoğu ekonomik krizin eşiğindeki Eski Sovyet Ülkeleri'nden gelenler için, coğrafi yakınlığı, giriş kolaylığı ve elverişli piyasa koşulları ile Türkiye, kaçınılmaz bir giriş ülkesi konumuna gelmişti. Sovyet ekonomisinin çöküşünün etkilerini en şiddetli biçimde yaşayan Ermenistanlılar da, I Dünya Savaşı'na dayanan uzun soluklu bir kesintinin ardından bu göç güruhuna katılmışlardı. 90lardan bugüne çok şey değişti. Bavul ticaretinde yaşlananlara, kayıt dışı ekonominin bambaşka bir alanında, bakım işlerinde çalışmak üzere hemen tümü 45 yaş üzerinde yeni gelenler eklendi. Dolayısıyla Kumkapı'nın, bu eski Ermeni mahallesinin bugünkü sakinleri, hem ev işlerinin küreselleşmesiyle bağlantılı olarak gelişen kadınlaşmış göçün yerel bir kolu, hem de sakinlerinin ve yeni gelenlerin barınma, iş ve güvenlik gibi hayati ihtiyaçlarını karşılayacak kendine has sosyal ağlara sahip, sirküler olmaktan ziyade yerleşik bir cemaattir. Bu civarda yerli (Türkiyeli) Ermenilere ait birçok kültür kurumunun varlığı ve Kumkapı-Gedikpaşa-Kapalı Çarşı hattının tarihsel anlamı sebebiyle, yerli ve göçmen Ermeniler arasında ne tür bağların bulunduğu; aynı zamanda sosyal ve ekonomik alan arasındaki belirleyici ilişkinin açıklanması için iki temel kavramdan yararlanılacaktır: sosyal sermaye ve etnik ekonomi. Son olarak, arka planında küresel ekonomik dönüşümlerini taşıyan bu çalışma, daha doğru bir ifadeyle burada ele alınan hayatlar, hem göç sosyolojisinin kavramlarını, hem de etnisite, dayanışma ve kimlik kavramlarını, (en son Ermeni) göçün(ün) soluk ışığında yeniden düşünmemizi sağlayacaktır.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I want to thank Mehmet Evren Dinçer, for his invaluable support and interventions, challenging my way of thinking. I want to thank my thesis advisor, Cengiz Kırlı; he did not fail to defend me in any situation from the very beginning. I am grateful to Kathryn Kranzler and Carol Lamotte for editing my text and bearing with my shortcomings. Mehmet Doğan, my dear friend, once again, did not let me walk alone. I want to thank Fırat Kaplan and Özgün Forta, who listened me and gave me inspiration. I want to thank to Ardaşes Margosyan, my secret advisor, namely my *varbed*. I want to thank my family, my wise and patient caregivers. I want to thank all those women for teaching me about real life and giving me faith in bright days to come. And finally, I want to thank fortune for giving me my companion during all those long days in Kumkapı, my fellow Aras.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On a Thursday morning, if you get off at Kumkapı, the third stop on the Sirkeci-Halkalı railway line, you will find yourself in a strange atmosphere of festivity. Before you is a road, both sides full of taverns and only open to pedestrians, which ends with a fountain in the middle of it, emphasizing the touristic feature of the region. When you turn left from here, you enter a narrow street. At the corner a building rises that separates Kumkapı Square (where the musicians and tourists run wild) from the rest of the neighborhood. Many faces peering out from the iron grilles of their windows stare motionlessly through clothes hung out to dry. This old building, in front of which a few policemen are on duty and which was once used as a courthouse, is the Foreigner's Guesthouse. If you turn your back to Kadırga, which is on your right, and continue to walk along the side streets, you will notice two things: Call Shops, namely telephone call centers, and above-middle age women speaking a foreign language. And if you go even a little further and enter the Perşembe bazaar, the number of these women with the short haircuts and fair skin that are typical of women from the Caucasus, who have not forgotten to be attentive to their make-up and clothing, will increase in such a manner that you immediately understand that what you saw a while ago was not a coincidence. At the end of the bazaar you find yourself in a street which does not resemble the other streets of Kumkapı along which old-style wooden Istanbul houses are in orderly lines, but also neglected and the street is full of playing children. Today this street is known as Love Street (*Sevgi Sokağı*): the Istanbul Armenian Patriarchate, the Main Church across from it and nearby Bezciyan High School are located here.

If you look more carefully, you will notice that the flags in the displays of the Call Shops belong to former Soviet countries. An ear attuned to foreign languages other than English will perceive that the languages being spoken in the street are Russian and Armenian. The curious person must ask who these people are, why the taverns are located here, and whether the other phenomena were related to each other or not. And finally, a mind that believes that there is a connection between the physical properties of the locality and its social structure will begin to think along the lines of the formation of the societal morphology. When Kumkapı is considered in this context, the question arises: Why are the immigrants settled in this neighborhood rather than anywhere else? In other words: *Why Kumkapı?*

Structuring of the Narrative on the Initiation of Migration

The presence of the Armenians in Kumkapı first of all corresponds to the fact of "migration." Migration, on the other hand, should be analyzed as a process rather than as a fact. Therefore, it does not have a certain point of initiation or a chronology which is separated by definite dates. Perhaps, somewhat because of this, "migration" is a subject that most needs to be *narrated* when considered within the interest area of the social sciences. As in any other story, to the questions posed while beginning the journey, is added a new set of questions during the course of time. The answer to each of them finds its correspondence in different units of analysis, at different levels and with different theoretical constructs. That is why, while bringing together the thousands of stories that originated in Armenia and ended up in Istanbul, it was not easy to bring together the common points, the general tendencies, to determine the repeating details and episodes, to eliminate certain points that I had thought to be

important at the beginning, and by this to define the limits in a clear way. In the end, I ended up with four basic sections.

The first thing to be done was to give a description of the "departure point" of the journeys, namely Armenia. The first part (Chapter II) is founded on this work. While the first equivalent in this country of the fact of migration throughout the entire first three quarters of the twentieth century was "*hayrenatartsutyun*" [repatriation], the immense transformation undergone in the 1980s would put aside the word for at least twenty years. However, while Soviet Armenia drew to itself the members of Armenian *kağut*s[1] of various sizes, dispersed throughout the world from Russia to the USA, from Egypt to Brazil, and even the members of the community in Turkey, "*ardakağt*" [out-migration] became the greatest reality for the country.

The decrease in the population of the country in the previous ten years of the twentieth century was immense; for this small country whose population was a little more than three million, the number of those who left was 800,000. This meant 20% of the population. Under which conditions did such an extreme situation take place? What did this twenty per cent mean? What was the destination of the migration? Who left, and more important than that, who could go? What did those who remained do?

Finding answers to these questions requires understanding Armenia, which is a politically independent part of the Caucasus today, but which until recently was a component of a bigger whole, the Soviet Union, which determined its entire socio-economic indicators. In the final analysis, the reason behind the intensity of this migration was related directly to the structural embeddings of the Soviet elements in the economic and social sense with Armenia and its cutting its ties with it. Even the

[1] Community (in Arm.); this word is specifically used to designate Armenian communities in countries other than Armenia.

big earthquake experienced in 1988 in the northwest of the country, was a catastrophe similar to the tragic image of the shocks that the country's economic infrastructure went through when its Soviet ties were broken.

When the Karabagh tension, which was exacerbated after a few months and later turned into a war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, was added to this, the social realm turned into a chaotic environment where the categories of "refugee," "internally displaced person," "temporary migrant," and "immigrant" were intermingled. Even if the difference in meaning among them was sometimes and legally valid, in actuality this difference disappeared. Following the demographic change experienced in this ten-year period and to define its relation with the rehabilitation program which could not be completed in the earthquake region, with the armed-conflict period, or with the "structural adjustments" to be realized for transition to a market economy would require an effort much exceeding the magnitude and claim of this work. But at least giving the breakdown of the events and presenting them with the various concepts expressing migration led me in the right direction by avoiding repetition and also searching for an appropriate category for the subjects of this fieldwork of mine.

Differentiating the women in Kumkapı from the hundreds of thousands of people departing a country of migrants, was once more possible with a concept - again relating to migration but which goes back to much earlier times than the other mentioned concepts: *khoban yertal*[2]. *Khoban* means the periodic journeys, the seasonal work, conducted by the males living in the rural areas of Armenia to obtain additional income. But in the transition country of Armenia opening its doors to the new world order, not only the production order, labor market, wages and social

[2] (Arm: Going to *khoban*) Armenian folk term to define people leaving to work abroad; leaving to work abroad over a long period of time was a longstanding traditional way of providing for families in some villages.

rights, but also the traditional meaning of many concepts related to them and expressing the social division of labor and intra-family roles were subjected to transition. The presence of a mass of people with whom you are directly faced when you get off at the Kumkapı train station and who were described at the beginning of this paper was neither present in the statistics kept by Armstat (National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia) nor did it appear in the works about the irregular migration in Turkey and those related to its labor aspect. These were the new *khoban*s of Armenian households.

Determination of the migration fact in the post-Soviet geography and the presence of Armenian women coming to Turkey during this period required, at the second stage, considering this together with similar examples considered in the migration sociology literature and with the concepts it uses. To the extent that the first chapter (Chapter II) is built up on the effort of "separation," the second part (Chapter III) aims to "integrate" it. Therefore, the question of "why the Armenian migrants are in Turkey" on which the third chapter is based finds its answer in the world system theory associated with globalization. The concept this theory uses is really capable of explaining the Armenian example from beginning to end. What the Soviet Union experienced was actually a period similar to the one created by the decolonization that was accelerated in the aftermath of the Second World War. When the USA and Europe pulled back the military and political regulation tools that they had constructed in Africa, Latin America and Asia to control the resources, this led to a great increase in the number of international migrants. Among the migrants were the colonizers, and in addition to them there was a mass bound to them with private or economic ties, and also people who fled the beginning of ethnic clashes arising from the change in the balance of power. From the opposite point of view,

what happened in the Soviet Union was more or less the same. The collapse of the Soviet economy meant the entrance of capitalism and the free market economy and, therefore, the tools of the First World indirectly controlling the politics that would enter these countries. The increase in international migration stock was an important consequence of the collapse of the Soviet Block, too. Migrants were Russians in non-Russian countries, those who were dependent on them with economic or non-economic ties, and also refugees fleeing ethnic clashes. In the end, this decolonization in the former Soviet Union, just like the decolonization of the Third World, created societies whose "non-capitalist patterns of social and economic organizations are disrupted and transformed."[3] In this context, the Armenians, besides being a part of the same global economic structure as the Mexicans or Filipinos, apart from all the local differences, they were on the *same side* as the Mexican Rosa in Miami or the Filipina Amihan in Italy: this *side* meant to be an Armenian Hayganuş in Istanbul.

Well, then, what were the points and definitions that constructed "that side"? This was the point where Turkey had a meaning. What explained this gendered arm of post-Soviet migration was not the ease of acquiring visas or the low cost of the journeys. It was "the jobs"… After the collapse of the Soviet Union, besides the permanent migrations to Western countries (whose numbers reached the hundreds of thousands), another flow from the same region, that of "circular migrants," has been in progress in a floating pattern.[4] In the actual context, Turkey, a source country for labor migration towards Europe between 1960 and 1972, is cited as one of the major

[3] Douglas S. Massey, Joaquin Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, J. Edward Taylor, "An Evaluation of International Migration Theory: The North American Case." *Population and Development Review* 20, No: 4 (1994), pp. 722.

[4] Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild, ed. *Global Women: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003), pp. 38.

hosts for labor immigration since the beginnings of the 1990s,[5] especially from the countries of the Black Sea region (Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Russia) and Southeast Europe (Romania, Bulgaria). In the 2008 report of the IOM, as well as in the reports of many other organizations showing new trends of labor migration, Turkey was ranked among the countries of destination for migrant workers from Moldova, Romania, Ukraine, and the Russian Federation in search of employment. However, this worker migration had another constitutive aspect: those coming were women. In this context, as stated in Chapter II, the current Armenian migration to Istanbul involved impoverished women deprived of social rights who could no longer find places for themselves within the labor market of Armenia or Russia. They form part of both "the post-Soviet labor migration" and "feminized migration."

The latter was made possible by the growing demand of middle-class families for paid domestic work; a fact strictly related to "the commodification of care", implying "the transfer of 'care work' embedded in close human relationship to the rationalized context of commodified care" which intersected with the "feminization of survival" in Third World countries and lead eventually to "the globalization of domestic work" and "the international division of reproductive labor" in advanced economies. But this reproduction is not only the reproduction of the daily life of the women in the global cities who participate in employment more fully. At the same time, it is the reproduction of both the "global inequalities" which force the migrant woman to assume the reproduction of the other at the expense of her own, and "gender inequalities" which have excluded domestic labor from the boundaries of the waged labor market until now, and still exclude it in the actual situation where the work is transferred to the hired migrant. Thus as geographical proximity or visa

[5] Ahmet Içduygu, *The Labor Dimensions of Irregular Migration in Turkey*, CARIM Research Reports, Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, San Domineco di Fiesole (FI): European University Institute, 2006.

applications should be determined as the secondary factors of migration, the legal context in the receiving country should be considered secondary as well. For example, when we look at the case of Turkey and the Armenians, the lack of legal grounds for the migration for economic reasons, when coupled with the violation of the one-month visa period being labeled "illegal," an order emerges which pushes the migrants to be/remain invisible in the public realm.

This is the endorsement and complement of the social inequality which limits women to responsibility in the private sphere within the social division of labor and which pushes them to be invisible in the public realm. But still, within this social and global polarization where single individuals and communities disappear, there is a situation where the Armenians are distinguished from the other actors of the post-Soviet migration: they denote a *community* that has passed from *de jure* "transnational migrant" to *de facto* "settled immigrant" within the Kumkapı-Gedikpaşa-Laleli triangle, which has become the meeting point for those coming from the former Soviet countries and the citizens of the Turkish Republic, and that witnesses the birth of a sort of "unsettled transnational community" through the socio-economic opportunities it provides. This transition forms the basis for the real claim of this thesis, which aims to re-determine the presence of the Armenian migrants in Turkey within the context of the post-Soviet migration and globalization of domestic labor. In the fourth and the fifth chapters this very settlement is described and its different actors are analyzed.

Structuring of the Narrative on the Perpetuation of Migration

The second half of this thesis was the longest and the most difficult part of the work. This difficulty basically derived from the "period of waiting" that working with the migrants required. My departure point was an interview published in a March 2008 issue of the weekly Turkish-Armenian newspaper *Agos*[6]. This was an interview conducted with Larissa Hamoyan, who had previously been a state artist in Armenia and who had become unemployed; she had first begun to deal with shuttle trading and finally ended up with domestic work in Turkey. Larissa felt *safe enough* to give interviews to the newspapers even though she was undocumented. Although this increased my hopes, I soon understood that I was mistaken. A personal interview to be made with *Agos* would not pose a serious danger, especially in that period when news regarding the Armenians working in Turkey was seldom seen in the media, or in this newspaper.

In the end, as I will be mentioning in the following chapters, they were aware of the "inactivist policy" that the state preferred to call its "tolerance policy"; thus, as one of the migrant women said, "They were less afraid of the Kumkapı police," who were aware of this lack of policy and acted accordingly. The only thing they had to do was not be noticed very much by the others, in short, not be seen in the public realm. Thus the risk of deportation and any danger of probable abuses were minimized.

This situation was reflected in two ways in my work: these women did not want to go outside of the houses in which they stayed or worked, or leave their friends' houses; in short, they did not want to be *outside*. This meant that the

[6] "Kapitalist düzenin göçe zorladığı bir kadın," *Agos*, 7 March 2008.

interviews had to be done inside the houses. Since they generally stayed as boarders (i.e., live-in) in the houses in which they worked, I had to wait for their weekly one-day holiday. If no exceptions occurred, this would take place on Thursdays, when the Kumkapı bazaar was open. Under these conditions, going to Larissa's home on a Thursday (and I did so) would mean that her off-duty housemates, or other friends in the vicinity, would be there, too. Knowing such a person would give me the opportunity to reach many of the others.

The other impact reversed this advantage: not wanting to be seen in the public realm was like a collective decision rather than an individual reluctance. This was a decision which meant avoiding any step leading to judicial risk for Armenian migrants working in Istanbul, and therefore not wanting to be the subject of the media, or to any [academic or other type of] work… Thus, the "waiting period" I mentioned earlier would begin here. This room in which Larissa and many other migrant women waited when they were unemployed, or when they waited for a "job" when they first came to Istanbul, now became a waiting room for me. What was I waiting for? I was waiting for them to trust me…

The economic infrastructure of the migration of the Armenian women to Turkey has been discussed by departing from the context drawn by the globalization theorists. The conceptual framework of this approach finding its place within migration sociology was provided by the world system theory and its sub-category, the "network theory." During each visit I made to the same house, the new people I met both made it possible for me to see the repeating parts of the different stories or the differentiating details, and to understand how the people were related to each other. Thus the assumptions of the "network theory" ceased to be a theory for me, and turned into the realities that I witnessed. Hence, the conversations I had most of

the time without tape recording (I preferred to write down what I remembered later) were the only source of the empirical data for me in writing the fourth and the fifth chapters. Assuming that I was trying to formulate a sociological perspective and that I was obliged to use a method in compliance with it, I see no harm in defining the methodology I used in these chapters as "in-depth interviews with Armenian migrants."

There was another very important advantage for me to continue my work by concentrating on certain houses. When my visits to Kumkapı became frequent, I had the opportunity of personally participating in the daily lives of the migrants. Otherwise this might have been the most difficult part to be formulated via simple questions and answers. Of course, this life involved what the "network theory" mentioned, the web of accommodation-finding jobs-security which made the coming of migrants possible: with its mediators, agents, with the assurance made possible with family relations and acquaintances. But there was much more than this in Kumkapı.

This community, whose presence dates back to the 2000s, as I stated at the end of the third chapter, was converted into a settled community. As the people who arrived become more and more settled, new acquaintances, sometimes sons, brides, or young daughters, were added to them. As the community was extended by including the males, young people and children, the needs were also extended to include school for the children whose parents work, a church where rituals are arranged with the participation of the community, a hall for weddings and baptisms. Tables set out on festival days, on birthdays, and even for funerals are full of food and drinks brought from Armenia.[7] These are obtained either through the mediation

[7] See Appendix B for photos.

of the hostesses or drivers who conduct bus services between Istanbul and Armenia and whose names are known to everybody, or by giving orders to the ever-coming-and-going acquaintances, or by directly buying from the Armenians who have booths in the Kumkapı bazaar. The signals of Armenian television can be received even in the poorest house.

People know each other; some are known by all. The most important thing is that everyone is able to find an *acquintant* to apply to when needed. In short, migrant women above the age of 45 are able to create their social networks to continue their presence in Istanbul and to absorb and embrace the newcomers. On my part, I had to ask them what was keeping the chains of this network together, the foundation of which had been set by those who had dealt with *shopping* (this is the expression they use for small-scale shuttle trading) in the 1990s, who had first got to know Istanbul (actually Kumkapı) in those years and then begun to work permanently. The "social capital" as James S. Coleman calls it, is the basic conceptual foundation I used in problematizing my observations.

Finally, due to my ethnic identity, there was another question which led me to query more than other researchers: the determinants of the relationship between the Istanbul Armenians and Armenian migrants, which I examine in the fifth part, and the role of the ethnic tie in this relation.

The agenda of the Istanbul Armenians in the spring of 2010 was the election of a new Patriarch in the place of (the spiritual leader of Turkey's Armenian community) Patriarch Mesrob II, who had been ill for a long time. At that time, except for Aram Ateşyan, who was the assignee of the Patriarch, there were two candidates, one from Germany and one from Armenia. The latter, Sebuğ *Sırpazan*[8],

[8] Bishop (in Arm.); Religious rank one step below the Patriarchate.

had assumed duty in the regions of Armenia which had undergone wide damage because of the earthquake. The Armenian migrants in Istanbul, most of whom had come from the earthquake region, knew him, but as if they were acting in concert, they neither believed in his election, nor that anything would change positively for them if he was elected.[9] Sebuğ *Sırpazan*, on the other hand, said the following in one of his visits to the Armenian institutions in Istanbul: "The Armenians of Istanbul are sinful with regard to the Armenian migrants."

The sin to which the Armenian Patriarch candidate referred was the ineffectiveness of the Armenians of Istanbul with regard to meeting the needs of the migrants, the unending accusations between the members of the two communities, the lack of contact between the Armenian institutions long established in Kumkapı and the Armenian migrants a few streets away. In short, he referred to the togetherness of these two communities that existed only in the form of tensions since the time of their first arrival in Istanbul as being the major form of their continual contact. Was the situation really as it was expressed by Sebuğ *Sırpazan,* and if so, what did this mean?

Two defining factors were at the source of the related "sin." The first is the "ethnic economy" that is discussed in Chapter V. More properly stated, it is related to the restrictive patronage relationship between the Armenian Armenians and the Istanbul Armenians for whom they generally work as servants, baby-sitters or nurses. The income source of the migrant within a legal context forcing one of the parties (here, the migrant) "to stay as migrant," and to continue her/his existence with non-legal status would be converted sometimes into a shelter, and sometimes into a compulsion, where the object of exchange is the very personality of the worker rather

[9] Actually the election had been canceled for a quite strange justification affirmed by Turkish government. For further information see, "Patrik Genel Vekili Aldatmacası," *Agos*, 02 July 2010.

than its labor power. The “common ethnic ties” would in the end not mean anything more than a tool confirming their position within this unequal employee-employer relationship. While the “social network” side of the migration theory represented by James Coleman, Douglas Massey, and Alejandro Portes evaluates the “common ethnic ties” from the perspective of the migrants, they position these ties within a facilitating network which ensures the minimization of the cost of migration from the perspective of the migrants. Although this description is valid for the Armenians in some way, it acquires a new and negative meaning in the area of paid domestic work.

The second determinant that we have mentioned is just this: the mentioned ethnic economy being shaped to a great extent at the axis of in-house labor, since home, namely the private area, can be described both as an area where gender inequality is reproduced due to the traditional approach to housework, and also as an area of representation of certain likes and tastes from the perspective of the urban middle class. With reference to Bourdieu, when it is accepted that “being dominant” would be related not only to mastering the financial power, but also having the power to determine the social values, then the confrontation of the two groups goes beyond the meeting of common ethnicities to a place where one group would be forced forever to remain as a worker and the other would enjoy the infinite privilege of being the employer within this ethnic economy. Beyond this, in this unequally preset relationship, on the one side there are the Istanbul Armenians, who are the conveyors of likes and tastes, and on the other side there are the Armenian Armenians who have to experience this unequal relationship everyday within domestic activities where the labor is continually devalued and degraded. In the fifth chapter, the grounds upon which this positioning and the resulting tension are built are explained by the fact that the relationship between the two communities demonstrates an “ethnic enclave”

pattern, and also that "social capital" and "transfer of information" as the building blocks of this pattern play a leading role in the Istanbul Armenians' search for workers as much as the Armenian migrants' job-finding process.

Limitations of the Study and Last Word for Introduction

The necessity to complete the work in a limited time period led me to concentrate on an important but limited part of the Turkish experiences of the Armenian migrants. One of the parts missing was the reflection of the Turkish-Armenian problem on the mind-sets of the Armenian migrants and their employers (and in connection with this, on their actions). The "genocide" tension that has continued between the two people since the beginning of the twentieth century and still has not been settled, continues to be a subject of political friction today between Turkey and Armenia that flares up from time to time. Many steps have been taken in recent years to turn this subject into an impartial discussion; the foundations of many bridges have been established, from cultural or artistic activities to commercial partnerships, to increase and strengthen the communication between the two peoples. However, it is not possible to say that the steps taken on each occasion have achieved their goals, or that they have included all the sections of society.

Armenians are still a taboo for some Turkish people; just like – perhaps even more- the Turks are for the Armenians… In this context it may be rather surprising that the Armenian migrants choose to come to Turkey for work, and even prefer – as they personally express it – Turks' homes in which to work. In the same manner, it may be a very meaningful subject to analyze why many upper-class Turkish families in the cities prefer to have Armenians as their domestics. The networks and

experiences of the Armenian women working in places very far away, for example in a hotel in a Black Sea city, or in a vacation centre in Antalya, may well be much different than what is narrated here with regard to their experiences in Istanbul, or more importantly, from the experience in Kumkapı, which is still the centre of their continued migration. There are also missing points regarding the situation of the men: for example, those working as seasonal agricultural workers with the Georgians in Samsun, or in other cities of Anatolia. For these people who are outside the scope of the thesis, the Turkish-Armenian encounter may be much different, and may play a more/less "founding" role than what is narrated here. More important than that, better knowledge of their experiences could take this approach regarding the case in Istanbul to a different platform.

The second part missing is the part of the narrative directly related to the Armenians of Istanbul. I will not refer to a certain "systemic" approach to my observations regarding this circle, of which I am a part, or to my conversations regarding the migrants. What are the thoughts of the Armenians of Istanbul regarding the migration to every part of the world from Armenia, or regarding the community in Kumkapı? When it is considered that most of them migrated to Istanbul from Anatolia 40-50 years ago and, moreover, were members of families who directed themselves to the traditionally migrant-receiving countries of the North (such as the USA and France) after the end of 1970s, posing such questions may well take us to implications far beyond the connotations of common ethnicity. In addition, it may make it possible to draw much more clearly and correctly the boundaries of the narrative that arises -in the second half of the study- on the framework determining this "identity" shaped by legal, economic and social status, taking it far beyond ethnicity. Most important of all, it may lay the groundwork for spelling out another

subject, which is one of the basic elements in the lack of communication/solidarity between the Armenian migrants and the Armenians of Istanbul: the role of the state.

In the 1960s, with the support of the Armenian Patriarchate in Kumkapı, the basic needs (such as accommodation, work, and education) of thousands of Armenians brought from Anatolia to Istanbul were met and their integration into the city and the community was made possible. The *Kağtaganats Hantsnakhump* (Migration Committee) established within the Patriarchate was the most important element of organization and direction during this period. When I asked Sarkis Seropyan, a member of the committee since its foundation and its secretary, why a similar formation (or any other similar organization) has not been established for the Armenians in Kumkapı today, his answer was as follows:

> All in all, the number of those we had officially brought to Istanbul within a period of fifteen to twenty years was 8000. Today we are speaking of 10,000, 20,000, 30,000 Armenian migrants. Although it is easier to reach them today, people who did not cooperate with us with the excuse of fearing the state today find other excuses. They distance themselves from this movement by throwing mud at them…[10]

This response may well be the subject of another study and could lead to another question which would complement (or maybe disprove!) the assumptions and deductions of this work: "Has the fear of the state really ended?"

Despite many unmentioned details and being to a great extent limited to the migrants of Kumkapı whose work experience is in the houses of Armenians of Istanbul, I believe that this work will contribute to the migrations studies conducted to date and to the other studies to be conducted with regard to the Armenians. Its contribution to the first includes the adaptation of the constitutive concepts of "the sociology of migration" to a community who came for domestic work, and thus was

[10] Sarkis Seropyan, editor of the Armenian weekly, *Agos*, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

within the borders of the literature regarding the "feminization of migration." By putting forward the daily lives of the migrants in the narrative, transformations in the concepts, their new meanings or deviations in shade are made apparent.

On the other hand, its contribution to the latter is related to the *transformation* of the various concepts discussed here, which may encourage the reader to think further. Throughout the study, the presence of the Armenians in Turkey is explained with the world systems theory, which defends the understanding that "the disturbance of the traditional relations at the local level by the capitalist market has created a momentum on the part of the masses," and the theories of social capital and informal networks are even reevaluated within this context. At the end it became evident that this transformation is seen not only in the traditional production and social structure, but also in concepts such as "ethnicity," "identity," "belonging," "sedentation" and "migration." As an individual, the migrant plays an active role in this transformation. Perhaps this activity mostly manifests itself in the hot spot of Kumkapı, the stage of this narrative. Even at the point where the theoretical framework of the narrative becomes so strong as to push the space back, migration emerges as an act disturbing the prevalent structure of that space by bringing with it new meanings and transforming it into a certain "place." All of these were the ingenious outcomes of the settlement practices of the migrants. In the end, we are faced with a multidimensional process. A section from history that includes scenes from the recent reorganization of the labor power by the global economy, the feminization of migration, income-obtaining strategies emerging at single centers, constitutive character of ethnicity and the negative meanings this character has acquired at the level of economic relations.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL ASPECTS OF MIGRATION IN ARMENIA

On August 23, 1990 Armenia formally declared its intention to become a sovereign and independent state, and one year later, on September 20, 1991, reaffirmed its commitment to independence by boycotting an All-Union referendum that would take place in nine of the republics of the USSR for the sake of the preservation of the USSR, and conducted its own, the consequence of which was the support of the majority for the secession from the USSR.[11] Armenia was among the fifteen newly established independent successor nation-states of the collapsed Soviet Union, a huge body of 153 various ethnic groups, 53 of which have their own ethnic homelands.[12] Heleniak writes that "In terms of the concentration of ethnic groups within their own homelands, Armenians were the least concentrated, with one-third of Armenians in the Soviet Union living outside Armenia (but elsewhere in the Soviet Union), in spite of making up the largest share of their own homeland."[13]

According to some current estimates, approximately five million Armenians live outside of Armenia, more than 1,130,000 of them residing in Russia, making it

[11] Armenia found itself in a turbulent political atmosphere in the period following declaration of independence in 1991. Studies dealing with the countries' recent history are only a few; moreover, their main focus is either Soviet period or the course of events after the collapse of the Soviet Union. My search for a comprehensive study dealing with the structural continuities between the two, rather than describing them as a strict rupture one from the other, ended up negatively. The following studies were used as the main sources on Armenia: Ronald Grigor Suny, "Soviet Armenia, 1921-91," in *The Armenians: Past and Present in the Making of National Identity*, edited by Edmund Herzig and Marina Kurkchiyan (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005); Joseph R. Masih and Robert O. Krikorian, *Armenia at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 1999).

[12] Timothy Heleniak, "Migration of the Russian Diaspora after the Breakup of Soviet Union," *Journal of International Affairs* 57, no. 2 (Spring 2004), pp. 99-117.

[13] Timothy Edmund Heleniak, "The Changing Spatial Distribution of the Population of the Former Soviet Union" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 2009), pp. 38.

home to the largest share of the Armenian diaspora.[14] Besides speaking of the ethnic conflicts that rose to the surface in the countries of Transcaucasia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the earthquake of 1988 that took place in the village of Spitak, Armenia, and economic factors that have driven masses toward Russia, a close look at *how* Armenia had been populated will contribute to deepen our insight into the reciprocal relationship between migration, ethnicity and the impact of political intervention on these processes.

How Was [Soviet] Armenia Populated by Immigrants?

There is a huge literature on migration in which wars, regime changes and national consolidation are traditionally cited as events causing the shift and/or displacement of particular ethno-religious groups during the first half of the twentieth century. Accordingly, large flows of people appeared in Europe during the periods directly related to the First and Second World Wars and their consequences, and during the post-war period, as well. As stated by Hobsbawm, the political developments that took place between 1914 and 1922 gave rise to roughly four to five million refugees.[15] More than three million Russians poured mainly into the United States and adjacent states after the Revolution and Civil War, and thousands of Ottoman Armenians, fleeing the massacres that occurred in 1915 in Anatolia, were

[14] According to the results of 2002 census published by *Goskomstat Rossii* (State Committee on Statistics of Russia, 2004a, vol. 4) the number of Armenians living in Russia is stated as 1,130,491.

[15] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: the Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London: Abacus, 1995), pp.32.

among the largest group of immigrants, located at the heart of the post-war period political refugee problem.[16]

In November 1920, when Soviet rule was proclaimed in Armenia, the population of the country was about 720,000, nearly half of it made up of refugees who had fled there during World War I. The majority had added themselves to the Russian army, some 200,000 residents of the province (*vilayet*) of Van: the entire Armenian population of this settlement had escaped to Armenia when the Russian army retired northwards on July 31, 1918.[17] The inflow to Armenia continued after the war, too, this time in terms of "repatriation." Indeed, repatriation was looked upon as a possible, eventual solution for the greater part of the Russian refugees, as well as Armenians, and was supported by the League of Nations and its member countries for the sake of alleviating the social and economic burden of immigrants that would arise if they were settled in Europe. At this point, it has to be mentioned that when Armenians are concerned, the word "repatriation" has a special connotation: In this case, the repatriated people were not natives of Soviet Armenia, but of "Turkey," i.e., the Ottoman Empire. In other words, the mentioned *patria* was not Anatolia, as expected, but the newly founded state of Armenia, which in its turn, transferred the image of homeland from Anatolia to Soviet Armenia.

Yet the new Republic of Turkey, which had no intention of recognizing the legal status of refugees that had come into being under the rule of the Ottoman regime, was not among the signatories of the League of Nations' arrangements dated 12 May, 1926,[18] and 30 June, 1928[19] the former relating to the issue of identity

[16] Louise W. Holborn, "The Legal Status of Political Refugees: 1920-1938," *The American Journal of International Law* 32, no. 4 (October 1938), pp. 680-703.

[17] Fridtjof Nansen, *Armenia and the Near East* (New York: Duffield, 1928), pp. 302.

certificates for Russian and Armenian refugees, the latter for Assyrians, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish refugees.[20] These arrangements were aimed to improve previous arrangements concerning refugee identity certificates[21] and to limit the definition of the term "refugee" to the Russian and Armenian refugees (and then to Assyrians, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish refugees). They read as follows:

> Any person of Russian origin (respectively, Armenian origin, formerly a subject of the Ottoman Empire) who does not enjoy, or who no longer enjoys, the protection of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (respectively, of the Government of the Turkish Republic) and who has not acquired another nationality.[22]

In addition, as mentioned by Dr. Fridtjof Nansen,[23] the League of Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees between 1921 and 1930, and member of the commission founded by the Assembly of the League for the sake of dealing with the issue of Armenian refugees, in his memoirs (*Armenia and the Near East*) about the commission's journey to Armenia realized in 1925, said Armenia was the major

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[18] Arrangement relating to the issue of identity certificates for Russian and Armenian refugees.

[19] Arrangement regarding the Extension to Other Categories of Refugees of Certain Measures taken for the Benefit of Russian and Armenian Refugees.

[20] Rona Aybay, *Yabancılar Hukuku* (*Istanbul*: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2007), pp. 108. In this perspective, the Law of Settlement (*İskân Kanunu*), dated 1934, can be considered as a coherent extension of the Turkish government's approach supporting ethnic discrimination: accordingly, Turkish Muslims are cited as the sole group worth gaining admission to Turkey as migrants.

[21] According the Arrangement of July 5, 1922, an identity paper of international validity for Russian refugees, intended as a substitute for a national passport, the Nansen Certificate, was approved by the League Council. An Arrangement of May 31, 1924, extended the provisions of the Arrangement of July 5, 1922, to Armenian refugees who were scattered throughout different countries, particularly Syria and Greece.

[22] Holborn, pp. 685.

[23] Dr. Nansen was appointed as the High Commissioner on behalf of the League in connection with the problem concerning Russian refugees in Europe by the Council of League on 20 August, 1921.

asylum for Armenian refugees in Greece and Turkey, as "they had no Armenian country to go to except Russian Armenia."[24]

The first convoy of 3000 immigrants to the newly founded Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (Armenian SSR) arrived from the Syrian deserts (current Iraq) to Batumi in December of 1921.[25] It was followed by a second caravan of 3000 in February of 1922, then around 1000 people, mainly from Van and Iran, in 1923.[26] The following fifty years witnessed the arrival of thousands of Armenians who had been seeking temporary asylum in Iran, Syria-Lebanon, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus, Palestine, Iraq, Egypt, France, England and the USA. The final destination for the refugees gathered in Istanbul was Soviet Armenia as well. The necessary visas were promised by the Armeno-Russian Government, and the financial assistance by the American sources.[27] Nansen notes that "the 5000 refugees would be transferred to Armenia as soon as possible."[28] Indeed nearly 40,000 Armenians who were almost all Turkish Armenian refuges, but had sought shelter in other countries, went to Soviet Armenia to settle in the period 1922-36.[29] The number is stated as

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[24] Nansen, pp. 26.

[25] *Haygagan Sovedagan Hanrakidaran* (Encyclopedia of Soviet Armenia), 1st ed., s.v. "Hayrenatartsutyun" (repatriation).

[26] *Ibid*., pp. 208.

[27] Namely 'Near East Relief,' an American organization, greatly supported for the education of thousands of orphans in Armenia and for the cultivation of the country: "they built schools and homes for 11,000 orphans at Leninakan, an agricultural school at Stepanova and many agricultural stations where people learnt scientific methods of agriculture." (Nansen, pp. 175-176).

[28] *Ibid*., pp. 30.

[29] Christopher J. Walker, *Armenia: The Survival of a Nation* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 349. The number is stated as 28,000 and 16,000 refugees for the first decade of the Republic and between 1929-1938, by Ronald Grigor Suny. In *Haygagan Sovedagan Hanrakidaran,* the exact number is stated as 42,286: around 4167 people from Greece, Syria, Istanbul, and France in 1924;

60,000, by *Hayasdani Oknutyan Gomide* (HOG, Support Committee for Armenia), one of the prominent civic organization of Armenia, (founded in 1921 at Yerevan) which aimed to establish connections between the homeland and the diaspora.[30]

The biggest wave of repatriation occurred between 1946 and 1948, within the context of the repatriation of around five million Soviet citizens held in the Mediterranean theatre, during which more than 100,000 Armenians of the diaspora (mainly from Iran, Syria-Lebanon, Greece, Romania, Egypt, France, Iraq, Palestine, Cyprus and even a small group from the USA and China) claimed USSR citizenship. The last flow of the return to the "motherland" occurred between 1962 and 1973, during which 26,140 people (5512 households) arrived, most of them from Iran (19,168 people) and Syria (4740), and the rest from the above-mentioned countries plus Turkey and England.

All in all, departing from the statistics before the war, setting apart those who fled to France (around 24,000), Greece, Romania, Bulgaria (around 20,000), North and South America (around 140,000), from the survivors of 1,845,450 Armenians in the Ottoman Empire,[31] about 250,000 fled to Transcaucasia, and finally, about 200,000 of them continued to live in Turkey.[32]

5016 people from Iraq and Greece in 1925; 5683 people from Greece, Turkey, and France between 1926 and 1929; around 8007 people from Greece, Bulgaria, and France between 1932 and 33; more than 1800 people from France in 1936.

[30] *Haygagan Sovedagan Hanrakidaran*, 1st ed., s.v. "Hayasdani Oknutyan Gomide" (Support Committee for Armenia).

[31] According to data given by the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul.

32 Kevork Mesrob, "Hayerı yev Hayasdan 1923.01.01-1924.06.01," in *Amerigahay Hanrakidag Darekirk*, 1925, p. 32 ("Armenians and Armenia 1923.01.01-1924.06.01," in Annuary of Armenians of America).

Emigration Began in Soviet Armenia

Harris writes that, "On January 1, 1992, more than twenty five million Russians, without moving an inch or leaving their homes, suddenly found themselves abroad in fourteen different non-Russian republics."[33] This statement implies the presence of ethnic Russians scattered among the Caucasian, Central Asian, Baltic and other Slavic peoples of the Soviet Union, a policy of ethnic mixing that went hand in hand with the recognition of the actual or perceived connection of an ethnic group to a given territory, namely "ethno-territoriality."[34] From this perspective, migration in the USSR was an integral part of social engineering, strictly controlled by the central authority, thus principally limited with enforced population transfers for access to the labor force, and the creation of a unique Soviet family composed of peripheral ethnicities loyal to the central authority.

In the mid-1980s, with the advent of Gorbachev's reform program of *perestroika*, which he declared would "ensure the transition from an excessively centralized management system relying on orders, to a democratic one, based on the combination of democratic centralism and self-management,"[35] the population's physical as well as psychological mobility, i.e., migration, started to carry a different connotation. Indeed, in the USSR, the freedom of travel and emigration, which arose initially in 1974 through the enforcement of the USA and Western Europe on Soviet

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[33] Chauncy D. Harris, "The New Russian Minorities: A Statistical Overview," *Post-Soviet Geography* 34, no. 1 (January 1993), pp. 1-27.

[34] Klas-Göran Karlsson, "Migration and Soviet Disintegration." In *The Cambridge Survey of World Migration*, edited by Robin Cohen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 486-489.

[35] Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), pp. 34.

Russia of granting permission for Soviet Jews to emigrate,[36] found its final form only after 1987, under the rule of Gorbachev. The permanent out-migration of certain ethnic groups found the right ground within this period. Chesnais writes that, "The regime governing exit from the Soviet Union became gradually more liberal and the opportunity to travel was no longer limited to the upper echelons of the Communist Party."[37] Apart from Soviet citizens in increasing numbers going abroad for short stays, the number of people asking for permanent settlement, that is emigrants, "went from only a few thousand a year to some 450,000 in 1990."[38] In all, some 1.2 to 1.5 million people emigrated from the USSR between 1950 and 1991; half of them left the country between 1989-1990.

Armenians, mostly from Soviet Armenia, were among the three major groups of emigrants, after Jews and Germans. The total number of Armenians who emigrated after the 1950s is estimated to be 100,000, of which 11,000 left the country in 1988, 20,000 in 1989, and finally 50-60,000 in 1990.[39]

The ethnic disparities of the mentioned groups and their cultural and historical ties maintained with their homeland/fellows (Germany for the case of Germans and Israel for Jews), or the fact of being descendants of a diaspora (for the case of Armenians) whose members had been attracted by the promises of a better life under Soviet rule before the 1950s, made many scholars define this flow as an

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[36] Heinz Fassman and Rainer Münz, "European East-West Migration, 1945-1992."Iin *The Cambridge Survey of World Migration*, edited by Robin Cohen (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 470-480.

[37] Jean-Claude Chesnais, "Soviet Emigration: Past, Present and Future," in *The Changing Course of International Migration* (Paris: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 1993), pp. 105-113.

[38] *Ibid*., pp. 107.

[39] *Ibid*., pp. 108.

"ethnic migration" or an "ethnic privilege."[40] Germany and Israel remained the major two countries receiving the bulk of persons leaving Russia, with the USA being the third biggest receiver for the next decade. Accordingly, two major destinations of Armenian emigration were France and the USA during this period. Both countries had hosted Armenians as well as Russians as political refugees since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Secondly, a much larger group of people, ethnic Russians of non-Russian countries, were flowing toward Russia. Between 1989 and 2002, net emigration from Russia to outside the former Soviet Union would be 1.2 million. On the other hand, net recorded immigration from the non-Russian FSU states to the Russian Federation would reach 5.8 million (see Table 1).[41] This migration pattern was related closely to the exacerbation of ethno-territoriality in the Transcaucasian and Central Asian countries and its conversion into a nationalist anti-Slavic feeling in its initial period, i.e., during the first half of the 1990s, then turned out to be a flow determined mainly by the relative state of the economies of Russia and the non-Russian states.[42]

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[40] Heitman, S., *The Third Soviet Emigration: Jewish, German and Armenian Emigration from the USSR since World War II*, (Köln, 1987).

[41] Eugene Krassinets, "Illegal Migration and Employment in Russia," in *International Migration Papers 26*, International Labor Organization, 1998.

[42] For most of the Soviet period, the recognition of ethno-territorial homelands was proceeding with the streaming of Russians into the non-Russian periphery, a trend that reversed only shortly before the collapse of the Union. The presence of ethnic Russians in a large percentage share and any probability of a colonization process of these emigrants was prevented by the local bureaucracy that was created by the party elite of the domestic permanent political staff. This political group, having representational characteristics rather than real political power, also targeted the prevention of rebellious movements against ethnic Russians, unlike what the western powers had in their colonies. This representational structure made important political mileage in political upheaval times. The image of Russia was repressive due to its dominant position in decision-making mechanisms and prominent role in resources exploitation, all of which had increased Russian opposition.

Table 1. Migration Account of Various Countries of the USSR (thousands).[43]

Country	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75	1976-80	1979-88	1989-2004
Russia	-521,5	-598,4	-194,7	725,2	1767	5769
Armenia	*60,3*	*80,4*	*69,6*	*10,1*	*-321*	*-635*
Azerbaijan	-53,1	-47,1	-22,1	-82,2	-266	-232
Belarus	-161,8	-1,4	-61,3	-30,7	-8	29
Estonia	43,2	48,0	32,9	27,5	55	-153
Georgia	-35,3	-53,8	-70,4	-93,7	-52	-1099
Kazakhstan	407,0	24,3	-261,1	-413,9	-784	-3406
Kyrgyzstan	72,6	53,3	-37,5	-64,7	-157	-390
Latvia	78,0	70,0	63,6	39,5	93	-199
Lithuania	14,4	33,9	33,6	34,4	100	-235
Moldova	42,8	24,1	8,6	-69,4	-56	-238
Tajikistan	56,3	14,4	1,3	-42,7	-102	-771
Turkmenistan	1,1	2,5	2,7	-26,6	-84	-155
Ukraine	173,3	344,5	226,0	-37,2	153	-782
Uzbekistan	130,5	127,2	142,7	-109,9	-507	-1300

[43] Extracted from Alain Blum, *Naitre, Vivre et Mourir en URSS 1917-1991* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1994), pp. 203.

As a consequence, Russian settlement in the southern republics (the five Central Asian and three Transcaucasian states), which peaked in 1959 at 22.1% of the population, fell to 15.9% by the 1989 census.[44] The Russian share of the population in Armenia for the same year (1989) was at its lowest point compared to all fourteen non-Russian FSU countries, just 1.6% of the population (51,555 people). However in 1989, in every non-Russian republic, the percentage of Russians in urban areas was still higher than in the republic (USSR) as a whole. Net migration to Russia rose rapidly following the breakup of the Soviet Union, peaking at 809,614 in 1994, 75% of them Russian, 13.2% Ukrainians (as one of three Slavic states, Ukraine shares a common Orthodox religion and similar Slavic language with Russia and Belarus), 4.7% Armenians and 3.9% Tatars (the second largest ethnic group in Russia after ethnic Russians. Only one third of them reside in their ethnic homeland, Tatarstan, which did not become independent after the collapse of the Union due to its lack of an external border with the Russian Federation). Indeed, the case of the Armenians was exceptional. They were unique among all of the fourteen non-Russian titular nationalities of the successor states that had had a net immigration to Russia every year since 1989.[45] By 2002, net migration to Russia had fallen considerably, to only 77,900, and 91% of them were ethnic Russians. However, in Armenia, the magnitude of the flow to Russia remained more or less constant.

The examination of these deviations in migration rates may lead us to discern two distinct periods, the 1990s and post-2000: the former characterized by the increase of human flow toward Russia and the latter by its decrease. Scholars studying the change of spatial distribution of populations in Soviet and post-Soviet

[44] Heleniak, "The Changing Spatial Distribution," pp. 121.

[45] Heleniak, *Migration of the Russian Diaspora*, pp. 104.

periods tend to define this divergence by combining two major theories of migration: transformation of facts depicted by "Diaspora migration theory" into those descriptive of "neoclassical economic theory." According to the first of these, there had been a net immigration of persons living outside their ethnic homelands, while the other defines the cause of migration by differentials in wages and employment. The attempt to ascertain the accurate position of out-migration in Armenia in this two-terminal network requires either considering political and economic developments or apprehending properly the significance of the Russian Federation to the people of Armenia. It would be inaccurate if one tried to explain this migration reaching its highest level between 1988 and 1994 solely pursuant to the existence of ethnic Armenians in Russia and their perpetuating role. Actually, as will be seen below, the socio-demographic structure of the migrant masses was determined mainly by their economic conditions deteriorating further in the course of ethnic conflicts (and the earthquake of 1988) that erupted during this very period. Thus, if the initial period (1988-1994) of mass emigration from Armenia is re-evaluated retrospectively, it is possible to recognize this flow as the early (first) phase of an economically rather than politically motivated mass migration which would continue for the next decade and cause the evacuation of 20% of its population.

The First Period: The Rise of Permanent Migration from Armenia

Based on data published by the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia (Armstat), the current population of Armenia is estimated to be 3,238,000. The last two censuses of the country were carried out under quite different social conditions: the former in 1989, under the rule of the Soviet regime, and the latter in 2001, when the transition to a market economy already taken place. The decline of 235,600 (from 3,448,600 to 3,213,600), was, so to speak, nothing but the tip of a migration iceberg that began in Armenia with the collapse of the Soviet economy. If this gap is adjusted according to natural population growth, namely, the difference between the number of births and deaths, and subtracted from the total population change occurred since 1989 (until 2001), net migration was accounted to be 635,000.[46]

As stated above, emigration was not a new phenomenon for the citizens of Armenia; however, such a deviance from the natural population growth was surely unusual. From the first population census of Armenia carried out under the Soviet regime in 1926 until the last one of 1989 –realized in quite chaotic social conditions- the population growth trends of the country were nothing but natural: a steady increase from 881,000 to 3,448,600.[47] The decline in the annual population growth, beginning from the 1990s, peaked between 1993 and 1995, then lasted until 2005. A similar pattern was observable in the proportion of urban population out of total

[46] This method, called "residual method," is commonly used whenever the migration data is thought to be unreliable. Indeed recent estimates of emigration from Armenia which took place between 1991 and 2001, reach 800,000 to 1,000,000.

[47] Statistical Yearbook of Armenia, 2009; http://www.armstat.am/file/doc/99458058.pdf. Statistical yearbooks of Armenia are published each year by National Statistic Service of the Republic of Armenia and can be found at http://www.armstat.am/en/?nid=45.

population, too: an increase from 19% to 68.7%, while that of rural population decreased from 81% to 31% during these sixty-three years, the consequence of the planned drive towards industrialization and urbanization under socialism. Basically, the upheaval of demographic indicators was nothing but the reflection of the social and economic bottleneck in which the country found itself following the breakup of the Soviet regime (see Table 2).[48]

Based on these data along with other socio-political developments and a demographic profile of the migrants revealed by sample investigations carried out by various state and non-state stakeholders, emigration from Armenia can be divided into two periods: the first migration flow occurred between 1989-1995, upon which the population size decreased from 3,448,600 to 3,260,300, and the second between 1995-2001, by which the population size decreased to 3,213,000. Indeed, in the literature on the social structure of post-Soviet Armenia, emigration is defined traditionally as a major social cost of the USSR's economic collapse, a social reality valid for many other former Soviet Union countries as well. In the case of Armenia, two major events can be cited as the catalysts of this migration. The destructive effects of both were intensified by the breakup of the Soviet regime and resulted in economic collapse, and still continue today.

[48] A similar situation can be observed in the distribution of urban population out of the total; the proportion of 68.8% in 1989 dropped to 64.1% by 2005, and has remained fixed thenceforward. Correspondingly, the share of rural population increased from 31.3% to 35.9% between 1989 and 2005, contrary to its tendency between 1926 and 1989.

Table 2. Demographic Indicators According to World Bank and Armstat Data.[49]

Years	Population size according to Armstat	Population size according to the World Bank	Population growth (annual %)	Birth rate, crude (per 1000 people)	Population ages 65 and above (% of total)	Population ages 15-64 and above (% of total)
1989	3,448 600	3,542,717	1	..	5	64
1990	-	3,544,695	0	21	6	64
1991	-	3,512,056	-1	..	6	64
1992	-	3,449,952	-2	19	7	63
1993	-	3,370,387	-2	..	7	63
1994	-	3,290,551	-2	..	8	62
1995	3,260,300	3,223,169	-2	16	8	62
1996	3,248,800	3,172,156	-2	..	9	62
1997	3,246,000	3,134,770	-1	14	9	63
2001	3,215,300	3,065,426		14	10	65
2005	3,215,800			15	12	66
2008	3,230,100	3,077,087		15	12	68

[49] It should not be forgotten that the cited Armstat data on the total population are based on estimates of '*de jure* population', or in Armenian, *mşdagan pnagçutyun* (permanent population), covering all residents officially registered in a given territory, thus including temporary absentees at the census date. However, the real number of permanent residents is considerably smaller. The main reason is that the majority of people leaving the Republic temporarily avoid registration with migration authorities. As a consequence, there had been many attempts carried out by national and international organizations to determine the precise number of migrations that occurred up until the first census after independence, on 10 October 2001. Among others, the data provided by the Civil Aviation of the Republic of Armenia (RA) is quite significant: the number of departing persons was essentially bigger than the number of arrivals during the years 1992-1998, which is 610,000. Considering other means of conveyance for leaving the country, along with out-flow that occurred before 1992, the traditionally accepted number of 800,000-1,000,000 seems quite logical.

Armenia between 1988-1994: A Land of Disasters

On December 7, 1988, a major earthquake (6.9 on the Richter scale) struck the northern part of Armenia, devastating the second largest city, Leninakan (actual name: Gumri), and obliterating scores of villages.[50] The official death toll was put at 25,000-30,000, although many estimates reached upward to as many as 100,000 victims. The epicenter of the earthquake was detected as the southeast of Leninakan, in this way including Spitak, Kirovakan (actual name: Vanadzor) and more than 150 villages nearby. More than 70,000 people were evacuated from the earthquake zone. Official sources declared the number of people left homeless to be 514,000. Albeit initiated immediately, repair and rehabilitation works in the earthquake region made little progress and remained incomplete due to the chaotic political and economic conditions dominating (and even overshadowing the disaster) in the country: the effects of financial difficulties and the political unrest were further aggravated by the lack of construction materials, the repatriation of laborers working in the reconstruction zone after independence and the collapsed infrastructure.

As a consequence, about 200,000 people emigrated immediately in the following months, in 1989-90, although approximately twenty percent of these people returned to the country during the 1990s. It was the biggest single wave of emigration from Armenia in its history.[51] The catastrophic consequences of the 1988 earthquake remained constant for a long time. Even seven years later the catastrophe, in 1995, a Word Bank report said, "over 100,000 people were still living in about

[50] Joseph R. Masih and Robert O. Krikorian, *Armenia at the crossroads*, pp. 14.

51 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Migration in Armenia: A Country Profile 2008* (Switzerland: International Organization for Migration, 2008), pp. 12.

24,000 units of emergency accommodation called *domik*s, 87% of which were located in the cities of Gumri, Vanadzor, and Spitak.[52]

In the following period, this wave of migration was intensified further by another disastrous event, the conflict that erupted in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. This conflict added thousands to the stock of migrants. From 1988 to1990, about 200,000 of the ethnic Azerbaijani population living in Armenia left the country, while about 360,000 ethnic Armenians came to Armenia from Azerbaijan.[53] The villages of Getashen, Azat, Kamo, Chardakhlou and others in the Karabagh Valley, populated exclusively by Armenian communities, were totally evacuated. These flows have virtually ceased, as the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan was closed in 1993.

The Mountainous Karabagh Autonomous Region (Nagorno-Karabakhskaya Avtonomnaya Oblast), a small enclave in Azerbaijan, was granted the status of autonomous region in 1923.[54] The number of Azeris who lived in Armenia was around 85,000, while that of Armenians residing in Azerbaijan was around 390,000, some 120,000 of them in Karabagh, when the open dispute for the region restarted in October 1987. Tens of thousands of Armenian signatures were submitted on a petition as a formal appeal to Moscow for a change in the status of the region. This

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[52] Document of the World Bank, *Project Performance Assessment Report, Armenia: Earthquake Reconstruction Project* (Credit 2562-Am), Report no: 28132, March 2004.

53 Ethnic Armenians and Azeris who left their countries in 1988 and were viewed as internally displaced persons (IDPs) because they remained within the Soviet Union became refugees only in 1991 when Azerbaijan and Armenia became independent states.

54 It was one of eight autonomous oblasts of the USSR, a limited form of self-governance, in this case, subordinate to the government of the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan. Ethnic Armenians from Azerbaijan in Armenia have, to varying extents, taken citizenship in their countries of asylum. According to international law, this situation suggests that they are no longer formally entitled to refugee status and its protection. However, the United States Committee for Refugees (USCR), in its collection of data on displaced populations globally, has recognized a category labeled “refugee-like” situations.

call was supported by mass demonstrations organized in Yerevan and Karabagh. The largest took place on 26 February, with the participation of nearly one million people. Although the result of the legislation's vote was in favor of Armenia, the process was ruptured by violence that broke out in the Azeri city of Sumgait immediately afterwards. The open involvement of Soviet forces in the process until the disintegration of the USSR; the declaration of independence in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Karabagh and the resulting rise of border problem between Karabagh and Azerbaijan; and, finally, direct military actions between the Azerbaijan and Karabagh forces which began in the winter of 1992 and lasted until the final cease-fire signed on May 12, 1994 were events that left marks on the first half of the 1990s and still continue to affect the foreign policies of Transcaucasia and even Turkey.[55]

The mass transfer of people, in terms of increases in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs),[56] was alleviated during those years. About 600,000 Azeri IDPs from Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding districts were displaced in 1992–93. Armenia, similarly, had IDPs who fled from their homes near the Azerbaijan border in the early 1990s during the Nagorno-Karabakh hostilities; estimates range up to 80,000. Currently, estimates of the number of refugees from Azerbaijan range up to 200,000 in Armenia.

According to studies, the vast majority of these displaced persons (DPs) have been more or less integrated into the host society through the provision of the land

[55] For a short review of the Karabagh issue, see Graham Usher, "The Fate of Small Nations: The Karabagh Conflict Ten Years Later," *Middle East Report*, no. 213, Millennial Middle East: Changing Orders, Shifting Borders (1999): 19-22; and Ronald G. Suny and Joe Stork. "What Happened in Soviet Armenia?" *Middle East Report*, no. 153, *Islam and the State* (1988): 37-40.

[56] Based on United Nations' *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, IDPs are defined as follows: Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.

and housing left by fleeing populations, particularly in Azerbaijan due to the settlement of refugees in urban areas like Baku, and Sumgait. Refugees in Armenia were settled foremost in rural areas, on land vacated by ethnic Azeri refugees. However, the majority of refugees, 81.3%, came from large cities (Baku, Kirovabad, Sumgait), with little background in agricultural employment; 16.3% from medium or small towns (Shamkhor, Khanlar, Mingechaour, etc.), and only 2.4% from rural areas.[57] Although refugees enjoy almost the same rights as citizens of the Republic of Armenia, most of them have been victims of the deep crisis of the transition economy of Armenia during the first half of the 1990s. The collapse of production, unemployment, worsening living conditions, the decrease in incomes and general impoverishment of the population were as destructive for the refugees as for the local population. In consequence, very few of them have given up their refugee status and became citizens of Armenia. Indeed, most of them were part of mass emigration from the country, the highest level of which occurred in 1992-1994, during the war of Azerbaijan. Nearly one fifth of the country's population emigrated in this period, including more than one third of the refugees. Moreover, the migration of locals was temporary in character, mainly aimed at finding employment or education, while every tenth settled refugee (those who lived in private accommodations), and every fifth non-settled one (those who live in state, agency, public or communal facilities like dormitories, resorts, communal centers, etc.) has left Armenia permanently. Neither did the main destinations change for these people: the Russian Federation and the United States.

Victims of the Spitak earthquake and the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh were probably the groups which felt the impact of economic crisis, serious

[57] United Nation Office in Armenia, *Poverty of Vulnerable Groups in Armenia: Comparative Analysis of Refugees and Local Population*. United Nations Department of Public Information (Yerevan, 1999).

underemployment and growing poverty the most.[58] However, in the post-Soviet socio-economic context, trying to achieve a minimum subsistence level has been a major problem encountered by the entire population of Armenia (see Table 3 for some macroeconomic indicators). Thus, those who didn't have the opportunity to emigrate permanently due to various reasons had recourse to a rather traditional and less precarious means of everyday economy: *khoban yertal*.

Table 3. Macroeconomic Indicators of Armenia between 1989 and 2008.[59]

Years	GDP per capita growth (annual %)	Workers' remittances and compensation of employees received as a % of GDP	Labor participation rate, female (% of female population ages 15+)	Labor participation rate, male (% of male population ages 15+)
1990	-		66	79
1991	-11		57	72
1992	-41		56	70
1993	-7		55	68
1994	8		54	68
1995	9		54	68
1996	8		54	67
1997	5		54	67
2004	10	22.7	55	67
2005	14	19.2	55	67
2006	13	18.4	55	66
2007	14	13.9	56	68

[58] During the 1990s, the transition to a market economy meant political instability and economic recession not only for Armenia but also for many ex-Soviet countries. This was especially the case of most of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and all the states of the former Yugoslavia with the exception of Slovenia. Among the rank of transition countries having the lowest level of GDP (Gross Domestic Product), Armenia was the second in 1992. It was followed by Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The situation remained the same until the late 1990s; in 1999, Armenia was the country with the third lowest level of GDP after Tajikistan and Moldova. Eight CIS members (Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) are currently classified as "low income countries" by the World Bank, with national annual income per head below $755 at market rates.

[59] Extracted from World Bank World Development Indicators Online: http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/DDPQQ/member.do?method=getMembers&userid=1&queryId=6.

The Second Period: The Rise of Labor Migration from Armenia

In the most recent report of the International Organization of Migration (IOM) on migration in Armenia, *shabashnichestvo*, namely the form of contractual work in Russia for earning, is cited as having been the traditional and prominent pattern of migration in the Soviet era, the annual number of which is reported to have been around 150,000 –in Armenia- before the collapse of the Soviet Union.[60] This term stems from the Russian word, *shabashniki*, literally meaning 'Sabbath worker'[61]: it is a specific word to define private tradesmen, those people having completed their main jobs and engaging in "freelance" work as an alternative source of income, particularly in construction (domestic repair, etc.) or agriculture. In a Soviet type socio-economic organization where virtually the entire economy was in the hands of the state and controlled by the state, the above-mentioned term describes rather the part of an alternative economic sphere complementary to the official one, but that for some reason had escaped from the control of the state: namely, the "shadow (or second) economy", as it used to be called.[62] It occurred at numerous stages of the economic process and in a variety of forms, from legal activities like the private activities of farmers or private trading to illegal and isolated ones like bribery.[63] Moreover, although highly regulated, the spatial distribution of populations

[60] IOM, *Migration in Armenia: A Country Profile 2008*, pp. 12.

[61] Sabbath is the name of the holy days of Jews, during which they are supposed to do nothing but pray. Here the expression of 'Sabbath worker' refers to 'temporary laborer', a specific term for a person who hires him or herself out for temporary seasonal work, usually in construction or agriculture.

[62] F. J. M. Feldbrugge, "Government and Shadow Economy in the Soviet Union," *Soviet Studies* 36, no. 4 (October 1984), pp. 528-543.

in the USSR, the existence of such non-deliberate movements from one location to another, implies a certain level of corruption in the system of passports and residence permits[64] as well. Hence, with its extent and impact on the official economy varying from one location to another, this kind of labor circulation seemed to be wider in the three Caucasian republics (Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan) and tended to be explained by reference to a complex of geographical, economic, historical, and sociological factors.[65]

But seasonal migration towards other republics of the former Soviet Union for private earning had been a relatively long-running tradition among the residents of rural areas and small cities in Armenia, too. This movement, driven by socioeconomic motives and triggered by the economic changes in the 1970s and 1980s, has currently been converted to a larger and far-reaching labor migration flow in many of the former Soviet countries, as well as Armenia, during the last two decades.

As stated by Heleniak, "the migration pattern for Russia is that it has been gaining people through migration from all of the other FSU states and losing them to countries outside the FSU region."[66] A similar trend is valid for Ukraine, Belarus and

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[63] Dennis O'Hearn, "The Consumer Second Economy: Size and Effects," *Soviet Studies* 32, no. 2 (April 1980), pp. 218-234.

[64] *Propiska*, or the residence permit system, introduced in 1932, required persons to register before being allowed to migrate to a new location.

[65] According to data acquired by Gregory Grossman in his questionnaire survey conducted on the families of recent emigrants from the USSR in the United States, the figures of informal income and outlay are much higher for the Armenians when compared to the rest. "Informal income tends to increase, both absolutely and relative to legitimate socialist income, as one moves from north to south, (and particularly into Transcaucasia and central Asia), from east to west, and from major urban centers to smaller cities and to the countryside. (Gregory Grossman, "Informal Personal Incomes and Outlays of the Soviet Urban Population," in *The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*, edited by Alejandro Portes, Manuel Castells, and Lauren A. Benton (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 150-170)

Moldova as well. Based on national estimates from the origin countries in the early 2000s,j there are 600,000 to 700,000 Azeris working abroad, 250,000 to 300,000 Georgians, 400,000 to 450,000 Kyrgyzes, 500,000 Moldovans, 600,000 to 700,000 Tajiks, 2.0 to 2.5 million Ukrainians, and 600,000 to 700,000 Uzbeks.[67] The vast majority of these people were settled in Russia. As for Armenians, the share of labor migration is as extensive as other Transcaucasian or Central Asian countries. Beyond the more than 800,000 people who have permanently emigrated from Armenia and joined the sizeable Armenian diaspora in Russia, Ukraine, the USA and countries of Western and Eastern Europe, a great flow of circular migration of the labor force at the beginning of 1990s still continues. The main destination of Armenian *shabashniki*s / *khoban*s as well is Russia, as before independence. The actual duration of their trips still represents the characteristics of seasonality (most of them leave the country by the end of spring and return before the New Year). Some preliminary agreements regarding the job are still in question for the large majority of cases. Finally, construction is still the overwhelmingly dominated sphere of employment for Armenian migrants (according to labor migration surveys of 2002-2005 and 2005-2007 conducted by Advanced Social Technologies (AST)).[68]

According to the third and the most recent of the nationwide surveys conducted by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) on labor migration from Armenia in March 2008, the total number of people involved in the external migration processes in the period of 2002-2007 was estimated at 230,000

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[66] Heleniak, "The Changing Spatial Distribution," pp. 141.

[67] International Centre for Migration Policy Development, *Overview of the Migration Systems in the CIS Countries* (Vienna: ICMPD, 2005).

[68] In parallel, contractual labor for private gain was generally related to construction work in the Soviet period, too.

± 15,000, or 9.7% ± 0.6% of the country's *de jure* population (ages 16 and above).[69] The great majority (above 90%) of this migration flow involved labor migration, defined as persons who left Armenia with the purpose of finding a job abroad, irrespective of whether they found one or not. Actually, in the period of January 2002 – December 2007, approximately 20% of Armenian households were involved in labor migration, the absolute number of which was between 162,000 and 189,000.[70] According to acquired data from an AST survey on labor migration in the period 2005-2007, some 54,000-74,000 migrants left Armenia to work abroad in 2005, and 60,000-81,000 Armenians were involved in labor migration in 2006.[71] The number of permanent migrants was reported to have declined to 25,000 – 37,000 people, namely around 3% of Armenian households, and 1.3% ± 0.2% of Armenia's *de jure* population, according to the most recent sociological surveys. In both patterns of migration, permanent and temporary, two variables were reported to be constant: the Russian Federation was the main destination (followed by other CIS countries including the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh as a distinct entity, the European states, and the USA); and the absence of jobs and impossibility of sufficient earnings to ensure adequate living standards were cited as major factors compelling people to take recourse to external migration for work.

The Armenian population residing in the Russian Federation (and Ukraine) has doubled since the collapse of the Soviet Union (see Table 4). This increase is mainly the consequence of the permanent migration of families as well as the flow of

[69] Anna Minasyan, Alina Poghosyan, Lilit Gevorgyan, Haykanush Chobanyan, *Return Migration to Armenia in 2002-2007: A Study* (Yerevan: Asoghik, 2008), p. 9. As per census data of 2001, the de jure population of Armenia (ages 16 and above) totaled 2,367,105.

[70] *Ibid*., p.10.

[71] Anna Minasyan, Alina Poghosyan, Tereza Hakobyan, Blanka Hancilova, *Survey on Labor Migration from Armenia 2005-2007: A Study* (Yerevan: Asoghik, 2007), pp. 19.

temporary laborers, mostly men.[72] Seasonal labor, as an important source of additional income before the 1990s, became the sole means of subsistence for many households in countries like Armenia or Tajikistan.[73] Remittances from abroad are cited as the second and third sources of income most frequently, apart from job -or business- in Armenia, and pension/allowances as the primary sources of income in many of the households.[74]

Table 4. Total Number of Armenians in Various Countries of the Former Soviet Union according to Census Data of 1989 and 1999-2002 (thousands).[75]

Country	Armenians (data of 1989)	Armenians (data of 1999-2002)
USSR/Former USSR	4623	4856
Armenia	3084	3145
Azerbaijan	391	121
Belarus	5	10
Estonia	2	0
Georgia	437	249
Kazakhstan	19	15
Kyrgyzstan	4	1
Latvia	3	3
Lithuania	2	1
Moldova	3	0

[72] See pp. 59 for gender rates of migration from Armenia.

[73] In Armenia, the contribution of agriculture to the contracting economy rose threefold to 37% of GDP, and its share of total employment increased from 18% to over 25% by 1993.

[74] In Armenia, more than half of families live on less than 50,000 AMD, equivalent to 143 USD. However research shows that working abroad produces an increase of more than twofold in the average monthly income: more than half of those who worked abroad in 2005-2006 earned 400-800 USD a month. At the beginning of 2007, the percentage of families receiving assistance from abroad was 11.8% (date taken from *Return Migration to Armenia in 2002-2008*).

[75] Extracted from Heleniak, "The Changing Spatial Distribution of the Population of the Former Soviet Union."

Russia	532	1130
Tajikistan	6	1
Turkmenistan	32	34
Ukraine	54	100
Uzbekistan	51	47

Nevertheless, it is not an easy task to further elaborate this migration chart, where "the geographical differences in the supply of and demand for labor" as well as the individual decision mechanisms involving cost-benefit calculations of migration -leading to the Russian Federation- is at the forefront, and which finally fits in this sense the assumptions of "neoclassical theory," as mentioned before. Thematic (or academic) works treating the out-migration phenomenon from Armenia are few. The others, carried out mainly by international organizations and their local stakeholders, compiling quantitative data and demographic statistics on migration, are hardly able to exceed the display of dimensions and direction of flow. For this simple reason, among all of these studies treating the citizens of a transition country as if they were a homogenous mass of people, any attempt to comprehend the ways in which the diverse layers of society are affected by this transition in traditional modes of production and to interrogate who and/or what is invisible in these aggregates of numerical data, is vital. To paraphrase, who are the *new* poor of Armenia in consequence of the transition to the market economy? For instance, what about residents of rural towns, particularly women from the countryside (or from Yerevan), who do not have any agricultural activities as an alternative, who are either unemployed or receive wages that are not sufficient for subsistence, who (because they are divorced, widowed, unmarried or abandoned women) do not have a spouse who could work abroad to support the household income? What do they do to cope with unemployment or low wages? The answer to this question lies in the appearance

of a separate branch of labor migration, directed not toward Russia or other FSU countries, but toward several countries in Europe and finally *Turkiya*.[76]

The New *Khobans* of Armenian Households

Considering the general demographic profile of the Armenian migrants living in Turkey, at first glance, one may observe the following picture: a community mostly composed of women age 45 and above, coming from regional towns like Vanadzor, Gumri and Hrazdan or from the capital city, Yerevan; they are joined at a later stage by other members of their households: their sons, who choose Turkey as an alternative to Russia, their daughters, who do not want to work at low-paying jobs in Armenia, or their close relatives, who do not have the chance of finding jobs, and even by their husbands, if they are still alive or not divorced . Within this picture, one may differentiate the most disadvantaged group of Armenians in terms of income generation and employment: female residents of old industrial towns.

The young Republic of Armenia was divided into ten administrative regions (which are called *marz*) in 1996 (see Figure 1); Vanadzor, formerly named Kirovakan, is situated in the Lori province, which is the second largest industrial region of Armenia after Yerevan. Gumri, on the other hand, is located in the Shirak region, which has border with Kars and Iğdır, border towns of Turkey. These two districts were among the places most affected by the earthquake of 1988 – after Spitak - which caused both the loss of thousands of lives and the destruction of a significant part of the country's infrastractural, residential and manufacturing capacity. The former was an important industrial region in the textile, mechanical

[76] Turkey (in Arm.).

and electronic sectors, as well as chemical material factories, before independence; today only a few of these factories are in operation. In Gumri where Armenia's second largest airport is located, even the housing problem has not yet been adequately solved. The factories that had certain functionality within the Soviet production structure are now mainly closed down, having lost their functions due to the lack of a spare parts industry, the natural consequence of which has been the lack of sources for income generation. Accordingly, Lori and Shirak represent both the highest rate of migration (5.7% and 8.8% respectively) and the lowest rate of employment (58.5% and 60.6% respectively)[77], which is significant when the migration is considered economically-motivated. As a matter of fact, a similar picture can be observed when considering the overall employment rates across the country: the average rate of employment is at its lowest level (38.2%) in urban settlements, as compared to rural areas (48.6%) and Yerevan (50.2%).

Figure 1. Political map of the Republic of the Armenia.

[77] Labor migration rates were found to be highest in Shirak, Gegharkunik, Aragatsotn, Vayots Dzor and Tavush in "Return Migration to Armenia in 2002-2008."

Nevertheless, it would be misleading to deduce from this point of view that the urban population is the largest group contributing to migration in Armenia. According to surveys, the migration rates in urban areas remain almost two times higher than in rural areas until recent years (5.4% and 2.8% respectively). The percentage of households involved in migration, however, tended to be higher in rural areas, which means that the involvement in migration of more than one member of each household was higher in urban settlements when compared to rural areas. This fact is probably due to agricultural activities as a constant source of income for the remaining members of the households. Indeed, according to the view of AST researchers, small-scale farming, which represents the overwhelming economic activity of the rural population, does not generate enough income for normal living, but enough to cover travel costs abroad. In this condition, when added to the weak level of private sector job opportunities in towns, the population of rural areas appears to be the most vulnerable group of the Armenian labor market, thus potentially the most prone to get involved in working abroad for additional income. Actually, the rural population of Armenia is reported to dominate the labor migration flow (44%), in contrast to permanent migrants mostly from regional towns (45%), according to the nationwide surveys conducted by the OSCE Office on labor migration from Armenia as well.[78] According to the sociological survey of the OSCE Office conducted in 2008, labor migration flow was dominated by the rural population of Armenia (44%), highest in Shirak, Gegharkunik, Aragatsotn, Vayots Dzor and Tavush; except for Shirak, these *marz*s constitute also those that have temporary migrants oriented solely to CIS countries, namely not to Europe or the USA.[79] The destination of labor migration to EU countries and the USA is reported

[78] "Return migration to Armenia in 2002-2008: A Study," pp.11.

to be highest in Armavir (7%), Lori (5.5%) and Shirak (4.3%) in *marz* other than Yerevan.[80]

When it comes to the capital, Yerevan, reports reveal an increasing rate of involvement in labor migration among the rural population, with a significant reduction from Yerevan itself. For example, the survey covering the period from 2005 to 2006 recorded two remarkable differences in terms of regional specifics of migration activity: in Yerevan the percentage of households involved in labor migration dropped from 10.5% to 7.3%, and the actual migration rate was almost cut in half. On the other hand, the involvement of the rural population in labor migration was on the increase.[81] The demographic profile of the Armenian migrants living in Turkey fits this scheme as well. Those coming from Yerevan are not the majority when compared to residents of Lori or Shirak. However, they outnumber those from the other provinces of Armenia and are generally included among the first arrivals at the end of 1990s, namely the earliest of the flow. It might seem an indicator of disparities in urban areas between secondary cities (as 'other urban') and the capital city, in terms of access to networks facilitating migration. However, in terms of the accumulation of economic capital, such a significant discrepancy is not the case for Yerevan. According to a research paper published by the World Bank in 2006, comparing urban poverty levels between countries of East and Central Europe, poverty is reported to be significantly worse in secondary cities than in the capitals,

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[79] However, according to the results of data acquired in a Sociological Qualitative Research carried out by Eurasia Partnership Foundation (EPF) and published on February 2010 (Alin Ozinyan, *Identifying the State of Armenian Migrants in Turkey,* Istanbul : Eurasia Partnership Foundation, 2009), although they are not many, there are also migrants whose residency in Armenia is Vayots Dzor or Tavush.

[80] The capital city of Armenia.

[81] International Labor Organization (ILO), *Migration and Development: Armenia Country Study* (Moscow: ILO, 2009), pp. 8.

with the sole exception of Armenia.[82] The urban poor were overwhelmingly located in secondary cities in all countries, but in Armenia (plus Azerbaijan and Georgia in this case), 20-30% of the poor were living in the capital city. It was more or less due to the structural adjustment policies bringing about the lowering of wages as well as a reduction in the numbers of government employees: thus, the numbers of artists, academics, engineers, physicians, etc., between the ages of 45-65 who were working for low wages at the state institutions in Yerevan or who had lost their jobs were not just a few.

Whatever their professional background or place of origin in Armenia, the area where these women can find work for themselves in Turkey is the reproductive work in households. What makes the situation of the Armenian women employed in housework different from the contractual, seasonal or temporary workers is just this situation of being domestic workers. Work found by going to Russia and mainly based on oral or written agreements with the employers for a period of less than one year – i.e., work that continues until the work ends- is categorized as seasonal work and is recognized as coming back home at certain intervals. In a similar manner, their male counterparts work in the textile workshops or at building construction sites when they find work with shorter periods of stay in Turkey.

However, the situation of the women creates a difference. Their Turkey trip begins with the intention of working for a few months, but due to the nature of their work and the practical difficulty of making entrance and exits each month (or longer periods), their stay can last for years. What makes this difference important for us is that this *de facto* non-temporary situation creates a mandatory settlement, and as a result, prepares the ground for the formation of a network for a settled life. For

[82] *Dimensions of Urban Poverty in the Europe and Central Asia Region*, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3998, August 2006.

instance, now there is a settled women's community in Kumkapı which has created its own web of solidarity different from the circular Armenian migrants in Turkey. Then how was this network established? How is daily life organized? What made the Armenians different from the other women from the former Soviet countries like Moldavia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan and finding employment in reproductive work? The main focus of the following chapters will be on revealing the reasons and development of the process bringing Turkey to the foreground as the destination country of the new *khoban*s of Armenian households.

CHAPTER III

WOMEN ON THE MOVE

The components of the social and economic structures unearthed after the collapse of the Soviet Union have been taken under consideration by the scholars of Western academies and become part of an elaborated literature on Soviet studies. Among those structures and their eventual consequences, "migration probability" was the first and foremost topic of discussion. A great wave of emigration from the USSR was somehow expected by policy makers as well as scholars of the Western world. In this context, in November 1991, during the days when the Soviet regime was disintegrating, a conference took place in Santa Monica, California, with the participation of academics from European, American and Russian universities: Prospective Migration and Emigration from the Former USSR. The participants' speculations about the greatness of a probable mass exodus from the former USSR over the years to come particularly lay upon the balance between the worsening economic situation, rising ethnic tension in various areas of Soviet Russia, and the restrictive tendencies in the potential host countries of Western Europe.[83]

And the expected took place. Between 1990 and 1992, advanced capitalist countries with established market economies officially recorded an annual average net inflow of about 980,000 migrants from countries with economies in transition (i.e., countries of Eastern Europe and the former USSR), compared to an average of

[83] Jeremy R. Azrael, Patricia A. Brukoff, Vladimir D. Shkolnikov, "Prospective Migration and Emigration from the Former USSR: A Conference Report," *Slavic Review* 51, no. 2 (Summer 1992), pp. 322-331.

175,000 migrants before 1989.[84] Still, the flow from the FSU to advanced economies never went beyond that of intra-regional ones (occurring within the countries of FSU), even during the first half of the 1990s, when –ethnically motivated- armed conflicts[85] and the voluntary repatriation of titular nationals[86] were in question (and during which migration flows reached historically unique levels in almost all countries in transition).[87] In addition to the historical and cultural ties maintained between the countries of the regions, the elimination of travel barriers surrounding the citizens of the Soviet countries had intersected with those of the Western bloc, restricting them –not in judicial- but in actual domain. This was in its turn the intersection between the sociological significance of the former with the political implications of the latter; which set in this scheme, the ground to grow "various forms of short-term migration, including seasonal, contract-based and, particularly, "shuttle" migration between neighboring countries" and "to become the main forms of migration from and within the region."[88] Thusly, in this multi-national, multi-factorial scheme, distinct points of destination had appeared for those departing from

[84] *International Migration from Countries with Economies in Transition: 1980-1999*, Population Division Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat (September 2002).

[85] The conflict over Nagorno-Karabagh (between Armenia and Azerbaijan) during 1988-1994; South Ossetia and Abkhazia (in Georgia) during 1990-93; civil war in Tajikistan during 1992-93; and finally in Yugoslavia, who alone generated more than 2 million emigrants between 1990 and 98.

[86] Between 1985 and 1990, the number of international migrants increased by 56 million from 99 million to 155 million, and from 2.3 to 2.9% of the global population. Of that increase, twenty-seven million were attributable to the reclassification of persons who had moved inside the USSR before 1990 to international migrants when the country disintegrated (UN Population Division 2007).

[87] Actually the migration from Soviet bloc reached historically unique levels in almost all countries in transition, some 1.5 to 1.9 million people migrated yearly to another country in transition between 1990 and 1994 according to UNDP report.

[88] *International Migration from Countries with Economies in Transition: 1980-1999*, pp. 16.

different countries, and even for males, females, families, youth or elderly. Actually, those journeys beyond the national borders, mostly temporary in nature, were performed by males and the usual destination point was the Russian Federation. In other words, the very object of the migration was Russia, rather than the Western world as had been predicted. Probably for that reason, combining "the feminized aspect of the post-Soviet migration" –not representing the entire flow but at least an important part of it worth considering- with other "feminized migrations" that occurred from countries of the Third World toward the advanced economies of the capitalist North, by reformulating it as a gendered labor flow, constituted only a further step forward taken at a later stage of migration studies.

As stated by Keough, "while it has been recognized that women are increasingly participating in such transnational activities, anthropologists have neither detailed nor theorized the gendered nature of migrant labor in this region."[89] Here, the implied "transnational activities" involve different patterns of labor flow carried out by women (and men), deprived of job opportunities to provide the basic level of household subsistence or any kind of social assistance from their government, in order to achieve sources of (additional) income. Several countries of Western Europe, such as Italy, Greece or Germany, ranked to some extent in the list of destination countries of former-Soviet women. However, a traditional destination country (until the late 1970s) had appeared on this list as an alternative vis-à-vis "fortress Europe," with its ease of entry and rather low travel costs; that is how Turkey, already part of the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) region geographically,[90] but an independent one due to the fact that it does not share the

[89] Leyla J. Keough, "Globalizing 'Post-Socialism:' Mobile Mothers and Neoliberalism on the Margins of Europe," *Anthropological Quarterly* 79, no. 3 (Summer 2006), pp. 431.

common inheritance of central planning or the transition experience of the other countries, became one of the major targets of a feminized labor migration in the post-Soviet period.

Migration was a planned process in the Soviet regime and it was this state policy which was criticized most by the proponents of civil rights and democracy. In this sense, "freedom of travel," of which coming to Turkey represented one of its aspects, became a practice symbolizing the shift of the old regime to a more liberal one. However, it is possible to claim that a similar but invisible effort to create "control on travel/migration" is in question for the First World's non-authoritarian political regimes, too. Beside restriction mechanisms like visa requirements or the heavy costs of travel that re-build *de facto* barriers for the probable actors of migration, there is a growing body of literature on migration which argues that in the current situation, "the most valuable remaining resource" of the Third World, *human labor*, is exported toward advanced economies solely to answer their increasing need for low-wage labor.[91]

Either way, what remains in hand to asses this human flow (and that of Armenian women directed to Turkey) inherited from the collapse of the Soviet economy is a set of notions that has taken shape around the history of "income travels" carried on in the consequence of social processes quite different from that of the Soviets, and has finally ended up in social geographies quite different from that of Turkey. The attempt to use the fundamental notions of this scheme while trying to problematize the case of Armenian immigrants in Turkey will both add nuances to

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[90] CIS is a regional organization established in 1991 to promote financial and security cooperation among participating members whose countries are of the former Soviet Union.

[91] "I suggest that immigration from the Third World into the US is carefully orchestrated," says Grace Cheng in *Disposable Domestics: Immigrant Women Workers in the Global Economy* (Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press, c2000), pp. 2.

these concepts and serve to connect these new actors of international migration with older and traditional ones of trans-border mobility, the immigrants of Far Asia, Africa or Latin America, as well as with other post-Soviet migrants of "near abroad"[92]; and, finally, will enable us to discover the crucial points that differentiate them from others, along with factors providing the basis for them.

Is the Flow from Armenia a Feminized Migration?

The phenomenon above expressed with the terms "feminized migration" or "transnational activities of women" does indeed represent a process in structural relationship with "globalization." However, as suggested by Saskia Sassen, because "the dominant narrative of globalization concerns itself with the upper circuits of global capital, not the lower ones," this relationship is not visible even to those who are in direct contact with the very actors of such a flow. The low-waged labor demand of advanced economies had been filled by migrant males; however, in the global restructuring of the economy after the 1980s which created a spatial segregation between productional and operational centers (between Third World countries where the costs of production are lower and capitalist countries of the First World where specialized professional services are concentrated, respectively), immigrant women emerged as a new, independent body, filling the above-mentioned "upper circuit of global economy."

An important indicator of the independent nature of this notion is the fact that the destinations of male and female labor migrants differed from each other. "As male and female migrants fill different niches in the global economy," migration

[92] This term is extracted from the Ph D. diss. of Timothy Edmund Heleniak. In FSU migration and foreign-relations vernacular, foreign countries are classified as the "near abroad" (those that were part of the Soviet Union) and the "far abroad" (the rest of the world).

from many source countries results in two gendered flows, with women initiating migration to countries with a greater demand for female workers and men migrating to countries with a greater demand for male workers.[93]

When the migration from Armenia is considered, gender is a central factor in the characteristic of their flow, too. Although it has long been known that migration from Armenia is male-dominated,[94] the majority of Armenian migrants in Turkey are women. According to statistical data derived from surveys on labor migration from Armenia,[95] 90% of labor migrants, 79% of all migrants, and 51% of permanent migrants were men. The exact opposite is true when the gender ratio of the Armenian labor migrants living in Turkey is considered.[96] The source of this contrast lies in the market structure of destination countries along with the very nature of "income activities" carried out by the migrants living in these countries.

According to results of the most recent survey on dominant migration flows in Armenia, "Return Migration from Armenia" including the period of 2002-2007, the Russian Federation was the prominent final destination country for both permanent (71%) and labor (96.2%) migrants.[97] The fact that the Russian Federation is the first choice of Armenian men for temporary work can be based on a set of

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[93] Rhacel Salazar Parrenas, "Migrant Filipina Domestic Workers and the International Division of Reproductive Labor," *Gender and Society* 14, no. 4 (Aug., 2000), pp. 564.

[94] *Return Migration to Armenia in 2002-2008: A Study*, pp. 13.

[95] Anna Minasyan and Blanka Hancilova, *Labor Migration from Armenia 2002-2005: A Sociological Survey of Households* (Yerevan: Asoghik, 2005); *Labor Migration from Armenia 2005-2007: A Survey*, Yerevan, 2007.

[96] According to data acquired in the research of Eurasia Partnership Foundation (*Identifying the State of Armenian Migrants in Turkey)*, the share of Armenian female migrants is 94%.

[97] As mentioned before, a similar pattern is true for other FSU countries as well. For instance, 61.9 % of migration from Moldova, one of the major sending-countries of region, has been directed to the Russian Federation.

factors such as knowledge of the language of the destination country (Russian was taught as a second language not only in the schools of Armenia, but in all of the countries of Soviet Russia. It is still spoken as fluently as a native language mainly by those above 35 years of age in Armenia) and the presence of friends and relatives (according to a census carried out under the Soviet regime in 1989, a large population of Armenians was scattered among the different countries of the USSR; currently they are mostly concentrated in Russia [see Table 4 in Chapter II]). The final factor is the absence of visa requirements between two countries (the application of a visa-free border entry regime between FSU countries). Russia, by reason of its shared socio-economic and historical background with non-Russian countries, as well as Armenia, remains in the position of an ideal destination toward which the social networks facilitating migration are established more easily. On the other hand, in a context where "the attraction is jobs,"[98] there is another major factor affecting the decision of "where" to go and which is not equally valid for each age and/or gender group living in Armenia: the fact that the job search in Russia seemed easier in comparison to other countries.

In the background of the concept expressed as the "feminization of migration," lays a secondary one, referring both to economic infrastructure and social inequalities, the "feminization of poverty" (or as suggested by Sassen, the feminization of survival). It is often argued that economic crisis or the fiscal reforms imposed by multilateral institutions like the World Bank, the IMF or the Asian Development Bank, result in greater damage for women in countries where they show high levels of participation in the employment market: the spontaneous consequence of the fact that women and men fill different aspects of the waged

[98] Grace Chang, pp. 2.

employment of their country, just as they "fill different niches in the global economy."[99] In many former Soviet countries -including Armenia- that experienced the transition from state socialism to market capitalism with the assistance of the above-mentioned institutions imposing regulations like "keeping wages down, cutting back public works, reducing the numbers of government employees, rolling back health and education budgets"[100] as standard prescriptions (called structural adjustments as well) for (indebted) governments,[101] "because state socialism targeted services to women in particular, they were hardest hit by its withdrawal."[102] In Armenia, just like in many other sending-countries, this vulnerability has been intensified by the traditional position of women as responsible for the *reproduction* of households in addition to their roles as providers of subsistence. The vulnerable position in which Armenian women found themselves in consequence of the recent regulations is even worse for certain age groups like those above 45 and below 30. These represent the most disadvantaged group in terms of their share in labor market participation. The rate of employment is at most around 60% for both groups.[103]

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[99] Parrenas, pp. 564.

[100] Cynthia Enloe, "Just Like one of the Family: Domestic Servants in World Politics," in *Global Dimensions of Gender and Carework* (Mass.: South End Press, 2000), pp. 118.

[101] Ten countries in the region are currently classified as "moderately" or "severely" indebted by the World Bank: Hungary, Estonia, Russia, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, and Turkmenistan (moderately), and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Kyrgyzstan (severely).

[102] Keough, "Globalizing 'Postsocialism," pp. 12.

[103] In parallel, according to data compiled by surveys on labor migration, they represent two major groups of labor migrants who defined their reason to work abroad as the inability to find a job in Armenia. When the presence of women in the private sector and state institutions is considered, the general situation does not differ from other countries of the FSU: they show less activity in the private sector and are mostly employed in state institutions where the wages are lower. The share of hired females employed in the non-government sectors is less than half of the males (7.9% versus 21.7%) according to a report on external and internal migration in Armenia involving the period between 2002 and 2007. However, the share of self-employment (particularly agricultural) is reported to

However, the number of women participating in the labor migration flow to Russia is not that great: 6000 to 8000 female migrants versus 96,000 to 121,000 males, according to recent surveys.[104] A fact frequently explained by the reluctance sourcing from the national mentality, which still perceives women as homemakers while men solely take the responsibility to provide for the family.[105] Although this is largely true, it does not reflect the reality. Due to the fact that the foremost motivation of working abroad is economic gain, the balance between "the probability of finding a good paying job in the host country" and "moral and material investment put forward for the realization of migration" must be in favor of the former, though the mentioned probability depends on the specific characteristics of the labor market of the host country and the availability of jobs for migrants within this market. Referring again to the labor migration surveys, the most frequent sphere of employment of the Armenian labor migrants working in Russia is construction, which means contractual seasonal informal labor in most of the cases:[106] two-thirds of them are engaged in this field.[107] Next, though six times smaller in proportion, are trade and public food. The proportion of the migrants holding positions as managers, white-collar women or who are self-employed is much lower. Finally, reproductive

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decrease (from 40.7% to 32.8%) while the proportion of wage earners and that of people employed in the private sector is on the rise (from 57% to 65.7 and 20% to 25.7%, respectively).

[104] *Labor Migration from Armenia in 2005-2007: A Survey*, pp. 18.

[105] The 2005 survey indicated that the overwhelming majority of the Armenian population (78%) views the migration of women negatively.

[106] According to *Return Migration to Armenia in 2002-2008*, construction is also the second sector in Armenia in which people are widely employed. Most people are employed in agriculture (25.8%), construction (12%), education (11.2%), in companies providing public utilities like energy and water supply (around 10%), and trade (8.6%). Another important finding is that the waged-labor of the construction sector is mostly dominated by those who had permanently migrated abroad. The percentage of non-migrants working in this industry is reported to be as low as 6.6%.

[107] ILO, *Migration and Development: Armenia Country Study*, pp. 11.

labor, an economic activity frequently carried out by migrant women wage earners is at the lowest rate: only in 4% of cases did migrants provide private services such as taking care of children or the elderly.[108]

In the above picture where Armenian women are de facto eliminated from the formal or informal labor market of Russia, or that of other CIS countries like the Ukraine, as well as from its own, it is possible to argue that the flow from Armenia is not a feminized one, but certainly has a gendered character. At this point, asking why reproductive labor is usually cited as "an economic activity frequently carried out by migrant women wage earners" will be helpful both for clarifying the reasons for this exclusion and the appearance of new countries of destination.[109]

Why Do Migrant Women Enter Jobs That Involve Forms of Carework?[110]

In their research article where the universal features of informal economy are introduced along with its starting point and connections with the formal market, Manuel Castells and Alejandro Portes mention three major characteristics of it. "The

[108] *Labor Migration from Armenia in 2005-2007: A Survey*, pp. 47.

[109] Referring to broad conversations conducted with migrants living in Turkey, Russia is not considered as an alternative solely because of the difficulties in finding a suitable job, but also by reason of "the danger" that it represents for single women. "It rests no one from the families. Women come here. Men go to Russia. The children are left unsupervised. Here there is no job for males… One day the country (Armenia) will stay womanless. Yet men are coming here, too. For instance there has been a new one who came to our house with his wife and children of two years old. Russia is very dangerous, even for males! It is too expensive; there is mafia everywhere…" Another empiric indicator of women's reluctance for going to Russia or other CIS countries comes from the report '*Labor Migration from Armenia in 2002-2005*': The proportion of females who have worked in the EU and the USA is much higher that that of males (3.4 times higher in case of the EU and 4.3 times higher in case of the USA).

[110] Reformulated as such by Zimmerman et al. in *Global Dimensions of Gender and Carework*, pp. 10.

informal economy's systematic connection with the formal (one)" [111] represents the first of these statements. This systematic connection implies something beyond a common labor market shared by registered and unregistered workplaces, but an organic relationship between these two, indicating that constraints stemming from the control mechanisms dominating the former (the formal one) can be tolerated and sustained only by reason of the latter (the informal one) subsisting free of them. Considering the precise, albeit invisible nature of this mutual dependence, one may ask if it is possible to make use of it in order to explain the use of immigrant labor in domestic services.

In the socio-economic (and moral) conditions where the reproductive activities have not been included in the sphere of the waged labor market, the relationship of the reproduction worker's labor force (either immigrant or local) with the formal economy seems to be *de facto* broken. The source of this interruption can be traced further through the institutialization of a production order where the labor of women, as reproduction workers, is confined to private spheres, and thus is excluded from the wage labor category.[112] Trying to establish this very connection in the case of Armenian migrants working in domestic services will lead us to two conceptual schemes, each justifying and reproducing the arguments elaborated by Castells and Portes.

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[111] Castells, M. and Portes, "A World Underneath: The Origins, Dynamics, and Effects of the Informal Economy," in *The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*, edited by Alejandro Portes, Manuel Castells, and Lauren A. Benton (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, c1989), pp. 26.

[112] Here, the mentioned "reproductive" activities involve Evelyn Nakano Glenn's account about it, which in its turn was borrowed from leading feminist Marxist theorists: "The array of activities and relationships involved in maintaining people both on a daily basis and intergenerationally such as purchasing household goods, preparing and serving food, laundering and repairing clothing, maintaining furnishings and appliances, socializing children, providing care and emotional support for adults, and maintaining kin and community ties." Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labor," *Signs* 18, no. 1 (Autumn, 1992), pp. 1-43.

The first of these conceptual schemes is the account of Sassen for the employment pattern of female migrant labor. Accordingly, the dramatic change in the post-Fordist production structure that had taken place by the mid-1970s led to the emergence of strategic spaces called "global cities", where the flow of capital, information and commodities (of multinational character) intersect. These are mainly the high-wage professionals and services provided by them which remain on the front line of these cities. On the other hand, this structure requires an equivalent mass of low-wage labor corresponding to the fulfillment of the basic needs of the former group, i.e, the reproduction of human capital. The international migrants concentrating on those strategic spaces pointed to by Sassen are the very suppliers of this demand. Thus, the migrants constitute the major employment group for those sectors devalorized and even marginalized by exclusion from the core of the urban economy, often shifted to informality, but still sharing an organic articulation with the global economy of the city.

Although Sassen's analysis is based on the macro-level direction of the migration, such a phenomenon may occur in local spaces not matching well with her definition of global cities.[113] The gendered ramification of the post-Soviet migration heading for Turkey (and that of the Armenians as one of its branches) provides a good example of this. The level of overlap between the participation of migrants in the labor force and that of women in Turkey may be the subject of other research, but it is still arguable that the need they fulfilled in Turkey is the same as that in Sassen's global cities, namely, the reproductive activities relegated to women as a traditional burden, but currently transferred to "hired" women with the increased participation

[113] According to Sassen, the activities of multinational corporations compose the major integral for considering those places where resources and infrastructure precipitate as global cities. From this point of view, Sassen's theoretical formulation only concentrates on relations of production in globalization.

in working life. In the context of the globalised economy, the first women are "local" as usual; however, the later ones are "migrants" any more (and for now), the consequence of which is the establishment of "a sort of carework chain or circuit which literally transfers care labor from developing to developed countries",[114] thus from native to "outsider." From this perspective, the labor of the migrant domestic worker constrained in private, thus informal, space is indeed in a systematic relationship with formal space, as it enables the participation of its very employer in the latter.

If we return back to the point where the delimitation of migrant women's labor became associated with the confinement of reproductive labor to the private sphere, we will find ourselves facing a second conceptual framework, one developed by Nakano Glenn, one of the first researchers conceptualizing the reification of the unequal role distribution between the two genders in the domestic area by considering its racial implications. Through her analysis focusing on the fact that the paid domestic services required by middle-class Anglos in the USA are overwhelmingly provided by the members of ethnic minorities or women of color, the author "helps us to trace how race and gender have been fashioned in one area of women's work as socially constructed systems of relationships."[115] What makes Glenn's formulation of "the racial division of reproductive labor" important for us is that, by carrying Sassen's argument one step further, which in its turn was established upon the indicators of global economy, it brings into view "the persisting

[114] "Globalization and Multiple Crises of Care," in *Global Dimensions of Gender and Carework*, edited by Zimmerman, M. K., Jacquelyn S. Litt, and Christine E. Bose (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2006), pp. 16.

[115] Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labor," *Signs*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Autumn, 1992), pp. 1-43.

gender inequalities in the families of these professionals."[116] In other words, it reminds us that what is worth capturing is the structural *continuity* (or the rupture, if any) between agents falling into the opposite hands of economic relations. Then, what is the significance of such a structural continuity?

The presence of migrant women's labor in Turkey seems to have created a sort of rupture in traditional roles/actors reified in the history of the commodification of domestic service.[117] This latter, carried out previously by the "wives of migrant men from rural areas," i.e., *live-out workers*, gained new implications with the "(re)introduction of *live-in domestic labor* to Turkish (upper) middle class homes," namely the introduction of migrant women into domestic work.[118] This structural transformation is caused in its turn by the structural transformation of the very laborer of the domestic work itself.

Contrary to the familiar rural faces of middle class homes, the migrant offers a new and preferable profile due to her exemption from domestic responsibilities of her own, since she doesn't have, after all, a private domestic space (of her own) to maintain. However, similar to the case of "Mexicans in the Southwest, African Americans in the South, and Japanese people in northern California" in Glenn's narrative, one has to consider the major and constitutive factor correlating these two groups of different profile, thus representing the continuity on which we put a strong emphasis above: either those who came Istanbul in the wake of internal migration and gained a seat in the urban periphery, i.e., the new poor of the urban space, or

[116] Parrenas, pp. 569.

[117] For further reading on the issue, see Gül Özyeğin, *Untidy Gender: Domestic Service in Turkey* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001).

[118] Ayşe Akalın, *Exchanging Affect: The Migrant Domestic Workers Market in Turkey* (Ph.D. diss: City University of New York, 2009), pp. 16.

undocumented post-Soviet women migrants, the laborers of domestic services are employed among those the farthest (for diverse reasons) to alternative income opportunities (formal or informal), the "outsiders."[119] The third and final argument of Castells and Portes' on the "the special characteristics of *–down-graded–* employed in informal activities" will be complemental to this point:

> Most workers who receive fewer benefits or less wages, or experience worse working conditions than those prevailing in the formal economy, do so because this is the prerequisite for their entry into the labor market….the most obvious instance is that involving immigrant workers, particularly undocumented.[120]

Migration has triggered the process of commodification converting the unpaid reproductive work of women into a consumption object in the form of paid domestic labor, while with the increasing participation of women in the waged labor market and the extension of this involvement so as to include those former servants of urban middle-class homes, new types of actors derived from new types of migration took the stage. Where Turkey is concerned, these are those –mostly undocumented, thus confined to a constrained "entry into the labor market"- women coming from former Soviet countries, the new actors in the process. And the most unexpected and challenging among them are, beyond any doubt, those from Armenia.

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[119] The implication of the mentioned "distance" can be reconsidered with the concept of "social capital" –which will be discussed in the next chapter. In addition, the metaphor of "outsider" was also used by Gül Özyeğin in order to identify the difference between migrants living in squatter settlements and those residing in the basement of middle-class buildings and working as 'doorkeepers': "If we use the metaphor of 'outsider' to define the marginalized position of the migrant in urban space, then the doorkeepers appears as 'outsiders within' because of their marginality within middle- and upper-middle-class space." In Gül Özyeğin, *Untidy Gender: Domestic Service in Turkey*, pp. 12.

[120] *Ibid*., pp. 26.

The impact of the collapse of the Soviet economy and the bottleneck within which the countries of the former Soviet Union found themselves has transformed the citizens of Armenia into agents of a transnational flow, as it has those of other transition countries that experienced the Soviet regime and are currently in the process of putting neoliberal economic policies into practice. This mobility has had two major consequences in terms of Turkey: a sharp increase in the number of shuttle traders coming from these countries and the appearance of large-scale female labor ready to get involved in domestic work. Both of them made up part of an informal economy, the former operating on a much larger scale in economic returns, with the latter being part of a rather transnational process of a feminized migration. How about the use of a conceptual framework to differentiate Armenian women migrants from those who took the road from other countries of the FSU in this scheme where the migration is described by the notions preserving its validity along diverse geographies?

The answer is behind the question itself: the global approaches brought to migration stem largely from a globalized economic structure that homogenizes the diverse flow of masses from diverse geographies. However, the *temporal* dimension is not visible in these explications, which focus rather on *spatial* coordination. Bryan R. Roberts, a scholar pursuing the goal of bridging such a gap, calls forth a concept borrowed from Robert K. Merton in order to account for the economic actions of migrants: socially expected durations (SEDs). SEDs imply a structural entity involving the social norms, cultural codes and legal framework of the sending and receiving country. Thereby, the interpretation of migration relating to a social action

rather than individual decision moves beyond the traditional "spatial" dimension focusing *a fortiori* on the role of social networks and the conditions of the labor market, then became sophisticated by the involvement of the "temporal dimension," attempting to comprehend the return of the mentioned structures' physical limits on collective (or individual) consciousness.

> Immigration is a process as much concerned with time as it is with space. People move at particular times in their lives and in those of their families. And their movements occur at certain times in their country's development and in that of the country of destination."[121]

From this framework, Roberts deals with "temporary" and "permanent" labor migration as two distinct systems and argues that the "family commitments encourage the return of the migrants" when the former group is concerned.[122] Research about the Gagauzian Moldovans –one of the first groups of former Soviet migrants working in domestic services in Turkey- show the circular character of their mobility as well as the spontaneous nature of it as it stems from the fact that the women leave behind their non-adult, even non-adolescent children.[123]

> What has developed over the years is a transnational migration circuit whereby, as locals explain, to run a Gagauz household, wives and mothers, usually in their thirties, go to Turkey to work as domestics for six months at a time, primarily in winter when work in the fields is not necessary.[124]

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[121] Bryan R. Roberts, "Socially Expected Durations and the Economic Adjustment of Immigrants," in *The Economic Sociology of Immigration: Essays on Networks, Ethnicity, and Entrepreneurship*, edited by Alejandro Portes (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1998, c1995), pp. 43.

[122] Roberts, pp. 46.

[123] Actually, this circular movement is technically possible due to the opportunity to extend visa period for three more months, upon recourse to their countries' foreign representatives in Turkey.

[124] Leyla J. Keough, *Driven Women: Gendered Moral Economies of Women's Migrant Labor in Postsocialist Europe's Peripheries* (Ph.D. diss.: University of Massachusetts Amherst, May 2008), pp. 441.

On the other hand, the run of the process has a small but important difference in the case of Armenian migrants. Although it is impossible to give precise data, the average age of Armenian women migrants working in Turkey is above 45, as mentioned before. This fact restrains "family commitments" as the prime determinant for their decision of return and places it in a secondary position, in contrast to other members of post-Soviet women's migration directly to Turkey. The presence of aged parents, adult children or other descendents reappear as factors consistently provoking the return decision, without turning it into "an obligation." In this scheme, Roberts brings about one more definition –quite evocative of the theory of the neoclassical economy's principle of the maximization of benefit- for identifying the migrant's decision mechanism of return: "the length of time needed to gather the resources to make the journey." Nevertheless, this period takes longer than expected for several of them:

> Istanbul is a swamp to us…The more you try save yourself from swamp the more you sink into it, so we are. Need to move slowly! We came here for six months stay. We have been here for ten years; in sum, 24 times six months. Let's see whether this six-month period will be the last one or not.[125]

It has been six months since I heard this appeal from an aged couple, 60 and 65 years old, respectively.[126] They are still here. The average of 500 dollars in wages[127] of these women (some of them never saw their grandchildren, or like Agata,

[125] Arşag, 65, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

[126] One may seldom meet couples like Arşag and Agata. Arşag, unemployed for many years, says that he preferred to join his wife and "protect" her, rather than stay lonely in Armenia. He even does some occasional, short-term work to provide as additional income to his wife's earning from domestic work.

[127] The wages are usually not less than 500 dollars; however, it may rise to as much as 1000 dollars, depending on requirements of the 'work.' The size of the house, the number of children or the health condition of the elderly, are among the measures for wage bargain.

had never met their sons-in law or had physical contact with their relatives for years), is either partially sent to Armenia as additional income for their family member's household (usually to adult children) or spent for personal household expenditure in Istanbul. It is possible to encounter several who are still seeking to pay their "debts," or those saving money to become homeowners, or even a few who are never able to scratch together any money. As the pace of the time required for resource accumulation overcomes the steps of the migrant, the last concept suggested by Roberts as the determinant of decision to return, namely "social time," the last train for return is gradually pulling away, too:

> [T]he widely shared sense that there is an appropriate and likely timing for life events that involve transitions from one role status to another, such as the transition between being unmarried and being married or between being employed and being in retirement.[128]

Adolescence, adulthood, marriage, motherhood, salaried status, etc., every kind of social or economic status has been left behind for Armenian women migrants due to their advanced age. Finally, retirement is not a preferred alternative. For those who have not saved enough money, return to Armenia, one of the CIS members where public expenditure for health or old age pensions are at the lowest levels, would mean deprivation of even the basic preventive and curative health-care services and material dependence on others, In conclusion, the factor joining Armenian migrants with those coming from other FSU countries seems to be the spatial dimension of the migration in this picture; but then, the discriminative factor among them is the temporal dimension.

One of the distinctive features of modern international migration suggested by Douglas Massey is "the relatively high degree of circular movement."[129] When

[128] Roberts, pp. 53.

Armenian migrants are considered, this feature is not as valid for them as it is for other former Soviet migrants. It is now time to discuss the significance of this differentiation in the temporal dimension juridically and socially. But before that, one more aspect is worth mentioning: another categorization as critical as the former one, but much more vulgar, where the differences mentioned above suddenly disappear. This is, with reference to Roberts for the last time, the formal sphere claiming to affect the migrants' stay duration, protected by laws, having well-defined boundaries, that is, "legal regulations" connotating "socially prescribed durations."

The Legal Status of Former Soviet Immigrants in Turkey and the Case of the Armenians

Ahmet Içduygu,[130] in his various reports on irregular migration to Turkey, defines those "who enter the country legally, but remain or work after the expiry date of their entry visas," as a distinct group among two major actors of irregular migration to Turkey.[131] This group consists of people from the former Soviet countries of Eastern Europe, such as Romania, the Russian Federation, Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan.[132] Armenians are part of this group too. Just like the other women from other former Soviet countries, the

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[129] Douglas S. Massey, "The Ethnosurvey in Theory and Practice," *International Migration Review* 21, no. 4, Special Issue: Measuring International Migration: Theory and Practice (Winter, 1987), pp. 1498-1522.

[130] Head of Migration Research Program at Koç University, Istanbul.

[131] Ahmet Içduygu, *The Labor Dimensions of Irregular Migration in Turkey*, CARIM Research Reports, Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, San Domineco di Fiesole (FI): European University Institute, 2006.

[132] Indeed, Içduygu cites only four countries of Eastern Europe: Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and Romania.

typical entrance of Armenian migrants living and working in Turkey takes place through legal means as well, that is by "entry visa."[133] However, because they overstay the "one- month" visa limit,[134] they find themselves in a so-called "illegal" or "irregular status."[135]

The factor enforcing immigrants to overstay their visa is the very fact that the actual category they occupy, "temporary labor," does not have any validity in legal terms. As will be seen below, legal regulations concerning individuals entering Turkey temporarily to work cast out *spontaneously* the *spontaneous* members of the temporary work force. Roberts' statement about the consequence of such a regulation is as follows:

> …by their very existence socially prescribed durations create disadvantages for those who do not conform to their prescriptions. Not only do non-conformers not derive the direct disadvantages of socially prescribed durations, but they also are likely to be stigmatized by others because they do not behave as is normatively expected.[136]

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[133] According to the Passport Law (No. 5682, Article 24), the competent authorities to issue visas for "ordinary" foreign passports (meaning passports which are not diplomatic or similar to diplomatic) are the Turkish Republic Consulates in foreign countries. However, due to the absence of any diplomatic mission of Turkey in Armenia, the citizens of this country benefit from the implementation of a relatively new system: banderole visa. In this context, with an application put into practice in the recent year, those foreigners with the appropriate passport but coming to the Turkish border gates without a visa have the opportunity to acquire a banderole visa at these gates. Foreigners who are able to get a banderole visa when entering Turkey are able to enter the country by depositing the banderole visa fees and will be able to stay in the country for the period of the visa and in accordance with the visa type. The banderole visa charge determined by the ministry of foreign affairs is $15 / €10 for Armenia, and the expiry date is one month (Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (legal website): http://www.mfa.gov.tr/sinir-kapilarimizda-vize-alan-yabancilardan-tahsil-edilen-vize-harclari.tr.mfa)

[134] Decision on the length of visa expiry date is not the same for each country; indeed it totally depends on the state of political relations with that country.

[135] A similar inference was made in a research project on Moldovan domestic workers in Turkey conducted by Selmin Kaşka; the main reason that gives an 'irregular' character to Moldovan's migration flow was defined as follows: "after their arrival migrants remain in the country to work even after the expiration of their visas" (Selmin Kaşka, *The New International Migration and Migrant Women in Turkey: The Case of Moldovan Domestic Workers*, *Istanbul*: MiReKoç Research Projects 2005-2006).

[136] Roberts, pp. 56.

In that case, what is the significance of the violation of these socially prescribed durations, namely its being illegal, if we look at it from the viewpoint of the migrants? Or to rephrase it, what are those "direct disadvantages" envisaged, or "concrete penalties" paid by migrants, by their act?

The major legal sanction for the related foreign nationals who exceed their visa period is deportation on the basis of violation of the Turkish Passport Law.[137] The only way to avoid such a heavy legal process like deportation is to acquire a residential permit (*ikamet tezkeresi*).[138] The criminal fee to be paid by those related to the deportation process is the "residential fee penalty" in operation for each day the document is not obtained.[139] Those paying the residential fee penalty accordingly are given the punishment of not entering the country for the period of half of the period of their visa violation. Those not paying this fee are forbidden to enter the country for a period of five years by paying the border transit fee (of $140). In the applications of deportation processes, just like the visa periods permitted for the countries, decisions are made by taking into consideration the relationships with

[137] According to the Turkish legal regulations visa violation is evaluated within the context of the Passport Law. "Because the visa is provided as a replacement of the passport, you are supposed to violate your visa requirements whenever you violate the Law of Passport. If you enter the country without a visa or passport; or if you depart from the country by violating your visa expiry date, you are supposed to derogate the Law of Passport," says the advocate of Helsinki Citizens Assembly, Sinem Uludağ. Actually the deportation penalty is arranged not only with the Passport Law, but also with the Law Regarding Residence and Travel of Foreigners (*Yabancıların Türkiye'de Ikamet ve Seyahatleri Hakkında Kanun*, YISK) and with the various articles of the Law on Turkish Citizenship (*Türk Vatandaşlığı Kanunu*, TVK).

[138] According to the third article of Law No. 5683 (YISK) foreigners who plan to stay in Turkey longer than one month are supposed to personally or vicariously apply to the authorized security agencies in order to fill out the required certificate before it expires.

[139] According to Article 20 of YISK those entering the country legally but holding "expired passports" are included under the heading "mischievous persons with conditions of deportation" and have to pay the criminal fee. The amount is determined and stated in the circulars of the General Directorate of Security under the Ministry of Interior. Again, according to YISK Article 22, the person deported from Turkey "cannot come back to Turkey without obtaining the special permit of the Ministry of Interior." Just like the visa violation fees, this penalty with regard to entering Turkey is determined through the circulars of the General Directorate of Security.

different countries and, therefore, the political dynamics. The determination of the amount of the penalty fee for the persons subject to the deportation process, namely the determination of the enforcements by the circulars (*genelge*) of the General Directorate of Security rather than the laws, makes it possible to quickly change these enforcements when needed.

For the migrants coming from the former Soviet countries, the avenues available to acquiring exemption from all of these sanctions is *de facto* blocked by both international norms and the national laws. Thus, from the perspective of the migrants coming from these countries, asylum or refugee status application is not a means for those persons to be exempted from the procedure of deportation, meaning to be forcefully sent back to the country from which they originated since, according to the directive prepared and published by the Ministry of Interior in 1994[140] in accordance with the directive of the Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees by the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) dated 1951, migration for economic objectives is not a valid reason for the application as an asylum-seeker or refugee. However, the migration of those coming from Armenia and also from the other countries in the FSU region is not due to flight from political pressure or ethnic discrimination, but due to economic reasons. It is evident that leading a life on low wages, with unemployment or deprivation of social aid which deprives the person of basic rights, such as education, housing and accommodation and nutrition, do not fit in with the definition of asylum or refugee seeking status stated in the UN's related regulation:

> [B]elfear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the

[140] Legislation for refugees: *Türkiye'ye İltica Eden veya Başka Bir Ülkeye İltica Etmek Üzere Türkiye'den İkamet İzni Talep Eden Münferit Yabancılar ile Topluca Sığınma Amacıyla Sınırlarımıza Gelen Yabancılara ve Olabilecek Nüfus Hareketlerine Uygulanacak Usul ve Esaslar Hakkında Yönetmelik*.

> country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.[141]

These persons who do not want to go back to the country they came from and who have successfully initiated the related legal procedure[142] to make this possible, or those whose asylum status requests have been rejected represents the second group, according to the "irregular migrants" categorization of Ahmet Içduygu, as stated above: transit migrants.[143] They are mainly from the Middle East (mostly Iranians and Iraqis) and from various Asian (such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka) and African (such as Nigeria, Somalia, and Republic of Congo) countries. They often see Turkey as a transit zone and attempt eventually to go to the developed countries of the West.[144] Under these conditions, those having migrated due to economic reasons and having shown their intention to stay in Turkey to work by exceeding the visa period have a different situation than those transit migrants who have applied for asylum. These people are not in a position of being reluctant to go back to their home countries. In the case of the Armenians, migration into Turkey is not a permanent migration including all family members. Most of the time it is a

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[141] 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, UNHCR, Article 1: Definition of the term 'Refugee.'

[142] Here it is implied the application to the UNHCR office in Ankara, the receipt of "certificate of temporary asylum," and following a period of waiting in defined satellite towns (Van, Kayseri, etc.) for the answer regarding the third country to be settled in. Also, those applying for the receipt of the 'certificate of temporary asylum' in effect in Turkey, and following a period of awaiting the answer of UNHCR regarding the third country to be settled in.

[143] Refugees in Turkey occupy *de facto* the status of transit migrants due to Turkey's 'geographical limitation' to the 1951 Convention, excluding non-European asylum seekers who account for the majority of migrants in Turkey.

[144] Ahmet Içduygu, *Transit Migration in Turkey: Trends, Patterns, and Issues*, European University Institute, Robert Schuman Center for Advanced Studies, June 2005.

prototype of post-Soviet migration conducted by the female family members of households who leave their adult children, their grand-children and, from time to time, their minor children at home and come to work as domestic workers. Therefore, returning to their home country is a wish, a desire continually kept alive, aimed at or to be repeated at certain intervals. Within this categorical distinction from the transit migrants fleeing political pressure, there are two avenues for the Armenian migrants to legalize themselves: to get a residential permit or to leave the country at monthly intervals, both representing a dead-end.[145]

Armenian Immigrants across Two Impasses

Foreigners who will be staying in Turkey more than a month have to make the necessary application to the Ministry of Interior to acquire "a residence permit for foreigners" for at least six months before their visa period expires.[146] The residence permit, known to be the legal condition for staying in Turkey, is at the same time described as the procedure to be completed by foreigners before getting their work permits. This demonstrates the reason why the migrants, rather than acquiring this right that appears to meet the "residential right" within the context of the law, prefer to stay in Turkey by way of visa violation and going through the disadvantageous process of living "without papers" and facing the threat of deportation.

This right, in accordance with YISK, is given to those foreigners "whose residence in Turkey is deemed appropriate." Special conditions like being a student

[145] According to Ahmet Içduygu, Turkey is one of the countries where the categories of asylum seekers and economically motivated irregular migrants tend to overlap the most, partly because both types of flows originate in the same countries (namely Iran and Iraq). However, this is not the case for migrants coming from the former Soviet countries.

[146] According the third article of YISK.

at one of the Turkish universities or having received an invitation from a workplace/business may facilitate the procedure to get the residence permit. But there is no such situation for either the Armenians or the other migrants coming from the former Soviet countries. Of course, they do not know in advance the probable justification of rejection awaiting them: the expression within the scope of "conditions where residential permit will be rejected" in accordance with Article 7 of the same law, "for those it is established that they cannot legally provide the material means for a livelihood for the period they want to stay in Turkey."[147] But one does not actually need such information in order to understand the state's foreigners' policy, since the state does not take a step to arrange the legal status of the migrants and is following a sort of "inactivist policy" (*politikasızlık*), which is often translated into a discourse of "tolerance policy." This is also well understood from the scene of migrant women whose houses are located in the streets near the Foreigners Guesthouse[148] and who walk in between the police in the Perşembe bazaar of Kumkapı without feeling uneasy or concerned, because the "Kumkapı police, who know and act according to state's 'ignorance' policy, threaten them less."[149]

[147] The first time that the travellers coming from a foreign country (actually from Armenia) were interrogated in terms of their conformity to this article occured recently; ironically they were journalists coming from Armenia for the International Hrant Dink Award which would take place on September 15, 2010. They were kept waiting for a while, then realesed.

[148] Detention Centers –or Foreigner's Guesthouses by their previous name- were established by the authorization of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. These are spaces keeping governmental watch on undocumented migrants. The biggest of them are located in Istanbul (Kumkapı), İzmir and Kırklareli. According to information provided on the web site of the "Migrant Solidarity Network" (a civic organization striving against the violation of the human rights of migrants): "Detention conditions of migrants within these centers are as such: Without having a well-defined legal time-limit, during time intervals extending from one month to one year (or even longer); without having any information on the reasons of their detention or having any idea about the length of their closure; without having any opportunity of judicial support and extremely narrow access to basic health services" (Extracted from the website of the Migrant Solidarity Network (*Göçmen Dayanışma Ağı*): http://www.gocmendayanisma.org/index.php/tr/sss).

[149] "I am not afraid that much of the police of Kumkapı," Emma, 52.

The only direct way for the migrants to legalize themselves by using the law is marriage. Before 2003 "marriage" was one of the easiest ways to acquire Turkish citizenship. A foreign woman marrying a Turk would automatically acquire Turkish citizenship.[150] This right was unattainable in other ways; it was so easy to get it without sparing much effort and this led to the binding of "fake" marriages by giving small amounts of commissions or looking after and taking care of [the spouse] without fee.[151] The number of "on-paper" marriages was so high that it led to an amendment in the related article of Law of Turkish Citizenship (TVK) in 2003. So after June 2003, "marrying a Turkish citizen will not automatically give the right to get Turkish citizenship, but that for the foreigners who wanted to acquire Turkish citizenship by marrying a Turkish citizen will have the right to citizenship" by proving to the inspectors coming to the residential addresses of the spouses with unannounced inspections that "they were married for at least three years, that they de facto lived together and that their marriages continued."[152]

Within this perspective, leaving the destination country for a while, then reentering on some regular basis might seem a strategy to avoid the problems that come with staying illegally and to re-legalize their status at intermittent periods. However, most of the time it is not the case for Armenian domestic workers in Turkey for two major reasons dependant on each other: the one-month expiry date of the visa and the fear of losing their job. Considering the cost-effectiveness, despite its long duration the road trip would be the preferred means for a short-term round-trip

[150] According to the fourth article of the law for Turkish citizenship (TVK, Law no 403).

[151] "During this period, the women learnt nothing but a sentence in Turkish: I have my passports. So you can understand that she has got married," Vahide, 33.

[152] Law Relating on Changes in the Law on Turkish Citizenship (*Türk Vatandaşlığı Kanununda Değişiklik Yapılmasına İlişkin Kanun*, Law no 4866, Article 1).

to Armenia. But in any case, it would mean staying away from work for four to five days per month, which is not practical at all, and furthermore out of the question when considering the nature of domestic work.

By definition, domestic workers are hired for their contribution to the sustainability of daily life. The fact that "home" is their workplace, together with the "live-in agreement" of their work, requires them to be 7-days/24-hours available employees with extremely "flexible" working conditions. If this flexibility, always in favor of the employer, has its sources in the physical conditions of the work, its legitimacy comes from the very objects of the care, that is, children and the elderly. The unpredictable character of the needs of children and the elderly, just like that of a home, overrides the hour and volume limits of the job, thus determining them in the workplace. Hereby, the employers do not allow for even short-term interruptions unless it is an exceptional case. Domestic workers, in case of need, find the solution by replacing themselves with someone (usually another migrant from her own neighborhood, practically unemployed at the time) who they really know and trust in terms of capacity to work just like themselves or whose word can be relied upon, namely, who will be ready to leave the job to its original owner when the time comes.

As a result, the home is where the migrant work provides "security" and "shelter" to the migrant woman who is unable to acquire a residence permit although her visa has expired. This also "pushes her to the status of not having a visa" and creates a vicious cycle by making the migrant totally dependent. This reproduction activity continuing in the "private sphere" is, traditionally, not being defined within the borders of the labor market and by its nature is already and de facto removing the

probability of the work permit.[153] Thus from the beginning, YISK Article 7 obstructs the migrant's path to right of residency, and even if no case has ever been seen, this law makes itself felt. Here this very deprivation of *exit* that lies in the categorical difference that distinguishes Armenian women from those coming from other FSU countries.

In their ten year-long journey in Turkey, Armenians have switched from one category to another, from once de jure *transnational migrants*[154] to currently de facto *immigrants*. But in the resulting picture, there is an important gap worth mentioning, the presence of which is constitutive as the deadlock results in legal arrangements, in terms of the appearance of "differences in sedentariness" between immigrants from Armenia and other FSU countries: the heads of traditional Armenian households, men. Where are they?

Is It the Transfer of Caretaking or of the Breadwinnership?

The fact that reproductive work traditionally is relegated to women results in its fulfillment by a woman when necessary and/or demanded; because this handover takes place in a global economic order through transnational actors, "the unpaid carework of women in one country became the paid carework of women from another country."[155] It is called by Rachel Salazar Parrenas "the international transfer

[153] Yet according to the Law on Work Permits of Foreigners (Law no 4817), those who besides not being Turkish citizens, work for at least one employer for wage or as self-employed, must have a 'work permit.'

[154] The term transnational migrantion is used to define those international migrants present in a given country for temporary work, without the intention for permanent settlement (or unable to have such an intention due to legal restrictions).

[155] *Global Dimensions of Gender and Carework*, pp. 107.

of caretaking": "It is a transnational division of labor that is shaped simultaneously by global capitalism, gender inequality in the sending country, and gender inequality in the receiving-country."[156]

In this scheme, the same concept is also the answer proposed by Parrenas for one of the prime questions of scholars working on the globalization of domestic service: "Who cares for the children of caregivers?" Albeit mostly used in reference to the care transfer (chains) in the receiving country, it is also able to explain that of the sending country. Accordingly, "when women from developing nations migrate to developed or other developing nations to care for other people's families, they leave the care of their children and elders to their female relatives or other domestics."[157]

The majority of the Armenian domestic workers living in Turkey remain spontaneously out of the above-described care transfer process due to their older age. The people left behind in the motherland may be children who have completed their education recently, the daughter at marrying age, the new-born grandchild or the son who left for Russia to take his chances. The common point of most of them is the fact that they found themselves in such a position as head of household providing the subsistence of the family, to clear debts, if any, or to support the recently married children financially. But why?

To the Armenian women's (and men's) isolation (desolateness) in terms of social benefits and governmental assistance, and their inability to find employment or to earn enough to survive, namely, their isolation in the public sphere, one has to add a second type of isolation that occurs quite frequently in the private sphere. The

[156] Parrenas, pp. 569.

[157] Shu-Ju Ada Cheng, "Rethinking the Globalization of Domestic Service: Foreign Domestics, State Control, and the Politics of Identity in Taiwan," in *Global Dimensions of Gender and Carework*, pp. 129.

number of Armenian males/heads of households going to *khoban* to Russia and not returning is not negligible. The great majority of the Armenian migrants working in Turkey are composed of women who were in some way deserted by their husbands. They are officially divorced or are widowed. Even if no study has been conducted on how the economic bottleneck in the post-socialist period has affected the family institution in Armenia, according to Armstat statistics there has been a two-fold increase in the rate of divorce since 1998, especially in the group of women aged 45 and above, who form the main category leaving Armenia and going abroad to work: those whose marriages continued twenty years and more.[158] Thus, this leads to the situation where the women who were *de facto* out of the gender-segregated labor market assume the household expenses as single adults, and therefore experience migration as an obligation.

In this way Parrenas' concept of the international transfer of caretaking is transformed into a new and particular kind of transfer when it concerns migrant women from Armenia, that of *patriarchy*. In other words, due to the adult age of the children left behind, the object of transfer is not the activity of caretaking, but the fact of being household head, thus the fact of being *khoban*. Temporary work abroad, namely going to *khoban*, as a traditional strategy of rural households to obtain sufficient income for subsistence, thus is transferred from male to female. Nevertheless, to assume the actual responsibility of the male virtually does not bring about the emancipation of Armenian women.[159] Even to the contrary, having no

[158] Republic of Armenia, National Statistic Service of the Republic of Armenia (Armstat), Statistical Yearbook of Armenia, 2009: http://www.armstat.am/file/doc/99458058.pdf.

[159] A similar inability of emancipation is valid for the employer, that is the women who transfer their traditional burden to hired women, as well. In any case, the woman cannot be exempt from being the housewife, namely her position as the party responsible for the organisation, management, and accomplishment of domestic life/work remains constant. As stated by Shu-Ju Ada Cheng, "women at both ends of the migration process bear the cost of social reproduction while

spouse is a factor that decreases household income, and thus increases poverty and in return increases the victimization of women in the post-Soviet era. From this point of view, the above-mentioned discourse establishing connections between feminization of migration -namely the task-switching between women as the secondary actors of migration before independence and men- with the impoverishment of women, is once again justified. And it is in this particular picture that Turkey has showed itself as a recently emerged 'near abroad' in terms of its geographical proximity, offering relatively easy entrance and the availability of a wide informal market of reproductive labor for Armenian women above fifty, deprived of any formal or private support in their country.[160]

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respective governments are spared the burden of fully compensating their reproductive labor" (Shu-Ju Ada Cheng, "Rethinking the Globalization of Domestic Service: Foreign Domestics, State Control, and the Politics of Identity in Taiwan," in *Global Dimensions of Gender and Carewok*, pp. 129).

[160] Global and ethnic characteristics of the mentioned market of reproductive work will be discussed in Chapters IV and V.

CHAPTER IV

HOW WERE THE NETWORKS ESTABLISHED?

The balance between the costs and benefits of a given action as the guide of the rational individual's behavior typically has figured in the focus of researchers' attempts at the analysis of the catalyst of "migration." However, this balance, by transcending the pure economic sphere, has fed in its turn the approach which both takes social relations into account and, by freeing it from the boundaries of the *local*, correlates this very balance with the structure of the *global* economy. In this scheme, researchers, accounting for the migration phenomenon by referring to the world systems theory, claim that the traditional modes of production and social structure have been transformed in those places of the Third World where the investors from developed economies incorporate in order to obtain a low-cost labor force and raw materials. The capitalist, while increasing his profit, sets the right ground for the establishment of a transportation-communication network along which the flow of goods from the site of production toward the site of consumption will be supplied.

The socialization of this network takes place via cultural and ideological links consolidated by means of mass consumption (TV, advertisements, etc.) "In this scheme, the penetration of capitalist economic relations into peripheral, non-capitalist societies creates a mobile population that is prone to migrate abroad," says Douglas Massey, one of the prominent scholars of the area.[161] This argument, by moving beyond the argument of wage and employment differentials between countries, relies on the structure of global economy when illuminating the reasons for

[161] Douglas S. Massey, Joaquin Arango, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellegrino, J. Edward Taylor, "Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal," *Population and Development Review* 19, no. 3 (Sep., 1993), pp. 445.

international migration and delineates a world economy within which the concept of "place" has lost its prior prominence due to the increase in economic liberalization.

It is not possible to ascribe such an agency to any of the transnational networks established by the mediation of multinational corporations when, among many aspects of the post-Soviet migration, the one canalizing Turkey is in question. However, it is likely to be the case when it concerns the commercial activities, in other words, the links established within the borders of the free market, in the process of *immigrantization* of those coming from the countries of the FSU, as well as Armenia. The implied activities are nothing other than the "shuttle trade" and the Laleli market. To rephrase it more clearly, the neighborhood of Laleli, "the center of shuttle trade between Turkey and the countries of Eastern Europe during the 1990s and guesthouse for thousands of people coming from countries like Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Azerbaijan, etc., for the purpose of trade" had turned into an interface for the human flow from an FSU country (here Armenia) to Turkey. Actually, to focus on a specific "place" –as we do here- calls for the re-capturing of "place dependency", contrary to the above-mentioned tendencies of the literature on globalization.[162] From this point of view, to take a further look at the period between 1990-2000,

[162] In this point, referring to Saskia Sassen, who by using her concept of the "global city" accounted for the key roles played by big cities in the reorganization of world economy, will yet bring about a structural problem. Accordingly the concept of "global city" –inherent in the world systems theory- signifies metropoles where "some of the global economy's key functions and resources concentrate, which in turn produce a sharp growth in the demand for highly paid professionals as well as a demand for low-paid service workers." Saskia Sassen, "Global Cities and Survival Circuits." In *Global Dimensions of Gender and Carework*, pp. 30. Low-paid women and immigrants are the providers of this demand. However, the author of an elaborate research on Laleli, Deniz Yükseker, argues that the main component of Sassen's global city is the presence of multinational corporations (capital). But in the case of former Soviet citizens maintaining trade activities in Laleli, a different process is in question: "the shuttle trade which presents a transnational economic dynamic albeit its agents are neither multinational firms nor capitalists." For the sake of being exempt from the restrictive framework imposed by the concepts of globalization when discussing this latter case, Yükseker chose a different conceptual scheme: that of Fernand Braudel, who analyses the world economy as a layered unit (in his work on the economic life of Europe between fifteenth and eighteenth centuries): "It is convenient to conceive of the world economy as a whole consisting of several layers, each of them both in a hierarchical relationship with each other and also conveyer of its own transnational dynamics."

those "transition years" that opened the doors of Turkey to Armenia and enabled the people of the two countries to meet after many years, will permit us to comprehend the meaning of being in the Laleli district of Istanbul, how the networks established here had transformed from the aspect of citizens of Armenia and the way they relate to immigrancy.

First Encounter of the Armenians of Armenia with Turkey

> Indeed, my *mama*[163] has been in Istanbul since 1999. My business there wasn't good anymore, so I came here. The day I arrived *mama* couldn't come, she was working – a friend of hers came to the bus station to welcome me. She's transporting goods between here and there, she has been working so many years and she knows who is where… How would I know that this city is such a place? Shops are everywhere, everywhere full with jewelry stores! The friend said she knew an Armenian guy, so she took me to his shop. The guy said, "Wait there." We sat down in a corner. He called somebody by us. "There is an Armenian hammerer looking for a job," he said on the phone. It was a summer day, very hot… Moreover, the shop was small, and I knew nobody. A moment later a man just stood upon me. Holding his eye glasses, their handle in his mouth, a red foulard around his neck… He measured me with his eye. They said, "He's the patron (boss)." Already he looked like an Italian mobster; moreover, they said he was the patron, so I was dumbfounded, scared! You know, in Russian "patron" means "bullet." Whatsoever, *akhperjan*[164] showed me a ring and asked: "Can you fix it?" I said I could. "Begin here a week later," he said. Since I have been here…[165]

Whatever the reasons lying behind the initiation of migration, it is not possible to assess accurately this mobility without describing its perpetuation, that is, providing a description of specific networks enabling the stay in the destination country and new migrations to come. The above-mentioned anecdote, which took

[163] Mother in daily language (in Arm.).

[164] *Akhperjan* is an expression frequently used by the Armenians of Armenia, meaning "brother."

[165] Ara, 35, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

place in 2003 at the Grand Bazaar situated in Beyazıt, the eastern extension of the Laleli district, displays a different aspect of the migration between Turkey and Armenia. This aspect, different from the central one in which the women have been described as the primary actors, represents a scene taken within the boundaries of the waged labor market, where the distinguished figures are males. It seems that the two leading actors are on the stage: Ara from Gumri, 36 years old, married, father of three children, professional jewelry artisan who has worked in the jewelry sector for thirty years, one of the oldest *varbed* [Arm.: master craftsman], and Istanbul Armenian Yetvart. Within this picture, the keeper of the shop where they met, the friend who welcomed Ara in the terminal, and Ara's mother who couldn't get her day off, remain in the background. Yet from a broader perspective, the reality is just the opposite: the ones in the background are actually located on the very nodes of the social networks that enable such an anecdote. If we are up to start the story from the mediator friend:

At the beginning of the 1990s, a flow of exchanges across borders began between the province of Kars and the residents of the young Independent Republic of Armenia. The railroad station of Doğukapı-Akhuryan,[166] running from the Akyaka village of Kars to Gumri, the second-largest city in Armenia, by passing over the river Akhuryan (Arpaçay in Turkish), then from there onwards to the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, was the main gateway through which the contact between Turkey and Armenia took place. Indeed, this was the case during the Soviet era, too, since the Kars-Gumri-Tbilisi railway line was the only rail link between Turkey and Armenia, as well as with the USSR. The daily railway connection permitted

[166] One of the two border gates between Turkey and Armenia. It is also called Akyaka Demiryolu Sınır Kapısı. Doğukapı, meaning East Door, is the name of the gate commonly used by the villagers of the Turkish side. The other is Alican Sınır Karakolu or Alican-Margara, taking its name from the villages located respectively on the Armenian and Turkish sides of the Turkish-Armenian border gate in Armavir province and Iğdır.

Armenian traders to arrive easily in Kars in order to sell foodstuffs in exchange for their needs.

> When they opened the Kars border gate in the 1990s, we were all finished. We were working for the government, but the government couldn't pay us. Maybe I could have worked, yet my wage would have been 10 or 20 dollars. So, before they closed the Kars gate, my brother and I started doing trade. First, we handled small business like oil and rice, requiring a few hundred dollars as capital. Then I enlarged the trade. We are working with trucks now.[167]

This trade activity, albeit small in scale, became more of an issue for the residents of the Armenian towns near Turkish border when the conflict with Azerbaijan got worse. During this period, from 1992 to 1994, Armenia survived more or less on humanitarian assistance, especially for food and fuel; the population suffered shortages of even the most basic needs for survival (like wheat or fuel oil). Considering the limited structure of this trade in terms of the ethnic diversity of its operators, restricted to a limited time and conditions, a relatively local type of commodity flow was in question. On the other hand, a much more "global" type of trade, namely the "shuttle trade" was in progress along the coast of the Black Sea after the opening of the first border gate with the former Soviet countries, the Sarp/Sarpi border with Georgia in 1988, and the gradual elimination of travel barriers for the citizens of these countries. The first bus services between Turkey and the former Soviet Union countries started to operate through this gate in 1989, toward Batum, the other end of the border. Beginning in April 1991, all Soviet citizens were allowed to take part in this international trade.[168]

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[167] Datevig, 55, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

[168] Caroline Humphrey, *The Unmaking of Soviet Life: Everyday Economies after Socialism* (Ithaca: Cornell Paperbacks, 2002), pp. 73.

> Indeed, at first I came with my father to Istanbul in 1992. I had arrived through Moscow with a 3-month visa. We stayed for a month. My uncles lived in Istanbul; we lodged with them. They said "stay longer," because to extend the visa the only thing they had to do was to pay 10 dollars at the Russian consulate.[169]

In the case of Armenia, the merchants and the private entrepreneurs became the major mediators in the absence of diplomatic relations between the two countries since both gates were sealed for political reasons in April 1993.[170] The exchanges and the contacts between Turkey and Armenia were executed via different means. Due to the closure of the Kars–Gumri section of the railroad line, the Artvin-Batum-Tbilisi direction became the main land route between the two countries, both for tourists and for those who wanted to engage in trade.[171]

The highway transportation service between Turkey and Yerevan started to be taken up by Turkish companies beginning at this time (in 1993), through the agency of those travel agencies which were already organizing trips from the Black Sea to Georgia. It was not possible for companies of Armenian origin to operate in this sector as long as the buses registered in Armenia were not allowed to enter Turkish territory anymore, based on the Turkish government declaration of 1993. In addition, it was a quite problematic period due to the arbitrary violence and bribery

[169] Datevig, 55, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

[170] Governmental declaration dating 3 April 1993: "Due to the Armenian attacks and the continuation of the occupation, our government has decided to suspend the wheat delivery to Armenia and to terminate all the facilities granted for the routing of aid through our territory."

[171] The Sarp border gate, located in the village of Sarp in Artvin, is the most well-traveled road between Turkey and two countries of Transcaucasia, namely Georgia and Armenia. The opening of this gate was followed by that of a second crossing between Turkey and Georgia, in 1994, at Türkgözü, the village located in town of Posof in Ardahan. This gate is mainly used by Georgians and Armenians: the share of Georgians and Armenians were 59% and 8%, respectively, between 1999 and 2008.

practiced by Georgian officers against the buses going to Armenia.[172] For the Armenian shuttle traders, as was the case for the citizens of other FSU countries as well, economically active cities of the Turkish Black Sea coast, namely, Trabzon, Samsun, Ordu and Sinop, were the major destination points of this period. As stated above, foodstuffs were the main trade item, particularly in the course of the Naghorno-Karabagh conflict, ranging from staple food products such as oil and rice to secondary consumable items like chewing gum. Textile products were another alternative, carpets in particular. The dynamism of the Armenian *arevdur*[173] attracted not only the Turkish bus drivers and owners of travel agencies, but also small business entrepreneurs, thus resulting in the involvement of the Turkish entrepreneurs of the Black Sea region, more specifically from the port of Trabzon, into the shuttle trade market of Armenia. The shuttle-tradesman of the open-air markets[174] were mainly Turkish wholesalers working in the import-export sector. Most of them were from the transport and logistics sector, possessed a transport company in Turkey, and were *Karadenizli*.[175] They exported to Armenia various products, especially raw materials, fruits, vegetables and consumer goods.[176]

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[172] "I counted as many as 36 bullet holes in my bus. I even witnessed moments when people were forced to get off the bus at gunpoint and everything inside was carried away," says Mehmet Dilber, the owner of the first travel agency organizing bus services to Armenia.

[173] "Shopping" (*alışveriş*) in Armenian; Armenian shuttle traders describe their activities with this word.

[174] One the first of these markets was the "Malatya Pazarı', situated at a few kilometers from the center of Yerevan.

[175] In Turkish, it means from the Black Sea (*Karadeniz*) region. For example, Mehmet Dilber and Kerim, owners of the first Turkish buses going to Armenia, are both from the same village in Rize.

[176] "Türk Firmalarının Reklamı," *Agos*, 21 Haziran 1996; "Ermenistan'da Türk Firmaları," *Agos*, 20 Haziran 1997; "Ticaret Engel Tanımıyor," *Agos*, 6 Şubat 1998; Burcu Gültekin, "The Stakes

In a very short time, the coast of the Black Sea relinquished its place to Istanbul, in particular the Laleli district, both for Russian and Armenian traders. The prices of merchandise were much more profitable in Istanbul due to the elimination of transportation costs from the centers of production to the recipient cities. Most of the time, the duration of travel was no longer than one week, and the places of accommodation were hotels located in the neighborhoods of Aksaray and Laleli. The foremost accommodation places were found in the Kumkapı district[177] particularly for Armenian traders, due to the presence of the first travel agency's office organizing services between Istanbul-Yerevan, in Gedikpaşa, in Azak Yokuşu, an old town situated on the north extension of Kumkapı. Between 1994 and 1996, Karadeniz Tour (currently named Mahmudoğlu) was the sole travel agency in this district, quite advantageous and profitable due to its proximity to places where the traders were doing business, Laleli, Beyazıt, and the Grand Bazaar.[178] The arrival of a second travel company, Anayol (current name, Öz Aybaki) in the same district in 1996, and the involvement of two other companies, AST and Buse on the same route, Istanbul-Yerevan, were the consequence of the increase in the number of roundtrips.[179]

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of the Opening of Turkish-Armenia Border: The Cross-Border Contacts Between Armenia and Turkey" (Centro Argentino de Estudios Internacionales, 2005).

[177] Aksaray, Laleli, and Beyazıt are three adjacent neighborhoods located on the historical peninsula of Istanbul, whereas Kumkapı forms the lower-northern limit of these three towns with the Sea of Marmara.

[178] "We were saving them from driving their trolleys full of merchandise far until Aksaray. Down the ramp, they reached our place in no time," says Mehmet Dilber, the owner of Karadeniz (Mahmudoğlu) Travel Agency.

179 Bus travel was the leading way of going to the Transcaucasian countries, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, until 2000. For the case of Armenia, nearly 90% of the total entry to Turkey had been realized via surface travel, particularly through the border gate of Sarp. Although the opening of an air corridor between Turkey and Armenia in 1995 and direct flights operated by the

Currently, there are eight travel agencies organizing travel to Armenia once a week (usually on Wednesdays), all clustered at the Emniyet Bus Terminal, or Emniyet *Garajı* as is called frequently, in Aksaray. The tens of travel and cargo firms scattered around Laleli, Aksaray, and Beyazıt, which were shuttle trade centers until the late 1990s, have come together since then in this one bus station at the rear side of Aksaray. Before the Fatih municipality made the relevant regularization, travel buses were able to penetrate even into the alleys of the neighborhoods where their agencies were present. Even the loads, that is, the cargo of the passengers, who mostly consisted of shuttle merchants, had been carried not with the shipment firms' long trucks as it is being done today, but with trailers affixed to the travel buses. Accordingly, on the grounds that the bus entries caused heavy traffic within the city, the travel firms that carry passengers coming from these countries were gathered in the same bus stations. For example, the Emniyet *Garajı* only harbors the travel (and cargo) firms that carry passengers to Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. The station from which the buses depart to the former Yugoslavian states, Macedonia and Rumania, and a different one from which the buses depart to the Baltic countries, are also around the Aksaray neighborhood. Considering that the passengers of these buses are still mostly shuttle merchants, the bus stations are convenient for them, since they are close to the stores and business centers where trade is conducted, and there are hotels good for several days' lodging.[180]

Although Armenian Airlines Company between Istanbul-Yerevan and Trabzon-Yerevan appeared as a much more practical way of travel, the relatively lower prices offered by land travel agencies was more attractive for the citizens of these countries, the majority of whom were involved in the shuttle trade or staying permanently for work, with a very low capital in hand.

[180] Here the police patrol ceaselessly; it is even impossible to take photos or any kind of recordings without obtaining special permission. Thus it may be speculated that by packing all the firms into a unique garage, the casual inspections and strict control by official authorities had become more likely and feasible than in the previous setting. Those working here in the offices of travel

Today, the actual passengers of the bus firms that travel between Armenia and Turkey once or twice a week are ones that come to Istanbul mostly for shopping. It is easy to see that many of them have aged during these trips which have continued since the first years of the shuttle trade, that is, since the early 1990s, because there are a number of *traders* who are older than 50. Datevig's stay is similar to that of Ara, whose mother's friend him at the station. She first came to Istanbul during that period when the traffic between the two countries had increased:

> At that time, people were barely coming from Armenia. Anyway, we were well off…We were arranging one-week trips to shop, staying in hotels and going back. Not only to Istanbul, but also to Rize, Trabzon, Samsun… Then we went bust in a night! Why? I wish it had happened because of fraud. Six million ruble we had – equal to 60,000 dollars – melted just in a night, because they enforced a law to devalue the ruble to half. I had cashed three million ruble in Istanbul; so much money got wasted…We all were left dumbstruck.[181]

The numbers of those traveling from Armenia to Turkey, namely the size of the shuttle trade between the two countries, has not reached that of other former Soviet Union countries, either in the 1990s or after. For example, currently as many as ten buses depart daily from Istanbul to Georgia. The majority of the passengers are women and they come only briefly for the shuttle trade. Studies that deal with labor migration in Armenia do not take into account these people who make short-term visits to Turkey only for trade. Although there is no precise statistical data, the significance of this activity for Armenia, which is a small and low-populated country, can be understood from a statement in a recent report by the International Labor Organization (ILO) on migration and Armenia: "The map of labor migration

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agencies say that passport controls carried out by police are the exception, and the sole control they provide is with respect to public security.

[181] Datevig , 55, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

would look different if the *chelnok*s[182] were included: e.g., the proportion of migrants to Turkey and Iran in the overall migrant population would definitely be significant".[183] On the other hand, the economic implications of the shuttle trade for Armenia would not consist solely of changes that resulted in macro indicators of the economy, as will be seen below. In the last instance, it would open the doors to a new world for those who suffered losses for various reasons,[184] as it did for Datevig.

A Family of Immigrants

> It was a building full of *Hayasdanlı*[185] in its entirety. Then the owner told us that he would build a hotel and remove us… Actually rents also began to increase. Then we came to Kumkapı. If a room today is three hundred liras, at that time it was fifty liras in Kumkapı…[186]

The building that Ara's mother mentioned above was an apartment near the Emniyet Bus Terminal in Aksaray, another neighborhood that was appealing for its affordable prices, before Kumkapı had become the only alternative for the Armenian immigrants. Aksaray, for many Armenian women, was perhaps more "familiar" than Kumkapı. Consequently, this neighborhood has become a junction of the shuttle trade between Armenia and Turkey coupled with the migrant workers in Istanbul.

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[182] Russian word designating 'shuttle trader' or 'circular migrant.'

[183] *Migration and Development: Armenia Country Study*, Moscow: ILO, 2009; pp. 8.

[184] There may lie many reasons behind the financial losses of the shuttle traders, yet I didn't conduct any systematic research (from written or oral sources) on this issue. However, the effects of the financial crisis of 1998 and the resulting increases in governmental controls and taxation may be cited as a major landmark in the scale-down of these activities.

[185] Armenian from Armenia (Arm.)

[186] Anahit, 62, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

Today, the number of early Armenian migrants living in Istanbul who had previously dealt with shuttle trade is not small. The connections these people had built with the local inhabitants and spaces of the city in the period when they were trading made it possible to transform those visits of a few days spent in the hotels around Aksaray into long-term stays.

Still, Aksaray has never been a migrant town; but it is not possible to say the same for Kumkapı. The streets are full of two-story wooden buildings reflecting the predominant housing architecture of the city before the 1980s, the owners of which are mostly Armenians, Assyrians or Kurds, namely the *old* migrants of Istanbul. The *new* tenants of these houses (which have never undergone any renovation and repair in the last few decades) are the migrants coming from the former Soviet countries, namely the *new* migrants. Thus the street walls have been full of hand-made fliers advertising, "Room for rent for foreigner" or "Private room for family" since the end of the 1990s, more than ten years. However, the rents of these houses transferred from one group of migrants to the other are now higher than those in many other neighborhoods of Istanbul. For this reason, as well as for the sake of saving as much money as possible, the migrants choose to live in these "communal-life houses" during their stay in Istanbul. The rooms mentioned in the fliers may be a flat, in a one-room squatter, or within the *han*s,[187] converted from old artisan workshops. Since the migrant women generally work as "live-ins," the rooms may be opened easily to the use of other friends or relatives "waiting for work" or on their "day off" during their absence. These webs, which resemble a different and special version of 'family unit' -defined as a strategic unit making the adaptation of the migrant to the

[187] Traditional buildings divided into small rooms and workshops where the shopkeepers, artisans and manufacturers are gathered; they are generally located in big cities and trade centers; many of them are either inactive or have been put to different uses.

country s/he comes to possible- derived from non-biological ties, "once they exist, reduce the [social, economic and emotional] risks and costs of movement."[188]

The process is similar in the case of finding employment as it is in finding accommodation. The newly arriving women are either coming to be employed at an already-waiting job (which is not so frequent), or are applying to the source of the news delivered mouth to mouth by tens of their fellow woman friends nearby: 'You hear? They are looking for someone!' The time spent until they find employment and earn money passes by waiting in the houses of their fellow women who have rented houses together with other women they know. In this "gendered" chain where the women call women, the women provide accommodation for women and women find employment for women, the rings are sometimes connected by coincidences or via acquaintances. In this context, the Armenian women's arrival in Turkey is generally made possible upon the call of their relatives, neighbors or friends who came earlier, settled and found jobs; a migration pattern in strict accordance with the framework described by Douglas Massey as below:

> Family members, friends and fellow townspeople are linked to one another through networks of interlocking *reciprocal obligations*. In moving between sending and receiving societies, migrants draw upon these obligations to obtain food, lodging and employment, and to facilitate adjustment. In return, they are expected to aid others when they arrive in need of assistance.[189]

This argument, "the network theory," emphasizing the continuity of migration rather than its source, once more points to a period in which the focus is the cost-benefit balance. Thus the first problem the migrant has to cope with, or the first cost (material or spiritual), namely accommodation (and then finding employment) s/he

[188] Massey et al., 1993, pp. 449.

[189] Douglas S. Massey, 1987, "The Ethnosurvey in Theory and Practice," pp. 1500.

has to assume in a foreign city, is resolved by staying in a reserved corner of a room in the houses where their relatives stay. At this point, one has to ask what keeps the links of this chain together, or in Massey's expression, what sort of *reciprocal obligations* keep them intact where the basic necessities like "food," "lodging" and "employment" are provided by the migrants who have come before. A concept integrating the social and normative explanations made by social scientists regarding the foundation of social action and the rational, target-and-utility-oriented explanations of the economists may provide an answer to this question: social capital.[190]

In an article in 1988 in which he gives the definition of "social capital," James S. Coleman cites the "wholesale diamond market" in New York where the Jews are concentrated. The fact that the actors of this market are Jews resulted in the conversion of the familial, religious and communal ties between them into an insurance that is necessary to facilitate the transactions in the market: "The strength of these ties makes possible transactions in which trustworthiness is taken for granted and trade can occur with ease. In the absence of these ties, elaborate and expensive bonding and insurance devices would be necessary-or else the transactions could not take place."[191]

From the perspective of our subject, the example Coleman gives is rather interesting, since the Armenians of Istanbul, who form a significant component of

[190] As put by Alejandro Portes in his review article on social capital and its applications in sociology, "the first systematic contemporary analysis of social capital was produced by Pierre Bourdieu who defined the concept as 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition." (Alejandro Portes, "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24, (1998), pp. 3). However, I will make use of another account of the concept, that of James S. Coleman, due to practical reasons.

[191] James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *The American Journal of Sociology* 94, Supplement: Organizations and Institutions: Sociological and Economic Approaches to the Analysis of Social Structure (1988), pp. S99.

the narrative related to the Armenian migrants (as will be seen in the coming pages) correspond to a community where the intercommunal relations find their equivalence as a form of social capital in the economic realm. In addition, like Coleman's Jews in New York, it is a community which is concentrated around the jewelry market, and to a great extent in the Grand Bazaar and its vicinity. The focus of this study being the Armenians of Armenia rather than the Armenians of Istanbul, however, requires that their relations with this market be given in more detail.

Since he first arrived in Istanbul, Ara has lived in a han that was previously occupied by shoe manufacturers, located in the Gedikpaşa neighborhood, which is interwoven with steep streets connecting the quarter to Beyazıt and Çemberlitaş. It is one of the tens of hans in Gedikpaşa, which until ten years ago could have been described as a "center of shoe manufacturing"[192]; upon their forced relocation to the industrial site in İkitelli, this han became vacant. In the divided sections of at most 20-30 square meters closed by grey iron doors, there are no longer the workshops of small artisans, but the "houses" of the citizens of new Third World countries like Armenia, Romania or Turkmenistan. Ara shares the room with his mother, and unlike the sons, husbands or brothers in other Armenian migrants' houses, he does not stay there as someone dependent on the woman of the house. The man's place within this structure, which by redesigning the social division of labor within the global economic system includes the migrants as well, is actually a position as a secondary actor, only coming through family reunification. The men coming to join their mothers, sisters or (even less frequently) spouses who have solved their accommodation and income problems, and correspond to a group that had work experience in Russia, and whose average age is much lower than that of the women.

[192] Berna-Güler Müftüoğlu, "Istanbul Gedikaşa'da Ayakkabı Üretiminin Değişen Yapısı ve Farklılaşan İşgücü," *Toplum ve Bilim* 86 (Güz 2000), pp. 118-138.

The men forming a mass limited in number but considerable in amount,[193] access 'the work' needed for their existence here through two networks developed independently of each other, but which have important common points: through the workshops of the Armenians (and Turks) of Istanbul in the *Çarşı*[194], and through a few shoe and textile workshops still in operation in the vacant hans of Gedikpaşa.

The jewel and shoe markets concentrated on the northern and southern margins of the Gedikpaşa-Çemberlitaş island respectively exhibit a small enterprise structure composed of various workshops of small and medium sizes manufacturing on façon basis, dependent on piece work, utilizing less developed technologies and operating on a labor-intensive basis. These sectors where the process of acquisition of technical ability of those employed was shaped within the traditional informal master-apprentice relationship, and therefore the cost-cutting processes were realized through the mechanism of apprentice/child labor, can obtain the cheap labor they need today from alternative avenues. "The children" of the textile and shoe sector "who are not acquired ability but employed as workers" and the "migrants" emerge at this point as the new actors on the scene. The "shoe worker works without a legal social assurance"[195]: This phenomenon, which Berna Güler Müftüoğlu describes as a situation where the employer is traditionally a person related to the worker, namely through family, village affinity or other similar kinds of ties, has today reached a higher level with the involvement of the already-undocumented migrant workers, so

[193] According to the research carried out by the Eurasia Partnership Foundation about Armenian migrants in Turkey (*Identifying the State of Armenian Migrants in Turkey*), the rate of males is 6%. They are certainly in the minority; however I am not sure about the accuracy of this statistic. Yet, I spent no effort to justify or suggest a more realistic value.

[194] This is the commonly used name for the Grand Bazaar (*Kapalı Çarşı* in Turkish).

[195] Berna Güler Müftüoğlu, pp. 132.

that its *de facto* transformation (namely its registration and documentation) have become almost impossible.

It is not wrong to say that the case is similar in the jewelry sector. The kinship tradition between the employer and worker actually is related to the concept of "ethnic enclave" (which will be analyzed in the next section). Armenian apprentices working under the Armenian shoe masters or the Armenian jewelry masters (from the early ages of their childhood) is an indicator of the ethnic solidarity where the ethnic ties show themselves as a component of the employer-employee relationship, as formulated by Alejandro Portes. This solidarity "serves to provide entrepreneurs with privileged access to immigrant labor and to legitimize paternalistic work arrangements."[196] However, in actual conditions where both the mentioned master-apprentice relations and the ethnic solidarity begin to dissolve, it will be a more accurate determination to explain the uninsured work with the chronic existence of a mass who would accept working without social benefits rather than explaining it with the legal status of the worker or by ethnic ties. In addition, the wages that the Armenian migrants working in the jewelry sector receive is not different from the wage the Turkish Republic citizens in the same position receive, either.

The relationship of this entire story about the concept of social capital reveals itself in how the migrants introduce themselves into these webs. The social capital which Coleman describes as a dynamic whole that is shaped in accordance with the conditions, is "a resource for persons inherent in the structure of relations between actors and among actors." Whether in the example of the friend finding a job for Ara, or in the case of women providing a place to stay or to work for each other, the people are connected with common values and aims. In the current situation, which

[196] Portes, 1981, p. 291.

includes being able to exist in Turkey as an Armenian immigrant, Coleman's social capital corresponds to the "information" on the very job that will make income generation possible.

> An important form of social capital is the potential for information that inheres in social relations. Information is important in providing a basis for action. But acquisition of information is costly. At a minimum, it requires attention, which is always in scarce supply. One means by which information can be acquired is by use of social relations that are maintained for other purposes.[197]

At this point, if we turn back to the "family unit" analogy defined as a source of social capital, the benefit the family provides for the integration of migrants arises from the "unpaid labor" that it supplies, which in turn supports the migrants' self-employment, which provides the financial sources that they need for economic progress and the acquisition of human capital (education, language, etc.): "Cooperation within the family stems not simply from self-interest, but from a moral order in which the accumulation of obligations among members builds a degree of solidarity best described as "household communism."[198]

On the basis of the mutual interdependence (here it is more appropriate to use the word "obligation") and expectations between the members of this solidarity unit lay "the past performance of routine tasks and duties encompassing sexual, child-rearing, and productive activities."[199] When it is thought that the Armenian immigrants are (now) mostly composed of single women and that the (adult) children (and their children) are left back at home, the solidarity unit they have established

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[197] Coleman, pp. S104.

[198] Jimy M. Sender and Victor Nee, "Immigrant Self-Employment: The Family as Social Capital and the Value of Human Capital," *American Sociological Review* 61, no. 2 (April 1996), pp. 231.

[199] *Ibid*., p. 231.

with the other immigrant women is a new type of familial unit rising upon their divided families. It cannot be denied that the communal life, in other words the web of migration, decreases the financial cost of migration and in this sense is related to a certain self-interest. But when it is taken into consideration that the existence of the Armenians in Kumkapı is spread over the years, it will not be difficult to think that their life is already out of the axis of the accommodation-security-work trio.[200] That is why what forces Ara's mother Anahit, a woman of 65, to live in a han on the alleys of Gedikpaşa, in a compound on whose never-closing door there is a big iron plate with the door number, is not only the affordable rent, but also its proximity to the sources who can inform her about new job opportunities when she is unemployed. What, then, will those people who don't possess this much do?

Mediators and Agents

> I got out of the bus. It was getting dark. I knew nobody. I raised my hands up and said, "[201]*Asduadz imin, as kişer ur bidi mınam*?"[202]

This is how Emma remembers her first trip to Istanbul eight years ago (then she was 45 years old) when she told her mother-in-law and her daughter that she was going to Moscow to work for a period of six months, got on the bus and found herself in the Emniyet Bus Terminal in Aksaray. She was not the only Armenian getting off the bus making its routine weekly trip between Yerevan and Istanbul, but

[200] At this point which implies the expansion of needs toward the moral realm, I prefer to replace the words by photos taken during our visits to Kumkapı. [See Appendix B].

[201] My God! Where am I going to stay this night? (Arm.)

[202] Emma, 53, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

probably it was only she who was “so alone” that she did not even know where to stay that night, because Emma’s case was an exception when compared with those coming from Armenia through a web of solidarity under the conditions as described above. Again, in such a situation, even for someone like her without any protection, it was not at all likely that she would face a tragedy on that first night spent in a foreign city, since it was not impossible to meet people who would provide her the answer to where she would stay and who were even ready to do more for her: the Armenian hostess of the bus she rode, the other passengers who had come for shopping or to work like she had, or, as in the case of Emma, the Turkish driver of the bus who can speak Armenian, in short, the ‘mediators’ of migration.

The existence of these mediators who may be ready to help an Armenian coming to Turkey without any connection in which she may have trust corresponds to the concept of “material links” which ease the flow of commodities and information as well as the *people,* as stated in the world system theory. This mediation can sometimes be realized in an indirect way; namely, it may be limited to the “transfer of information” about “where one stays,” or “to whom to apply,” etc.

For example, the bus that the Armenian immigrant got on may have belonged to Larissa, who is the owner of one of the companies which arranges the tours of Yerevan-Istanbul from the Emniyet Bus Terminal. This young woman from Yerevan was a hostess at the end of the 1990s in another travel agency arranging tours to Armenia through Georgia. During that period she married an Armenian from Turkey and benefited from the relevant article of the Law of Citizenship (TVK) valid until 2000 and became a Turkish citizen (see previous chapter for legal details). This job is a legacy from her mother, who was a hostess as well; and actually the driver of the

company is the husband of her mother, *Armenian* Ahmet –a Turkish man- who has been driving on these roads for years:

> We are always listening to complaints and problems. From those who cannot return to their homes for years to those who just came but did not even know where to go. If there is such a person we say that there are houses in Kumkapı and send them. At the most we can take them to a hotel so that they won't be sleeping on the street. We do not want to do more.[203]

But unlike Larissa, sometimes there are others who do more than this, like the owner of Öz Aybaki Tour mentioned in the previous section. When you look at the business card of Kerim, the owner of the company, you see two more names besides his: Olga and Anna. The first one is the name of his Armenian wife, whom he met and married in the first years after he began to work as a driver; and the second one is the name of the daughter of his wife from her first husband. His wife manages the Armenian branch of the company registered under her name; her daughter directs the office in Kumkapı. "There are those who come for shopping, and there are those coming for work… They have found an easy solution for everything, but still we are of help to them when needed," says Kerim, and he safely leaves Emma that night with Ara's mother Anahit, who also came as a migrant earlier, so that Emma will not stay on the streets that night.

The above-mentioned examples relate to a network composed of the travel companies, newcomers and the earlier migrants. The driving force of such migration networks, or the engines of migration, once more lies in the concept of "reciprocal obligations," as stated by Massey. It would be inadequate to limit the "obligation" implied here to the expectation of people who will probably meet each other again in the long-run and who will provide material gains to each other, remembering the previous helping relationships. Again, explaining the help of Kerim, who also has an

[203] Datevig, 37, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

office in Kumkapı besides the one in the Emniyet Bus Terminal, or the help of Larissa to a newcomer as an "act of charity" would be failing to problematize a fact containing a certain consistency.

Disturbing the relationship of trust, namely not being of help to Emma, perhaps may not lead to a concrete loss for Kerim, but his making the contact possible with Anahit will definitely make it possible for the women sending money, clothing, and even food to their relatives (or ordering things) to approach him with more trust.[204] Not to do this for Anahit, who benefited from similar help at different times and levels, or for Datevig or for someone else who is providing accommodation and/or work, would mean to take the risk of being excluded and isolated from a community that has come together around this aim, and therefore to be left out of this information network. Namely, refusing to be within the web of solidarity which Massey defined as "reciprocal obligations" would mean to directly lose this social capital.

When viewed from this perspective, it will be seen that the (informal) webs providing assurances in basic areas such as work and accommodation for the migrants in Kumkapı are formed neither only through kinship relations nor fellowship. What unites the migrants in the broadest sense is their coming to Kumkapı, maybe somewhat being an Armenian, in short, their *migration*. Thus, this unification is converted into a mechanism that increases the trend of migration at the macro level, and at the micro and the individual level it becomes a privilege that everybody wishes to possess but cannot have at anytime s/he needs/wishes. The

[204] Kerim sends two buses per week; one is full of food and the other clothes (and other items) sent from Istanbul to Armenia. Financial support of a few hundred dollars per month sent home by migrant women is delivered via these buses as well. First the total amount is recorded in a notebook personally by Kerim, then it is submitted to the person waiting for the bus at the destination point -whose name is already given by the migrant. The cost of this transfer is only a few dollars for the migrants, which makes it the major means of remittance transfer.

consequence is the emergence of people who turn the loneliness of those "newly arriving migrants" into a possibility to make profits by "providing them (temporary) accommodation and work opportunities": namely the agents (commissioners).

At this point, I must begin by saying that there is a distinction between the mediators and the agents and that neither the former nor the latter are very numerous. Different from the *voluntary* mediation among the women,[205] 'agency' designates an organized economic activity whose cost and service boundaries are well-defined. Agency denotes those casual individuals who find (domestic) workers for the employers looking for servants, caretakers or nurses and while engaging in this activity, generally apply to an influential migrant, or rather to the dealer behind. This person may be a local person whose social environment is wide and knows many people,[206] or who may be someone acting as a mediator and a frequent shopper in the Laleli-Beyazıt market and from the shop owners,[207] or, as is frequently the case, an Armenian hostess in one of the travel companies. In short, this person can be someone who is positioned between the realm of the migrants and that of local persons as two distinct points. The agent, on the other hand, is someone who is categorically on the side of the migrants, who holds the main gate opening to the mediation and thus is the "gatekeeper" of the migrant workers.

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[205] Indeed, during the first years of migration, it is said that migrants were asking a commission in return of their support for finding jobs to newcomers. Currently this is not the case, both for material and moral reasons.

[206] The wife of a physician working in an Armenian hospital at Yedikule is a relevant and stunning example. In an environment such as a hospital where the number of people ill and in need of nursing never ends, the act of setting about such a mediation seems to fit accurately the description of economists about the rational, locked-on individual in the pursuit of self-interest.

[207] Armenians working in and around the Grand Bazaar compose a major part of shopkeepers of this neighborhood. The first station of the Armenian migrants was generally the houses of these local Armenians. Therefore, to have a relationship with these people will signify for Armenian migrants (or traders) the chance to meet someone in search of a servant, nurse or nanny in the long-term.

> Turkish or Armenian…. Anyone who has some business with Armenians from Armenia knows me. Maybe I have served more than 2000 women![208]

At the moment, the only person that would come to mind when mentioned as an agent is that Fat Woman of Kumkapı.[209] She is known by all the men and women and the shopkeepers there. The story of Hayganuş, who had been to various cities in the Black Sea area and then in Istanbul in the first half of the 1990s when she was engaged in shuttle trading, staying in the hotels near Kumkapı and Laleli during these short visits, and then, when the business deteriorated, coming for work on permanent basis is not different from the stories told by others[210]:

> We, four women, decided to come with enough money in our pockets for a few days. Actually we all followed another woman who had a friend in Istanbul. But the woman did not even recognize us… We immediately rented a place in Kumkapı. We had a total of 2 million in our pockets, and began to wander around. I do not remember well, but maybe it was the day after we arrived, that we sat in one of the tea houses on the shore. The servant asked, 'Would you like to have tea?' We said yes, thinking that it was free of charge! So we had to pay all the money for the tea! Then we met a person we knew from Yerevan. I swear that that person saved us…[211]

The woman from Yerevan had saved her and her friends; because a relative of the woman for whom she was working (and then later, acquaintances of that relative) were looking for a 'caretaker' too. In other words, the 'information network' shared among the migrants made it possible for the women to cope with the first days with

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[208] Hayganuş, 57, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

[209] Hayganuş is called by this name among the shopkeepers of Kumkapı as she is "an overweight woman."

[210] I have to mention that the previous commissioner before Hayganuş was a male; he died a few years ago from a heart attack. He was dealing in the shuttle trade as well.

[211] Hayganuş, 57, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

the minimum material and spiritual damage (due to waiting in uncertainty). Today what Hayganuş does is nothing more than selling the migrants this 'information'.

> I am doing favor to people. They are coming here. I am meeting their food and other needs. I am providing them accommodation, I am finding jobs. What else can I do![212]

In the apartment flat that Hayganuş rents in Kumkapı, there are always at least 15-20 women. With each bus coming from Armenia, new ones 'who have first come to Istanbul that day' are added to them. The women who have decided to come to Istanbul to work, but who do not know where to stay, directly come to her house through the travel companies' hostesses that have agreements with Hayganuş. Till she receives a new phone call for an employer who is willing to employ a new caretaker candidate, she deals with providing the newcomers with food, accommodation and, most importantly, security.[213] Of course, this relationship in which women introduce themselves in return for a given cost, namely a good amount of money, is preferred by women of diverse socio-demographic profiles, but particularly by those who have not come to Istanbul before.

> Just think on it: Someone not speaking Turkish, knowing no one, is getting on a bus to come here; telling her needs and wishes to the hostess; the hostess knows the people who find the jobs, calls Istanbul, and says "*Megı egav, tsezi ğrgum em*[214]"; the newcomer is welcomed, is sent to Hayganuş's home. When she gets the job the commission is paid excessively. And of course if she continues to stay there, she shares and contributes to the expenditures of the house.[215]

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[212] Hayganuş, 57, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

[213] The term "safety" involves any mediation in terms of problems concerning the Foreigners Section or agency for the resolution of probable disagreements confronted in jobs found via the commissioner. There had been many cases in which the employer tried to seize the passport of the hired women or to refuse to pay her wage.

[214] "Someone has come; I'm sending (her) to you" (in Arm.).

The mediation of the hostesses once more requires us to consider the concept of "material link." According to the world system theory stating that globalization and investments cannot not be materialized without "the build-up of a transportation and communication infrastructure," goods and labor move in *opposite* directions throughout this communication and transportation web. We have mentioned that, during the years of Laleli when the Armenians were transported to Turkey, the travel companies played a role which was at least as determinative as the role played by the actors on the side of the mobile traders and the settled shopkeepers. After the 1990s, when those who could not continue this shuttle trade any more began to enter into this opposite trend stated above together with those who have never entered this trade, namely when goods flow into Armenia continued – even with different features and at different quantities-, and when those whose only capital is their 'labor' directed themselves to Turkey, it was only the travel companies which did not changed their position. Beyond the role of physical transfer, they have assumed the role of acting as a "material link" by enabling the migrant labor to realize itself by reaching the social capital it needed. This is sometimes an indirect connection, as in the case of Larissa or Kerim, and sometimes a direct connection, as in the case of Hayganuş's hostesses. But in any case, a considerable component of the phenomenon which started initially as "the movement of pioneers into a new locality" and later was transformed into an efficient network that facilitated the mobility of immigrants-to-be as well as their access to resources in destination country. With reference to Ivan Light et al., these networks "without increasing the supply of jobs or housing,

[215] Datevig, 55, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

only facilitate participants' access to that existing group."[216] This statement signalizes an important distinction in the realm of network that is present between demand side for employment and accommodation and its supply side. If the former is about the Armenians of Armenia, the latter is more or less about the Armenians of Istanbul. Thus, before concluding this chapter, the focus of which was the establishment of the migration networks, as well as the way its actors relate to each other, one more question remains to be answered. A similar kind of question was posed in the closing part of the previous chapter as well, concerning a missing link in the story whose lack is as determinative, "the man." In this narrative about the processes of the settlement, employment, and integration to daily life of migrants from Armenia, 'there is an important gap worth-mentioning: a kind of gap whose presence is as constitutive as that of the previous (man's)': the Armenians of Istanbul… Where are they?

[216] Ivan Light, Parminder Bhachu, and Stavros Karageorgis, "Migration Networks and Immigrant Entrepreneurship," in *Immigration and Entrepreneurship: Culture, Capital, and Ethnic Networks*, edited by Ivan Light and Parminder Bhachu (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1993), pp. 28.

CHAPTER V

KUMKAPI AT THE CROSSROADS OF MIGRATIONS

It has been almost ten years since the Armenian migrants began to settle in Istanbul. Within these ten years the social network that they have established with their own efforts has begun to function as a solidarity line and the daily lives began to be organized totally around these webs. Today one can still come across the "new-comers" who are able to find a place for themselves within these solidarity webs after getting off the weekly buses making trips between Istanbul and Armenia. Ten years ago the problems a newcomer had to cope with would begin the moment s/he got off the bus at the Emniyet Bus Terminal. But when not taking place within a status corresponding to the social norms or legal categories, the very effective method resorted to by the people, a reflex, turned into one of the most important survival mechanisms for the Armenian migrants: to get together. For them this is synonymous with being in Kumkapı.

As stated by Portes and Sensenbrenner, "the confrontation with the host society has created solidarity communities among immigrants both today and at the turn of the twentieth century."[217] When viewed from their perspective and from where they stand, "the reflex of staying together against a common problem" corresponds to the cases of Chinese or Italian neighborhoods in the US. This place-oriented togetherness that the researchers working on the sociology of migration frequently confront, is described (by the authors) to relate to the concept of "bounded solidarity" borrowed from Marx. [218] The solidarity described by Marx as the most

[217] Alejandro Portes and Julia Sensenbrenner, "Embeddedness and Immigration on the Social Determinants of Economic Action", in *The Sociology of Economic Life*, edited by Mark Granovetter and Richard Swedberg (Boulder CO: Western Press, 2001), pp. 118.

effective weapon of the working class converts the individual encounter of the worker with the capitalist in the market into a collective action. Thus quantity, namely being a part of a mass, and the "number" transforms into an advantage. The emergence of migrant neighborhoods, when viewed from this perspective, is a tool making their concentration possible, since it reaches a level which will convert the "number" factor into an advantage. Since being more numerous brings with it the possibility of being visible, and therefore 'the possibility of being recognized,' it may seem to be a conflicting situation from the perspective of the –undocumented-migrants. But, on the other hand, numerical majority is the only (collective) capital/resource which will increase the likelihood of finding the right social relations opening the possibility of finding avenues of accommodation, work and cultural reproduction on the part of the migrant. When the "inactivist policy of the state" stated in Chapter III is taken into consideration, it can be safely understood that the "big numbers" do not directly pose a political disadvantage in the prevalent political context.

Of course, such an instrumentalization is confined not only to the migrant groups or to the ethnic minorities within certain nation-state borders. It can be used by disadvantaged groups who fall into the position of minorities due to a certain feature within a wider spectrum such as exhibiting varieties of political views, value judgments or sexual preferences/feeling themselves under risk/having serious disadvantages in reaching social and economic resources. Thus it should be clear that both the emergence of gated towns in Istanbul and the current social structure of the Kumkapı neighborhood are nurtured from a similar reflex. The first question which is decisive here is the following: What is the relationship of the emergence of such

[218] Indeed, the authors define the bounded solidarity as one of the sources of social capital.

neighborhoods with the concrete economic activities of the migrants, except making social capital such as bounded solidarity possible to reach for everyone. The second question almost gives the clue to the answer of the former when approached from the specific situation of Kumkapı: Does the existence of the Armenian migrants here have anything to do with the fact that Kumkapı was an Armenian neighborhood until recent times? Or, put in another way, within these ten years that the Armenian migrants have become settled in Kumkapı, has any bounded solidarity developed between the migrants and the Armenians of Istanbul?

Kumkapı: An Old Enclave

> Armenians began to live in peace in a short time thanks to Fatih.[219] They began to go to the remote parts of Istanbul such as Beşiktaş, Ortaköy, Kuruçeşme and Üsküdar for recreation: with various reasons some of them stayed in these places and increased their number. Under these conditions it would not be possible for the Patriarchate to stay at Samatya. Upon the application made by the community, Patriarch Crimean Mardiros transferred the Patriarchate to Kumkapı where it is currently and has built the Main Church just across it.[220]

This narrative is a quotation from *Hişadagaran* [Yearbook] which was printed for to the 100th year anniversary of the Armenian school Boğosyan-Varvaryan in Kumkapı *Dışı*[221] which was closed down in 1981 due to lack of students. The actual existence of the Armenians in Kumkapı neighborhood goes back to the year 1453 when the Ottomans conquered Istanbul. To facilitate the repopulation of Istanbul, Armenians were one of the communities brought from

[219] Mehmed II, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire; known also as 'the Conqueror.'

[220] Bedros Garabedyan, *Hişadagaran Boğosyan-Varvaryan 1832-1932* (Istanbul, Galata: M. Hovagimyan, 1933), pp. 45.

[221] Outer-Kumkapı (in Turkish). Special term for designating the outer periphery of the neighborhood, settled between the housing zone and seashore.

Anatolia, and their religious center, the Patriarchate, was first built[222] on the Greek *ayazma* (holy spring) in Samatya,[223] and after two hundred years, in 1641, it was moved to Kumkapı.[224] From that time on, it stayed there. Hence the Samatya-Yenikapı (Langa)-Kumkapı axis is remembered as the neighborhoods where the Armenians formed the majority since the eighteenth century.[225] When we leave aside the period of 1960-80 and thereafter, when this concentration shifted to the neighborhoods of Şişli-Kurtuluş-Feriköy and Bakırköy-Yeşilköy, apart from the historical foundation of the Armenians of Istanbul being remembered with these neighborhoods, there is also an economic reason for it: the Grand Bazaar.

The residential concentration that began with the moving of the Patriarchate to its current location in the seventeenth century brought with it the opening of other Armenian churches,[226] Armenian schools[227] and workplaces, and the neighborhood

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[222] Kevork Pamukciyan, *İstanbul Yazıları* (Istanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2002), pp. 144.

[223] This monastery forms a part of a Byzantium monastery, Psamatia, according to İnciciyan. Due to the mouth of an aqueduct located below the monks' cells, non-Christians (i.e., Turks) used to call it *Sulu Manastır* (Moist Monastery). The church's name was changed to Surp Kevork after the move of the Armenian Patriarchate in 1461. P. Ğugas İnciciyan, *XVIII. Asırda İstanbul* (Istanbul: Istanbul Fetih Derneği, 1956).

[224] This removal is thought to have happened as a consequence of a great fire affecting the whole neighborhood of Samatya.

[225] P. Ğugas İnciciyan, *XVIII. Asırda İstanbul* (Istanbul: Istanbul Fetih Derneği, 1956), pp. 20.

[226] The central church of Armenian Patriarchate in *Istanbul*, Surp Asdvadzadzin, Kumkapı (1461), Surp Hovhannes, Gedikpaşa (1846), Surp Harutyun, Kumkapı Dışı (1855), and Armenian Protestant church in Gedikapaşa (1912).

227 The school of Boğosyan-Varvaryan (1832), the Central School of Bezciyan (1828), the Lusavoriçyan School for Girls (1840; joined later with Bezciyan) and the Gedikapaşa Surp Mesropyan (1880). According to statistics provided in the 1900 Almanac published by Surp Pırgiç Armenian Hospital, there were 40 Armenian schools in *Istanbul*, six of them sealed due to lack of students. The total number of students was 4923 in these 40 schools; on the other hand, those attending state schools or schools of foreigners was 1550. The number of students attending Boğosyan-Varvaryan in outer-Kumkapı, Surp Mesropyan in Gedikpaşa and Bezciyan-Lusavoriçyan in Kumkapı was respectively

acquired a strong character of "ethnic neighborhood" with time. This neighborhood actually included three quarters which represented a sort of spatial continuity: Kumkapı, composed of residential places, Gedikpaşa, as a corridor between private and public spheres (where after the 1950s shoe manufacturers and textile workshops were seen alongside the houses), and the Grand Bazaar and its vicinity, where the workplaces are concentrated. This continuity, which had its correspondence in the lives of the neighborhood residents as well, perhaps showed itself when the many jewelers, artisans or small businessmen in the Grand Bazaar and its vicinity returned to their homes in Kumkapı, which was "walking distance to the Bazaar," or in Gedikpaşa, just two streets away, or even on the "upper floors" of their shoemaker shops.

> In those times one other reason why the Armenians settled in Kumkapı and Gedikpaşa was that it was both close to the Patriarchate and the Grand Bazaar. Actually, in those times it was rather unlikely that people's workplaces were remote from their homes. Also, Istanbul's business centre was the Grand Bazaar. Everything was gathered there and in Mahmutpaşa. People would go there to buy a shirt, to buy food, or if it was a religious festival the Turkish families would go to Mahmutpaşa to purchase new clothing for their children. There were no business centers or bazaars in Nişantaşı, Taksim or Kadıköy. Almost everything was in the Grand Bazaar and in its vicinity before the 1950s…[228]

This embeddedness between the place worked, the place lived and the ethnic ties can be evaluated within the context of the concept of "ethnic economy." This hypothesis, developed by Wilson and Portes, specifically for the integration of Cuban migrants into the United States' economic life, provides an avenue of exit in social and economic respect for the migrants whose cultural and social capital was

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167, 249, and 585. The same data show that the highest number of students was found at the schools of Kumkapı, then at Eseyan in Pera (363), at Surp Haç in Üsküdar (355) and at Sahakyan-Nunyan in Samatya (341). Currently, among the schools of Kumkapı and Gedikpaşa, the only one still active is the Bezciyan High School.

[228] Sarkis Seropyan, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

sufficient only for low-waged employment in the secondary labor market, which does not require high professional skill and whose circularity is high.[229] Thus the migrants, "within large and highly differentiated enclaves, go about their work and leisure activities without having to know the language of their host society and without extensive interactions outside of their ethnic group."[230] The negative aspects that may be experienced by the different migrants groups in the United States in the course of their efforts of integration to the host society and to the labor market was thus bypassed. The skills indispensable to acquire but yet missing (in other words, the lack of background information conceptualized as human capital) -beginning with language learning- were one by one being removed as obstacles for them.

> The hypothesis simply state(d) that, for newly arrived immigrants, participation in a pre-existing ethnic economy can have positive economic consequences, including a greater opportunity for self-employment. This positive adaptation, in particular among immigrant entrepreneurs, creates the basis for a more successful integration of later generations into (American) society.[231]

It can be thought that the Armenians migrating to Istanbul from Anatolia (mainly from rural areas) would not have to cope with a structural obstacle such as language most of the time, but that their inadequacies with regard to their cultural background and professional abilities would be overcome by working near the small business owners and artisans who came to Istanbul earlier (or are even long-term

[229] The primary labor market, because it is characterized by stable work conditions, higher wages, scarce skill specifications, and internal labor markets that provide ladders of success within the firm, provides higher returns on human capital investments for workers. By contrast, the secondary labor market is typically characterized by high turnover rates, low-paying, low-skill jobs that lack structured opportunities for promotion within the firm; it generates low returns on human capital investments (Sanders and Nee, 1987).

[230] Jimy M. Sanders and Victor Nee, "Limits of Ethnic Solidarity in the Enclave Economy," *American Sociological Review* 52, no. 6 (Dec., 1987), pp. 746.

[231] Alejandro Portes and Leif Jensen, "What's An Ethnic Enclave? The Case For Conceptual Clarity (Comment on Sanders and Nee)," *American Sociological Review* 52, no. 6 (Dec., 1987), pp. 768.

Istanbul inhabitants). In this context it would be more appropriate so say that the relations the newcomers have established with Gedikpaşa and the Grand Bazaar (or rather, with the shopkeepers operating there) consisted more of "functional adaptations to the absence of opportunities in regular employment because of outside discrimination" than "an invented employment at the margins of the real economy." If we do not overemphasize the discrimination expressed here, and when we only take into consideration its impact reflected in the economic area, it will be adequate to limit it to the actual situation that required the non-Muslim minorities to stay out of any civil service posts except for academic duties. Although the legal arrangement regarding the situation that prevented non-Muslims from holding positions within the state bureaucracy was amended with the Law on State Servants dated 1965 (and which specified the precondition of being a Turkish citizen rather than being a Turk to be a civil servant), there was no change in the *de facto* situation, and the Armenians who could not find a place for themselves within the state institutions "looked for ways to become artisans in order not be dependent on others; and have expressed themselves in different crafts."[232]

On the other hand, the economic continuity revealed in the form of ethnic economy in the axis of Beyazıt-Kumkapı has a spatial aspect, too. Hence, the concept of "ethnic enclave" expressing "a certain space where the migrants have concentrated in terms of their life spaces and the work sectors they are employed in" has a usage in the statements of many researchers which overlaps with "ethnic economy"; the widespread usage of the concept of "enclave economy" arising from this latter point "continues to stress the residential concentration of a particular minority, a definition which makes 'enclaves' identical with ethnic

[232] Extracted from an interview made with the Armenian author Krikor Ceyhan (Baki Gül, "Atını Nalladı Felek," *Bakış*, (17 May 1999)).

neighborhoods."[233] From this perspective, it is possible to argue that the shoemakers operating in Gedikpaşa, or the jewelry masters of the Grand Bazaar, have converted the axis of Beyazıt-Kumkapı into an "ethnic enclave" for the Armenians.[234]

Today anyone passing by Gedikpaşa or going through the Grand Bazaar will come across a scene which is quite different from that described above. As will be understood from the previous section, now it is not possible to say that Gedikpaşa or Kumkapı is a residential or settlement place for Armenians or any other minority; similarly, it is not possible to say that the shopkeepers in the Grand Bazaar and in its vicinity are mainly Armenian.[235] In the current situation of the transformation that accelerated in the 1970s and reached its climax in the 1990s, it is possible to find a similar "ethnic enclave" that the Armenians of Istanbul were a part of a few decades ago. A similarity which, with the existence of the Armenians of Armenia in the neighborhood, brings this concept closer to its initial definition: "The enclave consists of immigrant groups which concentrate in a distinct spatial location and

[233] Alejandro Portes and Leif Jensen, "The Enclave and the Entrants: Patterns of Ethnic Enterprise in Miami Before and After Mariel," *American Sociological Review* 54, no. 6 (Dec 1989), pp. 929.

[234] The quarters of Samatya and Kumkapı used to be first stations for the Armenians whose migration from Anatolia accelerated in the 1950s. Several institutions of the Armenian community, including the Patriarchate and churches as well as workplaces, the keepers of which were Armenians, provided direct intermediation for the migrant's integration into the daily life and labor market of *Istanbul*. A prominent branch of this network was *Kağtaganats Hanstsnakhump* (Committee of Migration), established in 1960 with the support of the Patriarchate. The activities of the committee lasted until the military coup of 1980. Despite any written source about it, the total number of person brought to Istanbul via their agency is estimated to be around 8000.

[235] Sarkis Seropyan: "In 1956, at the time we opened a store on Hamam avenue in Gedikpaşa, everything was perfect. There were three shopkeepers in total, a cleaner, a grocery store, a seller of stoves and the fourth was ours, a fridge repair service. I was working in an atelier before, in Çarşıkapı. Then I joined my master and started to work there. Suddenly Gedikpaşa became crowded; our Hamam Avenue filled with stores and workshops. Yet there were nice places before the blaze of Çarşıkapı; clean and beautiful places... Then people begin to move away, one by one. The Mesropyan School fell vacant shortly after its renovation. It was a wooden building before the repair. They constructed a new building but there were no students to attend it. Finally, the building was converted to a *han* for shoemakers."

organize a variety of enterprises serving their own ethnic market and/or the general population".[236]

Kumkapı: A New Enclave

> I was working for a woman called Takuhi in Kurtuluş. She said to me, "Go and get three *yufka*[237] and come back". I was so happy, you can't imagine! "What a nice woman… To myself I said, how nice that she is buying a *yufka* for me too just at my arrival, not only buying for her daughter and herself. *Yupfka* means skirt in *parpar*.[238] I went, looked for it, looked for it, but could not find! I found the *yufka* seller by asking it to the shopkeepers, and thereby learned what it meant…[239]

I heard the "*kravat*"[240] version of the same anecdote from a few people. The man of the house asks for a '*kravat'* from the servant of the house. The woman looks in anxiety, since '*kravat'* in Russian means "bed." The Armenian of Istanbul probably does not remember the Armenian word for '*yufka'* or '*kravat'*, and while speaking with the Armenian employee, uses its Turkish version. The reaction of the Armenian woman deserves to be a sketch in a television show, since she understands the Turkish word used by her with its Russian meaning. However, their language of communication is Armenian (albeit many differences between Eastern and Western dialects of the language). Why the Armenian of Istanbul does not remember the Armenian equivalent of this word is another subject; but for an Armenian who

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[236] Portes, 1981, p. 291.

[237] Phyllo pastry, made in thin layers with rolling pin (in Turkish).

[238] Dialect (in Arm.).

[239] Arpig, 63, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

[240] Tie (in Turkish).

speaks Russian as easily as Armenian, it may seem the only possibility when working in the house of an Istanbul Armenian in a country whose native language (i.e., Turkish) she does not know, except for a few words that she heard from her grandfathers,

Forming an "enclave" for the ethnic minorities – in our example for the Turkish Armenians- is in a way converted into an opportunity to provide upward mobility and economic advancement. But in the enclave literature it is possible to see examples describing this as a relationship of exploitation. Sanders and Nee mention the problems when Portes and his colleagues put the entrepreneur (employer) and the worker within the same "enclave worker" pool. They state that a new ethnic economy formulation must be created which will take the migrant-employer/boss and migrant-employee/worker differences into consideration, and propose that the legitimacy provided by the ethnic ties was converted to low-level wages and bad working conditions in the hands of some employers. This important difference that the research emphasizes regarding the definition of this concept makes a serious point apparent when viewed from the perspective of our subject, even if it does not raise an obstacle to the opportunity of upward mobility asserted by Portes. To be a member of the "enclave," while not excluding the "residential concentration" (as mentioned above, even pushing it to the front in popular usage), is related to the "place worked," namely to the "ethnic enterprise" rather than the "place lived."

> The first concept [ethnic enterprise] may be defined as a firm of any size which is owned and managed by members of an identifiable cultural or national minority. The second concept [ethnic enclave] has been defined as a concentration of such firms in physical space –generally a metropolitan area- which employ a significant proportion of workers from the same minority.[241]

[241] Alejandro Portes and Leif Jensen, pp. 930.

Since the Armenian migrants are the workers in the domestic services which are not considered within the limits of the waged labor market, they may seem to be automatically excluded from a conceptual framework which is about a public realm, like ethnic entrepreneurship, and which therefore has institutional connotations. But the fact that these women work in the very houses of Istanbul Armenians during the period of learning a new language (here, Turkish), getting to know new people, in brief, during this period when they are creating the accumulation of a source which may have social capital (and then human capital) returns for themselves, can help us to re-establish this connection.

The Turkish Armenians, who have almost completed their migration period from Anatolia and have recovered their economic situations, "changed their residential places from the traditional residences of Samatya, Taksim and Üsküdar to the Kurtuluş, Bakırköy and Yeşilköy neighborhoods, which are rather resided in by the older inhabitants of the city."[242] In the current context, the socio-economic profile to which they belong corresponds, for the great majority, to the urban middle-class whose basic income source is predominantly self-employment. The traditional roles of the Armenian man and woman within the communal structure where the patriarchal family and moral structure is preserved (although it does not draw a homogenous profile) does not give a picture different from the rest of the urban middle-class (namely the non-Armenian majority) whose members have a similar level of income.

> [A] significant number of the women have especially emphasized that they had a leading role in the decisions to be made within the "family" and they

[242] Sarkis Seropyan: "At that time (during the 1980s), there were no more Armenians in Kumkapı. There weren't that many Armenians left behind. Those who could save themselves moved to Bakırköy, Feriköy and Yeşilköy. Gedikpaşa was already over. That old Gedikpaşa, the quarter of wealthy Armenians, where it had not been possible to promenade without putting on a tie, was all over. However, in the past, Gedikpaşa was not like even Kumkapı. It was a town of nobles! Kumkapı, it was the town of the people…"

> showed the example of naming the woman the "minister of the interior" as a widespread saying among the Istanbul Armenians. This argument, which proposes to prove the male-female equality in Armenian families, besides showing that the woman is responsible for the housework and that there is the expectation of the traditional spouse-mother role from her, also showed that the social gender-based role models were to a great extent internalized by a significant portion of the women.[243]

From this perspective, the niche that Armenian migrants fill in the houses of Istanbul Armenians corresponds to an agreed-upon part of a quite large range of "female responsibilities" involving the care of elderly and ill parents as well as children and the spouse, rather than the whole of the reproductive activities transferred from the highly skilled women participating in professional life. Paid domestic services described as a part of urban middle class women's modernization process and of the construction of its "various types of feminity"[244] involve, thus, a sphere much beyond the simple relationship of employment; moreover, where the houses of urban middle-class Istanbul Armenians are concerned, this paid domestic service has been transferred from the "woman" to "*Hayasdanlı*"[245] with the introduction of migrants into the process. It may be claimed that this transfer described above, which corresponds to a rupture in the structuring of domestic houses, has a different meaning than previously in terms of the self-construct of Istanbul Armenian women. The continuity that we defined in the third chapter

[243] Günay Göksü Özdoğan, Füsun Üstel, Karin Karakaşlı, Ferhat Kentel, *Türkiye'de Ermeniler: Cemaat, Birey, Yurttaş* (Istanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), pp. 380.

[244] For further reading on the issue, see Aksu Bora, *Kadınların Sınıfı: Ücretli Ev Emeği ve Kadın Öznelliğinin İnşası* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005).

[245] The signification of the word "woman" in everyday usage corresponds to "the person cleaning houses as a day job," that is domestic servants. The replacement of a word used for gender (sex) with another connotating domestic worker, shows how the reproductive work as well as domestic services are associated with "womanhood" and also to what measure this association is internalized. On the other hand, a new word related to domestic labor has appeared in the vocabulary of Armenians of Istanbul: *Hayasdanlı*. It means Armenian from Armenia (in Armenian); or just like in the case of the word 'woman,' the domestic worker.

between the "woman (servant)" and the "migrant" constructed via the fact of "being the one who migrated," undergoes a rupture when this migrant is a "*Hayasdanlı*;" at least for the employer who has the same ethnic origin as her, namely the Istanbul Armenian.[246]

A similar version of the employee-employer relationship among men is seen in the jewelry market, as described in the Chapter IV through Ara's experience. The shared ethnicity between the migrant worker and the employer serves and functions as a source of social capital that ensures a particular "worker" profile to be ahead of the others. Thereby the migrants, as previously stated, "go about their work and leisure activities without having to know the language of their host society and without extensive interactions outside of their ethnic group."[247] Both for the women and the men, especially in conditions where the "deportation risk" arising from the expiration of visas is continually on the agenda, not to be outside, and still being able to realize the very aim of coming to Turkey, that is "being able to earn money" during this period of being inside, is nevertheless a positive situation (the time inside could well be spent in Kumkapı, waiting for a job). The job, whether it is at a jewelry workshop or as domestics, would not only mean a material income, but also security against the probable threats coming from the police and any unexpected accidents or illness situations, as was provided by Hayganuş to the women from whom she got a commission. Furthermore, in the case of the waged labor market in which the men take part, an economic advancement which can be defined as a sort of "upward mobility" would also be possible.

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[246] The implications of such a rupture are discussed throughout the next heading; however this subject is worth further separate treatment.

[247] Jimy M. Sanders and Victor Nee, "On Testing The Enclave-Economy Hypothesis (Reply to Portes and Jensen)," *American Sociological Review* 52, no. 6 (Dec., 1987), pp. 772.

The workplace of *varbed*, or *akhperjan* as called by Ara, was in one of the hans full of dark, neglected, make-shift rooms in the vicinity of the Grand Bazaar. The workshop that *varbed* owned on the first floor was composed of the first entrance where the guests are welcomed, the first interior rooms where there is a cashier and other things are kept, the second room where the looms are located, and the main internal room and the foundry (*dökümhane*) at the far end. Those working at the looms are at most five people. Ara's workshop was one floor up. It is composed of a few machines and a sofa where the arriving people sit, and its appearance is not different from the rest of han. Jewelry work carried out in very small areas is almost kept hidden, as if adapting to the unregistered operation of its market, and it is a craft continued in workshops where the employee numbers or the volume of the work are not apparent. When the business is high, the number of workers increases to 15-20 people, and when the market is down (as was the case when I visited) the number could well decrease to 5-6 workers.

The work of the nailers or setters (*mıhlayıcı*) to set the precious stones in the metal, the plain workers (*sadekar*) preparing the metal without the stone, and the smelters (*dökümcü*) preparing the casting, needed one or two masters, and this would be enough for the already-decreased number of orders.

While I was talking with Ara there was only one apprentice with him, his friend Gagik from Gumri, aged 25, who stayed in the same han as Ara in Gedikpaşa. However, in the busy times when Ara "could not even find time to take a bath or even to shave" this number increased, and Ara began to employ as many as eight Armenians. Gagik, who had worked before in a textile workshop, but later began to work with Ara when his workplace was closed down, did not actually know much about jewelry: Ara teaches the profession gradually.

> A friend of mine has found a job in a refrigerator factory in İkitelli. The boss observed that this man was less "problematic" than the other workers and told him to bring his other [Armenian] friends. The men began to work; they even began to sleep there. But when one of the workers complained about the boss after he was fired, everything turned upside down. I also know a woman. She works in a hotel in Laleli. When she could not get her salary, she said "If you do not give it, I will leave." The men fired her without giving any money.[248]

Even if the small textile workshops in the vicinity continue to be the prime work alternative for the settled Armenian men in Gedikpaşa and Kumkapı, the working conditions of the jewelry market and its nearby workshops where the wage levels do not differ among its laborers, provide a "secure" option for those migrants working there. This situation must be taken together with the existence of the Armenians in the Grand Bazaar market. Even if the place where the Armenian migrant works belongs to a non-Armenian employer, this still makes him a part of a social environment representing a new type of "ethnic economy," the actors of which are themselves as well as the Armenians of Istanbul. On the other hand, how to assess the encounter of those two groups, without any common features in respect of economic situation, judicial position, historical background (at least in terms of recent history), or social structure, just shared ethnicity? Is it the meeting of people of the same origin, of worker and employee, or of different classes?

The Encounter of Two Enclaves: Armenians versus Armenians

Mark Granovetter, explaining how the economic organization is shaped by social structures with the concept of "embeddedness" he adapted from Karl Polanyi, argues that "the attempts at purposive action are embedded in concrete, ongoing

[248] Ara, 35, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

systems of social relations."[249] Hence, the driving force of economic action and the relationship of the social relations with it get tangled at the point of "social approval" and "reciprocity expectations." The web of reciprocal expectations that the Armenian migrants have established with each other, as seen above, is actually circumscribed by a second "web of reciprocal obligations" that they have established with the Armenians of Istanbul. The area where the first one is woven, namely Kumkapı, provides them a basis where, besides their exchange of information that provides them material benefits such as accommodation and work, they are able to engage in other kinds of exchanges (concerning the moral sphere). Within this physical structure implying the constitutive character of the space, a complementary statement to be made would be the emphasis on the dysfunctionality of the institutions belonging to the Armenians of Istanbul (located in Kumkapı).

The Armenian Patriarchate just nearby the places where the migrants live, besides not providing them any systematic support in terms of accommodation, rent assistance, etc.,[250] does not even provide them with any spiritual support particular to the migrants in cases such as marriage, baptisms, or funerals. For example, the marriage ceremonies of the young Armenian migrants whose numbers are continually increasing are not allowed within the (Armenian Orthodox) church with the claim that they are "unmarried" with respect to the law. [251] In a similar manner, most of the time the migrants who do not have the money to spend on a hall for their

[249] Mark Granovetter, "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness," *The American Journal of Sociology* 91, no. 3, (November, 1985), pp. 487.

[250] Even food and dress donations distributed every Monday and Tuesday morning at the Armenian Patriarchate Main Church's garden (often welcomed by African migrants rather than Armenians), are difficult to assess as an act of "charity" (see: "Kumkapı'da Bir Yardım Butiği," *Agos*, 14 March 2008).

[251] Because of their illegal status, "being unmarried in respect of law" is an actual phenomenon for them and cannot be reversed.

baptisms or funerals[252] find the solution of making the ceremony "by themselves" (namely in the houses), and "personally" practicing the –religious- rituals.[253] This attitude, justified by the fact that the migrants are "illegal," shows itself also in the case of the children whose numbers are also continually increasing. The children of the Armenian migrants are not allowed into the Armenian schools, one of which (Bezciyan Highschool) is on the street where the Patriarchate is located. The solution for the children forced to spend all of their days within the houses and deprived of rights such as playing with their peers and receiving an education, once more came from the migrants themselves. A few hours of "supervisions" that began in the basement floor of the Armenian Protestant Church in Gedikpaşa began to turn into a real "school" over time, with its teachers and school books brought from Armenia, with the construction of the classrooms filled with its present 60 students, through the efforts of the teachers. Therefore this "forced loose contact", where each request coming from the migrants apparently is evaluated by the boards of directors of the Armenian churches and schools, are "welcomed," but in practice "unfortunately" rejected, indicates that the webs between the Armenians of Armenia and the Armenians of Istanbul which we defined as embedded actually overlap only in the economic realm; and this, therefore, verifies the proposition of "ethnic economy" and even makes it the only reality. In any case, from the perspective of the migrants, this dual structure which can be operational only with a kind of social closure (as also expressed by Coleman), always carries within itself the risk of being restrictive at the individual level, and the risk of being stigmatizing at the group level. Coleman

[252] Here, the word funeral involves those who have died in Turkey, as well as symbolic ceremonies for relatives who have died in Armenia (or elsewhere). The deceased is usually buried in the orphans section of the Armenian cemetery in Balıklı –if any possibility to be sent to native lands is nonexistent.

[253] I should add that the attitude of Armenian Protestant church in Gedikpaşa toward migrants is quite different from that of Armenian Orthodox churches; much more embracing and protective.

writes, “Closure of the social structure is important not only for the existence of effective norms but also for another form of social capital: the trustworthiness of social structures that allows the proliferation of obligations and expectations.”[254]

Restrictiveness at the individual level of the social structure they formed, despite all of its supportive elements, is related to the concept of “norms” expressed by Coleman above. In the case of the Armenian migrants, this norm includes “the purity” that is a sort of extension of the “domestic work” responsibility traditionally ascribed to women. This obligation actually expresses a smooth case history including “not to be seen by men” as well as “not stealing” and therefore corresponding to “pudicity” and “honesty.” In the book where she analyzes the encounters between the domestic workers and middle class employers in Turkey, Aksu Bora mentions that honesty and pudicity were presented as “commitments not spelled out,” and has positioned this situation, which can be related with the word “cleanliness”, in its essence as a border line dividing the women from the two distinct classes:

> Class distinctions at the same time divide the women with respect to cleanliness. Employers emphasize their own borders as a precaution against the potential violation of the ‘otherness’ of the domestic servants whom they portray as dirty or indifferent to hygiene. While doing this they use the jargon of cleanliness/dirtiness and a language of physical control.[255]

Therefore the Fat Woman describes her house, which is naturally the most crowded and the salient one among the migrant houses, as a place where the ‘cleanliness’ norm is agressively protected *in a different sense*: “I have been in this

[254] Coleman, pp. S107.

[255] Aksu Bora, pp. 15.

house for years; only two times has a man been able to come in. Both were my relatives!" However, the source of this norm is not the moral structure that the migrants are the conveyors of; on the contrary, this necessity, this rule which should always be avoided and whose opposite be proven, was written by the employers, by those on the side of the hegemons within the context of the social environment they were in, namely the Armenians of Istanbul.

> I went to the interview. Of course, ten years ago I was not like I am now. I was younger, more beautiful… A woman met me. She was living alone with her husband. She looked and looked, we talked and at the end she said, "I do not want a *sosyetik*[256] one." In the first instance I could not understand! I was saying, "No, I am not Ossetian, I am Armenian" to the woman, with the only Turkish words I knew… The woman insisted, saying no. I went back home and looked at the dictionary; I understood that the woman was speaking of something else entirely …[257]

When we think that the Armenians obtain the information regarding the "work" through informal channels, namely through the "social networks" they have and within which they are their only source of social capital, it becomes indispensable to speak of a channel which progresses parallel with this network and in coordination with it: the channel of the Armenian (woman) of Istanbul in the position of an employer. Probably within a network which is multidimensional and more complex than the Armenian migrant's and is composed of acquaintances from the same community, neighbors, relatives and friends, she is in search of a "woman" from whom she could benefit the most, who would do the housework perfectly, namely the duty that was assumed by her up until that time.

[256] A pejorative term designating those who do not belong to upper class but pretend to be (in Turkish).

[257] Melanya, 63, interview by the author. [For a Turkish version of this statement, see Appendix A].

This web where the information regarding the Armenians is transferred via word of mouth represents an area where both the "femininity norms" of the community that the Armenians of Istanbul are a part of are reproduced, and also the negative (defacing) features outside of this definition are transferred to the "other" woman, to the woman hired, namely to the *Hayasdanlı*. The reaction that the woman showed, as mentioned above by Melanya, who today is 63 years old, does not arise from her being *sosyetik*, but of course arises from the fact that she prefers not to employ as a domestic a woman who had spent her life within an intellectual circle, who was a chemical engineer before and worked as the director of a scientific research laboratory for thirty years, or that she assumed that such a woman "would not know what a housewife/housework means."[258] Therefore, in the domestic service sector, the basic criterion that concerns the women in the position of employers, the requirement that the woman employed "should know serving," was not present in Melanya, according to this woman. This requirement, expressed here as "not being fashionable", may be expressed with other adjectives (such as "not to be lazy", "not to be dirty", "not to be shrewd," etc.,) that are adopted by other female employers, and may be converted into tools of stigmatization by the class determining the norm. What creates a fertile ground for stigmatization in this process is the presence of a river wherein all of this "information" regarding the Armenians flows, namely its dispersion within a network along which it can proceed.

In line with this, the reason for the migrant to *claim* this information, to claim having the expected characteristics, is related with its convertibility into another "form of capital," as stated by Coleman: human capital. Even though Coleman uses the expression "human capital," meaning the abilities that the young people acquire

[258] However, Melanya didn't wait too long. Ruzan, her elder sister who had came to Istanbul two years earlier, helped her to find a job; the sister of Ruzan's employer needed a servant to take care of housework.

by education, the content of the concept is suitable for its usage in very different contexts, such as the adaptation of the migrants to the host society[259]: "Just as physical capital is created by changes in materials to form tools that facilitate production, human capital is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways."[260]

These skills, in the case of the migrants, denote a process whereby a series of habits and capabilities (primarily language skills, here, learning Turkish) with regard to serving and living together are acquired. For the Armenian women servants whose age averages are quite high and who are not at all capable of going beyond their rooted behavioral norms, this process continues more painfully due to its shared ethnicity with its *spontaneous* employer, when compared to the process of those coming from another Soviet country. The Turkish Armenian is in a position to not only know Turkish, but also to act as the conveyor and transferor of other "information" (in the expression adapted by Aksu Bora from Bourdieu, "not the 'personal likes', but on the contrary the 'tastes' and 'likes' emerging as a result of her class position"). For example, the Western Armenian knows the most widely consumed food and appropriate dressing and behavioral norms that will allow the migrant to have access to more resources in the long run (namely, new job opportunities) and to have a wider area to maneuver. Although they have the same ethnic origin, of the two women who have not shared the recent past, the knowledge/information that the local woman has turns into a tool with which to build hegemony over the foreign woman, and in turn, with any adjective implying that she

[259] In line with this, is the concept of 'migration-specific human capital' which is defined by Douglas Massey as "a form of human capital consisting of skills, knowledge and abilities acquired as a direct result of participation in the host countries' economy" (Douglas S. Massey and Kristin E. Espinosa, "What's Driving Mexico-US Migration? A Theoretical, Empirical and Policy Approach." *The American Journal of Sociology* 102, No. 4, (1997), pp. 948).

[260] Coleman, pp. S100.

does not know them, is transformed into a means of stigmatization. That is why the Armenian migrants, during the stages of their first arrival when their social capital is still limited, find themselves working in the homes of the Armenians of Istanbul, which their ethnic background pushes them into as an obligation. They try their best to acquire the human capital needed as soon as possible and "leave there as soon as they learn a few words."[261] The hierarchical relationship where there is a complementarity between the social capital and the human capital, where the second cannot function without the presence of the first, and finally, which is created by the *ownership* of this capital once more takes us to the patronage emphasis made by Sander and Nee regarding ethnic economy:

> Immigrants who depend on kinship or ethnic group assistance in the initial stage of adaptation to a host society may become entangled in a web of obligations that interferes with their rational pursuit of economic opportunities. The "embeddedness" of economic activity in networks of ethnic relations can trap immigrant-workers in patron-client relationships that bind them, in exchange for assistance at an early stage, to low-wage jobs.

Therefore, while evaluating the tension, the feeling of degradation and the relationship of exploitation showing itself by "being channeled to heavier work at lower wages" that the migrant Armenian women who have worked in the homes of Armenians of Istanbul continually spell out, it will be inadequate to see them as isolated examples, or only to speak of them as natural consequences of a job which does not resemble the jobs they have done in their own countries, which does not correspond to their own knowledge and skills, but on the contrary, since it is at the lowest level of the social division of labor as work representing low status and a psychological burden and tension arises from their occupation with it. As much as the ethnic tie plays a role as a constitutive element in the employment of the

[261] I heard many versions of this sentence, always with the same meaning; thus I chose the most powerful one ("*Birkaç kelime öğrenir öğrenmez kendilerini dışarı atıyorlar*").

Armenian migrants, it plays the same constitutive role and at the same level regarding the transformation of this employment into a clash, an exploitation and into patronage relations. The network of reciprocal obligations between the Armenians of Istanbul and the Armenians of Armenia mentioned in the beginning, as well as the "social approval" and "reciprocal expectations" described as its constitutive elements, should, in this context, be considered as a process progressing unidirectionally, thus unequally. Let us finish up by naming this process, a name which will at the same time be a response to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter, the question of whether a 'bounded solidarity' has developed between the Armenians of Istanbul and the Armenians of Armenia or not: 'bounded dissolidarity.'

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This thesis analyzed the main dynamics of the mechanism bringing women migrants from Armenia to Turkey. It was important to do this for two main reasons. First, an accurate apprehension of "where and why they come" would enable us to take a politically correct position when assessing their presence in Turkey and our contribution to the process. Considering that their illegal position stems from their visa overstay, something of a contradiction can be easily noticed. They are here for "employment and better wages" since such opportunities are not present in Armenia; at least not for an age group of women above 45. They do not choose to go to Russia, although it is easier (or to Western Europe or the USA). Indeed there are several, as many as thousands, who took their chances in these places; but again, it is the case when a demographic profile quite different from those in Turkey is in question. Then it means that this country, Turkey, offers something of value for them, so that they could make the decision to come here for temporary work, despite a long history of conflict and opposition between the two countries, or two peoples (*halk*). This object of value is a "job," actually domestic work or carework in urban middle-class homes in the majority of cases; everything else (such as other types of employment or the arrival of male relatives) is established around this fact. Finally, this phenomenon, by being translated into "quantitative data" in the mouths of (Turkish) politicians for proving how tolerant they are,[262] or a discourse of "charity, or even brotherhood" in

[262] Turkey's prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said the following words during an interview with the BBC about the votes by the US and Swedish parliaments for "the recognition as an act of genocide the killing of Armenians, Assyrians/Syriacs/Chaldeans and Pontic Greeks in 1915": "170,000 Armenians live in my country; 70,000 of them are my citizens. Yet we are turning a blind eye to the remaining 100,000... Tomorrow, I may tell these 100,000 to go back to their country, if it becomes necessary. Why? Because they are not my citizens... Unfortunetly they are affecting our

the mouths of (Turkish or Turkish Armenian) employers of migrants to show how hospitable they are, send us/them/migrants drifting toward a quite dangerous realm: the danger of *normalization* of all inequalities inherent in this process.

It may not be the sole way to do that, but here, the concepts produced within the boundaries of the sociology of immigration are chosen to overshadow such manipulations of everyday politics. For this reason, after a short look at the socio-demographic aspect of Armenia for the sake of grasping the disadvantageous position of the above-mentioned profile (women above 45) in the *trans*national (*trans*- rather than national, for one has to involve the Russian Federation and other CIS countries as well when considering Armenia) labor market, it was the turn of scholars of globalization to take the stage. The perfect fit of notions developed to explain the presence of Latinos, Filipinos or Mexicans in advanced economies, "a system of world economy both producing employment alternatives for urban women in the developed world and creating a disguised encouragement in women of the Third World (including those from FSU) for filling niches left behind from the former, namely carework/domestic work," to the case of Armenian migrants in Turkey, justifies the accuracy of the selected framework. However, it is not a brilliant, fancy and idealized face of globalization, but a marginalized, devalorized and impoverished facet. Here lies the inequality:

> Currently we are caught in a nasty circle. To the extent that caring is devalued, invisible, underpaid, and penalized, it is relegated to those who lack economic, political, and social power and status. And to the extent that those who engage in caring are drawn disproportionately from among

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sincere approach negatively with their acts." This discourse on "sincerity" and its conditional sustainability is not new; sayings relating the total number of Armenian migrants grow in each political disagreement with Armenia or on the issue of "genocide" (for further detail, see the website of BBC in Turkish (BBC Türkçe): http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkce/haberler/2010/03/100316_bbc_erdogan_intw_update.shtml).

> disadvantaged groups (women, people of color, and immigrants), their activity –that of caring- is further degraded.[263]

The above statement of Nakano Glenn is displayed as a concrete reality in the settlement experiences of Armenian migrants, and more than this, in their encounter with the Armenians of Turkey. The shared ethnic bonds, along with the fact that they have settled in an old Armenian town (Kumkapı) was the rationale underlying my attempt to ask at the beginning of this study, "Why Kumkapı?" The presumption of "an active and affirmative agency of Armenians of Turkey" in the settlement and adaptation process of Armenian migrants was somehow present in my mind as well. Furthermore, assumptions of the "network theory," claiming the movement of migrants (or migrants-to be) along a line of relationships established around reciprocal obligations and need of social approval,' was setting a convenient ground for the mediation of Istanbul Armenians, too. But the reality was a bit different.

Yes, there is a well-distinguished network enabling the perpetuation of migration, as well as the integration of newcomers to the labor market and daily life of the city. Being part of this –mainly- gendered network provides the necessary means for migrants to acquire resources, namely "information" about "jobs:" it is the capital needed for start-up in an unknown environment, "social capital." But the Armenians of the city who appeared first, on a rather early stage of the journey to Istanbul, during the years of the shuttle trade in Laleli and the Grand Bazaar (there are many of them working in and around the Bazaar), were not present in these networks. Or to put it differently, they reappeared not as an equal component of it but rather a hierarchically upward counterpart. The presence of a certain relationship, even mutual dependency, between these two groups was certain. After all, Armenian

[263] Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "Creating a Caring Society," *Contemporary Sociology* 29, no. 1 (January 2000), pp. 84.

migrants were working -not solely but mostly- in the houses of Armenian families. The members of an old enclave, the Istanbul Armenians were currently surrounding those of a new one, the Armenians of Armenia. However, it is not the ethnicity that is the main determinant of this enclosure, but the ethnic economy that arises from this shared ethnicity and the position of its actors in the social hierarchy.

Finally, while considering the relationship between Kumkapı and the presence of migrants there, one has to refer to Laleli again. This quarter was described by Deniz Yükseker as the encounter space of two marginalized groups, those coming from southeastern Anatolia by enforced internal migration, namely Kurds, and those coming from former Soviet countries by self-enforced economic migration. Both are more or less excluded from the waged labor market of their countries; both look for the solution in informality; both find themselves in Laleli. It might be called a transnational enclave when viewed from this perspective. Kumkapı, one of the extensions of Laleli, displays a similarity. Old and new outsiders of the waged labor market met each other there. Whether Armenians, Kurds or any other ethnicity is the former, and Russians, Moldavians, or Armenians of Armenia is the latter, in any case the outsiders are among the migrants. The association between the ethnicity and migration shows itself in the initial part of the migration, namely at the departure point. However, at the arrival, this association is replaced by another one, that between outsiderness and informality, which in its turn is transformed into shared ethnicity between the Istanbul Armenians and the Armenians from Armenia, into something else, something that goes hand in hand with the stigmatization and the exploitation. At the end, the crossroads between the different migrations of Armenians has turned into a boundary between the actors of these migrations.

APPENDIX A

ORIGINAL TEXTS OF THE QUOTATIONS IN THE THESIS

PAGE	NOTE	TEXT
17	10	Sonuçta 15 sene 20 seneye yakın bir süre içinde resmen İstanbul'a getirttiklerimizin sayısı 8000 kişidir. Bugün 10 bin, 20 bin, 30 bin Ermenistanlı göçmenden bahsediliyor. Onlara yetişmek eskisinden daha kolay olduğu halde, eskiden devletin korkusunu bahane edip de bizimle çalışmayan insanlar, bugün başka şeyleri bahane ediyorlar… Devlet korkusu kalmadıysa eğer, başka bahaneler buluyorlar. Adamlara kara çalarak uzak duruyorlar bu hareketten…
60	109	Aileden kimse kalmıyor. Kadınlar buraya geliyorlar. Erkekler Rusya'ya gidiyorlar. Çocuklar. Erkekler için burada o kadar iş yok... Bir gün Ermenistan'da kadın kalmayacak. Hem artık erkekler de geliyor buraya. Mesela bizim eve karısı ve iki yaşında çocuğuyla yeni gelen oldu. Rusya erkekler için bile çok tehlikeli, çok pahalı, her yerde mafya var…"
68	125	İstanbul bizim için bir bataklık... Nasıl ki bataklıktan çıkmak istedikçe içine daha gömülürsün, biz de öyleyiz. Yavaş hareket etmek lazım! Altı ay için gelmiştik. On yıldır buradayız; toplam 24 tane 6 ay geçirdik. Bakalım bu seferki altı ayımız sonuncu olacak mı?
85	165	Aslında *mama*m 1999'dan beri İstanbul'daydı. Baktım benim işler yürümüyor artık orada, kalktım geldim. *Mama*m gelemedi o gün, çalışıyordu. Benim otobüsü bir arkadaşım karşıladı. Bizim oraya mal getirip götüren biri; kaç senedir gidip geliyor, iyi biliyor kim var kim yok… Aldı beni, daha eve bile uğramadık, *Çarşı*'ya götürdü. *Çarşı*'dan girdim içeri, resmen deliye döndüm! Böyle bir yer olacağı nereden aklıma gelsin? Her yer dükkan kaynıyor; her yer kuyumcu! Tanıdığı bir Ermeni adam varmış bizim arkadaşın; aldı beni adamın dükkanına götürdü. Adam 'bekleyin şurada' dedi. Oturduk bir kenara. Birini aradı yanımızda. "Ermenistanlı bir mıhlayıcı var; iş arıyor" dedi. Bir yaz günüydü. Çok sıcaktı… Dükkan da küçük zaten. Kimseyi tanımıyorum… Biraz sonra karşıma bir adam dikiliverdi. Gözlüğü elinde, sapını ağzında çeviriyor; boynunda kırmızı bir fular… Baştan aşağı süzdü beni. "Patron bu" dediler. Adam zaten İtalyan mafyasına benziyor; bir de patron bu dedilerse şaşırdım, korktum! Patron, Rusça'da "mermi" demek çünkü! Neyse *akhperjan* oradan bir yüzük gösterip "Bunu yapabilir misin?" diye sordu. "Yapabilirim" dedim. "Bir hafta sonra başla o zaman" dedi. Odur budur buradayım…
87	167	90'larda Kars kapısını açtıklarına hepimizin işi bitmişti. Devlet için çalışıyorduk fakat devlet bize artık para veremiyordu. Ben

		çalışabilirdim belki, ama 10 dolar, 20 dolar olacaktı maaşım. Böyle olunca Kars sınırı kapanmadan önce abimle ticaret yapmaya başlamıştık. Yağ, pirinç gibi birkaç yüz dolarlık sermaye gerektiren küçük alışverişler yapıyorduk ilk başta. Sonradan işi büyüttüm; artık kamyonlarla çalışmaya başlamıştık.
88	169	Aslında ilk defa 1992'de babamla geldim İstanbul'a. Moskova üzerinden üç aylık vize almıştık. Bir ay kaldık. Dayımlar İstanbulludur; onlarda kaldık. Sonra 'biraz daha kalın' dediler, çünkü vizeyi uzatmak için tek yaptıkları Rus konsolosluğuna gidip, 10 dolar vermekti.
89	172	Aracımda 36 tane kurşun deliği saydığım da oldu. İnsanları silah zoruyla otobüsten indirip ne var ne yok götürdükleri de…
90	178	Onları mal yüklü el arabalarını ta Aksaray'a kadar sürmekten kurtarıyorduk. Yokuştan aşağı vurdular mı soluğu bizde alıyorlardı!
92	181	O zamanlar Ermenistan'dan pek gelen giden olmazdı. Zaten durumumuz da iyiydi... Bir haftalığına alışverişe gidip geliyorduk; otelde konaklayıp dönüyorduk. Sadece İstanbul'a da değil, Rize'ye, Trabzon'a, Samsun'a… Sonra bir gecede battık! Neden? Keşke dolandırıcılık olsaydı; elimizdeki 6 milyon ruble, ki 60.000 dolar ediyordu, bir anda eridi; çünkü bir gecede kanun çıkarıp rublenin değerini yarıya düşürdüler. Ben İstanbul'da 3 milyon rubleyi bozdurmuştum. Boşuna gitti onca para… Hepimiz öylece kalakaldık.
93	186	Baştan aşağı *Hayasdanlılarla* dolu bir binaydı. Sonradan mal sahibi otel yapacağım deyip çıkardı bizi… Zaten kiralar da giderek yükselmişti. O zaman geldik Kumkapı'ya. Bir oda şimdi 300 liraysa o zaman 50 liraydı Kumkapı'da…
101	202	Otobüsten indim. Akşam oluyordu. Kimseyi tanımıyordum. Ellerimi kaldırdım havaya, '*Asduadz imin, as kişer ur bidi mınam*?' dedim.
103	203	Habire dert dinliyoruz. Yıllarca evine dönemeyenlerden tut, gelip de nereye gideceğini bilemeyenlere kadar. Böyle biri olursa Kumkapı'da evler var deyip yönlendiriyoruz. En fazla sokakta yatmasın diye bir otele koyarız. Daha da fazlasını yapmak istemiyoruz.
106	208	Türk… Ermeni… Ermenistanlılarla ilişkisi olup da beni tanımayan yoktur. Elimden belki 2000 kadın geçmiştir!
106	211	Biz dört kadın, karar verip ceplerimizde bize ancak birkaç gün yetecek bir parayla geldik. Aslında hepimiz, İstanbul'da arkadaşı olan bir başka kadının peşine takılmıştık. Gel gör ki kadın bizi tanımadı bile… Hemen bir yer kiraladık Kumkapı'da. Cebimizde toplam 2 milyon, etrafta dolanmaya başladık. Geldiğimiz günün

		ertesi miydi, hatırlamıyorum, bir sabah sahildeki çaycılardan birine oturduk. Garson 'çay ister misiniz' diye sordu. Bedava sanıp istedik! Böylece bütün para çaylara gitti bir çırpıda! Sonra yolda tanıdık birine rastladık Yerevan'dan. Vallahi o kurtardı bizi…
107	212	Ben insanlara iyilik yapıyorum. Buraya geliyorlar. Ne yemeklerini eksik ediyorum ne başka ihtiyaçlarını. Kalacak yer sağlıyorum, iş buluyorum. Daha ne yapayım!
107	215	Düşün ki hiç Türkçe bilmeyen, kimseyi tanımayan biri; buraya gelmek üzere otobüse biniyor; hostese derdini anlatıyor; hostes bu iş bulan kişileri tanıyor, arıyor İstanbul'u, "*Megı egav, tsezi ğrgum em*"; yeni gelen karşılanıyor, Arpig'in evine yollanıyor. İş bulunca komisyon fazla fazla alınıyor. Bir de orada kalmaya devam ediyorsa, evin masraflarına da dahil oluyor tabii.
114	228	O zamanlar Ermenilerin Kumkapı'ya, Gedikpaşa'ya yerleşmelerinin bir nedeni de, hem Patrikane'ye, hem de Çarşı'ya yakın olmak. Zaten eskiden İstanbul'da işine uzak olma şansı yoktu insanların. İstanbul'un iş merkezi de Kapalı Çarşı'ydı. Herşey orada, Mahmutpaşa'da toplanmıştı. İnsanlar bir gömlek almak için, yiyecek almak için, bayramsa Türk aileler çoluğunu çocuğunu giydirmek için Mahmutpaşa'ya giderdi. Nişantaşı'nda, Taksim'de, Kadıköy'de iş merkezleri, çarşılar, pazarlar yoktu. Ne varsa Kapalı Çarşı ve civarındaydı 1950'li yıllardan önce…
117	235	1956 yılında, Gedikpaşa'daki Hamam Caddesi'nde dükkânı açtığımızda, herşey mükemmeldi. Toplam üç esnaf vardı. Bir temizleyici, bir bakkal, bir sobacı, dördüncü dükkân da buzdolabı tamircisi olarak bizler. Çarşıkapı'da bir atölyede çalışıyordum daha önce. Sonra da geldim bizim ustanın yanına girdim. Gedikpaşa birden bire kalabalıklaştı ve Hamam Caddesi atölyelerle, dükkânlarla doldu. Çarşıkapı yangınından önce oralar evdi; temiz, güzel yerlerdi. Sonrasında insanlar yavaş yavaş kaçtı. Mesropan Okulu boşaldı. Okulu da o yıllarda onarmışlardı. Ondan önce tahta bir binaydı. Yeni bina yaptılar ama talebesiz kaldı. İş hanı oldu.
118	239	Takuhi diye bir kadının yanında çalışıyordum Kurtuluş'ta. "Git 3 tane *yufka* al gel" dedi bana. Bir sevindim ki sorma! "Ne iyi kadın… Gelir gelmez, sadece kızına ve kendisine değil bana da *yufka* alıyor" dedim içimden. *Yupfka* etek demek bizim parparda. Gittim arandım, arandım, bulamadım! Esnafa sora sora buldum yufkacıyı da, işin ne olduğunu öyle anladım…
120	242	Kumkapı'da Ermeni kalmamıştı o zamanlar (1980'lerde). Öyle ele gelecek, dişe gelecek bir Ermeni kalmamıştı. Kendini kurtaranlar Bakırköy'e, Feriköy'e, Yeşilköy'e taşınıyordu. Gedikpaşa zaten bitimişti. Gedikpaşa, o zengin Ermeniler'in yaşadığı, sokaklarında kravatsız dolaşılmayan semt değildi artık. Oysa bir zamanlar Kumkapı gibi değildi Gedikpaşa. Aristokrat semtiydi. Kumkapı halk semtiydi…
124	248	Bir arkadaşım İkitelli'de bir buzdolabı fabrikasında iş bulmuştu.

		Patron bakmış ki bu adam diğer işçilerden daha "sorunsuz," başka [Ermenistanlı] arkadaşlarını da getirmesini istemiş. Adamlar çalışmaya başlamışlar; hatta orada yatıp kalkıyorlardı. Gel gör ki işten çıkarılan işçilerden biri patronu şikâyet edince her şey tersyüz olmuş tabi. Başka bir de kadın tanıyorum. Laleli'de bir otelde çalışıyordu. Maaşını bir türlü alamayınca "vermezseniz giderim" demiş. Adamlar da para mara vermeden kapı dışarı etmişler kızı.
128	257	Gittim görüşmeye. Tabi 10 yıl önce şimdiki gibi değilim; daha genç, daha güzelim… Bir kadın karşıladı beni. Kocasıyla yalnız yaşıyorlar. Baktı baktı, konuştuk, sonunda "Ben sosyetik istemem" dedi. Anlamadım önce! "Hayır, ben Oset değil, ben Ermenistanlı" diyorum kadına. Bildiğim tek Türkçeyle… Kadın ille de olmaz dedi. Gittim eve, sözlüğe baktım; meğer kadın bambaşka bir şey söylüyormuş…
133	262	Bakın benim ülkemde 170 bin Ermeni var; bunların 70 bini benim vatandaşımdır. Ama yüz binini biz ülkemizde şu anda idare ediyoruz. E ne yapacağım ben yarın, gerekirse bu yüz binine "Hadi siz de memleketinize" diyeceğim; bunu yapacağım. Niye? Benim vatandaşım değil bunlar... Ülkemde de tutmak zorunda değilim. Yani şu anda bizim bu samimi yaklaşımlarımızı bunlar bu tavırlarıyla ne yazık ki olumsuz istikamette etkiliyorlar, bunların farkında değiller.

APPENDIX B[264]

The marriage of Ardak and Alvart in the Armenian Protestant Church in Gedikpaşa (the nameplate of a shoemaker can be seen behind the grids). The bread on their shoulders is part of a ritual from Armenia.

The woman in purple is Lusine, the mother of the groom. She is serving the guests. All of the foods were prepared by her friend (in black). Sona served the guests throughout the event.

[264] Photos were taken by Aras Margoz during our visits to Kumkapı.

A view from the school for migrants' children. Three small classrooms are situated downstairs in the Armenian Protestant Church. Its capacity is limited; only 60 students have the chance to acquire a primary education and to spend time with their peers.

Ceremonies held in the Armenian Protestant Church are performed in four languages: Turkish, Russian (for Moldovans), Persian (for those coming from Iran), and Eastern Armenian (for those coming from Armenia). A view from the fourth category; the hall is full of migrants.

A view from bazaar of Kumkapı, set up each Thursday. One can see the stands of Armenians, full of consumption items (food or other types) brought from Armenia or Russia.

Easter celebration. The table is full of traditional food (fish of Siga, *hamem*, *tarkhun* etc.) from Armenia (brought personally or bought from bazaar).

There is always a reason for celebration and gaiety on free days, like anniversaries, usually on Thursday.

It's a women's world…

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Interviews (Name, age, comes from, works as, civil status (profession if any)

Ara	35, Gumri, works as goldsmith, married with 3 children (goldsmith).
Gagik	26, Gumri, works as goldsmith, single.
Ardak	36, Yerevan, works freelance, married (legal consultant).
Datevig	55, Talin, domestic service, single (actress in public theatre).
Anahit	65, Yerevan, domestic service, widow (accountant).
Melanya	63, Yerevan, domestic service, divorced (chemical engineer).
Ruzan	62, Gumri, domestic service, divorced.
Arşag	65, Gumri, works freelance, married to Agata, has two children.
Alina	52, Gumri, domestic service, married.
Agata	62, Gumri, domestic service (see Arşag).
Sveda	68, Yerevan, domestic service, widow (mechanical engineer).
Zabel	67, Yerevan, domestic service, widow (physician).
Lidya	48, Gumri, domestic service, married (lives with her husband, war veteran).
Hayganuş	57, Yerevan, commissioner, married with two children.

Suzan 44, Gumri, works as waitress, married (lives with her husband).

Şuşan 45, Gumri, domestic service, single.

Nara 49, Gumri, works in a hotel, divorced, has one child.

Knar 47, Hrazdan, domestic service, widow, has one child (instructor).

Heriknaz 42, Yerevan, instructor at the school for migrant's children, married to a Turkish citizen, has two children (instructor).

Kohar 60, Stepanavan, domestic service, widow, has one child.

Samvel 29, Vanadzor, priest, married, has one child.

Heğine 29, Vanadzor, married to a Turkish citizen.

Larissa 37, Yerevan, works in transport sector, married to a Turkish citizen.

Emma 52, Yerevan, domestic service, widow (accountant).

Vahide 37, Baku, secretary, married to a Turkish citizen, has one child.

Krikor Ağabaloğlu, Pastor of the Armenian Protestant Church in Gedikapaşa.

The owner of the Öz Aybaki Travel Agency.

The owner of the Mahmudoğlu Travel Agency.

Linda Süme, responsible for the distributions of food-clothing donations in the Main Church of Armenian Patriarchate, in Kumkapı.

Sarkis Seropyan, editor of the Armenian weekly, *Agos.*

Sinem Uludağ, advocate at Helsinki Citizens Assembly.

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