Chapter 2

The International Migration Movements and Immigrant Policies From the Ottoman Empire 1299 to Republican Turkey 2016

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ABSTRACT

During times when the Ottoman Empire gained more land from its foundation in 1299 until declaration of Republic in 1923, by settling Muslim communities in each newly conquered territory, and yet seeking rights of foreign subjects, Ottoman Empire exhibited both a religious and yet liberal and democratic migration policy. Even though migration policies from 1299 to present day have changed over time along with reasons behind the migrations, it cannot be said that concepts of Islamism and Turkism, that have existed/been felt at the core of these laws, have been distanced. During this study, titles such as Immigration and Immigrant Rights during Ottoman Empire, Immigrations and Immigrant Rights in the Republic of Turkey, Migration Policies in Development Plans, will be handled together with Migration Data and respective general assessments were made in the conclusion.

INTRODUCTION

Immigration is considered a factor that should not be ignored neither in a state's strategic priorities and policies, nor the public's social culture, as people's movement activities give rise to social, economic and political changes as a whole since time in memorial. This situation applies not only to immigration-receiving and immigration-giving countries but also to transit countries on migration routes, deemed as one of the reasons for important variations with regard to immigration (Ministry of Interior Affairs). Immigration is a social reality arising from the precipitating motivation of the dynamic existence of the human being and his endless demands and requirements throughout history. This reality appears as the most natural result of human activity.

It is not easy to define migration and immigrant without considering that Erder (1986) defines migration as "all displacements realized over a meaningful distance and amount of time until effectiveness is realized." In fact, individuals going from one place to another with the intention to live there permanently, as mentioned in demographic statements, are deemed to have migrated (Özbay and Yücel, 2001). However, migration does not only consist of displacement. As Güvenç (1999) mentions, everything learned in the name of human race; from the invention of the wheel to the invention of writing, from epidemic illnesses to their treatments; is actually presented to the world through migration. Acculturation is a result of changing cultural traits and social patterns at both ends of a mutual interaction between individuals and groups from different cultures, within a certain culture and their material and spiritual elements imported via displacements throughout human history.

A theory of migration systems, that brings different migration theories together, has been constituted in order to understand the connections between immigration-receiving and emigration-giving places, and to investigate the reasons for international immigration movements of the 1970's within this context. Various researchers have contributed to this theory developed by Mabogunje (1970), examining rural-to-urban migration within the African continent. According to this theory, a migration system contains two or more spaces linked to each other with human movements and counter human movements (Kritz and Zlotnik, 1992). Linkages, existing previously and based on colonial interaction, trade, investment or cultural links, submit important clues about the development of migration instances featured today according to the migration systems' theory.

It is important to define basic specifications relating to the concept of immigration that has effected many communities and countries materially and spiritually all over the earth throughout history. Concepts such as immigrant, refugee, asylum seeker are being used interchangeably and thus, are likely to create counter-meaning in various sources.

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