

Forced Migration and the Politics of Internal Displacement
in the Making of Modern Turkey:
The Case of Dersim, 1937-1947

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation analyzes the historical dynamics of the process of demographic engineering that took place in the early years of the Turkish Republic. By focusing on the case of the forced displacement and resettlement of the Alevi Kurds of Dersim between 1937 and 1947, this dissertation looks at the relation between state-formation, nation building, and population movements in early Republican Turkey.

Drawing from archival and ethnographic evidence gathered on the case of the internal forced migration and resettlement of the Dersimli Alevi Kurds between 1937 and 1947 in Turkey, this study engages with two general theoretical and historical questions: when and why do modern states commonly resort to forced population movements; and how do those who are subjected to forced displacement respond to and deal with their displacement and replacement?

The dissertation contends that explanations of forced population movements based on regime type, ideology, and/or objective threat cannot adequately account for the case of the forced migration of the Dersimli Kurds. Rather, it argues that the forced displacement of the Dersimli Kurds is better explained by three related relational factors: the nature and dynamic of the relationship between state authorities (both central and local) and local elites; the amount of infrastructural power the state had

over the territory in question; and the policy options already available to state authorities, i.e., the prevalent repertoire of state action. All of these factors are path dependent: earlier relations, practices, policies limit the possibilities and opportunities both for state and non-state actors.

From a bottom-up perspective this study also contends that, despite the asymmetrical nature of their power and position, by adopting various survival strategies Dersimli forced migrants constantly refused to be passive victims of history. It shows that the choice of a particular strategy was a function of the nature of the unfolding relationship a) between the forced migrants and the local authorities, and b) between the forced migrants, local populations, and other immigrant communities.

The dissertation finally concludes by arguing that simply blaming a few sinister state elite (or some other macro actors) and/or victimizing the displaced is insufficient for explaining the breadth and severity of the process of demographic engineering in post-imperial Turkey. The case of the forced resettlement of the Dersimli Kurds in Turkey suggests a complex interaction between elite political rhetoric and policy on the ground, pointing to the importance of relational dynamics behind forced population movements.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“If we cannot bring the civilization to you, we
will bring you to the civilization.”

Local State Official, Dersim, 1937¹

1.1. Introduction

The last decades of the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century have witnessed massive population movements throughout the world, affecting the lives of many people. It would not be an exaggeration to define the period from 1850 to 1950 as the century of demographic engineering. Millions of people were forced out their historical homelands en masse, either expelled out of national borders or resettled/relocated/displaced within national borders by state authorities. Forced population movements, at the same time, have played a crucial role in the making and unmaking of states and nations.

This dissertation analyzes the historical dynamics of what I call the process of *demographic engineering* that occurred in the early years of the Turkish Republic. By focusing on the case of the forced displacement and resettlement of the “Alevi Kurds

¹ Interview with the grandson of one of the chieftains of the Haydaranli tribe of Dersim, who participated in a meeting, held in Hozat by the provincial administrator (*kaymakam*), in the spring of 1937, of some of the prominent chieftains of Dersim tribes. The quote was uttered by another local official who was attending the meeting.

(also called Kurdish Alevis) of Dersim”² of Turkey between 1937 and 1947, this dissertation looks at the link between state-formation, nation building, and population movements in early Republican Turkey.

Demographic engineering is a concept employed to explain the forced migrations and population cleansing of recent decades in several regions of the world. Reflecting the close affinity between politics and demographics, it refers to any deliberate program or policy initiated by power holders for political, strategic, or ideological reasons, and aims to increase the political and economic power of one group over others by manipulating population level, composition, distribution, increase, or decrease (Bookman, 1997, 2002a, 2002b; Weiner and Teitelbaum, 2001).

Despite its relatively recent coinage, it is difficult to confine the use of the term to any particular region or historical period. Throughout the ages, when and wherever

² Although those who want to emphasize the ethnic/national component use “Alevi Kurds,” and those who want to highlight the religious component use “Kurdish Alevis,” following van Bruinessen (1994) I use the terms “Alevi Kurds” and “Kurdish Alevis” (and sometimes Desimli Kurds) interchangeably as a shorthand for all Kurmanci- and Zaza-speaking Alevis, irrespective of whether they define themselves as Kurds or not. The heartland of the Kurdish Alevis consists of Dersim (the province of Tunceli with the adjacent districts of Kemah and Tercan in Erzincan and Kiğı in Bingöl). Also a series of Alevi enclaves stretches east, through Bingöl, northern Muş, and Varto all the way to Kars. My use of this term does not imply any claim that they are ‘really’ or ‘essentially’ Kurds or Alevis. Nevertheless, when asked about their primary identification, most Kurdish Alevis say they consider themselves Alevi first. On many occasions during my fieldwork my Kurdish Alevi informants inquired, most of the time indirectly through my translator, if “I was one of them.” Later, it turned out that they were in fact asking if I was an Alevi or not. Also they, more often than not, use Kurd to refer to the Sunni Kurds, irrespective of the language they speak. This shows that the primary social boundary separating the Kurdish Alevis from others has been a religious (Alevi vs. Sunni) rather than an ethnic (Kurd vs. Turk) boundary. In fact, the idea of “Kurdishness” among the *Dersimlis* is a quite recent construction.

there is struggle for territory and for control over its resources, it is possible to observe deliberate attempts at manipulating population dynamics through various methods, such as forced migration, resettlement, massacres, and ethnic cleansing. However, many scholars agree that the emergence of nation-states by the end of the nineteenth century, and the spread of nationalism, particularly in its ethnic form, which aims to provide homogeneity in a particular territory, gave a new and more merciless dimension to the phenomenon of demographic engineering (Zolberg, 1983a, 1983b; Zolberg, Suhrke and Aguayo, 1989; Tarzi, 1991; McGarry, 1998). Elimination of certain “undesirable,” marginalized, or stigmatized minority communities through removing and relocating them from some areas, and settling members of the dominant community in their place, became the principal means of nation building. As one observer puts it in the context of Tropical Africa “settlement schemes were often experiments in nation-building in miniature” (Chambers, 1969: 34). Therefore, one can easily argue that in order to understand the process of nation-state building in any context it is essential to look the dynamics of what might be broadly defined as demographic engineering. This has particular relevance especially in the context of imperial decline and the emergence of post-imperial political entities which claim to be founded on national and/or ethnic identity. State intervention and manipulation of the demographic characteristics of a diverse society inherited from the imperial period becomes an almost necessary (and in many cases quite effective) mechanism to create a more or less homogeneous national community. It would be wrong, however, to attribute this as an exclusive characteristic of nation-states. Rather we need to go back

in history and try to understand the reasons as to why this pattern, but not others, has become the dominant form of state-making and nation-building.

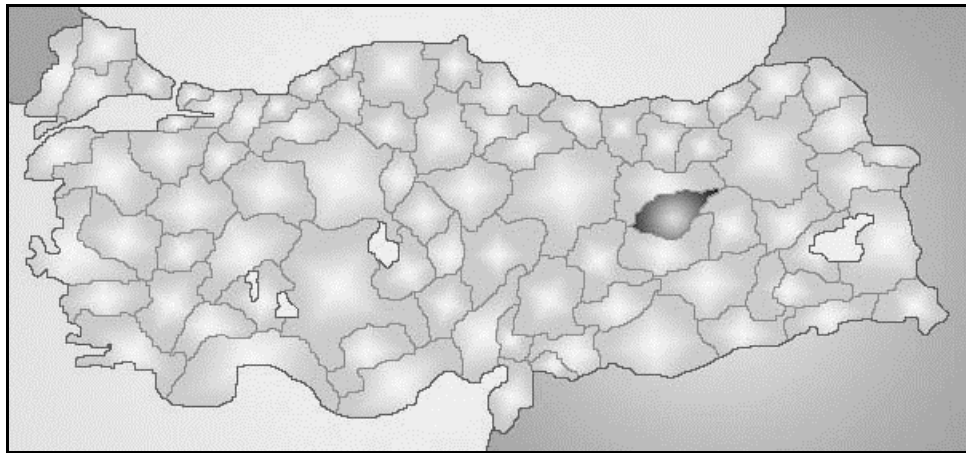
The history of the early decades of the Republic of Turkey, the subject matter of this study, fits well into this picture. Although forced population movements and (re)settlements were not a new phenomenon in Ottoman/Turkish history (Tekeli, 1990, 1994), and had occasionally been used as a strategy of imperial control—mostly for sedentarization of nomadic tribes to increase agricultural production, but also for punishing rebellious tribes (Hallaçoğlu, 1988; Orhonlu, 1987)—by the Ottoman state, they gained significant momentum towards the last decades of the Ottoman Empire and continued with an increasing pace during the early decades of the post-imperial Turkey. A deliberate state policy of manipulation of the demographic characteristics of particular regions is frequently observed in the first three decades of the Republic. Population transfers and (re)settlement schemes were the basic instruments of the new Turkish government to secure its domination over the core territory of what remained of the Ottoman Empire.

1.2. Dersim 1938

Dersim (presently called Tunceli), an inaccessible region of high and rugged mountains, narrow valleys, and deep ravines in central Eastern Turkey (Map 1), has been a culturally distinct region, partly due to ecological-geographical factors, and partly to a combination of linguistic and religious factors. The highlands of Dersim have been predominantly inhabited by a large number of small Zaza-speaking Alevi tribes, whose subsistence was based on animal husbandry, horticulture, and gathering

forest products (van Bruinessen, 1994). Few of the tribes spoke Kurdish proper, but most spoke another related but distinct language known as Zaza (also referred as *Dimili* or *Kırmançki*). Almost all adhered to the heterodox Alevi sect of Islam, which separated them socially and culturally from the Sunni Kurds living to the east and south. Their beliefs and practices are also distinct from the other Alevi communities in many other parts of Anatolia.

Map 1. Tunceli (formerly Dersim) Province in Turkey



Before 1915, when the Ottoman government decided to deport and expel the Armenians of the Empire, Dersim used to have a large Armenian population. The physical traces of the Armenians today are barely observable. However, as we shall see later, even well before the Armenian deportations, many local Armenians voluntarily assimilated, becoming Alevi Kurds, and many of the Dersim Kurds are partly of Armenian descent (Molyneux-Seel, 1914). These factors have left strong traces in the local collective memory of *Dersimlis* (Keiser, 2001a, 2001b, 2005).

The tribes of Dersim, whose total number was estimated between 65,000 and 70,000³ by the mid-1930s, were known for their contentious character, and had never been effectively subdued by any previous government. Their internal affairs were run by customary tribal law. Tribal chieftains and religious leaders wielded great authority over the ordinary Dersimlis. They were not opposed to state as such, as long as it did not interfere too much in their affairs. In fact, many local elites strengthened their position by establishing close relations with the local state authorities. At the same time, however, there was a tradition of refusing to pay taxes and evading military service. Many of the tribesmen carried arms, and raids against neighboring tribes as well as surrounding lowland villages were not uncommon. As many scholars of modern states have repeatedly pointed out since Max Weber, none of these practices are admissible or tolerable by any national state, since they all contradict the functions and existence of the modern state. Following Weber's conceptualization, the modern state could not afford its "monopoly over the legitimate use of violence" to be challenged by its competitors. Nevertheless, despite various attempts to penetrate and control the region on the part of the Turkish state, Dersim had managed to retain its semi-independent status and, by the mid-1930s, remained the only region in Turkey that had not been effectively brought under central government control. In the words of James Scott (1999), "the civilization had not been able to climb the hills and mountains" of Dersim, and Dersim remained illegible until 1936, when it was placed under a military government, with the expressed aim of pacifying and "civilizing" it.

³ This number was given by Sükrü Kaya, the Minister of Interior Affairs, in 1935 (Beşikçi, 1992: 15).

Frustrated by losing their power and prestige, most chiefs of Dersim tribes resented and fiercely resisted the state's attempts at penetrating the region through military as well as infrastructural means, such as building roads, bridges, military posts, telegraph system, and the like. They attacked the new military posts, blocked the roads, destroyed the bridges, and cut down the telegraph poles. A few attempts at negotiating with the insurgent tribes had failed. By early 1937, the authorities believed that a major rebellion, instigated by five of the Dersim tribes, was about to erupt as a show of resistance against the "civilizing" program of the Turkish state. The army used these somewhat minor and uncoordinated incidents as a warrant to organize a large scale military campaign against the rebellious tribes in late March of the same year. To their surprise, however, the first troops that were sent to arrest the suspects were stopped by armed tribesmen. Partly because of underestimating the military power of the tribes and partly because of geographic disadvantage, the government forces faced significant casualties. The confrontations soon escalated, which then led to a much larger and more organized campaign. The manpower and artillery of the Turkish state's army, with three air fleets, overwhelmed that of the Dersimli insurgent tribes. Nevertheless, military operations to subdue the region lasted through the summer of 1937.

The first time the public heard about the military operations in Dersim when a news item appeared in Tan, one of the national newspapers of the time, on June 15, 1937. The heading of the news article read as "The Heroic Performance of Sabiha

Gökçen, Our First Female Pilot, in Dersim.”⁴ Sabiha Gökçen, the adopted daughter of Atatürk, the president, as we learn from the article, had been awarded a special medal at the age of 24 for her success in the large scale military operation in Dersim, and had become “the first woman combat pilot in the world.” She was shown next to the heavy artillery in front of her plane right before she took off to drop 50 kilograms of bombs on Dersim (Picture 1). Two days later, an article appeared in the New York Times about the Turkey’s combat against the uprising Kurds, which also depicted Sabiha Gökçen as a “girl flier as war hero.” She appeared in the New York Times a second time on September 19, 1937, as “the Flying Amazon of Turkey” (see Appendix I).⁵

⁴ “İlk Kadın Teyyarecimiz Sabiha Gökçen’in Dersim’de Kahramanca Hizmetleri,” *Tan*, 15 Haziran 1937.

⁵ Sabiha Gökçen had long remained silent about her participation in the military operations in Dersim until 1987. In an interview appeared in *Nokta*, on 28 June 1987, although not very reluctant, in passim for the first time she made some remarks about Dersim. In that interview she argues that no bombs were dropped on civilians, and that government was well informed about the whereabouts of the “bad people” who were their real targets. “To bomb areas with children around,” she believed, “would have been an inhumane act. That was not done.” In response to another question raised during the same interview about the displacement of the Dersimlis to other parts of Turkey, mainly the West, she says: “That happened, of course. For some time, they were sent to other places for a better living. As I told you before, they lived in primitive quarters that could hardly be called housing. They were moved to other places for a better living. That was Atatürk’s purpose. He wanted them to live in more humane conditions.” (*Nokta*, 28 June 1987; for a detailed analysis see Altınay, 2004).

Picture 1. Sabiha Gökçen holding a bomb in front of her plane in Diyarbakır Airbase just before taking off for Dersim.



Source: Courtesy of Cemal Taş.

The traditional guerilla tactics of the insurgents were eventually overwhelmed by the modernized Turkish army⁶. In late August, newspapers reported that Seyit Rıza, the alleged instigator and organizer of the insurgency, had been captured along with his associates (Picture 2). On September 16, 1937, newspapers proclaimed that the Dersim “incident” was, once and for all, finished.⁷ Seyit Rıza, his son, and 5 other chieftains were hastily condemned to death and hung in Elazığ on November 18, 1937.

⁶ According to *The New York Times* (17 June 1937) 30,000 troops were moved to the region. *Cumhuriyet* gives the number of troops as 25,000.

⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, 16 and 19 September, 1937.

Picture 2. Two pictures of Seyit Rıza after his capture; the second picture shows him with a hat and a jacket in a more “civilized” look.



Source: *Akşam*, 22 September 1937.

If Turkish state authorities had ended their operation with the capture and punishment of the insurgent leaders, the Dersim/Tunceli military campaign might have looked like a classic example of a reactive state response aiming to suppress an armed insurgency, narrowly targeting those believed to be inciting resistance to the state, similar to the other previous Ottoman and Republican military interventions in eastern and southeastern Anatolia, or for that matter elsewhere. Yet, a second and much more comprehensive and ambitious campaign, known as the *Second Tunceli Military Campaign*, was launched in July 1938 and lasted until the end of August. This time the mission was “to completely cleanse the Tunceli region from tribes” as well as to “end raiding and banditry in the region” (Hallı, 1972: 410-413). The whole region was to be “combed” so that “not a single place in Tunceli was left inaccessible to the state”

(ibid.). Under the Third Army's command the operations were intensified, culminating in a 17-day onslaught that many Dersimlis would later call the "Dersim Massacre," or, euphemistically, simply "38."

In 17 days, military reports stated, 7,954 people were removed from the region, dead or alive (Hallı, 1972: 478). Most of these individuals did not actively participate in the rebellion. The exact number of those who were forced into internal exile in western parts of the Turkey is unknown, but eastern and northern parts of Dersim were completely emptied, and were declared forbidden zones.⁸

The main puzzle that inspired this study is this inversion in state policy. The authorities could have wiped out the entire population of Dersim. They certainly had the means to do that. But, instead they undertook a much more costly option: relocating and resettling the inhabitants of the entire Dersim region in other parts of Turkey family by family. The following pages try to find an answer to this puzzle.

1.3. Methodology

Although this study is informed by long-term historical change and by sociological and political theory, it remains an instance of a historical case study. As Shami (1994: 4) states "an approach which emphasizes the relation between causes and consequences of displacement and examines cases in their historical context is essential in developing an adequate framework of analysis" (also Shami, 1993), which

⁸ Mumcu (1994) estimates the number of people who were internally relocated as 3,500, but it could be as much as ten times higher.

points to the importance of examining specific cases of displacement within their geopolitical and historical context. It is, therefore, essential to contextualize any population movement: to place it in time and to describe it in space.

Given that very little empirical research exists on the subject, this project will combine archival research on institutional practices of the state with a mode of inquiry into the life experiences of those who were subject to state-incited population movements. This interdisciplinary methodology ensures that state-centered history does not simply become a background, but that the mutually constitutive relationship between state and non-state actors will remain at the center of investigation. This called for utilizing two distinct but complementary research methodologies: archival research and oral history coupled with what is often referred as historical ethnography.

Most the historical data for this study came from primary government documents in the state archives⁹, and other primary as well secondary published materials (newspapers, magazines, journals, party programs, political manuals, memoirs of officials). A systematic analysis of these materials helps to understand the governmental decision-making process, and provides some ground for documenting the dynamics of the Turkish state's population policies in general. However, their focus is restricted almost exclusively to the activities of the political elite. They are

⁹ Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi (Prime Ministry Republican Archives, hereafter BCA); Grand National Assembly Archives, which contain minutes, hearings and discussions that took place in the Parliament (Düstur, T.B.M.M Zabıt Ceridesi [Records of the Grand National Assembly], T.B.M.M Gizli Celse Tutanakları [Records of the Secret Sessions of the Grand National Assembly], T.C. Resmi Gazete [Official Gazette of Turkish Republic]).

explicitly biased in favor of rulers, and they rarely talk about popular experiences. And when they do, they usually present a distorted impression of the popular experiences. But the popular experiences of forced migrants were precisely what I wanted to learn more about, and to incorporate into my analysis. For that reason, and with the advantage of studying a relatively recent period, I carried out in-depth, extended interviews with people who actually lived through or observed state enforced migration.

From September 2002 to September 2004, I conducted 69 interviews in various towns and cities of Turkey, 52 with forced migrants from the southeastern Anatolia region, specifically from Dersim, who were deported from Dersim and resettled in other parts of the country, and 17 with local community members in the places where these forced migrants were settled (Bursa, Kemalpaşa, İnegöl, Mudanya, Eskişehir, Aydın, İzmir, Burdur, Amasya, Ankara, Samsun, Çorum, Çankırı, Konya, Karaman, Kayseri, Tunceli, Erzincan, Elazığ and İstanbul). 42 out of 52 forced migrants are returnees (they returned back to their natal villages when the Settlement Law of 1934, which provided the legal framework for their resettlement, was partially lifted in 1947), and 10 are stayees (they chose not to return but stayed in their place of settlement). The ages of the respondents range from 68 to +/-100.¹⁰

Some scholars have rightfully raised concerns about the reliability and validity of information coming from oral sources, especially from the elderly. Despite the

¹⁰ To protect the identity of the respondents, all personal names used in the text are pseudonyms. Some respondents also wanted to hide their physical location for privacy concerns. Therefore, except in very few cases the location of interview is not revealed.

common assumption that written historical records, especially officially compiled government archives, provide more “objective” information about the past, written history is often just as selective or subjective in its reconstruction of the past as local memories and oral narratives (Thompson, 1988; Tonkin, 1992; Perks and Thomson, 1998; Josselson and Lieblich, 1993). As a source of information, the “perpetrators” exaggeration is no less than of the “victims’.” In the case of internal relocation of minority groups in Turkey, for example, the perpetrators usually exaggerated the disloyalty and treachery of the targeted groups, as this makes the relocation more justifiable. Similarly, it was often the case that, in their accounts, victims of the relocation highlighted the role of the perpetrators, and downplayed the role that any of their own actions might have played in the process. The contention of this study is that the “reality” usually lies somewhere between these competing accounts. No doubt human memory is selective, partial, and susceptible to distortion. But, so is state memory. The central issue here is the problematic nature of knowledge as a social and historical construct. In this context, it is necessary to accept that written evidence is only one side of a conflict.

One of the difficulties with national and official historiography is a long-standing bias in favor of written data, especially officially compiled data, at the expense of more popularly collected and disseminated oral histories (Karakasidou, 1997). In the case of Republican Turkey, because of the attempt to create a single national identity within a historically multicultural geography, the everyday experience of people (including their memories of the past) has mostly been

discounted (Neyzi, 1999: 3). The national history in its official version, which excised the historical experience of the co-existence of multi-ethnic/multi-religious populations, became, until recently, the unchallengeable foundation of Turkish identity. As Keyder (2003) states, “this suppression, which was necessary for the coherence of the energetically propagated official version of national history and identity, could not accommodate the lived experience of the population and the abundant physical evidence of a prior ‘non-homogeneous’ population.” Oral history, in contrast, gives us access to the informal, by extending beyond official discourse. As an alternative source of information, therefore, it has the potential to bridge the gap between heterogeneous everyday life experiences and macro social and political analysis in Turkey.

The credibility of oral evidence depends more on its internal consistency, cross-checking, and whether the account is placed in the wider social context (Lummis, 1987) than on its external reliability. To control for the problem of internal consistency, I selected four informants and conducted 3 or 4 follow-up interviews to see if their stories/narratives were internally consistent. For each informant, the first interview was conducted alone, usually at a place of his or her own choosing. Then I conducted the same interview in the presence of close family members. The same interview was then repeated in the presence of the informant’s peers in public. Finally, the last interview was conducted alone, but this time at a place of my own choosing. Although the form and style of telling varied in each context, the content and chronology of events remained consistent.

Because of the “political sensitivity” of the subject at hand, coupled with privacy concerns and scarcity of potential respondents, the only feasible sampling method was snowball sampling (also referred as chain-referral sampling).

It is commonly accepted that snowball sampling is best suited for hidden populations, which are difficult for researchers to access. Although subject to numerous biases—for instance it is impossible to make unbiased estimates from snowball samples—a combination of different variations of snowball sampling has been shown to allow researchers to make asymptotically unbiased estimates from snowball samples under certain conditions (Heckathorn, 1997, 2002). To avoid at least some of the shortcomings associated with snowball sampling, I have combined the following variations of snowball sampling: key informant sampling, target sampling, time-space sampling, and respondent-driven sampling.

Since most members of my target population know one another, the respondents were not only asked about their own behaviors and experiences, but also about others’ behavior. As Deaux and Callagan (1985) have shown, this method of “key informant sampling” reduces the tendency to exaggerate socially accepted behavior and understate disreputable behavior.

Targeted sampling, or location sampling, is also a widely employed response to the deficiencies of chain-referral models. Target sampling generally involves two basic steps: first, field researchers map a target population; and second, field researchers recruit a pre-specified number of subjects at sites identified by the ethnographic mapping, ensuring that subjects from different areas and subgroups will

appear in the final sample. As Watters and Biernacki (1989) have shown, to the extent that researchers succeed in penetrating the local networks linking potential respondents, this prevents the under-sampling that traditional approaches would produce. This method worked quite well in Dersim, where the target population is geographically concentrated.

A more refined alternative to targeted sampling is time space sampling (Muhir et al., 2001). Under this procedure, ethnographic fieldwork is done to construct a sampling frame by identifying times when members of the target population gather at specific locations – for example at regular or occasional religious ceremonies, at yearly festivals, or at coffeehouses. This method was especially fruitful for reaching Dersimli forced migrants residing in cities, other than the Tunceli province, where the target population was dispersed.

Finally, after establishing initial contacts through some socially well-connected respondents, I tried to reach further potential respondents through the chain-referral procedure. The basic idea behind this method, which is called respondent-driven sampling, is that respondents are selected not from a sampling frame but from the friendship network of existing members of the sample. The sampling process begins when the researcher selects a small number of “seeds,” who are the first people to participate in the study. These seeds then recruit others to participate in the study. This process of existing sample members recruiting future sample members continues until the desired sample size is reached (Heckathorn 1997, 2002). One advantage of respondent-driven sampling is that it allows researchers to make estimates about the

nature, character, and dynamics of social networks that connect the hidden population (Salganik and Heckathorn, 2004).

I also spent the summers of 2003 and 2004 in Tunceli (formerly Dersim), and carried out what I call historical ethnography, trying to learn about the history of the region and its socio-economic structure before their inhabitants were deported and resettled, from the perspective of its own inhabitants. For comparative purposes, I also paid attention to the current socio-economic makeup of the region.

1.4. Outline of the Dissertation Chapters

Chapter II sets up the theoretical framework for the formation of state policy, paying close attention to the changes in that policy and their possible consequences. In particular, I explain why the Turkish state's policies towards the Kurds in general, and the Alevi Kurds of Dersim in particular, shifted constantly in the first three decades of the Republic. Contrary to the arguments that the Turkish state had a uniform policy towards its Kurdish citizens from the beginning, I argue that the type of policies adopted by Turkish state authorities and their selection depended on three related factors: the nature and dynamic of the relationship between state authorities (both central and local) and local elites; the amount of infrastructural power the state had over the territory in question; and the policy options already available to state authorities, i.e., the prevalent repertoire of state action. All of these factors, I argue, are path dependent: earlier relations, practices, policies limit the possibilities and opportunities both for state authorities and ordinary people. More specifically, I argue

that earlier institutionalization and “effective” use and results of the policy of forced migration and resettlement made it the strongest option for state authorities to adopt.

Following the argument developed in Chapter II, Chapter III looks at the historical origins, development, and institutionalization of forced migration (*sürgün*) and resettlement (*iskan*), starting from early modern Ottoman times up until the Republican period. Here I argue that, although with varying intentions and consequences, state authorities had frequently employed forced migration and resettlement to manage subject populations, to contain conflict, and to improve the economy, usually with positive results. Thus, when the Republic was established, these same policies were readily available for the Republican cadres. Moreover, the frequent, and usually effective, use of forced migration and resettlement by other states in Europe and elsewhere, especially during colonization processes before and after the First World War, made it an all the more attractive option for the Turkish state elite.

Chapter IV carries the arguments developed in previous chapters to the early Republican period, and scrutinizes the legal and institutional developments that led to Dersim. I show how the development of a particular form of legal and institutional/administrative system (*Settlement Laws* and *Inspectorates-General*) interacted with a particular kind of discourse on Dersim and its inhabitants (and for that matter on the Kurds in general) developed by some sectors of the state machinery led to the displacement of the Dersimlis. That analysis will provide us with the “official perspective from above.”

Chapter V, in turn, tries to develop what might be called a “perspective from below.” Based on the first-person accounts of the Dersimli forced migrants, it tries to make sense of the experiences and perceptions of ordinary people. It shows that, despite the asymmetrical nature of their power and position, Dersimli forced migrants tried to make the most out of their situation by applying various strategies during their time in exile. I argue that they constantly refused to be passive victims of history, and adopted various survival strategies, what James Scott calls “weapons of the weak” (Scott, 1985). Following Charles Tilly’s (2005) model I outline and detail four such strategies: concealment, dissimulation, alliance-making, and enlistment. While macro/structural forces play an important role in generating and structuring population movements, the causes and consequences of displacement cannot be understood in isolation from the meanings that are reinforced, contested, and created through such massive movements. These conditions inform people’s choices and decisions, within the space allowed them. In this chapter I also argue and try to show that the choice of a particular strategy was a function of the nature of the unfolding relationship a) between the forced migrants and the local authorities and b) between the forced migrants, local populations, and other immigrant communities.

Finally, the concluding chapter provides an overview of the dissertation, points out limitations of the study, and suggests further avenues of inquiry.

CHAPTER II

TOWARDS A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO FORCED POPULATION MOVEMENTS

2.1. Introduction

Political authorities use various methods to deal with contenders of their authority. The most drastic measures may include mass killings, expelling entire groups of active or potential challengers and their supporters, or destroying their living habitat with a spectacular display of violence. Softer measures are also sometimes taken, such as local policing and surveillance, selective exemplary arrests and coercive interrogations, restricting- contenders' movements and travel, or partial or total resettlement policies; as well as more flexible measures like negotiating with the challengers or even conceding to their claims (Ron, 1997, 2003).

By looking at the various mechanisms that affect the type of measures political authorities adopt, the first part of this chapter attempts to build a theoretical model that would explain why and under what circumstances one particular coercive measure, or a combination of two or more coercive measures, together or consecutively, are selected over others. Equally, I will try to account for when and how political authorities shift their policies, either from more violent and drastic measures to softer and more flexible ones, or from more flexible to more drastic ones. My primary theoretical concern is to understand and explain how and why governments change

their methods of social and political control when faced with resistance. In other words, how do they choose strategies to deal with internal contenders? Following Michael Mann's distinction between despotic and infrastructural power of the state (Mann, 1986, 1993) I argue that states use more radical and violent measures in cases where their infrastructural power is weak.

In the second part of the chapter, I engage with a different problematic by looking at what happens once a certain measure is chosen and implemented by authorities. That is, I ask what sorts of mechanisms might be at work, influencing whether or not a chosen macro state policy produces its intended results on the ground, i.e., at the micro level. I argue that the result, intended or otherwise, of a chosen state policy of social and political control (in this case forced migration and internal resettlement) depends, on 1) the dynamics involved in its implementation by local or regional state agents, and 2) the kind of response it triggers among the target groups and the kind of strategies adopted by them, and 3) the response of local third parties. I will try to illustrate this in the case of the forced internal resettlement of Dersimli Kurds. The policy of internal resettlement of Dersimlis was aimed at their forced assimilation. The "success" of this policy¹¹, that is the assimilation of the Dersimlis into the dominant Turkish (though not necessarily into the dominant Sunni) "culture," however, depended on the micro contexts of interactions between local/regional authorities, the resettled population, and local communities. Local/micro level

¹¹ "Success" here does not refer to any kind of normative judgment. I use "success" in an instrumental sense, as an achievement of an intended result.

relations and interactions between 1) forced migrants and local communities, and 2) forced migrants and local state authorities had as much, if not more, impact on whether or not the displaced people would adjust to their new environment, integrate, and possibly assimilate or alternatively resist than the initial implementation of resettlement as a macro state policy. The combination of a particular ideology and political structure might have created the conditions for forced migration of minority groups, but it in no way determined its outcomes. I draw upon the recent works of Charles Tilly (1995, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, 2006; also McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly, 2001) on relational social analysis, which emphasizes the importance of relations and interactions between various social actors. Ideological factors and structural constraints and opportunities, of course, do matter, but not because they have inherent explanatory qualities. They matter to the extent that they affect and change the character and dynamics of unfolding interactions between various social actors. By taking relations, interaction, and transactions between different actors in their historical context as its basic unit of analysis, this study not only intends to historicize and give texture to larger social and political processes in a non-determinist way, but also emphasizes the role of human agency in those processes (Emirbayer, 1997).

Since the arguments of this study come from a single historical case study, it shares many difficulties and problems of single case studies in general. Therefore, despite its within-case historical and regional comparative character, as a case study it makes no claim for its unproblematic application elsewhere. Of course some of the

concepts, variables, and arguments presented here can be extended to or tested on other cases. Although I sometimes over-dramatize the context, in its present form my explanation provides a reasonable interpretation of empirical variation within the Turkish case during the initial phases of its nation-building or nationalizing process. With some modification, however, a similar approach might help explain changes in the pattern of state violence in other cases of nation-building states.

2.2. Explaining State Action

In the spring of 1937 in Dersim, as an initial response to increasing unrest among a few historically contentious and armed highland Alevi tribes of Dersim against the centralization efforts of the central government in the region, whose pace had been intensified starting in early 1930s, political authorities first opted for negotiating, although in a very limited fashion, with some influential local tribal and religious leaders. As a matter of fact, this was not the first time Dersimlis were up in arms against the government. Historically, even much before the Republican period, imperial authorities had to confront and deal with the resistance of Alevi tribes of Dersim against any sort of direct intervention efforts, but to no avail. Ottoman authorities had to rule Dersim through negotiating with local patrons, usually with the leaders of the strong lowland tribes, who acted as intermediaries/brokers even after the transition from indirect to direct rule. Dersim had continued its *de facto* autonomous status up until early 1930s. On the other hand, it should be noted here that after the transition from indirect to direct rule, considering the general character and nature of the political system, especially in the Republican period, mediated rule in the Dersim

region, and its *de facto* autonomy, became an exception rather than the norm, which was perceived as a serious problem to be fixed by the Republican government. In 1930 in Turkey, Dersim was the only region that had not been fully brought into government's effective control. Not only did they have a tradition of not paying their taxes, but also they had always tried to avoid military conscription. Dersim was standing like an "internal frontier" (Ron, 2003) in the midst of Turkey's national borders. "It was an abscess right at the center of a healthy organism." Therefore, whatever its costs, as one state authority had put it as early as in 1926, "first the abscess is going to be cut off, and like any other piece of land within the borders of the new Turkish State, it is going to be put under state's control."¹²

The attitude of the authorities towards the status of Dersim, not to mention the ongoing unrest and resistance, is arguably understandable. The newly established Turkish state, with its nationalizing project, had no intention of letting anyone or any group oppose, muddle, or disturb the process of building its nation within its

¹² Hamdi Bey, Inspector of Civil Service, reported in 1925 that "Dersim is like an abscess for the republican government. To operate on this abscess and to prevent the probability of further distress is necessary for the safety (or security) of the country" (Bulut, 2005: 219). Almost ten years later, in late 1935, during his opening speech at the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Atatürk also hinted at the seriousness of the Dersim issue, and that various measures were going to be taken against it: "We have the necessity to expand our internal administrative institutions starting with the Eastern regions of our country. It is required to constitute two new general inspectorships and some new cities. We also think that it is vital to administer a general program in Dersim. We expect many benefits from general inspectorships that help to control our cities constantly and to execute their common works centrally. The main necessity for our Eastern cities is to connect them to Middle and Western Anatolia cities via railways. We are compelled to finish two main railroads rapidly and from now on will start building a series of roads which connect those two each other" (November 1, 1935, Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi, Session 5, vol. 6, p. 2).

established and internationally recognized territorial borders. As Tilly (1975: 181) aptly argues, processes of state making (eliminating or neutralizing inside rivals) and extraction (of human and material resources), are integral parts of the state building enterprise.¹³ Therefore, in one way or another, the newly established national state of Turkey had to establish its control over every corner of its territory, including Dersim. That, of course, doesn't mean that the Turkish State was desperately in need of the resources, either in capital or human power, available in Dersim. But, it did mean that the logic of building a national state cannot tolerate any sort of overt resistance or challenge against its claim of being the only power and of having monopoly over the means of violence.¹⁴ Yet, the question remained: with what measures could state authorities possibly deal with the incessant resistance coming from Dersim? How could it be possible to have control of the region, and to end the resistance movement

¹³ War making and protection are other equally important mechanisms in the state-building process (Tilly, 1975, 1992).

¹⁴ The reference here is to Weber's definition: "states monopolize the effective exercise of violence over a territory" (Weber, 1974: 54-56), rather than "state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of force within a given territory" (Weber, 1958: 78). I have left out Weber's problematic requirement that the state's monopoly be legitimate. The reason for this is that an organization can successfully claim a monopoly on legitimate violence while holding nothing resembling a monopoly over the sum total of violence, legitimate or otherwise. The belief among the members of society that only one organization is entitled to use violence would suffice. Defining modern states' monopolies as legitimate is problematic because it implies that states' sustenance of actual monopolies on violence is a result of the consent of the governed, which may or may not be the case. Following this, it is possible to argue that "the monopoly of legitimate force... is a false characterization of early modern states" (Goldstone, 1991: 5). Mann (1986: 37) also uses a similar definition of statehood, which avoids the ascription of legitimacy.

without attracting much domestic criticism and international attention, and without disturbing still-developing post-war economic conditions?

This was to be achieved through a process that I call “dialectics of state domination,”¹⁵ where two seemingly opposite imperatives, like coercive penetration and negotiative embracing, govern state action. In the case of Dersim this process started with an initial limited negotiation and mediation process put into motion when state authorities were unable to gain physical access to the contentious region. At the time Dersim was still an “internal frontier” (Ron, 2003) for the Turkish state. Negotiation and mediation were two important mechanisms of Ottoman indirect rule. Despite significant differences between the imperial and post-imperial states in their systems of rule, however, negotiation and mediation were two of the important governing imperatives whose legacy continued into the Republican period.

However, negotiation and mediation worked better in a system of indirect rule, because the expectations of the central authorities were minimal, and the probability of finding a local ally was much higher. In a system of direct rule, on the other hand, that was not the case. In direct rule, it is usually difficult to reconcile the interests of the central state authorities and the demands of the local power-holders.

In the presence of a powerful sovereign willing, but not able to permanently subjugate and directly rule the highlands of Dersim due to its daunting human ecology, the first choice of the central authorities was to attempt to negotiate with the

¹⁵ Adopted from Balbus’ (1973) concept of “dialectic of legal repression.” See also Ron, 2000.

powerful tribal and religious leaders of Dersim. The legacy of Ottoman indirect rule in Dersim, where the Ottomans were neither willing nor able to rule directly, also played a part in this choice.

The initial efforts of Turkish state authorities to negotiate with the leaders of the local Dersimli tribes, however, invariably failed. It was only after this failure that national authorities resorted to more repressive and violent measures until military and physical power over the contending population and their land was consolidated. After the state attained a sufficient amount of infrastructural power over the region at hand, a process that I refer to as the “state’s expansion and settlement into the frontier” (internal colonization), its methods of coercion and domination became less dramatic and less violent (Ron, 1997, 2000, 2003). Because the human ecology of the frontier was too daunting¹⁶, de-peopling of the frontier and re-settlement of its inhabitants were deemed necessary to accelerate this process until the state had firmly established its infrastructural power in the frontier. Until the frontier in question becomes a colony¹⁷ (in both the physical and geographic sense) it was treated as a forbidden

¹⁶ “Dersim is a rocky, very steep, and difficult to traverse wild place which has few cultivated areas and grasslands. The wilderness of the land affects the nature of the people of Dersim and makes them wild, bloodthirsty, and deprived of humanity and basic virtues” (Kazım Karabekir, 2004: 88). This geographic characteristic of Dersim and its effect on the region’s social and economic organization are repeatedly mentioned in military reports. See, for instance, the Dersim report of General Command of Gendarmerie (Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı, 1998).

¹⁷ “First, Dersim should be considered as a ‘colony,’ Kurdishness should be dissolved in Turkish society, and later it should be gradually objected to real/essential Turkish law” (Report submitted to the General Staff by the General Command of Gendarmerie, in Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı, 1998: 184).

zone. Meanwhile, inhabitants of the former frontier region were to be colonized socially and politically on the secure lands of the colonizer state. In other words, in the case of Dersim, the principle mechanism of translating the state's short-run, destructive, despotic power into long-run, infrastructural power was to de-people the region and to force the migration and internal re-settlement of its inhabitants.

As we will see more in detail in coming chapters, Turkish state's policies of coercion and control in Dersim were surprisingly sensitive to geography and human ecology.

2.3. Alternative Explanations: Regime Type, Ideology, and Objective Threat

One alternative explanation of why states do what they do in general, and why and when they prefer direct physical violence or indirect methods of coercion is regime type. Turkey had an authoritarian, one-party regime in 1938, and became a semi-democracy in 1946, when the Democratic Party was established and allowed to function as an opposition to the Republican People's Party, which had been in power since the establishment of the Turkish Republic. It is not incidental, as the regime change explanation goes, that it is in 1947, right after the first seeds of the democratization process were planted, that the Turkish state ended its forced assimilation through resettlement policy. Wouldn't this transformation in Turkey's political regime explain the change in the Turkish State's policies towards the Kurds in general?

There are serious difficulties with this argument, however. First, the designation of the change from single party to multi-party system as transformation from authoritarianism to democracy is problematic. Even after the transfer of executive power from the Republican People's Party to the Democratic Party's in 1950, the political regime in Turkey showed significant continuity in terms of its authoritarian characteristics. The military continued to maintain its power over politics, and this had an especially significant effect on the State's general policies towards the Kurds.¹⁸

The drawbacks of regime-based arguments emerge more generally from the tarnished records of democracies and semi-democracies worldwide. France, where the seeds of democracy were first cultivated, for example, employed vicious measures, ranging from indiscriminate terror, to torture, to forced displacement against rebellious colonized peoples in Algeria and Vietnam.¹⁹ Compared to this history, Turkey in the 1930s was, in many ways, much more democratic, yet its war with the Kurdish separatists was an entirely brutal affair, leading to the depopulation of southeastern Anatolia and the forcible displacement (this time with no accompanying resettlement policy) of large swaths of its Kurdish speaking inhabitants. Regime type, in and of itself, then, is too blunt an explanatory tool to account for an individual state's varying repertoire of violence.

¹⁸ As a matter of fact, until very recently party politics have had minimal effect on the Turkish State's attitude and policies towards its Kurdish speaking citizens.

¹⁹ At the time of this writing, similar methods were being used by American forces in Iraq in the name of democracy and democratization.

Second, variations of state policies within the Turkish/Ottoman case suggest that the nature of its political regime cannot, on its own, explain changing patterns of state coercion. How can authoritarian regime explain, for instance, the shift from limited negotiation to violent suppression, and then to less drastic measure of internal resettlement of the contentious Dersimlis within a relatively short period of time? Why, moreover, did Turkish authoritarianism not translated into a similar tyranny against other contentious groups during the same time period? Why, for example, did a more infamous popular uprising, arguably provoked by radical religious groups in the city of Menemen in Western Anatolia in December 1930, not prompt authorities to undertake methods of violence and repression similar to those they preferred to take in the case of the Dersim rebellion? As a response to the Menemen uprising, authorities decided to contain the unrest by encircling the city and declaring marshal law in and around it. They arrested around 105 instigators and participants of the uprising, out of which 27 were publicly hanged as and exemplary punishment, and it was left at that (Tunçay, 1999: 303-305)²⁰.

Moreover, why do we observe similar patterns of state action against internal contenders during the Ottoman imperial period, which had a very different political

²⁰ In his memoir, Fahrettin Paşa [Altay], who was the commander in charge during the marshal law period, states that right after he received the news, Mustafa Kemal called the Prime Minister, the Head of the Parliament, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Defense, and himself into a meeting regarding the incident, and told them to 1) investigate seriously the political roots of this incident, 2) punish those who were responsible for it, 3) de-people the region, and 4) intimidate the opposition press (Altay, 1970: 434-439; also cited in Tunçay, 1999: 304). The de-peopling of the region and displacement of the people of Menemen never happened.

regime and ideology of ruling than its successor? In fact, the historical legacy of the Ottoman Empire and its impact on the formation of the Republican state's "repertoire of violence" is much more suggestive than the political nature of the regime.

We observe similar problems with ideology-based explanations of state action. Analogous to regime-type explanations in terms of form but not content, ideology-based explanations try to account for variation in state action in terms of changes in the ideological orientations and predilections of those who have control over state power. the emergence and development of nationalism as the ideology of the nation-state, in this perspective, is presented as the primary explanation for why modern states do what they do. As nationalist ideology becomes more powerful and hegemonic among the state elite, state policies become less flexible and more exclusive and violent against those who do not fit into the dominant understanding of the nation.

With respect to the state policies of early republican Turkey, ideologically oriented accounts try to explain state action through the dominant ideology of the ruling state elite, which is often refereed as Kemalism²¹. Both by its proponents and critics, for a long time now, Kemalism has been portrayed as a coherent and

²¹ The basic principles of Kemalism are defined in the 1931 program of the Republican People's Party as republicanism, secularism, nationalism, populism, statism, and revolutionism. Defined as such, Kemalism never became a coherent, all-embracing ideology, but can best be described as a set of attitudes and opinions, which were never defined or articulated in much detail. As a result, it remained a flexible concept, more like an umbrella term, and people with widely differing world views have been able to call themselves Kemalist (Zürcher, 2003: 191).

overpowering ideology, responsible for all past and present goods and evils.²² With respect to its relationship with its minorities, as nationalist ideology—especially in its ethnic version—became more entrenched among the upper echelons of Kemalists, the Turkish state's attitude towards its minorities became more exclusionary, inflexible, and at times violent.

In a similar but somewhat different vein, others argue that ethnic nationalism caused a radical discursive shift in the definitional boundaries of the nation. Initially, belonging to the Turkish nation was ideologically defined in territorially inclusive but religiously exclusive terms. That definition eliminated the possibility that non-Muslim groups belong to the Turkish nation in any way. Muslims, on the other hand, regardless of their ethnic origin, remained as potential members of the Turkish nation. Although this account helps to explain the Turkish state's policies towards non-Muslims, both the first (secular Kemalist ideology) and the second (religious) type of ideology-based account fail to explain the case of Dersim. Indeed, in terms of dominant ethno-religious boundaries, being Alevi and speaking a non-Turkic language put Dersimlis in a very disadvantaged and stigmatized position compared to the Sunni Kurds and the Alevi Turks. If that was the main reason for what happened to Dersim and the Dersimlis in the 1930s and 1940s, we should have observed a more consistent state policy towards them. But, that was not the case. The state authorities had changed their policy towards the Dersim and the Dersimlis at least four times during

²² For critiques see, for example, Parla (1992), Ahmad (1993), Zürcker (2003), Parla and Davison (2004); and for classical pro-Kemalist arguments see, Lewis (1961), Shaw and Shaw (1977), Landau (1984).

the period under consideration, from negotiation to violent coercion to forced assimilation through internal resettlement, and finally to the lifting of forced resettlement. Of course, already existing social boundaries played their usual role, but they do not in and of themselves explain the tragedy of the Dersimlis.

Another possible answer might point to different levels of threat, real or perceived, suggesting that a state's methods are shaped by the magnitude of the security challenge it faces from contending groups. The rebellious tribes of Dersim were more threatening, thus the Turkish state dealt with them more harshly. Upon closer examination, however, that argument also fails to persuade.

This puzzle of state violence is further complicated by historical variations in the Turkish state's treatment of its Kurdish speaking citizens and their resistance. Compared to the two previous, and much more organized, Kurdish rebellions in Southeast and Eastern Anatolia—respectively the Sheikh Said rebellion in 1925 and the Mount Ararat rebellion in 1929-1930—the Dersim rebellion constituted a much less objective threat for the Turkish State. Yet, it ended with what might be called a semi-ethnic cleansing. Although Turkish security forces had suppressed the former two rebellions violently, the measures taken after the suppression of both rebellions were pernicious but less dramatic compared to the case of Dersim. Despite the fact that serious territorial claims and threats were in question, in the former two cases authorities were quite careful in distinguishing between actual rebels and ordinary people, which did not happen in the latter case, where Turkish military forces physically razed the entire region, indiscriminately killing ordinary Dersimlis,

irrespective of whether they actually participated in the rebellion or supported it in any way. Turkish state authorities, certainly, had viewed the Sheikh Said rebellion as a far greater threat than the Dersim rebellion, but it was in Dersim, not in Sheikh Said, that Turkish state authorities resorted to indiscriminately violent measures and killed large numbers of civilians. Perceptions of national security matter enormously, of course, but interpretations of what constitutes a threat are always mediated by other factors²³.

2.4. Interaction of Ideology and Institutional Setting

What, then, might explain variation within a single state's repertoire of social and political control mechanisms against its internal contenders? Can the varying degree of adherence to nationalist ideology among the state elite do the job? As the comparison of the Menemen and Dersim uprisings shows, the same nationalist political elite reacted to each case differently during the same time period (1930s).

This study suggests that actual repertoires of state domination are determined by institutional and geographical/organizational setting (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991). The repertoires of state action against its contenders are shaped by both institutional and geographical opportunities and restraints. More drastic and violent state actions are deployed in discrete institutional settings that vary in terms of visibility, legibility (Scott, 1998), accessibility, level of state control, and degree of state regulation (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991). These settings are specific in terms of both the nature

²³ For a critical review of arguments suggesting that threat shapes state violence, see Stanley, 1996.

of conflict and geography. In that respect states use different methods of domination in their cores and frontiers.

The case of Dersim suggests that the Turkish state's methods of coercion tended towards more destructive tactics when and where its grip was weak, and towards less dramatic methods when and where its control was highest. This observation prompts elaboration of a general hypothesis of state action. The less firmly a region is controlled by a nationalist state, the more likely it is to experience destructive violence and even ethnic cleansing, especially when it resists the state's efforts of infrastructural penetration/incursion. State domination is organized very differently in the periphery as opposed to the core of power. At the margins of the state, authority extremism flourishes. As the periphery gets integrated to the core, or as the state's power over the periphery becomes solid, methods of state domination begin to shift to less virulent proportions. In other words, states are more prone to use more destructive tactics in institutionally thin areas, but use softer methods of domination in densely institutionalized settings. To give an example, contentious Kurdish groups living in Ankara, the national capital, are in a densely institutionalized setting than are their co-nationals living in Hakkari, a remote and poorly controlled peripheral province in southeastern Anatolia. In both cases the contending groups would be repressed by the nationalist authorities, but the actual repertoire of the state's methods of violence would be quite different. Institutional settings serve as "mediating structures" (Berger, 1976), transforming similarly nationalist orientations into dissimilar regimes of domination. Similarly, had the Dersim uprising occurred exactly

at the same time, but in a different and more densely institutionalized setting, the Turkish state would not (and could not) have used the same dramatic and violent methods.

The case of Dersim in Turkey highlights the ability of institutional and geographical setting to shape repertoires of state coercion. When a particular form of state ideology interacts with a particular form of institutional and geographical setting, the consequences can be inconceivably devastating. Even within the same ideological framework, states do not dominate their frontiers as they dominate their cores. It was only when Turkish ethno-nationalism interacted with the Dersim frontier that ethnic cleansing became a viable option.

2.5. Despotic and Infrastructural Regimes of Power

In terms of the variation in state response to its internal contenders, following the theoretical models developed by Michael Mann (1986, 1988, 1993), Charles Tilly (1992), Anthony Giddens (1985), and Michel Foucault (1995), this study suggests that in the pre-modern, pre-national period, sovereigns used intense but sporadic violence against internal dissidents. It was not just simply a matter of the beliefs of the rulers that a few dramatic punitive acts would keep others in line and maintain order, but also that they neither had the technical means nor the necessary resources to implement more comprehensive regimes of control. Modern states, especially national states, on the other hand, it is argued, cut back on the intensity of their methods, shifting to smooth, more “civilized” but at the same time more comprehensive regimes

of control. As John Torpey aptly argues, state penetration²⁴, direct or indirect, would no longer suffice for effective governance. The modern state must also “embrace” its society in order to penetrate it effectively. Although the modern state’s ability to shape society has increased dramatically, the intensity of domestic state coercion has declined (Torpey, 1998).

Scholars have offered different explanations of this trend, but Michael Mann’s distinction between despotic and infrastructural power provides a particularly useful tool. As Mann says, in the pre-modern period, rulers used intense but sporadic violence against internal rebels, believing that a few dramatic punitive acts would keep others in line. Modern states, on the other hand, cut back on the intensity of methods, shifting to smoother but more comprehensive regimes of control. Pre-modern despots had less societal constraint and could do as they wished with their victims, but they had less access to powerful technologies of control over society at large. Modern “infrastructural” states, by contrast, can penetrate society and implement their policies more widely, but are obliged to operate within certain recognized moral and legal limits. Modern states, as Mann declares, cannot “brazenly kill or expropriate their ‘enemies’ without exciting intense oppositions, and they cannot change fundamental rules of state behavior at will” (Mann, 1986: 90). In other words, as infrastructural power grows despotic, power declines. Similarly, Anthony Giddens (1985) views this process as an increase in the “scope” of state power at the expense of intensity. From a

²⁴ For discussions of states as “reaching into” or “penetrating” societies more effectively during the modern period, see Mann (1993), Tilly (1992), Skocpol (1979), and Torpey (1998).

somewhat different perspective, Michael Foucault (1995) sees this as a transformation from “punishment” to “discipline.” As Foucault argues, although punishment is spectacular and intimidating, more often than not it excites popular revulsion and protest. Discipline, on the other hand, is a more insidious and less perceptible form of power.

What caused this shift? Some argue that it stemmed from the material interests of a capitalist class seeking predictable, routinized methods of rule to promote trade, while others suggest that it stemmed from shifts in the balance of state-society power (Migdal, 1988, 1994, 2001). As rulers demanded greater loyalty, taxes, and military service from their citizens, the latter discovered they could successfully press rulers to modify their ways (Tilly, 1990). Some others argue that it was the state elite itself who initiated the shift in order to rationalize and improve techniques of mass control (also Foucault, 1995). Whether caused by the enhancements of capitalism, initiated by rational state technocrats, or triggered by the increasing demands of ordinary citizens, broadly speaking, the more securely the state dominates society, the more incentives it faces to reduce its reliance on despotic methods.

2.6. From Autonomous Frontier to Dependent Colony

Michael Mann’s macro distinction between despotic and infrastructural power, however, is not sensitive enough to regional variations within a single case. States do not (and cannot) expand their infrastructural power over all of their territories at once. At the beginning of the transition process from despotic to infrastructural power, we observe a combination of despotic and infrastructural power. In order to initiate the

process, despotic tactics may gain the upper hand, especially when there is significant resistance against the state's efforts, to facilitate the process and sustain the required conditions to expand infrastructural power over a designated territory. Frontier regions are usually more difficult to penetrate, let alone to embrace, than others. Presence of an already established strong social boundary between the center and the periphery adds to the conflict, but it does not generate it.

Following Hogan's (1985) model, I argue that what happened in Dersim in 1938 and afterwards can best be explained as conversion of an internal frontier, where the state has minimal infrastructural power, into a dependent colony, where the state's power is firmly established. The de-peopling of the region and the forced resettlement of its former inhabitants to other places where state's infrastructural power was already strong was not simple ideological exclusionary practice of the nation-building process, but rather a structural requirement of the state-building process.

The Turkish state was going to "penetrate" Dersim, a former internal frontier, with or without its inhabitants living in it; and, one way or another, it was going to "embrace" the Dersimlis, either on their lands or on its own, not just because they were non-Turkish and non-Sunni, but because otherwise it wouldn't be a modern state. In other words, Dersim as well as the Dersimlis were going to be made "legible" at all costs (Scott, 1998).

The forced removal and resettlement of Dersimlis, no doubt constitutes a form of population cleansing. However neither the intentions nor the ideology of its perpetrators can sufficiently explain it.

In his comparative analysis of the development of nationalism in Spain, England, and France, Anthony Marx argues that nationalism, which he defines as “a collective sentiment or identity, bounding and binding together those individuals who share a sense of large scale political solidarity aimed at creating, legitimating, or challenging states” (Marx, 2003: 6), arise through processes of exclusion, directed against those who threaten the nation and/or remain unworthy of inclusion in the nation.

He argues persuasively that, during the initial stages of nation-state building, unable to unify their entire population, elites in France, England, and Spain chose one core constituency to placate and galvanize, and then tried unite the masses behind them by capitalizing on shared religious sentiment and the persecution of religious minorities. Cleansed of significant religious dissenters, by the late eighteenth century these nations could pursue civic and inclusive state-building policies with social solidarity based on relative religious homogeneity: “Liberal inclusiveness was consolidated on the basis of prior illiberalism” (Marx, 2003: 165). Only after the process of exclusion was complete could both French, English, and Spanish ruling elites afford to be inclusive and take for granted the religious (which for Marx also means ethnic or national) homogeneity of their populace.

Here Marx suggests an alternative to liberal arguments that Western civic nationalisms were inclusive, while Eastern nationalisms were ethnic and exclusive. All nationalisms, he contends, begin with exclusions. According to Marx, those advocates of civic nationalism who condescendingly hold that their formulation is more

comforting should recognize their common moments of origin with ethnic nationalisms. Later ideals of inclusion could only be built on the original base of definition by exclusion. Building a more tolerant liberal society and democracy, in Marx's model, was made possible by earlier exclusionary policies.

A degree of national identification, bounding the community and distinguishing it from outsiders, was a prerequisite for a democratic order. Without sufficient "nationness," any state would be left behind in the modernizing processes of inclusive nation making. For Marx, then, national identity formation, built on violent exclusivist purges, clears the way for institutional state formation.

Marx's arguments is not as novel as it first appears, as many theorists, such as Georg Simmel and Frederic Barth, before him have long ago noted that exclusion is always involved in inclusion, but his work definitely provides a clear, comparative narrative for early modern nation making and state building in Europe that elevates the role of pre-existing social boundaries (in his cases, religious identification) in the development of national identity. From the start Marx makes sure that this dialectic of exclusion and inclusion is closely linked to the standard state formation processes. It was neither the inherent characteristics of existing religious identifications nor ancient hatreds between different religious groups that caused some of them to get excluded or included in the large-scale political units of emerging states. Local conflicts within these emergent states had to be contained by one way or another. Since coercion cannot not always work, these new states, Marx argues, needed a widespread belief

among the populace that their rule is legitimate and should be observed (Marx, 2003: 4).

In some instances, as it was the case in early Republican Turkey, population resettlement was the price to be paid to ease the tensions and conflicts caused by the state-building process. Population cleansing and other forms of exclusion, especially during the initial phases of nation-state building, are not “pathological”, as Rae (2002) has recently argued, but are inherent in virtually all state-building and state-maintaining processes. All states seek to order and regulate their populations, fostering transparency and responsiveness to state needs for finances, military recruits, and social and economic leadership. In some ways, all states are “state-building,” in the sense that they constantly seek to expand their power and reach in the face of a more or less recalcitrant society. As Marx (1998) has shown, at various junctures in their histories, even the most stable states create an “other” within or without to build unity and a sense of common purpose. Even the world’s great democracies have undertaken or at least considered measures that some has classified as “pathological homogenization” (Rae, 2002; see also Mann, 2004).

2.7. Bringing the Dersimlis Back In

In the previous section, we have seen why the Turkish state acted the way it did in the case of the Dersim rebellion. State authorities were not acting solely on the basis of an ideology. The nationalist and nationalizing ideology, which most members of the political elite subscribed to at the time, had of course affected the repertoire of state action, but it did not totally determine it. Considering that the Turkish State’s

ideology had not changed much in the period under study, it doesn't help us to explain what may be considered as a radical shift in state policy in the case of Dersim.

So far I have argued that history, ideology, and geography had all played their parts in the case of Dersim in late 1930s. In other words, the case of Dersim, which has been presented as exceptional by the official historiography can best be explained as a result of an interactive and combined effect of a centralizing state structure dominated by a staff that subscribed to nationalist ideology, whose infrastructural power was comparatively weak over a territory with a daunting human ecology.

The impact of a particular top-down state policy, like forced migration, on a targeted group is usually very differential. I argue that this variation is best explained by the kind of bottom-up strategies (what James Scott calls "weapons of the weak") employed by the forced migrants upon their settlement, which, I argue, is a combined effect of the type of unfolding relations 1) between the forced migrants and the local host communities on the one hand, and 2) between the forced migrants and the local state authorities, on the other.

The type of relations between migrant community and local host community varies depending on whether the region where the immigrants were settled had a history of cultural heterogeneity or not. In regions that were historically ethnically and religiously more heterogeneous, the reception of the forced migrants by the locals tended to be less hostile and more supportive, which eased the adaptation and integration process for the forced migrants (for example in the Aegean and Mediterranean regions). In places that were predominantly homogenous, on the other

hand, relations between settlers and locals tended to be more conflictual, leading to increasing social closure among the forced migrants (for example central Anatolia—Yozgat, Çankırı). Social closure, in turn, led to social distrust and enhanced particularistic ethno-religious identifications among the forced migrants, solidifying an us-them distinction between themselves and the locals. When the Settlement Law of 1934 was lifted in 1947, one third of my informants who were in Aegean and Mediterranean regions chose to stay at their place of settlement (or relocated, this time voluntarily, to another village or city in the same or nearby region) while all from the central Anatolia returned back to their villages in Dersim. Although not very common, there were cases of intermarriage between the forced migrants and the local population in the former, something that did not occur in the latter context.

Similarly, when and where forced migrants were discriminated against and/or mistreated by local authorities, they developed more defensive, and sometimes belligerent, strategies, which in turn increased their discrimination. The result was an increasing political distrust among the forced migrants, which, in the long run, led to further polarization, discontent, and prolonged confrontation between them and the state authorities.

From the narratives of the Dersimli forced migrants, four strategies stand out as a function of their interactions with and reactions to local authorities and other local

or immigrant communities: concealment (of religious beliefs and cultural identifications), dissimulation (towards authorities), alliance-making, and enlistment²⁵.

Concealment is a very common strategy especially among minorities who were subjected to discrimination, exclusion, and repression, not just to avoid detection and manipulation by authorities, but also to evade and escape from social discrimination and exclusion. It involves not only “secrecy and deception, but also reticence and non-acknowledgment.” Dissimulation refers to “feigning conformity by adopting some available public identity, but minimizing compliance and visibility.” In this case I use it to refer to “outward but reluctant conformity to political authorities.” Alliance-making refers to temporary agreement between two or more parties made in order to advance common goals and to secure common interests. Enlistment refers to active engagement with and voluntary integration into the existing social and political system.

Table 1 summarizes when a particular strategy was adopted by the Dersimli forced migrants at their place of settlement. However, it should be noted that the first two were more commonly adopted during the initial phase of displacement, while the last two were more common in later stages. The table, of course, reflects ideal types. These strategies were usually used in combination. For instance, forced immigrants typically attempted to build alliances wherever they had an opportunity (either with other immigrant communities against locals, or with locals against state authorities, or

²⁵ With the exception of alliance-making, these conceptualizing strategies are adopted from Tilly, 2005: 34, 109.

with state authorities against local populations). Concealment and dissimulation reinforced each other and were, more often than not, used in combination.

Survival strategies of forced migrants

		Relations with Local Population	
		<i>Homogenous /conflict</i>	<i>Heterogeneous /cooperation</i>
Relations With Local Authorities	<i>Positive discrimination /incentives</i>	Alliance-making	Enlistment
	<i>Discrimination /coercion</i>	Concealment →	Dissimulation ←

Irrespective of the macro state policy, I expect that Dersimli forced migrants tended to assimilate voluntarily more in the cases where mechanisms of enlistment and alliance-making were predominant. Similarly, those forced migrants who returned to Dersim after 1947 should come from those places where concealment and dissimulation were more frequent and common.

2.8. Conclusion

In this chapter I argued that existing accounts of population cleansing, and other forms of exclusion are inadequate to account for the case of Turkey in general, and for the forced migration and resettlement of the Dersimli Alevi Kurds in particular on two major grounds. First, they don't recognize the importance of standard state

formation processes in the generation of exclusion, oppression or forced assimilation; and second that they usually portray the objects of repression as passive victims rather than active negotiators who respond to pressure with their own distinctive strategies.

Some sympathetic descriptions of the Dersim argue that what happened in Dersim was an ethnic-cleansing, and present ordinary local Dersimlis as mere victims of state violence. If my argument is correct, neither argument holds true. Dersim was not a case of ethnic-cleansing because it was not a 'planned, deliberate removal from a certain territory of an undesirable population' (Bell-Fialkoff, 1996: 3) solely on the basis of ethnic criteria. It occurred because the centralization of political and territorial power, in the form of a nation-state, necessitated more rigid institutional and ideological mechanisms of territorial control (Barkey, *Taming Imperial...*). Those political demands, combined with a daunting human ecology of resisting inhabitants, resulted in a situation that likely would have had very similar results even if those inhabitants had belonged to the same ethnic or religious group as the perpetrators of Dersim '38. As Barkey (1994) argues, imperial states rule their frontiers differently than their cores. I argue that is also true for national states. Not only do national states rule their frontiers differently than their cores, their policies also change as their frontiers become more integrated into the core.

I also argued that the change in state policy is path dependent in the sense that earlier events, interactions, and choices constrain the character and nature of future events, interactions and choices.

Finally I argued that the victimizing sympathy for the Dersimli forced migrants is also very problematic. Perhaps they were in a very unequal and disadvantaged position vis-à-vis the Turkish state. But, as it will become clearer in later chapters, by adopting various strategies of survival against Turkish state's policy of forced assimilation, they played their usual part in making a difference in their own history.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF FORCED MIGRATION AND THE QUESTION OF RESETTLEMENT IN TURKEY FROM THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE TO THE EARLY REPUBLICAN PERIOD

3.1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to lay out the history of what might be broadly labeled as involuntary or (en)forced population movements in the Ottoman/Turkish history roughly from the sixteenth century to the first two decades of the twentieth century. This will provide an opportunity to tract the historical roots of the forced population movements in early Republican Turkey

The discourse that encompasses the politics of state-induced population movements in today's Turkey contains various, and often contradictory, a-historical arguments about both its uses and its consequences. For some it has been a useful tool for maintaining public order and security. For others, it is totally a political problem, a state captured by nationalist political elite doing whatever is necessary to hold on to their power by pro-actively trying to prevent any kind of opposition to their attempt at creating a homogeneous nation (Beşikci, 1991, 1992). And this effort translated into a spatial manipulation and rearrangement of the subject populations. Others have been arguing that it has less to do with politics than economics. Here, the state only resorts to forced migration as an arbiter in order to adjust to the changing economic conditions (Tekeli, 1990, 1994). Modern nation-states, as the argument goes, have a

responsibility for “modernizing” and “civilizing” the backward regions of the country, even if that meant enforcing some of its citizens to relocate.

In fact all these arguments have some truth to them, and help understanding the phenomenon of forced population movements in Turkey. Nevertheless, these arguments are quite abstract and have very limited explanatory power, since they are not based on careful historical analysis. Therefore, there is a strong need to historicize the problem of forced population movements in Turkey. By tracing out the history of forced population movements in Ottoman/Turkish history, this chapter aims to contribute to a better understanding of why forced population movements had become one of the main measures that the new Turkish state frequently resorted to in the early decades of the Republic period. I argue that the reason why the Turkish nation-state frequently used forced migration in its early years can be partially accounted with imperial legacy. The fact that the Ottoman state had used forced migration and resettlement very effectively (meaning that it worked for the intended purposes for most of the time), and that it became part of the repertoire of statecraft provided the Turkish state elite with a ready-made option for state action. Starting from the 14th century, throughout the early modern Ottoman period, there were many instances of forced population movements. In fact, compared to other parts of the world, forced population movements had a more institutionalized character in the Ottoman Empire. Part of the reason why Republican state authorities often resorted to move and resettle some sectors of the subject population is the legacy of this early institutionalization of forced population movements during the preceding imperial period. The repertoire of

“*sürgün*” (exile) as a “legitimate” means of state policy to deal with a heterogeneous subject population had already been established during the imperial period. The policy and repertoire of exile and other kinds of state enforced population movements were already readily available for the Republican cadres.

If that indeed was really the case, in order to account for the population policies during early Republican Turkey, we first need to look at the population policies in the imperial period starting from the emergence of the Ottoman Empire until the establishment of the Republican Turkey. Although it shows variation in different periods of its history, the Ottoman Empire had managed to establish a specific form of organized and institutionalized policy of population management. And, the contention of this study, among other things, is that traces of the legacy of the imperial population policies were apparent in the early years of Republican Turkey²⁶, and perhaps even in contemporary Turkey.

For the purposes of this study, I will divide this long history into four sub-periods according to the different characteristics and patterns of involuntary population movements in each period. The first is the period that Ottoman historians usually refer to as the early modern period (14th to 18th centuries). In this period the institutional and organizational structure of the Empire was in its most mature phase. Therefore an examination of this period will make it possible to understand the characteristics and patterns of forced population movements in empires which are based on centralized but indirect mechanisms of control over a dominantly agricultural

²⁶ For a similar argument see Saydam, 1993.

economy. The second period that will be examined is the period from the beginning of the eighteenth century, when imperial territorial expansion began to decline and then stopped, and the first signs the disintegration of the imperial system of rule started to be observed. Thirdly, the period from mid-nineteenth century to the end of the same century, when nation-states started to emerge especially in the Balkan regions of the empire, will be examined. Finally, in the last and final section, the ten-year war period between 1912 and 1922 will be analyzed. This brief historical analysis of the change and variation in the form and patterns of forced population movements in the different stages of the transition from an empire to a nation-state will provide a background and help explain the historical causes of the modern Turkish states efforts to manipulate the demographic characteristics of its populace by means of forced relocation and mandatory resettlement schemes. The formative years of the Turkish nation-state, and the population policies of the Republican Turkish state under the single party regime between 1923 and 1950 will be the subject matter of the next chapter.

In each of the periods three different but complimentary dimensions of forced displacement are analyzed. The first dimension concerns the causes of the emergence of forced displacement. Throughout all periods, the most important factor behind forced displacement is the changes in the nature and function of the state. Moreover in periods of conflict and crisis, we observe a significant increase in the magnitude of population movements, forced or otherwise. Therefore the way in which these conflicts, either among local groups or between local groups and state authorities, are resolved had a significant impact on the patterns of population movements.

The second dimension is related to the form of legitimation of the displacement by the political regime. The form of legitimation shows variation with respect to the alleged causes of displacement and the form of the political regime. However, it is also possible that in certain periods there may not be an explicit formulation of a legitimation discourse. To a certain extent ambiguity in the discourse of legitimation provides leverage and advantage to authorities when and how to implement certain policies as opposed to others. Ambiguity, however, does not mean arbitrariness. Rather it shows the relative indeterminacy of already existing legitimation discourse. In some cases, forced displacement was legitimized after the fact. This dimension will later constitute an important aspect of the policy of forced displacement during the republican period, where different legitimation discourses, or reasons, for enforced population relocations were in circulation before, during and after the implementation of the policy of forced migration.

The third dimension that will be considered is the organization of the process of displacement and concomitant resettlement process. The manner in which the process of displacement and resettlement is organized and implemented has a considerable impact on its success. Here, success means two things: adaptation and integration of the displaced to their new conditions, and whether or not it results in the way it was originally intended by the authorities.

3.2. Population Policies in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire

The form and pattern of forced population movements in the classical Ottoman period was affected by a number of features of the period in question. First of all, the

Ottoman political system was based on centralized and autocratic but indirect rule, and in line with the principle of holy war (*gaza*) the territories of the Empire were continuously expanding. The economy was based on agricultural production; the control of agricultural surplus and the military power of the empire was based on the fief system of landholding. The social organization of the society was based on millet system, which granted a measure of limited autonomy to religious communities and allowed for the co-existence of various religious denominations without threatening the integrity of the Empire.

In such a system people's attachment to their localities varied for different social classes. In rural areas there were two distinguishable sectors. There was the *reaya*, who were tax-paying subjects settled on the land they were cultivating. They had the right and responsibility to work the land which was owned by the Sultan. But they also had to pay various duties and taxes. This made the *reaya* tightly bound to the land and their movement was strictly controlled by the local authorities who were responsible to pay tribute to the Ottoman center. Desertion was common but when caught, deserters were returned to their land and punished for disrupting the order, mostly in the form of severe fines. Second, there were the pastoral nomads, usually organized into tribes. They traveled along certain routes between summer and winter pastures. Because of their relative mobility pastoral nomads were harder to control.

In urban areas, artisans, among whom some were real-estate owners, were organized in guilds. Their mobility was also limited. On the other hand, the *ulema*

(religious scholars), and the military class were highly mobile, but their mobility was controlled from the center through appointments.

In this system of agricultural economy and centralized but indirect political rule whose territorial limits were rapidly expanding, the use of transfer of large segments of some sectors of the population by the state was a common policy. The rationale behind this was three-fold: territorial expansion, labor, and order and security. As it will be more apparent later, it is the last rationale, more than the other two, that made its way to present day Turkey.

Because of territorial expansion through conquest and other means Ottoman rulers frequently used forced population transfers as a useful mechanism to consolidate their power in the newly acquired regions. The new lands of the Empire needed to be integrated into the Ottoman system of government; and this needed to be done in accordance with rules and within the boundaries of the millet system, which was based on the co-existence of different religious groups. And, in order to balance of the millet system, Muslim populations of Anatolia were transferred en masse and resettled to the newly conquered lands while non-Muslims of the new lands were transferred and resettled to the Muslim dominated regions of the empire. By this way the religious composition of both the old and the new lands was kept in balance through constant population transfers.

The second factor behind state-enforced population movements during the classical Ottoman period was the scarcity of labor. Keeping the rural-urban population in balance through regularized population transfers from the areas where population

density is high but land is limited to areas where the labor is scarce but land is relatively abundant was important for factors of production. The pattern was usually moving people from regions where land/labor ratio was low to economically weaker regions where land/labor ratio was high. The justification for the forced population relocation in both urban and rural regions was the promotion of economic development and prosperity (Tekeli, 1990, 1994).

The economic rationale, however, was one among many factors that affected the population configuration of the empire. The economic rationale usually interacted with political factors, which brings us to the third reason that caused state-enforced population movements.

The third factor behind forced population movements was the maintenance of order and security in the large territories of the empire. Sustaining order and security was the *sine-quo-non* of agricultural production and well as short and long distance commerce. Establishing security required, on the one hand, controlling those nomadic groups who sometimes plundered the sedentary population and ransacked merchants on their routes, and, on the other hand, building and strengthening *derbend*²⁷ (guard) villages, whose job was to guard and protect mountain passes and maintain the security of the road system (Orhonlu, 1990). The settlement of nomadic groups in certain places where their movement could be controlled more effectively and the settlement of trusted clienteles (or agents) to strengthen the functioning of *derbend*

²⁷ “Der” means door and “bend” means to keep, literally meaning door keeper.

villages were two of the important factors behind forced population relocations in the classical Ottoman period.

In addition, and more importantly, when and where the local notables became powerful and tended to threaten or began to defy central state's power, they were moved out from their locality, usually by force, and resettled elsewhere where they could be watched and controlled more effectively²⁸. In cases where the resisting or defying local notable had a popular support base, they were also relocated. This way the power of the local elite was weakened and the central authority was reestablished. In the case of sedentary groups, the dominant pattern was exiling a few strong local actors rather than whole communities. In the case of nomadic groups, on the other hand, the whole tribe was required to move (Barkan, 1950, 1952, 1954; Orhonlu, 1987; Halaçoğlu, 1988; Tekeli, 1990; Gould, 1993).

Organizational Characteristics

For all these reasons, forced displacement and replacement of people was organized and institutionalized as a system of *sürgün* (exile) in the classical Ottoman period and its institutional legacy extended into the following centuries.

The decision of *sürgün* was vested in the Ottoman court and was issued to the 'kadı's (local Muslim judges) who were responsible to see to its implementation on

²⁸ Exile through resettlement was a strategy that was commonly used as early as the first days of the Ottoman Empire, and even before the imperial period. After defeating and conquering the lands of other Anatolian Turkish Beyliks, the Ottomans frequently resorted to scattering and resettling the members of these beyliks in different areas as in order to curb their potential to challenge the power of the Ottomans in the future (Dündar, 2001: 42, also see Aktepe, 1949: 375-387).

the local level. There were two basic types of *sürgün*: partial (or proportional) and total.

In the case of total *sürgün* all households, irrespective of their social and economic background, in a designated region were transferred and resettled to another region, which was deemed more appropriate by state authorities. Depending on the circumstances, members of the target group were resettled together in the same region, or alternatively they were divided and resettled separately in different areas. If the main rationale behind the relocation was sedentarization of a small nomadic tribe for increasing the production of a designated region, for instance, with no resistance from the target group and no prior conflict existed the whole tribe was settled together. If, on the other hand, the main reason behind their relocation was more political, the size of the group too large, there was a history of prior conflict between the target population and the state authorities, or the target group resisted the state's decision, the pattern was dividing the target group, sometimes even the individual households, and scattering them as much as away from each other. This pattern was more likely to be found in cases where the power of the central state was challenged by contentious large nomadic tribes.

In partial *sürgün* a certain ratio (such as one/tenth or one/fifth) of the population in a designated area were required to relocate. Whether occurring in urban or rural areas, but especially in urban regions, in partial *sürgün*, it was a rule that all social classes should be represented.

Resistance to relocation, escaping on the way, and deserting the destination region were severely punished. To increase compliance, some incentives were also provided for the displaced. Those who were subjected to *sürgün* were allowed to take their belongings, livestock and other means of production with them. If they had real estate in their place of origin, these were sold at an auction. In addition the resettles were exempted from all taxes and other official obligations for at least two years in their place of settlement.

All these point to the fact that forced displacement, formalized under the institution of *sürgün*, was used quite frequently during the classical Ottoman period. However, the policy of *sürgün* was not without its problems. Despite the severity of punishment, there was always significant amount of resistance to the exercise of *sürgün*. Moreover, there were significant technological and logistic restrictions and limitations in the means and methods of *sürgün*. There was the difficulty of keeping the displaced groups in their designated areas. Especially nomadic groups were difficult to control. They usually carried their old habits into their new environment. There was also reverse migration, the migration of the displaced groups back to their natal lands. Although voluntary migration was illegal, there had been various cycles of voluntary migrations that the Ottoman rulers were unable to control or prevent despite all their efforts. As we will see later, this became a much more significant challenge for authorities starting from the mid-seventieth century extending to the eighteenth century.

The above description of the way the institution of *sürgün* operated in the classical Ottoman period enables us to make some inferences about its possible consequences.

First, it accelerated the mixing of different groups. Priority was given not to disturb the economic balance both in target and destination regions. Other factors, such as ethnicity, religion, and conflict were secondary. They sometimes complemented the economic rationale, but were not by themselves the main cause of *sürgün*. Even in cases where *sürgün* was implemented as a measure of punishment, the optimum distribution of population for agricultural productivity always took precedence. To a lesser extent, and in combination with other mechanisms, the institution of *sürgün* made it possible to diffuse the Ottoman culture, especially through the transfer of Muslim population to the newly acquired lands. Though usually initiated by coercion, the implementation of *sürgün* always combined coercion with other mechanisms, such as providing positive incentives (Orhonlu, 1987, 1990; Arslan, 2001; Solak, 2000).

Second, it reduced the power local leaders and increased the hold of the central authority over the periphery. Overall, it helped increase the centralized control.

3.3. Population Dynamics and Forced Migration in the Eighteenth Century

Ottoman Empire

By the end of the seventeenth century it had become clear to the Ottomans that in the emerging circumstances of early modern Europe, flexible borders and imprecise identities, and flexible population policies could no longer serve them well.

Starting from the late years of the seventeenth century one can observe significant changes in the patterns of forced migration and resettlement policies. Transfer of population to and from the newly acquired lands was not as necessary as it was in the classical period, simply because the empire, first stopped growing and then began to shrink. In addition to the geographical reasons, additional challenge came from the extended rebellions known as the *Celali Uprisings* (Akdağ, 1963; Barkey, 1994). As a result of the pressure of these uprisings, the Anatolian regions experienced an extensive population flight from the villages on the plains to the valleys and mountainous areas. This population shift upset the agricultural production to a significant extent. When, because of the eighteenth century Austro-Ottoman and Ottoman-Russian wars, fertile agricultural land in the Balkan provinces added to the burden, and revival of the agricultural land and production in Anatolia became all the more important.

Since most sedentary population were already in flight it was no longer possible to implement *sürgün* to achieve an optimum distribution of population. The only alternative was settling and sedentarization of the nomadic tribes. From that time onwards sedentarization rather than *sürgün* became the dominant pattern of

involuntary displacement. *Sürgün* policy did not totally disappear but sedentarization of nomadic tribes gained the upper hand. Although the dominant pattern had changed, the basic rationale behind forced movements of people (or alternatively, as in the case of nomadic groups, limiting their mobility) remain the same: to enhance agricultural productivity and to re-establish order and security.

Another factor in the settlement of nomadic tribes was the establishment new urban centers and settlement of tribes was used as a means to enliven and galvanize the life in the new centers. For instance, Sadrazam İbrahim Paşa built a new town in his natal village in 1727, called it Nevşehir (literally New Town), and ordered the settlement of nomadic tribes in and around the region to galvanize the social and economic life in the new town (Orhonlu, 1987: 111)

The nomads that were to be settled were of different ethnic and geographical origins, Turkic, Kurdish and Arabic, ranging from the Western to the Eastern parts of Anatolia. But resettlement activities were mostly concentrated in certain regions of Anatolia (Orhonlu, 1987; Halaçoğlu, 1988). Besides Anatolia, Cyprus and Aleppo were the two other major settlement regions.

Compared to the settlement efforts in previous centuries the settlement of tribes in eighteenth century was better organized. It was carried out by a commission in each settlement area headed by a governor, and consisting of a settlement chief, a military commander, a judge, a land registrar, and sometimes an architect (Tekeli, 1990: 53). Detailed information on the characteristics of the tribes that were being

settled and the way the settlement process took place were recorded by each commission and sent to the center.

Although implemented by much care and attention to the local dynamics, the settlement and resettlement of nomadic tribes is no doubt a painful process for the target groups. It was very difficult for the pastoral nomadic tribes to adapt to a sedentary way of life. There was a great loss of life during the settlement process, partly because of the resistance of some tribes during their forced settlement, and partly because of epidemics, especially malaria, during their adaptation process to the climate and environment of the plains where they were settled. In certain regions, the land given to them was not adequate and usually not very productive. For these reasons, and despite harsh punitive measures, desertion from the settlements was not uncommon. As it was the case in the classical period, in addition to coercive measures of control over the new settlers, which was difficult to maintain at all times, in order to keep them in their place of settlement, authorities used other incentive creating measures as well. In addition to tax exemption, they were given the best land. That, however, later became a major source of conflict between the settlers and the locals, as well as among the settlers themselves (between the early settlers and those who were settled later).

In terms of spatial (re)distribution of the population, for the Ottoman administration in the eighteenth century, there was an additional challenge which had to do with reversing the rural-urban migration trend. Migration from rural regions to big cities, whose residents were exempt from tax, therefore always attracting in-

migration, became a big concern for the Ottoman administration. To reestablish the rural-urban balance, much effort was spent on sending those Muslim and non-Muslim population who had migrated from their towns and villages and concentrated in the largest urban centers, such as Istanbul, Edirne, and Bursa, back to their original places. But despite many official directives to reverse the rural-urban migration, the result was not very satisfactory.

3.4. Population Dynamics and Forced Migration in the Nineteenth Century

Ottoman Empire

The issues related to human migration and population displacement (and replacement) in the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire were considerably different from those of previous centuries.

As Kasaba (2004) argues up until the nineteen-century, despite the imperial Ottoman state's efforts at controlling and directing movements, among other things, of its subjects through various direct and indirect means, neither stasis nor mobility ever became the exclusive characteristic of the state or the ordinary subject populations. Instead, simultaneously and in contention with each other, stasis and mobility permeated all segments of the Ottoman state and Ottoman society. As a result, the emergence of the modern state in Ottoman Empire was accompanied by creation of a framework that enabled the continuing movement across spatial and social divides. Internal as well as external boundaries remained porous and permeable (Kasaba, 2004), which was partly responsible for the high degree of flexibility that shaped the question of identity and belonging.

Population policies, such as the institution of *sürgün*, that were designed to impose a seeming stasis as the norm of at various points in Ottoman history were much more than simple directives designed to bring about a settled and sedentarized society. Including *sürgün*, many of the population policies included elaborate safeguards for protecting the structure, organization and especially the leadership of the very nomadic communities which the Ottoman administrators were trying to alter and control. Moreover many nomadic groups were able to incorporate sedentary form of practices into their daily lives and managed to comply, at least partly, with the directives of the state without completely abandoning their nomadic and pastoral life.

In the context of imperial structure and indirect system of rule, the cultural identities of ordinary people, and the question of who the Ottomans were and who belonged to the Ottoman Empire was not very relevant for the political organization and functioning of the empire, especially in the early parts of its history. Despite the impetus to build a centralized bureaucracy, the Ottomans did not consistently use rigid classification to divide tax-paying subjects into sealed and fixed categories. The question of identity and belonging was highly contested and contingent for most people living under Ottoman rule for most of its history. The divisions that were introduced by the Ottoman state were fluid, imprecise, and tended to change over time as a result of the interactions between state rulers and subject groups. The only substantial exception to this was religion. Religion constituted the basic social boundary that categorically separated Muslims from non-Muslims. All non-Muslims were generally referred as “*zimmi*”.

*** *** ***

Despite two century long policies of creating and maintaining a more stable, sedentary, and secure empire, the conditions did not look very promising at the turn of the nineteenth century than they did in the preceding two hundred or more years. The reform attempts in the first half of the eighteenth century were very limited and did not seem to bear much fruit. By the second half of the eighteenth century, Ottoman Empire had been drawn into a series of lengthy wars, and had to deal with rural unrest, especially in the mountainous regions. Local leaders, who had benefited from their positions as intermediaries in the implementation of the reform measures of the eighteenth century, became much more powerful. In some regions they even became almost independent, wielding extensive powers in their localities and seriously undermining the power and authority of the central government. With their small armies, they assumed the protection of the peasants and nomads in their region as their responsibility. As a result the last decades of the eighteenth century have become a period which is referred as the “Age of the Notables (*ayan*)” in Ottoman historiography (İnalçık and Quatert, 1994: 637-758.).

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, a vast portion of the empire’s population was still nor settled or established in terms of geography, ways of living, or identities. Ottoman administration tried to tackle this situation with various measures. First, various measures were taken to curb the growing power of the local notables. An equally, if not more important measure, at least for the purpose of this study, was conducting periodic surveys and empire-wide first census in 1831 to keep tract of the

size, nature and changes in the population of especially in the border regions in the Balkans and in the southeast (Karal, 1943; Dündar, 2001; Behar, 1996; Karpat, 1985; Shaw, 1978). Collecting accurate information on the empire's demography and available land became an important issue for the Ottoman administration. This became pressingly more needed when shrinking territories were coupled with many waves of immigration and refugee movements from the Balkans and the Caucasus into the remaining territories of the Ottoman Empire.

Before the nineteenth century, a vast Muslim population of different ethnic origins existed not only in Anatolia, but also in the Balkans and the southern Russia. The Ottoman Empire was not just ruled by Muslims but in most of its territories Muslims constituted the majority²⁹, or in much of the conquered lands of the Balkans, parts of the Caucasus they constituted a sizable minority. Since the legitimacy of the Ottoman rule was based on Islam, politically being a majority or a minority in a region did not matter much. Non-Muslims were always considered politically inferior to the Muslims. On the other hand, imperial rule also favored plurality rather than homogeneity. Starting in the nineteenth century, however, as the empire's decline accelerated, it was no longer possible, nor feasible to maintain this plurality by old imperial strategies.

²⁹ Anatolian population was dominantly Muslim, but Muslims did not constitute the majority in all regions. In some parts of the Aegean and Black Sea coast and their immediate hinterlands Greek Orthodox Christians, and in sizable parts of the Eastern Anatolia Armenians constituted the majority. Nonetheless, because of the imperial policy of mixing different groups there were no purely Muslim or purely non-Muslim regions.

By 1923, the Balkan Muslims were largely gone, dead or forced to migrate, the remainder living in pockets of settlement in Greece, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia. The same fate had overwhelmed the Muslims of Crimea, the northern Caucasus and Russian Armenia. They were simply gone. Millions of Muslims of different ethnic origins either died, or were forced out of their lands and had fled to what is today Turkey. Between 1821 and 1922 more than five million Muslims were driven out from their homes. Some were killed in wars, others perished as refugees by starvation and diseases (McCarthy, 1995, 2001; Çağaptay, 2006).

The situation of the Ottoman Christians followed a similar fate. First Armenians and then Greeks of Anatolia were forced out their natal homelands. Emulating their Christian counterpart late Ottoman rulers decided to solve the “problem of diversity and difference” of the subject population at all costs. This first meant getting rid of the Christians. Their land was simply needed for settling the Muslim immigrants. Thus, Armenians were either killed by Ottoman paramilitary forces, or expelled out of the remaining lands of the empire by the Young Turk government (Akçam, 2004). Then came the forced migration of Greeks out of the “Muslim” lands (Hirschon, 2003; Yildirim, 2006).

This was a double-edged process which touched almost all groups residing in the ex-Ottoman territories, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. That being the case, it is fair to argue that much of the late history of the Balkans, Anatolia, and the Caucasus cannot be properly understood without consideration of forced displacement of Muslims as well as non-Muslims. Today, contemporary maps display the ex-territories

of the Ottoman Empire (the Balkans, Anatolia, the northern Caucasus, north-Africa and most the Middle East) consisting of nation-states with more or less homogeneous populations. It is often forgotten that the homogenization of the population of these countries were politically engineered through various demographic mechanisms: genocides, massacres, expulsion, exchange, displacement or forced resettlement.

Throughout the nineteenth century, an estimated 2-5 million Muslims were torn from their ancestral lands in the Balkans and the Caucasus, forced overseas or overland and dropped on the doorsteps of the Ottoman Empire, suffering throughout the process which cost many human lives. Although initially encouraged by the Ottoman government, in addition to the logistical problems the massive flow of immigrants posed significant social and political problems for the Ottoman administration. The process of receiving and settling Muslims of the ex-Ottoman lands dramatically altered the demographic characteristics of the remaining Ottoman lands, and consequently affected the population policies in the late Ottoman as well as in the early Republican period. According to some observers, the importance of this demographic shift cannot be overlooked in terms of formation and transformation of social and political identities starting in the late Ottoman period stretching into the early years of the Turkish Republic. The forced migration of the Balkan and the Caucasian Muslims into the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth century played a powerful role in the transformation of the social and political structure of the imperial polity, leading to a profound transformation in the social fabric of Anatolia, and by extension the very bedrock upon which the Turkish republic was founded.

3.4.1. Forced Migration of Caucasian Muslims

As already discussed in the previous section, the first immigration movement had already taken place at the end of the eighteenth century after the Treaty of Küçük-Kaynarca, signed after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1774. During and after the war, about 500,000 Crimean Tatars were forced out their lands and immigrated to Ottoman lands. During the process it is estimated that 200,000 lost their lives. Those who survived were first settled in Bessarabia and Dodridje, some of which later came to Anatolia (Tekeli, 1990; Karpas, 1985). A second wave of immigration from Crimea started in the nineteenth century when Anapa and Poty were ceded to Russia with the Treaty of Edirne, signed after the Ottoman-Russian war of 1828-29. The third and the biggest immigration wave of Crimean Tatars occurred during the years of 1860-1864. It is estimated that about 400,000 people emigrated during this wave³⁰ (Kırımlı, 1996; Fisher, 1999; Eren, 1966; Gözaydın, 1948). The Tatars who were settled in Thracian regions of the Empire had to migrate to and resettle in various parts of Anatolia after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878³¹. The total number of Crimean Tatar

³⁰ According to Russian sources, between 1854-1860 more than 177,000 Muslims had emigrated from the Crimean peninsula and the Northern Caucasus (Bolschaja Sovetskaja Enziklopedia, Moscow, 1937, BD. 35, S. 307, cited in Eren, 1966: 66). Between 1860 and 1862, Gözaydın estimates that the total number of Muslim emigrants from the same regions was more than 227,000 (1948: 84).

³¹ İzmir, İzmit, Bandırma, İnegöl, Eskişehir, Ankara, and Konya were the main settlement areas of the Crimean Tatars (Karpas, 1985: 66). Circassians were mainly settled in Amasya, Tokat, Sivas, Çankırı, Adana, Aydın, İçel, Bursa, Adapazarı, İzmit; also in Aleppo, Damascus and Amman, and some in the remaining Ottoman territories in Rumelia and the Balkans (Eren, 1966: 75).

immigrants to Ottoman lands throughout the nineteenth century is estimated around 1,800,000 (Tekeli, 1990: 56).

Another wave of migration into the Ottoman lands in the nineteenth century was the forced migration of the Muslim of the Caucasus occurred after 1860 because of the Russian expansion into the Caucasus. The Circassians and Abazas opposed and resisted to the Russia's expansionist invasion for a long time. When Russians finally took control of the area in 1865, the emigration of Crimean Tatars and Circassians, which already began in very small numbers in 1850s, turned into a mass movement after the 1860s (Berzeg, 1996; Karpat, 1985; Cuthell, 2005). A treaty of migration was signed between Russia and Ottomans, and according to this treaty between 40,000 and 50,000 Muslims were to be sent to Ottoman lands from the Caucasus and Orthodox Greeks from the Eastern Black Sea region were to go to Russia. However, at the end only a few thousand Greeks were transferred to Russia, some of whom later returned, while the number of people that were transferred to the Ottoman Empire was as much as 520,000 up to 1865 (Tekeli, 1990: 56).

Between 1859 and 1879 two million Muslims were forced out of the Caucasus, out of which one and a half million survived and resettled by the Ottoman administration in various parts of the remaining lands of the Empire. The emigration of the Caucasian Muslims continued until 1914, and additional half million people to the total number of Caucasian immigrants (Karpat, 1985). Wherever and whenever possible the Ottomans attempted to reverse the flow of people back to the Caucasus. On several occasions this attempt was successful, and the Ottomans managed to send

some of the Caucasian Muslim immigrants back to their villages, but they were eventually forced out by the Russians. Some families had to travel back and forth a couple of times. It seems that the struggle between the Russians and the Ottomans in the Caucasus throughout the nineteenth century was a “Demographic Warfare” as much, if not more than a military struggle (Pinson, 1970).

3.4.2. Forced Migration of the Balkan Muslims

An equally important demographic development of the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire was the mass immigration of Balkan Muslims and their settlement. Accompanying the contraction of Ottoman territories, several national-states were established in the Balkans. These national states, particularly Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and to a lesser extent Romania and Montenegro, immediately began to exert pressures on their Muslim subjects. This, in turn, led to the onset of mass population movements, most of which were incited, if not enforced, by the governments of the new national states.

Since then, until today the phenomena of both internal and external population displacement, initiated by state authorities or by other sorts of conflict, became a major problem in the Balkans. And, as it will become more apparent later, the causes and dynamics of this phenomenon were more general and regional than specific to each instance of population displacement.

There were various reasons behind the pressures that new state elite of the Balkan states had put on their Muslim population. Some arose from the ideology of nationalism based on ethnic and religious exclusivity. Nation-states cannot tolerate

ethnic and religious differences as much as an empire could. The nationalism of the new Balkan states was built upon the already existing prejudice against the Muslim groups, who were part of the dominant majority during the imperial period (Kirişçi, 1998). They also owned most of the land, which was the most significant source of hostility and prejudice towards them. To break the power of this sector of their population, the political elite of the newly independent national states of the Balkans considered it necessary either to assimilate, discriminate or force them to migrate. Which one of these alternative strategies took precedence depended partly on the context and on the dynamics of past and present interactions between the new state elite and various minority groups. Yet, whatever strategy took precedence, the homogenization of the population was seen as the only way to strengthen national sovereignty. As a result, a series of migration movements of the Muslim population, either by force or by choice, began from the former Balkan lands of the Ottoman Empire towards the mainland.

The first big wave of population movements in the Balkans, known as the Big Balkan Migration, took place right after the establishment of the states of Romania and Bulgaria after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878 (Şimşir, 1968; McCarthy, 1983, 2001; Kocacık, 1980). The movement of Muslim refugees in Bulgaria began even before the invasion and arrival of the Russians. Residents in key areas of the northern frontier had been instructed by the Ottoman Government to leave war zones and burn war material, including food and fodder that could be used by the invading Russians. Very few, however, seemed to have moved at this time. In the period before

the battles actually began, Muslims resisted such orders, possibly because of the great personal losses involved. The Russian invasion, however, solved their reluctance. When Muslims realized the dangers to themselves and their families, they had no choice but leave in haste.

The Muslim refugees first fled toward major cities and Ottoman military bases, where they hoped to be safe and be taken care of by the authorities. As the Ottoman forces rapidly lost to the Russians in the first couple of months of the war and began to retreat, the Muslim refugees had to set off again. As the Russian forces moved in through the Balkans, they forced more people on their way to flee, outpacing the refugee columns. Often the refugees settled in one place but had to take off again when some among them were killed by the Russian and Bulgarian forces. As each city fell into the hands of the Russians, many of the Muslim refugees moved on to what they hoped to be safer areas. At the end of the war, some refugees were already gathered in major centers, but the rest were scattered across Bulgaria and Western Thrace where they found shelter among other Muslims at were at least temporarily safe. Tens of thousands had been evacuated by sea to Anatolia, Cyprus, and Syria by the Ottoman Government. Others had to pass to Anatolia by overland.

About one and a half million people, mostly Muslims, but some Jews as well, (Kocacık, 1980: 141), emigrated from the new Balkan national states. In terms of loss of life and general suffering, forced migration of the Muslims from Bulgaria was among the most terrible in history. It is estimated that at least 300,000 thousand lives were lost on their way to the Ottoman mainland. Compounding the typical sufferings

accompanying any refugee migration, there were factors unique to this particular case. In addition to the vicious treatment of refugees by the Russians and Bulgarians, the fact that the migration was mainly undertaken in winter and the inability of the Ottoman government to provide adequate aid to the refugees increased the human casualty. Moreover, escape routes were not efficient. Justified fear forced the Muslims to leave quickly with little or no preparation. They walked, drove ox-carts, and when possible got on to trains to escape south. As the countryside became more unsafe and the winter deepened, refugees moved along the train tracks until they reached relatively safe stations guarded by Ottoman soldiers. Many froze to death along the tracks. Others froze outside the station buildings. One European observer describes the drastic conditions of refugees fleeing for their lives as follows:

The discomfort of these poor people can be somewhat imagined when I inform you that at each station crowds were waiting with their orders signed, ready to jump into any nook or corner they could find. On this account women and children were afraid to leave the carriages, lest they should lose their places, even for the calls of nature. The air, therefore, in some of the closed wagons, was beyond conception and probably was the cause of much of the mortality that occurred and the sickness now existing. Nearly every disease was represented from small-pox downwards.³²

Large numbers of Muslim refugees were caught behind the rapidly advancing Russian forces. These refugees were often attacked on the road by Cossacks and Bulgarians (McCarty, 1995: 79). Cold and starvation were their other enemies: "One little girl was found by a German railway officer amongst a heap of 400 men, women, and children who had frozen to death on the hills new Tatar Bazardjik, and of whom

³² Blunt to Layard, Constantinople, 1 February 1878, quoted in McCarthy, 1995: 78.

she was the only survivor”³³ The following account by the British Consul-General details the state of the displaced Muslims:

... 50,000 refugees are inscribed in the books of the Konak, besides a thousand not so inscribed whom were found [by the British representative Cullen] in the mountains, too exhausted to walk several hours to the town to get to the miserable pittance which the Government doles out. Many of these were dying of typhoid fever and dysentery, and thousands were sleeping in the open streets of the town in an indescribable state of misery, filth, and disease... the conditions in the mountains were much worse. Out of reach of help, thousands of women and children were dying a lingering a death of famine. In one place women and girls, huddled together as naked as they were born, their wretched rags having entirely fallen off of them... Many arrive daily from villages either plundered or burnt by the Russians and Bulgarians and complain of the treatment they receive from those savages. He [Mr. Cullen] further says that ‘the constant accounts I receive of Russian and Bulgarian cruelty were almost beyond anything I have ever heard of or seen in this dreadful war, although, as you know, I have seen much, and I can come to no other conclusion but that the Russians are carrying out a fixed policy of exterminating the Moslem race.

Although difficult to trace and document, the experience of forced displacement on the mental state of the surviving Muslim refugees who then settled in the Ottoman mainland is not very difficult to imagine. The psychological effect and trauma of the degradations caused directly or indirectly by their forced displacement cannot be emphasized enough. They also brought the perceptions of the perpetrators, whom they identified as Christians, and their stories about the miseries the Christians inflicted upon them to the Ottoman mainland. That, for sure, affected the perceptions of their neighbors who listened to their stories, and eventually hardened the socio-religious boundaries and distinctions between Muslims and non-Muslims in the remaining parts of the Empire.

³³ F.O. 195-1184, Calver to Blunt, Philippolis, 10 March 1878, quoted in McCarthy, 1995: 79).

The migration of the Muslims (and Jews) continued the following years of the war. From 1983 to the end of the nineteenth century an additional 72,000 people emigrated from Bulgaria to Ottoman lands. Unlike those who came earlier and were settled only in rural areas, the immigrants in this last group were settled in urban towns as well as in rural areas. Most of them were settled in Thrace, and the region of Bursa, Balıkesir, Bandırma Çanakkale and some were sent to the provinces in Central and Eastern Anatolia. One of the reasons for this was the policy of increasing the Muslim-Turkish population in the Central and Eastern provinces to balance down the proportion of non-Muslim and non-Turkish populations in these provinces.

Many of the Bulgarian Muslims were Circassians and Tatars who were previously exiled from Russia. They were being displaced for the second time. Like the Muslims of the Crimea and the Caucasus before them, they were settled in what remained of the Ottoman Empire, where they inevitably disturbed and disrupted the lives of those already residing in those places. Some were settled in what remained of Ottoman Europe – Macedonia and Thrace – from where they would once again be forced to flee during and after the Balkan Wars³⁴. Having been displaced three times by the Christians, it is not surprising that they kept alive hatred for their Christian

³⁴ The second big wave of migration from the Balkans had taken place during and after the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. I will look at this period in more detail in the next section but just to give a general idea of the mass character of the population movements that occurred during and after the Balkan Wars, the number of people who migrated just to Ottoman Empire was more than 600,000 (Tekeli, 1990).

perpetrators, which inevitably shifted and hardened³⁵ the boundary between them and their Christian neighbors in Anatolia and elsewhere.

3.4.3. *Organizational Aspects of Settlement*

Although the first signs of mass immigration to the Ottoman lands had began as early as 1790, there is little available information on how the Ottoman Administration had dealt with the organization of immigrant settlement as well as the integration of these new immigrants into the Ottoman social economic and political system. One fact is certain: that there was no central institution that was specifically responsible for organizing the settlement of immigrants neither during the reign of Selim III (1789-1807) nor of Mahmud II (1808-1839) (Eren, 1966: 39). As Cevdet Paşa, one of the Ottoman administrators engaged in the affairs of the immigrants, stated “there was not enough organized effort on the part of the Ottoman State to manage the settlement of the immigrants” (quoted in Eren, 1966: 39). Until the *Tanzimat* period started by the declaration of Tanzimat Decree in 1839, immigration and settlement issues were dealt on *ad hoc* basis when needed, for each case by specific directives sent by the Ottoman Court to individual provincial administrators. In many of the cases the process was initiated by the immigrants themselves. Up until the second half of the nineteenth century, the affairs of immigrants were regarded as the concern of municipalities and provincial districts.³⁶ Although a special organization was established in 1849 for administering the settlement of Hungarian

³⁵ For the concept of boundary hardening, see Duara, 1996: 168-171.

³⁶ BA, İrade Defterleri, Sene 1276, Meclis-i Mahsus, no. 696, cited in Eren, 1966: 40.

refugees in various areas of Anatolia, there is no available information on the specifics of how that task was carried out (Altınay, 1926).

The emerging dynamics with the first big wave of immigrants during and after the Crimean War, however, pointed towards the need for a more centralized and efficient organization. Later, the pouring in of vast number of Muslim immigrants from the Balkans added to the difficulties, and development of new policies and new form of organizations for proper management and settlement of the immigrants became all the more necessary.

In order to tackle this issue, the first thing Ottoman government did was drafting a *Talimatname* (Regulation) in 1856 that specified how the immigrants would be moved within the Empire, who would take responsibility for their well being, and how and where they would be settled (Orhonlu, 1987: 119). Immediately after the Crimean War, the Commerce and Trade Administration (*Ticaret Nezareti*) was charged with administering the needs of the immigrants arriving in Ottoman domains. Regarding the immigrants the primary task of the Commerce and Trade Administration was transshipping those recently arrived from the Russian controlled ports to the Dobruja and further west along the Danube. Some of those immigrants who were able to avoid direct settlement in the Dobruja and Danube often traveled to Istanbul, where the Municipal Administration of Istanbul and the Police Administration were responsible for dealing with the immigrants (Saydam, 1997; Pinson, 1970; Cutchell, 2005).

In most of the time, however, there was little coordination and collaboration between various government institutions. For that reason primary responsibility for managing the problem regarding the care and welfare of immigrants fell on the provincial and local administration. There was also a direct and close relation between the social status of the immigrants and how they were treated. Those who had connections were often treated more sensibly, and were usually sent to urban centers, or settled on more fertile lands. In some cases, local governors profited handsomely from settlement and relocation of emigrants, buying tracts of land that were allocated for immigrant settlement below their market value. In the lack of any central institution that oversees the process, some local governors were running their independent operations. Some even were negotiating directly with the Russian agents regarding the flow and control of the refugees (Pinson, 1970).

As the number of immigrants continued to pour in, local administrators began to send reports to the center about the deteriorating living conditions of the settlers in their localities. Draft and domestic animals were dying, leaving farmers unable to cultivate their lands. Housing and land quality was increasingly poor and limited in quantity. As the conditions were getting worse, some refugees were making plans about returning back to Crimea at all costs. For their part, the Ottoman administration seems to have been not very sure about how to deal with this situation. There was a significant amount of confusion among them about the kind of policy they should pursue with respect the immigrants. On the one hand, the immigration of Muslims was initially encouraged and was clearly seen as positive by the Ottoman government,

which had been under internal and external stress for some time. For the Ottomans, the immigrants represented a useful Muslim population. Particularly Crimeans were seen to be particularly useful as most of them were skilled farmers and spoke a language which was relatively similar to the local Turkish villagers. In regions along the Western Black Sea Coast, Crimean immigrants helped revive the agricultural production as well as securing the loyalty of the population. Settlement of these immigrants also helped to bolster the Muslim population along the borders to the north and west, and was used as a counterweight against the rising influence of nationalism among the Christian populations of the Balkans and Greece. On the other hand, after a certain threshold, the uncontrolled and increasing influx of refugees presented considerable economic, social, and political strain as well as major health problems. They began to absorb more than they could possibly provide. Despite all these difficulties and problems, however, the Ottomans were content to adopt a position that they would continue to stay as the Protector of Muslims and therefore would do whatever it takes to protect and shelter them (Pinson, 1970).

Although Muslim immigrants were the primary concern and they were given special attention, there was no apparent discrimination against non-Muslim refugees. In a directive, dated May 3rd 1856, sent by the Ottoman Porte to the provincial governor of Silistre (Silistra), the second article reads as:

...irrespective of their religious affiliation, all immigrants that seeks asylum in the Ottoman lands were to be treated with utmost compassion and sympathy, and they will be exempt from all kinds of tax obligations for 10 years, and from military conscription for 25 years until they will be able earn their livelihood by themselves.

In other articles of the same directive it states that agricultural producers should be given land in available areas and should be provided whatever they need—seeds, draft animals, agricultural machinery-- to properly cultivate their lands; artisans and craftsmen should be settled areas which were most suitable for their skills; those in need should be provided shelter free of charge; all additional expenses related the welfare of the refugees will be the responsibility of the Ottoman State.³⁷ At the time, in terms of the treatment of the refugees, neither religion nor ethnicity seems to constitute much importance for the Ottoman authorities. For instance, in response to a petition from the Jewish refugees, who were expelled from Crimean peninsula by the Russians after the Crimean War and came to Istanbul in 1887, requesting help from the Ottoman Government, after discussing the request in the *Meclis-i Mahsusa (Special Commission)*, Said Pasha, the governor of Silistre, was directed to take all necessary measures for the transfer of resettlement of the Jewish refugees in available places in Rumelia, treat them the same way as he did the other Crimean refugees, and provide for their needs on behalf of the Ottoman government (Eren, 1966: 49-54).

In 1860, all the tasks that were stipulated in the 1856 Regulation were put under the purview of Emigrant Commission (*Muhacirin Komisyonu*) (İpek, 1994: 69; Cutchell, 2005; Eren, 1966). The Emigrant Commission was expressly created in response to the perceived failures in the existing ability of the Ottoman Government to

³⁷ BA, İrade Defterleri, year 1272, Dahiliye No, 22622. For full text see Eren, 1966: 42-49.

cope with the waves of Muslim refugees from the Crimea and the Caucasus in the years following the Crimean War.

Until 1877, except high rank officials, members of the Ottoman learned class (*ilmiye sınıfı*), and artisans can only practice their craft in cities, immigrants were not allowed to settle in and around urban centers. But, rural areas had already been saturated. Artisans and petty merchants were increasingly unable to provide for their livelihoods. Moreover, settling immigrants who had no agricultural skills in rural areas was simply unproductive, and increasing hardship was a concern for both the new settlers and the locals. Many immigrants were deserting their settlements in the hope of living elsewhere, especially the urban centers. Despite their efforts, Ottoman authorities were not able to stop urban migration. In 1878, the Ottoman government decided to allow the settlement of immigrants in urban centers, and for the very first time large shantytowns began to appear in and around large urban centers (Eren, 1966: 82).

Moreover, although the Emigrant's Commission had been trying to increase the organizational and infrastructural capacity of some of its provincial branches (especially those that were located in major port cities such as Samsun, Trabzon, Varna and K stence) as well as improve the organizational power of its center located in Istanbul, there had been not much progress. As the number of immigrants had increased and reached a level far beyond the capacity of the local branches of the Commission, mistreatment and increasing corruption among local officials become a serious problem. In one case, after allegation from some immigrant settlers in  zmit

province that their money was stolen, an investigator was sent from the center to İzmit province, which was very close to Istanbul, to look into the subject; and it turned out that some workers of the Commission's local branch were indeed stealing money from the immigrants, and that one of the local governors (*mutasarrıf*) of İzmit province expropriated a portion of the money sent by the Government to be spent for the immigrants. Although the official was reprimanded and punished in this case,³⁸ because of lack of any effective means of central control, in many other cases, especially in remote regions, mistreatment and corruption of local administrators went unnoticed.

To absorb and settle the 1.5 million refugees who fled to the empire's borders overland and overseas after the 1877-78 war with Russia, the commission was expanded and renamed the Commission for the General Administration of Refugee Affairs (*İdare-i Umumiye-i Muhacirin Komisyonu*) in 1878 (Orhonlu, 1987: 120; Eren, 1966).

3.4.4. (Re)settlement of Tribes

On top of the problem of finding land for the vast number of Muslim refugees and immigrants, making necessary infrastructural and logistical arrangements for their settlement and integration, a second dimension of population management for the Ottoman administrators of the nineteenth century was the continuing process of sedentarizing and integrating the nomadic tribes into the imperial society. It was

³⁸ Takvim-i Vekayi, Defa 715, Sene 1281, cited in Eren, 1966: 74.

somewhat inevitable that the two issues, settlement of Muslim immigrants and nomadic tribes, would eventually become linked.³⁹ In the formulation of the policies of immigrant settlement, particularly in the choice of the settlement regions, the continued instability of the eastern and southeastern parts of Anatolia, which were dominantly populated by Armenians and Kurdish tribes, became an additional concern for the authorities. Settling Muslim emigrants from the Balkans and the Caucasus, who were more dependent and pro-government, among the Armenians and the Kurds was seen as a means of tackling two problems at once.

In addition to the earlier efforts of registering and counting the population of the nomadic tribes and creating specific administrative units, in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman government became much more active and direct in enforcing the settlement of specific tribes. Tribes were frequently broken up and settled in different areas. Scattered settlement was thought of a useful means to disrupt the strong solidarity, particularly among members of large and powerful tribes (Orhonlu, 1987: 115). The requirements of the imperial economy and conditions of the local market and production were also an important factor in the choice of the places of settlement (Kasaba, 2004: 38). For instance, because of the extensive need for agricultural labor in wheat and cotton farming regions of central and southern Anatolia, the Ottoman Government decided to move and settle many nomadic tribes in these regions

³⁹ The vast network of officials, commissions, and initiatives that dealt with refugees, immigrants, and tribes was finally centralized just before the start of World War I, through the creation of the General Directorate of Tribes and Immigrants in 1914 (Shaw, 1978; Orhonlu, 1987; Tekeli, 1990)

(Orhonlu, 1987: 117). On the other hand, however, forbidding all kinds of nomadism and pastoralism was neither possible nor desirable, because the empire still needed these communities for its supply of animal products. Moreover, the Ottoman state couldn't afford to alienate all nomadic communities. On the contrary, the whole idea behind the very policy of settlement was to strengthen the ties between tribal communities and the central government, has more control over them, and makes them more dependent on the state.⁴⁰ Therefore, the project of tribal settlement, most of the time, was a partial and flexible policy. Accordingly, tribes were permitted to continue animal husbandry, but instead of a whole community moving freely with its animals, tribes were now required that only a limited number of their members could travel with their flocks in closer distance and through more controllable routes.

As the process of political centralization gained pace together with the implementation of other *Tanzimat* reforms, roughly starting in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman government began to resort to military force with more regularity in order to make it very difficult, if not impossible, for the tribes to continue their previous relatively uncontrolled nomadic lives. For that reason, as a first

⁴⁰ A similar strategy was adopted in the case of the settlement of Circassian immigrants, most of whom were previously living in the highlands of Northern Caucasian, in Anatolia. While they were settled in groups in the Balkan provinces, in some Anatolian regions only 5 to 10 households were settled in each village (Şen, 1997: 128). In general, the rule was that the number of [Circassian] settlers could not exceed the total number of the local population in each specific settlement area (Tekeli, 1990). The reason behind this, as stipulated in official documents, was to accelerate and ease the integration and adaptation of the settlers into their new settings. For the very same reason inter-marriage between the immigrants and locals was also advised and also encouraged by the government (Şen, 1997: 132).

step in 1863 a new mobile military force, named as *Fırka-i Islahiye*, was established under the directive of Dervish Pasha, commander of the fourth army division, with the specific task of controlling and sedentarizing the nomads in Southern and Southeastern Anatolia.

These regions, which were geographically hard to penetrate and control, were infamously known by the rebellious character of their tribal groups which had been defying and resisting state power. The first task of *Fırka-i Islahiye* was registering the nomadic tribal populations. Most these tribes had managed to escape/evade government's previous efforts for registering them. Registering, and then settling this population would render them more legible (Scott, 1998; Scott et. al., 2002), which would then serve to facilitate not only their effective political control but also extraction of more resources (Cevdet Paşa, 1986: 21-39; Orhonlu, 1987: 115-118; Halaçoğlu, 1973).

Fırka-i Islahiye, and consequent settlements served other economic, political and military purposes as well. It increased the proportion of Muslim population in those regions, where non-Muslims once constituted the majority, thus relieved some of the pressure from major European powers who had been trying to use that issue, i.e., the conditions of the non-Muslims, as a reason to intervene in the affairs of the empire like they had been doing in the case of the Balkans. It also served the purpose of creating a buffer zone for the threats that might come from the south, especially from Mehmet Ali Paşa of Egypt. Moreover, the settled tribes, who were more sympathetic

to the state, would help create a security zone for the Ottoman government against those more belligerent nomadic tribes which had not been brought under control.

In 1866, mostly as a result of the activities of *Fırka-i Islahiye*, Southeastern Anatolia was largely pacified. 26 nomadic tribes were “successfully” settled in the region. In addition, a sizable number of immigrants, such as Turkomans and Circassians, who sought refuge in that very same region from other parts of Anatolia and Caucasus, were also sent to the region to be settled. The newcomers were broken up into small groups, and diffused among the Armenians, Kurdish, and Alevi concentrations in the Southeast for the aim establishing a much more diverse and sedentarized society.

Direct coercion was the primary but nonetheless not the only mechanism that was in operation. As some new research has showed, in the case of tribal settlement coercion usually operated in combination with other methods (Köksal, 2002, 2006). Within certain limits, negotiation, co-optation, incentive creation, and brokerage, just to mention a few, were also at place.⁴¹

⁴¹ In 1865, right before *Fırka-i Islahiye* started its operations, a general amnesty was declared for those who had previously been resistant and rebellious against the Ottoman state (Orhonlu, 1987: 116). Since then this has become a common strategy, and as we will see later, commonly adopted against rebellious groups during the early years of the Republican period.

3.5. The Population Policies of the Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti), 1908-1918

The population policies of the period under the rule of the Committee of Union and Progress (hereafter CUP) just preceding the establishment of the Republic requires special attention. After a brief review of the CUP's coming to power, this section will highlight the main characteristics of CUP's population policies and argue that the population policies of the Republican period show significant similarities with that of CUP's. In terms of population policy, the path that was going to be followed by the Republican cadres was already initiated during the CUP's rule.

From the middle of the nineteenth century on, the Ottoman Empire was vexed by several crises as politicians struggled for the political survival and cultural formation of the decaying empire (Ortaylı, 2000). The reigning Sultan, Abdulhamid II (1842-1918), struggled with managing the power balance between his government and various oppositional political groups. The core concept during his autocratic rule (1876-1909) was the centralization and the reorganization of all the domains of Ottoman society. Despite the accelerating pace of a series of successful reforms, as Abdulhamid's power intensified and his rule became more despotic, it attracted more and more internal as well as external opposition. Although the Sultan was not unpopular among the Muslim majority population due to his pro-Muslim policies, as the nineteenth century drew in, the previously fragmented opposition became more outspoken. In 1899, a group of Military Medical School students secretly founded Ottoman Unity Society (*İttihad-i Osmani Cemiyeti*), whose membership rapidly grew

and later on it became the base for the organized opposition movement and adopted the name “the Committee of Union and Progress. The CUP was mainly composed of oppositional intellectuals, military officials and civil bureaucrats. The minority nationalities of the empire, who had been discontent with the evident pro-Muslim policies of Abdulhamid also joined their forces with the CUP. The primary objective of the CUP was pushing for installment of the constitution and the convention of the parliament (Akşin, 1987; Hanioglu, 1995; Mardin, 2000; Ahmad, 1969; Zürcher, 1984).

Throughout the empire, and especially within the army, the years 1906-1908 had witnessed increasing discontent. Prices were rising, and payments of salaries were even more in arrears than usual. Signs of discontent in the shape of urban strikes and small scale rural rebellions set the stage for the 1908 Constitutional Revolution, and the inability of Sultan Abdulhamid to contain the increasing discontent in the Balkans, especially the Macedonian problem, led CUP to engage in a coordinated campaign for the restoration of the constitution that Abdulhamid abolished when he got to power thirty years ago.

As a result of extensive lobbying and propaganda among the middle and lower echelons of the state bureaucracy, as well as among the ordinary Ottoman citizenry, the CUP managed to exert some pressure on Abdulhamid. Finally, when the some officers who were members of the CUP took to the hills with their troops and demanded the restoration of the constitution the Sultan gave in and restored the Constitution on 23 April 1908 (Kansu, 1997; Zürcher, 2003). The CUP had already de

facto control over most parts of the Balkan provinces, and the restoration of the Constitution meant the extension of CUP's power over the rest of the Empire's territories and peoples. Nevertheless, although it could, the CUP neither took power into its own hands nor tried to depose the Sultan. The main reason for this was that the Sultan was still quite popular among the Muslim majority, and perceived by them as the only legitimate ruler. Therefore, even though the CUP leaders strongly distrusted Abdulhamid they did not feel able to remove him from office. Nor did they feel able to take the reins of government into their own hands. The CUP, instead, choose to leave governmental affairs in the hands of the existing cabinet, while, in the meantime, setting itself as a watchdog, interfering in politics whenever its leaders saw fit (Zürcher, 2003: 98).

The re-installment of the constitution and the parliament was by no means enough to cure all the problems the Ottoman Empire had been experiencing. On the contrary, one could contend that the CUP holding political power without any formal responsibility in many ways contributed to further destabilization and de-concentration of power and decreased the autonomy and capacity of the central government in dealing with the ensuing problems and predicaments. Eventually this informal duality in the state structure proved to be very inefficient and it created more divisions and conflicts among the state elite when they confronted more serious challenges. Until 1913 the CUP preferred to stay in the background, exerting its influence in politics indirectly through relying on its majority in the parliament.

From 1909 onwards the already ailing empire had to grapple with several problems caused by internal and external factors. Internally, the country was torn due to numerous urban and rural uprisings, some of which were separatist. Between 1904 and 1911, a continuous war raged between the Ottoman army and rebellious Arabs in the remote southeastern province of Yemen. The war had a detrimental effect upon the Ottoman military morale due to the high death rate among Ottoman soldiers. Another boiling pot was Albania that demanded autonomy in 1910 even though its population was predominantly Muslim and nationalism hadn't gained foothold among larger segments of Albanian society (Glenny, 2001; Mazower, 2002). Kosovo and Montenegro too became scenes of important uprisings between 1910 and 1912 (Zürcher, 1999). The Dersim region with its small but heavily armed Kızılbaş (Alevi) population rose in rebellion in 1911 and 1912. Most of these uprisings were caused by either organized ethnic nationalism or discontent with the Ottoman rule, such as taxation and military conscription. The centralizing efforts of respective Ottoman governments in the Balkans did not offer much solace and proved counterproductive.

Rebellious initiatives were also conceived in the Anatolian provinces as well, especially where inter-communal friction was prevalent and governmental control weak. Armenian and Kurdish separatist nationalism were also on the rise.

The external crisis wasn't any milder. The major Western powers had been encroaching upon Ottoman territory for the sake of imperialist expansion for a long time. Italy occupied Tripolitania in October 1912 and escaped potential repercussions because of Ottoman military impotence and British rejection of intervention in favor

of the Ottomans. CUP efforts of deploying a paramilitary expedition proved unsuccessful; the Italian government even ordered bombings of Gallipoli. Bitter and disillusioned, the Ottoman government, lead by Minister of the Interior Kâmil Paşa (1823-1913), turned its back on the European powers and could only organize an ineffective economic boycott when Austria-Hungary officially annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina. The most severe and acute crisis hadn't come about yet. Emboldened by these exhibitions of Ottoman humiliations, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro declared war on the Ottoman Empire in October 1912. The Ottoman armed forces, underpaid and underfed, struggled with their technically obsolete weapons and could not hold long. Completely demoralized, the army retreated to the outskirts of Istanbul and awaited the terms of truce the Balkan countries issued on 3 December 1912 (Erickson, 2003). While the negotiations were continuing between the Balkan states and the Ottoman government in London, the inner circle of the CUP, frustrated by the situation, organized a *coup d'etat* in Istanbul on 23 January 1913 and removed the existing cabinet, who were about to agree with the great powers proposals, including the handing over the province of Edirne to the Bulgarians, from office, replacing it with a new cabinet which would follow a more aggressive policy. Immediately after the coup hostilities with the Balkan states resumed, but thanks to the mounting tensions among the Balkan states, the CUP managed to gain the upper hand and retake some of the territories lost during the first Balkan war.

The importance of the Balkan wars for Ottoman losses cannot be overstated. "It was a disaster in human, economic, political, cultural, and ideological terms. The

empire lost nearly all of its European territories, over 60,000 square miles in all, with nearly four million inhabitants.” The remaining parts of the empire were deluged with Muslim refugees, whose settlement caused vast problems (Zürcher, 2003: 114). Therefore, one can argue that the Balkan wars and the subsequent coup, constituted a point of no return, or critical juncture (Collier and Collier, 1991), for the ensuing changes and shifts in policies of the CUP, especially relating to the population structure.

After the 1913 coup, the CUP was in complete control of the internal political situation. The liberal political climate was no longer in place. Although there was not an organized attempt at suppression of the opposition, the CUP was no longer tolerant for those who challenged their authority, or tried to create divisions within the state. The inner circle of the CUP counted much more than the cabinet or the parliament. Similarly economic policies shifted from liberalism and free trade to more nationalist and protective ones.

The year 1913 also marked a turnaround in the influence of ideological currents in the empire, just as it did in political and economic developments. The alliances between the European powers and the non-Muslim communities of the empire during the Balkan Wars proved that Ottomanism, the old Ottoman ideal of a union of the different communities around the Ottoman throne, which was the dominant ideology among the Ottoman state elite, could not be pursued much longer. The Balkan Wars had made the idea of Ottomanism a dead letter. Panislamism, which sought to regenerate the empire on the basis of solidarity within the Islamic

Community (*Ümmet*); and Panturkism, which sought to union of the Turkic peoples under the Ottoman flag, began to attract more attention and found more support among the members of the CUP (Zürcher, 2003: 132-137). The mass influx of Muslim immigrants into the remaining lands of the empire and the rise could only but accelerate this ideological shift from Ottomanism to a mix of Islamism and Turkism. And, this new ideology, which later became the dominant ideology in the making of the Turkish state and nation, as we will see below, had overwhelming demographic consequences, affecting the fate of both non-Muslim communities and non-Turkish Muslim communities.

Since the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877/78, the Ottoman government had been struggling to establish a balance between the mass immigration of Muslims and the internal facilities for the needs of these immigrants. With the outbreak of the Balkan Wars, and later the First World War, population transfers became the preferred tool of demographic engineering. In general the population policies of the CUP had four interrelated axes: order, security, taxation, and conscription.

Although military and security concerns of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) primarily determined the nature of population policies during and after the Balkan Wars, economic and political concerns were also at place.

The security concerns were mostly affected by a fear of 'fifth column activities' of the non-Muslim populations living in or around certain strategic military locations (Dündar, 2001: 62). One of the most crucial consequence of this fear was the promulgation of the Forced Emigration Law (*Tehcir Kanunu*) issued on 27 May 1915.

According to the provisions of this law, the Ottoman Army was authorized to resettle the inhabitants of a village or a town to other locations, either individually or collectively, after an act of espionage and treason. On May 30, the government issued a decree which prolonged the forced migrations until an indefinite period (Akşin, 1997: 126; Dündar, 2001: 63), which in fact continued until the end of the First World War. The Law was an open-ended delegation of power given to the army commanders in the provinces, which could be exploited by false allegations, not only against minorities, but also against other demographic elements. For example, the Commander of the 4th Army in Syria, Cemal Paşa, sent into exile many merchants and local power holders during the war, regardless of their ethnic origin. He even killed a couple of local magnates during the course of the war (Kocahanoğlu, 1998: 125-26; Dündar, 2001: 81). His policies of settlement of Bedouin Arabs were coincided with the forced emigration of Anatolian populations. The process worked something like this: The non-Muslim groups expelled from Anatolia, then the refugees settled formerly around Syria and Mesopotamia were resettled in those deserted villages in Anatolia, and finally tribal and nomadic populations in Syria sedentarized on those lands emptied by those refugees. Motivated by the military and security concerns of the government, the provisions of the Forced Emigration Law were applied to the Armenians, Greeks, and other minorities such as Jews, Nestorians, Assyrians and Chaldeans. Initially, the abandoned property of forced emigrants was proposed to be kept intact. However, in practice, the government resettled Muslim refugees in the abandoned property of those emigrants forced to leave their homelands.

The pre-World War I was a period of mass migrations in the Ottoman Empire. The territorial losses of the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan Wars put the Muslims living in the Balkans into a difficult situation. The population policies of the newly established nation-states, founded on the former Ottoman territories, was in tune with each other's concern of administrative homogeneity, since population exchanges emerged to be a final solution to the problems created by the internal administrative and demographic regulations. This population exchange policy became one of the most important tools of the CUP government as well. It seemed that the administrative and economic concerns of the Ottoman state complied well with the interests of other Balkan states during this period. The creation of a homogenous population in the provinces would be conducive to the local administrative order. Between the Balkan Wars and the First World War, the Ottoman government signed certain treaties with Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia regarding population exchanges. During this brief period, population exchanges outbalanced largely other policies of migration, such as deportation and forced emigration. However, at the same time population exchanges brought about many administrative and social problems. Most importantly, safeguarding the rights of immovable property constrained bureaucratic cadres. Population exchanges entailed to resolve such problems on a reciprocal basis. However, it seems that the great landowners were in better-off positions compared to small landholders (Dündar, 2001: 69). The outbreak of the First World War curtailed the policy of population exchanges in the Ottoman Empire until the Republican

period. Ottoman entry into the war and the wars with Russia on the Caucasian front radically changed the policy of population exchanges.

3.5.1. Armenian Deportations

The military fiasco of the Ottoman forces against the Russians in eastern Anatolia marked the beginning of the suppression of Ottoman Armenians. Some Armenian nationalists saw Russian victory as their chance to achieve the establishment of an Armenian state in eastern Anatolia. Russian propaganda encouraged these aspirations. A few thousand Armenians joined the Russian army. There were also Armenian desertions from the Ottoman Army and guerilla activity behind the Ottoman lines. Confronted with this situation the Ottoman cabinet took a somewhat radical decision on the initiative of Talat Pasha, the Interior Minister and the leading figure of the CUP. The government thought that Armenians, as being Christians, were likely to side with the Russians and were considered as potential traitors. The leaders of the CUP thought that the best solution to prevent was the deportation of the Armenian from the eastern front. Later, however, this policy was extended and heavily applied not only in the east but throughout the empire's territories (Dündar, 2001: 62-66).

The initiative for the comprehensive Armenian deportations came from the CUP's headquarters. In a Memorandum dated May 26, 1915, the Interior Minister, Talat Pasha, requested from the Grand Vizier the enactment through the Cabinet of a special law authorizing deportations. The Memorandum was endorsed by the Grand Vizier, Sait Halim Pasha (1863-1921), on May 29, 1915. The press, meanwhile,

announced the promulgation of the new emergency law, Temporary Law of Deportation, May 27, two days before its endorsement. Without referring to the Armenians, the law authorized the military commanders to take necessary military measures against those opposing government orders and organizing armed resistance (Article 1). It also authorized the same commanders to order the deportation and relocation of population clusters on suspicion of espionage, treason, and on military necessity, injecting into the terms of the law the nebulous word “feel” or “sense” (*hissetmek*) relative to the possibility or probability of acts of disloyalty (Article 2) (Dadrian, 2004: 219-247). This vague but sweepingly decisive authorization resulted in the transfer of the bulk of the empire’s Armenian population from the war zone and relocated to Zor in the middle of the Syrian Desert.

Eventually, however, the deportations were extended to other regions of Anatolia. This massive relocation (*tehcir*) was carried through in 1915 -1916 and it resulted in the death of great numbers of Armenians. A large part of the suffering during the deportation process was due to unchecked and unabating Kurdish depredations, mostly by the Kurdish tribal regiments of territorial cavalry.⁴² There has

⁴² As formulated by Henry F. Lynch, the British ethnographer and lawyer who in two separate trips spent eleven months conducting research in the afflicted areas, these Kurdish depredations constituted “the Kernel of the Armenian Question” (Lynch, 1965: 420). A similar view is expressed by the Islamist scholars Hamilton Gibb and Harold Bowen, who have characterized the Kurds as “the mortal enemies of the Armenians” (Gibb and Bowen, 1962: 227). Dogan Avcioğlu (1974: 1088) declared that the Kurdish regiments were used as instruments of bloodbaths against the Armenians. Similarly, İsmail Beşikci stated that Sultan Abdulhamid exploited the Islamic religion to co-opt the Kurds and “unleashed against the Armenians a campaign which seemed to have no end and no abating . . . he thereby averted the establishment of Armenia” (Beşikci, 1969: 89, 236, 239, 479). Halil Berktaş noted that these

been a great controversy over numbers, but between 800,000 and 1,200,000 deaths seems to be most likely. Whatever the numbers, or whether or not there was any genocidal intent on the part of the organizers, deportation of the Ottoman Armenians, and its human cost, reached an unprecedented scale. As has been showed in previous sections, the Ottoman state had traditionally employed the mandatory transfer of both Christian and Muslim communities, the practice of *sürgün*, to populate politically or economically strategic areas of the country as well as to punish selected communities. But this had occurred neither on the scale of the 1915 deportations nor with the genocidal results (Naimark, 2001; Akçam, 2004).

3.5.2. Population Censuses

In order to have a better management of population, the CUP frequently tried to utilize demographic statistics in making and implementing its population policies, especially in the settlement of immigrants and nomadic groups. Without a detailed demographic and geographic knowledge, it was thought, efficient governance would simply not be possible.

The data gathered from official statistics was used systematically to determine the number of people to be settled in a specific region. The last empire-wide census was concluded in 1907. Before the First World War, the CUP government continued to update the census data with quarterly enumerations by means of nationality and ethnicity in order to stabilize/counterbalance Muslim and non-Muslim populations in

“regiments were made to attack Armenians... benefiting from their primitiveness and violence.” (“Interview with Halil Berktaş,” *Radikal*, 30 June 2000).

the provinces. Local officials and religious leaders were held responsible for providing the numbers for population changes in their regions. The CUP government also collected information on the distributional aspects of the population and prepared ethnographical maps of the empire. The final and most decisive maps and statistics, which included detailed information on the denominational and tribal populations province by province, were prepared after the fall of the CUP government in 1918 (Dündar, 2001: 84-86). Another detailed ethnographic map was prepared in 1919. All these maps and demographic data were intended to be used against the allegations of the Great Powers on the structure of the Ottoman population. Having detailed information on the demographic structure of the empire was also necessary for efficient taxation and conscription. In brief, it is certain that at the end of the WWI, the *İskan-ı Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdüriyeti* (General Directorate of Tribes and Immigrants - AMMU) possessed valuable information on the demographic structure of the Ottoman population.

The division in the AMMU responsible for tribal affairs was supposed to concerned with the settlement of the Turkmen, Kurdish, and Arabic nomadic communities. But until 1918, the institution mostly devoted its efforts to the settlement of immigrants. The officials believed that the settlement of immigrants and tribal populations as well as their ‘taming’ and ‘civilizing’ was less an administrative and bureaucratic operation than a scientific endeavor. For this aim, a scientific investigation committee was established within the AMMU.

According to the 1st article of the Draft Regulation on the Foundation of the General Directorate of Tribes and Immigrants (AMMU-15 February 1916): a) attached to the Ministry of Internal Affairs; b) summon, transport, settle, and provide permanent housing for immigrants and “civilize” and “tame” tribal populations (Dündar, 2001: 71). Sedentarization of nomads and itinerant Gypsies would hopefully make them “useful elements” (*anasır-ı nafi*) of the state. Some were even forced to work in the military factories and workshops (Dündar, 2001: 128-130).

From the beginning, the government favored Muslims and discriminated against non-Muslim immigrants before accepting them into the Ottoman territory, both formally and informally. This was also true during the settlement process. This principle was applied almost uniformly to the Balkan immigrants. On the other hand, eventually Muslim Gypsies were excluded after the officials could not control the influx of both non-Muslim and Muslim Gypsy families. The third article of the Draft Regulation on the Tribes and Immigrants, presented to the government on 15 January 1918, stated that no Gypsies would be allowed to enter into the Ottoman lands, like people with infectious diseases (i.e. syphilis and leprosy), prostitutes, gamblers, beggars, anarchists, and spies (Dündar, 2001: 129).

Parallel to the need for statistical information for representation of the population was of course the need for control over their movements. In order to establish a “monopoly of the legitimate means of movement,” (Torpey, 2000:1) within its territories the Ottoman government enacted a regulation on March 16, 1915 which required all Ottoman subjects, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, as well as foreigners

to get internal passports (or travel permits) (*seyahat varakası*) in order to move from one city to another.⁴³ This practice is very much in line with John Torpey's argument that "to carry out and coordinate their basic tasks of or revenue extraction, administration, and physical coercion, states must be in a position to lay hold of the people from whom they hope to acquire these resources. Passports, internal passports (or passes), and identity cards have been crucial in states' efforts to achieve these aims (Torpey, 1997: 840; 1998; 2000). We do not know how widely or strictly the internal passport system was applied by the CUP government but it was certainly one of the principal means for discriminating among the Ottoman subjects in terms of rights and privileges.⁴⁴

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter traced the history of forced population movements in the Ottoman Empire. It showed that forced population movements are not novel phenomena, specific only to the modern period. Since the 16th century Ottoman authorities had used population relocation and settlement with an increasing pace to manage the

⁴³ This policy of controlling population movements with official documents had been already introduced prior to the Tanzimat period. The local authorities demanded *mürur tezkeresi* (literally 'travel permit'), explaining the reason and period of traveling, from subject populations before their leaving of original residential places. These documents were also used as identification cards (Karpas, 1985: 35).

⁴⁴ Hükümetçe şüpheli tanınan Ermenilere ve bilhassa bunlardan müteşebbis ve faal komite rüesa ve erkanına katiyen seyahat varakası ve harice azimet için vesika verilmemesi." şeklinde Emniyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti'nden Edirne, Erzurum, Adana, Ankara ve sair vilayetlerle Kütahya, İzmit, Urfa ve sair mutasarrıflıklara çekilen telgraf. BOA, DH.SFR, 52/95, 24 April 1915.

demographic structure of the Empire's territories. As the preceding analysis demonstrated the reasons behind such a population policy were multiple: maintenance of order and security in the newly conquered territories, economic development of a region, and sedentarization of tribes. The Ottoman state established various institutions to handle these matters more efficiently. Until the transition from indirect rule to direct-rule, Ottoman population policies remained mostly local in character. It was only in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the process of political centralization gained pace, the seeds of a more comprehensive population management policy started to emerge.

This chapter also showed that the relationship between forced migration and state making is double-edged. The state-making processes in the Balkans and the Caucasus in the late nineteenth century lead to the forced migration of Muslims into the remaining territories of the Ottoman Empire. The influx of Muslim immigrants and their settlement, as we will see in more detail later, tremendously altered the demographic structure of the empire, constraining the choices of the late Ottoman political elite in formulating and then implementing their subsequent population policies.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROAD TO DERSIM '38: THE POLITICS OF FORCED MIGRATION IN THE EARLY TURKISH REPUBLIC

4.1. Introduction: State-making, Nation-building, and the Origins of Kurdish Displacement in Republican Turkey

Throughout the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, many Ottoman Muslims (including Turkish, Bosnian, Greek, Serbian, Macedonian, Albanian, and Bulgarian Muslims) who faced various kinds of repression in the newly independent Balkan States immigrated to Anatolia. In addition, Turks, Circassians, Tatars, and other Muslims of different ethnic origin arrived in Anatolia from the Black Sea basin, fleeing Russian expansionism. These immigrants joined other immigrant and indigenous Muslim groups of Anatolia, Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Georgians, and Lazes (Tekeli, 1994; Çağaptay, 2002a). These demographic changes strengthened Anatolia's Muslim demographic base at the expense of its Christian communities; and by the 1920s, a largely Turkish, yet still significantly multi-ethnic, Muslim population came to constitute the majority. Within this Muslim majority, Kurds were the most significant non-Turkish population. According to official figures, in 1927, out of a total population of 13.5 million, there were approximately 1.8 million Kurdish speakers (Karpas, 1985; Çağaptay, 2002b). Hence, despite having a dominantly

Muslim population, the Republican state was still bound to deal with its ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous population.

The expectation on the part of the governing elite was that Muslims of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds would easily and quickly assimilate into the new nation which was yet to be constructed as Turkish. Already having been uprooted from their homelands and being scattered all over the place and therefore being more dependent on the state, immigrant Muslims were more than eager to cooperate with the new governing elite, and assimilate into the dominant nation.

Local Muslims, on the other hand, did not share the same incentives with immigrant Muslims. Still retaining their cultural and social structures, and living in a relatively compact territory concentrated in large parts of southeastern Anatolia, of all the Muslims, the Kurds were the least likely to assimilate.

Yet Kurds did not pose a serious challenge to the state until the mid-1920s. The dynamics of the relationship between the new nationalizing government and the Kurds began to change after the establishment of the Republic. The reason behind this change was twofold: the dissolution of the Muslim alliance against the common enemy (occupation forces and their local Christian allies) and the efforts of the new state to implement direct rule in Kurdistan.

4.2. Implementation of Direct Rule in Kurdistan

Starting from the mid-nineteenth century, increasing pressure from geopolitical competition forced the Ottoman state to seek more efficacious means to extract more

and more revenues for their rapidly increasing military expenditures. Indirect rule—rule by local/regional mediators—which was the prevailing form of governance until then, was structurally ineffective, severely limiting the amount of resources central rulers could extract from their subject populations. It is not that the Ottoman rulers did not want to rule directly, but the infrastructural and technological conditions necessary for instituting direct rule did not exist before. The development of transportation and communications technology aided the central rulers to extend the center's ability to respond to challengers in distant and previously impermeable territories. Advances in capital-intensive military technology was another factor which favored central rulers in their efforts to implement direct rule, because central rulers had greater access to capital than local authorities (Tilly 1992; Levi, 1988; Hechter, 2000).

Instituting direct rule, however, was not an easy task, and posed a daunting challenge to central authorities, because “it can only be attained by destroying the previous bases of social order—namely, that social order that was build upon indirect rule” (Hechter, 2000: 60). Since direct rule inherently worked against the interests of local authorities, it brought about significant conflict and resistance. Local authorities, thus, responded to center's effort to impose direct rule by mobilizing their subjects to resist growing central control.

Because order is basically maintained by local authorities under indirect rule, cultural diversity is relatively irrelevant to attaining social and political order; therefore indirect rule is usually more tolerant to cultural heterogeneity. Moreover, heterogeneity may sometimes provide central authorities various opportunities for

making use of local conflicts and diverting them to their own advantage through making local alliances. Another advantage of indirect rule was that the existence of mediating groups lowered the costs of maintaining order for the central state. But when the responsibility for maintaining order shifted from local to central authorities, cultural diversity began to be perceived as a potential threat. Central authorities hoped that cultural uniformity would help facilitate and legitimize direct rule. It was believed that cultural uniformity would foster political loyalty to the center. Therefore the growth of direct rule led to efforts in cultural homogenization. Unlike the decentralized indirect rule of the imperial states and their flexible policies of social and political control over subject populations, the centralization of political power in the form of nation-state necessitated more rigid institutional and ideological mechanisms of territorial and social control (Barkey, *Taming Imperial...*).

Although serious efforts had been made since the Tanzimat period to implement direct rule, in most parts of Kurdistan indirect rule remained the dominant form until the 1920s, even after the proclamation of the Turkish Republic. This was mostly due to the series of wars that took place beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century (Ottoman-Russian War, Balkan Wars, First World War, War of Independence). Especially during the War of Independence, the power of the local Kurdish elite was strengthened. Despite some fissions and tensions, the presence of a common enemy led to an alliance between the center and the Kurdish periphery. This alliance continued during the first years of the Turkish Republic. In order to compensate for its economic and military weaknesses, the builders of the Republic

placed priority on strengthening the state's external power against other states, even though this meant perpetuating their dependence on local power holders. At the same time, largely because of the Balkan experience, the peripheral, especially the frontier, regions were considered to be potentially hostile and were kept under close observation.

The need for an alliance against a common enemy, together with weak communication and transportation structures and competing ideologies, led the Republican government to adopt a flexible, semi-pluralist policy towards Kurdish groups. Because of shortages of men and material, the central government was more than willing to negotiate with local leaders in order to preserve its alliance with them. In many instances, the equality of Turks and Kurds was invoked. The Republican government was careful enough not to alienate the Kurds. Kurds were even promised autonomy. In March 1920, 22 Kurdish tribal leaders signed a declaration stressing Islamic solidarity and opposition to efforts to separate Kurds and Turks (Yıldız, 1996: 104). However, there were also some Kurdish tribes who were opposed to this alliance and rebelled against the central government. Between 1919 and 1921 there were 23 revolts directed against the efforts of the resistance movement, and then against the efforts of the central government to centralize its authority across the country outside occupied areas. Yet, only four of these uprisings occurred in Kurdish populated areas, and three involved Kurdish tribes. These were the rebellions by the Cemil Çeto's clan, by the Milli Aşireti during the summer of 1920, and by the Koçgiri tribe between March and June 1921. None of these rebellions managed to attract support from

Kurdish deputies in the national Parliament or from other Kurdish groups, and they were eventually suppressed in collaboration with other Kurdish groups (Dersimi, 1997). However these manifestations of Kurdish dissent, with the possibility that Britain and France might provide support, were viewed at the time with much concern by the central government

Despite the resistance of some sectors of the Kurds, for a short period the flexible policy of the central government and the accord of Kurdish powerholders served the pragmatic ideals and practical interest of the Republican State. However, the victory of the allied Muslim forces of Anatolia and Thrace in the War of Independence of 1922 put an end to the practical need for Muslim coalition and finally transformed the relationship between the central government and the Kurdish elements. The decisive moment of this transformation materialized around the mid-1920s.

The Lausanne Peace Treaty (24 July 1923) established the new borders of the Turkish Republic. Throughout negotiations the Turkish delegation based its claims on the unity of Turks and Kurds as one nation. The delegation strongly argued that even though they speak different languages, Kurds and Turks are not significantly different and form a single bloc in terms of race, faith, and custom. The British, on the other hand, argued that Kurds, with their own language, independent history, customs, manner, and character, ought to be an autonomous nation. The Kurdish leadership was, at the time, quite divided concerning the future of Kurdistan. At the end of the day, the majority of Kurdish leaders supporting a confederacy with the Ottomans and

sat alongside the Turks, stressing the necessity of recognizing the new Turkish state as the government of both Kurds and Turks. As a result, all provisions of the Treaty of Sevres (10 August 1920) regarding the formation of an autonomous Kurdistan were dropped in the Lausanne Peace Treaty. It was agreed that the status and rights of minorities in the Turkish Republic be based on religion rather than ethnicity. Therefore, along the lines of the Ottoman *millet* system, the new Republic did not recognize any of the Muslim ethnic groups as a minority. However, this seeming Ottoman-Turkish continuity started to prove itself wrong very shortly. Right after being recognized internationally as a sovereign nation-state, the new Turkish state started to repudiate the multicultural ethos of the imperial era and embark on a nationalistic drive for homogeneity.

Immediately after securing the territorial borders of the state, the state elite began an immense project of centralization. A confrontation between central power and Kurdish tribes was inevitable, since the logic of political centralization necessitates a reconfiguration of power relations in a way that promotes the interests of central rulers and decreases the power of local elites. Therefore, as soon as the state started its centralization efforts, several Kurdish groups immediately showed significant concern and resistance. The first wave of resistance movements (until 1924) were sporadic and unorganized, and mostly led by individual tribal leaders. Starting from 1924, with the formation of a somewhat provisionary alliance between big tribal leaders and influential religious leaders (sheikhs) the second wave of Kurdish resistance started, which finally led to the Sheikh Said rebellion of 1925

(Olson, 1989 -for a chronological list of Kurdish rebellions, see Appendix II). This was an insurrection with religious and separatist overtones, which also aimed at challenging the tribal oligarchy and the central authority which was in implicit alliance with it. According to one observer it was connected with resentment against the centralizing policies of the Turkish government. The dire economic situation in the east, the frustration of the tribal leaders who had failed to be elected to the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1923, and “the fear of the feudal landowners and the chiefs of the tribes of having their privileges curtailed” by the government, were the major factors which seem to be responsible for the break of the insurgency (Arfa, 1968: 37).

The central government at first tried to negotiate with the leaders of the rebellion. But, when the leaders of the rebellion made clear that they would not give in short of at least territorial autonomy, if not independence, the central government mobilized all of its military sources and bluntly suppressed the rebellion⁴⁵.

The Sheikh Said rebellion did serve as a potent reminder and constituted the critical break point, hinting that despite the Armenian massacres and deportations, and the population exchange with Greece, the new Turkish state still had not attained the degree of national homogeneity desired by the state elite (Zürcher, 2005). It was in 1925 that the passage of a new “Law for the Maintenance of Order” provided the government with the institutional framework for authoritarian rule, and at the same

⁴⁵ The cost of suppressing the rebellion constituted almost a third of the total state budget (Tunçay, 1999).

time set the stage for blocking potential channels for all sorts of opposition. Starting in 1925, with the exception of a brief period in 1930, these channels were to remain closed during two decades of single party rule. The Law for the Maintenance of Order (*Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu*) was also used to suppress other oppositional groups and to silence the press. Symbolically oppositional, but nonetheless more liberal than the governing Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*), the Progressive Republican Party (*Terakkiperver Cumhuriyet Fırkası*), which functioned within the parliament, was also closed down after the Sheikh Said rebellion, based on the allegations that some of its members cooperated with and support the rebels.

The Sheikh Said rebellion represents a major turning point in terms of the changes in governmental policies of social and political control over the Kurds. It marked the beginning of systematic deportations and razing of villages, as well as martial law or special regimes in Kurdistan--policies that afterwards became the commonplace experience of Kurds whenever they defied the state. After the Sheikh Said rebellion, the central government in Ankara decided upon the eventual and complete assimilation of Kurds, by force if necessary, whenever and wherever serious resistance was encountered. Expressions of Kurdish nationalist thought as well as language and culture were severely repressed. As it will be analyzed in detail in the next section, the government passed a series of laws that enabled it to exile Kurds from their traditional living areas to other parts of the country, where they would be in the minority.

4.3. The Settlement Law of 1926

The most frequently used strategy of demographically engineering a homogeneous subject population in the early years of Republican Turkey was deportations and relocation and resettlement of ethno-linguistic minorities and insurgent elements. Especially after the Sheikh Said Rebellion of 1925, the government put pressure on the Grand National Assembly to provide a solid legal framework that would enable the government to deal with the insurgent Kurdish elements and their support base more effectively. For that cause, in addition to the laws and provisions that actually targeted active insurgent elements, a series of laws and regulations were also put into effect that empowered the government to restructure the demographic make-up of the country. The first example of this comprehensive plan was the resettlement law, adopted on May 31, 1926 (Law no. 885).⁴⁶

Until 1926, problems related to demographic factors had been dealt with in a sporadic manner, focusing mostly on local and regional concerns. Ad hoc decrees and regulations managed individual cases, generally regarding immigrants and issues related to population exchange, but no comprehensive legal framework regarding the general population policy of the new Turkish State was established.

⁴⁶ ‘İskan Kanunu’, no: 885, 31/06/1926, Düstur, Tertip: 3, Cilt: 7, pp. 1441-1443. For a complete list of laws and legal regulations related to settlement and resettlement see Appendix III.

The settlement law of 1926 was the first step towards establishing such a comprehensive population policy⁴⁷. It was intended to deal with two main issues. First it focused on the influx of immigrants into the country and defined who qualified as an immigrant. Second, and more importantly for the purposes of this study, it focused on internal population movements.

The first article of the Law on Settlement charged the Ministry of Internal Affairs with the tasks of managing the admission of immigrants and refugees to the country, and of determining their place of settlement. Article 2 of the Law, on the other hand, defined who could not be admitted as immigrant or refugee. According to it “People who do not belong to Turkish culture, who are infected with syphilis, who are subject to leprosy and their families, who are imprisoned because of committing murder, except for political or military reasons⁴⁸, anarchists, spies, gypsies, and who

⁴⁷ The exception is the “Law on the Immigrants, Refugees, and Tribes Who Change Their Region of Settlement without Permission,” adopted on 28 November 1925 (Law no. 675). Far from being comprehensive, in the face of increasing number of deserters and escapees, this law only stipulated that all immigrants, refugees, or tribes who came to Turkey either voluntarily or by force and were settled in a region by the government could not desert or change their residence for five years. Those who did so would be returned to their original place of settlement. But, after two years, the government, if it deemed it necessary, could change one’s settlement. The law does not concern itself with other aspects of the settlement process (Kökdemir, 1952: 18-19). In effect, this law was applied only selectively for “non-reliable elements.” For example, in 1933, an official report ordered the application of this law for the exchangee “Gypsies” who had deserted their official settlement place in Mersin (BCA, 272..0.0.12/63.190..5, 07 March 1933).

⁴⁸ Here, the exclusion of the murder cases for political and military reasons seems to be very important, but the Law does not specify the rationale for this.

were previously exiled outside of the country cannot be admitted [as immigrants or refugees].”⁴⁹

The Settlement Law of 1927 also authorized the Ministry of Internal Affairs to relocate and (re)settle the nomadic tribes⁵⁰ and “others who have erratic lives” in suitable centers.

At face value, distinguishing between different categories of groups that were subject to settlement, i.e., between those coming from outside versus those living within the country but having errant lives, may not seem very significant. In practice, however, it turned out to be a very important distinction that affected patterns of settlement for each category. In terms of internal settlement, by allowing the government to uproot some groups and resettle them elsewhere whenever and wherever it was seen necessary, the Law mostly targeted some sectors of the Kurds. Here, it seems that lawmakers were consciously using ambiguous categories without specifying their content in order to provide practical leverage and flexibility to the government.⁵¹ As we will see later in the chapter, this sort of “creative ambiguity”

⁴⁹ For a list of categories of settled and resettled populations, see Appendix IV.

⁵⁰ Yeğen (1996) elegantly shows that, among others, the term “nomad” was a euphemism for the Kurds in the Turkish State’s discourse.

⁵¹ During the discussions about the details of the law in the Parliament, Rahmi Bey, a deputy from Trabzon, raised the question of whether or not court order is required to relocate those suspected of spying. The Minister of Interior’s reply was that if their actions could be legally established, they would be arrested and imprisoned, therefore there wouldn’t be any need for their relocation. Relocation was intended for the distrusted whose status could not be factually established (TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 2, İctima Senesi 3, İctima 110, Cilt 25, Sayfa 649). The Ministry of Interior’s

constituted an important aspect of the second major, and more comprehensive, Settlement Law adopted in 1934.

Despite the legal framework provided by this law, the resettlement of Kurds did not become a widespread policy in the late 1920s and the early 1930s. One of the reasons for this was the massive influx of immigrants. Between 1920 and 1932 more than 740,000 Muslims poured into the country. About 500,000 of them were exchanges from Greece. The government gave priority to settle these immigrants first. In addition the government had to resettle and provide resources to thousands who had lost their homes and belongings due to wartime destruction during the First World War and the War of Independence (1918-1922). There were also about 36,000 refugees to be sheltered (Dündar, 2001). Since the state's resources were already exhausted, internally relocating the Kurds and other "unreliable elements" remained a secondary concern. Accordingly, the number of Kurds who were moved and resettled in Western parts of Turkey remained quite selective and limited.

With the suppression of rebellions between 1925 and 1927, followed by the mix of relative moderation in 1928, it seemed that Kurdish dissidence had come to a halt. But beyond Turkey's borders, some of the exiles, who continued to believe in a Kurdish national movement, met in Lebanon to form a new party called Khoybun (Independence). They hoped to avoid the mistakes of the past. This implied a move

statement shows that resettlement should be seen not as a reactive but a proactive measure.

away from individual uprisings by tribal and religious leaders, and the constitution of a trained, non-tribal fighting force (McDowall, 2000: 184-213).

As a response to this development, Turkish State authorities felt the urgent need to take stronger preventive measures. As a part of this effort, a new and more specific law, “The Law on the Relocation of Some Individuals from the Eastern Zones to the Western Provinces” (Law no. 1097), was passed on June 10, 1927. This law ordered the transfer, from the zone under martial law (established after the Sheikh Said Rebellion of 1925) and the Bayazit Province to the Western Provinces, of up to 1400 individuals and 80 rebels, all of whom were, at the time, on the run or in custody (Kökdemir, 1952: 28-30). Those who were transferred in accordance with this law were allowed to circulate or change residence in the Western provinces, but under no condition could return to the Eastern provinces.

This law remained in effect for about six months, until the Government decided to abate it on December 5, 1927⁵² (Law no.1178), for all except for those who had deserted their settlements and joined the insurgent bandits and had not turned themselves in within three months of the proclamation of this Law. In his address to the Parliament regarding the rationale of this change, the Minister of Interior Affairs, Şükrü Kaya, described the reason behind this as a necessary stage in the course of the normalization process in the Eastern Provinces. “Those who needed to be taken out of the region had been successfully removed, and order and security had been established and the conditions in general had been improved. Therefore, it was the Government’s

⁵² Law no. 1178, December 5, 1927 (Kökdemir, 1952: 30-31)

belief that those harmful elements that were transferred from there could no longer be able to engage in activities that might threaten the public order and security. The opposition elements in the East had been shattered to a large extent. Hence, it was time to return to the normal, civil life that our people there always deserved.”⁵³ In his speech, the Minister of Interior Affairs also added that the abolishment of this law should not be seen as reflecting weakness on the part of the government. The Turkish State would continue its efforts to maintain the rule of law under normal governance in the Eastern Provinces at all costs. This had been, according to the Minister, the intent of the government from the beginning.⁵⁴

The Minister of Interior Affairs’ statement neither reflects the “true” intent of the government nor correctly presents the historical facts. The general conditions in the Eastern provinces had not improved significantly as the Minister argues. Neither had the government been able to establish order and security in the region. The abatement of Law no. 1097 might, on the surface, seem to point towards the effort of the government to return to a state of normalcy in the region. But, the creation of another law on June 27, 1927, right after the proclamation of Law no. 1097, shows that the intent of the government was far from returning to normal rule in the East. Law no. 1164, which had remained in effect after the abolishment of Law no. 1097, ordered the establishment of the Inspectorate-General, a special administration

⁵³ Summarized from Şükrü Kaya’s speech (Aydın Tarihi, no.45, Aralık 1927, pp. 2860-2862).

⁵⁴ *ibid.*

structure with extraordinary powers and authority – including the power of population transfers – in the Eastern provinces. The abolishment of Law no.1097 and the alleged intent of returning to normalcy in the East seems to be nothing more than part of an effort to relieve some of the national and international pressure on the government regarding the status of the Kurds, and for that matter of other minorities (McDowall, 2000; Natali, 2005).

Despite the government's relentless efforts to prevent another Kurdish insurgency, the second big Kurdish resistance movement, known as the Mount Ararat uprising, organized by the Khoybun, began in 1928. The rebels were able to get some assistance from Armenians as well as Iran, but failed to attract sufficient external support. At first the Turkish forces suffered a setback and Kurdish forces were able to make some advance. Authorities tried conciliation to persuade the insurgents to lay down their arms, offering a cessation to all deportations in addition to a general amnesty. The rebels demanded total Turkish evacuation from Kurdistan, so there was no prospect of a settlement. The rebellion continued for almost four years. The Kurds were being re-supplied from the Kurds and Armenians of Iran. The Turkish government warned Iran that it would assume 'liberty of action' if Iran did not prevent rebels from getting assistance from Iranian territory. The danger of conflict between Iran and Turkey led Iranian authorities to stop the flow of assistance to the rebels from their territory. Having been cut off from its supplies and external support, the resistance did not have much chance of success. After a series of short encounters, the rebels were surrounded; many were killed, and the remainder was deported and

resettled in western Thrace (Dersimi, 1997). 41 people in 10 households were transferred from the Bitlis province and resettled in Western Anatolia (Çağaptay, 2002b: 228). In November 1931, in accordance with the government decree to relocate some of the tribes along the Iraqi border, a group of 300 families arrived in Istanbul and was later transferred to Tekirdağ to be settled.⁵⁵ A report⁵⁶, dated August 12, 1933, by the General Directorate of Population Affairs (Nüfus İşleri Umum Müdürlüğü), states that the government had managed to settle 1260 nomadic tribal households (5544 individuals) in the last ten years (1923-1933). Among these is mentioned the Halikanlı tribe, a Kurdified Turkish tribe with a population of 2186 in 489 households, which was transferred from the Beyazıt Province and settled in villages throughout Tekirdağ (in Eastern Thrace) and İzmir (Smyrna - Western Turkey), and had now become productive peasants. The report does not say anything about the involvement of the Halikanlı tribe in the Mount Ararat uprising. The report also states that the settlement of two more Kurdish tribes, the Bazıklı (423 individuals in 58 households) and the Alemelik (189 individuals in 38 households) were about to be completed.

As a measure of counter-espionage and other matters related to state security, there were additional population transfers from the East, especially from the areas under the rule of the First Inspectorate General. To this end, 475 individuals from the

⁵⁵ Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Turkey 1930-1944 (M 1224), Review of the Turkish Press for the period 12 November-55 November 1931, 897.9111/337, cited in Çağaptay, 2002b.

⁵⁶ BCA 030.1/124.885.4 (12 August 1933).

Zeylanlı [tribe], 220 from the Sasonlu, and 24 from the Abbasoğulları were transferred to the West, and scattered throughout the provinces of Thrace, Çanakkale, Bolu, and Burdur. Similarly, 17 families (from the Kara, Haydaroğulları, and Gencoğulları tribes) from the Kediler village of Yozgat were transferred and resettled in the province of Kütahya⁵⁷.

In addition to population transfers from the East to the West, we observe two other main patterns of state-induced population movements during the first decade (1920s) of Republican Turkey, both of which were extended into later decades. The first of these was the relocation of selected groups within the Eastern provinces. For this purpose, for example, the Council of Ministers issued two decrees in 1930 and 1931 that ordered the transfer of some Dersimli tribes from defective and hilly regions to suitable places in the Elazığ plain.⁵⁸ The reason underlying this decision was to

⁵⁷ BCA 030.1/124.885.4 (12 August 1933).

⁵⁸ ‘Elazığ Ovasında Yerleştirilen Dersimliler Hakkında’, Decree no: 8734, 01/01/1930; and ‘Dağlık Mıntikalarda Yaşayan Halkın İskanı Hakkında’, Decree no: 10822, 18/3/1931 (Kökdemir, 1952: 165-166) After an investigation by the Inspectorate-General in 1931, it was made clear that 38 families (16 of them were aghas who had been resettled in the centre of the vilayet) had been left their residential areas. On the other hand, the other 160 families stayed in their villages and had become producers on their own. The news about the settlement of Dersimlis in the plains distracted the local oppressors (müteğallibe) who used to benefit unlawfully from the abandoned property of the emigrants. Concealing their real aims, these people began to propagate that the Turkish villages would be subjected to Kurdification, the plains would be invaded by burglars, and everyone would be disturbed by the movement of the Dersimlis. Especially they flashed these news to the members of the parliament. However, when they witnessed that their propaganda did not produce desired results, they sought directly to influence the ordinary Dersimlis. For example, they disseminated rumours about the government’s will to conscription and the would-be extermination of the population. Especially, the resettlement of aghas was presented as a concealment for their capture and possible exile. Consequently, the tribal leaders,

transfer the “unreliable” elements from the places that were hard to control to areas in which the state had already established its authority. In fact, the resettlement of the Dersimli tribes in nearby lowlands in 1930 and 1931 set a precedent for the subsequent, and much more intensive, forced migration of the Dersimlis in 1938.

The second strategy that the Turkish State employed to alter the demographic make-up of the Eastern provinces during the 1920s was the settlement of Turkish-speaking immigrants from the Balkans and the Caucasus. The Directorate General for Settlement suggested that such settlement was necessary to enhance the Turkish character of some areas. For example, on 15 October 1925, the Directorate decided that the Maras province “whose inhabitants were of various elements needed Turkish immigrants.”⁵⁹ In another instance, the Directorate asked that Turkish immigrants coming from Russia be “settled in Van and nearby villages on the Van plain,” a

who claimed authority within Dersim, got suspicious from the rumours and joined the propagators. It seems that especially the rumours about the conscription intimidated the Dersimlis more than others. It is said that due to the spread of these rumors among local people, the demand to settle in the plains decreased sharply, even stopped. The Dersimlis already settled in the plains began to send away their families to Dersim. The aghas settled in Elaziz (Elazığ) returned to Dersim with their followers as well. However, the 160 families remained in the plains of Elaziz and became the “men of the plain.” the first experience of the settlement of Dersimlis in the plains achieved a 71 percent success. The tribes of Resik and Koçulu, who were living in caves on the steep and rugged areas around Tağr deresi and Ali boğazı and engaged only with cattle herding until then, were settled in Çemişkezek. These clans acted as the armed units/or militia of the Koç uşağı tribe. But after the settlement they became ‘good farmers’ and paid their taxes levied by the government despite the opposition of the Koç uşaklıs’ coercion” (Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı 1998: 51–53)

⁵⁹ BCA 272.11/46.79.19, October 15, 1925.

predominantly Kurdish area.⁶⁰ According to the information attributed to the Department of Settlement, for example, the number of immigrants who were going to be settled in the Eastern provinces during 1927 was between 40,000 and 50,000.⁶¹ A British report from 1928 observed a similar pattern, noting “that the land in North-Eastern Turkey is being prepared for a large influx of Moslems from the Caucasus; and that Eastern Turkey is being populated by emigrants from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Greece in considerable numbers.”⁶²

According to the same report by the General Directorate of Population Affairs, between 1923 and 1933, 8277 individuals in 1457 households were internally

⁶⁰ BCA 272.11/22.113.28, December 26, 1926.

⁶¹ Records of the Department of State Relating to the Internal Affairs of Turkey 1910-1929 (M 353), Review of the Turkish Press for the period 1 June-18 June 1927, 897.9111/189, cited in Çağaptay, 2002b. In fact, the government had prepared the ground for the settlement of immigrants in the eastern part of the country even before that date. A report, which was sent from the Muş Province to the Ministry of Interior after the repression of the Şeyh Said uprising, illustrates the intention of the government. It was a very detailed report providing information about the housing and settlement conditions of the Bolanik and Malazgirt fields, where the expected immigrants would be placed. After giving wide-ranging information, from the number of the abandoned properties to the fields of grassland, this report suggested the possibility of locating an important number of immigrants to these fields (BCA, 272.0.0.12/45.77.5, 16 August 1925). Upon this, some of the immigrants, who came from Yugoslavia, were placed in Diyarbakır as early as 1925 (BCA, 272.0.0.12/45.75..3, 06 July 1925). Similarly, a governmental decree issued on January 23, 1927, ordered that the abandoned properties in Van, Urfa, and Hakkari should be reserved for the settlement of 10,000 immigrants of Turkic origin coming from Russia (BCA, 030.18.1.1/22.85.14, January 23, 1927).

⁶² FO 424/268/E129. Clerk (Constantinople) to Chamberlain (London), 4 January 1928, cited in Çağaptay, 2002b.

relocated, mainly for political and administrative reasons, and 5544 nomads in 1260 households were settled for social and economic reasons.

4.4. Forced Migration and Re-settlement of the Kurds in the 1930s

During the 1920s the state of Turkey resorted to forced relocations of the Kurds mostly as a reactive policy to pacify the insurgent elements. Those who were relocated were mostly the leadership of Kurdish nationalists and their supporters, and the members of leading families and tribes who were allegedly involved in anti-government uprisings. Nevertheless the forced displacement of Kurds did not take any mass character. The application of the policy of forced migration and resettlement of the Kurds remained selective, low-level throughout, and mostly elite-based until the mid-1930s.

Beginning from late 1920s, the definitional boundary of membership in the nation began to shift from a territorial to an ethnicized one. Paradoxically, however, this boundary shift did not affect the inclusiveness of the national membership for Muslims as much as its hitherto voluntary dimension. This change was the result of two seemingly contradictory, but in effect complementary, mechanisms: *social deepening* and *ethno-linguistic narrowing*.⁶³ Through social deepening, nation was reconceived in a populist manner that expressly included all social classes, communities, and strata. At the same time, however, through ethno-linguistic narrowing, all ethnic, linguistic, and even religious claims of minorities were

⁶³ I borrow the concepts of “social deepening” and “ethnic narrowing” from Brubaker (1996: 85).

decertified and if necessary denied. The Turkish state was conceived as the state of and for the ethno-linguistically defined Turkish nation. This ethno-linguistic conception of the nation necessitated emphasizing (or rather enforcing) Turkishness and de-emphasizing, de-certifying, and even rejecting other available forms of identifications.

The most daunting example of this boundary shift in the definition of membership in the nation, and the consequent policies of spatial reorganization, demographic engineering, and compulsory assimilation was the adaptation of a new Resettlement Law (no. 2510) on 13 June 1934. According to this law “the authority for reorganizing and correcting the demographic structure and locale of the subject population in accordance with membership in and devotion to Turkish culture was given to the Ministry of Internal Affairs with almost unlimited powers.”⁶⁴ Compared to previous legislation, the Settlement Law of 1934 was much more comprehensive.

The law designated three spatial zones in Turkey for the implementation of the policy of settlement:

Zone 1: areas where populations that share the Turkish culture are deemed to be dense. This zone could receive immigrants from any part of the country as well as from abroad, provided that they are of Turkish origin.

Zone 2: areas separated and reserved for the migration and resettlement of the populations which were deemed to be assimilated into the Turkish culture.

⁶⁴ Official Gazette, No. 2733, 21 June 1934.

Zone 3: areas where civilian settlement and residence are prohibited due to health, economic, cultural, political, military, and security reasons. These areas were primarily in Eastern and South-Eastern Anatolia, where some of the Kurdish uprisings had taken place.

The Law also categorized its subject population into three groups:

- a) those who speak Turkish and are of Turkish origin,
- b) those who did not speak Turkish but are considered to be of Turkish culture,
- c) those who neither speak Turkish nor belong to the Turkish culture.

The first category constituted the ethnic core of the nation. The second category basically referred to the past Muslim immigrants from the Caucasus and the Balkans. Most of them did not speak Turkish but they were, somehow, considered to be easily assimilated into the core nation. The third category included the non-Muslim minorities, Kurds and Arabs.

Carefully avoiding the use of the word “Kurd,” legal documents of the period described the Kurds in different ways such as “tribal populations who do not speak Turkish” or “people who do not share the Turkish culture.” In an amendment to the Resettlement Law in 1935, it was stated that “people who do not share the Turkish culture and who are not of Turkish origin” couldn’t settle in Zone 1. Only those who can speak Turkish and are of Turkish origin could freely settle in this area. Zone 1

covered the areas where majority did not speak Turkish, which literally referred to Kurdish-speaking areas of Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia.

Some have argued that this Settlement Law was basically adopted to assimilate Kurds into a Turkish identity (Beşikçi, 1991). However, the lawmakers were not only concerned about the Kurds. One of the deputies, Ruseni Bey, bitterly complained during the parliamentary debate about the failure of the government to assimilate Jews, without actually referring to the Jews by name. The same deputy also noted angrily that there were still large numbers of immigrants from the Balkans and the Caucasus who had been settled in Turkey by successive Ottoman governments and who could still not speak Turkish, and hence had maintained their separate ethnic identities.⁶⁵ Similar remarks were also made by the drafters of the law. The interior minister Şükrü Kaya stated that the assimilation of these immigrants was one of the goals of this law. Another objective was to settle the nomadic tribes, both Kurdish and Turkish. Kaya noted that there were more than one million nomads in eastern as well as in southern and western parts of Anatolia, and that he considered it paramount to settle them and “make the benefits of Republic accessible to them.”⁶⁶ Later on, in his address to the Grand National Assembly, Şükrü Kaya, the Minister of Internal Affairs, explains the aims of the Settlement Law of 1934 in detail :

This [the Settlement Law], first of all, is about population, and second about immigration. Third, it has to do with nomadic tribes within our borders. And,

⁶⁵ *TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi I*: 65, 7.6.1934, C; 1, pp. 69-70.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p. 141.

fourth it is about the landless and the landless who work in others' lands... Our population, which is about 18 million today, will most probably be at least 25-40 million in 25 years. Because of this fact, moving and resettling some of our internal indigenous citizens living in densely populated regions to less densely populated areas is a useful and necessary precaution to provide them better conditions.

As you know, there are two kinds of migration. One is compulsory and forced migration. The other is voluntary migration, which stems from overpopulation. Those who were forced to immigrate in the past either were not properly settled by the authorities of the time or were settled improperly. Those immigrants have been bearing the difficulties of their improper settlement until today. This Law contains many articles that will rectify the problems faced by the forced migrants.

In addition, there are around two million pure Turks nearby around us. Eventually, their incremental arrival to their motherland is inevitable. They will not come by force, as happened in the past, but they will willingly choose to come. It is our utmost duty to place them properly according the social and economic rules dictated by the science of settlement. There are edicts in this law to make this possible.... And there is also the issue of internal resettlement: As I have told you earlier there are more than one million nomads in our country.... Each of them today is in a miserable and suffering condition. These people remain deprived of human, moral, national, and political education and manners.... It is very sad to see them wandering like leaves pushed around by the wind. There are also stipulations in this law to elevate the conditions of these people to facilitate a more civilized and developed level.

This law will make it possible for our country to be composed of citizens who speak the same language, think in similar ways, and hold the same values and emotions.⁶⁷

Clearly, the purpose of the law was to assist the nation-building process taking place in the country. In the words of one deputy, the law aimed at creating “a country which would speak one single language, think and feel alike.” What was striking, however, was the privileged status extended to individuals of Turkish ethnicity. Article 7 of the Settlement Law authorized immigrants of Turkish ethnicity to settle

⁶⁷ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, cilt I, I:68, 14 Haziran 1934, s. 140-141.

where they wished except in areas closed to settlement. The settlement of other immigrants would be closely regulated by the government. In practice, some Kurds were relocated in western Turkey and some Turks settled in traditionally Kurdish-populated areas in the east. The law, which passed without modification and with only very minor discussion, and which was implemented against a backdrop of increased militarization, provided a comprehensive framework for the reconfiguration of the land and the population. In 1936, a state of siege was declared in the region. Many new police stations, military barracks, bridges, roads, and especially railway lines, which began transporting troops and officials to the region on a regular basis, were established (Kalman, 1995: 228-231). By the mid-1930s, it became apparent that central authorities were no longer interested in bargains but rather in “massive pacification and monopolization of the means of coercion.”

The last cycle of Kurdish resistance during this era came from the Dersim region. Dersim was, by the mid-30s, the last part of Turkey that had not been effectively brought under central government control. Dersim had been notoriously defiant since the 1870s. More than eleven military expeditions had tried to quell its inhabitants since 1876 (Halli, 1972).

On the other hand, the Alevi tribes of Dersim were not opposed to the state as such, as long as it did not interfere too much in their affairs. In fact many chieftains strengthened their position by establishing close relationships with the military and police officers appointed to the region by the central government. There was a long tradition of refusing to pay taxes. There were also conflicts between tribes, and many

of the tribesmen carried arms. Yet, they did not constitute a serious threat against the established power of the central government.

Nevertheless, from 1930 onwards the government began a policy of disarmament, deportation, and forced settlement in order to achieve greater control of Dersim. These efforts increased the resistance of local Dersimlis.

Dersim was among the regions considered as an undesirable zone consisting of persons “not of Turkish culture and “speaking a language other than Turkish” (Kalman, 1995; Kirişçi and Winrow, 1997). The Resettlement Law was followed by the approval of the Law on the Administration of Tunceli,⁶⁸ established on December 25, 1935. This law, which so far is the only law in the history of Turkish Republic directed specifically to a single province, placed Dersim under the newly created Fourth Inspectorate-General, headed by a military governor-general with absolute administrative and legal authority. As we will see later in detail, in conjunction with the Settlement Law and the Inspectorates-General, the Tunceli Law set the legal and institutional matrix for later developments in Dersim.

Given this general historical overview, the remaining part of this chapter first analyzes the historical origins of the institution of Inspectorates-General (*Umumi Müfettişlikler*), the primary state institution, which had, among other things, carried out Turkish State’s policies against the Kurds, including their resettlement, on the

⁶⁸ See the section on the Tunceli Law below. With this law, the name of Dersim was changed to Tunceli, and the use of Dersim was forbidden. This practice of changing local names was also extended to villages, rivers, valleys, mountains, etc.

ground throughout the single party period. Next, the Tunceli Law will be examined in detail. Then, the chapter will analyze, through the examination of various official reports, why the Turkish State deemed necessary such a harsh policy regarding the Dersim region and its inhabitants.

4.5. The Inspectorates-General

After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, we observe much administrative and other institutional continuity between the Ottoman and the Republican administrative systems. The same also applies for governmental mentality. Of course, in the context of nation-state building, the imperial governmental mentality and old administrative institutions had to be rearranged and adjusted for current needs and necessities. On special occasions, or in extraordinary circumstances, institutional adjustments, however, had to be made in a radical fashion.

Through looking at one particular institution, namely Inspectorates-General, which went hand in hand with the policy of resettlement of the Kurds, in this section I am going to show both continuity and change in the administrative and institutional structure of the new Turkish state during the first couple of decades of the Republican period (Koçak, 2003; Çağaptay, 2006; Taş 1997; Koca 1998). The institution of Inspectorates-General is particularly important for demographic changes because it was the Inspectorates-General that were responsible for carrying out the state's policies at the regional and local levels, including organizing the settlement both of immigrants coming from outside and of internal migrants, forced or otherwise. They were intended to combine the principles of central administration and local/regional

governing. In a sense they were going to be the eyes and hands of the central state, functioning as its organizational mechanism to transform its despotic power into infrastructural power. One the one had, they were supposed to function as mediating institutions between central and local governance. Yet, on the other hand, Inspectorate-Generals were meant to be the main mechanism of the centralization of power through regional governance.⁶⁹

The First Inspectorate-General during the Republican period was established on January 1, 1928, the historical origin of this type of an organizational structure goes back to the late nineteenth century Ottoman administrative reform movement. To show the continuities between the Ottoman and Republican administrative systems, the next section lays out the historical development of the institution of Inspectorates-General.

4.5.1. Historical and Institutional Origins of Inspectorates-General

The institutional origins of Inspectorates-General go back to the 19th century administrative reform movement in the Ottoman Empire. Many students of the late Ottoman Empire have observed that the classical administrative system based on decentralized indirect rule began to lose its efficiency and therefore started to create many problems, sometimes to the extent of creating serious crises. The old system was

⁶⁹ For similarities between *Umumi Müfettişlik* (Inspectorates-General) and *Olağanüstü Hal Bölge Valililiği* (State of Emergency Regional Governorship) see Koca, 1998; also Insel, 2003).

based on the *Eyalet* system, which was a kind of decentralized regional governance. *Eyalets* were dependent on the central state but as long as they continued to pay their tributes to the Imperial Center, they remained relatively autonomous in terms of their internal affairs. The efforts of the Ottoman center to reform and radically but usually hastily centralize the administrative system during the Tanzimat period had invariably failed in most regions (Köksal, 2002, 2006). The old system of indirect rule was heavily based on mediating but autonomous regional rulers/brokers. Radical centralization meant rapid transfer of power from these mediating regional rulers, and in the absence of sufficient infrastructural capacity to replace these rulers, continuing the process of intense and rapid centralization proved to be almost impossible. It created an unbearable burden on the central government and in many respects made local governance almost impractical (Ortaylı, 1979; Çadırcı 1991; Sencer, 1986). It was precisely at this juncture that the idea of Inspectorates-General emerged for the first time in Ottoman/Turkish history. Realizing the importance of and need for a mediating regional institution, central state authorities decided to establish Inspectorate-Generals to facilitate and mediate the process of centralization. In other words, the institution of Inspectorates-General was meant to achieve centralization through regional decentralization. Its main function was going to be facilitating the construction of the necessary local infrastructural means, which would then help to further implement the process of political centralization in the long run. Moreover, it was one of the responses of the Ottoman authorities to increasing international and diplomatic pressures coming from European powers, especially Russia, France, and

Britain, to reform the regional administrative structure of the Empire. That internal pressure was partly related to the status of Armenians living in the Eastern Provinces. Therefore, by creating Inspectorates-General as an intermediate administrative institution, Ottoman authorities aimed at both solving the problem of maintaining order, which was caused by the inefficient implementation of previous centralization efforts, and appealing to the international pressures regarding the status of non-Muslims of the Empire. For all these reasons the first Regional Governorship during the Ottoman Empire was created by an imperial edict in 1861 in the Balkans, right after the Niš Rebellion of 1859. The Eyalets of Niš, Vidin, and Silistrea were combined to form the Vilayet of Denube, and Mithat Pasa was appointed as its first Governor-General (Taş, 1997: 14). The success of the system of regional governorship, under the authority of Mithad Pasa, in the effective implementation of certain policies led the Ottoman Court to extend this system to other regions as well. The Proclamation of the Regulation on the General Administration of Provinces (*İdare-i Umumiye-i Vilayet Nizamnamesi*) in 1871 provided the legal foundation to make regional governorships an integral part of the Ottoman administrative system. To review how the new administrative system of regional governorships was working, in 1885 Ahmet Sakir Pasha and Dervis Ibrahim Pasha, high level bureaucrats armed with extraordinary powers, were appointed as Inspectorates-General in Anatolia and the Balkans, respectively. Ahmet Sakir Pasha, who was the Inspectorate-General for the Anatolian provinces between 1895 and 1899 (Koçak, 2003: 26), was responsible for coordinating the intensive reform program throughout all Anatolia, including the

resettlement of the nomadic tribes. Directly responsible to the Ottoman Court, his primary mission was to re-establish order, if necessary through violent means (Karaca, 1993).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the role of the Inspectorates-General was again on the Ottoman's agenda. Because of the unrest in Macedonia, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha was appointed as the Inspector-General to the *Vilayet-i Selase* (Three Provinces). Following a 1902 government decree, his authority covered Salonika, Monastiri, and Kosovo. Hilmi Pasha remained as the Inspector-General of the *Vilayet-i Selase* until the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy in 1908. His duties included building public works; developing agriculture, industry, and education; establishing relationships with "foreigners;" making sure that both Muslims and non-Muslims were employed in the security forces (as police and gendarmerie), if necessary taking command of the army; coordinating the relationships between local governors; and informing the Ottoman Court about all kinds of further needs and developments in the region under his authority. Inspectorate-General's had overarching authority over all other regional and local administrators, except the Field Marshall (*Ordu Muşiri*).

As it will become clearer in the next section, the similarities between the duties and functions of the Governor-General during the Ottoman period and the Inspectorate-General during the Republican period are intriguing. The structure and the working of the institution of Governor-General provided the groundwork for the Inspectorates-General during the Republican period, with the exception that during the

late Ottoman period, external/international powers frequently tried to intervene in and influence the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire, especially regarding the Balkans (Koçak, 2003: 28-29). In the Republican period, on the other hand, no such external influence was present, which gave the Republican government more room for maneuvering in “reforming” and re-arranging its provincial administrative structure.

With the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy in 1908, the system of Inspectorates-General was briefly interrupted until 1913. The position of Inspectorate-General was abolished on the claim that it conflicted with the new Ottoman Constitution. Two attempts at officially re-instituting the system, the first in 1913 and the second in 1921, failed because of the World War One and the War of National Independence. However, although it never materialized, the 1913 Regulatory Statue on Inspectorates-General is very informative for understanding the logic behind the system’s eventual reinstitution in 1927 by the Republican government. As part of the 1913 Law on the General Administration of the Provinces (*İdare-i Umumiye Vilayet Kanunu*), the 1913 Statue aimed, once again, at linking the central government to a local administration to achieve further centralization (Taş, 1997: 20).

The 1913 Law on the General Administration of the Provinces proclaimed that the Ottoman State would henceforth be divided into Inspectorship Offices, and that an Inspector-General would be appointed to each Inspectorship Office by the Council of Ministers for a period of five years. The authorities and duties of the Inspector-General were to be arranged by an additional regulatory statute. According to the provisional regulatory statute on the administrative status of the Inspectorates-General

Offices, the responsibilities of the Inspector-General included maintaining order and security; implementing laws and legal regulations in a local context; advising, in consultation with the Governors under his authority, the Council of Ministers about necessary changes to such laws and regulations, when they did not fit with the conditions of their region; making provisional regulations to facilitate the implementation of certain policies, provided that they informed the Council of Ministers in advance; preparing proposals for establishing new civil services in consultation with the Governor and the Corps Commander; overseeing all civil bureaucracy appointments and deciding upon promotions and demotions; supervising the effective management and operation of forests, mines, and other agricultural fields; and, most importantly for the purposes of this study, proposing strategies to the Council of Ministers for the effective resettlement of nomadic tribes and immigrants and, if accepted, implementing them. In addition to these duties and responsibilities, an Inspector-General had the right to keep as many telegram clerks as he wanted and to appeal for more gendarmerie and foot soldiers in cases of emergency in his region.

Meanwhile, European powers insisted that Inspector-Generals be “foreigners,” meaning that they should be appointed from outside of the Empire. The Ottoman Government, on the other hand, firmly resisted that idea, and argued that they should necessarily be appointed from among the citizens of the Empire. At the end of the day, the European powers had the Ottomans agree to their proposal to appoint two European Inspector-Generals. However, towards the last days of the Empire, at the

start of the First World War in 1914, the last Ottoman Government unilaterally abrogated this agreement (Koçak, 2003: 32-33).

Throughout the period of World War I, Ottoman authorities had many more pressing problems to tackle than grappling to reform provincial administration; therefore Inspectorates-General remained far outside of their immediate agenda, but once again emerged as a central concern as soon as the WWI was over, at the very beginning the War of National Struggle. On 23 August 1918, Hasan Tahsin Uzer was appointed as the Inspector-General of the *Vilayeti Mühtahsile* (covering the cities of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, and Erzincan). However, the Inspectorate-General of the *Vilayeti Müstahsile* was very short-lived. A month after its establishment, Hasan Tahsin Uzer was appointed as the Governor of Syria and no one was selected to take his place as Inspector-General (Koca, 1998: 197-198). By trying to establish Emergency General Inspectorships of Anatolia, the second round of attempts for recovering the system Inspectorates-General, made by the Istanbul Government in April and May of 1920, was likewise unsuccessful (Koçak, 2003: 34). The Inspectorate-General once again appeared in the 1921 Constitution⁷⁰. The last section of this Constitution, which is composed of 24 articles, was entitled “Inspectorate-General.” Articles 22, 23, and 24 summarize the nature and function of Inspectorates-General. Article 22 states that Inspectorates-General are constituted through uniting several provinces (*vilayets*) in economic and social terms. Their main tasks are

⁷⁰ More than half of the articles in 1921 Constitution (14 out of 24) were related to administrative issues, specifically local administration (Taş, 1997: 36).

maintaining order and security in their regions, supervising and managing all administrative institutions under their authority, and insuring the effective implementation of state policies (article 23). What these functions meant, in practice, is that almost all control over local and regional governing was left in the hands of Inspector-Generals. Inspectorates-General were more than merely part of the administrative hierarchy, mediating between center and periphery; rather, in theory, they were supposed to function as an extension of the central government, as well as remain dependent upon it. On the other hand, they had extraordinary powers and discretion over the local administration of the region under their authority, which gave them the opportunity to be relatively autonomous. One way to account for this duality is the state of affairs caused by the occupation of Anatolia by the Allied powers. Centrally administering the whole of Anatolia was practically impossible. But, officially accepting decentralized management was also not very desirable. Nevertheless, although it never materialized, the desire to re-establish Inspectorates-General during the period of the War of National Independence shows that, in practical terms, de-centralized and regional/local governance was the norm rather than the exception. The central government had to be more sensitive to regional and local difference for successful mobilization for the war. The constant physical movement of people caused by the war, as well as potential local contention from various groups, also made sensitivity to local conditions and the delegation of power to local and regional administrators necessary.

After the Independence War things took a different turn, and with the proclamation of the Turkish Republic as an independent national state, the relationship between the central government and local administration was radically transformed. Centralization in all aspects of governance regained its importance. The new Constitution of the Republic (1924) left no space for any kind of mediating regional administrative institution. It was only after a series of resistance movements in the mid-1920s, especially after the Sheikh Said Rebellion of 1925, that the central government re-considered the importance of regional administration for the effective centralization of power. Thus, Inspectorates-General had re-appeared on the agenda, but this time for good. Starting with 1927, Inspectorates-General became one of the most important administrative institutions used by the State of Turkey to nationalize its people and territory.

4.5.2. Inspectorates-General in Republican Turkey

Inspectorates-General were basically regional governorships whose regional authority prevailed over all civilian, military, and judiciary institutions under their domain. In that respect they had extraordinary powers, not just in administrative but also in juridical terms.

The first signs of the need for establishing such an institution appeared in 1921. During parliamentary discussions examining the reasons behind the ineffectiveness of the government in containing anti-government resistance movements throughout Anatolia, specifically in the Kurdish speaking provinces, Refet Pasa (Refet Bele), the Minister of Interior Affairs, emphasized the necessity and

urgency of establishing General Inspectorships (*Mufettiş-i Umumilikler*), without which a proper and effective governance of the country was possible.⁷¹ According to Refet Pasa, the effective administration of the country by someone who sits in the center is simply not possible. However a completely decentralized local government was certainly not desirable. What was needed was an intermediary, regional administrative institution that would link the center to the local, and the local to the center.⁷²

For various reasons the establishment of Inspectorates-General did not materialize until 1927. The first draft of the Law on the Establishment of Inspectorate-General was proposed in January 1927. After a couple of revisions it was finally accepted by the National Assembly (Law no. 1164)⁷³ on 25 July 1927. The duties, authorities, and personnel of the Inspectorate-General⁷⁴ were announced in a separate governmental decree on 27 November 1927 (Decree no. 5858)⁷⁵. According to this decree, composed of 17 articles, the Inspectorate-General (and the Inspector-General) represents the Government and the Ministries in its region. The Inspector-General is

⁷¹ TBMM Gizli Celse Zabıtları, p. 262-263.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, cilt 33, devre 2, İçtima Senesi, sayfa 682-686.

⁷⁴ “Inspectorate-General” was renamed as “First Inspectorate-General” by the Council of Ministers on 25 December 1927, on the assumption that more Inspectorates would be established in other regions as well. In the Law no. 1164 and Decree no. 5858, only “Inspectorate-General” was pronounced, which in fact refers to the First Inspectorate-General.

⁷⁵ Düstur, Üçüncü Tertip, vol. 9, p. 19; Sicilli Kavanini, vol. 12, p. 787.

accountable for the actions and performances of all civil servants under his authority, and all civil and bureaucratic servants under his authority, including the Governors, are accountable to the Inspector-General. The Inspector-General's prime duty is to maintain order and security in his region. He is also in charge of overseeing the effective local implementation of laws and regulations. In addition, his authority extends to the juridical field. When there is a complaint about judges, he has the right to appeal the case to the Ministry of Justice. He is also responsible for taking necessary actions that he sees fit for facilitating the improvement of economic, social, cultural, civic, educational, and health conditions in his regions; protecting individual and property rights of people; managing the settlement of people and supervising their well-being; making necessary arrangements for the distribution of land to landless peasants and villagers; and promoting and demoting civil servants. If there is any threat to public security, the Inspector-General could ask the Minister of Interior to declare martial law. Regarding local issues, before putting their decisions and resolutions into practice, governors, local administrators, and local assemblies must have their decision affirmed by the Inspectorate-General. Last but not least, Inspectorate-General is responsible for informing the Ministry of Interior about issues on public order on a daily basis; and every three months he must send a report on the general conditions of, and the accomplishments in, his region.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Interestingly the Inspectorate-General was not allowed to have any contact with foreigners. This was most probably to prevent the possibility of external pressures influencing the functioning of the Inspector-General.

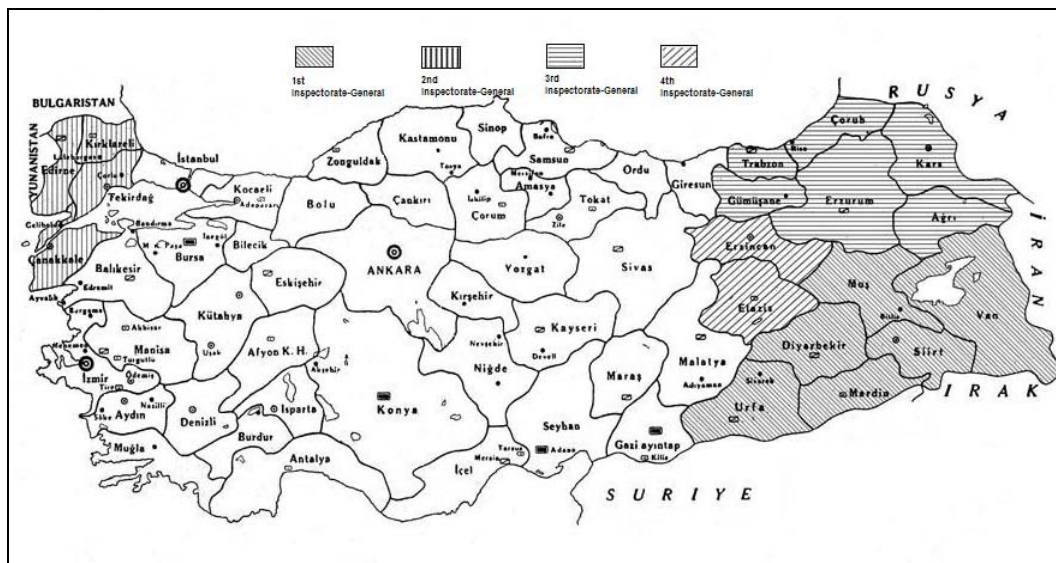
The special, and somewhat ambivalent, status of Inspectorate-General in the hierarchy of government is quite intriguing. In relation to individual ministries, the status of Inspector-General was a subordinate one. The Inspector-General had to report to each Ministry for issues over which that ministry had mandate, and act according to the decision of that particular ministry. In practice however, the Inspector-Generals frequently tried to bypass ministerial decisions by directly appealing the Prime Minister. In one such case, for instance, the Inspector-General İbrahim Tali Bey did not agree with the response of Zekai Apaydın, the Minister of National Defense, concerning his additional budget request to assign more manpower for the policy of collecting firearms in provinces under the authority of the First Inspectorate-General⁷⁷. Both the Inspector and the Minister appealed to the Prime Minister. In his response to the Minister, İsmet İnönü, the Prime Minister, urged him to be more cognizant of the circumstances in the East and stated that this was not a time to concern himself with financial and military issues, but rather that he needed to let the Inspector do his job. According to Beşikçi (1992: 66), this sort of preferential treatment of the Inspector-General, and the fact that some of the Inspectors were Ministers⁷⁸ before their appointment as Inspectors, reflect a priority of the Inspector-General's status over that of Ministries.

⁷⁷ BCA, 030.10/54.35910 (11.8.1932 and 10.8.1932)

⁷⁸ Abidin Özmen, for instance, was the Minister of Education before his appointment as Inspector of the First Inspectorate-General in 1935 (S. Taş, 1997: 64).

Armed with extraordinary powers, the First Inspectorate-General was officially established on 1 January 1928 in the southeast, and İbrahim Tali Bey (Öngören)⁷⁹ was appointed as its first Inspector-General (Koçak, 2003: 81; Çağaptay, 2006: 47; Taş, 1997: 61). During the 1930s, new ones followed.

Map 2. Provinces governed by the Inspectorates-General (1936)



⁷⁹ A military doctor by training, he was an experienced bureaucrat. After working in various military posts, he had worked as a Consular in the Department of Exterior from 1921 to 1923. Afterwards, and until his appointment as the first Inspector-General in 1927, he was a member of the National Assembly, where for a while he acted as the Minister of Education. Just before the termination of his tenure as the Inspector-General of the First Inspectorate-General, he was re-elected to Parliament as the deputy of Istanbul in 1931. However, he had to resign from that position because of his appointment as the Inspector-General of the Second Inspectorate in 1934. Finally, he was again elected as a deputy in 1935, at which point he resigned from his Inspector position and remained as a deputy until 1950 (Taş, 1997: 62). Out of 9 Inspector-Generals appointed between 1927 and 1952, along with Kazım Dirlik (Second Inspectorate) and Apdullah Alpdoğan (Fourth Inspectorate), İbrahim Tali Öngören was among three Inspectors with military background. The rest of the Inspector-Generals were civil bureaucrats. All Inspector-Generals, however, were selected from among the members of the National Assembly.

The declared idea behind the establishment of these Inspectorate-Generals was to divide the country into more manageable regional administrative units. In practice, however, they were in charge of containing unrest, maintaining order, and disciplining the disorderly (Tunçay, 1999: 178-179). Koçak (2003: 13) argues that Inspectorate-Generals were the most extraordinary and unique administrative institutions of the single party period in Turkey, and they are crucial for understanding how the single party regime established its control network over regional politics and local societies. Similarly Çağaptay (2006) maintains that founding of Inspectorates-General was one of the main processes used by the authoritarian rule to establish its control over society. At the most extreme, Beşikçi (1992: 54-63) believes that the sole purpose of Inspectorates-General was the successful colonization of Kurdistan and assimilation of the Kurds. Beşikçi's claim, although a bit overstated and biased, has some truth to it. With the exception of the Second Inspectorate, whose jurisdiction was only over the four cities of the Thrace region (Çanakkale, Edirne, Tekirdağ, Kırıkale), all other Inspectorates were established in regions populated predominantly by Kurdish speakers. Out of the 23 cities under the authority of Inspectorates-General between 1927 and 1948, 16 were predominantly Kurdish-speaking ones, and 2 had significantly large numbers of Kurdish speakers. Similarly, another observer maintains that Inspectorates were created only in regions that were considered strategic or turbulent areas, or had witnessed Kurdish uprisings. Beşikçi argues that even the ones which were established in other regions were tools for concealing the colonizing imperative of new Turkish State in Kurdistan (Beşikçi, 1992). Although the system of

Inspectorate-General certainly comprised one of the strategies that the Turkish state authorities employed to try to contain Kurdish contention, as would become more evident with the establishment of additional Inspectorate-Generals, it was nevertheless much more than a simple state tool used only to deal with the Kurds.

After the First Inspectorate-General, three more Inspectorates were established during the 1930s. The Second Inspectorate-General (also referred as the Trakya (Thrace) Inspectorate) was instituted on February 19, 1934 by a government decree (no. 2-150).⁸⁰ With this decree, the Council of Ministers announced that the ‘Trakya (Thrace Inspectorate-General),’ the second Inspectorate-General, whose mandate would cover the provinces of Edirne, Çanakkale, Kırklareli, and Tekirdağ, would be instituted to organize and administer public works and population settlement in the above-mentioned regions. With its center in Edirne, the Thrace Inspectorate was intended for uniting the Dardanelles and other strategic provinces in Eastern Thrace under a common administration (Çağaptay, 2006: 47). The Thrace Inspectorate-General was going to fulfill two major strategic goals. First, from an external perspective, it would provide “a centralized military administration in an area of the country that flanked Bulgaria, the chief revisionist power in post-First World War Balkans. Thus, the creation of this Inspectorate was a security move by Ankara” (ibid.) Secondly, the Second Inspectorate’s administrative structure was indeed significantly different than the other three Inspectorates. While main sub-offices of the First, Third, and Fourth Inspectorates were mainly composed of Military,

⁸⁰ BCA, 030 19 01/ 42 8 10 (no date).

Administrative, Juridical, Settlement, and Security and Intelligence Directorates, the Second Inspectorate's administrative divisions were related more to educational, health, and public works services, and population settlement issues than to security and order related ones (Beşikçi, 1992: 62). From these differences one may conclude that, although related, the reasons behind the establishment of the Second Inspectorate were seemingly different from the ones for the establishment of the rest of the Inspectorates. In a similar vein, in his speech in the National Assembly, the Minister of Interior, Şükrü Kaya, explains the rationale for establishing the Second Inspectorate-General as follows:

One of the main principles of the Turkish Republic is its populist character. By establishing Inspectorate-Generals, we lay the government's services and supervision at our people's door. For that purpose, there will be six Inspectorate-Generals in the country⁸¹. We try to achieve this within the confines of our resources. We established the first one in the East. We achieved more than we had anticipated, even more. Encouraged with this, and with similar intentions, we are now establishing a second one in Thrace.⁸²

In the case of the formation of the First Inspectorate-General, the primary legitimizing discourse was maintaining order and security, emphasizing the importance and inevitability of coercive measures to achieve that purpose, whereas that discourse shifted towards a seemingly softer and more embracing one in the case of the Second Inspectorate.

⁸¹ Neither the 1927 Law on the Establishment of Inspectorate-Generals nor related governmental regulations after that mention the total number of Inspectorate-Generals. Here Şükrü Kaya must have been referring to the 1921 Constitution. Only the 1921 proposed to establish six Inspectorate-Generals in total. The continuity here with the 1921 Constitution is specifically worth noting.

⁸² TBMM ZC, Devre: 4, İçtima: 3, Cild: 2, 32 (22 March 1934).

In 1935, the government decided to reorganize the existing Inspectorates and establish new ones.⁸³ The Inspectorate-General in the southeast became the First Inspectorate, and the Thrace Inspectorate-General, the Second. Eventually, two more Inspectorates were established, one in the north-eastern Anatolia and the final one also in the south-east, but specifically for Dersim and its surroundings, which were previously covered under the mandate of the First Inspectorate.

Following İsmet İnönü's, the Prime Minister, trip to the northeastern provinces of the country, and upon his observations (İnönü, 2001: 170), the Third Inspectorate-General was created in this area by governmental decree⁸⁴, covering the provinces of Erzurum, Kars, Çoruh, Gümüşhane, Trabzon, and Ağrı (taken from the First Inspectorate). Establishing its center in Trabzon, the Third Inspectorate-General had threefold aims: coordinating the development efforts in the relatively poor northeastern part of the country; pacifying the Ağrı province, an area of Kurdish insurgency since the late 1920s; and acting as a security wall along the Caucasus border with the Soviet Union (Çağaptay, 2006: 47; Koca, 1998).

4.6. The Fourth Inspectorate-General and Dersim

The Fourth Inspectorate-General was established with Government Decree No. 2-8823 on January 6, 1936, to “incorporate” the maverick region of Tunceli (formerly called the Dersim district, now made a province) into the rest of the country. The

⁸³ Law No. 2865, 2883, 2884, 2885.

⁸⁴ Decree No. 2-3823, January 6, 1935.

Fourth Inspectorate also covered the provinces of Erzincan, Elazığ (Elaziz), and Bingöl (formerly Genç, then the Çapakçur district). Why did the government need to set up another Inspectorate-General in Eastern Anatolia, where there were already two in operation? The answer given by state authorities was the extraordinary state of affairs in the Dersim region, and the special characteristics of its social and physical structure. Despite their already overwhelming powers over the Eastern province, the previous two Inspectorates had not been able to bring the Dersim region under control.⁸⁵ On that basis, an additional Inspectorate, this one with even more extensive powers, was deemed as necessary to resolve the problem of Dersim one and for all. In terms of its mandate and power, the Fourth Inspectorate-General stands far superior to the first three. In order to grant it the necessary powers, a special law, the Law on the Administration of the Tunceli Province (Law No. 2884)⁸⁶, had already been passed on December 25, 1935, a few weeks before the establishment of the Fourth Inspectorate. The Fourth Inspectorate-General was the next step to effectively put that law in practice. Taking into account the inextricable relationship between the Tunceli Law and the Fourth Inspectorate-General, the next section will first look at the Tunceli Law, and then analyze the Fourth Inspectorate-General in relation to the Tunceli Law.

⁸⁵ Along with Dersim, Sason, a small, narrow gorge on the anti-Taurus chain, was another region not under the government's total control by the mid-1930s. The situation was resolved by declaring the Sason valley a "forbidden zone," to which entry was banned (Koca, 1998: 381-382, 411, 457). This was not possible for Dersim, since it was comparatively a very large region, with around 70,000 inhabitants.

⁸⁶ Düstur, 3. Tertip, No. 55, s. 165; Official Gazette, no. 3195 (2 January 1936).

4.6.1. The Law on the Administration of Tunceli Province (Tunceli Law)

In the preamble of the Draft of the Law on the Establishment of the Fourth Inspectorate-General, submitted to the National Assembly on November 11, 1935, the need for the Fourth Inspectorate was justified as follows:

... there is no doubt that the Fourth Inspectorate-General, decided to be set up covering the newly established Munzur and Murat provinces⁸⁷, and the already existing Elaziz (Elazığ) province, is very much necessary for achieving many important things in this country. Unusual administrative and social imperatives necessary for the development of special public administration system in Munzur province and, because of their proximity, in Elazığ and Murat provinces, requires that these provinces should be under common administration. This was deemed very useful for the enhancement of our citizens' conditions in legal and all other respects.⁸⁸

From the above statement, it is clear that proclamation of the Tunceli Law and the establishment of the Fourth Inspectorate-General were conceived as complementary tools for instituting a special governance regime in Dersim. To that end, right after the establishment of the Fourth Inspectorate-General, a special Law on the Administration of Tunceli Province was proposed by the Ministry of Interior, and accepted by the Parliament with little or no discussion⁸⁹. At this point it is noteworthy to mention that while the Settlement Law and the Law on the Establishment of the Inspectorate-General attracted significant amount of discussion and opposition among the members of the Parliament, the Tunceli Law triggered no discussion, let alone opposition.

⁸⁷ It was later decided that Munzur province be called Tunceli, and Murat as Bingöl.

⁸⁸ BCA, 030.18.1.2/59.84.9 (7 November 1935).

⁸⁹ Law no. 2884, Resmi Gazete, 2 Ocak 1936; Beşikçi, 1992: 14-42.

In his address to the Parliament before presenting the Law, Şükrü Kaya, the Minister of Internal Affairs, tried to rationalize such an extraordinary endeavor on the part of the present government.⁹⁰ The social organization of Dersim, he believed, remained from the middle-ages. Its present inhabitants were part of the Turkish element, but because of the neglect of past rulers and their bad governance⁹¹, they had somehow lost their origins. Today, Şükrü Kaya declared, there are 91 tribes in this region and they still bear arms and want to be autonomous in their internal affairs. Since 1876, there have been 11 military expeditions to gain control over the region, but to little avail, because these operations had only limited scope, therefore they could not go deeper to find a cure to the real problem. This Law [the Tunceli Law], according to Şükrü Kaya, was intended to find a terminal, but more civilized, solution to the problem at hand.

The Tunceli Law, which contained 38 articles, gave the military-governor/commander (*vali kumandan*), who was also the Inspector of the Fourth Inspectorate-General, extensive military, political, administrative, and juridical powers. Some of his powers were at the ministerial level, and sometimes even surpassed the power and authority of individual Ministers. The military-governor of the newly created Tunceli province had the authority to appoint, promote and demote

⁹⁰ The rest of the paragraph is summarized from Şükrü Kaya's speech (TBMM Zabıt Ceridesi, Devre 4, inikad 21, cilt 7, 1935, sayfa 175-181).

⁹¹ The reference here is to the Ottoman period, when most of the Kurdish areas were ruled indirectly and some regions, like Dersim, managed to retain their autonomy in internal affairs.

all local governors and other administrative personnel, including military ones; to change the local administrative boundaries within the province under his authority; to override the decisions of public prosecutors; to relocate those individuals, along with their families, as he deemed necessary to other areas within or outside of the province; to defer the prosecution of a case or suspend legal penalty and punishment, including death penalties. Moreover, the Tunceli Law did not allow any power of appeal for arrests during the first stage of legal investigations, and the juridical decisions that were approved by the Governor/Commander were final and could not be appealed.

Despite the fact that a couple of deputies raised questions about the anti-constitutional character of the juridical powers of the Governor/Commander, these objections were bypassed and the law as accepted as it was originally proposed by the government. It took the Parliament more than two years to process and pass the Settlement Law of 1934, creating many debates and even divisions not only within the parliament, but also among the upper echelons of the bureaucracy and the general public at large. The Law on the Establishment of the Inspectorates-General took even more time but created relatively less contention. But, the Tunceli Law was put in effect in less than two months after it was drafted by the government. Even this simple fact tells quite a lot about the significance of the case of Dersim, and what it was going to become, in the history of the Turkish Republic. But then, this obviously begs the following question: what made the case Dersim exceptional?

In the next section I shall suggest that, together with the institutionalization of forced migration and settlement since the mid-nineteenth century, the emergence and

development of a particular official discourse on Dersim and its Alevi-Kurdish inhabitants might help towards understanding and explaining better why mass-scale forced migration and resettlement became the dominant form of state response.

4.6.2. Civilizing Dersim

Much before the Republican authorities' concern for Dersim and its inhabitants, Ottoman authorities were as much aware of the potential trouble that Dersim could, sooner or later, cause if deep-seated administrative and military precautions were not taken in due time. Therefore before looking at the state discourse on Dersim during the Republican period, a brief analysis of the official administrative and military reports on Dersim in the last decades of the Ottoman Empire is in order. The similarities between these earlier reports and the later ones produced during the Republican period are striking. It seems that the Republican discourse on Dersim was very much influenced by the prior perceptions of the late Ottoman state elite.

4.6.2.1. Administrative and Military Reports on Dersim before the Republican Period

Since the Ottoman State started its effort to implement direct-rule in Kurdistan in the nineteenth century, it encountered fierce resistance in Dersim. In fact, since priority was given to the centralization of other parts of the Empire, especially the Balkans, implementation of direct-rule in Dersim (as well as in other parts of Kurdistan) came a bit later. Moreover, a series of wars in the second half of the nineteenth century prevented the Ottoman state elite from undertaking a serious centralization campaign in Kurdistan. They simply couldn't take the risk of alienating

the Kurds. Therefore, they tried to avoid confronting any sort of contentious encounter with the Kurds, short of outright rebellion. In the case of Dersim, it was not until 1866 that the Ottoman Court was able to initiate attempts to have greater control over this rugged region, if not to restructure its administrative organization (Dersim, Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı Raporu, p. 161). Official records mark 1880 as the starting year of the permeation of central state power into Dersim, which nevertheless retained indirect rule (*ibid.*, 54). In a dispatch to the Ottoman Court in 1899, Ahmet Şakir Paşa, who was in charge of the reform movement in general, states that from 1866 to 1896 three major military expeditions⁹² were commenced against mischievous elements, who were either arrested, sentenced to death, or banished from the region. Nevertheless, less than ten years after each campaign new ones emerged, creating even more trouble than the previous ones (*ibid.*, 115-117). Ahmet Şakir Paşa contended that reactive and violent measures against such campaigns could not have any long-term effect.⁹³ Rather, he believed that education, both civil and religious⁹⁴, infrastructural investment, and economic development would be much effective in terms of reforming the region in the long-run.

Despite all efforts, the late Ottoman State was had not been able to increase its military control over Dersim. Neither was it able to advance its infrastructural power.

⁹² There had been 8 more expeditions between 1896 and 1937.

⁹³ Also see Karaca, 1993.

⁹⁴ He even suggested opening Nakşibendi (one of the major Sufi orders of Islam) lodges for possible Sunnification of the region. It seems that Sakir Pasa's concern was not the Kurdishness of Dersim but the religious Sunni-Alevi boundary.

The authorities must have realized that without having detailed advance knowledge of the local conditions and dynamics of relations among the local population—of what James Scott calls *metis* (Scott, 1998)—their chance of penetrating the region was very dim. For that reason, two civil bureaucrats, Mardini Arif Bey and Celal Bey, both of whom had served as the District Governor of Dersim and therefore had close links with the local Dersimlis and deep-seated knowledge about the contemporary conditions of the region, were commissioned to prepare reports (in 1903 and 1906 respectively) detailing their assessments of what needed to be done.

Both Mardini Arif Bey and Celal Bey believed that the truculent nature of the Dersimlis was due to their concern for survival in a rather arduous environment (Bulut, 2005: 191-195; Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı, 1998: 162-166). Lack of sufficient means of subsistence had been causing discord between the tribes and therefore increased the level of armament among them. Insecurity and discord among semi-nomadic highland tribes, who depended on animal husbandry, were more common than among agriculturalists. Likewise, influence of tribal chiefs was felt less among the lowland tribes.

Nevertheless, both Governors suggested the establishment of a firm military base in Dersim, not just to punish the belligerent tribes, but to implement an extensive land reform in order to galvanize sedentarization and agricultural production. In other words, they believed establishing order and security was necessary for socio-economic development in the region, which would naturally solve Dersimlis' concern for subsistence and survival and so eventually allow them to achieve a more civilized life.

The reform program should also include deporting local chieftains and other feudal elements that would probably resist any sort of land reform. Although not in a primary fashion, exile (*sürgün*) and resettlement should be integral part of the reform measures in both Governors' discourse. Without this, the integration of Dersim to the rest of the country would not be possible.

A decade later, in 1918, Kazım Karabekir, the Commander of the Second Army division (who later became the Chief of General Staff), echoed Mardini Arif Bey's and Celal Bey's emphasis on the significance of the difficult human ecology on the local Dersimlis (Bulut, 2005: 196-218; Karabekir, 2004: 79-108). After giving detail information on the individual tribes of Dersim, he categorized them in terms of their trustworthiness, dependability, and reliability. Kazım Karabekir was an ardent conservative and nationalist, and according to him none of the Alevi tribes in Dersim could be trusted. Although some tribal chiefs were given military posts for purposes of cooptation and alliance building, and had cooperated with the government in the past against external incursions, most concealed their true intentions and sought alliance with the Armenians. They are calculating, deceitful, and harmful, Kazım Karabekir declared. Therefore they should always be approached cautiously.

Kazım Karabekir's negative attitude towards the Alevi Kurds of Dersim, and for that matter towards the Kurds in general, however, did not represent the dominant view among the political elite of the time. Nevertheless, it marked the emergence of a particular discourse that was less flexible, less willing to negotiate, and more determined to exert its full political and military control over a defiant territory and its

population. It also set the stage for the subsequent struggle within the state elite between the hardliners and moderates as to how to handle resistance and opposition.

4.6.2.2. Administrative and Military Reports on Dersim During the early Republican Period

Mülkiye Müfettişi (Civil Service Inspector) Hamdi Bey's Report

The first official report on Dersim was commissioned to Hamdi Bey, a Civil Service Inspector, in 1926. In his assessment of the region Hamdi Bey suggested the following measures: abetting dispersion of agriculture among the ordinary villagers through providing more agricultural credit and subsidies; land reform; providing more jobs, especially through mining operations; deporting and relegating tribal and religious chiefs and their supporters; settling Turkish-speaking populations in their place; building roads; assigning carefully chosen idealist civil servants for missionary-like activities in the region. According to the Civil Service Inspector, building schools can only start after 25 or so years of Turkification and disciplining, otherwise it would contribute to the already rising Kurdish propaganda. Brute force, for him, is not going to work, but would lead to more guerilla-like resistance movements.

Cemal Bey's (Governor of Diyarbakir) Report (1926)

Not satisfied with Hamdi Bey's report, the central government appointed a regional governor, Cemal Bey, to prepare a more detailed report on Dersim. In his long report Cemal Bey starts with the observation that because of their unbefitting and

usually derogatory treatment both by previous governments and neighboring Sunni communities, which at the same time lies behind their strong sense of solidarity, Alevi Dersimlis are afraid of being killed (*taktil*) or banished (*tehcir*). Cemal Bey strongly believed that it was imperative that the Dersimlis be persuaded and convinced about government's good intentions. Coercion should be minimized, and more conscientious policies should be adopted to gain the trust and the confidence of the Dersimlis. Only then, according to Cemal Bey, they could become productive servants of the Republic. Religious dissonance should not be used as a means of condemnation and repression.

Governor Cemal was a self-alleged Alevi himself, although he did not have much credit among the local elite, and among all of the reports on Dersim his is the most sympathetic one. Rather than taking coercive measures, which, he thought, could not bring any durable solution to the increasing unrest in the region, he was in favor of more enduring and long-term policies for the "Turkification" of Dersim. Unlike previous reporters, who were against more comprehensive investment in formal education, Governor Cemal believed that the predicament in Dersim could only be resolved by investing in educational infrastructure. He also believed that they (the government) should think in instrumental terms, and act accordingly. To that end, he used most of the money provided him by the central government for sending gifts to tribal chiefs. He even tried to buy out some of them, and he explained the rationale behind his actions in the following manner:

"If the government would have sent his troops, that would have cost millions..." (Kalman, 1995: 200).

Nevertheless, in his report he also proposed a military campaign to castigate the Koçuşaklı tribe—one of the most contentious and powerful tribes of Dersim and the only tribe that had supported the Sheikh Said Rebellions—as an exemplary punishment, which he considered to be a classical Ottoman strategy.

Fevzi Çakmak's (the Chief of Staff) Report on Dersim

On his way back from the military operation against the Kurdish rebels around Mount Ararat, Fevzi Çakmak, the Chief of Military Staff, made a personal visit to observe the current situation in and around Dersim, and penned a report regarding his observations on the current state of affairs of the region in question. He also advised the government about what kind of military measures should be taken to contain the increasing unrest and disorder in Dersim. According the Chief of General Staff, militarily speaking, in the past contentious tribes were dealt on an individual basis, usually by maneuvering ad hoc military expeditions each time a tribe got out of line, showed signs of disorderliness, or breached public security. Unfortunately, he believed, that strategy had not been very effective. Therefore, a more comprehensive campaign should be carried out. That campaign, Fevzi Çakmak suggested, would start with a strict and serious warning to those who had not yet started paying their taxes, enlisting in the army, and turning in their arms; making it clear that not doing so would result in grave consequences. If that didn't work, the next step would be exemplary punishment through destruction and demolition of a few spoiled and indulgent Kurdish villages, some of which had been actively or indirectly supporting

the bandits (*eşkiyalar*), through an air strike. On that ground, an air force should be transferred to Erzincan, and be kept ready. To compliment that, tribal chiefs and other notables of other indulgent villages could be transferred and resettled either in Thrace, or, if that weren't viable, to city centers where they could be closely monitored by state authorities. Another measure that the Chief of General Staff saw as necessary was removal of civil servants of Kurdish descent (*soy*) from their office. In a separate dispatch, dated September 20, 1930, from the Office of the General Staff to the Office of the Prime Ministry and the Office of the Interior Ministry, it was stated, in response to complaints received from the Turkish villages about increasing raids by the bandits, that it was deemed necessary to transfer some arms from Erzurum to Erzincan to be distributed to the Turkish villages, so that they could protect themselves from the [Kurdish] bandits (Kalman, 1995: 142). A few weeks later, the General Staff ordered Colonel Rüştü Bey, the Inspector-Commander of the Third Army, to commence preparations for a possible military campaign against Haydaran and Abbasuşağı Tribes, two armed highland tribes of Dersim, in Pülümür. As soon as Colonel Rüştü Bey gathered sufficient ammunition and manpower, including an air fleet with four aircrafts ready in Elazığ, the military expedition against the Haydaran and Abbasuşağı Tribes commenced, on October 24, 1930. After the Haydaran and Abbasuşağı Tribes were confined and disengaged from their surroundings, some villages were bombarded from both ground and air (ibid. 143). At the same time, those tribes who could potentially support the Haydaran and Abbasuşağı Tribes' resistance were neutralized either by promising material rewards or by the threat of blunt force. Despite the initial

advance of the Turkish military forces with the cooperation and collaboration of some pro-state tribes, some of which publicly declared their allegiance to the state (ibid.: 144), the Pülümür operation did not result in the pacification of the region as much as was intended.

Şükrü Kaya's (Minister of Interior) Report (1931)

Towards the end of 1931, together with a group of high ranking military officials and civil administrators, Şükrü Kaya, the Minister of Interior Affairs, visited Dersim during his tour of inspection in the areas under the mandate of the First Inspectorate-General. In his confidential report to the Prime Minister of the time (İsmet İnönü) he drew a highly negative picture of the recent developments in and around Dersim. Banditry, larceny, waylaying, village raid and pillage, resistance, and chaos were prevalent in the region. The state machinery in the region was bulky but far from effective. With the present state mechanism, it was not possible to get hold over the belligerent highland tribes and bandits in the mountains. The people were under the influence of *aghas* (*chieftains*) and their tribal rules. Although there were divisions and conflicts among the tribes of Dersim, the power and influence of Seyid Rıza and his associates, especially the Haydaranlı tribe, had been increasing. Some chieftains condemned and chided their anti-state actions, but there were others who admittedly or not envied them. In consultation with the Inspector-General and with other military commanders and civil governors, the Minister proposed the following reform plan:

- Disarmament of the tribes by collecting their fire-arms (estimated to be around 18-20 thousand).
- Removal of the tribal chieftains and other local political elite from the region. This could only be done by a military campaign.
- Land reform
- Transfer and resettlement the population of the highland tribes of Northern Dersim (11,742), a rugged region with no arable land (Ovacık and Nazimiye Counties). People living in other mountainous parts of Dersim could be resettled in nearby plains.
- The forbidding of dispersed and thin settlement, which prevented effective state control.
- Building continuous roads, which would improve the economy of the region, and at the same time ease the state's [military] access into the region.
- Opening up more schools.
- Providing more public health service, which would help build the trust of the local people and increase their adherence and attachment to the government.
- Recruiting and employing local informers, who would provide the government with reliable knowledge on the internal affairs of the region as well as its rugged geography (critical niches, roads, pathways, etc), without which any campaign in the region would have little chance of being successful.

The Minister of Interior further suggested that if these measures were not be taken soon, conditions would get much worse in Dersim. He added that some of these required long-term commitment and investment; and if rushed the consequences would be dire.

*İbrahim Tali Öngören's (Inspector-General of the First Inspectorate-General)
Report (21 December 1931)*

The first official report by Inspectorates-General on Dersim dates back to 1930. After two years of extensive travel and inspection in the provinces under the mandate of the First Inspectorate-General, noting the seriousness of the circumstances in and around Dersim region, in his commentary, Inspector-General İbrahim Tali Öngören suspected that no weak, local, restricted, and short-term reactive measures, which he believed what had been the prevailing form of state policy in the region, would likely be effective. The Inspector-General recommended the following immediate and more enduring measures, which he thought necessary for the long-term “rehabilitation” of the region (Bulut, 2005: 226-227; Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı, 1998: 173-174):

The whole Dersim region can be confined in such a way that its relations with the external world would be cut off. This will prevent [Dersimli] bandits from raiding nearby [Turkish] villages. It will also work as an economic embargo which would eventually lead to hunger; and that will force mischievous and harmful Dersimlis to surrender *ex mero motu*. After thoroughly encircling the region from all sides, the

siege could incrementally be narrowed, catching the ill-behaved ones, taking them out of Dersim, and then dispersing them in Western provinces. To achieve the stated goals, the following measures were a must: controlling critical passageways that Dersimlis use for pillaging; destroying the living habitat of dissidents by bombing their villages with the backup of the Elazığ air base; and settling cogent troops in various critical places, which would provide the military power for the planned general campaign (Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı, 1998: 173-174).

The Inspector-General also cautioned that, if pursued, this sort of campaign would have to be conducted abruptly and necessarily with adequate forces. The adequacy of military power needed could be decided by comparing the geography and people of Dersim to previous cases of [Kurdish] rebellions, especially to the Mount Ararat Rebellion. Dersim had a more rugged terrain. Its people were valiant. If these factors were not taken into account, the Inspector-General believed, the consequences would be dire. Any [military] measure short of adequate forces would probably lead to much more fatal results, creating more problems for the government in the long-run than it would solve in the short-term.

There were, of course, other secondary measures that could help reform Dersim, but these, the Inspector-General believed, could only be successful if implemented on top of the aforementioned primary military measures. Otherwise, the effectiveness of secondary measures was doomed to be very low.

In a later report dated 21 December 1931, İbrahim Tali Öngören repeated his concern about Dersim (Kalman, 1995: 145-147; Jandarma Genel Komutanlığı, 1998:

174-177; Bulut, 2005: 227-230). The people of Dersim had been, he observed, very worried and daunted, especially after the suppression of the Sheikh Said Rebellion. Nevertheless, the Inspector-General did not think that there was any threat of internal rebellion. The real danger was external to Dersim. If there would be any rebellion it would be triggered by external armed parties who had been trying to infiltrate Dersim and provoke a general resistance movement against the government. Preventing this should constitute the first step for having control over Dersim. The next step involved the disarmament of the region. A well-organized campaign for the confinement of weaponry in the region was crucial if the government wanted to make any progress. It was estimated that between eight to ten thousand fire arms were held by Dersimlis. Before collecting these arms, a military operation in Dersim could result in heavy casualties.

Celal Bayar's Report (January 1936)

In late 1935, one year after Prime Minister İsmet İnönü's travel to the Eastern Provinces, Celal Bayar, the Minister of Economy who later replaced İsmet İnönü as Prime Minister⁹⁵, was asked to organize a similar trip and to report his assessment of the conditions of the Eastern Provinces. Celal Bayar's report focused mainly on economic issues, but he made a couple of important observations in which he politically diverged from the mainstream hardliners and their perception of the

⁹⁵ Celal Bayar later became a popular figure and was elected as President during the multi-party era.

problem at hand. Celal Bayar agreed with the hardliners that so far the state was far from establishing its power and control over the Eastern Provinces. He even stated his support for the legitimate use of limited violence against actual insurgents. However, he wanted to attract attention to a noticeable fact in the Eastern Provinces that ambitions for Turkishness as well as Kurdishness had become inflamed after the Sheikh Said and Mount Ararat rebellions. More violence and repression would probably make things worse by increasing the already existing polarization. The solution, according to Celal Bayar, was to be found in the proper and equal treatment of all parties after suppressing the insurgent elements. Moderation and integration of the rest of the region's population was necessary to attach them to the motherland, not exclusion, discrimination or any other kind of special treatment. If they saw themselves as outsiders, mischievous external powers would attract these people to themselves, and agitate them against the government much more easily. This also goes for Dersim. Dersimlis could be won over. They could be turned into good citizens if proper (and more moderate) measures were taken. One of these measures, Celal Bayar declared, was land reform. But, land reform could only be effective if powerful local lords and chieftains were removed from the region together with their families. After that was achieved, Celal Bayar seems to believe, there was no reason why the rest of the Dersimlis should not become good and productive citizens (Mazıcı, 1996).

Perhaps, compared to others, Celal Bayar's perspective at the time was a bit optimistic and economic. He was no Marxist. Neither can he be considered a liberal

in the political sense of the term. Yet, he believed that economic improvement can cure social and political problems.

4.7. Conclusion

This chapter looked at the legal and institutional developments that provided the context for the forced migration and resettlement of the Dersimlis in 1937. It showed how the development of a particular form of legal framework for population management in general helped to legitimize the forced migration of the Dersimlis. That legal framework was not established just for the sake of the Dersimlis, but for defining who is to be included in the nation. Nevertheless, an already established legal framework delimiting the legitimate means of population movement came quite handy for state authorities when they faced with the resistance of the Dersimlis.

Second, this chapter also showed that the organizational structure of the new Turkish state, and the establishment of a special administrative regime., i.e, the Inspectorates-General, equipped with extraordinary legal, political and military powers affected the nature and character of the relationship between the state authorities and the local elite.

Finally, the last section of the chapter have demonstrated that despite disagreements on how to handle it and with what measures, there was a certain amount of consensus among the civil and military sectors of the state that the conditions in Dersim could not be tolerated. With the currently available evidence it is hard to argue

that the result would have been different if there had been more conflict among the Turkish state elite and less conflict between the Dersimlis.

CHAPTER V

THE FORCED MIGRATION OF THE DERSIMLIS: A PERSPECTIVE FROM BELOW

“Bizi kamyonu doldurdular.
Tüfekli iki erin nezaretinde.
Sonra o iki erle yük vagonuna doldurdular.
Günlerce yolculuktan sonra bir köye attılar.
Tarih öncesi köpekler havlıyordu...
Keşke göçmen denseydi bize.”⁹⁶

Cemal Süreya

On August 19, 2007, Yusuf Halaçoğlu, Professor of History and President of the Turkish Historical Society⁹⁷, established in April 1930, claimed that there is no such thing as “Kurdish Alevi”.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ “They crammed us on a truck, guarded with two armed soldiers; then, together with that two soldiers, loaded us on a train wagon. After days of travel they threw us to a faraway village. Prehistoric dogs were barking... Wish we were called migrants.” Cemal Süreya (1931-1990) is a renowned poet and writer born in Dersim. His family was forced out of their village by state authorities and resettled in Bilecik in 1938. Both of his parents died in exile. He was then raised by his uncle, also an exile, in Istanbul. Later he was able to become a public fiscal inspector. In his work he frequently uses the imagery of migration, exile, banishment, and itinerancy (Erdost, 2004).

⁹⁷ The Turkish Historical Society was founded in April 1930 with 16 members, and was initially a dependent body of the Turkish Hearth Central Council under the name of “Türk Ocağı Türk Tarihi Tetkik Encümeni”. On the closure of the Türk Ocakları on 15 April 1931, the members applied to the Ministry of the Interior for permission to found a society under the name “Türk Tarihi Tetkik Cemiyeti” (Society for the Study of Turkish History). After the language reform in 1935, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk changed the name of the Society to the “Türk Tarih Kurumu” (Turkish Historical Society). By Cabinet decree No. 2/14556 dated 21.10.1940, the Turkish Historical

At a symposium on “Avshars in Turkish History and Culture” Halaçoğlu argued that Kurds are Sunni and Alevis are Turkmen. According to Halaçoğlu “Kurds who live in Turkey are originally descendents of Turkmens, and Kurdish Alevis are originally Armenian,” he said. “Some of the ones in the eastern Anatolian cities of Tunceli and Sivas, who define themselves as Kurdish Alevis, are originally Armenian. Halaçoğlu also claimed that many members of the outlawed Turkish Workers and Peasants’ Liberation Army (TİKKO) and Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) are converted Armenian Kurds. “Some Armenians settled in some areas and defined themselves as Kurdish Alevis during the forced emigration in 1915,” Halaçoğlu said. “Many of them, who converted from Armenian origins to Kurdish Alevism, are not really sincere. It is known that they are trying to open a church. For example when some PKK members are arrested it becomes apparent that they are not circumcised. We have to be careful about where the terror comes from. In 1936-37 the [Turkish] State carried out a survey and managed to identify these converts [crypto-Armenians] house by house.”

Despite Halaçoğlu’s tenuous allegations with its latent racism and pan-Turkism that denies the historical complexity and the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural blend in Anatolia, this line of thinking might shed light for understanding why Armenians and

Society was granted the status of a non-profit association. By Law No. 2876 dated 11.8.1983, the Turkish Historical Society was incorporated in the Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History with the legal status of a public organization (Çoker, 1983; İğdemir, 1973).

⁹⁸ Radikal, 20 August, 2007; Turkish Daily News, August 21, 2007.

Alevi Kurds had shared a similar, though not the same, fate during the first half of the twentieth century. Both Armenians and Alevi Kurds did not fit into the dominant conception of the new Turkish nation, whose boundaries had shifted radically starting from late nineteenth century, and both were seen as “unreliable,” and “insincere,” and were targeted by the nationalist political and military elite as the main objects of what I call the process of demographic engineering. From the perspective of those who were targeted during this process conversion was, among others, one of the most used survival strategy. Therefore, in a sense Yusuf Halaçoğlu allegations were partly true. In order to escape from being massacred or at best deported in 1915, many of the lowland Armenians living in the Dersim region sought refuge among their highland neighbors who were Kurdish Alevis, a marginalized group of Islam, and eventually converted to Kurdish Alevism. In fact this phenomenon was not specific to Dersim. Many Armenians also converted to Sunni Islam during and after 1915. The difference of the crypto-Armenians of Dersim is that they, along with the rest of the inhabitants of Dersim couldn’t escape from being displaced when the Turkish government decided to violently suppress the resistance of some armed Dersimli highland tribes against the centralization efforts of the government, and then forcefully but systematically and indiscriminately remove and internally relocate the remaining inhabitants of Dersim in western parts of Anatolia in 1938.

What is more striking is that oral accounts of the local Dersimlis partially support at least one aspect of Professor Halaçoğlu’s allegation: that the government

was already knowledgeable about Kurdified crypto-Armenians in and around the Dersim region. As one of the informants of this study stated⁹⁹:

...when they [government officials] arrived here [Mazgirt], one of them, the chubby one with civilian clothes asked about an Armenian named Arto, Arto the shoemaker. We said we don't know any Arto here, you must be mistaken. But he got very angry and started to shout furiously, insisting that we show them where Arto's house or shop is, or otherwise he will make us suffer the consequences. There was a long silence. Then a man, whom we know as Servet, Servet the shoemaker, stood up, looked down and uttered something, almost whispering. 'What is it?' the official asked. Servet raised his voice a little and said "he was my father. I'm Arto the shoemaker's son." We were all surprised. He was a good practicing Alevi. They took him with them. Later we heard that it's true. Servet the shoemaker's family is a convert. His grandparents had converted to Alevism long ago. They [the officials] separated Servet and his family from the rest of us when they started to send us to the West, and we haven't heard from them since. They did not come back when the exile ended. After our time in the West, I now can understand them [convert] much better. During our time in exile, many of us acted like a Sunni. We fasted during the Ramadan, occasionally attended to the mosque, and tried not to speak our language in public, especially when the authorities were around. Perhaps, Servet the shoemaker and his family were doing the same thing. They were just trying to survive.

The above account of one of the survivors of forced migration is telling for four main reasons. First, it tells us that Armenians (among other non-Muslim groups) and Alevi Kurds have constituted the "other" in Republican Turkey. Both did not fit the dominant form of legitimate political identification, which was (and still is) Sunni Islam. However the degree otherness of the Armenians has been much more than that of the Alevi Kurds. Second, we understand that the Turkish state had repeatedly resorted to forced migration and resettlement as a means of social and political control and pacification of contentious elements during the early phases of nation-building

⁹⁹ Interview, 27 April 2003, Mazgirt/Tunceli.

process. Fourth, it is true, as Yusuf Halaçoğlu argues, that the state was knowledgeable, but in a much limited terms, about the demographic characteristic of its subject population. Fourth, but not least, it shows that victims of demographic engineering had employed various survival strategies, conversion and concealment, just to mention two among others. This last issue points to a very important fact that despite the power asymmetry between the state and the resettled populations, they were not mere victims of a process beyond their control. Even within the limited confines of the space provided to them, they sometimes were able to deal with the hardship caused by their forced displacement. In what follows, based on the oral accounts of Dersimlis, I will analyze the how did the real forced migrants respond to and deal with their predicament during their time in exile.

*** *** ***

Stroking his longish white mustache, the old man averted his eyes away from the sight of the sharp cliff facing directly the humble house he built with his own hands up high in the hills of one the legendary mountains of Dersim. Pointing his finger towards the cliff, he said:

...each time I look at that cliff I tell myself we should have known better when they came for the Armenians. It was a sign that they were going to come after us soon. In the eyes of the government the Armenians and we were not that different. That must be why we shared similar fates. Armenians used to live in this very village before us. The government did not allow us to go to our own village but settled us here when we returned from exile¹⁰⁰.

¹⁰⁰ Interview, 24 April 2003, Hozat/Tunceli.

At the very beginning of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* Karl Marx, once again, tries to remind us of the importance of the past in understanding the present. “The tradition of the dead generations,” he notes, “weighs like a nightmare on the minds of the living” (Marx, 1992: 146). Indeed, the past always haunts us in various disguises. In both, material and symbolic terms, the legacy of “the great events and characters” of history—whether victorious, tragic, or wretchedly farcical and preposterous, and the dynamics behind them can help us not only grasp our present in better ways but also envisage a better future.

For a long time before the processes of nationalist incorporation transformed Turkey from a multi-ethnic and multi-religious territory into a homogeneous, mono-ethnic homeland of the Turks, Dersim was the home for both Christian Armenians and Alevi Kurds, as well as Sunni and Alevi Turks. Yet, as the old man above remarked, Armenians and Alevi Kurds shared a similar, but not the same, fate. To frame it in the language of this study, similar mechanisms and processes were at play in the two communities’ interactions with other communities and state authorities, but in different concatenations.

The disjunction between the nationalist vision of ethno-religious homogeneity and the historical and material reality of Turkey’s territories presented the nationalist elites of the early republican Turkey with a grievous dilemma. The process of nation-state formation required incorporation of the space (geography) and time (history) of those considered as “others” into the core of an emerging nation-state. In general, where the dominant ethnic core and the territory are congruent, reinterpretation of pre-

existing traditions and cultural norms or their deliberate construction and invention proves to be relatively easy. When, however, a disjunction prevails between the territory and the dominant core, social and demographic engineering tends to dominate (McGarry, 1998). The Dersim region and its surroundings at the beginning of the twentieth century provide a good example of such disjunction. Hence, both Armenians and Alevi Kurds of Dersim, both of which happened not to fit into the dominant notion and definition of the nation, were subjected to various strategies of nation-state building, nationalist incorporation, and social engineering, ranging from brutal state violence to forced eviction, deportation, and relocation. Yet, despite two main cycles of forced displacements, the first in late 1930s and the second in the early 1990s, many Alevi Kurds still remained in Dersim -, and continue to call the region their home. In contrast, with the exception of some remnants of churches, which were first razed by authorities right after the expulsion of the Armenians, and further destroyed by locals, at present, there is almost no material sign of Armenian presence in Dersim¹⁰¹. Nevertheless, despite all official attempts to erase the material and cultural heritages of the previous inhabitants of the region, the fate of the Armenians, as much as their own, still informs the collective memory of Dersimli Alevi Kurds. Based on the oral accounts of the Dersimlis, which I collected during my fieldwork from 2002 to 2004 by conducting open-ended interviews in multiple sites, this chapter intends to accomplish two things: First, it will describe the details of the process of social and spatial engineering based on the accounts of those who first-hand witnessed this very

¹⁰¹ Among others, “strategies of destruction and neglect of the other’s heritage” has been a common policy of the nationalizing states (Öktem, 2004).

process. Second, and more importantly, I will argue that the so-called victims of Turkish State's policy of social and demographic engineering were in fact active participants creatively engaged with other actors throughout the whole process of their displacement. Depending on the local conditions in their new environment they employed various social strategies in their interactions both with the state authorities and with their local host populations. Sometimes they concealed their "true" identity, sometimes resort to dissimulation, i.e., publicly act in accordance with what was expected of them, like not speaking their own language or attending the mosque, while actively promote the use of their own language and the practice of their own religious rituals in their private lives; sometimes they sincerely tried to get enlisted into dominant culture of their new environment and assimilated; and more importantly when and wherever they could they tried to build alliances with others, usually with other immigrant communities.

In the previous chapter, I argued that in the case of Dersim rebellion, as soon as the state's security forces had infiltrated and taken control of Dersim's physically, pacifying and destroying the most resistant network of armed tribes as well as their potential support bases, the state authorities shifted their policy from brutal use of violence to more subtler means of domination, "embracing", to use their own terms, the ordinary Dersimlis by putting forward a so-called "civilizing" mission.

The military success was made possible not just by brute force, but also, to an important extent, by the help of smaller tribes, local rivals of the insurgent tribes who were willing to cooperate with the Turkish military forces, a telling reminder that prior

local conflicts in the region were also an important factor to consider. Their cooperation with the state might have solved their problems with the rival tribes; it did not, however, change their identity in the eyes of the authorities. Hence, in the end, whether pro or anti-state, most tribes were relocated to other parts of the country for the sake of the civilizing mission.

In the official records, the 1937-38 deportations in the Dersim region and the subsequent resettlement process remain more like a mystery than a historical fact. Rebellion, resistance, and banditry were publicly given as the reason [this also has to do with the textual mode of domination that represented the Kurds in orientalist and essentialist terms], but we already know that not all instances of resistance during the same period resulted in deportation and resettlement. The official rationale is even less convincing when we consider the fact that the ones who were deported and resettled were not the actual rebels, who were either killed or fled to the mountains. It was primarily the women, children and elderly left behind who were deported en masse. Their guilt or innocence was never investigated, let alone established. “Resistance to the state” was an important factor in their deportation. Yet, considering that the decision to do “whatever necessary” in order to assimilate the Dersimli Kurds was taken long before the start of the rebellion of a few armed tribes, it becomes clearer that the policy of resettlement was part of a much larger “civilizing” mission.

In the previous chapters, I showed that the factors informing a general state policy of the internal forced migration and resettlement of minority groups as a means to contain actual as well as potential resistance and increase the pace of cultural

assimilation through coercive inclusion (commonly referred to as Turkification) during the early years of Republican Turkey). I also argued that the internal forced migration of minority groups as a general state policy was, 1) historically path-dependent, 2) influenced by previous interactions between the central state authorities and minority groups, 3) affected by the ideology of nationalism which emphasized the primacy of a homogeneous subject population as the only legitimate base for political power, and 4) encouraged by the unattractiveness, unfeasibility, and structural unavailability of other options, such as total annihilation (mainly because of potential external pressures) or territorial expulsion (because of consolidated territorial boundaries).

Although these factors help us understand the initial intentions of the central state authorities and explain why the Turkish state resorted to the forced migration of often contending minority groups, they fail to tell us much about how this macro state policy was carried out in practice, and how the target groups (I use forced migrants, deportees, settlers, resettles interchangeably) were affected by and responded to it. In what follows I will concentrate on the responses of the displaced Dersimlis to resettlement and the subsequent efforts at their assimilation.

5.1. Responses to Deportation and Assimilation

It is true that some Dersimli forced migrants did assimilate, but most did not. They maintained their collective identity during their life in exile. The question of why some did and some did not assimilate, and why, in some cases, displacement enhanced

rather than diminished their collective identification will be the subject matter of this chapter.

In this chapter, I will tell the story of internal displacement and resettlement of Dersimli Kurds from a bottom-up perspective. Based on the narratives of the Dersimli forced migrants, I will document how the process of displacement actually unfolded, and will show that local processes and relations/interactions between forced migrants, host populations, and local authorities help us better explain the varying consequences of forced migration.

While they were targeted for cultural assimilation and written out of the official history, most Dersimli Kurds did not, as the Turkish state authorities hoped, disappear or assimilate.

Basing my observations primarily on my fieldwork and interviews in this chapter I explore various topics, including: 1) narratives of deportation and resettlement of the Dersimli Kurds starting from the early centralization efforts of the Turkish nation-state, 2) the resistance movement led by local Alevi tribes, 3) the military campaign against the rebels, 4) the initial process of the de-peopling of the entire region, 5) the first impressions of exile, and 6) the “adaptation” processes, first of exile then of return to the homeland. Although informants switched back and forth in time when giving their accounts, for the sake of clarity their personal testimonies are arranged in a chronological order that follows the process of displacement. I have interwoven many of the accounts, selecting components of several stories rather than precisely reproducing individual testimonies. I do this, not to gloss over individual

differences, but rather to capture the most significant qualities of the narratives and to highlight significant recurring patterns. Rather than treating them as unified and coherent accounts, it is useful to think of individual testimonies as falling on a spectrum, from the most intensive practice of complete disclosure, to a middle ground of recounting life in Dersim and in exile in a selective and pedagogical manner; to the most restricted practice, eschewing mention of the past in favor of personal safety. My informants mostly employed an intensive and open form of recounting while talking to, or in the presence of, close family members and relatives. Selective and reluctant recounting was employed either to avoid individual emotional pain or to avoid potential negative repercussions of their anti-official version of history, thus compromising their security.

Even if the forced displacement as a phenomenon was communal, it impacted individuals differently. I explain the disparate impact of displacement on the displaced individuals in terms of location, gender, and social class, and argue that it varied significantly with respect to the type of interaction between the forced migrants and the local host communities. My findings shows that in places that used to be ethnically and religiously more heterogeneous, the reception of the forced migrants by the locals tended to be less hostile and more supportive, which eased the migrants' initial adaptation and eventual integration process. In places that were predominantly homogenous, on the other hand, the relations between the settlers and the locals tended to be more conflictual, leading to increasing social closure among the forced migrants.

Physical state violence and repression is by no means the only significant experience that informs the collective memory of Dersimli forced migrants. In fact, despite their claim of innocence and victimhood, some of them have less difficulty in understanding why 1938 happened than the exile and resettlement that followed. In fact, it was during their life in exile that they began to realize why they had been treated differently by the state. It was in exile that they met the different faces of the state. At the same time, experiences of exile vary considerably. Despite commonalities, exile and resettlement were not uniform processes for the Dersimli forced migrants. Neither were their reactions.

***5.2. Seperation: The initial phase of Displacement¹⁰²: End of the Killings
and Evacuations from Villages***

“Had Field Marshall Fevzi Çakmak taken a shorter coffee break at Elazığ on his way to Dersim, many of our forefathers would have been saved”, maintained Sekine Öztürk¹⁰³, a 78 year-old woman. She was one of the first informants I interviewed. At the time of our interview¹⁰⁴, together with her son’s family, she was living in an old, abandoned building that was formerly a primary school at the outskirt

¹⁰² Arnold van Gennep divides rites of passage into three phases: rites of separation, which remove an individual or group of individuals from his or their accustomed place; liminal rites, which symbolically fix the character of the “passenger” as one who is between states, places, or conditions; and finally rites of incorporation (postliminal rites), which welcome the individual back into the group (Gennep, 1969; also Turner, 1969)

¹⁰³ For privacy concerns, unless otherwise noted, all personal names are pseudonyms.

¹⁰⁴ Interview, 22 July, 2003, Ovacık/Tunceli.

of a village, not very far from the city center of Ovacık. Her natal village, which is up in the mountains that circle Ovacık, was evacuated overnight in 1993 by the Turkish military forces for “security” reasons. This was not the first time she was displaced by the state. Sixty-five years ago, in the summer of 1938, she, together with the other remaining residents of her village, was forced into resettlement, but this time in an unknown land very far away from her native village. “Those were much better times, we were taken care of by the government” Sakine Öztürk claimed, “now we have no one to take care of us.”

With my increasing confusion about this comparison, I tried to bring the subject back to Fevzi Çakmak, and kept wondering whether she really knew who he was. “More of us would have been saved because Fevzi Çakmak would have intervened and stopped the wrongdoing of the government, which he did, but he was a little late.” To my surprise she added, “he was a great man. It was he who saved us. It was he who sent us to exile, and saved our necks.” Fevzi Çakmak was the General Chief of Staff of the nascent Turkish republic and an ex-Ottoman general¹⁰⁵. He was

¹⁰⁵ Coming from a prominent religious family background, Fevzi Çakmak received his military education during the Hamidian period. He was one of the major figures in the proclamation of the second constitution in 1908. He led troops in the Balkan Wars, World War I, and the War of Independence. He served as Chief of Staff and Minister of War during the last years of the Ottoman Empire before he joined the new Ankara Government in 1920. He participated actively in all stages of the creation of the Turkish Republic, serving as the Minister of Defense, Head of the Council of Ministers, and as the first Chief of the General Staff of the Turkish Republic from 1923 to 1944. After retiring from his military post he joined the Democratic Party in 1946 and was elected to the Parliament as an independent member. He then left Democratic Party and founded the nationalist Nation Party in 1948, which is the predecessor of the contemporary ultra-nationalist/fascist Nationalist Movement Party.

one of the few military officers who, because of his extensive experiences in the war field, was given the honorific title of Field Marshal in the history of Turkey. As the first General Chief of Staff of the Republic (1923-1944), he was responsible for carrying out all the military operations of the Turkish state's more extensive "civilizing" mission in Dersim from 1937 to 1938. In fact, as we have seen, with respect to his views on the Kurds and other minorities he was one of the prominent Ottoman/Turkish orientalist.

For many Dersimli forced migrants like Sakine Ozturk, and the generations who listened to their stories and formed a collective memory about this traumatic experience, Fevzi Çakmak was a savior. He arrived on a white horse some will say; others will add that he was riding in a military vehicle. In the accounts of the survivors of Dersim '38, Çakmak appears as the Janus-faced image of the state. On the one hand, as the highest ranked military official he was the embodiment of the state with all its coercive powers. On the other hand, in almost all accounts of the survivors of Dersim '38, he appears as the savior from the cruelties of the government.¹⁰⁶

He died in 1949, and his funeral was turned into a religious and anti-secular protest against the ruling Republican People's Party (Hatemi, 2000: 1-36)

¹⁰⁶ Dersimlis are not the only ones who see Field Marshall Fevzi Çakmak as their savior. There is a similar mythical belief regarding Fevzi Çakmak among other minorities as well. Rifat Bali notes that in the collective memory of Jews of Turkey, Fevzi Çakmak appears as their rescuer. Many non-Muslims, but especially Jews, who witnessed the harsh Turkification process in 1940s, believed that they owe their survival to Fevzi Çakmak and Turkish Armed Forces (Bali, 1999: 419-422). According to their accounts, when Fevzi Çakmak, the Chief of Staff, heard that the government was planning to exterminate male non-Muslims by conscripting them under the service of the Ministry of Public Works, he ordered that they be transferred to the Ministry of National Defense, where the non-Muslim minorities would be under

Perhaps Fevzi Çakmak occasionally had his disagreements with the government during his military and civil tenure, but it is certainly most unlikely that he was not aware what was going on in Dersim in 1938. It is even less likely that he personally intervened and saved the rest of the Dersimlis, or for that matter other minorities. But the case of Fevzi Çakmak uncovers two clues:

1) The first relates to the internal dynamics of the Turkish state itself. As the highest military officer he had his disagreements with the governments of his time. Despite his nationalist leanings, he represented the liberal/constitutionalist Ottoman tradition that urged for the equality of all Ottoman subjects, and from time to time opposed the authoritarian policies of the new Turkish state. That opposition might have caused a partial change in state's policies towards its minorities.

2) The second is that the importance of the case of Fevzi Çakmak has less to do with factual reality than with perceptions; simply put, for the survivors of Dersim '38 Fevzi Çakmak was a savior. They needed an explanation for why the state stopped the killings and started to send the survivors into exile. The belief that the highest-ranked military officer "saved" them from death made exile and resettlement appear as a reward rather than a punishment.

his personal command. A prominent Turkish Businessman of Jewish origin, Jak Kamhi, shares this belief, and has stated that Fevzi Çakmak was one the leading protectors of Jews in Turkey (Yetkin, 1992).

5.3. Remembering the Past: Before and After 1938

Dilan Ağa¹⁰⁷ is from the village of Harşı (Işıkveren) in the *kaza* of Ovacık. Before 1938 most of the residents of his village were small landowners. The economy of the village was based on subsistence level husbandry. “We did not have much, just a small piece of land and a few cattle, but we were doing just fine by ourselves until the state started to intervene in our lives,” Dilan Ağa recalled. “We never liked outsiders/intruders; we were used to being independent in our affairs. When the *hükümet* wanted more taxes and more soldiers from us, our people demanded to have an independent state. All people have their own states, why shouldn’t we, we thought. But İsmet Paşa (the president) and Celal Bayar (the prime minister) did not accept our demands and instead punished us, killed most of us, and sent the rest to exile,” he added.

Dilan Ağa’s account follows the same logic one can find in classical accounts of nation-state formation. Central power holders’ attempts to extract more and more material and human resources from local populations caused substantial levels of resistance. In most cases, local, and usually unorganized, resistance against the organized army of nationalizing states proved to be futile. In the previous chapter we saw the reasons behind the Dersim rebellion where a few contending tribes, whose armed force did not exceed more than a few thousand men, furiously resisted the “civilizing mission” of the Turkish State. The resistance and its brutal and violent suppression by the Turkish state, which resulted in the loss of 45.000 to 70.000 human

¹⁰⁷ Interview, 23 April, 2003 and 4 August, 2003.

lives, have long constituted a very important and resilient force in the collective memory of the Dersimli Kurds. “Some of our elders warned us,” an informant recalls, “that we would have no chance of winning this war against the state. You need a state to resist a state.” “But we thought we really had a chance,” he added. In the end it turned out that the elders were right. The effects of resistance were devastating for the whole region.

Dilan Ağa’s extended family spent almost a year on the run in the mountains. They numbered around 500 but only two carried arms, because they turned in their arms voluntarily before the first military operations began in 1937. Since they were followed by the soldiers, they had to move continuously. Although they had limited supplies, they managed to survive until the winter arrived. “We could have hidden in these mountains forever. We knew them by heart. There was no way the soldiers could have caught us. But we ran out of food; the elders and the kids couldn’t stand it anymore. We were either going to die of hunger or surrender voluntarily. And we did. It was the winter that beat us, not the state.”

It was only when they surrendered in Ovacık that Dilan Ağa and his family realized the military operations had already ended and an amnesty was announced that there would be no more killings. They were told that they would no longer be allowed to stay in Dersim, and were going to be sent elsewhere. “None of us could speak or understand Turkish back then. At fist we couldn’t understand what they were telling us. Then one of the officers went and came back with a young foot soldier. He was speaking our language [bizim dil] but with a very different and heavy accent. He

explained us that they do not mean any harm to us, that the government decided to spare us, but we were going to be relocated someplace in the West.”

My mother and grandmother seemed to be happy to hear that. Not for themselves, but for us, the kids I guess. ‘I have lived enough, but you are just beginning to live, but you should never ever forget about what happened to us and never forget about your roots,’ my grandmother said to me. My grandfather, who was the leader of our group, on the other hand, seemed very sad about us being sent to exile (surgun). I remember him saying ‘this is the worst punishment for us. We should have died freely and honorably on our land. Now we are going to live, but die in chains and shame.’ At first I thought my grandfather was going nuts. It was only when we arrived in Adana that I started to realize what he meant.

After surrendering Dilan Ağa and his family stayed a couple of weeks in a military camp in Ovacık. Each day more were arriving. They were provided food and shelter. “We weren’t sure if we should be grateful to them or hate them. Why are they taking care of us, we wondered. They were firing at us before but now they are feeding us. Some of us thought, this is going to be our last meal.”

Fortunately it wasn’t their last meal. After two weeks stay at the military camp Dilan Ağa’s family, along with others, were transferred to Elaziz (later renamed Elazığ), to a bigger camp where they spent a few more weeks before being sent to their new settlements. There were also others there from different tribes and villages. Some of them had been there for a couple of months.

The deportees of Dersim were gathered in two main camps: Divriği/Sivas in the North and Elazığ in the South. In terms of their treatment and living conditions, informants reported some differences in the two camps. In Elazığ camp, which was much bigger and more crowded compared to the Divriği/Elazığ camp, living

conditions were quite pitiful. With limited supplies, the soldiers tried to provide shelter and food to the camp residents. In the Elazığ camp, the deportees were put in military tents, whereas in the Divriği/Sivas camp most were put in old inns and lodgings [han], some in military barracks, and those who could afford it were allowed to stay in hotels.

Upon arrival to the camps, the deportees were registered. Because most of them didn't have any birth registers, registering them was the first step to make them *legible* (Scott, 1998). They were then subjected to "six second" health checks¹⁰⁸. Those with serious medical problems and those who were suspected of having contagious illnesses were separated from others and given treatment. Both men's and women's hair was cut to prevent lice infection and they were forced to take baths and clean up. "You couldn't differentiate men from women," many informants reported. "Some of our own men tried to take advantage of it by trying to take a leak in the women's bathroom, but we beat the hell out of them," a female informant recounted wittily.

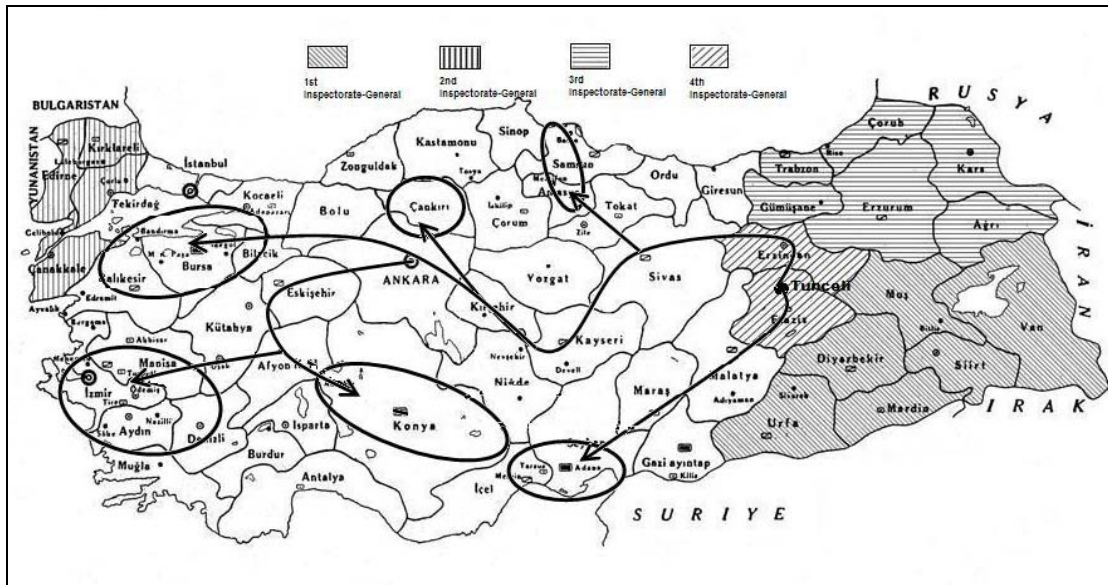
It seems that the state not only wanted to turn its subjects into reliable good citizens, but also healthy and clean ones.

After "purifying" and then registering them, the authorities started the relocation and resettlement process. Below are two maps, first showing the transfer

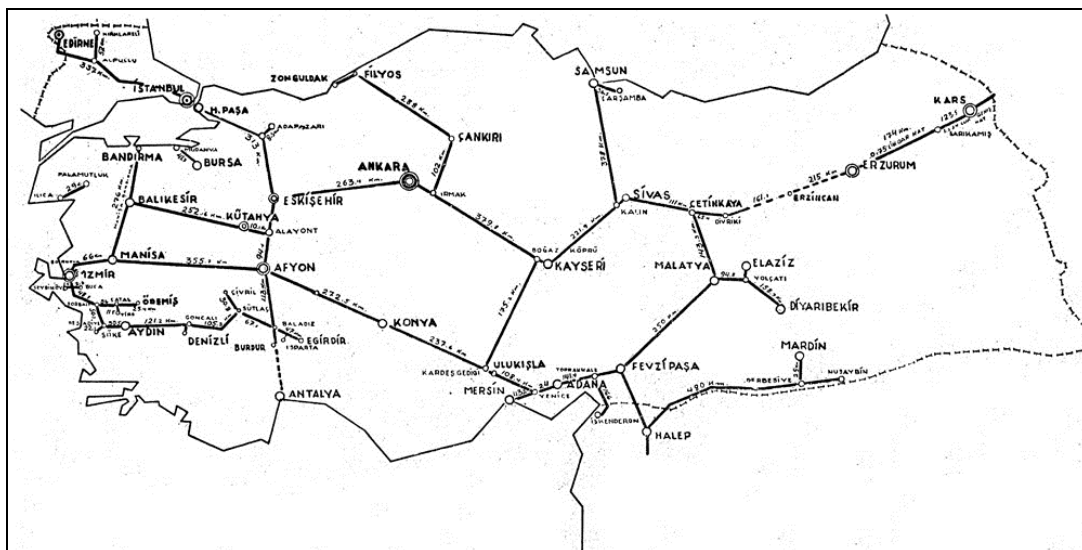
¹⁰⁸ Until very recently, the first experience of immigrants who arrived to Ellis Island in New York from all around the world was the health check, which lasted no more than six seconds.

routes and settlement regions based on the oral accounts of the forced migrants (Map 3), second showing the railway infrastructure of the Turkey during the same time (Map 4). The resemblance is more than apparent. The resettlement process took place within the confines of the available transportation infrastructure.

Map 3. The transfer routes and resettlement regions



Map 4. Railroads in Turkey in 1939.



Source: Hamit Sadi Selen (1939-1940): *İktisadi Türkiye*. İstanbul: Tan Matbaası.

5.4. The Liminal Phase of Displacement: The Train Journey

“One day my father’s name was called. He came back and said to us that they are sending us to Adana. ‘Where the hell is Adana?’ my grandfather cried out. ‘I don’t know,’ my father replied, ‘but they said it is much warmer.’” Together with others Dilan Ağa’s family was taken to the train station. They were put in black wagons [kara vagon], which are normally used to carry livestock. “They placed us on top of each other, locked the doors from outside, you know, like animals.” Dilan Ağa’s narrative of deportation resonates with the prevalence of animals as a theme in narratives of deportation. “Theranthropic” figures, which combine animal and human characteristics, are common in the narratives of the displaced Dersimlis. Some have described being checked for tails by local residents upon arrival. Others recalled that they were called “kuyruklu Kürtler” (tailed Kurds). Some locals even thought that the newcomers were cannibals, and needed to be approached very cautiously. Throughout, dehumanization and demonization seem to have characterized the experience of the Dersimli forced migrants.

The journey to exile from Elazığ to Adana took more than a week, but for the travelers it felt like forever. “I don’t know how long the journey took,” Dilan Ağa recalled. “We were locked up the whole time, and there were no windows. We didn’t know whether it was day or night. Sometimes it got very muggy, we could barely breathe.”

The train was stopping at almost every major station to drop off some of its passengers. Accompanied by soldiers, it was only during those stops that the rest of the passengers were let out of the cars for brief periods of time.

By all accounts, the train journey was a time out of time, a liminal experience in the extreme. Stripped of their land, their personal belongings, and in some cases their families, Dersimli Kurds were removed from the social roles and positions they formerly occupied. The deportees traveled for several days without knowing what was going to happen to them. The element of not knowing where they were going and for how long, coupled with the intense discomfort of the trains themselves, made the journey seem everlasting.

On the trains, daily life activities were totally suspended. There was a dramatic leveling of social status. Rich and poor, dissidents and collaborators, young and elderly were all loaded onto the trains together. To their embarrassment, men were loaded with women, which made personal hygiene even more difficult. One female informant related that his elder sister's intestines exploded because she was too ashamed to relieve herself in the train. The only place to relieve oneself was a hole in one corner of the train car. The lack of privacy offended everyone. While most of deportees survived the travel, some died during the journey. The officers did not allow them to bury the dead according to their own traditions. The dead remained in the train until it reached the next stop, where the escorting soldiers took them out.

5.5. Arrival: First Days in Exile and Strategies of Survival

Accompanied by soldiers, forced migrants were first distributed to city centers, where they were handed over to the highest local authorities. After a couple of days they were handed over, this time to village headmen who personally saw to their settling down in their respective villages. Very few remained in city centers. It was made sure that no more than two families (preferably from different tribes) were settled in each village. Separation and diffusion of families and tribe members has been a typical state strategy of management of forced exile since Ottoman times.

Shelters that were provided for the migrants were usually very old, unusable, and unhealthy. Some of the migrants applied to local authorities and either requested better shelters, or asked for relocation to another village.

The official account renders that the Dersimli Kurds were justly relocated and the operation was carried out in a humane manner. The accounts of the displaced Dersimli Kurds, however, present a counter-narrative. The stories of the displaced fuse the material with the symbolic difficulties and hardship they experienced during their term in exile.

How were the displaced supposed to survive in their new settlements? As we have seen in Chapter IV, articles 10 and 15 of the Settlement Law enacted in 1935 set forth the rights and duties of the settlers. All settlers are supposed to be provided shelter and supported by the government with “minimal” monthly payments until they settle down and take care of themselves.

What was legally declared in the Settlement Law and other official documents, and what practically took place in different locales was quite different, and usually contradictory. Although most forced immigrants were provided shelter, living conditions were usually minimal and uncomfortable. Most of the time, until more permanent and reliable shelter was found or built, settlers were put in temporary shelters, like school buildings, empty barracks, or a corner in someone else's house. Food supplies were extremely limited. For a year or so, the settlers relied on the generosity of local populations.

In most cases, very little of the help officially outlined above ever materialized. Many informants recount the struggle to survive in their new settlements. While some consultants mentioned being given some supplies, mostly in the form of necessary food like flour and sugar, in none of the testimonies does the assistance match that described in official declarations. Most informants stressed that it was only local villagers who helped them.

Although many informants spoke of their life in exile as a process in which things very gradually got better, the Dersimli Kurds' first arrival in their new settlements was initially marked by hostility, fear, suspicion, and lack of trust. A very few informants reported minor cases of open aggression by the locals upon arrival. But overall, despite hostility, fear, and suspicion, open aggression and violence, both on the part of the locals and of the settlers, constituted an exception rather than the rule.

Nonetheless, upon arrival at their destination Dersimli forced immigrants adopted various survival strategies. In their narratives four such strategies stand out prominently: concealment (of their religious beliefs), dissimulation (towards Turkish authorities), alliance-making (especially with other non-indigenous immigrant communities), and enlistment.

5.5.1. Concealment and Dissimulation:

Concealment and dissimulation were the most common initial protective strategies employed by the Dersimli forced migrants in their new settings. Before their forcible displacement, for the Dersimli Kurds, the most important overarching social boundary that separated “them” from “others” was religion; that is the Sunni-Alevi distinction. Ethnicity, at that time, was secondary. One may argue that even today, though to a lesser extent, religion still constitutes their primary form of identification. For the Dersimlis the answer to the question “who we are” has always been “we are Alevi.” During my fieldwork, in my first encounter with my informants, their first inquiry about me was always whether or not I was one of them. At first I took it for granted that they were asking about my ethnic background, that is if I am Kurdish or not. After some time I realized that was not what they were wondering. For them, “being one of us” meant being an Alevi. None of my informants, and this is true for most old generations of Dersimlis, consider non-Alevi Kurds, whether Sunni, Shafi, or Christian, as “one of them.” They say they feel much closer to non-Kurdish Alevi, but they are also hesitant to accept non-Kurdish Alevi as “one of them.” Moreover they sometimes use Sunni and Turk interchangeably:

We call non-Alevis, that is Sunnis, Turks... For example, that person is a Kurd, he speaks Kurmanci (Kurdish proper), but since he is a Sunni, we consider him a Turk (Çem, 1999: 43-44).

Alevis in Turkey have been subject to social and political discrimination, exclusion, and repression for a very long time. Following the age old Shi'a concept of *taqiya* (concealment/dissimulation or the practice of hiding one's beliefs or religion when under imminent or possible future threat) concealment among the Alevis, as among other branches of Shi'ism has been a very common protective survival strategy for centuries, not just to avoid detection and manipulation by authorities, but also to evade and escape from social discrimination and exclusion. For that reason concealment means not only "secrecy and deception, but also reticence and non-acknowledgment."¹⁰⁹ Almost everywhere the locals, even where the locals too were Alevis, did not know that the newcomers were Alevis. And for a long time the Dersimli forced migrants tried very hard not to publicize their religious identifications, beliefs, and rituals.

Dissimulation was another commonly used protective strategy employed by the forced migrants. It refers to "feigning conformity by adopting some available public identity, but minimizing compliance and visibility of internal operations and resources" (Tilly, 2005: 34). It also refers to "outward but reluctant conformity to political authorities" (Tilly, 2005: 109).

¹⁰⁹ For a definition of concealment see Nagel, 1998; also Tilly, 2005.

The following narrative represents how commonly concealment and dissimulation, singly or in combination, were employed by the Dersimli forced migrants:

When people asked us who we were and where we came from, we simply avoided the question. We did not want to tell that we were Alevi; and we could not tell them we were from Dersim, because, you know, everybody knows Dersim is the land of Alevis. If they knew we were from Dersim, they might have gotten suspicious that we were Alevi. Some asked ‘you are Kurdish, right,?’ and we couldn’t say yes either. Because that would have gotten us into trouble with the government. We did not want that either. So we pretended we were nobody. Some of us even went to the mosque voluntarily to attend Sunni prayers. We tried not to speak our language in public, especially when authorities were around. We sent all our children to school so that they could learn Turkish, but we never let them forget who they really were.¹¹⁰

Popular as well official accounts commonly presented the Dersimli Kurds as wild, aggressive, and uncivilized people who have no respect for the state and the law. They were nothing but a threat to the unity and security of the Turkish nation, which was still in the making. In some places the locals had been subjected to propaganda by local authorities, who claimed that the immigrant Kurds were wild and aggressive and spread rumors that these terrible people were coming. Some consultants reported open aggression upon arrival in northern and eastern parts of Central Anatolia, a region in which the majority of inhabitants are Sunni Turks. Some recalled that the locals were afraid to come near them for a couple of months.

National propaganda combined with local rumors laid the groundwork for the initial social exclusion of the immigrant Kurds from the social fabric of their new

¹¹⁰ Interview, September 7, 2003, Karaman.

settlements. Moreover, the initial social exclusion was more pronounced in historically less heterogeneous regions. In later periods, on the other hand, the degree of social exclusion or inclusion/integration of the immigrants had to do less with the initial state policy of forced migration and resettlement than the already existing social and historical boundaries that characterized the local host population, and the character and nature of the unfolding interactions between and the new settlers, host population, and local authorities.

Many informants reported that they had nowhere to turn for help and support because they distrusted both local villagers and authorities. They suspected that the exile and resettlement policy was a continuation of the government's policy of getting rid of them, but this time more slowly and in an allegedly humane manner.

We couldn't understand why the government was doing this to us. They could have killed all of us in Dersim if they wanted. When the soldiers captured us we were sure that they were going to kill us like they did to others. But they didn't. We thought they were going to kill us later. We had waited and waited to be killed. Do you know what it feels like waiting to be killed? We were told that there would be no more killing, but we did not believe it. How could we? After all we went through, how could we trust them! Even when we were on the train, each time the train stopped and they opened the doors, we thought they were going to kill us. But again they didn't. It did not make any sense. Then they brought us to this place that we knew nothing about, and told us that from now on we are going to live there. We couldn't understand a word these people were saying. Neither could they understand us. We had nothing, no money, no clothes, and no food. The village headman gathered everyone in the village and told them something in Turkish. Then he took us to a place, which I think used to be a barn. We did not know that it was going to be our new home for the next ten years. We were still afraid that they were going to kill us here. I know it doesn't make sense. After all, if they were going to kill us, why would they bother to take us all the way up here? But that's how we felt. While we were waiting for the machine guns to arrive, instead they brought us bed and bedding. The locals never dared to enter the barn. They left the stuff outside, and someone called out my father's name. He and my elder brother got out and took

the stuff in while the villagers were watching from a distance. I think they were afraid of us as much as we were of them. As it turned out they were not bad people at all. They were just afraid of us. They thought we were a bunch of violent bandits. Years later, someone, who eventually became a good friend of mine, told me that before we arrived there was a rumor running through the village which was spread by some local authorities that the government will settle some criminal Kurdish immigrants in the village, and that they better watch out for them. That's all they knew about us, and we knew nothing about them.

Dilan Ağa's narrative points to the importance of the social circulation of images and discourses associated with the fears experienced by forced migrants in their host populations and the ways these social fears inform the actions and responses of the forced migrants as well as the actions and responses of the host populations to the presence of forced migrants. Therefore, to understand and explain the differential impact of forced migration it is crucial to specify the differences and commonalities in the uses of memory and the fears experienced by forced migrants, in their reconstitution as social [and political] subjects, in the social actions and networks they develop, and in their experiences of integration or marginalization in the receiving society.

5.5.2. Alliance-making

Turkey is a country of immigrants and the province of Adana is no exception. Here, nearly continuously groups of immigrants replaced each other, took over lands they had no experience cultivating, and had to adjust to the unfamiliar climate. It was no surprise, then, that immigrants (*muhacirs*) from the Balkans, and to a lesser extent from the Caucasus, would be settled in villages emptied of or by its long-time Armenian occupants. At first glance the experience of Dilan Ağa and his extensive

family who were sent to the empty Armenian village of Kaladeresi in the *kaza* of Feke was no different than that of the immigrants living in the nearby villages, except the fact that unlike their neighbors they did not emigrate from the lands beyond the limits of Turkish Republic. What they shared with many other immigrants was the fact that they also for the first time were forced to leave their ancestral lands. All immigrant communities had to adapt to and learn to survive in their new settings.

A third survival strategy employed by the Dersimli forced migrants was making alliances with other immigrant communities when a conflict occurred between them and indigenous/local groups. Many informants observed that compared to indigenous groups (*yerliler*) they usually had fewer problems with other immigrant groups. They recalled that in many instances, other immigrant groups, especially the Circassians (*Çerkesler*), supported them when they had issues with the locals; and, in return, they supported the Circassians when they had conflicts with the locals.

In one case, for example, a group of Dersimli forced migrants settled in a highland village of Asarcık/Samsun in alliance with the Circassian immigrants, who were previously settled in the same village, managed to elect one of their members as the head of the village.

In an other instance, Hıdır Taş, who was settled in Balıkesir, escaped his village to go help his younger sister and her children, who were settled in a very poor mountain village in Burdur. Hıdır Taş' brother-in-law died shortly after they arrived in Burdur, and his wife and children were left in miserable condition because the local villagers couldn't help them and they were unable to claim, and thus couldn't receive,

help from the local authorities. After receiving this news, Hıdır decided to do something to help them. He was worried because neither his sister nor her children could speak Turkish. Since he couldn't leave his village without the permission of the local authorities, he went to the village headmen, explained his sister's situation and requested permission to go to Burdur and claim responsibility for his sister's family, or at least see to their relocation to the city center where he thought they would be more comfortable. He was denied permission. Undeterred, he escaped and went to Burdur, traveling at night and hiding during the day. When he arrived in Burdur, he realized he couldn't take his sister's family back to Balıkesir with him. At the expense of disclosing his identity and being caught, he went to the Governor of Burdur and requested that his sister and her family be relocated to the city center. The Governor, whom Hıdır referred to as "one of us" – probably meaning that he was an Alevi, though not a Kurd, was very sympathetic to the situation of Hıdır's sister and her family. Yet, even the Governor did not have the authority to send them to Balıkesir with Hıdır. Even relocating them to the city center would be suspicious just because they were in a difficult situation in the mountain village. Luckily however, the Governor did manage to relocate them to the city center. At the time, the city was also receiving migrants because of an earthquake in the city of Erzincan. He announced and registered Hıdır's sister's family as earthquake victims and facilitated their settlement in the city center, making sure they got the proper economic and social support from the government.

The Settlement Law states that if one leaves the perimeter of his settlement for the first time without proper authorization, when caught he is to be sent back to his settlement with no additional punishment. However if it recurred and became habitual, further punishment, including imprisonment, was required. Because it was his first time to run away, Hıdır was sent back to Balıkesir without any further punishment. In fact, like Hıdır, many others had taken advantage of this flexibility in the Law and escaped their settlements at least once for various reasons. They were aware that as long as they did not go Eastwards (i.e., to Dersim and its surroundings), they would not be punished severely.

5.5.3. Enlistment

Some Dersimli forced migrants, however, chose to go overboard.. They thought doing more than what was expected of them would benefit them more in the long run. So rather than concealing, dissimulating or seeking alliance with others, they tried hard to become what they were supposed to become: good citizens of the country. Some voluntarily registered for schooling, some sought government jobs, even in the security sector. A grandson of one of the participants of the 1938 resistance, for example, applied to the military school. His application was first rejected on the grounds of his current low grades, but then he managed to increase his grades, got into the military high school and made his way up to the rank of colonel in the army. During our initial encounter, he insistently denied his origins. Later, however, after hearing my references from his relatives back in Dersim, he acknowledged that his being an army officer relieved all the government pressure on

his family, and through his connections many of his relatives found jobs in various government posts, which otherwise would not be possible for someone with his/her origins in Dersim. “Nobody forced me to become a member of the army,” he said, “but, I thought my ancestors lost their battle because they simply did not to fight with a regular army. Frankly, at the beginning I thought by becoming a professional soldier I could take my grandfather’s revenge, so I enlisted. My father and uncles were frustrated, and my father even threatened to disown me. But a lot of things have changed since then, including me.”

There were also others who tried heartily to integrate into the existing regime’s available niches. Enlistment mostly occurred through education. It is not coincidental that Tunceli today has one of the highest literacy levels in Turkey today. Sometimes enlistment occurred against the will of individual enlisters, and it no doubt has the potential for total dissolution of a cultural community. The line between forced assimilation and enlistment is usually very thin and fragile. Nevertheless, it was one of the powerful survival strategies, at least among the Dersimli forced migrants.

5.6. The Special Settlement Regime

Even though there were no official stipulations against it, male exiles were practically forbidden to be employed for paid jobs for two years.

The men were like prisoners for a couple of years. We were under surveillance. We were not allowed to do anything. We could wander in the village, go to the coffeehouse, but were not allowed to leave the village. They [the authorities] were worried that we might escape and go back. A couple of years later we were told that a new law was passed and we were “free”, and could take care of our own business. For about six years the government gave us 40 bags of flour a

year for 27 of us. They also gave us rice, lentils, and occasionally a little cheese. The government took care of us for six years. Then we were allowed to work and take care of ourselves.¹¹¹

In terms of paid work, women were subjected to fewer constraints. They, too, were not allowed to leave the perimeters of their new settlements, but within their respective villages some were able to find minor work, usually as land laborers.

The condition of those to whom the government allocated some land was relatively more comfortable. They basically worked on their land and were able to support themselves with little or no outside (local or government) support. “The government gave us land. We were growing everything there. We had an ox, also chickens. We could get by with no problem.”

In most cases, however, the village headman was held responsible, with or without government aid, for the survival needs of the settlers. Initially, for about a year or so, either local villagers, under the provision of village headmen, provided for the minimal needs of the forced migrants collectively, or a “rich” villager undertook the responsibility.

Some even had the luxury of not “liking” (and even “trashing” the food brought them by the local villagers:

The village headman was bringing us some cooked food everyday. You know, we are used to butter. We couldn’t eat food cooked with margarine or vegetable oil. We threw it away. Then he started to bring us raw food and we started to

¹¹¹ Interview, 25 April 2003, Tunceli.

cook for ourselves. They [local villagers] were helping us; they were giving us many things. We never had to buy anything.¹¹²

For those who were settled in towns and cities, it was the district governor (*vali* or *kaymakam*) who supervised the needs of the displaced, usually in consultation with the state's medical doctor. In fact, according to the Settlement Law the main authority and responsibility for resettlement belonged to the Ministry of Health and Social Aid. Doctors, who were members of local resettlement committees, regularly visited the resettled families and registered their needs and problems. Some doctors even tried to help some families with their own means. At the same time the government was trying to keep the expenses and payments to the settlers as minimal as possible; and negligence on the part of the government authorities was not uncommon. Although all settlers were subject to an equal amount of government help by law, some had more difficulty getting it than others. Among those having the most difficulty were single and widowed women, and women whose husbands were conscripted.

With respect to the resettlement of women unaccompanied by adult males, we observe a general pattern. Although there were exceptions as an unofficial principle widowed women and women whose husbands were conscripted were settled alone but with or near close relatives, or alternatively two or more such single women were settled together. In most cases their consent was not required. This suggests that among other things, displacement and resettlement was also a gendered process.

¹¹² Interview, 26 July 2003, Ovacık.

5.7. Conclusion

In this chapter I analyzed how the Dersimli forced migrants respond to and engaged with the problems they encountered in their new settlements. I showed that it's not possible to depict them as mere victims of larger historical process. By developing various strategies in their interactions with other social groups, and by making crucial choices, in their own unique ways they actively participated in the making of their own history.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this study I addressed a crucially important but hitherto neglected historical problem: the close nexus of population movements, state building and identity formation in the early decades of Turkish Republic. I have drawn attention to the ways in which forced population movements influenced the emergence of nationalism and national movements (rather than the other way around) in the late imperial and the early post-imperial Turkey. Based on the case of Turkey, I showed that population displacements have played a powerful role in the making and unmaking of states. At the same time, drawing from the archival and ethnographic evidence I gathered on the case of the forced migration and resettlement of the Dersimli Alevi Kurds between 1937 and 1947 in Turkey, I have also engaged more general theoretical and historical questions, such as, “when and why do modern states commonly resort to forced population movements?” and “how do those who are subjected to forced displacement respond to and deal with their displacement and replacement?”

In the preceding chapters, through an historical analysis of forced displacement and resettlement of some segments of the Kurdish-speaking population in the early years of the Turkish republic, I have suggested that the reasons behind the frequent observance of state-enforced population movements, as well as the consequences of such movements, are much more complex and therefore defy any simple and single explanation. The fact that forced population movements have

occurred in almost all periods of history complicates the matter even further and makes generalizations harder.

Nevertheless, I have argued that it is possible to observe some historical patterns, at least in the case of Turkey. In light of the analysis and findings in the preceding chapters, in this concluding chapter I will first summarize the general arguments I developed in previous chapters. Second, I will summarize my findings by laying out the historical factors that led to forced migration and internal resettlement of the Dersimli Alevi Kurds in the early decades of the Turkish Republic (1937-1947) as well the consequences of such phenomena. Then, I will discuss the relevance of the case under study for some theoretical questions in social sciences. Next, I will critically evaluate the limitations of my analysis. Finally, I will propose possible avenues for future research.

Most observers and analysts of nation-state formation have treated forced population movements as by-products of the attempt on the part of the state elite to create a more easily manageable and controllable subject population. In an influential study, for example, Aristide Zolberg and his colleagues have argued that the great wave of population displacement in the 20th century was created by the establishment of national states that were unwilling and unable to integrate minorities who did not easily fit the national ideal (Zolberg et al., 1989). The starting point of this project was indeed the recognition that states tend to privilege place of being above space of movement (Baron and Gatrell, 2003; Scott, 1998). One cannot deny the importance of certain mechanisms common to all forms of state-construction and nation-building.

Processes of state-making and nation-building, especially during and immediately after World War I, for instance, entailed both territorial reconfiguration and a confrontation with the scattering of populations (Gatrell, 1999; Baron and Gatrell, 2004; Kulischer, 1948; Mazower, 2000). When state-making coincided with nation-building, one of the results has usually been forced migration of minority groups.

The difficulty with this approach, which focuses on the causal connection between the nation-state formation and population displacement, however, is that it overlooks the possibility that forced migration might also contribute to the formation of new states. What begins as internal displacement in imperial polities may end in a constellation of forces driving the project of nation-state formation. Similarly, what begins as forced expulsion of a targeted group out of the territories of one nation-state may cause formation of another nation-state. As Chapter III showed, had the Muslims of the Balkans and the Caucasus not been forced to move out of their homes and come to Anatolia, there would not be a Turkish nation-state on those lands today as we have it today. The formation of the Turkish nation state as such and the constellations of factors that further affected the dynamics of the subsequent population movements during the first half of the 20th century, was, in the language of Chapter II, path dependent. Earlier contingent events and interactions set into motion event chains or sequences that have highly predictable features, culminating in outcomes of interest that could not have been explained in light of an initial set of conditions. Nevertheless, once a certain pattern of interaction between two or more social units emerges and gets “locked in,” it tends to reproduce itself and shapes the trajectory of subsequent

developments by constraining the subsequent choices, therefore limiting future alternatives (Collier and Collier, 1991; Goldstone, 1998; Thelen, 1999, 2004; Pierson, 2004; Mahoney, 2000, 2006; Greener, 2005; Boas, 2007). In our case, the imperial legacy and previous institutionalization of exile and resettlement (*sürgün ve iskan*) and the influx of Muslim immigrants from the Balkans and the Caucasus since the mid-19th century set the stage for subsequent population policies of the late Ottoman and the early Turkish states.

More than fifty years ago Robert Koehl (1953) drew attention to the basic logic behind population resettlement. The true wealth of a sovereign required a disciplined and productive subject population. State-organized reshuffling of the population of a region usually served that purpose well. Common to all resettlement schemes has been “the attempt to dominate a politically doubtful region by filling it with a controllable population and removing from it all those who are believed to be uncontrollable on national, political, or class grounds” (Koehl, 1953: 232). Practices of resettlement in any form, ranging from outright deportations, exile, international population transfers, internal displacements and replacements to policies of “internal colonization” whereby members of the dominant group are settled into areas weakly held by the leading group, Koehl argued, have been intended to master a territory (*ibid.*). Koehl evaluates population resettlement as a means of cleansing, relating them to the practices of the transformation process through which empires became nation-states.

Before the emergence of nation-states, the goal was to maximize population by marriage and conquest, without much concern for people’s cultural characteristics.

However, at the dawn of the 19th century something dramatic had occurred. The powers of important European Empires—the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian empires— began to decline, culminating in their disintegration at the turn of the 20th century. The new states emerged that in their place modeled their population politics on the idea of nationalism, a political concept holding that the borders of political units (states) and cultural units (nations) should coincide, and that the power legitimacy of the state depend on the degree to which its subjects respond to the ideal of the particular cultural identity that is thought to characterize the nation (Koehl, 1953: 231; Hechter, 2000). The borders of the new states, however, rarely, if at all, corresponded with those of the cultural units. This incongruence gave rise to the idea of resettlement and exchange of populations between politico-cultural units as a method of bringing logic to the map. The idea of bringing logic to the map comprised the territorial reshuffling of people between states, aimed at overcoming the discrepancy between the national ideal of cultural and linguistic homogeneity and the existing heterogeneity on the ground. As many theorists of nationalism have argued, this spatial binding of polity and culture marks the modern project of nationalism. Its aim is the attachment of a culture based political regime to a space in order to create the territorial belonging of the nation. In short, nationalism caused millions to be uprooted from their homelands and resettle somewhere else, usually in another political unit (state).

The idea of resettlement, among other measures, as a tool for the management of populations aimed at the production of congruence between state and culture, which

is thought of as a functional requirement of modernity, has been quite influential in social and political sciences. It is held that forced population movements and consequent resettlements have been functional requirements of modern societies. The case of forced migration and resettlement of minorities in post-imperial Turkey, at first sight, seems to agree perfectly with this argument. Regarding Turkey, for example, Ernest Gellner argues that population resettlement is not only one of the options a state has for the production of congruence between polity and culture, but also an inevitable one (Gellner, 1997). People, Gellner believes, have to be competent in the language employed by the educational, economic, and administrative bureaucracies that surround them, and their personal characteristics must be compatible with the self-image of the culture in question. If people master the dominant idiom, then they can acquire membership of the nation. If not, their lives become a series of humiliations. Gellner argues that this basic situation of modernity forces people to be nationalists. If they do not become nationalists, people have a limited number of other options, from gradual and voluntary assimilation to migration to commitment to an alternative, competing nationalism. Society, for Gellner, has similar options for those who do not fit its dominant paradigm, from assimilation to expulsion, ethnic cleansing, and murder. Population resettlement, understood as the deportation of people from one political entity to another, is simply a necessary and inevitable condition of modern life (Gellner, 1997: 239-240).

Contrary to Gellner's argument, however, in this study I demonstrated that functionalist logic does not suffice in helping us understand and explain the case of

Turkey. The management of population and the territorial and social production of congruence between political and cultural units cannot only be universally described negatively in terms of exclusion and deportation, but that very process can also lead to different outcomes, such as inclusion and integration of previously excluded groups or unification of previously particularistic and fragmented identifications into a more solidaristic identity. What sorts of social and political mechanisms select out during the process of state construction and nation building in a particular case depends not simply on systemic requirements nor simply the presence or absence of certain ideas and ideologies, but on the nature and dynamics of past and present relations and interactions between different state and societal actors. Political organization of a society and the prevailing forms of ideological orientations in that society matter not in and of themselves, but to the extent that they affect the interactions between different groups.

As Chapter V demonstrated, the forced migration of the Dersimli Kurds, intended for their assimilation into the dominant Sunni and Turkish culture, led to enhancement of their Alevi identity and eventually transformed their previously fragmented tribal allegiances into a more unified Kurdish identity. In other words, it is the experience of forced migration which made the ordinary Dersimlis realize that they were Kurdish. The experience of living in “exile” for years changes the outlook, ambitions and expectations of those who had been displaced. At least some of the Dersimli forced migrants became aware of their predicament, broke out from their “exile” status, and began to become conscious of entitlement as citizens. Moreover,

just as the expulsion of the Huguenots from France at the end of the 17th century helped to spread and strengthened Protestantism not only in France but in the whole Europe (Elias, 1935: 24), the forced migration of the Dersimli Alevi Kurds helped strengthening of the realization that they were “different,” which further hardened the social boundary between them and the majority Sunni Turks. In that sense, from the perspective of the state, forced migration and resettlement of the Dersimlis, intended to promote cultural assimilation, proved as counter-productive. Once again, we observe that what grows out of the land is rarely only determined by the initial intent or the motivation of the gardener.

This does not mean, of course, that the gardener’s intent and motivation have no significance at all. As Chapter IV has shown, the frequent use of medical imagery in official state discourse towards Dersim and its inhabitants’ points to the fact that the Turkish state had seen the campaign against the Dersimlis as a form of prophylaxis to ensure the integrity of the politico-social body by eliminating the tumors, abscesses, and parasites. Forced migration and resettlement were seen as prophylactic measures for securing the health a pristine national polity. As Zygmunt Bauman argued, unlike the gamekeepers or earlier ages, who merely watched over their realms, the modern state is like a diligent gardener who is “armed with a detailed design of the lawn, of the borders and... with the determination to treat as weeds every self-invited plant which interferes with his plan and his vision of order and harmony.” (Bauman, 1989: 57; 1992) ‘Wild growth’, ‘weeds’, and other ‘useless’ plants, plants regarded as dangerous competitors of the useful ones, in the ‘garden’ of the modern state are not

tolerated. They are either weeded out or, if a potential usefulness is seen, domesticated and tamed to fit into the order of the garden (Weiner, 2003; Schiel, 2005; Scott, 1998; Naimark, 2001). In terms of highlighting the role of instrumental reasons in various forms of population cleansing, this study finds the “gardening state” metaphor as a valuable starting point in the analysis of the practice of social engineering schemes in modern times. But, condemning all kinds of state-initiated population movements outright as fatal does not help much in terms of understanding the causes behind them as well their consequences. Forced population movements can be both destructive and transformative. As the preceding analysis in previous chapters shows, the productive side includes the creation of a new environment for the betterment of social and economic life and the creation of new identities, and more importantly the active engagement of the migrants in this process. The destructive side includes the destruction of environments that are considered as incompatible with the master plan of the ruling elite. Yet, these are difficult to disentangle. Destruction, however, is not usually the primary aim in itself, but part of the process of production, in our case the production of a national state, and maintaining political and military control over a geographically defined population. Moreover, in this production process, ordinary people are not simply passive victims, but active negotiators who respond to pressure with their own distinctive strategies, trying to make the most out of the limited resources available to them.

In her powerful analysis of Hutu refugees in Tanzania during 1980s, Liisa Malkki has shown that the dynamics of the interaction between the refugees and their

environment matter a lot in terms of the impact of displacement on the displaced population. Making a distinction between the culture of the Mishamo refugee camp and that of the settlement at Kigoma townships she writes (Malkki, 1995a:4): “The camp refugees perpetuated and reified that very categorical order in terms of which they were displaced, while the town refugees’ lives seemed to have the effect of challenging and dissolving totalizing, essentializing categories.”

According to Malkki, the incarceration of Hutu refugees in an isolated camp environment helped to produce a specific kind of composite “Hutuness,” which embodied notions of purity, integrity, and collective worth. By contrast, township refugees discovered the possibility of escaping “refugeeness” through the anonymity conferred by the urban milieu (*ibid.*, also Malkki, 1992, 1995b).

In line with Malkki’s analysis, the findings of this research show a similar pattern in terms of the differential impact of displacement on the displaced. As Chapter V has demonstrated, the location of settlement and the cultural environment in that location affected the type of strategies that the Dersimli forced migrants adopted. This then impinged on whether or not they eventually became integrated into their new settings. Where the local host population was more tolerant and the local state authorities were more accommodative, the Dersimli forced migrants were more willing to accept the terms of their displacement. Where the reverse was true they developed more confrontational and sometimes aggressive strategies, which further exacerbated their cultural and social exclusion. This does not mean that the relationship between the Dersimlis and the local population in the former case was not

asymmetrical. In both cases, asymmetry, which is a structural characteristic, between the two groups was more than apparent. But that asymmetry did not determine the outcome. How the Dersimli forced migrants responded to their predicament mattered a great deal.

The analysis of the historical and institutional origins of the resettlement regimes in early decades of post-imperial Turkey also speaks to other theoretical issues that have become increasingly central in historical social sciences. While a group of “new institutionalists” have focused on the impact of institutions on political and social outcomes (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991), the current literature on institutions has delved more deeply into the questions of institutional evolutions and path dependence (Pierson, 2004; Pierson and Skocpol, 2002; Mahoney, 2000; Thelen, 1999, 2004). The analysis of the internal forced migration and resettlement of Dersimli Kurds allows us not only to explore the of the institutional origins of Turkish population policies, but also to track the development of the Turkish settlement system over a relatively long period of time, from the late 16th century through the post-World War II period; and perhaps would help others to develop a more historically grounded analysis of the present issues and problems related to forced population movements in Turkey and elsewhere.

The case of the forced migration of minorities in Turkey is also characterized by some important incongruities and therefore poses a number of interesting empirical puzzles. Turkey’s migration and immigration policies during the early Republican period have been characterized as a central pillar of the county’s nationalization

process, one which is compatible with what is usually referred as authoritarian nationalization from above that responded little, if at all, to societal pressures from below. As this study has demonstrated, however, this was by no means the case. Although with the structural limits, Turkish state authorities responded differently to resistance and rebellion, and improvised, though not always very wisely, in their interactions with the minority groups within institutional limits. It is true that the available options for them were quite limited. Nevertheless, after a policy was selected, state agencies have been able to improvise during the implementation of that chosen policy, especially at the local level. Moreover, the Turkish case, on the one hand, exhibits an historical trajectory that is sometimes characterized by surprising continuities through historical breakpoints. On the other hand, it had also undergone a massive transformation even over the course of a couple of decades that are analyzed in this study. Therefore, for both these reasons, the preceding analysis of the historical evolution of the population (re)settlement system in the Turkish case provides important insights into the question of how institutions persist and change over time.

The findings of this study also contribute to the ongoing debate about the constitution of social identities in the early 20th century Turkey, by making these as part of the outcome of interaction between the local state authorities, the local settled populations and the displaced groups.

Careful readers will have noted some of the issues that are not addressed adequately in this study. One obvious area that this study did not address is the issue of gender. This is not because the lack of interest on gender issues on the part of the

present researcher, but because the available records, both formal/written and informal/oral, are not sufficient to unravel and disentangle gender issues. So far I can tell from the currently available records, government officials had virtually paid no attention to the role of women despite the fact that most households during the initial periods of resettlement were headed by females. In the individual narratives of my respondents, most of whom were males¹¹³, the role of females during both the resistance movement and the displacement period was rarely mentioned. The very few female respondents that I managed to interview refused to talk about their role during the process of displacement.

Another limitation of the present study is that its historical scope ends in 1947, when some very important social and political developments were already in the making. One such development was the transformation from a single party to a multi-party system in 1950, which then affected the dynamics of the relationship between the Turkish state and the Kurds. Yet, since the period of forced migration officially ended in 1947 with the abolishment of the “Settlement Law,” I have not included the political developments and the experiences of ex-forced migrants after that date. In fact, most of the participants of this study became displaced again in 1993 (some of whom still are) when the armed conflict between PKK and the Turkish military was at

¹¹³ Unfortunately my access to female respondents was very limited. This was not because lack of potential respondents. In fact the number of potential female respondents I was able to track down outweighed the number of potential male respondents. Unfortunately most of the females either rejected to be interviews, or those who accepted to be interviewed did not tell much about their own personal experiences.

its peak. One respondent of this study, who has been displaced twice, first in 1937 and then in 1993, stated “1938 was a blue exile, but this time (1993) we have been going through a black one.” A comparison of the two cases of forced migration of the same population would reveal a lot more about both the continuity and change in the coloring of forced migration.

All forced population movements are prone to risks and perhaps involve insurmountable hardships, and no logic can endorse the misery and suffering that they produce. But as I have shown in this study, simply blaming a few sinister leaders (or some other macro actors) and victimizing others is insufficient for explaining the breadth and severity of the process of demographic engineering in post-imperial Turkey. The Turkish case suggests a complex interaction between elite political rhetoric and policy on the ground, pointing, if nothing else, to the importance of relational dynamics behind population displacement.

Population displacement has played a powerful role in the history of Turkey, and this dissertation contributed to a better understanding of population displacement by highlighting the close connection between population movements and state-building, demonstrating how population displacement might create new opportunities not only for the emergent political elite but also for the “people without history.” In its own peculiar way, it has gone beyond the tendency to understand population displacement simply as a human tragedy, suggesting that one needs to look further into the lived meanings that displacement and replacement can have for specific people.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

A New York Times News Piece on Dersim Operation (17 June 1937)

TURKEY COMBATS UPRISING OF KURDS
Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.
New York Times (1857-Current file); Jun 17, 1937; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2013); pp. 15

TURKEY COMBATS UPRISING OF KURDS

30,000 Troops Sent to Dersim Area and Insurrection Is Reported Stamped Out

GIRL FLIER IS WAR HERO

Adopted Daughter of Ataturk Receives High Honor for Her Bravery in Action

Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.
ISTANBUL, Turkey, June 18.—Details of a campaign in the Dersim region, one of the most secret military operations in history, in which 30,000 Turkish troops and a fleet of airplanes were required to subdue an insurrection in an almost inaccessible region, were disclosed today.

Although 5,000 were killed in bitter fighting in rough country where there were virtually no roads, and ladders had to be used to drive the rebels out of mountain caverns, it was not known that anything was going on.

Aircraft Were Active

Reconnaissance and bombing by government aircraft played an important part in suppressing the insurrection, the surviving leaders of which are being removed to other parts of Turkey. The revolt broke out three months ago, when a military post was attacked and a bridge destroyed.

The insurgents, who belonged to the Kurdish tribes of Kalan, Abbasushagi, Haydaran, Deman and Lolan, were confident in their strength of 5,000 fighting men. They addressed an ultimatum to the government demanding that no garrisons be established or bridges built or administrative divisions created; that the tribesmen be permitted to keep their arms; that they continue as before to pay taxes by bargaining with tribal chiefs.

The government's answer was prompt, and now it is believed that, having lost their leaders in an unsuccessful insurrection, the tribesmen will abandon brigandage and turn to peaceful pursuits for their income.

The campaign ended when Sabiha Guekchen Hanoum, one of the adopted daughters of President Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, made a direct hit on the house of Seyid Riza, one of the insurgent leaders, killing him and several of his principal supporters.

Following the disclosure by Prime Minister Ismet Inonu before the Kamutay (the Grand National Assembly) that there had been 659 disturbances recently in the region of Dersim, a government award of honor to Miss Hanoum was made public today.

She received a flying medal set with brilliants for distinguished service as a volunteer pilot in the Turkish Flying Corps during the Dersim operations.

This is the highest honor for an aviator in Turkey and rarely is awarded. The last persons to receive it were Russell Boardman and

John Folando for their flight from New York to Istanbul in 1931.

Miss Hanoum, who is 22 years old, it was said, had shown the greatest bravery and resourcefulness throughout the operations and she was credited with having dropped the final bomb, which virtually ended the insurrection.

After a lengthy address, in which Mr. Inonu reviewed the entire field of his foreign policy, the Kamutay approved the League of Nations settlement of the Sanjak of Alexandretta dispute.

He assured the Kamutay that the government would not remain indifferent if further disorders arose in the district and that it would follow the situation closely.

Referring to the disorders in the Dersim region the Prime Minister said the government had been required to send large numbers of troops to restore order. In suppressing the disorders, which resulted from the hostility of the local population toward the introduction of compulsory education and other reforms, the army and the gendarmerie had lost thirteen killed and eighteen wounded, but, he added, the situation now was well in hand.

Mr. Inonu denied recent reports that Russo-Turkish relations were cooling off and asserted that Turkey remained "on the most friendly terms" with Moscow.

After giving a vote of confidence in the government by acclamation the House adjourned for the Summer.

First Girl Cadet Flier

Last Summer Miss Sabiha Guekchen Hanoum, adopted daughter of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, received her appointment as the first official girl cadet at the Military Aviation School of Eski-Chehir. On her graduation she was commissioned an officer of the Flying Corps.

Her appointment at the time was interpreted as an initial step in the government's plan to open all careers, including the army, to women.



KURD REVOLT AREA

In the inaccessible region of Dersim, shown by the arrow, 30,000 Turkish troops and a fleet of planes battled rebellious tribesmen.

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Appendix II

List of “Kurdish” Rebellions between 1924-1937

Name of the Rebellion and/or Operation	Start Date	End Date
Nasturi Rebellion	September 12, 1924	September 28, 1924
Raçkotan and Raman Operation	August 9, 1925	August 2, 1925
Sheikh Sait Rebellion	February 13, 1925	May 31, 1925
Yusuf Taşo Rebellion	May 16, 1925	March 17, 1926
1 st Ağrı Rebellion	May 16, 1926	June 17, 1926
Koçuşığı Rebellion	October 17, 1926	December 1, 1926
Halil Sami Rebellion	May 1927	August 25, 1927
2 nd Ağrı Rebellion	September 13, 1927	September 20, 1927
Bıcar Operation	October 7, 1927	November 17, 1927
Asi Resul Rebellion	May 22, 1929	August 3, 1929
Tendürek Operation	September 14, 1929	September 27, 1929
Zeylan Rebellion	June 20, 1930	September 1930
Savur Operation	May 26, 1930	June 9, 1930
Oramar Rebellion	July 16, 1930	October 10, 1930
3 rd Ağrı Rebellion	September 7, 1930	September 14, 1930
Haydaran Tribe Rebellion	June 20, 1930	August 10, 1930
Barzani Rebellion	July 16, 1930	October 10, 1930
Pülümür Operation	October 8, 1930	November 14, 1930
Menemen Case	December 23, 1930	December 23, 1930
Dersim Rebellion	March 21, 1937	November 18, 1937

Appendix III
Chronological List of the Laws and Legal Regulations
Related to Resettlement in Republican Turkey, 1923-1949

The name or the content of the legal regulation	Number of the law	Issue date
Exchange, Reconstruction and Resettlement Law	368	8 November 1923
Law on the Distribution of Unclaimed Properties to the Entailed People whose Properties Are Destructed by Enemies and Insurgents	441	13 March 1924
Law on Immovable Properties Which Will Be Given to the Exchanged Population	488	16 April 1924
Law on Refugees and Tribes Deserted Their Settlements Without Permission	675	10 December 1925
Law on Loan Contracted Debt	716	24 January 1926
Law on Immovable Properties Abandoned by Non-exchange Population and To Be Given To Resettled Population	781	29 March 1926
Resettlement Law	885	31 May 1926
Law on Resettlement of Some People from Eastern to Western Provinces	1097	10 June 1927
Law on Appending the Granted Properties Abandoned and Allotted from Exchange, Non-exchange Population and Refugees to the Registry	1331	24 May 1928
Law on Granting the Land to the Needy in Eastern District	1505	2 June 1929
Law on Liquidation of Legal Valuables on Registry	1515	2 June 1929
Law on Abolition of the Exchange of Populations and Allotment Procedures	1771	19 March 1931
Law Adding to the Law No. 1771	1866	21 July 1931
Law on Retrocession of Properties According to 10 June 1930 Agreement	1885	25 July 1931
Law on Preventing Infringement of Immovable Properties	2311	12 June 1933
Resettlement Law	2510	13 June 1934
Law Amending the Law Number 2502	2561	12 July 1934
Circular on the Speedy Disposition of Resettlement and Population Matters	15035/6599	7 August 1934

Statue on Exemptions from Resettlement	2/1777	27 October 1934
Law Adding Additional Paragraph to Article 44 of the Resettlement Law	2650	29 December 1934
Regulation on Resettlement Exemptions	2/1777	5 January 1935
Law Adding to the Resettlement Law No. 2510	2837	31 October 1935
Law Amending Some Articles of the Resettlement Law	2848	21 November 1935
Law Assigning the Resettlement to Another Ministry and Administering with A Separate Budget	2849	21 November 1935
Legal Commentary on the Article 4 of Law No. 1771	220	8 May 1936
Legal Commentary on First Paragraph of Article 31 of the Resettlement Law	221	7 January 1937
Law Appendage to Law No. 2848 on Amending Some Articles of the Resettlement Law	3123	18 February 1937
Statute on Practices of Law No. 3123 Amending Resettlement Law	2/6605	27 May 1937
Law Appendage to Law No. 1771 on Definite Cleaning and Resulting of Exchange	3551	7 January 1939
Law Appendage to the Article 2 of Law No. 2850 on Military Service (makes military service easier for people resettled)	3370	2 May 1938
Law Appendage to the Resettlement Law	3371	2 May 1938
Law Amending Article 31 of Law No. 2510 and Partially Amending Law No. 2848	3657	5 July 1939
Law Adding Additional Paragraph to Articles 17 and 23 Partially Amending Article 12 of the Resettlement Law	3667	5 July 1939
Law Amending Some Articles of the Resettlement Law	3685	12 July 1939
Decree Concerning the Adoption of the Executive Act on Land Distribution in the First Resettlement Zones	2/12374	24 November 1939
Law Amending Article 39 of the Resettlement Law	4062	13 June 1941
Law Amending Some Articles and Adding New Articles to the Resettlement Law	5098	24 June 1947
Law Partially Amending and Adding Paragraphs to Article 2 of Law No. 5098	5227	5 July 1948
Law Adding New Paragraphs to Article 2 of Law No. 5098	5420	8 June 1949

Appendix IV

Categories of (Re)settled Populations (Adopted from Kökdemir, 1952)

<i>People Relocated Internally</i>	<i>People Coming from Other Countries</i>
Refugees from Eastern provinces	Exchanged population
Rendered homeless during the war	Non-exchanged population
Rendered landless by invasions	People immigrated between 1934-1950
Harmed from flooding and landslides	Exiles returning from abroad
People who transferred	Free immigrants
Nomads	Refugees
Landless indigenous people	Immigrants from former Bulgaria
People of Kars, Artvin and Batum	Gypsies coming from abroad
Anarchists, exiles and suspected spies	People coming after 1950

Appendix V

DECLARATION ISSUED BY 4TH GENERAL INSPECTORATE DURING THE SECOND TUNCELI REPRESSING OPERATION

To Kalanlı People living around Lertik, Mercan and Birmanlı regions of Ovacık District

1. Day by day you are learning about all the good policies that the Government has been trying to implement in Tunceli in order to save the people from poverty and ignorance. Some empty headed cruels, who were considering these nice and propitious works as being harmful to their interests, have persuaded some ignorant amongst you in Mansuluşağı Village with their lies and false accusations and impelled the ignorant to criminal acts such as shooting at soldiers and taking property and cattle of innocent people by force. By the help of this crime they estranged ignorant from the Government and aimed at using poor's lives, chastity and property for their own benefit.. For this reason the Government has brought soldiers to end the tyranny of these cruel people and save the innocent from their hands and evils. As you see, you have been surrounded by the soldiers all apart and they will act soon. Our purpose is just taming the criminals, and especially their leaders.

To achieve this:

- a. People who committed crime without consideration, under coercion or ignorance, should trust to Government's justice and come to surrender in order to save their lives and their families. If they do surrender, they will be regarded to have committed those crimes voluntarily; they will be chased and captured for sure, and will be punished very seriously.
 - b. If these criminals captured the people that have drag them into this disaster, dead or alive, and hand them over to Government or to the army, not only they will be exempted from punishment but they will also be rewarded.
2. There are many innocent people amongst you. While the soldiers are looking for the guilty, these innocent people should leave criminals and come to district center at Pülür with their families and children. The Government will be generous in its kindness to these as it has been in previous years.
 3. People who obstructed the Government to fulfill this last promise will be responsible for the consequences of their own sins.

Appendix VI

DECLARATION 2 ISSUED BY 4TH GENERAL INSPECTORATE DURING THE SECOND TUNCELI REPRESSING OPERATION

As you see with your own eyes that our soldiers seized Bobyezbaba, Koz Mountain, Dolubaba, Azizabdal, and Zel Mountain and besieged you very closely from all quarters. Besides, our airplanes are flying over you and seeing what you are doing. You fell for the false words of some fools and followed them. You abandoned your dwellings and fields in fear, agitation, pain, and distress and took your hungry and destitute families and animals to pits and airless dark caverns. [But] diseases will spring among them due to hunger and heat. You thought that by sheltering in those places you could escape from chasing. Our victorious soldiers crossed [those] mountains that you confide in and checked every corner; now they are ready to penetrate your last shelters. But, the state does not murder its children. It never wants to harm them. Also, it feel great sorry when it beats its disobedient children. We know that you are regretted and repented because of your wrongdoings. We also hear that you were annoying at and cursing on those people who throw you in disaster. We feel very sorry for you, but especially for your families. The only relief for your pain and misery is to come and take refuge in the arms of the state. The clever ones did this thereupon and nowadays they live in peace and harmony in Erzincan, Pülümür, Nazımiye, Mazkirt, and Ovacık. The government always does favors to its own children. Well, if you want to put an end to your current state of wretchedness and to escape from chasing and punishment, we are repeating our last advice and merciful word. If you feel compassion for your families, you are to think and act like us. The ones who come and take refuge [with us] will free themselves from pain and misery. Our soldiers will march against and our airplanes will fly over those who do not recourse. The pursuit will continue until all of them are captured. Nobody will ever escape.

The road to freedom and security is to take asylum in the arms of the state and ask for mercy. Hurry up, recourse to the government and soldiers and [thus] put an end to your own misery. It has been ordered to all garrisons to take good care of those who surrender.

Koçuşaklıs escaped from chasing by turning away from the evils of a few ignorant. Nowadays they are living in comfort. Those who were not involved in banditry are busy with their work in their villages as well. Let the conditions of these clever Tuncelites be exemplary for you.