

'Turkey is a paradise for foreign academics who have no better place to go': The structure of transnational academic mobility towards Turkey

'Gidecek daha iyi bir yeri olmayan yabancı akademisyenler için Türkiye bir cennettir': Türkiye'ye yönelen uluslararası akademik hareketliliğin yapısı

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ÖZ / ABSTRACT

Transnational academic mobilities are on the rise globally. While most of these mobilities are directed towards developed countries, it is seen in recent years that the number of academics who have moved to developing countries increased also. One of these countries is Turkey. This study discusses the socio-spatial pattern of transnational academic mobility in Turkey. This discussion is divided into these four themes which were put forward by Terri Kim (2009) in order to understand the pattern of transnational academic mobility: Who moves (1), what kind of knowledge they act on (2), where they move (3) and what affects these mobilities (4). Information obtained from CoHE (the Council of Higher Education in Turkey), curriculum vitae of academics and in-depth interviews with academics were used within the scope of the study. The findings of the study showed that in most universities, nationality, religion and gender are taken into consideration before the qualification of foreign academics. In general, those who come from developed countries are employed by private universities whereas those who come from countries that are less developed than Turkey are employed by public universities. Most of the academics are employed in temporary positions and the academic expectation from them are limited to the lectures. This situation changes the transnationalization of higher education by employing foreign academics (macro level); increases the attractiveness of Turkey for the academics who are under the stress of academic performance (meso level) and causes it to become ethnic clustering in many cities (micro level).

Uluslararası akademik hareketlilik küresel olarak artıyor. Hareketliliklerin çoğu gelişmiş ülkelere doğru olsa da son zamanlarda gelişmekte olan ülkelerde de yabancı akademisyenlerin sayısının arttığı görülüyor. Bu ülkelerden biri de Türkiye'dir. Bu çalışmada Türkiye'de uluslararası akademik hareketliliğin sosyo-mekansal görünümü tartışılmaktadır. Bu tartışma Terri Kim'in uluslararası akademik hareketliliğin paternini anlamak için ortaya koyduğu 4 tema altında yapılmaktadır: Kim hareket ediyor (1), ne tür bilgiyle hareket ediyor (2), nereye hareket ediyor (3), bu hareketlilikleri ne etkiliyor (4). Çalışma kapsamında Yükseköğretim Kurumu İstatistiklerinden, akademisyenlerin erişime açık özgeçmişlerinden ve akademisyenlerle yapılan derinlemesine görüşmelerden yararlanıldı. Çalışmanın bulguları gösterdi ki çoğu üniversitede yabancı akademisyenlerin niteliklerinden önce milliyetleri, dinleri ve toplumsal cinsiyetleri dikkate alınıyor. Genellikle gelişmiş ülkelere gelen akademisyenler özel üniversitelerde, Türkiye'den daha az gelişmiş ülkelere gelenler ise devlet üniversitelerinde istihdam ediliyorlar. Akademisyenlerin çoğu geçici pozisyonlarda çalışıyorlar ve daha çok ders vermeyle yükümlü olan bu kişilerden yayına dayalı akademik performans beklentisi ise sınırlıdır. Bu durum, Türkiye'de yabancı istihdamı yoluyla yükseköğretimin uluslararasılaşmasını azaltmakta (makro düzey); akademik performans baskısı altındaki akademisyenler için Türkiye'nin çekiciliğini artırmakta (mezzo düzey) ve çoğu kentten etnik kümelenme alanına dönüşmesine neden olmaktadır (mikro düzey).

1. Introduction

Transnational academic mobility, a type of mobility for highly-skilled people, is not a new phenomenon (Kim, 2009). However, in the contemporary period of globalization, the scale and speed of transnational academic mobilities have changed. Due to the increase of transnational academic mobility and its widespread

effects, studies on this subject are also increasing (Kauppinen, 2012; Kim, 2008, 2009, 2010; Leemann, 2010; Mahlck, 2016; Yang and Welch, 2010). There is a consensus about academic mobility that it provides multiple benefits (Beck, 2006; Bilecen, 2013; Jöns, 2007; Magnan and Back, 2007; Williams, 2005) through academic mobility, individual lan-

guage skills of the academics develop (Magnan and Back, 2007), leading to the development of intercultural understanding as well (Williams, 2005), and the level of tolerance increases (Bilecen, 2013). It is also known that those who participate in transnational academic mobility expect to be exposed to an academic culture embellished with different empirical, methodological and theoretical approaches (Bilecen and Van Mol, 2017: 1245). Furthermore, these mobilizations lead to the transformation of human capital into economic capital (for example technologies with high economic value can be produced by using human capital), and often economic capital is transformed into national economic growth and competitiveness (Fahey and Kenway, 2010). The policymakers encourage the transnationalization of higher education due to such benefits (Knight, 2008).

Transnational academic mobility, which is a significant way of transnationalization, has quite a complex structure. Terri Kim (2009: 398) suggests focusing on four themes to understand the structure of transnational academic mobility. The *first* of these themes is who moves. It is necessary to understand who takes part in transnational academic mobility in order to understand how higher education and society are expected to be transformed with the knowledge produced by which actors. This is because those who manage transnational academic mobility are quite picky as to who should take part in this mobility. Therefore, it is difficult to state that taking part in academic mobility implicates global freedom (Jöns, 2010).

The *second* theme that Kim asserts is what kind of knowledge transnational academics act on since the distinctiveness and uniqueness of the knowledge they possess both distinguishes them from their peers and makes their academic contributions visible. Otherwise, the advantage of the mobility is reduced and the role of the academic becomes unquestionable in the system in reference to the knowledge they have produced.

The *third* way to understand the pattern of transnational academic mobility is where the mobility is directed at. As a matter of fact, the direction of transnational academic mobility often shows similarity to labor mobility (Hoffman, 2008), especially to that of skilled labor. Developed countries such as Western European countries, the United States, Canada and Australia are the ones where transnational academic mobility gravitates towards (Kim, 2009; Saltmarsh and Swirski, 2010; Webber and Yang, 2013). In addition, the precarity created by neoliberal policies and the increased competition within the academy in these countries caused many academics to gravitate towards new fields for work (Burford et al., 2019). In their new search, the first countries that academics tend to move to are the ones that are within the circle of developed countries (Knight, 2006; Luczaj and Bahna, 2018). Academics' tendency to also gather in specific locations (Arslan, 2017) within these countries again brings about the need to focus on their location choice based on different levels (macro, meso, micro).

The *fourth* and the last theme is what affects these mobilities. Transnational academic mobility develops by being heavily affected by political and economic structures. These structures determine the direction and extent of migration. At the same time, personal choices and networks, which are elements of

human capital, affect these movements (Kim, 2008). In other words, mobility decisions are shaped by the interaction between structural conditions, career paths and personal choices (Delicado, 2010: 38). As can be seen, it is not possible to present a transnational academic mobility pattern without understanding the social geography of transnational academic mobility and the relationship between these geographies and multiple identities of their actors.

This study discusses the structure of transnational academic mobility in Turkey within the scope of the themes presented by Terri Kim (2009). There are various reasons for having this discussion specific to Turkey. The first reason is that the number of foreign academics which was 173 in 1984, 851 in 2000, 2944 in 2014 (Seggie and Ergin, 2018) reached 3,203 in 2018. In Turkey, where the highly skilled population has been moving to developed countries more and more in recent years (Dülger, 2017; Güngör, 2003), it is not very well known who the main actors of the academy are. The second reason for conducting the study is the limited literature about Turkey's position in transnational academic mobility and the effect of it (Dölen, 2014). In fact, with the spread of academic mobility in the countries nearby, studies related to academic mobility have also appeared in these countries. These studies include some findings which show that the employment of foreign academics, the advantages of which are constantly being expressed, does not actually provide advantages as much as expected (Luczaj and Bahna, 2018). Therefore, it is necessary to examine these mobilities in order to understand why they have not had the same effect in the new destinations they have spread whereas they were taken into prominence due to their benefits in central countries. In the studies regarding the status of foreign academics in Turkey as a peripheral country (Çetinsaya, 2014; Gür et al., 2018; Seggie and Ergin, 2018), neither the spatiality of the mobility nor the actors' experiences have been covered in depth. Therefore, in the study, the experiences of foreign academics in Turkey have been included bearing in mind the call of Kim who draws attention to the need of focusing on the experiences of academics to understand the nature of transnational academic mobility. In addition to this, in this study, the relationship between the spatiality of transnational academic mobility and these experiences has been discussed, through which the status of foreign academics in academia in Turkey has been put forward. In this way, making a unique contribution to literature is aimed.

The findings of the study are presented in four main parts. These are as follows: Who moves, what kind of knowledge they act on, where they move and what affects these mobilities. The study ends with a discussion and conclusion part.

2. Development of Higher Education System in the World and Turkey

The Academy, founded by Plato in ancient Athens, and Lyceum, founded by Aristotle, are regarded as the first higher education institutions (Saklı and Akbulut, 2012). Nevertheless, although these institutions served the purpose of providing higher education, institutions corresponding to a university in the contemporary sense emerged in the 11th century. The first examples are Bologna (1088), Paris (1160) and Oxford (1167)

universities (Toprak, 2012:2). Including only students who wanted to receive education and scholars during their foundation period, this structure persisted with the help of students funding it. However, the structure was rapidly taken under control by central states, thereby obtaining political identity (Dölen, 2009, 2014). In this politicization period, these institutions were financed using public funding and their numbers increased rapidly.

The mission universities have undertaken during their development has changed due to the effect of the political environment they are in (Charle and Verger, 2005). In a way, this reveals how the social history of knowledge has changed in time (Burke, 2010). For example, the function of Medieval university was to serve as the centers where knowledge from the past was transmitted (Toprak, 2012). In this respect, knowledge shared in universities did not have an effect to encourage critical thinking and, thereby, transforming the society. It was as late as around 15th century when, in addition to transmission of knowledge from the past, the idea of adopting a research-centered higher education to improve and sometimes correct false knowledge became widespread (Burke, 2010). Humanist movement becoming popular in the period and scholars like Galilei, Copernicus, Descartes, Bacon, Boyle and Newton played a big role in this transformation (Saklı and Akbulut, 2017). Humbolt's Research University Model is the first example of research universities (Toprak, 2012). Upon the foundation of these new universities called 'Second Generation', many previously non-existent departments were founded, and the scope of higher education was broadened (Kerr, 2001). Also, Latin, the medium of education in these institutions, began to be eliminated due to the effects of nationalist movements. All these developments indicate that universities were far away from their initial situation (Wissema, 2009).

Universities began to transform into institutions providing the necessary knowledge for social progress in their changing positions, which led to more support for them and an increase in the belief that development is promoted through producing knowledge. Nevertheless, neoliberal policies among the policies adopted during a race in development gained global prominence, which also affected higher education. The most important impact of this effect appeared in the financing of universities. While universities were supported mainly by the state in previous terms, the number of the ones open to collaboration, internationalized, inter-disciplinary, and financed by the market started to increase rapidly. The emergence of these universities known as 'Third Generation' has brought about an emergence of a new political-economic structure in state-private sector duality in higher education. In this duality, the state and private sector have made an effort to produce a person and knowledge based on their ideologies in higher education.

Presenting openly the effect of strengthening higher education on the development of countries has also led to the creation of global competition. In this competition, institutions provide a variety of opportunities to attain academic staff consisting of qualified academics and academics tend to move to these institutions to continue their studies in places where research facilities are developed. However, academic mobility is by no means a new phenomenon. As a matter of fact, the ancient Is-

lamic and Medieval European universities were far more transnational communities of scholars than the modern national universities founded in many parts of the world in the 20th century. Expansion of empires and transferring knowledge through migrant academics in colonies have been influential in the increase in academic mobility from past to present (Kim, 2009). This is supported by technological advances and policies focused on directly facilitating the regulation of academic mobility.

Wars and battles in the history of the world also affected academic mobility and transferred its spatiality. Particularly, the academics who escaped from Germany due to Nazi pressure played an effective role in the transformation of academic structures in the countries they went to. One of these countries is Turkey. In fact, the foundation of higher education was laid in the Ottoman Empire period. The emergence of an institution, Darülfünun, was a milestone for the history of universities in Turkey (Tekeli, 2010). The institution, the only university of Turkey until 1933, was transformed into İstanbul University with a law (Toprak, 2012). This, at the same time, is a continuation of Young Republic's modernization policy claiming a European base and the wish to cut off its ties with Ottomans (Maktav, 2001). Until the period of World War -II, İstanbul University, İstanbul Technical University and Ankara University became the main cultural production forces in building the nation. These institutions were mainly also the ones where academics escaping from Nazi pressure densely worked and to which they transferred the academic culture they were used to. After World War-II, in order to change development paradigms and decrease regional inequalities, universities were founded in Anatolian cities. During the 1980s, universities were instrumental in reviving economic life in their locations. In the 2000s, many new universities were established both not to leave out a place where state ideology did not prevail and to provide university-industry collaboration (Toprak, 2012). In the last two decades, the influence of private universities has increased in the stream of universitisation, which is a product of the state's efforts to alleviate its burden in education services through neoliberal policies. As a result, today, Turkey has a multitude of private universities spread all over the country different from the limited number of them in the biggest cities in the country in the past.

This has brought about an increase in competition between universities at not only national but international scale as well. In this competitive environment, the demand for academics has risen to produce qualified people and knowledge. Since the internationalization of institutions benefits them in this competition, foreign academics have been paid prime attention in the recruitment of academics. Particularly, about the issue of teaching English, becoming increasingly effective in the world, having a strong preference for employing American and British academics whose native language is English is a result of this internationalization concern. This situation also forced Turkish academia, which, after European academics' leaving Turkey where they lived temporarily after WW-II, isolated itself and drifted away from the world agenda to transform itself. There are two motives to affect this academic mobility. The first one is international expansion starting from the 1980s, increasing trade relationships, becoming a candidate country for

EU, as a result of regulations towards transforming the country into a touristic attraction in the region, many foreigners' getting informed about Turkey, being invited to the country (such as from former USSR and European countries) and the decision of some to live through buying property. The second motive is the development of supportive programs for international student and academics mobility. Some of the ones who are here through these agreements have come directly via these programs. Some others are foreign spouses and business partners accompanying Turkish academics who go abroad for a period, and then, come back to Turkey after a while, and thus, participating directly to this mobility.

As can be seen, the development of foreign academics' employment both in the world and Turkey has been influenced by radical changes in social and economic life. In this transformation, the variety and intensity of interventions aimed at regulating higher education have increasingly gone up. The first to draw attention in this structure is politization of higher education. Traces of this politization are concealed in decisions on the content of higher education (changing paradigms) and its finance. The second is its becoming marketable. In this market, all components of higher education have become tradable commodity and precarity caused by this structure has led to a loss of established traditions in higher education and increasing vulnerability. The third is academics who had the biggest role in shaping universities becoming actors of the system. However, it is a fact that sometimes their various identities (ethnic or religious) take precedence over their academic qualifications. The fourth one is that all these components determine the spatiality of academic mobility. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt an integrated approach considering all these components to analyze the structure of transnational academic mobility.

3. Methodology

Three parts of data that complete each other were used while conducting this study. The first one is the statistics on higher education which were taken from CoHE. Since the open access statistics provided by CoHE was limited, we directly requested for data and had access to various statistics on 28 August 2018 that presented the case. In order to have access to information pertaining to the previous situation, studies carried out on this topic were employed. (e.g. Çetinsaya, 2014; Gür et al., 2018; Seggie and Ergin, 2018). The data taken from CoHE were requested both to understand the existence of foreign academics in academia and to lay out the spatial pattern of academic mobility. Based on the above-mentioned data, the provincial distribution of the foreign academics in Turkey was mapped considering the public-private university division. In accordance with this distribution, the top 10 provinces where foreign academics are concentrated in were identified. These are Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Kayseri, Konya, Mardin, Gaziantep, Adana, Erzurum and Karabük, respectively. Later on, the foreign academics who live in these cities were asked for interviews. A total of 65 academics, 43 of whom worked at public and 22 of whom worked at private universities, accepted the request for an interview. 36 of the academics were interviewed face-to-face, while 29 of them were interviewed via Skype. The shortest interview was 30 minutes whereas the longest took 3

hours. The average duration of the interviews was 75 minutes. In general, the academics who were interviewed face-to-face were met at the universities where they worked. In the cases where an academic shared their office with someone else or did not have an office, they were met at a cafe that was in or nearby the university. The first interview took place in October 2018 while the last one was in August 2019.

32 of the interviews were carried out in Turkish, 29 were in English and 4 were in Russian. On the other hand, sometimes the language that was spoken changed within the course of the interview. The two factors which affected the language preference was the time spent in Turkey and the country of origin. Those who came from Turkish speaking countries and those who have stayed in Turkey for more than 5 years preferred Turkish whereas those who came from other countries and have been in Turkey for a short period of time preferred English as the language of the interview. The ones who preferred Russian came from Russian speaking countries and spoke neither Turkish nor English as well as their Russian. The interviews which were done in Turkish and Russian were then translated into English by the author, while the interviews in English were added to the study without making any changes. 11 participants allowed sound recording during interviews. Academics, especially the ones not satisfied with the system of education, did not want sound recording since they thought they might be harmed because of their criticism of the system. Therefore, note-taking was a method that was used often in these interviews. The interviews were later transcribed and organized around the themes which were mentioned at the beginning. MAXQDA, a qualitative data software, was used in analyzing the data.

Some characteristics of the participants are given in Table.1. However, in order to eliminate the risk of exposure of the interviewees with the attached table, their academic titles and the cities where they worked were not added to the table. Meanwhile, maximum diversity has been achieved in terms of participant profiles as it can be understood from the table that is shared.

In general, the characteristics of the participants can be summed up as follows: of all the participants, who apparently came from 23 different countries, 23 are female and 42 are male. The participants' ages are between 24-65. Most of the participants are between the ages of 30-50 and the average age is 40. Their work experience as academics varies between 1-33 years. However, their total average time worked is 11 years and the average time they have worked in Turkey is 7 years. 54 of the participants have been living in Turkey for less than 10 years. Along with official statistics and in-depth interviews with foreign academics, I also wished to benefit from academics' CVs. Nevertheless, it was observed that most academics did not put up their CVs for open access and/or have not updated their CVs. Despite these limitations, CVs of some 756 academics were reached and analyzed. In this CV analysis, academics' educational backgrounds and academic performances were taken into account. The special focus was on whether their academic performances have changed since they came to Turkey or not. Since the findings gathered from this search is widely similar to the findings obtained from the interviews, it helped strengthen the interview data.

Table 1. Some Information about Participants

Code	Gender	Age	Country of Origin	Total Academic Exp. (Year)	Duration of Employment in Turkey	Code	Gender	Age	Country	Total Academic Exp. (Year)	Employment in Turkey
P1	Male	61	Azerbaijan	33	27	P34	Male	61	Iran	30	8
P2	Male	40	UK	11	10	P35	Male	65	Germany	27	12
P3	Female	24	Russia	1	1	P36	Male	61	Azerbaijan	32	17
P4	Male	33	Syria	8	6	P37	Male	59	Azerbaijan	29	20
P5	Female	28	Northern Cyprus	3	3	P38	Male	54	Turkmenistan	28	21
P6	Female	46	Germany	20	15	P39	Male	35	Germany	5	4
P7	Male	31	Syria	5	4	P40	Male	29	USA	6	1
P8	Female	59	Russia	30	21	P41	Female	34	Ukraine	7	3
P9	Male	39	Greece	12	7	P42	Male	41	Syria	12	6
P10	Female	49	Ukraine	6	4	P43	Female	32	Greece	8	3
P11	Female	40	USA	12	8	P44	Female	33	Spain	6	2
P12	Male	43	Georgia	20	12	P45	Male	37	UK	4	2
P13	Male	39	Germany	10	9	P46	Male	42	Northern Cyprus	7	2
P14	Male	37	USA	8	8	P47	Male	29	Pakistan	5	4
P15	Female	30	Spain	8	8	P48	Female	42	Northern Cyprus	7	5
P16	Male	56	Syria	25	12	P49	Male	25	Northern Cyprus	1	1
P17	Male	43	UK	26	16	P50	Female	30	Russia	2	2
P18	Female	50	Azerbaijan	29	26	P51	Male	55	Syria	14	7
P19	Female	41	Northern Cyprus	14	5	P52	Female	34	Bulgaria	5	2
P20	Male	37	USA	5	4	P53	Female	31	Spain	3	3
P21	Male	58	UK	9	9	P54	Male	52	South Korea	11	5
P22	Male	36	Iran	6	4	P55	Male	56	Kyrgyzstan	7	2
P23	Male	49	Azerbaijan	12	9	P56	Male	55	Iraq	10	5
P24	Male	33	Iraq	5	3	P57	Male	47	Jordan	12	6
P25	Male	43	USA	8	7	P58	Female	43	Greece	9	3
P26	Male	32	Italy	9	5	P59	Female	32	Canada	8	2
P27	Male	36	USA	11	8	P60	Female	29	Ukraine	6	4
P28	Female	26	Northern Cyprus	2	1	P61	Male	30	Greece	3	1
P29	Male	39	Northern Cyprus	12	4	P62	Male	28	Germany	2	1
P30	Female	43	Germany	8	8	P63	Male	35	USA	7	5
P31	Female	27	Russia	3	3	P64	Male	39	Canada	13	6
P32	Female	43	France	11	10	P65	Male	42	Syria	9	4
P33	Male	41	Egypt	15	6						

4. Foreign Academics in Turkey

4.1. Who Moves?

Gender and country of origin are the prominent characteristics in the assessment of who the foreign academics in Turkey are. Referring to the subject of gender first, more than 70% of foreign academics working in Turkey appear to be male. The rate of male academics among all foreign academics is higher compared to the rate of male Turkish academics in academia (56%) (CoHE, 2018). In addition, when the statistics on higher education and related studies are examined, it is seen that most of the Turkish and foreign students who will be academics in the future are also male (Seggie and Ergin, 2018; Yılmaz-Fındık, 2016). Therefore, gender inequality in the higher education system is multidimensional and a structure is built in which inequality is reproduced. This structure is also reinforced by prioritizing the employment of foreign male academics. One of the participants stated that male employment is especially preferred:

“My name does not give away my gender. The person who mediated my job finding had been told, ‘We don’t want women. If women get married they will follow their husbands or go on maternity leave and education will be interrupted’. They hired three more foreign academics after me. All are men” (P1, Male, 55, Syria).

This statement by the participant shows that sexism in employment is a product of a traditional gender regime. Fragility, a product that is created by the same regime, has become a reason for some institutions to gravitate towards female employment. One of the participants mentioned that this is due to a heavy workload. To put it another way, the employment of foreign female academics depends on whether they would do the work that is not defined for them and outside their work agreements. A participant told the situation with the following words:

“Male lecturers only do certain jobs and leave. Especially European and American lecturers are very professional. When they are allocated extra work, they say it’s not in the contract. Women are more hesitant about refusing work than men. Because, as a foreign woman, they already think that they are doing you a favor by giving you a job (if you are a woman). They want you to be the mother of the department you work for. So, there are few foreign women in our institution. Those women do the work of at least two people” (P41, Female, 34, Ukraine). Another remarkable feature of the academics is the diversity of places they come from. The academics working at various universities in Turkey come from 105 different countries (Figure 1).

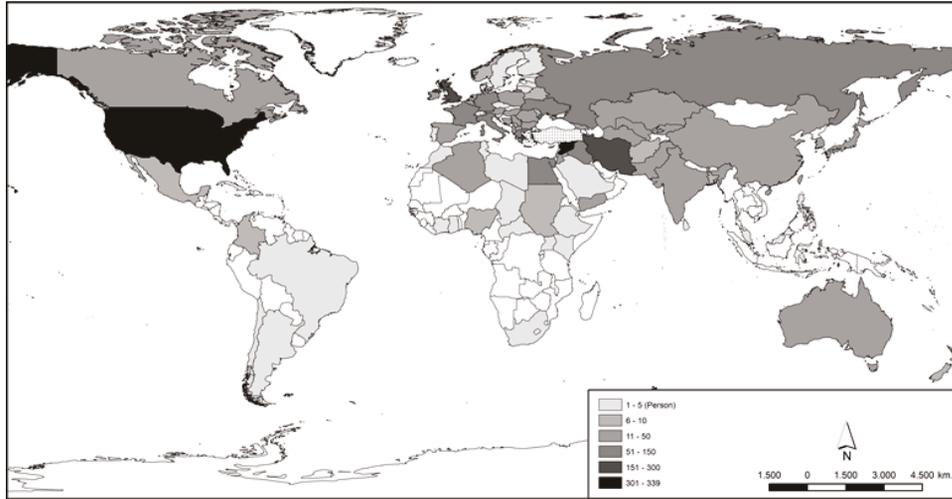


Figure 1. Distribution of foreign academics by country of origin, 2018.

The countries where most foreign academics working in Turkey come from are Syria, USA, Azerbaijan, Iran, UK, Germany, Northern Cyprus, Egypt, Russia, Greece, Iraq and Ukraine, respectively (Figure 2). As such, transnational academic mobility is largely in line with the general migration trend to Turkey and especially the transnational mobility of students (De Bel-Air, 2016; Özer, 2016). In fact, Syria, Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, Greece, Russia and Northern Cyprus are among the countries that comprise the highest number of foreign students in Turkey (Seggie and Ergin, 2018: 54).

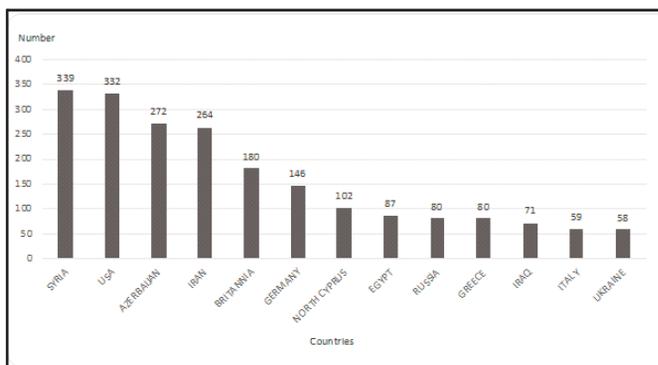


Figure 2. Number of foreign academics by country of origin, 2018

According to the human development index, 55 of the countries the foreign academics come from are less developed than Turkey. While this is the case from a country standpoint, the majority of the employed academics (58%) come from countries with a higher level of human development than Turkey. Nevertheless, the closeness of this ratio shows that academic mobility from developed countries to Turkey is not high. In relation to this, a participant working for 9 years in Turkey commented on the situation regarding the foreign academics' countries of origin as follows:

“Those coming to Turkey from underdeveloped countries are usually the most educated people in their countries. Those from developed countries are less successful than their country's average. Nevertheless, there is a perception that all people from developed countries are highly qualified. Therefore, an acade-

mic from an underdeveloped country may have to struggle to prove himself. We know that the UK and India are not exactly the same. However, the effort people make would carry them further than where they are” (P21, Male, 58, United Kingdom).

These words uttered by the participant –while they do not deny the effects of the possibilities provided by academics' countries of origins upon their qualifications– shows that it is wrong to have opinions on their academic performances based solely on the countries where they come from. The next chapter, therefore, examines what kind of knowledge the academics mobilize with and which positions they work at here.

4.2. What Kind of Knowledge Do They Mobilize with?

This chapter of the study contains what kind of knowledge the academics mobilize with and what kind of knowledge they are expected to produce at which positions here. First of all, it is better to know that the rate of foreign academics who have worked in another country outside their own before coming to Turkey is 15%. Therefore, the academic environment of most of them before coming to Turkey is only limited to their own country. Besides, 301 of the 756 academics whose CVs were examined and 10 of the 65 interviewees did not receive a doctorate degree before coming to Turkey. 296 of those whose CVs were examined and 22 of the participants worked in a sector outside the academy before coming to Turkey. Therefore, the knowledge they possess is what they have obtained from the work they did outside the academy. Furthermore, the ratio of academic publications and projects per academic is 4 before coming to Turkey whereas after coming to Turkey, this number is 2. The decline in their academic performance after coming to Turkey has a lot to do with the academic performance they are expected to have here. One participant from a Western country, where the academic labor market is very competitive, explained the spatiality of academic performance as follows:

“In my previous contract, there was an obligation to publish at least one article in an international indexed journal each year. Most people even worked on weekends. This is the natural environment. The time is definite as is the amount of work to be done. Then I worked in Saudi Arabia for a while. It was enough that I was there. After a while, I lost my motivation to publish. I turned to teaching rather than research. It is the same in Tur-

key. Turkey is a paradise for foreign academics who have no better place to go" (P2, Male, 40, United Kingdom).

As can be seen, the low expectation of performance from the academics takes away their desire to do research after a while. When the employments of all foreign academics in Turkey are examined, it is obvious that most of them work in positions where they carry a heavy course load (Figure 3). The majority of foreign academics work in the 'teaching assistant' position where an undergraduate degree is enough to qualify. Therefore, academic publication performance is not expected from the academics employed in this cadre unless there is a special clause in their contracts.

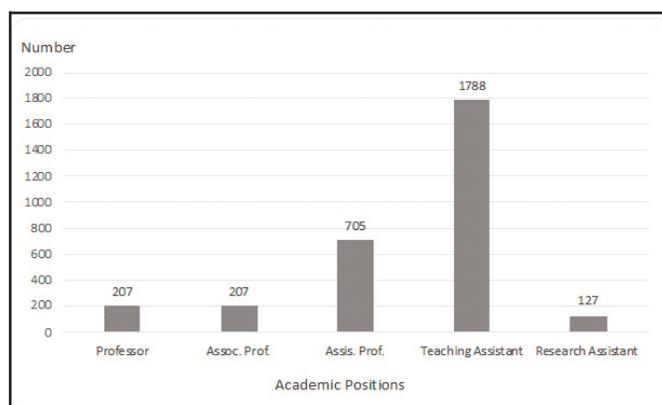


Figure 3. Academic titles of foreign academics, 2018.

If foreign academics want to become professors or associate professors in Turkey, they must fulfill the mandatory academic activity criteria stipulated by universities and higher education institutions. However, foreign academics often fail to meet these criteria and therefore remain in their initial positions in academia. The workload of teaching assistant and assistant professor positions also makes it difficult to demonstrate academic publication performance. In addition, the positioning here not only challenges the reproduction of knowledge, it also makes it difficult to use the conveyed knowledge efficiently. One participant explained the situation as follows:

"I would love to be an associate professor in Turkey but I attend lectures 30 hours per week. I don't have time to research, publish and proposing research projects. In fact, I am an expert on modeling, but I lecture on subjects anybody could talk about by heart. I am afraid that I will forget what I professionally learned in my country" (P48, Female, 42, Northern Cyprus).

This explanation by the participant shows that the positioning of some academics is on a level that causes brain waste. In fact, the academic mobility until the early 2000s occurred—at large—due to the invitation of some academics to Turkey for their specific qualities. Therefore, the knowledge of academics directly affected their academic mobility. One of these lecturers explained the effect of the type of knowledge on mobility as follows:

"I was outstanding at the mathematics Olympics. I received an award from the Academy of Sciences. That is why I was offered the opportunity to establish a mathematics department at this university. I introduced students to methods which are different than the ones that are thought here" (P37, Male, 59, Azerbai-

jan).

After the mid-2000s, most of the academics who came to Turkey did not come because they were invited. Accordingly, the effect of demand for the specific knowledge they possess did not strongly affect their mobility. They were rather tasked with giving some lectures which could as well have been given by a local lecturer. A participant mentioned this issue as follows:

"I lecture about classical economics... Another Turkish friend lecture when I am not available. Therefore, I am not lecturing about something that the people here do not know" (P19, Female, 41, Northern Cyprus).

Academic specializations of the participants vary in accordance with where they work. For instance, at private universities and well-established public universities in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, foreign academics concentrate on foreign languages, engineering and fine arts, while foreign academics at public universities in small towns concentrate on foreign languages, divinity studies and social sciences. The fact that foreign languages take first place in all departments is the perception that a native speaker facilitates language teaching. This situation facilitates the employment of foreign academics and accelerates the procedures related to employment which is manifested by two participants as follows:

"More than half of the lecturers in the faculty of foreign languages are foreigners. If lecturers are needed, universities turn to embassies for help. It is beneficial for our country as well. Because here we can teach our language and culture correctly" (P53, Female, 31, Spain).

"It is easier to get accreditation from the Council of Higher Education if a person has studied in the language department in their own country. Usually, someone else from the same university has been accredited which decreases paperwork" (P50, Female, 30, Russia).

In addition to this, especially the participants who work at private universities explained that the knowledge they possess is more visible and useable. The knowledge on foreign academics' resumes is presented in more detail on the official websites of private universities. Since these academics generally speak English well, they can publish in the international language of science and follow publications in this language. This accelerates their academic progress in Turkey. Already, many researchers working at these universities are employed because they bring knowledge that is not available here and they are committed to maintaining this performance. One participant explained the impact of the organization's structure on the conveyed knowledge and its presentation as follows:

"A student who will attend a private university opens and reads the lecturer's resume. This is something that affects her/his department and university choices. They think they will become successful with the knowledge they receive from a foreign academic. Therefore, we present what knowledge we have to attract students" (P25, Male, 43, United States of America).

As can be inferred, the knowledge and positioning of the academics working in Turkey vary considerably. Especially the field in which they work and the status of the university (private/public) affect this variety and all of these do not spread homogenously nationwide on a spatial scale.

The next chapter, in order to link the abovementioned knowledge to spatiality of the mobility, deals with where the academics go to.

4.3. Where Do They Go?

There is a total of 206 universities in all provinces of Turkey and the opening of new universities is supported by the state; therefore, this number continues to increase rapidly. However, more than half of the universities of Turkey are located in the most advanced and densely populated cities such as Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. This also affects the places where foreign academics are employed. The provinces where foreign academics are mostly employed are respectively Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. Nevertheless, foreign academics work in 75 out of 81 provinces in Turkey, although the scales vary (Figure 4). This clearly reveals that the employment of foreign academics spread to the nation. Most of the foreign academics in Istanbul, Izmir, Adana and Antalya work at private universities (Figure 5).

The rate of foreign academic employment at private and public universities in Ankara and Trabzon are quite close to each other. In other cities, however, foreign academics are concentrated at public universities. In fact, the number of private universities in those cities is very limited.

The spatial mobility and the tendency of foreign academics to concentrate in specific locations are quite variable despite this distribution in the country. This variety is related to academics' ethnicities. In other words, members of some ethnic groups show the tendency to concentrate in specific locations whereas some spread to many cities in smaller groups. For example, Syrians, who rank first in terms of foreign employment, are employed in many cities, albeit only a few academics per province (Figure 6). The academic mobility of Syrians is step-dependent and the move of a Syrian academic to a certain city makes it easier for other Syrian academics to move to that city as well. A Syrian participant expressed as follows that this is an extension of the social solidarity of disadvantaged groups:

"We need to take care of each other. Because no one helps us... It is better to work calmly in a small city than to stand out in crowded places. Syrians turned to other big universities, but then they started looking for jobs in small cities... It's easier to live here" (P42, Male, 41, Syria).

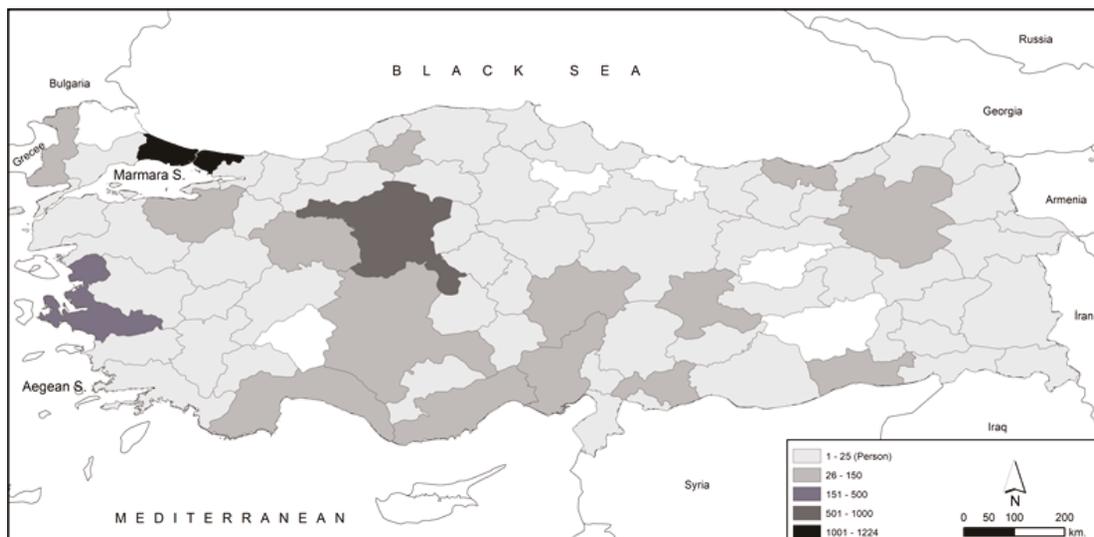


Figure 4. Distribution of foreign academics by provinces, 2018.

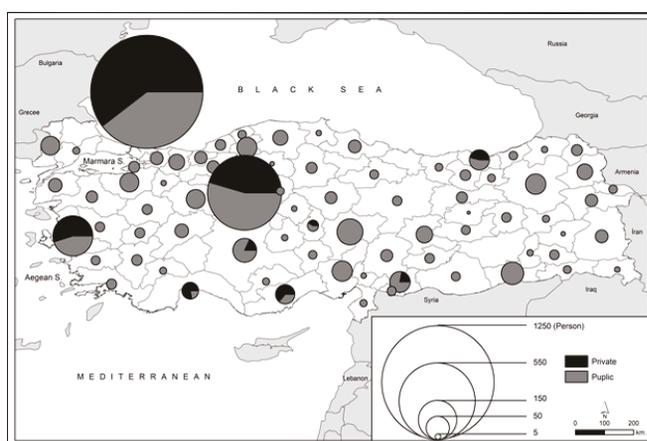


Figure 5. Distribution of foreign academics to public and private universities by provinces in Turkey, 2018.

Unlike the Syrians, the second-ranking Americans work in fewer cities but have higher concentrations in big cities (like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir) (Figure 7). One of the American academics explained the reasons behind this situation as follows:

"An academic who has been raised in Western culture wants some of his social needs to be met in his city. Cafes, bookstores, gyms... He goes to cities where they are found. Money is not everything. It must be a modern and developed place. Those who live there must be used to foreigners. How can an American work in a place that sees America as an enemy?" (P27, Male, 36, United States of America).

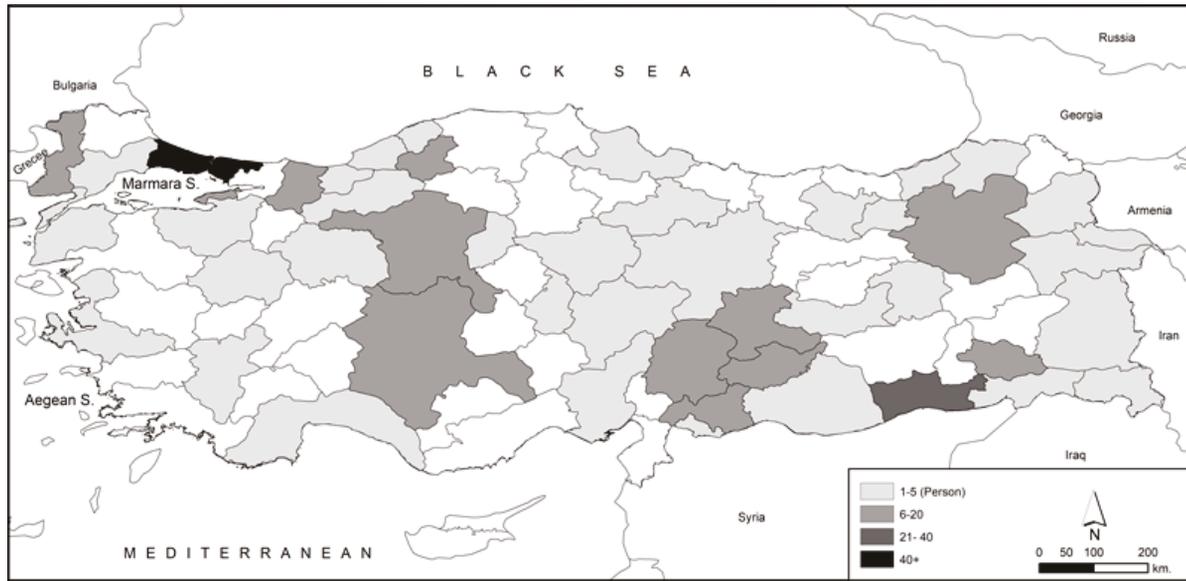


Figure 6. Distribution of Syrian academics by provinces, 2018.

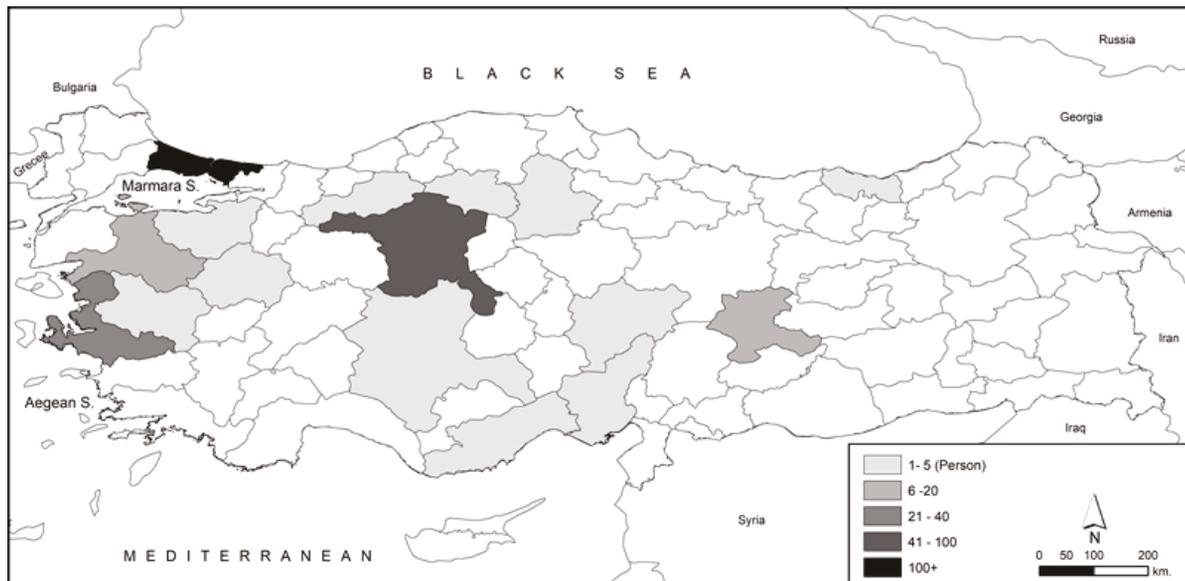


Figure 7. Distribution of American academics by provinces, 2018.

As it can be understood from the statements of Syrian and American participants, academics' choices of location are affected by cultural practices, people's view of that certain group in the host country and the opportunities that a city offers to the people. However, the spatial reflections of academic mobilities are not only the products of personal choices. Institutional and national policies for the employment of foreign academics are at least as effective as personal choices since whenever personal choices are not in line with institutional and national policies, it is not possible for the academic mobility to take place. It could be said that these policies are also shaped around ethnicity and university status. According to this, academics from Western European countries, the USA and Canada often work at private universities. Therefore, they steer to provinces like

Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara and Antalya where there are more private universities. Academics from other regions, especially those from Muslim and/or Turkic countries, usually live in cities where there are public universities. Since there are public universities in all cities, it is possible to see these academics in every city in Turkey. Therefore, employees in private and public universities are differentiated. This difference affects both the structure of institutions and the meaning attributed to the ethnicities of individuals. This is because under this differentiation lay hierarchies among ethnicities and stereotypes about certain nations. One participant explains this with the following statement:

"A private university cannot attract students with an Arab lecturer. The student will not find him adequate. They prefer an American lecturer. The American lecturer represents good education. It doesn't matter in a public university. Already, the state wants to work with Muslims and Turks. A Muslim lecturer easily finds a position, but a lecturer from Europe is kept waiting for months because of a security investigation and work permit. The lecturer is discouraged by difficult bureaucracy. This is the case in Turkey" (P11, Female, 40, United States of America).

This participant's words indicate that neoliberal policies and ethnic policies are formed at their intersection. In this regard, it is important for academics to have a marketable ethnicity for private universities, while ethnic and religious kinship is the key motivation for public universities in employing foreign academics. Therefore, since ethnicity is the prominent criterion in the employment of academics, the direction and structure of academic mobility are also ethnicity-based. This is especially apparent in Turkish universities which are in the cities near the eastern border. An academic working in one of these universities, almost all of which are public, makes the following statement that clearly reveals the spatiality created by this employment policy:

"Lecturers from 'friendly' countries are employed in border cities. 'Friendly' countries in the east of Turkey, Muslim countries. There are no Americans here" (P23, Male, 49, Azerbaijan).

This participant's words demonstrate that the daily language of politics has spread to some foreign academics and affected this spatial pattern which was created by ethnicity-based differentiation. For this reason, the employment of academicians working in border cities is in line with the government's policies towards these fields. As can be seen, the employment of academics carries various motivations, and this creates new spatialities. Therefore the next chapter handles what factors affect academic mobility in Turkey.

4.4. What Affects Mobility?

Although the factors affecting foreign academics in terms of academic mobility in Turkey are fairly variable, they can be handled basically in two categories. Policies affect the macro level while the individuals' life situations affect the micro level. Firstly, when we look at the macro level, it is observed that foreign policy and regulations of higher education affect the mobility and employment of foreign academics. The first one is the open-door policy applied to the Turkic Republics that separated from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the 1990s. During this period, close relations with these countries were sought, and therefore, human mobility from this region was supported. This ensured that academics from this region were invited to find employment at universities. One of these academics explained the arrival process as follows:

"I was working in an institute in Azerbaijan, the Soviet Union collapsed. We were getting \$30 per month. Salaries were good in Europe, but they would not hire us. We spoke only Russian and now I have forgotten Russian. Turkey said one nation, two states. We were invited. That's how I got here. Then I brought other friends, my family..." (P1, Male, 61, Azerbaijan).

As it can be seen, the government's policies towards the Turkic states which were separated from USSR have made it easier for the academics of this region to come to Turkey. These policies have also affected the academics in Russian speaking countries. Due to plans to improve economic relations with Russian speaking countries, the demand for Russian speaking people also increased in Turkey. This resulted in an increase in the number of university programs that offer the Russian language. The need for native Russian speaking academics, who could give lectures in these departments, paved the way for the employment of academics, especially those from Russia and Ukraine. A participant from one of these countries explained the arrival process as follows:

"When the Soviets collapsed, everyone was on a quest... My spouse is Azerbaijani, I am Russian. There was an increase in interest here in the Russian-speaking world... We became lecturers in the Russian language department. I mean... Turkey needed us and we needed Turkey" (P8, Female, 59, Russia).

A similar case presents itself with the open door policies offered to some neighboring countries in which civil conflicts and political changes are happening. For instance, when the leadership in Iran held by Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was taken over by Ayatollah Khomeini in 1979, the new regime which was based on Islamic law forced thousands of people to migrate due to the pressure they felt. These people include academics and even today, these academics support people who want to leave Iran for similar reasons to come to Turkey. Again, the war which started in Iraq in the early 2000s, the 'Arab Spring' which affected Tunisia, Libya and Egypt in 2010s and the conflict that started in Syria caused academics to move to Turkey, a country which they deem safer. Some of the people who came to Turkey as a result of these causes proceeded to continue their academic lives in Turkey. Two of these individuals described what affected their mobility as follows:

"Syria, war. We lost everything. I resisted to the end. My students died in the war. It's hard to live, to work, knowing that. Turkey opened its doors to us" (P4, Male, 33, Syria).

"Those who could move easily left first. Academics were among them... Turkey was much more affordable to reach... We had other relatives here. So, I told my family 'Let's go to Turkey'" (P34, Male, 61, Iran).

Another example regarding the academic mobility, which has occurred in relation to Turkey's foreign policy, is the mobility from Northern Cyprus to Turkey. Close relations with Northern Cyprus, which is considered as the 'foster land' of Turkey, has attracted academics from this country to Turkey. A participant from the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus described the migrations from this region as follows:

"Northern Cyprus means Turkey. When we are looking at universities in Cyprus we always look to Turkey. There are many people who study here and marry Turks. Once Cypriots come to Turkey they never leave. Some of the Turkish universities are already establishing campuses in Cyprus. Once people have worked there for some time they can come to the campuses in Turkey" (P29, Male, 39, Northern Cyprus).

Another example in which foreign policy affects mobility is Turkey's candidacy to the European Union. The fact that Turkey made large-scale arrangements affecting different areas of social life during the candidacy process has affected the arrival of many academics here, especially in the early 2000s. One of these academics described the situation as follows:

"I came here on an invitation. At that time, there was a Turkey that wanted to be European. Turkey has potential. We have carried out a lot of projects" (P35, Male, 65, Germany).

In addition to this participant's statement, the high salaries offered by private universities to especially Americans, British and Germans increased the mobility of the academics from these countries to come to Turkey. The presence of a developed transportation network between the country of origin and Turkey was also important. Again, the reason that some of the public universities offered permanent positions to foreign academics resulted in those who had difficulty having access to these positions in their own countries to come to Turkey instead. A participant from Germany described the work situation in Turkey as follows:

"Turkey and Germany have a 50-year old history of migration. There are direct flights from Turkey to all major German cities. I can get an affordable ticket to Germany even for the weekend. For many Germans, Turkey is an adjacent neighborhood. When I was offered a good salary, it became more attractive" (P30, Female, 43, Germany).

As it can be understood from the words of the participant, academic mobility came out primarily as a product of Turkey's foreign policy. In addition, policies on higher education affect mobility in Turkey. The first of these are the programs developed for foreign students to come to Turkey and the scholarships provided. In this way, some of the students who came to Turkish universities have remained in academia. One of them described this process as follows:

"Turkey was providing scholarships to foreign students. The diplomas were accredited. We came to Turkey... A lot of students came but most did not go. There are employees like me" (P10, Female, 49, Ukraine).

Finally, another factor affecting mobility is the increasing need for academics due to policies aimed at increasing the number of higher education institutions in Turkey. Efforts were made to fill this gap with English-speaking academics after the 2010s with the increase in importance given to English language education as opposed to the mainly Turkish-speaking academics employed in the 1990s. One participant described the relationship between the quantitative increase of higher education institutions and the employment of foreign academics as follows:

"How many universities are there now? I honestly don't know. They used to be known in the past, everybody knew them. Now we hear a university name and look it up online. It's not enough to open a university, you need planning, you need to train people. When these are missing, a foreign lecturer comes even for basic courses" (P58, Female, 43, Greece).

The participant's description clearly shows that lack of academic infrastructure at the stage of higher education planning opens the way for the employment of foreign academics. However, a system created to build this infrastructure, which makes it obligatory for Turkish students to work at Turkish universities for a certain period of time in exchange for receiving a scholarship to study abroad, indirectly makes foreign academics to gravitate towards Turkey. The reason is that some of these students get married to academics in the country where they study. Their spouses join them on their return after finishing their studies and after getting here, they also look for jobs in academia that are suitable for them. One of these individuals explained his motivation for mobility as follows:

"My wife came to America with a scholarship. We met there. We decided to get married, but she had to return to Turkey. She had signed a promissory note. She had to pay a lot of money. We tried to find a position for me... We came to Istanbul" (P20, Male, 37, United States of America).

It is clear that policies regarding higher education affect academic mobility as much as the government's foreign policy. Another factor affecting mobility is personal interest and curiosity. Turkey's geographical location and socio-cultural structure have led some scholars to live here. One of them explained this effect as follows:

"My curiosity brought me here. Turkey is a very special country. It connects two continents. I wanted to experience different cultures, people, faces, smells... This wealth would enrich me. I wanted to be inside. I wanted to be from here and understand this place" (P40, Male, 29, United States of America).

As one may infer from these participants' statements, the motivations behind their mobility are highly varied. In fact, the distinction that was made at the beginning of this chapter under macro and micro levels have all been intertwined because of this variety. On the other hand, despite this variety, very few of these academics have based their participation in academic mobility on academic reasons. In other words, neither the academic opportunities provided to them by Turkey or the institution they work for nor the international reputation of those institutions was regarded as worthy enough to be mentioned by most participants. This may have to do with the academics' being highly limited in doing research due to their positioning inside the higher education system and the institutions they work at may be unaware of their research capacities or they may simply not be interested in this at all.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, transnational academic mobility and the mechanism of foreign academics' employment in higher education in Turkey are laid out under four main themes mentioned by Terri Kim (2009). Accordingly, it is possible to read the impact generated by the employment of foreign academics and the results of this employment separately for each theme. However, they are also interrelated and contribute to understanding the effects of foreign academics on a higher education system in Turkey.

At this point, when I look at the first question, there are three main effects on who foreign academics are. The *first effect* is that the majority of foreign academics are men and the workload of female academics is higher than men, deepening gender inequality in academia. In fact, it has been demonstrated in various studies that there is no gender equality in transnational academic mobility (Jöns, 2010). Turkey supports the sustainability of this global view by clearly giving priority to men. Thus, the male-dominated academic structure is gaining strength in Turkey. However, what is interesting here is that the number of women among the Turkish academics is increasing rapidly. Some departments are even dominated by women. It is emphasized that the reason for the increase in the number of female academics is related to the rise of the women's movement and the fact that men turn to jobs that bring more money (Alptekin, 2011). Besides, academia is seen as a suitable and reliable for women (Özkanlı and White, 2008). Despite the struggles of pioneer women in the academy, most of the female academics often work in lower positions, under the influence of gender inequality. For the same reasons, they find it difficult to achieve the geographical mobility expected of them, which is seen as an important way of transnationalization of universities. This may be the reason for the male foreign academics on these issues. Therefore, it is assumed that foreign female academics will not be mobile enough because of similar reasons.

The *second effect* is the super-diversity (mentioned by Steven Vertovec (2007) about the new migration flows) of the academic structure due to the increasing numbers of academics' countries of origin. However, the limited area in which academics can reflect this diversity limits the utilization of this wealth. Nevertheless, even in their current form, it is possible for different groups of people who have minimal knowledge of each other to encounter each other in higher education and in relation to everyday life. These encounters can contribute to overcoming prejudices, strengthening social relations and developing transnational academic collaborations. The third effect is that the ethnic and religious identities of individuals change their academic positioning. It is already known that the economic, social and cultural capitals of individuals affect their positioning (Bilcen and Van Mol, 2017: 1242). However, which of these capitals affects the positioning of the individual the most differs. The employment of individuals from Muslim or Turkic countries in public universities, in general, leads to the establishment of academia of Turkish-Islamic synthesis by the state. Furthermore, the ethnic identities of academics are made visible in private universities and priority is given to the employment of certain ethnic groups. This is manifested as an increase in the ethnic hierarchy in academia.

When we look at the second question, there are two main effects on what kind of knowledge foreign academics act on. The first is a conflict of academic qualifications. Some of the academics are not invited to work concerning their qualifications. Again, most of the positions they work for do not directly support them in demonstrating and enhancing this quality. The *second effect* is that the management of the knowledge of the academic is institution dependent. This is regulated by employment contracts. Most academics, who are obliged to teach only because of the standard contracts at public universities, avoid

carrying out academic research, publishing, and executing projects. This makes it easier for academics to be employed for a longer period of time in public universities and transforms mobility to migration. This is also because the benefits acquired by those employed in this group are higher than those in the previous ones. On the other hand, the fact that the contracts in private universities involve more obligations causes the academic performance of some academics who work for private universities to be higher than the academics in public universities. However, academic performance pressure causes foreign academics in private universities to change institutions more frequently. This prevents them from conducting long-term studies in certain universities and decreases their contributions to the institutions they work for. However, academics who change institutions and places more often have more information about different institutions and places. This increases their knowledge of the higher education system throughout the country.

The third question has a fundamental effect on where foreign academics mobilize and in which parts of the country they are employed. This effect is named the ethnic concentration of foreign academics of the same nationality in certain places. In fact, big cities are the most densely populated areas due to the high number of universities. Therefore, the diversity of academics in these cities is high. However, academics from countries such as Syria, Azerbaijan, Iran and Iraq are concentrated in universities in medium-scaled cities. This clustering is the product of the internal solidarity networks of individuals of the same nationality. Therefore, even in cities where academics of a given nationality are scarce, it is likely that there will be clustering in the future and that spatial expansion will incur.

The last question is about what affects the academic mobility of foreigners, the limits and higher education policies and personal situations come to the fore. At this point, foreign academics are actually the affected group because of the practices of the state that affect the employment of academics are not seen as the product of a needs analysis and specific planning. Rather, Turkey's political stance because of the developments in the region where Turkey is located has facilitated the employment of foreign academics. The greatest impact at this point is that academic structure is formed in line with populist policies. The content of this academic structure is being developed by supporting the opening of new public universities on the one hand, and, on the other, the opening of private universities to leave higher education in the hands of the market. Herein, the dependence of higher education on daily policies creates fragility in the employment of foreign academics. Lack of organization on the part of foreign academics to reduce this vulnerability may affect both their academic mobility and higher education institutions shaped by their presence.

In conclusion, academic mobility in Turkey is a product of a process in which both the state and the individuals actively take part. The pattern that is created with this process distinguishes Turkey from the countries which are traditionally the destinations of transnational mobility. Indeed, it is visible that the employment of foreign academics—in its current form—does not very much help improve the quality of education or serve Turkey to increase its share in the knowledge economy. It can also

be understood that these mobilities have become a product of an ideological conflict under neoliberal conditions.

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