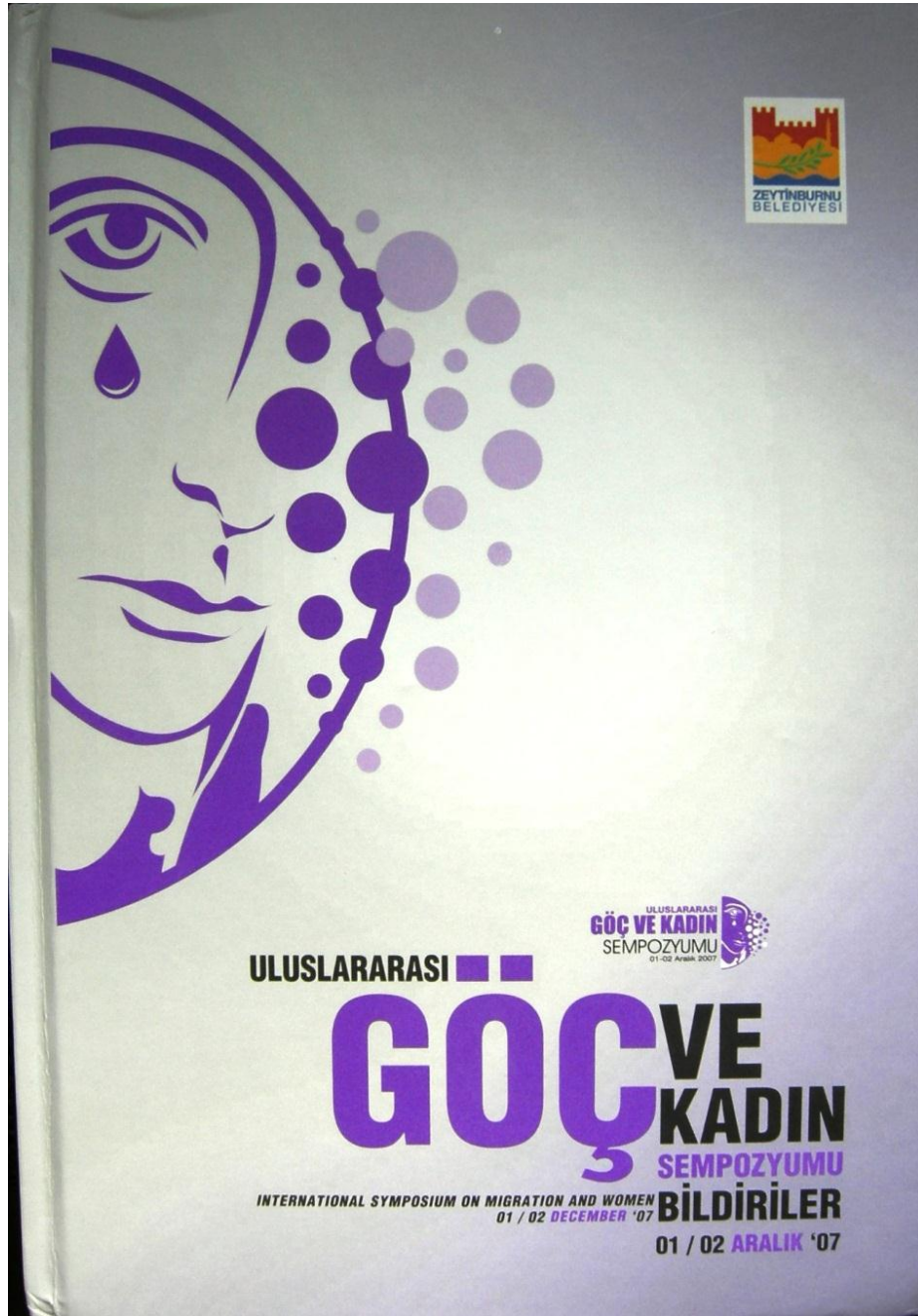


# MIGRATION THROUGH MARRIAGE, MARRIAGE FOR MIGRATION

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### **Migration through Marriage, Marriage for Migration**

Turkey is in a very rapidly developing process of internal migration. In the process of migration from rural to urban areas, which started in 1950s, accelerated in 1980s and reached its peak in 2000s, there are 3 leading factors in action, namely pushing, pulling and transmitting factors. Whereas such elements in rural areas as financial problems, need for additional income and insufficient educational, health and employment opportunities etc. constitute "pushing factors", such elements in urban areas as education, health and employment opportunities, modern lifestyle and desire for a better life are among "pulling factors". Such elements as the expanded highway networks enabling daily transportation from nearly every part of Turkey, including the remotest villages of Turkey, to large cities, means of communication, effects of newspapers and television stations, assistance provided for accommodation and employment to new migrants by those who previously migrated to cities and provincial and kinship ties etc. emerge as "transmitting factors".

In recent years, new additions have been made in Turkey to the list of the transmitting factors which have been addressed in various scientific studies up to the present and whose leading items are mentioned above. The additions involve around such factors as the fact that villagers are released from their dependence on the village and the soil as trees and fruits with commercial value such as poplar, nut, tea and olive have been planted in cultivated lands, that the children in rural areas have to go to cities for education in villages where the school is closed or the transported education model is utilized, that people who went abroad from the rural part of Turkey choose to live in cities upon their return (YILMAZ, 1992) and that girls living in villages sets to their prospective husbands living in cities as a condition for marriage.

This research addresses the last factor, i.e. the acts of migration and resultant events and relations induced by the marriages made by girls living in rural areas with men who migrated to urban areas or who are working and living in cities with regular wages and social security or, at least make such promises to these girls, for the dream of living a more comfortable, consistent and richer life.

The study has two sections, the first of which is migration through marriage which as a phenomenon emerges as girls abandon their rural areas upon marriage with men who are living and working in cities. Within the same context, the second section is titled marriage for migration, which is a phenomenon through which girls use the institution of marriage as a migration tool, knowingly or unknowingly, for the purpose of escaping from their villages and migrating due to their preference of the urban lifestyle, rather than the rural lifestyle. The issue of migration through marriage bears a general quality among the aforementioned transmitting factors, while the issue of marriage for migration carries a more specific and personal meaning under the title of migration through marriage. In this study, these two aspects of migration through marriage and marriage for migration are addressed as aspect that differentiate these two phenomena from family unions, the topic is approached from different points of view and with both positive and negative examples and the actual process is interpreted from a critical perspective.

The data used in this study are gathered from the results of the works assigned to a group of students of rural origin from 19 Mayıs University, Department of Geography regarding the accounts of **the number and place of destination as a bride of the girls who got married in the last two years in their villages**, from the information presented in two studies (YILMAZ 2007a and YILMAZ 2007b) published by our part on the reasons of the acts of internal migration from the villages of the Samsun province to cities and results of our observations and interviews in the villages of the Carsamba and Ladik towns of Samsun.

### **Migration through Marriage**

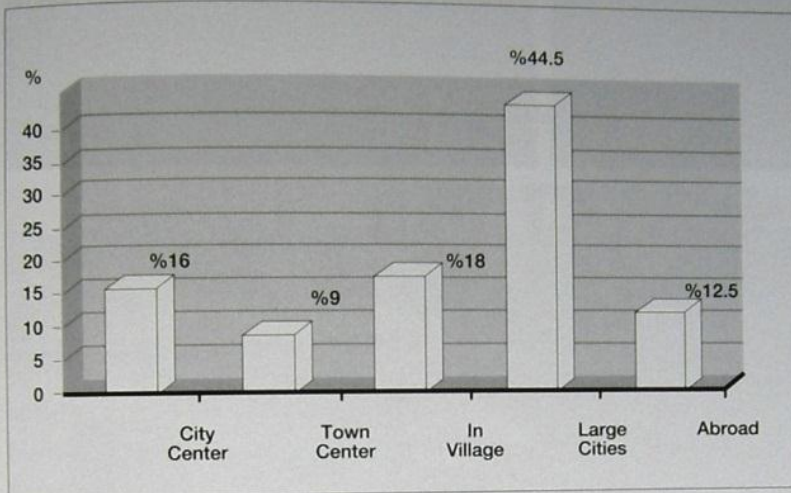
There are quite few research studies addressing marriages as an intermediary institution or a transmitting factor in the process of internal migration from rural to urban areas in Turkey. Among these, OZGUC (1998:134) approached the issue from a global perspective, addressed rural women and urban women separately in developing countries and made a reference to Wekerle's statement, "**A woman's place is in the city**". ILKARACAN (1999) addressed the issue under the title of Women and Migration, points out **associational migration** as a motive of migration specific to women and underscored **marriage migration** in this context<sup>1</sup>. The researcher also explained the fact that the preference of women participating in migration is affected by their dislike of their villages, rather than their like of Istanbul. In the process of migration from rural to urban areas, the perceptions regarding the rural world are also of great significance (TUMERTEKIN and OZGUC, 1992:52). ERMAN (1998) employed this context to address the issue in his study titled Migration from the Rural to the Urban and the Urban Life from Women's Perspective. The researcher states that women are very willing to migrate from the rural to the urban and that there are women saying, "It doesn't matter what happens to us, it doesn't matter if we regret it, just so we migrate to the city". UNLUTURK (2007), on the other hand, looked into the positions of women who came from the village to the city with the hope of a better life within the urban business life and labour market.

The process of migration from the rural to the urban by way of marriage is going ahead at full speed. In the research study, which we conducted on the recent years of migration, only 18% of girls who got married in the rural areas (villages) went to a village (the village of residence or a close village) as a bride, while 82% preferred urban areas (Table 1, Figure 1).

**Table 1. Places of destination of girls upon marriage in randomly selected 19 villages in the years 2006-2007.**

Province	Town	Village	No of Marriages	Location				
				City Center	Town Center	Village	To Another City	Abroad
Adıyaman	Çelikhan	Kurudere	8	-	-	3	5	-
Gümüşhane	Merkez	Kabaköy	15	3	-	3	6	3
Hatay	Antakya	Erikli	9	2	5	1	1	-
Kastamonu	Doğanyurt	Erencik	12	4	-	2	6	-
Konya	Seydişehir	Yaylacık	3	-	-	3	-	-
Mardin	Derik	Doğancı	4	-	-	-	4	-
Rize	Pazar	Boğazlı	22	-	4	2	15	1
Samsun	Bafra	Kamberli	5	1	1	-	3	-
Samsun	Çarşamba	Kumarlı	4	1	1	1	1	-
Samsun	Çarşamba	Taşdemir	4	-	-	1	2	1
Samsun	Çarşamba	Aşıklı	9	2	1	1	3	2
Samsun	Çarşamba	Bayramlı	13	2	1	-	3	7
Samsun	Havza	Gidirli	10	-	-	3	7	-
Samsun	Kavak	Mahmutbeyli	13	9	-	-	4	-
Samsun	Tekkeköy	Balcalı	15	1	4	2	4	4
Sivas	Yıldızeli	Yolkaya	21	3	-	3	9	6
Sivas	Şarkışla	Gücük	6	-	1	-	4	1
Tokat	Zile	Eskidağıcı	3	-	-	-	3	-
Yozgat	Merkez	Gülyayla	24	4	-	11	9	-
<b>Total</b>			<b>200</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>%</b>			<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>44,5</b>	<b>12,5</b>
				<b>% 43</b>			<b>% 57</b>	

**Figure 1. Places of destination of girls upon marriage in randomly selected 19 villages in the years 2006-2007.**



According to the table, 43% of married girls joined families within the limits of their own province of residence. Among these, 16% went to the respective city centre, 9% to the respective town centre and 18% stayed in their own village or went to one of the nearby villages upon marriage.

57% of married girls went to a place outside the limits of their own province of residence upon marriage. Among those that went to other places as brides, 44.5% went to large cities and 12.5% abroad. 57.3% of those going to big cities preferred Istanbul, followed by Ankara (15.7%), Bursa (6.7%), Antalya (3.3%), Izmir (2.2%), Adana (2.2%), Kayseri (2.2%) and other cities (11.4%). 70% of those going abroad upon marriage went to Germany, 14% to the Netherlands, 7% to France and 9% to other countries.

### **Marriage for Migration**

In today's Turkey, rural girls of marriageable age willingly want to spend the rest of their lives in cities. Especially after 1990s, girls became more aware of the world outside the rural area with the increased rate of participation in educational processes, the extension of the schooling duration and with the effect of TV broadcasting; consequently they have been increasingly forced to make a choice between the rural and urban environment and this situation led to a preference in favour of the urban. The process which we put forward on the basis of an old lady's statements in the village of Golyazi in Ladik, Samsun (Photo 1) and which we term as the migration spiral can be summarized in terms of its progression as follows:

a)



b)



c)

**Photo 1. a) and b)** Summer and winter scenery in the village of Golyazi in Ladik, Samsun. **c)** The water carrying and laundry activities which the rural girls don't want to continue ad infinitum.

*If a young girl born and raised in a village stays in that village after marriage, she will wake up early like her mother, milk the cows, release them in the meadows in summer and feed them in stables in winter, then do the housework, take care of the gardens, carry water, provide firewood, raise the children and will always depend on her husband or his family, since she won't have an income in return for these activities she performs as an unpaid family worker.*

*However, she sees a whole different picture when she looks at her friends or sisters who went to Istanbul upon marriage. If this girl were living in Istanbul, she would prepare breakfast for her husband and children in the morning, see her husband off to work and her children off to school and then have some time for herself in front of the television, do the laundry and prepare dinner in the afternoon, without any serious exhaustion thanks to the washing machine and dishwasher; when her husband and children came home, they would have dinner, watch television for a while and go to bed. Considering this process*

as a whole, the rural girl resolves never to marry a person from the village and thus accepts the marriage proposal made by a person who will save her from the village. Young rural men also decide to leave their villages when they see that it is impossible for them to marry a girl they like and admire within the village as long as they stay in the village (due to the desire of girls to go to large cities). Thus, young girls and men make marriages for migration and participate in the process of migration by way of marriage.

The village of Golyazi which has favourable conditions in terms of physical and human geography went through a fast process of population loss, the number of children in the village decreased, the village school was closed and the village became a settlement with a small population constituted mainly by retired people.

### **Pushing, Pulling and Intermediary (Transmitting) Factors for Girls of Marriageable Age**

According to the results obtained from the research (YILMAZ 2007a and YILMAZ 2007b) and investigation activities which we conducted in villages of the Samsun province, the factors that push young girls to marriage for migration are as follows:

#### **Pushing factors in rural areas (for a young girl)**

- *Lack of social security, the notion that she will be desperate and dependent on others in case of illness,*
- *Lack of monthly, fixed income; always being dependent on others for her own needs,*
- *Rural vocation predominated by agriculture and livestock, the related activities performed from the morning to late at night without one single day off, such as milking, animal feeding, gardening and ploughing,*
- *Housing with inadequate infrastructure; lack of continuous supply of tap water or insufficient water pressure to use washing machines and dishwashers, failure to reach the desired hygiene in the easy way,*
- *Inadequacies of the social life,*
- *Gradual decrease in the number of young people in villages, leaving fewer people to socialize with,*
- *The concern that her children will not be able to benefit sufficiently from educational and health opportunities,*

The fear of being left alone in the village and of separation at a young age, considering the fact that her husband will have to leave the village eventually to earn money. The concern that the saying she hears for others, **"the man away, the woman in field"** will be repeated for her own account, The fact that they will raise their children by themselves and share a house with older people such as the father- and mother-in-law, with whom she will have problems arising from the generation gap/conflict,

The notion that, even if her husband does not go away for work, he will be in his own environment in the village's coffee houses and they will not have time for themselves,

Being increasingly aware that the wearing effects of rural works,

Being aware that they are in fact unpaid family workers,

The exaggerated life stories told by those who migrated to urban areas at their holiday visits to the village.

### **Pulling aspects of cities (for a young girl)**

- Expectation of a regular life,
- Expectation of a fixed income per month,
- The idea that she will keep the money she earns to herself, if she has the opportunity to work,
- The idea of being away from pressures and of feeling free in the urban environment,
- The idea of staying at home from morning till night, doing less work and watching more TV if she can't have the opportunity to work and thus become a housewife,
- The idea of being free from the time her husband goes to work till night,
- The fact that she will only do housework in apartments in cities rather than physically challenging activities such as field, garden or livestock work and the perception of the housework as easier and less exhausting activities than the work in the village,
- The idea that nobody will be able to interfere in her life other than her husband,
- The idea of being away from the pressures of her own parents and parents-in-law, which will enable her to be free from the never-ending "duties of the bride",



- *The belief that she will be able to spend more time with her husband and children,*
  - *A hope of a better future for her children,*
  - *The idea of being more liberated in terms of clothing,*
  - *The desire to consume the products she wants in any way she wants,*
  - *The possibility to send her children to better schools, the idea that she can only raise them properly in the city,*
  - *The idea that she will be more liberated and have more freedom of movement,*
  - *Her dreams portraying the city as a better place than the village in any event.*
- Intermediary elements in migration through marriage (transmitting factors, institutions)*
- *The desire to make a marriage for migration or to escape from the village by any means,*
  - *The encouragement she provides to her future husband to find a job and work and then to take her away from the city,*

*- (Since rural girls are in the expectation of something that will take them to the city and thus want to marry a person who can do this) The lack of hope for young men of marriageable age to marry a girl from the village as long as they stay in the village and the resultant feeling of obligation to leave the village.*

- *The desire of parents, who migrated to and are residing in cities, to wed their adult sons with an already acquainted girl from their village of origin in order to sustain the traditions and customs of their parents and maintain the conventional way of life,*
- *The desire of some of our citizens in large cities, in a fashion similar to that of our citizens in Western European countries, to bring young and candid rural girls from families of small financial means to the city as their daughters-in-law in order to espouse their sons, to reconnect their astray sons to the family home and to have these girls in their houses as obedient providers of service and care,*
- *Online forum discussions, which have become rapidly widespread in recent years.*

## **Result**

*As a transmitting factor in the process of migration from the rural to the urban, migrations through marriage are increasing in number each year. Such migrations demonstrate different attributes in terms of their results.*

*Young rural individuals who get married upon obtaining consent from their families, upon getting to know and love each other and who make the decision of migration together leads less problematic lives in terms of domestic violence and incompatibility. Marriages made by young girls with people who they don't know or have a common background with are generally problematic, in some cases resulting in rather dramatic consequences. Rural young girls who marry a distant relative or a son of a former neighbour residing in the city by reason of the idea that they have the opportunity to migrate to the city are observed to be susceptible to great frustrations after the actual marriage. These young brides, who are brought to large cities to live for the rest of their lives in a small apartment, mostly in a slum house, living 24 hours with perfectly different people with whom they have never lived with before, have great difficulties in terms of accommodating themselves to their new environments, with their behaviours regarded unfavourably by elders and find themselves in the middle of domestic violence and conflict in a few months following the marriage since they mostly are left devoid of the support of their husbands, with whom they do not have a common background. This situation, in turn, brings with it violence, abuse and ill-treatment against women and causes suffering to many people.*

*ABADAN-UNAT (1977) tried to apprehend the effects of this migration on the liberation process of women within the scope of a study he conducted on the labour force of Turkish women who go abroad for employment. There exists not one research study which shows that women are more liberated by reason of the streams of internal migration in Turkey. Dependence on husbands is a prevailing phenomenon in both environments, abroad or domestic. Women in large cities are also observed today to go through the experiences of young Turkish girls abroad who first get married to escape from the intense family pressure commonly observed among Turks in foreign countries and who get divorced to gain independence once this family pressure is lifted off.*

*Cities usually fail to satisfy the expectations of women, who are observed to fall on hard times both due to urban adaptation issues and economic hardships following the actual migration. On the other hand, since the efforts to accommodate themselves to the urban life after immigration are usually assisted by members of kith and kin, being together with them sometimes yields positive results in terms of protection and assistance, but sometimes brings with it negative consequences if the originally desired sense of freedom is inhibited thereby.*

*In the migration process which is based on family pressure and forced marriage, women encounter much greater problems. Especially in the marriages of rural girls with men who were raised in the city and have broken loose from the control of the family, conflicts are observed to arise in a short period due to both cultural differences and the lack of a common background and these problems bring forth marriages which usually result in irreconcilable differences and divorces. In cases where the incompatibility between spouses is aggravated by family pressure, on the other hand, much more serious problems are observed to arise and this issue is being made subject to various research studies such as Migration-*

*Oriented Violence and Social Alienation, Psychological Effects of Migration and Exploitation and Experiences of Women in the Migration Journey.*

*As a result of the acts of migration through marriage, along with other factors, the young population regressed in number in the majority of our villages and there are years with no incidence of childbirth in certain villages. Due to the decrease in village populations induced by this phenomenon and other factors, the services provided to villages are left unexploited, the related investments made by the state fail to meet their goals and the **efforts to retain the rural population** which have been put into action without a research into this social infrastructure prove to be abortive.*

- 1 *Presently, the issue of migration through marriage is discussed with relation to the Turkish citizens that reside in Western Europe and marry people from Turkey and various related publications were presented. For instance, the research study on "Migration through marriage" conducted by the Turkey Research Centre in Essen on behalf of the Federal German Ministry of Social Order revealed that choosing a spouse from Turkey is a widely preferred option among Turks of marriageable age. The Chairman of the institution, Prof. Dr. Faruk Şen stated in his press statement of 2003 that "imported spouses" is a rising trend in Europe among Turks of marriageable age and the number of spouses coming to Germany increased from 16.822 in 2000 to 18.413 in 2001, adding that migration through marriage has risen to the first rank among the streams of migration from Turkey to Europe. In this article, the foreign aspect of the issue is excluded from the scope, as it constitutes a separate research topic*