

Ibrahim Sirkeci, Jeffrey H. Cohen & Pinar Yazgan (eds.), *Conflict, Insecurity and Mobility*, Transnational Press London, London, 2016, 184 pp., (ISBN: 978-1-910781-09-8).

Why do people migrate and what are the consequences of mobility? This question has been the core question of Migration and Ethnic Studies for the past decades. An answer to this question, however, is not straightforward. Motives for leaving one's home, family, friends and neighbours are manifold. Apart from expats and highly skilled workers, people do not migrate when their lives are comfortable. Economic factors, for instance, are often intertwined with conflict. War paralyzes the formal economy and makes it extremely hard, if not impossible, for citizens to make a living. *Conflict, Insecurity and Mobility* is about the complexity of migration motives and highlights how security and insecurity are related to other factors, such as the economy, that tend to play a more central role in research. The authors emphasise four intersecting points. First, migration has consequences not only for the people who migrate. Mobility triggers changes in the region and country of departure, places of transit when moving from one place to another, and migrants' arrival points, either temporarily or for good. Second, migrants may have to cope with new insecurities in the country or city of destination. Their skills are oftentimes not transferrable in the new setting, which requires them to settle for jobs that do not match their degrees and experience. Third, mobility that is traditionally conceptualised as a constellation of economic pull- and push factors that trigger migration due to the surplus or lack of opportunities on the labour market. Hence, migration, so the argument, is generally also fuelled by the narratives of co-nationals or ethnics who are already settled in the country of destination. Fourth, migration is costly, financially and socially.

These intersections are obviously not new. An established body of literature focuses on the multiplicity of migration motives, integration processes as a multiway process driven by actors in the country of destination, transit countries, the country of origin and on a supranational level, as well as the transnational consequences of migration (for a recent overview see Blanca Garcés-Mascareñas & Penninx 2016; Mügge 2016). Although the relation between conflict and migration is a topic of inquiry in international relations and political geography, it is less central in migration and ethnic studies. This is exactly the main contribution that Sirkeci, Cohen and Yazgan make. The book consists of a collection of twelve chapters which are predominantly written by young scholars who focus in their ongoing dissertation projects, or spin-offs thereof, on Kurdish and Turkish international, as well as internal mobility.

The result is a deep and rich account of cases on the relation between conflict, insecurity and mobility of Kurdish people. The authors demonstrate that insecurity does not end with moving from one place to another. Instead, new insecurities and forms of conflict arise in the transition. The book is organised along themes of conflict and insecurity around borders with Turkey and neighbouring countries, regions within Turkey, and neighbourhoods within cities of destination. The contributors of the book focus on gang wars in Copenhagen, relations between Syrian and Kurdish migrants in Istanbul, and the Gerdi tribe's perception of borders at the Turkish-Iraqi border. A next set of chapters delves into governance by scrutinising the role of the diaspora in Turkey's European Union accession process and local policy-making in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood in Berlin. This is followed by chapters that address military service, violence, and statelessness.

The volume is of interest to students and scholars of migration who want to learn more about experiences of migration on the ground. For example, in the chapter "As if all life had vanished ... The return of Kurdish villagers to their hometowns", Şemsa Özar describes the experience of Kurdish villagers who return to their homes from which they were evacuated in the 1990s. Central in this chapter are the stories and memories of the villagers of Kavar, located between Van and Tatvan. In direct quotes, illustrated with pictures, Özar gives villagers a voice and explains through their words what conflict, violence and migration actually does to people and how they navigate political and military actors that determine where they can or cannot reside. Villagers remember how soldiers entered their village in the middle of the night, shot their relatives, and set their houses on fire. They were forced to flee to Istanbul, where they struggled to survive in a hostile environment, going from one temporary contract in construction to another. In 2000, around a third of the villagers returned to the region. Upon their return they were not allowed to stay in their villages to rebuild their ruined houses. In the process of resettlement, a committee was installed to foster the peace process. One of the women tells the committee: "They first broke my husband's legs in front of our children. Then they took him out of the house and killed him brutally and then ridden over [sic] him with a panzer 4–5 times [...] I scraped his flesh from the ground" (Özar 2016: 112). The woman asks the committee to free Öcalan and to recognise the Kurdish language and identity so that her husband, who was unarmed, died for a cause.

Like Özar, all contributors draw on rich material that has been collected in many years of research. That said, in some of the contributions the relation between a general literature review and genuine research findings is somewhat

imbalanced. The authors clearly have exceptional in-depth knowledge of the communities under study. As a reader I would have liked to see more of the empirical material and less discussion on how container concepts, which are rooted in Western thought, apply to the cases under study. Post-colonial critique might have been a more appropriate theoretical lens. Given the current uncertainties in Turkey and the region and the ongoing violence that citizens cope with, it is worthwhile to show this in more detail to the general public.

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