

Projections of Motherland in the Perceptions of the Turk Migrants from Bulgaria to Bursa

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ABSTRACT

One of the constructs that problematize the identity categories in the perceptions and the narratives of the Turkish migrants from Bulgaria, settled in Bursa, is the concept of 'motherland'. The motherland has got two dimensions in their perceptions and in different situations one of them prevails in the construction and transformation of identities. On one hand stands the image of the 'historical homeland' and it is associated with place of birth and origin. On the other hand is the category of the 'symbolic motherland' that constructs the ethnic identity. The migrants exist in a complicated situation generated by their confusion with the categorization of 'own' and 'foreign' and the construction that sets it – the homeland. Leaving the country of origin, they believe that they 'return' to the 'real' motherland, in which they are related by ethnicity and by blood. Entering the new conditions however they face identity differences they were not prepared about. Leaving the past on the other side of the border opens a nostalgia line and prospect visions or dreams in the individual everyday existence. Both homelands are strong constructs which still influence the individual perceptions and the community identification both from "inside" and from "outside" point of view. The paper will explore how these two belongings and perceptions about the 'native' exist within one and the same identities – 'we are Turks' but also 'we are from Bulgaria'.

Key Words: Turks; Bursa; migrants; motherland; identity; communities.

Bulgaristan'dan Bursa'ya Göç Eden Türklerin Penceresinden Anavatan Kavramı

ÖZET

Bulgaristan'dan Bursa'ya göç eden Türk göçmenler için kimlik bakımından sorun yaratan konulardan biri de 'anavatan' kavramıdır. Bu göçmenler için anavatan kavramının iki boyutu vardır ve farklı durumlarda bu kavramlardan biri hâkim olmaktadır. Bir tarafta, doğdukları yerle özdeşleşen 'tarihi anavatan' kavramı, bir diğer tarafta ise etnik olarak benimsedikleri 'sembolik anavatan' kavramı vardır. 'Öz' ve 'yabancı' kavramlarının kafalarında yarattığı karmaşa nedeniyle göçmenler kendilerini karmaşık durumların içinde bulmaktadır. Geri döneceklerine inandıkları ülkeye etnik ve kan bağlarıyla bağlıdırlar. Bununla birlikte kimlik farklılığıyla yüzleştikleri yeni koşullar için hazırlıklı değillerdir. Geçmiş; sınırın diğer tarafında bırakmak bir nostalji penceresi açar. Her iki vatan kavramı da kişinin algısı ve hem 'içeri' hem de 'dışarı' bakış açılarından toplum tanımı üzerinde etkilidir. Bu çalışmada 'yerli' olma tanımı hakkındaki bu iki aitlik kavramı ve algı incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkler; Bursa; göçmenler; anavatan; kimlik; toplum.

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This article attempts to explore the Turkish migrants from Bulgaria to the region of Bursa in the Republic of Turkey, mainly in the perspective of identity markers and in the context of the current social situation. The main method used during the fieldwork was that of semi-structured biographical interview with community members within which 17 sound files were collected and many additional individual conversations were conducted. The individual interview consisted of two parts – part one, in which the respondent was asked to tell more about themselves and their lives with little or no intervention by the interviewer and second part consisting of additional guiding questions focused around the establishment and existence of the community as such through the prism of the trajectory of individual life, the memory and the story about it. The interlocutors mentioned key identity topics spontaneously in the course of the story and the additional questions in the second part of the interview provoked story about details of the memory rather than adding new topics to the main life story. The presence of key themes in the individual narratives could be explained with the structuring roles of these themes in the particular biographical trajectory, with multiple re-telling and repeating of the story which would create well-structured narrative or with the presence of collective memory whose carriers build their individual stories on similar pillars. All stories (although not all follow the structure of the classical biographical interview) provide rich empirical information and different perspectives, but also reproduce experienced past, diagnose the present and build a picture of expected future in the context of the social community today, so they all will be subject of this analysis.

The community of the Turks, migrants from Bulgaria, appeared in Bursa after several waves of migration from Bulgaria to Turkey, the biggest of which – in the summer of 1989, known in the history as “the big excursion”. This mass migration was a result of a long-term policy of the Bulgarian communist state towards the Turkish minority of its population. This policy took several courses (from recognition of the specific identity markers of the Muslim population in the beginning of the regime until huge campaign for homogenization of the nation (known as the “Revival Process”), including changing Turkish-Arabic names with Slavic ones, restricting Turkish speech in public places, forbidding traditional (considered for Muslim) clothes, like *shalwars* and head-scarf, for example and so on).²

2 For more information about the policy of the Bulgarian state towards the Turkish population in the period 1945-1989, see: Büchsenschütz, Ulrich, *Minority Politics in Bulgaria. Politics of BCP towards Jewish, Romas, Pomaks and Turks*, Sofia, 2003 [published in Bulgarian], Gruev, Mihail, Aleksey Kalyonski, *The Revival Process. Muslim Communities and the Communist Regime*, Sofia, 2003 [published in Bulgarian], Ahmed, Cemile, *Name, Renaming and Double Identity (Bulgarian Turks during the “Revival Process” 1984-1989)*, *Sociological Problems*, 2003, 1-2, pp. 166-178 [published in Bulgarian], Elenkov, Ivan, “Thus are the Historical Facts...”: Official Culture, “Revival Process” and the Consecutive Turn in the Discourse for the Bulgarian Past from the Beginning and the Middle of 80s, in: *Moving Balkans, Research from the NEXUS Projec (2000-2003)*, ed. Alexander Kiossev, Sofia, 2009, pp. 176-206 [published in Bulgarian].

It is extremely hard to give the exact numbers of the migrants from Bulgaria. The difficulty in the statistic data comes from the political understanding and interpretation of the 'migrant' concept, mainly because of the fact that the settlers from Bulgaria are acknowledged as 'ethnic kin', '*soydaş*', i. e. citizens, belonging ethnically and nationally to the Turkish state. As thus, they are outside of the official statistic for immigration from different countries, because they are being accepted as 'returning' migrants in the political and media discourse.

Outside of the political rhetoric however, in the frames of the everyday communication, the migrant status is easily discerned, on one side – from the local Turks, who distinguish themselves from the migrants and indicate them as different, on the other side – from the migrants who define themselves as originating from Bulgaria.

In the time aspect, the children of the migrants, born within the Turkish state, are also considered for migrants and this problematizes the definition – 'migrant' is understood as a corpus of behavioural codes and cultural belonging, rather than place of origin. The border police documents could count the number of those who passed the border at any time; the census could count the place of birth and indicates status of migrant from Bulgaria but both official data would miss the second and third generation who could have consciousness for belonging to the migrants' community (identification from inside) or would be recognized as such from the local population (identification from outside).

The paper is focusing on the aspects of the contemporary social migrants' situation. The text is trying to see precisely the existence of a community with its own rules of behaviour, boundaries and relationships with "the otherness". It is exploring the continuous identity construction through the prism of individual daily living and biographical narrative. For the present analysis the position of the particular individual within the community is important – how he perceives himself; the environment in which he is situated; how he explains the big historical projects which passed through his life; how much of them he remembers and transmits to the generations. The hypothesis suggests that the individual narrative tells the important and the necessary. The selectivity of the remembrance has preserved in the individual memory and told in the story what the individual or the collective had evaluated as important to be remembered and transmitted. Of course, such a "wide-screen" field will reveal many pieces of the same puzzle – the point of view 'from below' in the frames of own concepts of identity (explanation for belonging); the social relationships (with the local population, with other migrants from Bulgaria, and with relatives and friends left in Bulgaria); the strategies for survival and adaptation to the new social conditions, the future visions and many others, articulated or not, constructions of the

social existence of the community today. Only after the complete puzzle assembling (and from a particular position of the eyes) we will have the opportunity to see the whole image on it. This, of course, is an ambitious task that requires more space, more effort and a more focused look at the depth of the picture. For the purpose of this text we will focus mainly on one component of the “puzzle” – the projections of the motherland as identity-constructing marker and its location from the perspective of the individual narrative.

Bülbülü altın kafese koymuşlar, “ah vatan” demiş.

Even in a golden cage, the nightingale longs for its homeland. (Turkish proverb)

One of the constructs that problematize the categories for ‘own’ and ‘foreign’ in the perceptions of the ‘göçmen’-s³, settlers in Bursa, is the concept of ‘homeland’. The motherland has got two dimensions in their perceptions and in different situations one of them prevails in the construction and transformation of identities. On one hand, the image of the ‘historical homeland’ stands which is associated with place of birth and origin. On the other hand is the category of the ‘symbolic and ethnic motherland’ that constructs the ethnic identity. The first one sets national belonging, the second one, in addition to the national, constructs also ethnic self-identification.

“Now I personally, as I. M., I feel Turk, this is the most important, at the same time I feel myself a Bulgarian citizen, this Bulgaria is my homeland, there I was born, but I am Turk ethnically, my mother is Turk, my father is Turk.” [I. M., a 44-year-old man, born in the region of Kardzhali]

“And what I was telling you about falling into the wilderness, with these transfers the attitude towards life didn’t change, because someone who has gone out of their homeland, where he was born, where he used to live, everywhere is wilderness, regardless how much money you have in your pocket and no matter what funds you have available, because neither the air is your air, nor the water is your water, nor the soil beneath your feet is your soil. Although we are Turks, homeland is where you were born, where the graves of your ancestors are.” [N. K., a 44-year-old woman, born in the region of Kardzhali]

3 ‘Göçmen’ is a concept used for describing the migrants from Bulgaria. Literally it means ‘migrant, settler, incomer’. ‘Göçmen’ comes as a noun from the verb ‘göçmek’ which means ‘to migrate, to cross the border’. It also has got another meaning – ‘to die’, ‘to pass away’, ‘to migrate’ but in another world, to cross another border after which there is no turn back.

The confusion comes from the different levels of influence that those two images of motherland (national and/or ethnic) have on the own self-identification, as far as this influence depends on the specific situation of declaration and construction of own identity. Even within the same biographical narrative, in a period of a few minutes in the same story, the own understanding of homeland undergoes transformations:

“Besides the old people talk: Our ancestors went to Turkey in 78th, in the 50s. There has always been emigration to Turkey, and it’s better to go there, to arrange our life there, and at least not to think that one day we will go somewhere, to live elsewhere. We will already know our motherland.”

“I think that nobody wanted to leave there the house in which he was born, where he is used to [living]... The homeland... And to come here. It was not something very easy to take everything with you, and even to leave some relatives and to come here.”

Both paragraphs are quoted from the interview of the same respondent – N. I., a 35-year-old woman, born a village around Kardhzali. In the first case by motherland she understands the ethnic meaning of the concept in sense of the Turkish state, in the second quotation – it is the place of origin, identified as Bulgaria.

Ayşe Parla explores the concept of homeland in the context of government policies and official nationalist discourse of the two countries and claims that the current locations of homeland in the migrants’ perceptions are precisely the result of these policies. The Turkish nationalistic historiography considers homeland as ethnically conditioned concept, whose population members are connected together by common blood relationship. Thus the nationalist propaganda insists on superiority of the Turkish mother-land over communist Bulgaria. The Bulgarian nationalist propaganda of the time before 1989, whose results are processes which still run among the migrants in Bursa, insists on loyalty of the Turkish minority to the Bulgarian state.

Parla criticizes the inclusion of the community in the theories about ‘diaspora’, understood as a common vision or myth of the primordial homeland, political and economic commitment to it and expectation for a possible comeback with a sense of alienation from the host country. Such a categorization could easily be applied to the community of the ‘those returning to home’ in 1989 but loses from its sight those who return to Bulgaria due to lack of ability for adaptation as well as those who have never left the borders of their birthplace.⁴ (Parla, 2009b)

4 The last two are not a subject of the current research.

The existence of the community of the migrants from Bulgaria is closer to the modern transnational theories, presented, for example, by Basch – Glick Schiller – Szanton Blanc, which define transnationalism as a process of constructing social networks between the community of origin and that of settlement, with the existence of social, cultural, political relations over the borders of the national states. The participants in those processes they call ‘transmigrants’. (Basch – Glick Schiller – Szanton Blanc, 1994, 7)

On the other hand, the community does not fit entirely in those theories because it exists relatively settled in the new space and even retaining some connections with the place of origin, it could not be argued that it exists at the same time in both places, ‘jumping’ over the border. Quite the contrary, the everyday life limits its movement into the social field of the new habitation, work place, school and so on, and the cross-borders connections are in the field of the memory, rare trips to the other side of the border and rare meeting with relatives and friends left there.

The problem of categorization in precise terms comes from the incoherence and clear definition of basic identity markers.

The ‘göçmen’s exist in a complicated (I would call it) ‘patch-work’ identity generated by their confusion with the categorization of ‘own’ and ‘foreign’ when it comes to their own identity and the construction that sets it – the motherland. Leaving the country of origin, they believe that they ‘return’ where their ancestors are actually from, the ‘real’ motherland, in which they are related by ethnicity and by blood. Entering the new conditions however and facing the differences in language, religion, attitudes, lifestyle, they refuse to accept these new conditions and to identify themselves as belonging to ‘this motherland’ and thus, they return to the ‘old’ national belonging. Today these two belongings and perceptions about the ‘native’ exist within one and the same identities – ‘we are Turks’ but also ‘we are from Bulgaria’.

Besides the case of N. I., which indicates exactly this complexity of definitions and self-identifications, we will canvass more narratives of members of the community which are contrasting the position of N. I. but also illustrate the contradiction between each other.

I met C. D. almost accidentally, in a pub, where he used to work as a waiter, and joined our conversation after hearing us speaking Bulgarian. He agreed to sit and tell us his story but due to the fact that he moved many years ago, in 1978, he encountered problems with the use of Bulgarian language. At the time of the interview he was 54 years old, his friends in Bursa were joking with him by calling him “a communist”.

He left Bulgaria illegally with a cargo ship (which brought him a two-year sentence for deserting from the country) after an earlier attempt to sign for an ‘excursion to Istanbul’ but he was not allowed to pass the border. In his passport in Bulgaria he had

got a 'red point', later, in 1984, when the re-naming started, his friends with such points in their passports 'were sent to Belene'.

He managed to get on the board of the ship thanks to his close friends who were in the governance of his home town and had high positions in the communist party at those times. They advised him friendly: "C., if you get a chance, run away from Bulgaria. In 1-2 years your situation will be very difficult." From them he understood that a decision for changing names was taken (in his own words); they are the ones who helped him enter the ship.

"But the same woman, I gave, then the price of a Moskvich⁵ was 5400. 10000- 11000 levs I gave then to that woman... [...] But otherwise they do not deal with something else, just I would enter the ship. [...] Cause I don't have passport, or anything. Nothing. I paid there, I risked what I risked. And I entered the ship, I escaped. And in Istanbul, 9 o'clock in the morning, the Turkish policemen helped me. But inside the ship, there is, how to explain it, a KGB ajan, agents. In the morning, the Turkish police entered the ship. I was the last staying there, I would have dived into the sea. A Turkish policeman told me: "Stay 2-3 minutes, we will transfer you." The policeman told me: "If you step down, nobody can make you anything."

He left his relatives and did not say anything to anybody about the planned desertion (so that they would not know anything when the authorities ask them) and left... He returned to Bulgaria for a first time in 1995.

"C.: I do not go very often. Once per two-three years. Now I am, I am used to Turkey. Now, no matter how much nice in Bulgaria is, I worry there. There I have got friends, all my friends are in Bulgaria, but I am used to here. [...] When I go to Bulgaria, I am not worrying but something... something comes to me dark there. When I go out... Now I go from Kırklareli, from Malko Tarnovo I enter. Until the border everything is bright, when I enter, it seems to me dark in Bulgaria.

I: And you have got local citizenship and Bulgarian one, two passports?

C: No, I don't have Bulgarian. Only Turkish one. But in '89th, '90th you know I think, an amnesty for the emigrants was published. Whoever whenever has escaped, come and take your citizenship! In 1995 when I went my father told me: Take your citizenship! I told him 'Boş ver.'⁶"

In the end of the conversation he prepares tea for us and then I understood that his surname. In Turkish means 'the one who does not return'.

5 A Russian car brand

6 Boş ver (Turkish) - It doesn't matter. It's not important.

The narrative of A. A. is exactly opposite of those of C. D. Mr. A. A. was 65 years old at the time of the interview, he was born in a village in North-Western Bulgaria. In Bulgaria he was a teacher in Bulgarian language and literature and author of poems in Turkish and Bulgarian languages. He got arrested in front of the children in the local cultural centre because he explained ‘them’ [those in power] that *‘this is not humane, it is not correct, than one party, a communist one should not allow itself such things. How can it be, this is pure fascist act and so on.’*

He refused however to remember ‘these things’ with the explanation that *‘I want to remember Bulgaria with the good with which, isn’t it, breastfed me, raised me and educated me and these things, these spots, I do not give great importance.’*

“I couldn’t adapt here, that is... [...] Because, as I told you, a man forms himself up to the age of 20, I come here at the age of 45. 45 years old. Whatever you are doing, I cannot become a foreigner. I am a man of that place, of flesh and blood, of everything that formed me as a human.”

Mr. A. tells the story of his acquaintance who issued a Bulgarian passport but “ten years since he has got Bulgarian citizenship, he visited Bulgaria only twice.” He asked him why he needs this passport and his friend replied: ‘I am a Bulgarian citizen. I was born there. I was born there and this is my motherland, that’s it.’ When Mr A. is being asked with a direct question about his homeland, he answers:

‘Yes, now, if they tell me, for example: which one do you resign, I resign the Turkish citizenship and return back to Bulgaria. [...] I am thankful from the earth to the sky that is those difficult years and moments it embraced me, took care of me, gave me bread and so on. But that does not give me the moral right, does it, to put myself on such a low level and to say ‘I’m a citizen of Turkey and Turkey is before...’ The bones of my ancestors would then rebel. Do you understand? [...] Past, present, future, homeland is homeland. Homeland is a term that should not be diluted. With this concept nobody should play.’

These two stories illustrate two fundamentally opposing projections of the homeland. This is how the perceptions of the community members exist. Some of them situate the motherland in the country of origin with the argument of place of birth and express it in the memory of home. Others identify motherland with the country to which they feel sense of ethnical belonging and in which they recognize the language, religion, traditions as their own, as Turkish. A third part of the *göçmens* exist in the hybridity narrated in the story of N. I. Their concept of motherland is located simultaneously in both countries and it is projected in two layers – it is based on the ethnic origin (motherland=Turkey) but also on the place of birth (motherland=Bulgaria). Thus they are able to switch between these two identity constructing markers.

In the idea of the 'native' (not necessarily connected to the context of "homeland") embodies a very specific line of nostalgia which can hardly be defined – whether it is nostalgia for the home house, for the lost past, respectively lost youth, connected with a concrete place, people or memories.

"I. M.: We've got land, house. Memories I have. It is the most important, from there I have memories. It's something else, there I feel much more..., I feel comfortable.

I: In which occasions do you go there?

I. M.: ((laughing)) To see my homeland, that's it. That's the only reason, I have got friends, of course, there, who have been living there, who have come... Hey, now I remember there... [...] That's a reason, yeah. As I told you I am going for memories there, and when I go, I have a lot of memories. And when I look there all those fields, those walls that were made, the buildings. These are from my father, my mother – they made them, years and so... Grandfather, great-grandfather were all there. I am going in this, in the cemetery, to see the graves of the relatives, of the elders where they are. That's it, we were born there. It cannot be returned. Anyway. I want very much my... my children to go there, not to break the bone with this, with Bulgaria." [I. M. 44-year-old man, born in the region of Kardzhali]

In terms of nostalgia for the birthplace the generalization differences are indicator for the extent of its experience – it is much more visible and clearly expressed in the generation on and over middle age whose life has passed much the territory of this 'birthplace' and the memory for it is strong enough. It is much less visible in the younger generation for whom the 'birthplace' is just 'an image often identified only by the presence of close relatives, left in Bulgaria.' (Bochkov, 2004: 181)

'This is one, the expatriation affected most, most, most negatively the old population. People over 40 years could not get used to.' [A. A., a 65-year-old man, born in North-Western Bulgaria]

'B: The old... a bit more hard.

L: It's harder to accustom here. So long time, their whole life passed there, the environment here is different. For them – it is more difficult.

B: It's more difficult form them. They came here, we locked them at home. They do not work, we...

L: They were used to living there, as we were, they used to live there. They are accustomed to walk to the hills, to this, outside. Here closed at home?' [from the conversation with B. and L., 40-year-old women, born in the region of Dzhebel]

'My father died in 1993. But when we came here, he was not pleased. For the old ones, it was hard. Now, at that age of 50 to come here, you can not find job nor arrange your life here. If it wasn't us, the young ones, they would not be able to cope with living here.' [L, a 40-year old woman, born in the region of Dzhebel]

'For example, my father – he could not get used here. His mind is still in Bulgaria.' [T, a 35-year old man, born in the region of Dzhebel]

Nostalgia seems inversely to the ability to adapt. Many of the migrants talk about nostalgia when they were not able to adapt to the new conditions (from a communist to a capitalist regime), the new cultural and social situation and when they have close relatives left on the other side of the border.

'My mother, for example, got used to living here very hard. The first thing she told me. My brother had come to fool around here and I came to run about here. The first thing she told me, you know it is very hard for her, her parents are there; her family is there. She told me only this: "What did you like here in Turkey? Did you like the orange oranges?" There were oranges everywhere, at that time in Bulgaria there were no bananas, oranges. "Is it what you liked?" She was very... she was disappointed.' [B., a 40-year-old woman, born in the region of Dzhebel]

The image of Bulgaria in the minds and memories of the interlocutors is connected with the migration time, i.e. the socialist regime. Often it is expressed verbally with the absence in the "present" of the social conditions of the "past", illustrated in the story of L. and B.:

'The social insurance, nobody thinks about the future, whether you will remain without work or will remain without a salary, you know, there was not such thing.' [L.]

'Every year I was going on excursions. While we were in our secondary education, in the technical school of economics, every year we went to brigades⁷. On the brigade we are all the same age, we had great fun – we were working and we had fun there.' [B.]

'When we came here I was asked how life was there. For example, the health services, how was there, what were you doing, how do you go to a doctor there, do you pay or don't you pay? And I was saying: you go, make an appointment, get examined as a patient, take your medicine and you go. Do you work? Yes, we do. And those who didn't work, what did they do? And then I started thinking, saying: There was nobody not-working there. I don't know of anybody. Were there people who didn't work? There were not. All people worked.' [L.]

7 It is a summer working camp for young people (secondary and university students) organized by the communist state. People were sent for a couple of weeks to work in the fields (pick up fruits and vegetables, for example)

Nostalgia is part of most of the narratives of the migrants in Bursa. It is caused by strong emotional feelings in the reconstruction of memories in the story as well as in the frameworks of the everyday activities, expressed for example in watching Bulgarian TV or buying products from Bulgaria.

After the end of the interview with B. from the region of Dzhebel, upon understanding that I would return for short to Bulgaria, she asked me to bring her 'a milinka'⁸. 'The milinka' is what she missed in Turkey, she tried to find it but 'nowhere there is milinka like the one in Bulgaria.'

In the separate migratory quarters there are shops where you can buy commodities imported from Bulgaria. In Kestel⁹ there is a market, known as '*göçmen pazarı*'¹⁰ (open every Sunday), where besides the traditional fruits and vegetables, people can find 'Bulgarian' products, such as sausages, chutney¹¹, shaving cream "Caro", herbal tea, traditional Bulgarian bonbons, cream-starch, wafers, 'sharena sol'¹², cream 'Zdrave' (most of the products are left over from the period before 1989 but the nostalgic feeling are oriented exactly towards these products).

This 'migration' of goods is directly linked with the migration of people. The identification of the individuals through the products of consumption is a specific type of declaration of belonging, which belonging happens in the personal space. It happens 'for myself', to help me remember and not forget, to connect me with something I want to be connected with. Shaving cream "Caro" does not possess better quality features than any other shaving cream but it is the one that confirms identities and evokes memories.

One element of nostalgia is expressed by the symbol of language. As a result of the long stay, migrants have lost the ability to communicate in Bulgarian and this is explained as a lack and evaluated negatively. Those who do not communicate frequent enough in Bulgarian and those who migrated at young age do not have knowledge for fluent command in Bulgarian.

After the migration their desire to learn the 'foreign language' – the Bulgarian, gets transformation. In Bulgaria the collective desire was oriented towards learning Turkish as it was the impossible one in terms of time and place. In Turkey, the individual wish regrets the lack of practice of Bulgarian because it the impossible one at the relevant time and space.

8 Milinka is a traditional Bulgarian breakfast pastry with cheese inside

9 Kestel – one of the emblematic "Bulgarian" quarters in Bursa

10 *göçmen pazarı* (Turkish) – the migrants' market

11 'lyutenitsa' in Bulgarian is a traditional type of pickles with tomato and papers.

12 Sharena sol is a type of spice consisting of salt, savory, red pepper, etc.

'We were 40 people from Bursa, who were there to serve the military duties. 15 days it was very bad. I know nothing! The man shouting "Down!", "Stand", Ow... It was... But after that, the rest are from Bulgaria, we started talking with them slow, slow, slow. When we finished the army, it was very good. And, you know, I come here, there is nobody to talk Bulgarian with. If we were 5-6 people speaking Bulgarian, we would never forget... [...] To the right, ow... The lieutenant got crazy at those times. Hey, what this man was doing...' [B, a 28-year old man who chose to serve his military duties in the Bulgarian army¹³]

This example illustrates the usage of language but this opportunity for choosing a place for military service illustrates the specific position that the migrants from Bulgaria have compared with the local people in both countries. It operationalizes the 'national' belonging within the individual everyday life, i.e. sets opportunities for usage of the national and 'operating' with it in different contexts.

In his story I. M. expresses one of the strongest reasons in the perspectives of nostalgia and through the marking construct of the language:

'I. M.: Even I, it is difficult for me that my children do not know even a word in Bulgarian. A few word only. They have to learn a little bit Bulgarian because they are Bulgarian citizens. I have some projects about this. But this is concerning the future. The coming years I will...

I: What else is in the future?

I. M.: There is, future is something else. These are my projects and so, but after years I will, not after years... just after months I will do something, like this. To come true to this children, to make something, to start something. In general, for the children who were born here who do not know Bulgarian, this and that. I am thinking about some courses for Bulgarian, in Bulgarian, so that children will learn, those who were born here, who doesn't knot it. Those, who are Bulgarian citizens, of course. There are many.' [I. M. a 44-year-old man from a village around Kardzhali]

When speaking of nostalgia, we should make a specification that it is not part of all the stories. Among some people we met there was reluctance to remembering the past. Most of them however refused to participate in the research and to tell (with or without recording the story) about themselves and how their life has passed so far, so there is no empirical data for comparison.

13 Choosing the place for military service was a privilege the migrants with double citizenship received according to the local men.

'Now, my parents, you know, lived this thing with the names; they do not like going to Bulgaria. They still love it, but there is something inside there, right. [...] For my mother and my father, you know, there is nothing. But there are such people.' [B., 28 years]

Concerning to the whole community in Bursa the hypothesis of Ayse Parla that the absence or presence of an emotional connection with "home" is related to the differences in age seems valid, but it could not be confirmed in terms of economic capital and political engagement. (Parla, 2009b, 326) More difficultly adapting to new conditions appears to be elder people whose huge part of life has passed in Bulgaria and for whom the location of the 'homeland' is exactly there. We cannot confirm the hypothesis in terms of political engagement because respondents rarely touched political topics in their stories. In terms of economic capital proportion between strong emotional ties and economic development in the past could not be found as well as most of the respondents are not engaged in highly qualified labour, neither in the past in Bulgaria nor in the present in Turkey.

'Here we've got factories, instead of tobacco. Everybody works in the factories, this is the difference.' [N. I., a 35-year old woman, born in a village near Kardzhali]

The case of C. D., who had a high social and professional position in Bulgaria and is pleased to be called at the present "a communist" and who worked as a waiter most of his life in Turkey, even refutes the idea of emotional connection between economic capital and political engagement. For C. D. Bulgaria is a "dark" place.

A possible reason that could explain the existence or not of nostalgia, is associated with the presence or absence of any connection with the country of origin. When such a connection exists (it could be related with family, friendship, business, possessing of real estate and so on) nostalgia seems more explicit. The lack of such a connection in the present is a precondition for the lack of nostalgia, because on one hand, there is no "bridge" to recall the memory, and on the other – there is no need for such a memory.

Reaffirming the political influence on the national and ethnic self-identification, Ayse Parla explores the context of the appearance of the term '*soydaş*'. (Parla, 2009b) As argumentation of her thesis about the political usage of the concept and about how this use justifies political actions and constructs individual and collective identities, we will focus in detail into the political and social meaning behind this term.

'*Soydaş*' consists of two words in Turkish: 'soy' which means 'ancestry, kin, origin' and the '*daş*' – old Turkish suffix to denote belonging to the same thing. Literally translated '*soydaş*' means 'a relative' – a person who has the same ancestry, kinship, family origin.

The interesting thing here is that the word appeared in the Turkish language when the immigrants from Bulgaria settled within the borders of the Turkish state. It appeared initially in the political rhetoric as a justification of Government's actions related to the protections, benefits and state policies that support and (in the eyes of the local population!) 'favours', 'privileges' the newcomers. Later on the term entered the everyday language. Explanation of its appearance is connected with the necessity of it - i. e. when the meaning it expresses gets problematized. Within the community and in the parameters of the present, the local Turks do not call themselves 'soydaş' in everyday language; there is no necessity to prove a common ancestry. 'Soydaş' is used only in connection with and towards the community of the Turks from Bulgaria or within their own society boundaries because for the locals the "common kinship" is certain, it's taken for granted, which shall not be questioned and then proved.

Exactly in the recognition of 'ethnic kinship' comes the biggest clash of identities in the relations locals-göçmens. The perception of double marginalization could be found in most of the biographical narratives, caused, on one hand by the lack of adequate state policy in Bulgaria for the acceptance of ethnic diversity, and on the other hand – by the lack of recognition of this common 'ethnic kinship' by the local population in Bursa on the everyday level.

'There they call [us] Turks, here we are called Bulgarians.' [B., a 28-year old man]

'I say, I was born in Bulgaria, I say. So then, she says, how you can be a Turk, she says. You are not a Turk.' [N., a 58-year old woman from the region of Kardzhali]

'We say: they were telling us that we are Bulgarians. And here, also they are telling us that we are Bulgarians. Are we Turks, are we Bulgarians? ((laughing)) We just got confused here... Those who do not know exactly the history of the Balkans and in general, they cannot understand. They think we are Bulgarians. But if we are Bulgarians, why are we coming to Turkey? What job we have got here? ((laughing)) We are just explaining to them: "We are Turks, and you are, like you. "' [N. I., a 35-year-old woman, the region of Kardzhali]

The biggest conflicts in the relations between the two communities come from the accusation of the existence of 'Bulgarian identity' from 'outside' and from the attempt to defend their own Turkish one from 'inside'. The separate migratory quarters are called by the locals 'Bulgarian' ones in the everyday language, the 'göçmens' market is called 'Bulgarian', the cafés where people gather together are also 'Bulgarian'.

'Bulgarian Turks, for example, if we take them as a whole, they are seeking another way to form a community here, the community of Bulgarian Turks. If you imagine Turkey

as an ocean or a sea, let's say, ethnic groups are like islands. Bulgarian Turks are an island here, although they get married [to locals] and so on. They do not forget that 'I come from there.' It is transmitted from generation to generation: 'You do remember that your ancestors came from there.' And this is perhaps the most stable basis on which they build confidence that they belong to a particular group, ethnic group. And a few months ago a man came to me and said: 'Sir, do you know, I am one of you as well.' Who I am that you are saying I am one of you? 'Aren't you from Bulgaria?' 'I'm from Bulgaria. 'But my ancestors came here in the Russian-Turkish War.' [...] So 'And I am one of you, he said, my, ancestors came from... and so on'' [A. A., 65 year-old man, born in North-Western Bulgaria]

This aspect of the study on the construction of identity in the projections of the home and the homeland sets another theoretical framework – that of the ‘recognized’ identity (Dichev, 2002) - ethnic or national, by the ‘significant others’ who are considered inherently as its carriers/‘privatizer’ and the hypothesis that there is no identity where there is no ‘recognition’ of such from ‘outside’.

The research of the community of Turks, migrants from Bulgaria, in its focus of location of motherland, reveals a complex picture of declaration of social positions which put identification tags in the everyday existence. These positions are constant struggle for recognition of particular identities and are situated between the two extremes of a desire for belonging to the local community, the carriers of the signs of ‘Turk-ness’ and a desire for separation and distinction from unknown and undesirable social practices and norms of behaviour that the local community sets.

The location of the homeland is a result of political projects of both countries. It arises from the political preconditions as the public political (and as a consequence of that – media) rhetoric of both identity influencing countries set different and contradictory concepts of categorization.

The Bulgarian state recognizes the Turkish citizens who left the country as citizens who belong unconditionally to its population and as a result of this – gives them citizenship status with all coming rights (the right for ID documents, education, political vote, pensions, property, etc.) and obligations (taxes, military service until soon time ago, etc.).

The right to be Bulgarian citizens from the individuals’ point of view is taken for absolute granted, based on the place of birth and personal wish. It is provoked by deep emotional feelings in the older population and from a purely pragmatic ones in younger (nostalgia, of course, does not exclude pragmatism). Nostalgia is expressed in the awareness of the lost past and appears as opposing to the adaptive skills to new conditions (political, economic, social). Pragmatism, on the other hand, appears when

the additional citizenship provides more rights (rather than liabilities) for the particular individual. The main right, provided by the Bulgarian nationality is related to the ability to move freely over the borders within the European Union area. Compared to this, the Turkish citizenship provides visa restrictions for travelling abroad.

'I, as a retired person, will go around the world with the Bulgarian passport. ((laughing))' [B., 40 years old, born in the region of Dzhebel]

Pragmatism exists regarding the ability of individual investment and business plans within the borders of either countries (or the cross-border ones). Another factor on the side of pragmatism is the opportunity for education in Bulgaria. The access to higher education in Turkey is extremely difficult due to the small number of universities and the large number of applicants and therefore the entrance examination is quite demanding. The unsuccessful applicants there have a real chance for education in the Bulgarian universities, and the double citizenship decreases the amount of the semester fee to half of it compared to all other foreign students. Education in Bulgaria also provides a degree from a European Union university and many of the migrants who send their children for studying in Bulgaria know the education system since before 1989. That's how they imagine it now.

'They finished secondary education and could not continue upper and here [in Bulgaria]. Here they are with no exams. How do you enter? With an exam. In Turkey it is the same but as our children could not, both only to colleges. With secondary [education] there is no work anywhere.' [M., a 42 year-old woman, born in Kuklen, she mixes the idea of "there" and "here" because the conversation happens in the bus on the route from Sofia to Bursa]

The Turkish state in its nationalistic rhetoric, on the other hand, recognizes the settlers as its national citizens (imposed to the rights and obligations), but also as ethnic kin' (*soydaşlar*). Ethnicity is taken as unconditional through the prism of the individual perception, but faces serious conflict in the everyday social relations with the local Turkish community. The decision of migration in Turkey was provoked exactly by the protection of this ethnic belonging within the Bulgarian state but the expectations for recognition in Turkey face confrontation with the reality. In the concept 'construction-recognition' of identity, this ethnic identity meet refusal to be recognized by their 'significant others' who were originally its carriers and for whom – the migrants remain 'ethnically' foreign. This foreignness is determined not that much by the historical conditions, as by the cultural patterns and behavioural models

concerning the religious, economic and social aspects of daily existence. The settlers also identify the local population as different (in terms of initial expectations and in terms of everyday practices in the present). As a result of this, their existence in the new environment is characterized by multiple daily practices of integration and separation, both to society of their host country, Turkey, and to the society of the sending one, Bulgaria. Possession of two passports, issued by both countries, do not to provoke awareness of citizenship to both, but rather the opposite – in terms of individual perception, expressed metaphorically, the *göçmens* have no passport. They are citizens of two countries, but in practice within the everyday life and the social relation with the other, do not belong ethnically nor nationally neither to any of them.

The clash of the cultural codes of the two communities in Bursa puts the group of immigrants in the position of constantly defending their ethnic identity and asserting their right for double national citizenship. In practice, the existence within the Bulgarian State ‘hardens’ the individual and group identity as ‘Turkish’ because of the need for protection of a possible loss of identity. For the same reasons (conflict, requiring protection of a possible loss of identity) within the Turkish state, the Turkish identity ‘softens’ and gives way to social practices, norms, behavioural strategies which are ‘carried’ from the country of origin and recognized locally as ‘Bulgarian’ ones.

Migration cannot simply be viewed as the unidirectional uprooting and re-rooting of identity in a new, national, territory. (Parla, 2009b, 329). Both homelands are strong constructs which still influence the individual perceptions and the community identification both from “inside” and from “outside” point of view. Turkey is the chosen place to stay, the well established life, the ethnic and blood connection with ancestors. Turkey is the land of the ‘own’ – own language, own religion, own community, own nation.

‘We are here, canım¹⁴, we are going to live here, where can we go. [...] We are here. I am Bursalı.¹⁵’ [M., a 45-year-old woman, born near Assenovgrad]

‘To conclude you only this – it is good that I was born, grown up and educated in Bulgaria, but it is good that we moved to live here.’ [B, around 40-year-old woman from the region of Dzhebel]

Bulgaria, on the other hand, is the location of nostalgia and the lost past, personified in the father’s house, the homeless street dog in the centre of the village, the flowers and the trees of the family garden. The visions for the future and dreams in the nights are passing the border and even appear in the last sacral wish for a grave in Bulgaria.

14 canım – dear

15 Bursalı – from Bursa

“Until nowadays, for example, I haven’t dreamed any dream in Turkey. All my dreams are there. I close my eyes and I go... Ah!” [A.A.]

‘In the end my will is to bury me there [in Bulgaria]. I have written this in a farewell poem. If I do not create troubles, if I die here [in Turkey], to move my body there, to be buried there. That’s it. (tears appear in his eyes). Thus is my girl, Babini Vidini Kuli.¹⁶ [A.A.]

‘Man has grown up there. These mountains, these fields, yards, houses, you can’t forget them. No matter how many years pass, again it can not be forgotten. I was always saying to my husband, I say: one day, when I die, I want you to bury me there, I say, in my home village. I loved my village very much. There are a lot of fruits there. Have you heard about Perperikon¹⁷? Perperikon is in my village.’ [N., woman, 58 years old.]

16 Baba Vida (Babini Vidini Kuli) is a popular touristic place – medieval castle in the a town in North-Eastern Bulgaria

17 Perperikon is another popular place, a Thracian sanctuary in the Rhodope mountain.

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