

The children and their parents: Changing spatial belongings among migrants' generations

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the process of changing spatial belongings of migrants' generations. The First generation who moved out from Eastern and Southeastern of Turkey haven't cut their communication with their hometown. On the contrary, they have built new belonging relations with the host culture. This is the exact opposite of the second generation. The second generation, who are children of the first generation, have built sense of belonging to İnegöl where they live. Also the second generation have prevented their parents from returning to their hometown. It shows that children and their parents have been living in the different worlds although they live in the same homes. This study has been conducted on migrants living in Huzur Neighborhood, İnegöl, Bursa. Empirically, I conducted in depth interviews and focus groups discussions with 30 migrants to capture the changing spatial belongings of the two generations of migrants.

Keywords: Construction of identity, Kurdish migrants, intergenerational relations, Turkey.

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1. Introduction: Migration, Culture, Identity and Generations

The people who interact with the communities acquire some cultural patterns and they make sense all around the world with that view. First, it begins with the question of "who am I" and that is followed by multiple questions which continue for a lifetime. But there is a limit that creates the framework of these questions, which is the cultural environment we both live in and lives within us. Therefore, our identities, languages and entities are experienced through action and they are always ready for a change inspired by the events around us; and generally, "I" is in a state of motion all the time (Chambers, 2005). It means we build our identity in a process, or we can say that as long as the people are alive, they are in search of an "identity". As a result of living in the community, people need to create a sense of belonging to the people and communities around them. Also they need to differentiate themselves from the people who live in the same community (Kent, 2015; Yalcin, 2004). "Socialization, therefore, should be seen as a lifelong process in which human behaviour is continually shaped by social interactions. It allows individuals to develop their potential, to learn and to make adjustments" (Giddens 2005). The interaction happening between an individual and the society, allows an individual to select either one, the other or mixed models. Assmann (2001) highlighted that the socializing process of human beings look like a cell which produces and reproduces the body of living things. In the same way social groups always shape the structures of people, and as a result of these processes "social identity" is constructed. Thus, Social/cultural identity means the people who live in the social environment create their social roles and status according to components surrounding them (Gulec, 1992).

Actually we can talk about two kinds of socialization processes that people need to live. They are objective and subjective socialization (Fitcher, 1990). Objective socialization is the type of accepted norms and behaviours that are given to all persons by the culture which they are born in and which is also transferred from generation to generation. Society expects people to abide by rules set by cultural norms. In any case of noncompliance, individuals are considered or announced as an example of "deviation". The other one is subjective socialization, which means that the people who live in the social environment implement the roles learned from past experiences.

Without doubt, to find a way which is suitable for a person who has been affected by two different cultures, requires a long learning process (John, 1985). Therefore, Assmann (2001) has analyzed the process of identity formation with two paradoxical sizes. According to him, the first element is the social and cultural structure which people born in. In this stage, people are shaped with the features given to them and they also try to acquire a status in the community for themselves. The second element just consists of individual knowledge and skills. Besides that, the formation of identities includes different features. Generally, the first-generation migrants continue to live with the cultures, customs and traditions which they brought with them from their hometowns, because they feel more secure and safe with those aspects of lifestyle. Moreover, from now on, they work to educate their children who are called 'second generation' migrants, with the help of their traditional values. But the problems begin at this point, because they want to equip their children with that culture, but their children don't want to be shaped by them (Mitchell 2008). Since the second-generation migrants interacted with the city and its popular culture. They think that there is not any positive side of the culture which their parents try to give them. Also they think that they have to stay out of their parent's culture in order to find an acceptable identity in the city culture.

Constructed identities are affected by age, sex, living spaces and of course time. For example, according to Erginsoy's (2001) study, conducted on migrant Laws showed a cultural transformation over generations. According to this study, migrant people construct their identities using three reference points. The first one is financial conditions, physical space and objective conditions of human being. The second one is the normative structure of values and traditions. Lastly, the interaction between people living in same place which results in the local culture melting into a dominate one. In this context we can say that the second generation migrants find themselves in a new place and culture which is more dominant than their parents' one. As Alankus-Kural (1999) pointed out, being deprived of culture, relations, religious fellowship, citizenship and kinship causes desire to build identity in all countries of the world especially in Turkey.

We should not expect the integration of newcomers in any dominant culture in a short time. So, integration is a process that requires a person to give up from a lot of cultural identities and relations which they previously had. On the other hand, it is easy to select some cultural codes by having the same one than having different cultural context (McAuliffe, 2008). That is to say, as the context changes it becomes very difficult to choose cultural codes. The first one is easy for people and it doesn't change their lifestyle, but the second one, besides being very difficult to get it, requires some radical decisions. Because of that they are totally different from each other (Tok, 2003). Because "migration people" on the one hand should not forget the culture which shaped their identity, and on the other be able to adapt to the culture they live in by selecting compatible behaviour (if they want to integrate). It could be claimed that identity formation is flexible but this flexibility is not for people who had lived in rural areas until the age of 50 years (Yukseker, 2012).

But this situation is not the same for the second generation migrants. Because migrant youths spend most of their time in the city center by going to school, working, having fun, spending time with their friends etc. This situation, necessarily, has caused them to leave behind their parents' culture. That's why, they have more interaction with the city culture than their parents' culture. As highlighted previously, identity formation is shaped by friends, professional, class, media, ethnic, nationality, spatial, religion, and culture (Dogruel, 2007). But the different side of this subject is that they live in same home as a family. So they have to share some places, equipment and also, most importantly, they have to speak with each other. Finally it could be claimed that these two groups, despite the fact that they seem on the surface to be the same, in reality they are very different.

In this process, the second generation migrants behave pragmatically for cultural codes whilst choosing some features from these cultural codes. But, of course, the city culture is the dominant one. Also they select some cultural codes from their parents staying in the same home, so that they understand each other. Therefore, the places where people live offer a wide range of insight into the ability to choose for their identity formations (Nicholls & Uitermark, 2016). But also I must say that required components for the formation of an identity have been selected by media and popular culture, before the coming of second generation migrants. This section introduces and describes the second generation, the method of data collection, findings and results of the study, the interview notes that were collected from the interviews and the conclusions that were made from the study.

2. The Second or "The Transition" Generation

The migrants who are over 50 years old don't usually compromise their traditional values which have shaped their identities throughout their life in a very strict manner. However, for the second generation, their social identity begins after their relocation, which is turning point. They will have two different cultures; on the one hand the traditional culture of their parents on the other hand the dominant culture of the city where their parents go to. Obviously, there is a very challenging process waiting them to create a new identity, as they are affected by both of these cultures whilst not feeling a sense of belonging to either. This situation allows us to describe them as a 'transition generation'. Besides that, some descriptions have been given previously, like problematic generations, mixed-up generations, as well as "lost generation". At the same time, the "second generation" are a heterogeneous group of youths representing different trends among themselves (Canatan, 1990). The models are taken from both cultures and the invalid position of their parents' traditional culture makes the meaning of the second generation world complex. This situation leads to a new formation of culture called "hybrid culture", for which the most important impulse is "persistent demands of identities" that the second generation have had. Moreover, according to Freire's study (2011) sub-culture members who made contact with culture tried to change their behaviour in accordance with dominant culture. That's to say, the sub-culture members who want to be a member of dominant culture, like most of the second generation migrants, count themselves successful when they dress, eat, speak, behave, etc. like members of the dominant culture. It means that "they want to be like them, but cannot do so". I argue that one of the main reason for the second generation to adopt the popular culture of the city which is in many aspects different from their parents' is the fear of discrimination. One of the similar study conducted on migrant Jewish immigrants in Europe shows that "one of its characteristic features is hostility to migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers who are positioned in exclusionary discourse as the new 'Others' " (Delanty et al, 2008). Certainly what the Jewish people have experienced is different from the Kurds when their

social and special position are thought, but there are some general characteristic features of indigenous to migrants for instance "stance against" and bias. So the second generation wants to leave behind their parents' traditional cultural features.

Unlike their parents, the second generation who try to shape their identity with the city culture, have obtained the awareness of the different culture and hurry to experience it (Mitchell 2008). By doing so, they have moved away from the traditional forms of their parents' culture and moved closer to the new one. After having taken these roles, they have begun to criticize their parents' traditionalism. Moreover, this situation is clearly connected with the age and language dimensions of host place. Second generation migrants have an important opportunity to experience their language skill to be fluent. But on the other hand first generation have to be away from such social groups because of their age and unwilling behaviours (Skrzypek & Singleton, 2015). Despite the fact that the Kurdish people moved in the borders of their origin country, they have been facing some problems experienced mostly by transnational immigrants. Especially the first generation feel to be the foreigners in the city popular culture. By doing so, they constitute the transnationalism within the boundaries of Turkey. As it is shown in the Soongs' (2016) study which focused on the transnational students. Similarly, this is shown in the study conducted by Flam and Beauzamy (2008) that investigated the daily lives of "natives and foreigners". According to the research the human gaze has a very important role of keeping foreigners away from the public sphere and the social life. This is also very common for Kurdish people in the Turkish-populated cities. For the very reason the connection to homeland is completely being continued by the first generation. Some ethnographic studies, such as Giorgas (2008), Wilding (2008) highlighted the "recalled tradition from homelands to host countries". In addition to cultural activities held in the host country, "letters, telephone calls, video and audio tapes, emails and gifts were sent to and fro across the globe many times each year, reinforcing a sense of "imagined proximity" that was punctuated by the regular visits (Wilding, 2008, p. 34). Depending on this study's data, I argue that all of these connecting links are continued by first generation while definitely being denied by second generation.

By accepting some cultural codes of the city and feeling a sense of belonging to them, they enter a different world which their parents have never seen and felt. "For the person who has been broken off from his/her roots, to think is the first stage to unite and integrate with the one who desired to be" (Beaud & Noiriel 2003). So, the second generation have represented the innovation and change happening in the culture. Weber pointed out that when the thought of change enters into the everyday life of people and takes root, it will be impossible to stop. In this situation thought comes before action but action and dynamism follows that (Schroeder, 1996). It is possible to find similar finding among Jewish immigrants in Leeds, England. The study conducted by Kent (2015) shows that the immigrants have been experiencing the cultural evaluation in the historical process. Also it should be noted that the city and its dominant culture has become the port of salvation where the rural and traditional culture which their parents have loses its meaning. This is very similar with Dowson's study which focused on the Greek Cypriots who live in Melbourne, Australia; "For first generation Australian Greek Cypriots their memory of homeland is based on the experience of living in Cyprus. However, for second and third generations their reference to Cyprus is generally not reliant on lived experience in the homeland" (Dawson, 2008)

At this point, the role of education should not be ignored. By going to school the second generation migrants exist due to informal training given by the social environment especially parents, who have entered into a formal education. As Keser (2008) highlighted, with formal education, the youths have left behind the traditional education and acquired a new gate to learn about the outer world. Hence, the second generation migrants have begun to construct their culture differently from their parents. It makes them pioneers among migrants. However, this change can cause a conflict between generations.

3. Method

The Kurds are the largest ethnic minority group of Turkey. They predominantly live in the eastern and south-eastern Anatolia of Turkey. However, in the historical process they have migrated from their origin to very different regions of Turkey such as İstanbul, Bursa, Izmir due to some problems

experienced in the regions as well as for some economic, social and political reasons. They speak Kurdish language and have very different cultural heritage from the other indigenous people of Turkey. These differences add some characteristic features like, keeping themselves away from crowded spaces in the city center to some extent. However, this situation has been changing in the recent years with advantages of media (Bleich et al. 2015) and other integration policies by governments for them. Currently new generations are growing up with Turkish language and this has an important effect on the intergenerational relationship. This is so clear among Kurdish migrants who live in the city center, Inegol, a distinct of Bursa city, is one of the region where Kurds have a different neighbourhood named Huzur. In this context, I focused on the spatial belongings of the two generations in terms of hometown and the host spaces of Inegol Huzur neighbourhood. I utilized a qualitative method with a descriptive overview. The migrants who have been studied here had moved to Inegol from different cities of Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia of Turkey. They had migrated there due to a variety of reasons (especially from Bitlis, Mus and Van). But this study focused on intergenerational conflicts instead of other reasons. It should be said that this study separated generations from each other. The first generation refers to the migrants who were born in their hometowns and are over 50 years of age. The second generation refers to the youths who are under the age of 30 and were born in Inegöl. Empirically, I conducted in-depth interview and focus group discussions with 30 migrants, to capture the changing spatial belongings of two generations of migrants.

4. Findings: The Spatial Belongings of Generations or “Locals and Foreigners”

Because of various social and political factors the first generation migrants should put more effort to protect their traditional values against indigenous people, social and geographic effects of the place where they moved. This has two important reasons. The first one is that the first generation whose identity formation had been shaped into the traditional values are reluctant to enter into modern culture. The second reason is, the migrants don't want to be involved in the city culture and continue to live in a suburban area like Huzur neighborhood migrants. In addition to this, repeatedly keeping in touch with the place they came from, has also blocked access of their cultural transformation. However the values that the first generation has attempted to be protect, not only have they been criticized as explained above, but they have been changed by the second generation youths. At this point spatial belongings of generations have begun to change.

As Subası pointed out (1999) the values which were maintained by the first generation were done to protect them against anemia. Additionally, Tasdelen's (1999) study, based on Beritanlı tribe members, expressed that the people who migrated from rural to urban areas introduced themselves by the place they had come from. Another study on migrants Gormez (1999), shows that the migrants who moved from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia of Turkey could not integrate to the dominant city culture and have tried to go back to their homeland at every opportunity. But this "wish" has been followed by the most important "condition" that is, "if my children come with me". So the second generation believe that even if it is their homeland, they would not fit there and should not go back. For this reason, they stay, mostly in the suburban area and live as a "migrants".

In the following sentences of interview notes, we can understand the fragility of the sense of belonging and distance relationship with the city culture of the first generation migrants.

I'm not comfortable here. I cannot go out of here but in the village every place is yours. City's and village's life is very different from each other. The life in Eastern and Southeastern of Anatolia is very different. We want to go back. In Inegol I just can't stay in my neighborhood. I mean what I say, I haven't adapted to Inegol as I have adapted to my neighborhood (Huzur neighborhood) and our cultures are very different. We have never said that we are from here. I have another hometown... I have been living in Inegol for 20 years but I have not had two close Turkish friends yet. Our youths (the second generation) think that they are from here and they don't care about the hometown. For example the first generation could not go back due to their children, they stay in Inegol just for their children. The people who grew up in

the rural area want to return there, absolutely. I 'm one of them. If it was up to me I would go to my hometown tomorrow. The city life is very difficult (Kasim, first generation, in-depth interview, 2013).

As Kasim, a first generation migrant expressed in the sentence of "We have never said that we are from here", he put into words his longing for hometown and has never adapted with the city culture. Also we can understand from this sentence that his loyalty ties with the place where he was born. But he also said, "I haven't adapted to Inegol as I have adapted to my neighborhood". It means that he keeps the neighborhood separate from Inegol. So the neighborhood has been located by Kurdish people who came from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia of Turkey. The neighborhood is both heterogeneous and homogeneous. It is heterogeneous as there are migrants from almost every city in Eastern and Southeastern of Anatolia. But also it is homogeneous as their culture is the same and they are in the same condition. Moreover, he said that he wanted to return to his hometown like all the other the first generation interviewed. But they haven't gone back due to their children.

I do not want to go to the city center (Inegöl) I'm bored there and I cannot stand to stay in a small place. My family is very big. I cannot stay without my relatives. (Saniye, first generation, in-depth interview, 2013)

Saniye is 46 years old and he is one of the first generation migrants. In her entire speech during the interview, she emphasized kinship relations by referring to traditional values. Furthermore, we can understand from the sentence "I cannot stay in a small place" that the size of a place is not related to ground but to familiar people.

We are not exactly peasants or city-dwellers. But I feel like myself in my village. And every time I say that we are in our village. (Abdullah, first generation, in-depth interview, 2013).

Abdullah who is one of the first generation, said that he feels like himself in his village. It means that he keeps the neighborhood separate. This was also pointed out by Kasim and Saniye from Inegol. Because Huzur Neighborhood helps them to protect traditional values and relations between each other.

If I knew that my wife would come with me, I would go back as soon as possible. But my wife says that I cannot go back. 90% of our parents would also return to their hometown if they knew that their children would come. But that is impossible, no one from the second generation wants to (Suleyman, first generation, in-depth interview, 2013).

Sometimes, when I go to the hospital, they look at me as if I'm a weird. We are guests here. I don't feel myself when I am here. Nobody from the first generation should accept that. The first time when I came here I wanted to go back very much. Once I saw a Bestvan¹ company car and I was looking at it with longing. "I came here by it," I used to say. If I was in my village I would go wherever I want. But here I have not gone anywhere yet. In the village also we speak Kurdish but we are forced to speak Turkish here. (Gulistan, first generation, in-depth interview, 2013).

Gulistan is one of the first generation. She also talked of longing her hometown too. Moreover, she emphasized her discomfort, like other migrants. But unlike the other migrants she specified that they are guests in Inegol. This means that they did not belong to the place they were now living.

We aren't comfortable and we cannot behave like we did in the village, no matter how nice it is, no matter how nice Inegol is. It isn't about Kurdishness and Turkishness, it is about the living in a place that we are not from (Focus group, first generation, in-depth interview, 2013).

The first generation migrants especially men, want to return to their hometown and talked of their longing and uncomfortable situations at every opportunity. Furthermore, they specified that they could not behave like they did in their hometown due to cultural differences.

¹ A bus company carrying passenger between Eastern and Western of Turkey.

The interview notes mentioned above show the one side of the dispute of identity, culture, and relation with the city in which they live. However, these problems, experienced by the first generation, have been overcome by the second generation, changing their spatial relations. So this phenomenon removes the sense of longing and pain experienced by their parents.

In the following section shows the interview notes from the second generation migrants. These notes will show how they try to integrate to the "city" and its culture.

I have experienced all good things in Inegol. If I were in a village I would not have these opportunities. I would not have gone to university, for example. I would be a shepherd or a farmer. I would have less income. But if we adapt to the city culture, our parents criticize us, on the contrary, when we try to adapt to our parents culture our friends blame us. When I get away from Inegol I miss it more than Bitlis (his parent's hometown) (Huseyin, second generation in-depth interview, 2013).

Huseyin is a 25 year old second generation graduate who talked about opportunities of the city and its culture and the disadvantages of rural areas.

I have been trying to be like people who are from here, I follow fashion, in other words. They are not different from me. Of course, you should follow the fashion. And you should not stay away from it. You have to adapt to the fashion of wherever you are. For example, if we were sitting and there were some people speaking Turkish, we would have to adapt to that. We should not expect them to adapt to us. They already don't know. We should follow our customs, traditions and language when we are by ourselves (Elif, second generation in-depth interview, 2013).

Elif who is a second generation individual, 20 years old and a high school graduate, clearly shows the differences between her generation and their parents. With this feature, Elif becomes an example of "epistemic community"². Moreover, we can understand from the sentences of Elif that she sees the city culture as a dominant fashion and which they should be follow. On the other hand she sees their parents' culture as passive and should be followed in a specific area.

I'm used to this place and I feel as myself here. I have never seen my parents' hometown hence I cannot adapt it (Nülifer, second generation in-depth interview, 2013).

I have been living in Inegol ever since I can remember. Inegol is my hometown. I like it, because I have adapted to it. If I was in a village, working and education conditions would not be met. But, here you can find and work at a part time job after school (Burak, second generation in-depth interview, 2013).

Burak who is a second generation individual, high school student and 17 years old talked about advantages of city life and disadvantages of rural areas like his generation emphasized above. His identity, of course, has been shaped by the city culture but his world has also been shaped by it. These interview notes show the differences between their spatial relations. While the first generation see the rural area as an advantageous location the second generation believe to the contrary. That is an obstacle for them to understand each other.

We have to adapt to Inegol, as we live here. It is very difficult to explain to our parents. When we try to we are thought of as having forgotten our manners. We have adapted to the city culture. We are Kurdish but we live Inegol and it is just our another skill to speak Turkish. Our parents do not care about this advantage because of their ignorance (Celal, second generation in-depth interview, 2013). Celal who is a second generation individual thinks that they have to adapt to the city and its culture. But with this attitude, he criticizes his parent about their ignorance which leads to them misunderstanding him. Turkey is their (the Turks) country as much as it is mine (Zeynep, second generation in-depth interview, 2013). Zeynep, a second generation individual,

² Epistemic community used by Huseyin Arslan. To him, knowledge is produced by Westerns (USA, England, France etc.) and followed by Easterns (Arslan, 1992).

thinks herself as an indigenous person rather than a guest as mentioned by the first generation above. Saying that "Turkey is their country as much as it is mine", she has emphasized her sense of belonging to Inegol. Even if I had a chance to return to my village where my parent came from, I would not go. İnegöl is my hometown. Let's say I even if went, I can never adapt to their lifestyle (Gamze, second generation in-depth interview, 2013). Gamze who is a second generation individual and high school student has confirmed the statement, "if my children came I would return to my village" said by the first generation. She also has shown us the intergenerational conflict through perceptions of "strangeness" towards the village culture.

5. Conclusion

This study has analyzed the process of changing spatial belongings among migrants, where the second generation emphasized their adaptation to the city culture. But on the other hand, the first generation have talked of their "wish" of going back with longing. As Bagli (2006) specified, people can establish a very "strong", "romantic" and "mystic" relationship with the place they were born in. The other study conducted by Gungor (2005) has shown the change in spatial belongings among Turkish citizenship who moved to Netherlands. This study claimed that as time goes by, generations diverge from each other emotionally which helps the people who want to understand the intergeneration conflict. The study (Deniz & Atlan, 2009) conducted on Kurdish migrant people also shows that the first generation, who represent traditional culture in the city of Van have experienced more difficulties due to the behavior of people who live in the city. The first generation men, as we mentioned above, wish to return to their hometown but women of the first generation have also been trapped in their neighborhood. Unlike men, they cannot work from outside their homes. But both of the groups complain about being trapped in their neighborhood. They try to live with their traditional culture and the most important thing is allowing their dreams to remain alive. Besides these findings, first generation migrants have also experienced cultural shock, causing them to wish to return.

Finally, the first generation migrants who moved to Inegol for a variety of reasons want to return to their hometown with longing. Bulac (2007) has pointed out that lifestyle, which reminds the first generation's life in their village, has kept their feelings to return to their village alive. But as we mentioned above, this has not been possible because of their children's wishes of staying. Also the longing which is felt by the first generation has not been considered by the second generation. So the first generation has been continuing to live in Huzur Neighborhood as they have been living in in their villages whilst being trapped by the borders of the neighborhood. On the other hand, the second generation have been continuing to build new belongings in Inegöl.

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