Hans Vermeulen
Martin Baldwin-Edwards
Riki van Boeschoten *Editors*

Migration in the Southern Balkans

From Ottoman Territory to Globalized Nation States

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A welcome addition to the migration scholarship on this little-known, fragmented but globally important region. Taken together, the contributions offer a rich blend of history, politics, sociology and anthropology, alongside studies of memory, mobility and ethnolinguistic identity.

Russell King, University of Sussex and Malmö University

This well researched volume is a welcomed addition to our understanding of cross border migration over time in the southern Balkan region. The focus on the transformation of social identities is a testimony to the long term historical processes that underpin large scale population displacements which are far richer than mere 'migration crises'.

Eftihia Voutira, Professor, Anthropology of Forced Migration, Department of Balkan Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki

Migration is a ubiquitous phenomenon in the modern world. This thoughtful book studies migration patterns and intercultural exchanges within the transnational region of the Southern Balkans against a deep historical background, offering fresh and alternative readings of the past two centuries. From the final decades of the multicultural Ottoman Empire, through the homogenizing efforts of several nation states, to new forms of ethnic and cultural diversity imposed through globalized networks, this important collection of original essays successfully brings together two separate fields within migration studies, those of forced and voluntary migrations. A genuinely transnational volume, both in its scholarly approach and the makeup of its contributors.

Maria Todorova, Gutgsell Professor of History, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Hans Vermeulen • Martin Baldwin-Edwards
Riki van Boeschoten
Editors

Migration in the Southern Balkans

From Ottoman Territory to Globalized
Nation States

Springer Open

Editors
Hans Vermeulen
Emeritus professor
University of Amsterdam
Amsterdam
The Netherlands

Riki van Boeschoten
History, Archeology and Soc. Anthropology
University of Thessaly
Volos
Greece

Martin Baldwin-Edwards
Former Director
Mediterranean Migration Observatory
Athens
Greece

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Preface

The idea for the current volume emerged in a working group on migration of the Via Egnatia Foundation (www.viaegnatiafoundation.eu).[1] This working group was established during a conference the Foundation held in Bitola in February 2009. One of the purposes of the Foundation is to promote communication and understanding between the countries belonging to the 'catchment area' of the Via Egnatia—that is, Albania, the (former Yugoslav) Republic of Macedonia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey. In this book the term 'Southern Balkans' refers to these five countries.

In the early nineteenth century the Southern Balkans was still part of the Ottoman Empire. This started to change when the small Greek state was founded in 1830. Almost 50 years later the region saw the birth of another new nation state—Bulgaria (1878). In the period up to the Balkan Wars both states gained new territory, but the Ottomans still controlled a broad corridor from the Albanian coast on the west to Istanbul in the east (Fig. 1). This corridor or belt—consisting mainly of Albania, Macedonia and Thrace—might be called the Via Egnatia region since the Via Egnatia runs straight through it from Dürres in the west to Istanbul in the east. The countries of the Via Egnatia region share a memory of a fairly recent Ottoman past involving at least part of their national territories. It can be considered a distinctive region especially in terms of the population movements during and following the Balkan Wars (1912–1913).

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[1] For the results of the conference see Via Egnatia Foundation (ed.) (2010), *Via Egnatia Revisited: Common Past, Common Future*. Skopje: Kolektiv.

Fig. 1 The Ottoman Empire in the Balkans before the First Balkan War (1912)

As social scientists and others have remarked, the history of the region—both the narrower Via Egnatia region and the Southern Balkans as a whole—has resulted in conflicting interpretations of the past and the present which are often the product of narrow national(ist) frameworks. The linguistic diversity of the region also makes it difficult to widen one's horizons and take other national perspectives into account. Researchers from outside the region confront these problems as well. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, both communication and mutual understanding have slowly started to improve. The increasing internationalization of the social sciences and the associated increase in the use of English in scientific publications in past decades has also contributed to these positive developments.

This book contains three maps. The first two black-and-white maps were made by Vasilis Soliopoulos who did this with dedication and without remuneration. We thank him for his excellent contribution to this book. The third map is in colour and is placed at the end of the book. We have included this well-known map by Carl Sax to give the reader a strong impression of the ethnic complexity of the Southern Balkans—a complexity with tremendous consequences for the character and volume of intra-regional migration.

Note on Transliteration

In transliterating Greek words and texts we have followed the system used by the *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* with one exception: we have left out the stress accents. For the transliteration of texts in Cyrillic script we use the ISO standard of transliteration, as used by the *Ethnologia Balkanica* journal. In the case of names of authors and institutions we have usually maintained the way these names are spelled in Latin script by these persons or institutions, so as to make it easier for the reader to find these in bibliographies.

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Contributors

Martin Baldwin-Edwards Former Director, Mediterranean Migration Observatory, Athens, Greece

Riki van Boeschoten Department I.A.K.A., University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece

Raymond Detrez Slavistiek en Oost-Europakunde, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium

Panos Hatziprokopiou Department of Spatial Planning and Development, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece

Petko Hristov Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Moskovska, Bulgaria

Ahmet İçduygu MiReKoç, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey

Ifigeneia Kokkali Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of Florence, Florence, Italy

Eugenia Markova The Faculty of Business and Law, London Metropolitan University, London, United Kingdom

Ayse Parla European Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sabancı University, Istanbul, Turkey

Deniz Sert Department of International Relations, Özyeğin University, Istanbul, Turkey

Riki van Boeschoten University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece

Hans Vermeulen University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Nikolai Vukov Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria

Julie Vullnetari Geography and Environment, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom

Chapter 1
Introduction

Martin Baldwin-Edwards, Riki van Boeschoten and Hans Vermeulen

Previous studies of migration in the Southern Balkans have been fragmented not only along national but also along disciplinary lines. Moreover, the fields of study of 'forced' and 'voluntary' migration have been separate, with few interconnections. Our collection intends to bring these different traditions together, and in addition aims to promote mutual understanding between the citizens of the countries of the region, who are now increasingly linked through transnational and globalized networks. In order to achieve this goal, the volume adopts a dual approach to the study of migration in the area. On the one hand, it focuses on migration flows and intercultural exchanges exclusively *within* the region; on the other hand, it looks at contemporary migration against the background of historical developments during the last two centuries, while at the same time proposing alternative readings of this history. From a methodological point of view, this study reserves a special place for aspects of cultural history often lacking in the literature of migration—most notably, religion, personal name strategies, gender, family strategies, and 'memory'. It takes an interdisciplinary approach to migration—with insights from history, anthropology, sociology, economic geography, political economy, and oral history—and utilizes empirical studies of the societies and polities under examination rather than more theoretical elaborations. Our aim is to go beyond the narrow focus of national narratives that have dominated historiography in the region, by identifying transnational or trans-regional bonds from Ottoman times until the present day and also by bringing in comparative perspectives, where appropriate. We consider that

M. Baldwin-Edwards (✉)
Former Director, Mediterranean Migration Observatory, Athens, Greece
e-mail: mbe@mmo.gr

R. van Boeschoten
Department I.A.K.A., University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece
e-mail: riboush@uth.gr

H. Vermeulen
University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
e-mail: vermeulen.milies@gmail.com

migration patterns, coping strategies of individual migrants, and public discourses on migration in the present cannot be explained solely by contemporary developments, since they are deeply influenced by cultural traditions from the past.

The remainder of this chapter—like the contributions that follow—is organized historically. We start with a short discussion of migration in the Ottoman Empire, also considering some aspects of the late Ottoman Empire that are relevant to issues of migration in subsequent historical periods (such as heterogeneity versus homogeneity and the issue of nationalism). This is followed by a brief discussion of the implications of World War II and its aftermath for migration in the region. Next, we look at migration during the Cold War period and developments since the collapse of the communist regimes in Eastern Europe. We conclude by looking briefly at some consequences for intra-regional migration of the economic crisis that started in 2008.

1.1   Migration in Ottoman Times

Immigration, emigration, and internal migration all played a crucial role in the history of the Ottoman Empire. Immigration was a characteristic of the hey-day of the Ottoman Empire when many people found a safe haven and better economic prospects there. A typical case was that of the Spanish Jews who fled persecution in Spain and arrived in large numbers in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, settling in urban centres in the Balkans—especially in Salonika and Constantinople (Mazower 2004, pp. 47–52). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the Empire was in decline and disintegrating, many Ottoman subjects (mainly Christians and Jews) left for the USA (Ipek and Çagayan 2008). From the very beginning the Ottoman Empire was a 'moveable empire', as Kasaba (2009) phrases it, and the diverse populations in the Empire were frequently on the move—either voluntarily or forced by the authorities. The remarkable population transfers (*sürgün*) organized by the Ottoman authorities in the early period of the Ottoman Empire involved transfers of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish populations within the Empire (see, e.g., Hoerder 2002, pp. 111, 113, 117), while the *devşirme*—the levy of young Christian boys for service in the Ottoman army—also implied migration over large distances within the Empire, in this case of individuals (Lucassen 2009, pp. 21–22).

Besides these population movements between different parts of the Empire, there was also considerable movement within the (Southern) Balkans itself. Seasonal movements of agricultural labourers or of shepherds between winter and summer pastures, as well as the migration of itinerant artisans and traders, were all part of everyday experience. Part of this itinerant population subsequently settled in new locations. In Chap. 2, Petko Hristov describes these traditional forms of migrant labour, focusing on the Slavic-speaking part of the Southern Balkans and more specifically on Šopluk and Mijak, two mountainous border regions with a long tradition of migrant labour. There was also an almost continuous movement from the mountains to the plains, or in the opposite direction, depending on the security and health conditions prevailing in the Empire. The late Ottoman period saw new mi-

gration movements. Following the growth of trade in the late seventeenth century, thousands of Greek merchants established themselves in the cities in the northern part of our region as well as in the Northern Balkans, Central Europe, and southern Russia (Vermeulen 1984, p. 230). During the nineteenth century, cities in the Slavic-speaking regions—previously inhabited mainly by Turks, Greeks and Jews—saw their religious and ethnic composition transformed owing to the increasing migration of Slavic and Vlach speakers (Sahara 2011).

While the creation of nation states erected barriers to the free movement of shepherds, itinerant merchants, and all those who wanted to try their luck across state borders, it is difficult to get a clear picture of the volume and state regulation of cross-border migration within the Southern Balkans in the early phases of state formation. Some sources suggest that cross-border migration greatly diminished. Fatsea (2011), for example, found no evidence of the presence of foreign labour in the Athenian labour market during the founding phase of modern Athens (1830–1850).[1] A clear case of cross-border movement is the migration from the small and poor Greek state to Asia Minor in the years immediately after independence (1832). This migration—a continuation of migration flows since the eighteenth century—contributed significantly to the growth of the Greek population there (Adanır 2009, p. 64; Kitromilides 2008, p. 287).

1.2   Heterogeneity and Homogeneity in the Southern Balkans During the Last Period of Ottoman Rule

The frequent migrations during the Ottoman period contributed to the heterogeneity of the Southern Balkans in terms of language, religion and the origin of its inhabitants.[2] The 'ethnic' diversity of the Southern Balkans in Ottoman times is often perceived as being due to two factors. The first factor is the large number of 'ethnic' groups living there—a complex situation that many authors describe using the same ethno-national categories as we use today, such as Greeks, Turks, Bulgarians, Serbians, Montenegrins, Albanians, Gypsies and Jews. Second, these groups did not live side by side in neatly separated territories, but were to a large degree intermingled, especially in Macedonia and Thrace (see Sax map in the Appendix). Though such a picture gives some idea of the 'ethnic' complexity and cultural diversity of the region, it is potentially misleading, because it applies present-day categories to the

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[1] Most of the skilled labour force in the building sector at that time was recruited from the Greek islands (Cyclades). Several authors, however, mention the presence of Bulgarian and Macedonian workers (masons) in Greece in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see, e.g., Miller 1905; Grigorova and Zaimova 2012).

[2] Brunnbauer and Esch (2006, p. 14) make the same point for both the Ottoman and Habsburg empires.

past. People at the time did not see themselves in terms of such categories, although they slowly learned—and were taught and obliged—to do so.

How did the peasants—the overwhelming majority of the population—see themselves before the nationalist world-view reached them? Let us look briefly at the Orthodox population of the Balkans.[3] Simple peasants at the time would have seen themselves first of all as members of a family and village. Next, they would have identified themselves as members of a religious community—in our case, the Christian Orthodox one. The Ottoman Empire was organized into religious communities, the so-called *millets*. The Orthodox millet was known as the *Rum millet* and those who belonged to it called themselves *Christians* or—less frequently—*Rum* (in Turkish), *Romios* (in Greek), or some equivalent in another Balkan language. Though a religious label, the term also had a Greek connotation. The Orthodox millet was dominated by a Greek-speaking elite and the Greek language, called *Romeika* in Greek at the time*,* was the language of the church or millet and of the schools run by it. Besides the Orthodox millet, there were Jewish, Armenian and Muslim ones: each consisted of people speaking different languages. However, peasants were not only members of families, villages and religious communities. There were many named groups at an intermediate level, between village and religious community, such as the *Hashiots* (very poor, Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians), *Dönme* (Jewish Muslims), *Vallahades* (Greek-speaking Macedonian Muslims), *Gagauzes* (Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians), and *Pomaks* or *Torbesh* (Slav-speaking Muslims).

Before the rise of nationalism the term 'Bulgar' (or some variant of it) did exist, but usually had the connotation of 'poor Slav-speaking peasant'. Upwardly mobile Slav-speakers became Hellenized and no longer considered themselves Bulgars. Greek-speakers usually referred to themselves as *Romios*, but a Bulgar as a member of the Greek-dominated Orthodox Church or Rum millet could do so as well (see, e.g., Detrez 2013). The notion of 'Turk' also had a different meaning than it has today—being used for Muslims, even when their native language was not Turkish but Albanian, Greek or Slav. It also had connotations of status. For the Ottoman elite, the Osmanlı, the term 'Turk' had the connotation of country bumpkin (see, e.g., Lewis 1971, pp. 19–20; Mazower 2001, p. 51).

Gellner (1997, p. 20) argues that cultural diversity or differentiation as well as its maintenance over time was central to agrarian societies like the Ottoman Empire:

> Agrarian society encourages cultural differentiation within itself. Such differentiation greatly helps in its daily functioning. Agrarian society depends on the maintenance of a complex system of ranks, and it is important that these be both visible and felt, that they be externalised and internalised. If they are clearly seen in all external aspects of conduct, in dress, commensality, accent, body posture, limits of permissible consumption and so forth, this eliminates ambiguity and thus diminishes friction.

Notwithstanding the enormous cultural differentiation and complexity, the student of the Southern Balkans can hardly miss the cultural similarities that also existed across linguistic and religious boundaries (Detrez 2013), and in this case migration

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[3] The following description is mainly based on Vermeulen (1995, 1984). See also Detrez (2013).

played a role as well. Weakley (1993, p. 130) provides us with a good example. Writing about the houses constructed by Greek itinerant builders over a vast area in the Southern Balkans, he comments on people speaking different languages and professing different religions:

> The differences are seen in slight variations in plan and in certain detail elements…. The key design element was *a single housing form for a pluralistic and diverse culture* (ibid., italics original).[4]

This unity of Balkan culture can be observed not only in architecture, but also in music, cuisine, kinship, religious beliefs and practices, and in other cultural domains.[5] Perhaps most remarkable are the linguistic similarities. According to specialists like Friedman (2011), the Balkans constitutes a linguistic area with common characteristics: Balkan languages, despite their diverse origins, show many similarities in their grammar, called Balkanisms.[6] Perhaps more important for our introduction is the domain of religion: there is abundant evidence of syncretic religious beliefs and practices in regions where Muslims, Christians and Jews lived in close proximity. Syncretism existed in many places in the Balkans and the rest of the Ottoman Empire.[7] Remnants of such syncretism still exist in the region and are visible, for example, in the sharing of sacred places (Albera and Couroucli 2012; Duijzings 2000). In Chap. 7, on Albanian immigrants in Thessaloniki, Ifigeneia Kokkali considers syncretism in Albania and Albanian history. In an attempt to explain the remarkable way in which Albanians integrate into Greek society—and more specifically the role that religion plays in this process—she looks at the context of reception as well as Albanian history and the 'cultural baggage' that Albanians bring with them. A certain 'syncretic attitude' towards religion is one element of her analysis.

1.3   Creating National Identities

Before the advent of nationalism, the major identity split in the Balkans was between Muslims and Christians. Most Muslims were Turkish-speaking, but those who spoke other languages were often also called Turks and could identify themselves as such. There was a similar correspondence between Christian and Rum.

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[4] Slav-speaking and Greek-speaking itinerant builders moved roughly in the same geographic region. It could well be that the building styles of Greek and Slav-speaking builders differed only slightly.

[5] Regarding kinship see Kaser 2008. Kaser's study includes Albania, Macedonia, northern Greece (Epirus, Thessaly and Macedonia), and the western part of Bulgaria (2008, p. 12). Turkey is not included.

[6] Balkan linguistics was the first modern approach that 'attempted to deal theoretically with the consequences of language contact'. As a consequence 'no general work on language contact can avoid mentioning the Balkans' (Friedman 2011, p. 276).

[7] Kitromilides (2008, p. 259) refers to the 'extensive religious syncretism at the grass-roots' among the Greeks of Anatolia and mentions the well-known early study by Hasluck (1929). For the Balkans see, e.g., Stavro Skendi (1967) and Duijzings (2000).

In the early phases of Balkan nationalism when the Rum millet was still intact, Orthodox Albanian and Slav speakers tended—as Rum—to participate in the Greek struggle for independence, though some of them subsequently became fervent nationalists of their own linguistic nation.[8] Whatever assimilation existed in the Ottoman Empire occurred mainly within the millets. Among native Muslim groups this tendency continues to exist in some places to this day. Smaller Muslim groups tend to identify with, and to assimilate to, the dominant Muslim minority within a particular country or region rather than the dominant Christian majority.[9] This illustrates that 'in many ways the legacy of the Ottoman millet system has endured as religion continues to be an important differentiating factor among people' (Poulton 1997, pp. 20–21).

The unity of the Orthodox community started to break down when the Greek national Church was founded in 1833. The real split came, however, with the foundation of the Exarchist Church in 1878. Although the original goal was 'only' to introduce the Bulgarian language in the liturgy, the church soon became an instrument in the Bulgarian national struggle. From that moment, Bulgarian-speaking peasants were confronted with a difficult choice: to remain in the Greek-dominated Patriarchist Church and 'become Greek' or to go over to the Exarchist Church and become Bulgarian. Whole villages, particularly in areas to the south bordering on the territory of Greek-speakers, became divided into Greek and Bulgarian parties. Similar processes took place in Albanian-speaking and Aromanian-speaking Orthodox villages (Van der Plank 2004, p. 90; Vermeulen 1984, pp. 242–243). Schools played a major role in inculcating a national identity: during the nationalist campaigns in Macedonia, at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, the number of Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian schools increased dramatically.

Greek-speaking Orthodox individuals, belonging to the culturally dominant group within the Rum millet, were confronted with such difficult choices to a much lesser extent, but even they had to learn to be Greek. As Kitromilides (1989, p. 169) writes of the Greek communities in Asia Minor, the identification with the Greek nation 'had to be instilled and cultivated, or "awakened", as older nationalist historiography might say, through a crusade of national education'. Dragostinova (2008, 2011) writes in a similar way about the Greeks who lived on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. Though most of these Greeks supported the Greek national idea, they had strong ties to their places of birth, were reluctant to emigrate and some opted for Bulgarian nationality. Moreover, the Greek government organized there 'a massive enterprise of national persuasion by dispatching activists' (Dragostinova 2008, p. 167; 2011, pp. 24–31).

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[8] Examples are Vasil Aprilov (Stavrianos 2000, p. 371) and Grigor Parlitcheff (Grigorova and Zaimova 2012).

[9] See, e.g., Marushiavoka and Popov (n.d.) for Bulgaria.

1.4 Unmixing Populations and 'Cleaning' the National Territory: Forced and 'Voluntary' Migration in the Age of Nation State Formation

The rise of nationalism in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had great consequences for the Southern Balkans. In the early nineteenth century, the entire region was still part of the Ottoman Empire; by 1923 the Southern Balkans were divided between five nation states—Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania and Turkey. Greece was the first to break away with its War of Independence of 1821–1828, ultimately achieving recognition of a small territorial state (consisting of Attica, the Peloponnese and the Cycladic islands) in 1830–1832. Further territorial expansions included the Ionian Islands (1864) and Thessaly (1881).[10] Nevertheless, by 1912 over five million Greeks (mostly Ottoman citizens) remained outside the territory in Macedonia, Epirus, Thrace, Asia Minor, Cyprus, the Aegean Islands, Crete and southern Russia (Petsalis-Diomidis 1978, p. 15). In 1912 the Balkan League, consisting of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro, attacked Ottoman troops in an attempt to expel the Ottomans from the peninsula. This was succeeded by the Second Balkan War, started by Bulgaria (see below). As a result of these two Balkan wars, Greece's territory expanded massively to include Crete, much of Macedonia, Epirus and the Aegean Islands. Sovereignty of the Aegean Islands was finally confirmed by the Treaty of Sèvres (1920), although the disastrous Greco-Turkish war that followed resulted in considerable loss of territory[11] as determined by the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne.

Following the Greek pattern, Bulgarian revolutionaries engaged in a series of uprisings against the Ottomans, but were unable to dislodge Ottoman power. It was not until Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire that the peace of the San Stefano Treaty (1876) created the first Bulgarian state. This was bitterly opposed by the Austro-Hungarian and British empires, and in 1878 the Treaty of Berlin reduced the new Bulgarian state to a 'principality' that was 37.5 % of its original size, returned Macedonia to Ottoman rule and created a new autonomous state of Eastern Rumelia—also Ottoman territory (Crampton 2005, pp. 81–83). Just seven years later, Eastern Rumelia's military coup of 1885 reunited it with Bulgaria; this was formalized in Bulgaria's declaration of full independence in 1908. As a result of the subsequent First Balkan War, Bulgaria greatly expanded. Dissatisfied with the division of the spoils in Macedonia, however, Bulgaria then attacked Greek and Serbian positions, thus starting the Second Balkan War. It lost this war, as well as most of the

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[10] For a detailed exposition of the evolution of the Greek Kingdom, see Wagstaff (2002, p. 65–112).

[11] As a result of Greek military conquest in Western Anatolia after World War I, the Treaty of Sèvres confirmed acquisition of most of the Aegean islands and the entirety of Eastern Thrace excluding Constantinople, established procedures for the transfer of all Dodecanese islands to Greece, and awarded autonomy of Smyrna and the Asia Minor littoral to Greek administration under Ottoman sovereignty, along with a procedure for its incorporation into Greece after a period of five years (Wagstaff 2002, p. 90).

territorial gains obtained as a result of the first war. The net result of both wars was not insignificant, though: Bulgaria had obtained Eastern Thrace and its access to the Aegean Sea. Ten years later, at Lausanne, it would lose this as well.

Albanian nationalism had no equivalent of the Philhellenism of the European elites, or even the pan-Slavist movement in Russia (Vickers and Pettifer 1997, pp. 1–2); with no support from the 'Great Powers' (i.e., the international community), Albanian independence was to be both delayed and fractured.[12] From the very outset, Albanian aspirations conflicted with Greek ones, and initially this strengthened Albanian support for the Ottomans. After the 1908 rise to power of the 'Young Turks', by 1909 the Albanian Kosovars were in revolt, and by 1911 Kemal had agreed in principle to Albanian demands for autonomy—in line with those conceded to other Balkan nationalities (Kondis 1976, p. 54). However, an Albanian provisional government was achieved only as a consequence of the two Balkan wars and the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest. After a period of anarchy, the borders of Albania were finally settled with the Corfu Protocol of 1914.[13] Before this could be applied, World War I broke out, leaving a poorly-equipped new Albanian state to cope with it (Kondis 1976, pp. 132–133, 137).

What is now the Republic of Macedonia[14] was for a very short time part of 'San Stefano Bulgaria' until it was returned to the Ottoman Empire by the Congress of Berlin in 1878. After the Balkan Wars, with the Treaty of Bucharest (1913), Macedonia was divided between Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. When the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed after World War I, it became part of the federal state that during World War II was transformed into the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. During both world wars the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—as well as Greek Eastern Macedonia and Thrace—was temporarily occupied by Bulgaria, which still claimed it as its own. Macedonia gained its independence only in 1991, after the break-up of Yugoslavia.

The modern Republic of Turkey is, of course, what remains of the former Ottoman Empire. As a member of the Axis Powers, the Ottoman Empire belonged to the camp of the losers of World War I. In 1919, Kemal Ataturk started a revolt against both the Ottoman government and the occupying allied forces: the Turkish War of Independence (1919–1923) resulted in the end of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of modern Turkey.

Carving out more or less homogeneous nation states was not an easy task, especially in the Via Egnatia region with its mosaic of cultures characterized by hybridity and syncretism. No wonder it became an arduous and cruel process, notwithstanding the emphasis on heroism and national glory in the historiography of

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[12] By 1914, Albania had the support of both Austria-Hungary and Italy, who were keen to limit the size and power of a Russian-backed Serbia (Kondis 1976, p. 137).

[13] However, this agreement left substantial Albanian minorities in Serbia (Kosovo) and Bulgaria (Macedonia).

[14] It should be noted that the name of the country remains disputed by Greece, and its constitutional name—Republic of Macedonia—is not recognized by Greece or the UN. The provisional name agreed in 1993 was the 'former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia', which Greece abbreviates as FYROM.

the individual nations. Creating homogeneous nation states and national cultures required a lot of work in many domains: a national history had to be written and the national language, religion and landscape had to be purified—freed from 'foreign' elements. Religion and national identity became strongly linked, especially in Turkey and Greece, with Albania constituting the only real exception. There, the continuing co-existence of Islam and Christianity in its Orthodox and Catholic variants prevented a close link between national identity and religion while leaving some space for the continuation of syncretic attitudes and practices.

Purifying the nation also implied demographic engineering, the unmixing of ethno-religious populations, or the ethnic cleansing of the new national territories' 'foreign populations' (Sigalas and Toumarkine 2008; Zürcher 2008). Landscapes were nationalized by giving places with 'foreign' names new, 'national' names. Cultural monuments that evoked the presence of others were often used for new purposes or neglected, if not destroyed. Forced migration and other, more obnoxious, ways of ethnic cleansing such as massacres and the burning of villages were recurrent phenomena.

In the Southern Balkans, the Greek War of Independence marked the beginning of this process, leading to the deaths not only of soldiers but also of many civilians. The Greeks, perceiving they were on the winning side, seized their chance and cruelly murdered many Turkish civilians—for example, at the massacre of Tripolitsa. The Turks took revenge in Constantinople, Smyrna and on the island of Chios (see, e.g., Rodogno 2012, p. 66), with this last massacre, especially, gaining much attention in Europe at the time. Woodhouse (1977, p. 136) concludes, 'On both sides atrocities were appalling.' Those Muslims who had been able to save their lives fled the small independent Greek state and migrated northwards to Ottoman-held territory (McCarthy 1995, pp. 10–13). In the Russian-Turkish War (1877–1878) the victorious Russian troops, supported by Bulgarian irregulars, took revenge on the Turks (McCarthy 1995, pp. 65–81). Large numbers were killed and many fled to Ottoman territories. Cities like Thessaloniki and Istanbul were flooded by masses of refugees (see Akyalçin-Kaya 2011 for Thessaloniki). According to Mazower (2001, p. 11), over the period 1878–1913 some 1.7–2 million Muslims migrated voluntarily or involuntarily from the Balkans to what later would become the Republic of Turkey. By the 1880s, the Ottoman administration had already sent experts to sensitive border areas such as Thrace to see if refugees could be settled there to make these areas more Turkish (Adanır 2006, p. 177).

The two Balkan Wars (1912–1913) mentioned above were a combination of fighting, burning villages, massacring people and putting people to flight. As the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars wrote, 'The Turks are fleeing before the Christians, the Bulgarians before the Greeks and the Turks, the Greeks and Turks before the Bulgarians, the Albanians before the Servians' (Carnegie 1914, p. 154).

World War I (1914–1918) brought new population movements, mainly as a result of changing state borders, and was followed by the Greco-Turkish War which was at least as violent as the Balkan Wars. Until the Balkan Wars, the main (forced) migration movement had been that of Muslims from the Balkans to Turkey. As a

result, by 1923 over 20 % of the population of Turkey consisted of people with *muhacir* (that is, refugee) background (Zürcher 2003, p. 6). The wars 'caused a staggering refugee problem that was estimated by independent observers to have involved up to three million people' (Kitromilides 2008, p. 256).

Although a cynic or fervent nationalist would perhaps say that the formation of nations and national identities had made a big leap forward after (and as a result of) all these wars, violence, ethnic cleansing and mutual hatred had increased as well. Those who did not belong to the dominant nation became minorities, and usually enemies 'within the walls' as well. Moreover, in several cases these minorities lived in border areas, claimed by the neighbour. Under the circumstances, the best solution politicians could think of was the exchange of populations—a method considered legitimate at the time (see, e.g., Brunnbauer and Esch 2006, p. 11). And 'despite the great human hardship engendered by population exchanges, the improvement in regional stability cannot be ignored' (Barutciski 2003; see also Clark 2006, pp. 223–246). The largest and most well-known of these exchanges is that between Greece and Turkey (1923) and it is also the one that is best studied, though mainly from the Greek perspective. In Turkey there used to be little interest in the exchange, although interest in the topic is increasing (Kitromilides 2008, p. 269). The Greek-Turkish population exchange was laid down in the 'Convention concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations' signed in Lausanne on 30 January 1923. It came into force when it was included in the peace treaty of Lausanne (24 July 1923). Greeks were defined as 'Turkish nationals of the Greek Orthodox religion established in Turkish territory' and Turks as 'Greek nationals of the Moslem religion established in Greek territory' (Hirschon 2003, p. 8). Most Greeks of Istanbul and Turks from Western Thrace—about 100,000 in each case—were excluded from the exchange. The convention covered all those who had become refugees since 18 October 1912. This included about 1.2 million Greek Orthodox persons and slightly fewer than 400,000 Muslims. Since many Greek Orthodox people had already left Asia Minor over the period 1912–1923, the number actually falling under the conditions of the exchange (that is, those leaving after 1923) was considerably lower—around 350,000. The corresponding number for the Muslims was about 190,000.[15]

As the Greek-Turkish population exchange is better documented, and also as we are more interested in the region where the five states involved in our book border each other—the area we call the Via Egnatia region, we consider here mainly the other two cases of population exchange, between Bulgaria and Turkey and between Bulgaria and Greece, respectively, agreed in September 1913 and in November 1919. Here we will not go into detail on these exchanges since both cases are well-treated in Chap. 3 by Raymond Detrez, who shows how the expulsions and exchanges of populations relate to nation-building and irredentist policies. Vukov's

[15] According to Ladas (1932, pp. 438–439) between 1923 and 1926 189,916 'Greeks'—defined as Greek Orthodox—were transferred from Turkey to Greece and 355,635 Muslims in the other direction. Eddy (1931, p. 201) gives slightly different figures, resp., 192,356 and 354,647. These sources—one or both—continue to be referred to in (fairly) recent publications (e.g., Adanır 2006, p. 187; Barutciski 2003, p. 28; Hirschon 2003, p. 14).

contribution (Chap. 4) also relates to the population exchanges in which Bulgaria was involved, although his interest is less in the population exchanges themselves and more in what happened to Bulgarian refugees from Thrace and their offspring long after they settled in Bulgaria. He demonstrates that many people of Thracian origin are still involved in Thracian organizations and in claims for compensation for lost property.

There is a clear legal difference between the three population exchanges: the first two were voluntary, the last one obligatory. Many of the people involved in the Bulgarian-Greek and Bulgarian-Turkish exchanges were nevertheless forced to leave, either before, during or after the exchange. In practice, the difference is one of degree. The main criterion of selection in the Bulgarian-Turkish and the Greek-Turkish exchanges was religion. In the language of the day and also in many subsequent publications, Turks are said to be exchanged for Greeks; however, the selection criterion was not language as West Europeans would expect, but religion. The *Karamanlides* (Turkish-speaking Christians in Anatolia), for example, were forced to migrate to Greece; and the *Vallahades* (Greek-speaking Muslims from what is now Greek Macedonia) had to leave Greece for Turkey.

There are some characteristics that these population exchanges have in common, and these are points which also recur in the contributions by Detrez and Vukov. All three states involved in the exchanges were very keen on 'cleaning' border regions from populations considered to be a fifth column or 'foreign element'. The border regions were, moreover, considered ideal locations for settling incoming refugees, returning kindred peoples from afar. If the original population was removed, these refugees could be settled in those houses; and if native but 'alien' local groups were still living there, they could be induced or forced to leave. It was sometimes considered important to keep a claim on territories on the other side of the border. In these cases, ethnic kin living just across the border had to remain there, rather than 'return to the fatherland' as, for example, in Venizelos' policy regarding the Greeks in Western Thrace when this region came under Bulgarian control (Adanır 2006, p. 182). Another recurring theme is that people often had to migrate more than once. This happened, for example, to the Greeks on the Turkish coast, to the Bulgarians in Thrace, and to the Turks after the Russian-Turkish war. A final point to note is the radicalization among refugees—for example, the *muhacir,* who played an important role in the expulsion of Greeks from the Aegean coast before the Greek-Turkish war (see, e.g., Van der Plank 2004, p. 73).

Though the exchanges of populations contributed to the security of the region, the human price paid for it was tremendous (see, e.g., Clark 2006, pp. 223–246 on the Greek-Turkish exchange). Kitromilides (2008, p. 266) sees yet another drawback to the exchange of populations as a policy of ethnic cleansing:

> By reducing ethnic pluralism through such radical means, the exchange prevented the modern national societies that emerged from it from learning the skills and internalizing the values necessary for the practice of toleration, mutual respect of social groups and recognition of otherness.

Ultimately, this had consequences for the way that immigrants—not only those from other Balkan countries—were received in the 1990s.

1.5   World War II and its Aftermath

The Axis Occupation, resistance movements and the civil wars of the 1940s had a deep impact on the societies of the Southern Balkans. At the end of the decade, the establishment of communist regimes in Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria led to the onset of the Cold War which would seal off Greece from its northern neighbours for half a century. Economic hardship, violence and demographic politics led to mass migration, both within and across the borders of nation states. Although the Occupation created a new situation, some of the issues that had divided Balkan nations in the past continued to play a crucial role—territorial claims, irredentism, ethnic minorities, and the consequences of the interwar exchange of populations. Some of the events of the 1940s are the source of continued tensions between states in the Southern Balkans up to the present day, most notably the Macedonian Issue and the expulsion of the Albanian-speaking Muslim minority of Greece (Chams) to Albania.

The war created a major split between the states: while Albania, Greece, and Yugoslavia were occupied by the Axis Powers and developed coordinated resistance movements, Bulgaria actually joined the Axis and facilitated the invasion of Greece and Yugoslavia by German troops. Through this move, Bulgarian troops were allowed to occupy Serbian Macedonia, the eastern part of Greek Macedonia, and Western Thrace. This temporary annexation was seen by Bulgarian nationalists as a reunification of the Bulgarian nation. Italian troops occupied Albania and most Greek territory, while the Germans occupied Central Macedonia, Athens, Thessaloniki and the island of Crete. After the surrender of Italy in September 1943, Italian-held territory came under German control, but most of Italy's weaponry ended up in the hands of the partisans. In September 1944, following a change of regime in Bulgaria, Bulgarian troops evacuated Greek and Yugoslav territory and took part in the final battles of the war against Nazi Germany. Turkey remained neutral until the last months of the war, when it joined the Allies.

Many of the migration movements during World War II were of a temporary nature.[16] Between 1941 and 1943 nearly 23,000 Greek citizens fled to Turkey. Among them were soldiers of the defeated Greek army and partisans who had received an order to join the Greek forces under the command of the Greek government-in-exile in Cairo. The rest were refugees from islands of the Northern Aegean who fled in panic as the Germans approached or were driven by hunger. They remained

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[16] Although the 'final solution' enforced by Nazi Germany on the Balkan Jewish population does not fit the regional frame of this volume, it would be inappropriate to ignore it altogether. Greece lost between 75 and 88 % of its Jewish population (Matsas 1997, http://gjst.ha.uth.gr/el/history.php), one of the highest percentages of loss in Europe. In stark contrast to Greece, nearly all Albanian and Bulgarian Jews survived the Holocaust, with one exception. In March 1943, about 4,000 Jews from Eastern Macedonia were deported by the Bulgarian occupation forces to Bulgaria. From there they were sent to Treblinka, where all were killed immediately. Only 60 Jews from Eastern Macedonia survived by going into hiding (Kotzayeoryi-Zymari 2002, pp. 155–167; Matsas 1997, pp. 75–81).

in Turkey for the rest of the war.[17] Similar temporary movements of refugees also occurred in the border areas between Greece and its northern neighbours, Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Towards the end of the war, the newly created People's Republic of Macedonia received increasing numbers of refugees from the Macedonian minority in Greece. Among them were many families from the border area, but also Macedonian resistance fighters who had served within the ranks of the Greek Partisan Army ELAS, as they had been promised equal rights after the war. In May 1944, however, they came into conflict with the ELAS leadership and joined the Yugoslav Partisan Army. In 1945 there were 8,500 Macedonian refugees from Greece in Yugoslav Macedonia. The next year, with the outbreak of violence by right-wing irregulars, which often specifically targeted Macedonian villages, their numbers swelled to 20,000 (Michailidis 2004, p. 46–47).

By far the most important migration waves during the war years occurred as a result of the Bulgarian occupation of Eastern Macedonia and Western Thrace. The Bulgarian occupation forces adopted everywhere a policy of forced Bulgarization. In contrast to what happened in Yugoslav Macedonia, in Greece these Bulgarization policies were particularly harsh, as the majority of the inhabitants, after the interwar exchange of populations, were Greek-speaking. People were forced to acquire a Bulgarian identity card, an early uprising in September 1941 was bloodily suppressed and Greeks were forced or encouraged to sign applications for 'voluntary migration' (Aarbakke 2004, p. 38, 2005, p. 167; Kotzayeoryi-Zymari 2002, p. 139). Others, especially army officers, academics, and civil servants, were forcibly expelled (Kotzayeoryi-Zymari 2002, p. 140). As a result of these pressures, about 150,000 Greeks left their homes and moved west to German-held territory. In 1941 another 12,000 Muslims from Western Thrace fled to Turkey (Kotzayeoryi-Zymari 2002, p. 152–155).

Bulgarian authorities further pursued their Bulgarization policies by bringing in about 100,000 Bulgarian settlers, many of whom were former inhabitants of the region. Associations of Thracian Bulgarians in Bulgaria played an active role in these policies. In a proclamation of May 1941 their representatives condemned the way in which they had been 'expelled' from the area under the Neuilly Treaty and claimed the right to return to their homes in the now 'liberated' area (Aarbakke 2004, p. 384). In September 1944 all the settlers returned to Bulgaria, together with about 9,000 Bulgarian-speaking residents of the area who became refugees for the first time. The stream of refugees from Eastern Macedonia and Thrace continued over the following months, and at the end of 1944 there were some 100,000 refugees in Bulgaria (Aarbakke 2004, p. 386).

Even more dramatic was the fate of the Albanian-speaking Muslim minority (Chams) of Epirus during the war. In 1940 about 20,000 Chams lived in this area, which had become part of the Greek nation state in 1913. Most of them inhabited the fertile lowlands, and frictions over land subsequently became a source of conflict with their Christian neighbours. Although in 1926 the Chams were exempted from the exchange of population foreseen in the Lausanne Treaty, large portions of

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[17] Documentary *Asia Minor Over Again* by Tahsin Isbilen (2008).

Cham lands were expropriated and distributed to Greek refugees from Asia Minor or to local landless peasants. Others sold their properties, being led to believe they would be included in the exchange and forced to leave for Turkey. As a result, large numbers of the now landless Chams fled to Albania, where they formed a restless community. When war broke out in 1940 between Italy and Greece, the Italian authorities exploited the feelings of bitterness among the Cham communities both in Greece and in Albania and set up special Albanian-speaking military units to help them fight first the Greek National Army and later the Resistance. After 1943 the German army followed their example. Some Chams, however, fought together with Greek partisans in the left-wing Resistance units of ELAS. During 1943–1944 violence escalated and atrocities were committed by both sides. Between June and September 1944 the non-communist resistance organization EDES launched a major attack on Cham communities, in which about 2,000 Chams were massacred, women raped, and mosques and houses burnt to the ground. The survivors of these massacres, about 18,00–20,000 individuals, fled to Albania. The Greek census of 1951 registered only 77 Albanian-speaking Muslims in Greece. After the end of communist rule in Albania, the Cham Issue resurfaced, when Cham communities in Albania and the diaspora launched an international campaign to reclaim their properties.[18]

The second half of the 1940s produced new waves of mass migration within the Via Egnatia area. The establishment of communist rule in Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria led many Muslims of these countries to seek refuge in Turkey, mainly because of the restrictions on religious practices (Icdygu and Sert, this volume). The largest streams of refugees, however, were linked to the violence of the Greek Civil War. By the end of 1947 there were already 25,000 refugees in Albania and 18,000 in Yugoslavia (Danforth and Van Boeschoten 2011, p. 46). During the same period, 327 refugees, mostly women and children, arrived in Bulgaria. In 1948 the left-wing Democratic Army forcefully evacuated villages from border areas under its control to Albania and Bulgaria (Danforth and Van Boeschoten 2011, pp. 53–54). In the same year, the partisans evacuated about 20,000 children from northern Greece to Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria (Danforth and Van Boeschoten 2011). After the defeat of the Democratic Army in August 1949 the number of political refugees who had left the country reached a total of 140,000. However, as the neighbouring countries were unable to cope with the enormous flows of destitute and hungry people, the majority of the refugees were moved to other countries of Eastern Europe, where most of them would remain for over 30 years. About 4,500 refugees stayed in Bulgaria (Aarbakke 2004, p. 392) and 30,000 in Yugoslavia (Kofos 1964, p. 168). Most of the refugees in Yugoslavia were Macedonians who settled in the People's Republic of Macedonia.

In the aftermath of the Greek Civil War, many political refugees were stripped of their nationality and their properties were confiscated. Deserted villages of the border areas—especially those formerly inhabited by Slavic-speakers—were resettled

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[18] On the history of the Chams of Greece during the interwar period and the 1940s, see Kretsi (2002, 2003) and Margaritis (2005). On the Cham issue today, see Vickers (2007).

with people from other areas of Greece, deemed to be of 'healthy national beliefs'. Until 1974 the majority of political refugees settled in Eastern Europe were not allowed to return to Greece. Therefore, in the 1950s and 1960s tens of thousands moved to Bulgaria and Yugoslav Macedonia, in order to be closer to the villages of their birth and to enjoy the milder climate. Mass repatriation became possible only after 1981 when the Socialist Party PASOK was voted into power. However, a decree of 1982 restricted the right of repatriation to 'Greeks by birth'. Since then, many Macedonian refugees have been refused permission to enter Greece even for short visits (Danforth and Van Boeschoten 2011, p. 36; Monova 2008). This painful legacy of the past is at the core of the Macedonia Issue which has poisoned relations between Greece and its northern neighbour.

1.6   The Cold War Period (1947–1989)

The political architecture of Europe that resulted from World War II was absolutely central for Balkan countries and their management of borders. The Yalta Conference had placed Greece unambiguously in the western sphere. Under the Truman Doctrine, both Greece and Turkey, despite the latter's ambiguous position prior to and during the war, were increasingly seen as strategically important to the West; moreover, the Marshall Plan of 1947 nudged Turkey into a more pro-Western position. In contrast, the Balkan countries to the north had all initially fallen under the Soviet sphere of influence in 1945: by 1949, Tito had distanced Yugoslavia from Soviet influence and received substantial western aid and loans, followed in 1953 by a friendship treaty with Greece and Turkey (Jelavich 1983, p. 328). Albania broke relations with Yugoslavia after 1948 and became the most doctrinaire and isolated country in the region, closely allied with Moscow until 1960, when it shifted its allegiance to China (Jelavich 1983, pp. 331–333). Bulgaria was a close ally and adherent to Stalinist policies, remaining the region's closest ally of Moscow right until the final collapse of the communist bloc.

Albania became the first regional target of US and British security services, which recruited some 300 Albanian dissidents from Greece, Italy and Egypt and sent them in as guerrillas to organize anti-communist uprisings over the period 1950–1952 (Jelavich 1983, pp. 378–379). All were killed, and Albania effectively sealed its borders and isolated itself from the entire region until 1991. Thus, there was no migration of any sort for the duration of the Cold War.

Greece, despite the largest US investment in the world from the Marshall Plan and military aid (Mazower 2001, p. 119), suffered from a very weak economy, even with massive capital inflows. This led to extraordinary levels of emigration—initially to the USA and after 1960 to northern Europe, primarily Germany (Vermeulen 2008). Migration flows within the region followed the general Balkan pattern of ethnic rationalization (i.e., creating a mono-ethnic state), with removal of Greek citizenship from minority groups, the emigration of minorities to Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Turkey (see Içduygu and Sert, this volume), and the immigration of ethnic

Greeks. In particular, as political relations between Turkey and Greece soured over Cyprus, the Greeks of Istanbul became vulnerable. Just under a third of them did not possess Turkish citizenship, and in March 1964 Turkey denounced the 1930 Convention on Establishment, Commerce and Navigation and began deportation of Greeks on the grounds of national security (Alexandris 1992, pp. 280–281). By September 1965, over 6,000 Greeks had been deported from Turkey; many were wealthy businessmen who arrived penniless in Greece (Alexandris 1992, pp. 284–285). The fear of political persecution also led Greeks in possession of Turkish citizenship to join the ranks of refugees, and an additional 30,000 were reported by the Turkish press as having left Istanbul. Naturally, this had a massive impact on the size of the Greek community in Istanbul and contributed to the ongoing ethnic rationalization common to both Turkey and Greece.

Yugoslavia was not only a federal state, but a multi-ethnic one in which historic ethnic tensions were suppressed through the overarching ideology of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. There were tensions between developed and less developed regions, but traditional ethnic rivalries were the major concern. Many Muslim Yugoslavs—especially Albanians—took advantage of the improved relations between Turkey and Yugoslavia after the signing of the Balkan Pact and various treaties, and just under 200,000 migrated to Turkey during the Cold War period. They consisted of Albanians, Slav-speaking Muslims from Macedonia (Torbesh) and Bosnians as well as Turks, but all claimed Turkish descent (see Içduygu and Sert, this volume). With the creation of the People's Republic of Macedonia in 1943, Yugoslavia addressed the long-standing issue of regional identity (although the major part of the historical territory lay in Greece). In 1944 the government in Skopje declared Macedonian to be the republic's language and a commission chose a Macedonian local dialect that was the furthest removed from Bulgarian and Serbian (Jelavich 1983, p. 399). An official history and literature were contrived, along with an autocephalous Macedonia Orthodox church; ultimately, these resulted in serious tensions with Bulgaria, in particular. From the early 1950s, Yugoslavia tended towards economic liberalization along with greater freedom for its citizenry compared with the rest of the communist bloc. Citizens were free to travel, and tourism was actively welcomed with few visa controls. Labour emigration was also freely permitted. By 1975, persistently high levels of unemployment had resulted in over a million Yugoslavs and their families working abroad—representing 20 % of the actual labour force still in the country (Jelavich 1983, p. 392). Most were working in Germany and Austria, but there was a small presence in almost every European country. Yugoslavia was the second largest source country for labour migration across Europe, after Turkey (Kupiszewski 2009, pp. 427–429).

Bulgaria had agreed at the end of the war that those parts of Pirin Macedonia within Bulgarian territory should be ceded to Yugoslav Macedonia when the Balkan federation was established. It even recruited teachers skilled in the new Macedonian language that had been selected by the Yugoslav republic (Crampton 2005, p. 190). This unpopular policy was immediately dropped when Yugoslavia was expelled from Cominform in 1949. Expression of a Macedonian identity was criminalized in the 1960s, and the 1965 census was the last one to recognize the Macedonian

language (Crampton 2005, p. 199). At the end of the war, pressure to leave was put on ethnic Turks in Southern Dobrudja (acquired in 1940), as Bulgaria wanted the land for collectivization. Some 156,000 Turks left in the early 1950s (Marushiavoka and Popov n.d., p. 46), although there were still about 750,000 remaining in the country in 1965 (Jelavich 1983, p. 368). After Bulgaria and Turkey reached agreements in 1968 on family reunification, an uncertain number (114,000 according to Marushiavoka and Popov) left for Turkey (see Içduygu and Sert, this volume). The largest and most dramatic flow of ethnic Turks to Turkey occurred in 1989, as the final stage of an aggressive assimilation campaign that had started in 1984, with the criminalization of Turkish dress, language and personal names. Some 350,000 Turks (including Bulgarian-speaking Muslims or Pomaks) fled to Turkey between June and August of 1989 (Içduygu and Sert, this volume). Emigration of political dissidents occurred primarily in the immediate post-war period—that is, until the early 1950s. According to one source of data, some 8,000 Bulgarian political refugees had been resettled in Europe by the mid-1950s, the largest communities in Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey (IOM 2003, p. 13). Despite its strict adherence to the Soviet line, Bulgaria did encourage some temporary migrations. In particular, starting in the 1960s, Africans were admitted as university students. From the late 1960s, links with various African countries facilitated large temporary skilled migration flows out of Bulgaria for doctors, teachers, engineers and others (Crampton 2005, p. 195). By 1981, there were over 2,000 Bulgarian doctors working in Libya, for example, providing much-needed foreign currency and remittances. However, there was no regional Balkan labour migration either from or into Bulgaria prior to 1989.

Turkey during the post-war period became a major emigration country—in particular as *Gastarbeiter* in West Germany. In the 1970s, after the oil shocks, Turkish emigration started to be directed towards the Middle East (Adaman and Kaya 2012, p. 5). Turkey also shifted its immigration policy towards discouragement of immigration on the grounds that there was no demographic need. Some ethnic flows did occur, primarily from Greece and Bulgaria (see Içduygu and Sert, this volume).

1.7   The Post-Communist Political Upheavals

1.7.1   The Early Migration Phase

Unsurprisingly, the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe had major ramifications for the Balkans. With the collapse of the Iron Curtain, the region entered a new phase of population movements, encompassing ethnic, refugee and economic migrations. Perhaps less obviously, the first country to experience emigration pressures was Albania, which had been the most isolated for the entire post-war period. In June and July of 1990, some 5,000 Albanians sought refuge in western embassies in Tiranë (Vullnetari 2007, p. 31). Subsequently, thousands crossed the land and sea borders

to enter Italy and Greece in an irregular fashion. The total number of those who illegally entered Greece is unknown, but is estimated at over 200,000 for 1991 alone (Fakiolas and King 1996, p. 176).

Bulgaria's transition from communist rule followed the general pattern across Eastern Europe, although the fall from power of Zhivkov in November 1989 was more the result of a 'palace coup' than a popular revolution (Crampton 2005, p. 212). One of the first acts of the new regime in December was to revoke the ban on Turkish names. This led to the return of a third of the 360,000 who had left for Turkey earlier in the year. However, as a result of the sharp economic decline—especially affecting the ethnically mixed areas of Bulgaria—an additional 150,000 ethnic Turks left for Turkey over the period 1990–1991 (IOM 2003, p. 14). The removal of restrictions on travel also permitted ethnic Bulgarians to move in search of work—especially in Western Europe, the USA, Canada, and Australia. However, strict immigration requirements and Schengen visa controls meant that only the highly skilled could migrate legally. The majority crossed borders illegally (especially into Greece) and also were recruited for seasonal agricultural work in Greece (see Hatziprokopiou and Markova, this volume). This pattern of irregular and seasonal labour migration extended subsequently to Italy and Spain.

The collapse of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the complex and brutal civil wars that accompanied it, resulted in massive flows of refugees and IDPs (internally displaced persons) from and within the region. By the end of 1995, 350,000 Croatian Serbs had left Croatia; from Bosnia, more than 2.6 million were displaced and 1.2 million found refuge abroad. In 1998, 350,000 fled their homes in Kosovo, and the following year 350,000 ethnic Albanians fled to Albania, 250,000 to Macedonia and 70,000 to Montenegro. Conflict in Macedonia in 2001 led to 150,000 ethnic Albanians fleeing, mainly to Kosovo (Baldwin-Edwards 2005, p. 33). Other than the involvement of Albania and Macedonia in these flows, the impact on neighbouring Southern Balkan countries was not large. Relatively small numbers of refugees arrived in Greece and Turkey.

Greece had acquired an immigrant population over the 1980s—a complex mix of legal, semi-legal, and illegal migrants—from various countries including those in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. By 1990, it was of the order of 2–3 % of total population (Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatou 2009, p. 235)—reflecting the country's increasing political and economic stability. The Greek political reaction to irregular border crossings by Albanians en masse in December 1990 was highly negative, and reinforced by near-hysterical reports in the mass media which constructed a stereotype of the 'dangerous Albanian' (Baldwin-Edwards 2004a). Thus, a new immigration law was rapidly drafted to replace the previous one of 1929; its primary rationale was the allegation of criminality and the need to protect Greece from aliens. The new law made no practical provision for legal immigration, but implemented several new mechanisms of expulsion and deportation, as well as implementing major parts of the Schengen Agreement (Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatou 2009, p. 235). Immediately, the Greek police began mounting regular operations known as *skoupa* (broom) to round up undocumented immigrants and expel them, generally to Albania. In 1992, 277,000 Albanians were summarily expelled

without legal process, and 221,000 in 1993. From 1992 to 1995, 250,000–282,000 immigrants (predominantly Albanians) were expelled annually, although there were multiple expulsions of the same individuals. Reyneri (2001) has argued that this procedure was actually a form of circular migration, since Albanians who wished to get a free ride home would ensure that they were detected in the *skoupa* roundups. Small numbers of other nationalities were also expelled, primarily Iraqis, Romanians and Pakistanis (Baldwin-Edwards and Fakiolas 1998, Table 7). Despite these repressive measures, the stock of unregistered immigrants in Greece (primarily Albanians) climbed rapidly and by 1995 had reached an estimated 600,000 of which fewer than 100,000 had legal residence (Baldwin-Edwards 2004b, Fig. 1).

Turkey was a recipient of Muslim refugees from the Yugoslav war—primarily from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo (see Içduygu and Sert, this volume). While some ethnic migrations within the region continued (e.g., Muslims from Greece and Bulgaria), the predominant character of immigration into Turkey began to change into that of (unauthorized) labour migrations. In particular, small migration flows from Albania to Turkey started with the Albanian 'embassies crisis' of 1990, with later family reunifications and other flows. Starting from this period, the phenomenon of 'trader-tourism' also emerged as an important survival strategy: traditionally practised in East European counties, and involving Turkish goods, Bulgarians were particularly well positioned to engage in this economic activity (Konstantinov 1996).

1.7.2   The Consolidation Phase (1997–2008): Limited Peace, Regularizations and Border Controls

With the Dayton Accord of 1995, it looked as if the Yugoslav war period was over. However, in 1998 civil war broke out in Kosovo between Serb and Albanian Kosovars. Some 350,000 people, mostly Albanian Kosovars, fled as IDPs or refugees. The following year, 450,000 fled to Albania, 250,000 to the Republic of Macedonia and 70,000 to Montenegro. According to Kirişci (2001) about 18,000 fled to Turkey. With peace in 1999, some 600,000 returned to their homes in Kosovo alongside a reverse exodus of Serbs and Roma who fled to Serbia and Montenegro. Two years later, conflict in the Republic of Macedonia resulted in 150,000 ethnic Albanians fleeing—mostly to Kosovo (Baldwin-Edwards 2005, p. 33). EU governments have insisted on refugee returns to the region, although this simplistic policy choice has not been feasible for a variety of reasons. Around one million persons had returned by 2005, but this did not undo any of the ethnic cleansing created by war.[19]

Over this same period, different migration issues emerged in the other countries of the region. For Greece, the issue was the ballooning of an irregular immigrant population, of which the majority were Albanian. For both Turkey and Greece, there was the problem of irregular transit migration. In both cases, the Northern European

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[19] See Baldwin-Edwards (2005) for a discussion of policies and outcomes.

countries put political pressure on the countries concerned to deal with irregularity of all sorts. In late 1999, in the context of improved Greek-Turkish relations, an agreement was signed for cooperation in various matters of combating crime. This was supplemented by a protocol signed in 2001 detailing readmission procedures for irregular migrants. By this point, Turkey's application for EU membership had stalled and Greek-Turkish relations were less comfortable. As a result, Turkey was reluctant to implement the protocol and accepted merely 3–8 % of the requested readmissions over the period 2004–2006 (Baldwin-Edwards 2006a, p. 120). Improved coastguard patrols from 1999 onward deflected irregular crossings from Turkey towards the Greek land border and the River Evros, but the numbers were still small in comparison with irregular crossings from Albania. By 2007, detected crossings from Turkey were beginning to approach those from Albania at 34,000 compared with 43,000 (Maroukis 2008, Table 16), and this rising trend continued. As the numbers of detected irregular migrants climbed from 2006, there was no change in the proportion re-admitted by Turkey; in fact, the highest readmission number was in the first year of operation, in 2002, at 645 returns (Içduygu 2011, Table 2).

The other major issue was that of visa requirements. Greece had joined Schengen in 1999 (fully implemented from 2000) and was required to enforce the Schengen rules with regard to visas. The other countries in the region followed different policies on visas and border controls. All of the countries of the former Yugoslavia retained visa-free travel with each other; Albania and the Republic of Macedonia granted visas at the border for each other's nationals; Bulgaria granted visa-free travel to citizens of Macedonia (Baldwin-Edwards 2006b); and Turkey allowed visas to be bought at the border for citizens of almost all countries in the region, with the exception of Bulgaria. The visa requirement for Bulgarian nationals was waived in 2001, allowing a three-month stay for tourism (see Parla, this volume). This was occasioned by Turkey's partial adaptation to Schengen; Greece also removed the visa requirement for Bulgarians in 2001 (see Hatziprokopiou and Markova, this volume).

Greece by 1997 had acquired an estimated immigrant stock of some 700,000 of which only 60,000 were with legal status (Baldwin-Edwards 2004b, Fig. 1). There was considerable political pressure on the government to regularize immigrants—since the mass deportations of 200,000 a year had failed to prevent rising numbers (Baldwin-Edwards and Fakiolas 1998). In 1997 Greece started a two-stage regularization programme, which yielded the first hard information about irregular immigrants in Greece. Out of a total of 371,641 applicants, 241,561 (65 %) were Albanians, 25,168 Bulgarians and 16,954 Romanians. The total number of persons covered (including family members) by the White Card awards was 462,067 with an estimated 150,000 who did not apply. Regularization programmes were held subsequently in 2001 (with a new immigration law), 2005 and 2007. Immigrants started to acquire a more secure presence in Greece. By 2006, the second generation of immigrants had reached an estimated total of 220,000 with Albanians at around 110,000–representing 30 % of Albanian residence permits (Baldwin-Edwards 2008, p. 38).

Albanian irregular emigration continued apace, especially to Greece and Italy, with another large exodus in 1996–1997 after the economic collapse associated with fraudulent investment schemes, the so-called pyramid schemes (Jarvis 1999). Whereas the original border crossings into Greece had been over the mountains, this was in fact a very dangerous route: mostly men arrived in Greece this way. Women and children started arriving in the mid-1990s, mainly through other routes—with underground visas, smuggling arrangements and even trafficking. By 2001, the predominant mechanism was the purchase of underground visas from the Greek consulate in Tiranë (Baldwin-Edwards 2004a, pp. 52–53). By 2010, the Albanian population had increased to an estimated 700,000 (Vullnetari, this volume). Barjaba (2000) formulated an 'Albanian model of migration', consisting of survival emigration, abnormally high emigration rates, high but decreasing irregularity, volatility, back-and-forth migration and strong instability in migrant behaviour. This model actually holds for most poor Eastern European former socialist states, including Bulgaria (Kupiszewski 2009, p. 446).

Turkey's geographical position in the region has always made the country—and Istanbul especially—a major conduit for migration flows from the Middle East into Europe. In the 1990s the 'Southern Balkan route' through Turkey, then Greece and onwards to other EU countries, came under political scrutiny (Içduygu 2004, p. 309) with respect to irregular border crossings. The situation of Turks of Bulgarian origin is quite fascinating as a case study of both identity and adaptation between two countries, in particular, the shift in their status from that of potential citizens to systemic irregularity (Parla, this volume). Moreover, with changes in the Bulgarian citizenship law in 1998 and 2001, many returned to Bulgaria and applied for return of their Bulgarian citizenship. The resulting dual citizenship provided considerable advantages—in particular, involving border-crossing and trading of goods. Reports suggest that locals on both sides of the border resent what they see as the unfair privileges of dual nationals (Özgür-Baklacioglu 2006, p. 324–325).

1.7.3 Post Economic Crisis

Since 2008, the near-collapse of the Greek economy alongside economic depression throughout the region (with the exception of Turkey) has altered the character of migration flows. A large number of Albanians residing in Greece returned to Albania over the period 2007–2012. Greek statistics are incapable of revealing the extent of this, but reports from Albania suggest a figure of 180,000 returns (*Kathimerini*, 15 Jan. 2013), with potential impacts on the weak Albanian welfare system. Albanian border guard reports indicate that 64,060 Albanians returned from Greece in 2007, along with negligible numbers from other countries (Gedeshi and Jorgoni 2012, Table 1). Limited evidence suggests that the degree of rootedness in Greece has been the primary determinant of remaining. Thus, it is mainly single migrants (male workers) who return to Albania. Border apprehensions indicate that circular (irregular) labour migration to Greece has continued, alongside circular migration of those with valid Greek permits or citizenship, as well as authorized seasonal employment

in agriculture (see Vullnetari, this volume). In the case of Bulgarian migration to Greece, Bulgaria's EU accession in 2007 has made cross-border flows, and circular migration patterns, far easier. Thus, the labour markets of Bulgaria and Greece have become more interconnected, and flows of capital as well as people have increased correspondingly (Hatziprokopiou and Markova, this volume).

A similar pattern of increasing circular migration can be found in Turkey, where border 'sticker visas' have facilitated tourism-trading as well as tourism. From a recorded total of just over one million tourist arrivals in 2000, by 2009 Turkey was receiving 27 million tourists—of which 2.8 million were from the Western Balkans (Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and former Yugoslavia), 5.6 million were from the former Soviet bloc, and 2.2 million were from the Middle East (Erder and Kaşka 2012, Table 1). Some 32 % gave their reason for visiting Turkey as 'business' or 'other', instead of tourism activities or visiting relatives (ibid., Table 2). With a relatively open border policy alongside strict controls on formal employment and departure to EU countries, Turkey is an ideal country for informal economic activities of all kinds; this includes not only tourism-trading, but illegal employment of immigrants and acting as a staging post for irregular migration into EU countries. It is for this reason that the EU has been negotiating since 2005 to conclude a re-admission agreement and force Turkey into greater conformity with the Schengen provisions—despite its not being a signatory to them (Içduygu 2011). A draft agreement was initialled in June 2012, and signed in December 2013; the EU is demanding full implementation before granting a visa waiver to Turkish nationals visiting Schengen countries.

Across the entire region, migration is characterized largely by short-term survival strategies in a period of weak economic activity, alongside a small residual of ethnic migrations. Sometimes, the two are combined. The small labour immigration into Albania, for example, is predominantly from Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro, as well as from Turkey (MARRI 2012, p. 56). There have also been some short-term and longer-term migration movements from Albania, Bulgaria and Turkey into the Republic of Macedonia throughout the last decade (Kupiszewski et al. 2009: Annex 1). The principal result of the economic crisis has been to push both people and governments into patterns of flexibility, in order to survive the economic downturn. The old state-centric model of controlled borders and permanent residents has lost its validity, at least within the EU and Balkan regions. The exception lies in control of borders concerning 'outsiders' from Asia and other lessdeveloped regions. There, the EU through its agency Frontex, is persisting with the old model, and trying to impose it on the EU candidate country Turkey, as well as overseeing its implementation in Greece and Bulgaria.

1.8   Epilogue

In compiling this book we have taken a historical perspective, starting from the late Ottoman Empire. We have adopted this approach partly because studying historical developments in the field of migration is interesting in itself and this makes us real-

ize that international migration in the Southern Balkans is not a new phenomenon (as is sometimes argued). However, our primary reason for using a historical lens is because it aids us to better understand the present. The phenomenon of nation state formation in the Balkans necessitated a brutal process of classifying and 'reorganizing' the ethno-national groups inhabiting the region. Several means were used to reach the goal of relatively homogeneous nation states—such as ethnic cleansing, extermination, expulsion, forced assimilation and population exchanges. The enormous changes that these processes entailed can only be grasped if we realize how complicated the ethno-cultural and religious composition was in the Southern Balkans during the last century of Ottoman rule (see Sax map in Appendix). For a long period of time, migrations between the countries involved retained the character of 'ethnic migrations'—members of ethnic minorities leaving their birthplaces to join co-ethnics in another country that was in many ways foreign to them. During World War II and the Cold War that followed it, the volume of migration within the region was restricted; international migration was directed mainly to Western Europe and overseas destinations. Whatever migration there was between the countries of the Southern Balkans continued to be of the ethnic type or consisted of political refugees, such as the Greek partisans who crossed the border at the end of the Greek Civil War. The major change in migration between the countries of our region came with the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. Although the collapse of state socialist regimes led to a resumption of ethnic migrations, especially the ethnic cleansing of the Yugoslav wars, economic migrations also emerged. Greece became the focus of intra-regional migration, particularly from Albania and Bulgaria. That was a major change since it contributed to ethnic heterogeneity rather than homogeneity.

The first three chapters that follow deal with past migrations. In Chap. 2, Petko Hristov describes and analyses a traditional system of labour migration known as *gurbet* or *pečalbarstvo* as it existed in two mountainous regions of the Southern Balkans—*Šopluk* and *Mijak*. These traditional migration systems, which also existed elsewhere in the region, have disappeared; yet, despite their differences from modern labour migrations, the word *gurbet* is still used and the memory of these past migrations still plays a role in relating to the present. In Chap. 3, Raymond Detrez deals with one of the major population movements in the region in the early twentieth century—namely Bulgarians from Greece, Turkey and Romania moving to Bulgaria. He discusses the role of population exchanges in the process of nation building and irredentist policies in interwar Bulgaria. The refugees were used as tools for irredentist claims, and the process of adaptation to their new homeland was thereby retarded. In the following chapter, Nikolai Vukov looks more specifically at the history of Thracian refugees and their organizations in Bulgaria. He also pays attention to the revival of activities of Thracian organizations after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the renewed claims to compensation for lost properties and the continuing and revived memories of their homelands.

Chapters 5 and 6 are illustrative of the changes over time. The first of these, written by Ahmet İçduygu and Deniz Sert, tells the history of migration from the Balkans to Turkey from the end of the nineteenth century to the present. Like Detrez, they relate this history to nation building, but also to economic conditions and spe-

cific Turkish concerns, such as the perceived need for immigration to compensate for a declining population at that time. They also show that after 1990, ethnic migration decreased and irregular labour migration became more important. This last aspect is dealt with in great ethnographic detail by Ayse Parla in Chap. 6. Parla shows that over the past two decades the legal status of Turkish migrants from Bulgaria changed significantly. While in the past they were received as ethnic kin and prospective citizens, today they have become dispensable labour migrants moving back and forth between Bulgaria and Turkey.

Since the early 1990s, Greece has been the major pole of attraction for prospective migrants from the Southern Balkans, mainly Albanians and Bulgarians. This is why the last four chapters are devoted to Albanian and Bulgarian migration to Greece. Ifigeneia Kokkali asks why Albanian immigrants in Greece are so inconspicuous, why they seem to change their names and even their religion more easily than most immigrants. In trying to answer these questions she looks not only at discrimination, but also at how history has shaped conceptions about national identity among both Greeks and Albanians. She examines several aspects involved, such as the strong link between national identity and religion among the Greeks and the tradition of religious diversity and syncretism among the Albanians. In Chap. 8, Julie Vullnetari takes a very different look at Albanian migration to Greece. Her interest is in temporary or circular migration—a topic also addressed by others in this volume—and more specifically, seasonal migrants in agriculture. These migrants, drawn from the poorest strata in Albania, constitute an interesting segment of the Albanian population in Greece, specifically in view of the renewed interest in seasonal labour migration and its relation to the socio-economic development of 'sending' regions. In Chap. 9 , Riki van Boeschoten examines the renegotiation of gender identities among Albanian and Bulgarian migrants in Greece. She focuses on two major issues that emerge from the life stories of male and female migrants. The first is the empowerment of migrant women and disempowerment of migrant men, which seems to contradict the 'patriarchal backlash' in their home countries. The second is the striking differences between the gender identities of Albanian and Bulgarian migrant women. Van Boeschoten locates these trends against a backdrop of gender relations in Albania and Bulgaria and also the particularities of the migration process after 1990. In the final chapter, Panos Hatziprokopiou and Eugenia Markova examine the development of labour migration from Bulgaria to Greece over the past 20 years—placing it in the context of other forms of human and capital mobility in both directions. They argue that in this way the Balkan space is regaining the unified character it used to have in the Ottoman period. Greece, in particular, is also reacquiring some of the ethno-cultural diversity that used to characterize the Balkans—notwithstanding the recent popular hostility to immigration and immigrants, not only in Greece but in Europe as a whole.

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Martin Baldwin-Edwards was until recently Director of the Mediterranean Migration Observatory, based at the Institute for International Relations, Panteion University, Athens. Until 2014 he was also Senior Researcher at the International Centre for Migration Policy Research (ICMPD) in Vienna. He has published widely on migration issues, especially in the regions of southern Europe, the Middle East and the Balkans. Recent publications include Labour immigration and labour markets in the GCC (London School of Economics, Kuwait Programme 2011) and with A. Kraler, eds., REGINE: Regularisations in Europe, Amsterdam University Press, 2009

Riki van Boeschoten is Professor of Social Anthropology and Oral History at the University of Thessaly, Greece. Her research interests include memory, refugee studies, migration and ethnicity, civil war conflicts and post-socialism. She has directed a research programme on gender and migration from Albania and Bulgaria (http://extras.ha.uth.gr/pythagoras1/en/index.asp). Her most recent book, Children of the Greek civil war: Refugees and the politics of memory, co-authored with Loring Danforth, was published by Chicago University Press, 2011. Website: users.ha.uth.gr/boeschoten

Hans Vermeulen is emeritus professor of the University of Amsterdam. Until his retirement in 2001 he was director of research at the Institute of Migration and Ethnic Studies of the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He used to research in Greece and the Netherlands. His main interests and publications are on ethnicity, nationalism, multiculturalism, migration, integration and the second generation

Chapter 2
The Balkan *Gurbet*: Traditional Patterns and New Trends

Petko Hristov

The tradition of temporary labour migrations, particularly among men, has existed for centuries in a number of regions of the Balkans. The model by which men earn money somewhere 'away' or 'abroad',[1] but invariably return to their home places and families 'here', is known in different Balkan languages as *gurbet*, *kurbet*, or *kurbéti* and by the South-Slavic term *pečalbarstvo*[2] (Hristov 2008a, p. 217). Even though in the Balkans the term *gurbet* unifies a wide range of labour mobility patterns, these all relate to what Baldwin-Edwards (2002, p. 2) has called 'old-fashioned temporary migration', 'where the migrant's identity is closely linked to the country of origin' and remains significant for extended periods, regardless of ethnic and religious affiliation. The Balkans offers a remarkable variety of such traditional patterns: from the seasonal mobility of shepherds, agricultural workers and master builders to the temporary absences from home of crafts people and merchants (usually for one to three years, typically three[3]), with the goal of gaining wealth and supporting family back home. The names of these patterns are diverse, as are their distinctive characteristics in different regions, but all share a number of features that make them an important part of what we could call a Balkan 'culture of migration', following Brettell (2003, p. 3).

Migration researchers interested in the Balkans, however, confront several difficulties. First of all, there is the difficulty of uncovering the reasons for a country's different social groups' labour migrations, internally or to another country. Then

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[1] The 'abroad' could be a neighbouring region, the big city, another state/country, or 'somewhere in the Balkans'.

[2] The word gurbet in most Balkan languages comes from the Turkish-Arabic gurbet, meaning 'abroad' (see Turkish-Bulgarian Dictionary, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia 1952, p. 193), and the South-Slavic word pečalbarstvo comes from the Slavic pečalba ('gain'), i.e., to 'gain for a living'.

[3] Sometimes up to seven (see Brailsford 1906, p. 51 for Macedonia).

P. Hristov (✉)
Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum,
IEFSEM-BAS, Sofia Bulgaria
e-mail: hristov_p@yahoo.com

there are difficulties in tracing the mechanisms of the process. Finally, there is the difficulty of determining how changes in these processes are reflected in the migrants' everyday life and culture. From a Balkan perspective, both historical and contemporary interdisciplinary research are hampered by the frequent politicization of migration movements, especially concerning refugees and political emigrants. In this respect, Balkan researchers have fallen victim to the tendency of international migration to be a focus of political debate, rather than an analysis of hidden dynamics and socio-cultural characteristics (Kearney 1997, p. 324). Furthermore, if assumptions are correct about the highly problematic and uncertain nature of today's data and interpretation of numbers regarding Balkan temporary migrations (Baldwin-Edwards 2006, p. 9), what must this imply about numbers and interpretations in a historical context?

Patterns of labour migrations in many regions of the Balkans have for centuries followed their traditional model and principles of social organization, the latter being closely interwoven with family and kin. Given this peculiarity, as well as the lack of historical statistical information on seasonal workers in Bulgaria,[4] Serbia, and the Ottoman Empire, this chapter presents a historic-ethnographic reconstruction of temporary cross-border mobility using predominantly narrative sources. Documents from historical archives (mainly in Bulgaria), memoirs, scattered information from regional research (in Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Serbia), and oral family history narratives are the basic sources drawn upon to study the labour migration traditions of men from the Central Balkan region. All written sources are cited in the text.

Serious difficulties have also arisen from researchers' focus being limited to national frames, particularly among historians. A number of authors who study past labour migrations focus on their own country, writing in their national 'cages' and failing to look across the borders. Social and cultural exchange and influences are often ignored, both in the regions or countries that 'send' migrants and also in those that 'accept' them. Such a view is particularly inaccurate when speaking of the Balkans. In a historical context, labour migrations within the Balkans were as a rule cross-border and trans-border—'border' in the meaning implied by Barth (1969) of the ethnic, religious, cultural, and later, state boundaries of the Balkans.

This chapter focuses on seasonal and temporary male labour migration (*gurbet/kurbet* or *pečalbarstvo*) in its socio-cultural and ethnological aspects, showing its historical roots, specifics, and stages of development, with the example of the Central Balkans See fig. 2.1. This region is the part of the peninsula where today the frontiers of three states come together: the Republic of Bulgaria, the Republic of Serbia and the FYR of Macedonia. The area is known as *Šopluk*—a denotation without a clearly defined perimeter and including a range of local cultural features (Hristov 2004, pp. 67–82; Malinov 2008, pp. 424–436). In spite of this, the region shows some common and stable cultural traits, even though local populations

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[4] During the entire period after the liberation of Bulgaria (1878) and World War II, the official state statistics did not take into account seasonal workers hired for less than six months (Natan et al. 1969, p. 408).

have had different national identities; over the last 140 years parts of this area have changed their state affiliation five times (Hristov 2004, pp. 69–80). National and ethnic groups are not determined once and for all; they change over the course of history and 'by definition are modified after changes in state borders' (Prelić 1996, p. 115). At least, this is the way it has been in the Balkans. Among the stable traits of social life in the Šopluk region during the entire nineteenth and twentieth centuries is the temporary labour migration of the male population, which has shaped the traditional cultural model of local communities. The region under study here has been mentioned only sporadically in previous studies of migration in the Balkans (see Palairet 1987, pp. 225–235).

As a basis for comparison I use materials from my own fieldwork[5] and historical research on another border region in the heart of the Balkans, famous in the past for its ethnic and religious diversity and for mass labour mobility (seasonal and temporary) of its male population. This is the *Mijak*[6] region in north-west Macedonia, where the state borders of Albania, FYR of Macedonia and the newly proclaimed Republic of Kosovo converge in the present day (see fig. 2.1).

Fig. 2.1 The historic-cultural regions of Mijak and Šopluk

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[5] I carried out my fieldwork in north-eastern and north-western Macedonia during the summers of 2005 and 2009 (see Hristov 2010a, pp. 141–150).

[6] The Mijaks are a specific ethnographic group, inhabiting north-western Macedonia.

2.1   Traditions of Labour Mobility

Traditional patterns of economic migration in the Balkans are impressive in their variety and importance to the social and cultural history of all regions in South-Eastern Europe. Despite the turbulent history of the Balkan peoples—marked throughout the past 200 years by numerous economic and social catastrophes—*gurbet* migration has never ceased and has been accompanied by an exchange of ideas, information, technologies and cultural patterns. For centuries, specific regions of the Balkans in Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, northern Greece, Turkey, and south-east Serbia have been the main places for such seasonal or temporary labour migrations, either 'sending' or 'receiving' migrants.

This Balkan version of the 'mobility culture',[7] practised by generations of men who earned their livelihoods away from home, caused a number of transformations in the entire model of traditional culture in these regions—related to the temporary absence of men from the village. In a number of places, these transformations included the ways of making a living and material culture, as well as everyday gender stereotypes and the division of labour between men and women, social organization, the holiday calendar, and rituals related to a person's life cycle. Some of these cultural patterns and their impact on identity, particularly in the border regions of the Balkans, are discussed in earlier publications (see Hristov 2009a pp. 109–126). Comparative research about *gurbet* or *kurbet* in the Balkans is still remarkably scarce. A significant challenge to researchers (historians, ethnologists, anthropologists, sociologists, and demographers) is to explain whether these traditional patterns of 'life in motion' are being reproduced and transformed in the current context of globalization and EU expansion, which give more opportunities for labour mobility from a European perspective. This research has yet to appear. In this regard, the case of Greece is perhaps indicative: it was transformed from being a 'source' of emigrants in the decades after World War II (see Vermeulen 2008) to become an attractive centre for Balkan *gurbetchias* after 1991. As noted by Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatou (2008, p. 15), 'Today, immigrants make up around 10 % of the total population'.

2.2   Past Tradition I: Agrarian and Pastoral
Labour Mobility

Seasonal and temporary labour movement in the Balkans is a social process that developed at varying speeds throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Within the borders of the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century, the main 'streams' of temporary labour migration were headed towards the capital city *Stambol* (Istanbul)[8] and the other big cities of the Empire; they also headed to Wallachia

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[7] I borrowed this term from the French anthropologist Fliche (2006), who studied labour migrations (gurbet) in Turkey.

[8] In 1863, approximately 32,550 Bulgarians worked in Istanbul and its suburbs.

and Serbia (which had already been liberated by that time), to Central Europe and, less frequently, to Asia Minor, Egypt, and Persia.

In the early decades of the premodern age, the main form of seasonal migration in the agrarian sphere was the movement of the labour force from the mountains—areas which, according to Braudel (1998), were characterized by their 'archaism and poverty'—to the rich plains and river valleys, mainly during the harvest seasons (*na žetva*[9]). This process is typical for the entire Balkan-Mediterranean range (ibid.: 30, 40–43, 51–53). For example, the main destinations for agrarian seasonal labour mobility from the mountainous central part of the Balkans (the so-called *Šopluk*) were Wallachia (*Vlaško*) and the big farms in Dobruđa and the Thracian Valley. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the men from entire villages in the Bulgaria-Serbia border region (e.g., near the Timok River, Godeč, and Berkovica) worked on the farms of Wallachian *čokoyas*[10] (Hristov 2010b, p. 199). This type of agrarian labour mobility is not denoted as *gurbet* and is only sporadically called *pečalbarstvo*.

Historical patterns of labour mobility that preceded the classic *gurbet* are represented by transhumant shepherding. Seasonal shepherding and sheep breeding (with a calendar framework between the feasts of Saint George in May and Saint Demetrius in October), along with various combinations of agrarian labour, was commonplace throughout the centuries of the Ottoman Empire and its rule in the Balkans. Enormous flocks of sheep were moved from high mountain pastures to warm southern valleys in winter and back again in early spring. This was usually done by shepherds hired by the wealthy owners (*kehayas*[11]). Most distinctive was the shepherd nomadism typical not only of Wallachians, Aromanians, and Karakačans,[12] but also the Bulgarians from the Rodopa Mountains (towards Aegean Thrace and the Upper Thracian Plain) and from the eastern *Stara Planina* Mountains (towards Dobruđa). Part of this population had the privileged *đelepkešan*[13] status of suppliers of the Ottoman army over the centuries (Grozdanova and Andreev 1986, p. 121).

The rich shepherds among the Mijaks in Western Macedonia alternated the summer pastures surrounding Galičnik and Lazaropole with winter pastures on the Salonika Plain. It is no coincidence that one of the best known researchers of labour migrations in the Balkans, Michael Palairet (1987, p. 44), mentions Galičnik as an 'archetypal *pečalbar* community'. Though this village is currently deserted, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries up to 90 % of its men were away, engaged in *gurbet/pečalba* in Salonika, Istanbul, Sofia, Belgrade, Bucharest, and even Egypt. A considerable proportion of these temporary migrants owned shops (*djukjan*) selling dairy products (e.g., milk and white and yellow cheese) and sweets

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[9] In Bulgaria, this traditional movement from the mountains to the valleys received the folklore name *'slizane na Romanja'* ('descending to Romelia', i.e., Thrace).

[10] During the nineteenth century the term 'čokoy' was used to refer to rich owners of arable land in Wallachia.

[11] A traditional name for rich sheep breeders and traders in the Ottoman Empire.

[12] In Greek, they are known as the Sarakatsani.

[13] The official name for rich sheep breeders and traders in the Ottoman Empire, from Turkish-Arabic celep (-bi)—'flocks and herds trader'—see Turkish-Bulgarian Dictionary, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Sofia, 1952, p. 75.

in the big cities and capitals of the Balkans, thus creating a market for the products of the famous Mijak *kehayas*.

Agrarian and pastoral labour mobility had specific age and gender characteristics in the different regions of the Balkans, related both to the peculiarities of agricultural production and market and to the policies of the Ottoman Empire. The female version predominantly involved young, unmarried women ('maidens'). After marriage, the woman traditionally stayed with her family in her husband's house; in the regions with male *gurbet*, she took care of the family's land and livestock. The Šopluk mountain regions were a constant source of seasonal maiden workers, who migrated towards the lowlands (around Sofia in Bulgaria and to Ovče Pole in Eastern Macedonia) at the times of crop harvest. Intensification of agricultural production during the first decades of the twentieth century put an end to this seasonal maiden mobility; yet, the growing needs of the new bourgeois society in the capital forced the rapid development of new types of temporary maiden labour. Being a maidservant in a rich urban family became an important part of the socialization of girls from a number of villages near Sofia (Palairet 1987, p. 34). A twice yearly maidservant market (the *Sluginski Pazar*) was organized in Sofia, at the *piazza* where construction workers typically gathered to find work (the so-called '*Dyulgerska Piazza*') a week after Saint George's Day and after Saint Demetrius's Day. This became an important location in the capital of Bulgaria after World War I (Hristov 2005, p. 87). Parents brought daughters who were too young for marriage to the market and contracted them out as housemaids. This was usually done by the mothers, who also received the payment for the girls' labour (mainly house and kitchen work). The money was used for the future bride's dowry (see Hristov 2002, pp. 31–32). When the girls reached age 15–16, they were taken back to the village to marry. According to my respondents, girls rarely stayed on to live in the city and marry into urban families. Successful marriages took place in the village, thus marking the end of a young woman's acquaintance with the urban way of life. But the lessons learned from the landlady (*gospoža*) in the city were taken to the village in the form of cooking recipes, methods of housekeeping and nursing children, and sometimes urban ways of dressing and social etiquette.

These agrarian migrations were ended by the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 and the new political boundaries that divided and separated the territory of the former Ottoman Empire.

2.3   Past Tradition II: Seasonal Labour Migration (*Gurbet*) of Builders

Crafts people—especially masons—in a number of Balkan mountain regions have a tradition of temporary labour migration lasting from a few months to a few years. Often their seasonal[14] travels—aiming primarily at *pečalba* ('gain for living')—also

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[14] Labour mobility of artisans, specifically of builders, had a seasonal character and traditionally spanned the period between Saint George's Day in spring and Saint Dimitri's Day (or Saint Thom-

stemmed from attempts to overcome land shortages in the mountains (Palairet 1987, pp. 225–235; Brunnbauer 2004, pp. 141–142). Labour mobility of artisans had particular characteristics as well, especially among builders, potters, bakers,[15] and tinkers, whose travels covered the entire peninsula. In this aspect, several regional centres were formed in eastern Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia,[16] and in northern Greece (see Nitsiakos 2000, pp. 5–13) which 'emitted' waves of men for *gurbet* every year throughout the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. Possibly the oldest such centre is north-western Macedonia, specifically the Debar and Tetovo *kaaza,* which is home to the Mijaks. The other centres—such as Trăn in midwestern Bulgaria, Crna Trava, and Bosilegrad in today's eastern Serbia, and Kriva Palanka and Kratovo in Macedonia—still preserve the tales of the legendary builders (*djulgers*) of the capitals Belgrade and Sofia who were said to have acquired their skills from *Debarlias*, originating from the region of Debar (the so-called *Arnautluk*[17]) (Hristov 2008a, p. 219). Traces of the *Debarlias* can be found among the wandering *dyulgers* from other regions of Bulgaria—in Bratsigovo in the Rodopa Mountains and in the central Stara Planina Mountains, where the centres were Dryanovo, Tryavna, and Gabrovo. An example of this phenomenon occurred in 1870 when the first railway was built in Bulgaria (between Varna and Rousse). Most workers were 'Christians from Albania who swarm[ed] all over European Turkey and return[ed] home in the winter months, but faithfully returned each year' (Barkley 1876, pp. 56–57).

Traditional seasonal labour migrations of men in Bulgaria and Macedonia are not only part of the centuries-long common history of different ethnic, religious, and language communities of the Balkans. They are also part of folklore (see Karovski 1979; Pistrick 2008, pp. 97–110), of local and family narratives and of the individual biographies of prominent local historical figures, some of which have been celebrated as cultural heroes in tales and legends (Hristov 2008b, pp. 315–323). The intensification of male *gurbet* in the late Ottoman Empire was caused, in my opinion, by the break-up of the Empire's agrarian system and by the socio-economic crisis of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that led in the mountain regions to a decline of the well developed and state-maintained network of sheep breeders that supplied the army and large cities (Hristov 2008a, p. 219). This resulted not only in loss of privileges, income, and markets, but also in widespread economic desolation and insecurity in the emigration regions. Furthermore, there was the economic collapse that followed decades of feudal violence at the end of the 18th and the first two decades of the nineteenth century.[18] Local Mijak folk myth tells a different

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as' Day in the central part of Bulgaria) in the autumn, i.e., six to seven months of the year. We call it 'seasonal' to distinguish it from the collective term 'temporary' for traders and other crafts people.

[15] The term 'bakers' includes a range of bakers, pastry cooks, *boza*-makers, and *halva*-maker.

[16] The name 'Macedonia' denotes the geographical area Macedonia, which is populated by various communities in terms of confession, ethnicity, language, and culture.

[17] During the centuries of the Ottoman Empire, the name *Arnautluk* was applied mainly to Albanian-populated regions.

[18] For example, the rule of Kara Feiz, one of the gang leaders of former government soldiers and mutineers—so-called *kurđalias*—and his son Ali in the Šopluk; and the persistent raids by various villain gangs—called *kačaks*, especially in Western Macedonia (Petrov 1909, p. 3; Cvijić 1931, p. 134, 162, 169, 199). *Kurđalias* were a Bulgarian version of 'bandits from the fields', from the

version, however, relating the beginning of male *gurbet* at the end of the eighteenth century to the legendary Gjurčin Kokale. Appointed as mayor (*kođabašija*) of Lazaropole at a young age, Kokale is said to have ruefully witnessed the poor harvests from local lands; one autumn, the story goes, he piled up and set fire to the ploughs of all landowners in Lazaropole, thus 'ordering' the men to become traders and to feed their families by 'earning abroad'[19] (Hristov 2008b, p. 318).

In the mountain regions of the central peninsula, *gurbet* and *pečalbarstvo* of craftspeople was both widespread and traditionally prestigious (Bobčev 1902, p. 107; Petrović 1920, p. 18; Cvijić 1931, p. 134). This was especially true in the region known as Šopluk: legends are still told of masters who 'could shoe a flea and split the sole leather into nine' (Cvijić 1906, p. 194). The temporary labour migrations of the *pečalbars* is well documented in the period after the Crimean War (1853–1856). The Austrian vice-consul in Sofia, Von Martrit published a report in 1853 stating, '[T]he Christian citizens of the region around the town of Trăn are so poor they can hardly pay their taxes, therefore in the spring many of them leave their places of origin seeking opportunities to earn money in Istanbul, even Asia Minor. They return as late as winter' (Mihov 1943, pp. 331–332). After the Liberation of Bulgaria in 1878, Konstantin Ireček was reportedly told that 'during the time of the Ottoman Empire, a group of 5,000 men regularly went to Serbia to work as masons in summer'. Later, he added, 'The area around the town of Trăn as well as around Radomir and in Kraište is inhabited by mason-vagrants who work in bunches of 40 to 50 people' (Ireček 1978, p. 559). In the area of Trăn, the seasonal workers in free Serbia were called 'Šumadiers' (*Šumadinci*) in order to differentiate them from 'Stambolđias' (*stambolđii*)[20] working in the villages surrounding the capital of the Empire (Petričev 1940, p. 150).

These masters travelled from early spring to late autumn throughout the Balkan peninsula: from Serbia (Morava region, Šumadia, Belgrade) and Wallachia to Istanbul and Asia Minor (Smirna) as *djulgeri* (builders), *dzidari* (masons), *ciglari* (tile-makers), *kaljavci* (potters), and *crepari* (*crepnja* or *podnica*, those making flat clay baking pots), and also as stone-cutters from some villages (see Nikolić 1910, p. 29; Mironova-Panova 1971, p. 65; Palairet 1987, pp. 23–46). The seasonal outpouring of mountain male populations ('*u pečalbu*', meaning 'to gain', and '*u rabotu*', meaning 'to work') to other parts of the Balkan peninsula made for stability at a time of complex family households (*zadruga*[21] type) and increased the importance of women's position in the family (Brunnbauer 2004, p. 144). However, the deeply-entrenched traditional social role models for men and women in this

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Turkish kir—'field'—cf. Turkish-Bulgarian Dictionary, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Sofia, 1952.

[19] As told by Trajko Changoski in Lazaropole, the last descendant of Gjurchin Kokale's kin.

[20] Meaning 'people who travel to Šumadia' and 'people who travel to Stambol', respectively.

[21] *Zadruga* is a South-Slavic term for what social anthropologists call the 'extended family household', when different kin families do not separate but continue to live together in a single household after the sons have married. I agree with Brunnbauer (2004, p. 144) that 'the so-called *zadruga* was the prevalent household pattern only in areas with specific conditions—most notably insecurity and the existence of patrilineages'; this is exactly the case in the regions here under study.

patriarchal socio-cultural milieu inhibited, to a certain extent, rapid modernization in these pastoral communities. It is a fact, though, that entire villages were left in women's hands for entire seasons. Palairet (2002, p. 173) quotes Ireček, who calls Koprivštica (in Bulgaria) 'a female town during winter'. In addition, men's labour mobility, their seasonal absence from the local village community and their continuous work away from the home region contributed to the great strength of kinship networks in these regions. Even when settled in the big cities some decades later, as refugees after World War I or in the years of accelerated urbanization following World War II, these migrants constructed proverbially efficient social networks for mutual help, based on kin and local origin.

An important condition for the continued preservation and significance of the family and kin structure for the overall life of the village was the traditional organizational form of the migrant groups (*pečalbarska tajfa*) of construction workers. These were based on the kinship principle and up to the beginning of the twentieth century knew no written regulations (of the guild type). Traditionally, migrant male labour groups followed the norms of customary practice: a hierarchy of masters (*majstor*), journeymen (*kalfa*), and apprentices (*čirak*) was selected mainly from among the kin and, rarely, the wider village community. This peculiarity of the social organization of the migrant groups continued for a long period of time, both in Bulgaria and in Macedonia—in some places it remained as late as World War II.

2.4   Past Tradition III: Cross-Border Labour Mobility

The directions, destinations, and character of the temporary labour of male migrant groups changed a number of times in the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century along with the turbulent and complicated historical destiny of this part of the Balkans (Manolova-Nikolova 1997, pp. 159–173; Stojančević 1995, pp. 283–331). Before the liberation of Bulgaria in 1878, the most attractive centres for migrant groups from today's border region (Šopluk, including Crna Trava, Trăn, Caribrod, Pirot, Leskovac, Vranje, Lužnica, Kumanovo, Kratovo, and Kriva Palanka) were Šumadija in Serbia and Vlaško (Wallachia) in today's southern Romania). These were already independent and within the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. Also attractive were the region of Zagore near the towns of Vidin and Lom in the north-western part of today's Bulgaria, Dobruđa in the north-eastern part of today's Bulgaria, and Istanbul, which was the Empire's capital. In their travels across the Balkan peninsula, the skilled master builders left traces of their work everywhere. Examples range from the popular Wallachian houses of rammed earth (*bienica* or *punjenica*, see Mironova-Panova 1971, pp. 69–70) to modern buildings in Istanbul and Belgrade and the large port cities of the Ottoman Empire. In a number of (then) border cities in free Serbia (Paračin, Jagodina, and Čuprija) and Wallachia (Craiova, Gjurgiu, Braila, and the capital Bucharest), temporary migrants from Bulgaria and Macedonia established entire communities of their own. Many of them actively participated in the revolutionary struggles, uprisings, and wars that led to the liberation

of their home regions from Ottoman power, as well as their inclusion within the borders of the new nation states in the Balkans (Hristov 2008a, p. 222).

After the liberation of Bulgaria in 1878, the new capital Sofia quickly became an attractive destination for temporary labour migrants from the central Balkans, including Macedonia. Most of the seasonal construction workers in Sofia were from mountain villages along the Bulgarian-Serbian border and from the regions of Kratovo and Kriva Palanka in Macedonia, which remained within the Ottoman Empire. The most famous construction contractors in the Bulgarian capital were born in Trăn (a western Bulgarian border region) or in Macedonia (Petrović 1920, p. 23). The seasonal construction workers had 'their own' gathering and hiring spot—the *Dyulgerska Piazza* which was mentioned earlier as the venue of the twice-yearly 'maidservant markets'. It became an important location in the capital city as early as the end of the nineteenth century (Hristov 2005, p. 86). At the beginning of the twentieth century, construction workers were still 'seasonal guests' in the big city: they worked and earned in the capital, but spent winter months in their home villages. Soon after the Ilinden Uprising in Macedonia in 1903 many of these men became refugees from their home regions, arrived in large Bulgarian cities (Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, and Russe) and with their own communities and separate quarters there. The decades-long destinations of the male *pečalbars* traced a route similar to that of the refugees from the central part of the peninsula.[22]

Organized on the basis of kinship or local communities, groups of temporary migrants (so-called *pečalbarska tajfa*) developed their own subculture in the big cities (Istanbul, Thessalonica, Belgrade, and Sofia). The seasonal workers had spots where they congregated, such as the famous 'Znepole'[23] hotel (for the *pečalbars* from Trăn) and the 'Razlog'[24] restaurant (for those from Macedonia) in Sofia. Dialects came to be language markers both in Bulgaria and in Serbia (Cvijić 1922, p. 219). Some groups developed their own 'secret' language, such as the so-called *Fornički* speech of those from the north-eastern Macedonian village of Šlegovo, near Kratovo (Filipovski and Kitanovski 1984, pp. 67–135). Local populations on both sides of the (political) frontiers also considered the migrant groups from Šopluk to be autonomous communities, and their seasonal moving, from early spring to late autumn, was compared to the flocks of migratory birds: they were called 'cranes' (dialectal *kurkavci*) (see Hristov 2005, p. 85). These communities of male craftspeople traditionally had a closed subculture. Workers from other regions rarely could penetrate into their construction groups even into the 1940s.[25]

At the beginning of the two Balkan Wars and during World War I, many *pečalbars* from the central regions migrated to America to avoid military service.

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[22] Here is only one example: out of 74 construction workers in Sofia from the village of Radibuš (the Kriva Palanka region in present-day FYR of Macedonia), 72 enrolled as volunteers in the 'Macedonian' volunteer corps of the Bulgarian Army to participate in the First Balkan War, hoping to liberate Macedonia (personal fieldwork records).

[23] *Znepole* is the geographic name of the Trăn Valley in the westernmost part of Bulgaria.

[24] Razlog is the name of a town in Bulgaria, in the geographic area of Pirin Macedonia.

[25] It is still said in Sofia that you can only 'steal' but not learn the craft from the Trăn masters.

As early as the end of the nineteenth century, the USA became an attractive place for the region's unemployed labour force—first for those from Macedonia, and later for those from Bulgaria and Serbia as well (Petrov 1909, pp. 3–6). Some of these 'Americans' returned home in the 1920s, but most remained in the USA.

Time transformed local cultural tradition in the regions with traditional male labour mobility in accordance with the men's seasonal absences from their homes. In Šopluk, the builders' groups (*tajfa*) started their journey on the days of some of the great spring feasts around *Đurđovdăn* (Saint George's Day), but traditionally men were solemnly seen off by their families on the first Monday of Long Lent, the so-called *Čist Ponedelnik* ('Clean Monday'). By mid-May—Saint Constantine and Helen's Day—they were already at work ('*u rabotu*') (Petrović 1920, p. 14). Their earliest return was around Saint Demetrius's Day or *Ranđelovdăn* (Saint Michael the Archangel's Day in November). That is why most family and kin feasts (of the *svetăc* type, the feasts of the family patron saints, see Peševa 1960, p. 739) were grouped in the period from Saint Dimitri's Day to Saint John's Day in January (see Hristov 2001, p. 193). Weddings were similarly concentrated in the winter period, and in this region most children were born in autumn.

Local cultural tradition shows a stable 'migrant' ritual complex, connected with seeing off the groups of men leaving on *gurbet*. Seeing off the migrants took place in the following way: the oldest woman of the household scattered live coals from the hearth on both sides of the front gate, which the men then had to cross to acquire magical protection. This important ritual is similar to the seeing off given during traditional weddings: when men from the bridegroom's family left their home to fetch the bride and her dowry (*ruba*), they jumped over live coals from the hearth for magical protection (Mironova-Panova 1971, p. 181). Seeing off the groups of men as they left for *gurbet* was a ritualistic occasion, involving female tears and wishes for great gain.

In other regions of traditional seasonal labour mobility, the intensity of the yearly feast cycle was reversed. Among the Mijaks in Western Macedonia, weddings were held only once a year, when the young men returned to their homes on the day of the village church celebration (e.g., Saint Peter's Day in Galičnik[26] and Saint Elijah's Day in Lazaropole). If the young couple (*verenici*) did not manage to marry on that day, they had to wait an entire year until the next church celebration; the only 'reserve' option allowed by tradition was that of the feasts dedicated to the Virgin Mary (Hristov 2010a, p. 147). As late as the mid-twentieth century, these mountain villages were entirely closed and endogamous; for some the endogamy was inter-village, but in a local circle. Young men returned to their homes to find brides, and weddings as a rule were only 'among their own' (in a village and regional aspect).

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[26] During the last decades of the twentieth century the Galičnik wedding was transformed into a folklore performance. Even now, however, those who really want to marry in Galičnik can do so in the local church only on Saint Peter's Day. In summer of 2005 on Saint Peter's Day in Galičnik I witnessed three consecutive weddings. Galičnik locals still remember years with more than 30 weddings on this day. Saint Peter is the patron saint of the biggest church in the village, and Saint Peter's Day is the most important feast for the entire village.

Even today local women are said to marry in summer when the descendants of the former *pečalbars* from Europe, America, and Australia return home to find wives.

Also in these mountain regions of Western Macedonia, a stable *gurbet* ritual complex developed related to sending off and welcoming back the groups of migrant workers. Women and children would follow their husbands, sons, and fathers far outside the village, to a spot traditionally marked as a boundary of the region, where groups of departing men gathered. One can map these migrant toponyms for each of the villages and regions to create a particular 'landscape of *gurbet* memory' (Pistrick 2008, p. 103), part of what Nora (2004, p. 37) calls the 'milieux de mémoire' as social and collective memory. The names of these places were often related to 'crying' (such as the *Bridge of Crying* near Želino, Tetovo region and the *Tree of Crying* near Lazaropole; see Hristov 2009b, p. 93) and bring to mind touching scenes of (temporary) family separation. Local memory recalls that even the *Težkoto* dance, traditional in Western Macedonia, was performed at these places as the men started out on their journey.

This *gurbet* toponymy was not confined to Western Macedonia. Pistrick (2008) found *gurbet* toponyms in the Zagoria area between Albania and Greece to also be predominantly related to separation. Particularly well-known are the so-called *Guri e shkëmbive*; these are porous limestone rocks covered with small holes said to have been made by the tears shed by mothers of leaving migrants (ibid.: 103). This reminds us of the famous *Sopolivi kamănye* ('Rocks of Tears') in the Koprivštica vicinity of Central Bulgaria, described by Ireček (1899, p. 96) in the late nineteenth century. There are other similarly ringing Bulgarian *gurbet* toponyms like the *Oplači kamak* ('Stone of Crying'), *Plači-mogila* ('Hill of Crying') and *Plači-topola* ('Poplar of Crying'). In this regard, Ireček (1978, p. 48) makes note of the erstwhile well known *Kurbet* Mountain which separated the Šopluk mountain regions from the Šumadia valley in Serbia. It probably received its name precisely as a location for *gurbet* separation and reunion.

Gurbet toponyms can be characterized as 'lieux de mémoire' (to use Nora's terms), created by the piling up of collective memories of particular persons and events. As a result, these spatial loci turn into an 'environment of memory' ('milieux de mémoire') and function as elements and pivot points of collective identity. In the future study of cross-border migrations, drawing a 'landscape of *gurbet* memory' in the Balkans, as part of what Assmann (2001, p. 37) calls collective memory, is part of the challenge that researchers are currently facing.

2.5   Past Traditions and New Trends

The new political borders in the Balkans after the Balkan Wars and World War I, the restrictive national legislation in the individual countries, and the complex political environment in most Balkan countries (both victorious and defeated in the wars), further intensified by nationalist propaganda, led to a drastic decrease in trans-border labour mobility of men from the regions studied. Between the two world wars,

the Balkan market for seasonal trans-border migrants virtually collapsed: the USA closed as 'the *pečalbar* Eldorado' and the social situation in Bulgaria, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and Greece drastically reduced opportunities for labour migration (Palairet 1987, p. 34). This led to a change in the model of labour migration among men from these regions. Their movements were redirected towards the big cities at the hearts of their own countries. Still, this labour mobility had the traditional characteristics of *gurbet*: the men were earning in the city but their families stayed in their home villages throughout the Šopluk where the men spent the inactive winter months. However, this increase of 'internal' temporary labour migration laid the social foundations for permanent emigration to the cities (or urbanization), which became a reality after World War II and was stimulated by the intensive industrialization undertaken by the new socialist governments of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

After World War II, the Central Balkans became a region of the new 'People's Republics'. These dramatically changed the labour market situation and character of labour relations in Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia. The accelerated industrialization of the 1950s turned the seasonal migrants into 'socialist workers' and resulted in the mass depopulation of villages. The builders became city dwellers, bringing their families to the big cities and gradually losing their connection with the land. Only elderly people remained in the villages. In Bulgaria this contributed to the forced mass collectivization of arable land, which in turn led to the villagers' loss of their land.

The century-long traditional model of male labour mobility (*gurbet*) underwent further drastic change during the 1960s, when a number of Western European countries invited 'guest workers' from the Mediterranean countries—including Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia—turning men into legal temporary migrants. A considerable proportion stayed in the host countries and the migration process then continued through family reunification, with most Western European countries successively becoming countries of immigration (Guentcheva et al. 2003). During this period, temporary migrants from the territory of (former) Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey settled permanently in Western Europe. The traditional *gurbet* model of seasonal and temporary migrations and labour outside the region was thus transformed from the beginning of the 1960s into the *pečalbar* model of the *Gastarbeiter* culture, especially in Serbia and the FYR of Macedonia.

Actively joining this pan-European process of labour mobility from the early 1990s were Balkan countries, like Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania—which until then had been closed within their centralized economies and state-regulated labour movements. While in the 1990s seasonal and irregular migration had been directed mainly towards neighbouring Greece, at the beginning of the new millennium and especially after the removal of Schengen visa restrictions for Bulgarian citizens, a great number of Bulgarians—Christians and Muslims, Bulgarian Turks as well as Macedonians with Bulgarian citizenship—found themselves drawn into labour migrations of a range of durations to the countries of the EU, especially Germany, Great Britain and Spain. Time will tell whether these migrant workers will adhere predominantly to the circular migration model (see Baldwin-Edwards 2006, p. 9) that has its background in traditional Balkan *gurbet*, or if these people instead become permanent migrants in the host countries.

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Petko Hristov is Associate Professor at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia. He is editor of the collections Migration and identity: Historical, cultural and linguistic dimensions of mobility in the Balkans, Sofia: Paradigma, 2012 and co-editor of the book: Labour migrations in the Balkans, München-Berlin: Verlag Otto Sagner, 2012. His main scholarly interests involve studying labour migrations in the Balkans, the construction of social networks among trans-border migrants, family and kinship, the construction of identity and political anthropology. http://www.eim-bas.com/profile.php?u=p_hristov&l=en1

Chapter 3
Refugees as Tools of Irredentist Policies in Interwar Bulgaria

Raymond Detrez

The expulsion of entire populations from their native lands because of their ethnicity is a practice probably as old as humankind itself. From the nineteenth century onwards, however, although the appropriation of arable land and houses remained a major incentive, the removal of ethnic groups occurred for 'modern' reasons. Nationalism had become the main motivation, or at least a commonly accepted rationalization.

Gellner (1993, p. 1) defines nationalism as 'primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent'. This implies that all members of the nation—which in Eastern Europe, as a rule, is an ethnic nation—should live within the borders of their own nation state. A corollary of nationalism is irredentism, a foreign policy that aims at incorporating within the national territory any adjacent areas that are populated—if only partly—by co-ethnics. The 'congruence' of nation and state also supposes an ethnically homogeneous population within the state's borders: ethnic groups differing from the dominant one are removed through assimilation, ethnic cleansing (a particular variant of which appears to be population exchanges), and—in extreme circumstances—genocide. With the nationalist state concept prevailing, minority rights are given reluctantly.

Irredentism and the (mis)treatment of minorities are interdependent in yet another way: a policy aiming at the elimination of minorities is often inspired by the fear of irredentist aggression on the part of the neighbouring state(s), while steps taken to eliminate the minority enhance the irredentism of the neighbouring state(s)—now presented as a protective measure—rather than diminish it. The assignment of minorities' rights is facilitated, or complicated, if both states contain minorities of each other's populations, in which case the minorities are treated more or less as hostages or potential objects for bargaining. In a similar way, refugees after having found shelter in their 'own' nation state, are often instrumentalized by

R. Detrez (✉)
Slavistiek en Oost-Europakunde, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium
e-mail: raymond.detrez@ugent.be

the governments of these states to support claims on parts of the territory of the state from which the refugees were expelled.

After World War I, population exchanges were generally considered to be an appropriate way to ethnically homogenize a population, to eliminate problems of minorities, and to avoid territorial conflicts. From the point of view of political science, international relations, and diplomacy, population exchanges in a number of instances did indeed substantially contribute to improved relations between states, as they removed at least the ethnic component of territorial conflicts.[1]

However, the idea that a lost territory was originally inhabited by 'our people' has continued to incite strong emotions of being wronged and to increase the support of 'revanchist' and 'revisionist' parties which have often been tempted to stir them up whenever induced by domestic or international political threats or opportunities.

This chapter investigates some aspects of how within Bulgaria in the interwar period, in spite of all sincere human concerns about the deplorable fate of the refugees, the 'refugees question' (*bežanskijat văpros*) was (ab)used in order to serve an irredentist and revisionist foreign policy that met nationalist aspirations rather than the refugees' real needs. In Bulgaria, owing to the harsh treatment meted out at the Paris Peace Conference (Treaty of Neuilly) in 1919, nationalist frustrations and revanchism were particularly strong. Nevertheless, Bulgaria was not an isolated case. Similar emotions existed, for instance, in Greece concerning Northern Epirus and in Albania concerning Kosovo. After depicting Bulgaria's national frustrations about the territories it lost or failed to acquire and the massive influx of refugees from these territories, this chapter proceeds to examine the strategies that subsequent Bulgarian governments, instrumentalizing the refugees and their organizations, applied to undo the suffered injustices.

3.1   Early Population Exchanges

In the first quarter of the twentieth century, forced migrations often occurred with the consent, or even insistence, of what we are now used to calling 'the international community', that is, the Great Powers or respected international organizations. After World War I, the League of Nations monitored implementation of not only minorities' rights, but also treaties and conventions concerning population exchanges.

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[1] Currently, international law experts, economists, sociologists, and anthropologists are more sceptical about the benefits of population exchanges. Evidently, from a moral perspective, nowadays they are totally unacceptable. Population exchanges cause immense suffering not only because people had to leave their native lands where their ancestors were buried, along with loss of immovable properties and most of their belongings, but also because their adaptation to a new and often hostile environment was a traumatizing experience (see e.g. Clark 2006 and the 'assessments of Lausanne' in Hirschon 2004, pp. 9–12; for the legal aspects of population exchanges, see Barutčiski, 'Lausanne Revisited' in the same volume).

In the Southern Balkans, there were three major such population exchange agreements: the Treaty of Constantinople (1913) between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire (never fully implemented), the Convention between Bulgaria and Greece Respecting Reciprocal Emigration of Minorities of 27 November 1919 (signed at the same time as the Neuilly Treaty), and the Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations added to the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. As a result of ethnic cleansing and bilateral agreements in Macedonia and Thrace—the regions focused on in this chapter—during the period 1912–1924, large-scale demographic transformations occurred in what is now Greek Macedonia. On the eve of the Balkan Wars, the number of Bulgarians amounted to 119,000; after the Balkan Wars, 104,000 Bulgarians were left, further declining to 77,000 between 1920 and 1924. The number of Greeks increased from 513,000 to 1,277,000 over the period 1912–1924. In Western Thrace, the number of Bulgarians over the same period declined from 35,000 to 23,000, while the number of Greeks grew from 87,000 to reach 189,000. Finally, in Eastern Thrace the entire Greek population of 235,000 people disappeared and the number of Bulgarians shrank from 50,000 to 1,000. The fate of the Muslim population was even worse: the number of Muslims (Turks and Pomaks) in (Greek) Macedonia was reduced from 475,000 to 2,000 and in Western Thrace from 111,000 to 84,000; in Eastern Thrace the number of Muslims grew from 223,000 to 370,000.[2]

The economic and social disruption and human tragedies caused by these coerced demographic changes were all the more painful as Macedonia and Thrace already had a history of ethnic cleansing. By the time of the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877–1878 (known in Bulgaria as the War of Liberation), more than half a million Turks had been expelled not only from the Principality of Bulgaria, but also from the Ottoman autonomous province of Eastern Rumelia, both created by the 1878 Treaty of Berlin (McCarthy 2001, p. 48). Although the Treaty envisaged the return of the refugees, covertly the temporary Russian administration and the Bulgarian authorities tried hard to prevent their homecoming. The aim was twofold—ethnic homogenization and appropriation of real estate (Statelova 1983, p. 126). From the areas that had remained under Ottoman rule after the war (Macedonia and the southern and eastern parts of Thrace), a limited number of Bulgarians—mainly intellectuals—emigrated to independent Bulgaria. However, they thought of themselves as political activists in exile rather than as refugees. The suppression of the 1903 Ilinden Insurrection in what is now the Republic of Macedonia resulted in the emigration to Bulgaria of about 30,000 people, fearing Ottoman retaliations (Dragostinova

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[2] See Pallis (1925). The numbers are cited here merely to give an idea of the magnitude of the demographic change: like all Balkan statistics, they are potentially controversial. As a rule, Orthodox Christians belonging to the Bulgarian Exarchate are considered to be Bulgarians, and Orthodox Christians belonging to the Patriarchate of Constantinople are classified as Greeks, although these categories are not entirely congruent. In addition, Bulgarians in Macedonia are now regarded as Macedonians by many historians. In the period under consideration, however, they are most often recorded as Bulgarians (e.g., in Pallis' study, in the *Carnegie Report* (Carnegie 1914), and elsewhere. Since we intend only to give an idea of the size of these migrations, we do not take into consideration smaller ethnic groups such as Armenians, Jews, and Vlachs.

2006, p. 553). The Greek population in Bulgaria, living predominantly on the Black Sea coast in the cities of Plovdiv (Philippopolis) and Asenovgrad (Stenimachos) and the surrounding villages, was discriminated against and harassed from the very beginning of the existence of the Bulgarian state (Nazărska 1999)—although this was no more serious than that experienced by ethnic minorities in other Balkan countries. In 1906, the Greek population in Burgas, Pomorie (Anchialos), and in other coastal cities fell victim to a pogrom, intended as retaliation for Greek attacks on Bulgarian villages in Macedonia (Avramov 2009).

During the First Balkan War (1912–1913), all belligerents (Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia) embarked on ethnic cleansing of the Muslim populations (Turkish, Albanian, and Pomak) in the conquered areas of the Ottoman Empire: 87,000 of the 2,315,000 living there were expelled (McCarthy 2001, p. 92). During the Second Balkan War (1913), the newly-formed alliance (Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia, now joined by Romania and the Ottoman Empire) against Bulgaria targeted mainly the Bulgarian population in the territories they occupied. In Eastern Thrace about one third of the Bulgarian population was massacred by the Ottoman army (Dragostinova 2006, p. 553). The Treaty of Constantinople between Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire, of September 1913, provided for a mutual exchange of the Bulgarian and Turkish populations within a 50 km zone on both sides of the border, but it was not implemented because of the outbreak of World War I.

The expulsions did not stop after August 1913 when the Treaty of Bucharest was signed, concluding the Second Balkan War. Although no clause envisaging a population exchange was included in the treaty, the expulsions eventually took the character of a *de facto* population exchange. The Bulgarian authorities forced Greeks and Turks in the areas under Bulgarian rule—the Pirin region of Macedonia and especially Western Thrace—to emigrate. On the other hand, many Bulgarians had to leave the Southern Dobrudža, assigned to Romania, and Eastern Thrace, which was reincorporated into the remnants of the Ottoman Empire.[3] Smaller numbers of Bulgarians from Greek (or Aegean) and Serbian (or Vardar) Macedonia also kept on arriving.

As most of the refugees considered their stay in Bulgaria to be temporary, they preferred to establish themselves in proximity to the areas they had abandoned—along the borders, in the Pirin region of Macedonia, around the city of Petrič, and in Western Thrace (Dragostinova 2006, p. 557). The Bulgarian authorities gave them shelter in the houses left by the expelled Greeks and Turks. There is no doubt that the establishment of the refugees in the border zone also served the strategic aim of creating an overwhelmingly Bulgarian population in these vulnerable areas. As Dragostinova (2006, p. 558) points out, 'while bureaucrats rationalized such decisions with the urgency to secure land for the refugees, no doubt these policies aimed

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[3] The May 1913 *Treaty of London*, concluding the First Balkan War, had fixed the western border of the Ottoman Empire along the line Enoz-Midye, ceding most of Western Thrace to Bulgaria. With the *Treaty of Bucharest*, the Ottoman Empire re-acquired eastern Thrace as far as Edirne in the north and the River Marica (Evros, Meriç) in the south.

at ridding strategic territories (especially the Burgas and Kărdžali areas near the Turkish and Greek borders) of distrustful ethnic and religious minorities'.

Although Bulgaria, like the other Balkan nations, was reluctant to engage in a new military conflict, ultimately the opportunity offered by the Central Powers to revise the 'injustices' imposed by the Treaty of Bucharest turned out to be irresistible for a frustrated irredentist nation. In 1915, Bulgaria occupied Southern Dobrudža and Serbia (the region of Niš, Kosovo, and Macedonia). This new state of affairs allowed for the return of many of the refugees to their native lands. The persecutions of the local (non-Bulgarian) population, in which the squads of the Internal Macedonian-Adrianopolitan Revolutionary Organization (IMARO) had a large role, resulted not only from an irredentist policy, but also from the revengefulness of the expelled and returned populations. Irredentist aspirations, frustration about lost properties and sorrow for the victims were feelings that would reinforce one another for years to come.[4]

3.2   Demographic Consequences of World War I and the Peace Settlements

The war ended in a catastrophe for Bulgaria's allies and consequently for Bulgaria. The Macedonian front was broken, and the Bulgarian army had to retire to the North. The territories that Bulgaria had annexed during the war now had to be evacuated. Western Thrace, occupied by British and French forces, remained under the control of the Entente Powers. Bulgaria risked losing this area, which was economically of the utmost importance because of the profitable tobacco culture and, especially, because of the harbour of Dede Ağaç (Alexandroupolis), which provided the country an outlet to the Mediterranean.

At the peace conference in Paris, Bulgaria was treated harshly. The Treaty of Neuilly, signed on 27 November 1919, forced Bulgaria not only to renounce the territories occupied during the war, but also to cede four small areas on its western border to the newly-formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (after 1929, Yugoslavia). The treaty came with the Convention between Bulgaria and Greece Respecting Reciprocal Emigration of Minorities, which introduced the first large-scale population exchange in the Balkans. About 35,000 Greeks left Bulgaria for Greece, reducing the Greek presence in Bulgaria from 1.0 to 0.1%. Depending on sources, between 42,000 and 66,000 Bulgarians, mainly from Greek Eastern Macedonia, emigrated to Bulgaria—joining the much larger number of Bulgarian

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[4] The Internal Macedonian-Adrianopolitan Revolutionary Organization (IMARO) fought for the liberation and annexation to Bulgaria of Macedonia and 'the region of Adrianople', which meant Thrace. In 1919, it was transformed into the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO).

refugees from Yugoslav Macedonia.[5] The Treaty of Neuilly stipulated that Bulgaria cede Western Thrace to the Entente Powers, which administered it as a protectorate in anticipation of a final decision on its status. After the Entente Powers had entrusted the administration of Western Thrace to Greece, harassment by Greek officials forced Bulgarians—many of them for the second time—to flee and look for shelter in Bulgaria. The 1920 Conference of San Remo assigned Western Thrace to Greece. Subsequently, most of the Bulgarians in Western Thrace left for Bulgaria.

In addition to the territorial losses, Bulgaria had to pay huge reparations to Greece and Yugoslavia. Moreover, it was not allowed to have a proper army, and it was kept in diplomatic isolation as a country suspected (with good reason) of pursuing a revisionist foreign policy. A number of practicalities, including an agreement on the protection of the cultural rights of the 'Slavophone' population in Greece and its monitoring by the League of Nations, were settled in the September 1924 Kalfov-Politis Agreement (named after both countries' ministers of foreign affairs). The Greek parliament, however, did not ratify the agreement. The December 1927 Mollov-Kafandaris Agreement, endorsed by the League of Nations in January 1928, regulated the financial aspects of the expropriation of Bulgarian immovable properties in Greece and Greek immovable properties in Bulgaria. It led to a new, last wave of emigrants, mainly from Greece to Bulgaria.

All together, in the period from October 1912 to December 1926, the Bulgarian authorities officially recognized 253,067 people as refugees. Together with the refugees who left Macedonia after the Ilinden Insurrection and those who for some reason were not officially recognized as refugees, their total amounted to 280,000.[6] Some 48 % of them originated from Greece (Aegean Macedonia, and Western Thrace), 28 % from the Ottoman Empire (Eastern Thrace, and Asia Minor), 12.5 % from Yugoslavia (Vardar Macedonia and the western districts) and 11 % from Romania (Southern Dobrudža) (Dragostinova 2006, p. 553). Given the huge number of casualties in the Balkan Wars and World War I, the territories lost after the wars, the economic and social consequences of the massive immigration of refugees, and the psychological impact of the military defeat, the Bulgarian qualification of the events as a 'national catastrophe' seems justified. The strong feeling of being wronged explains to a large extent the way Bulgarian governments dealt with the refugees: they were to help to undo the injustices that the nation had suffered, the more so as they were directly involved.

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[5] According to Poulton (1995, p. 86), between 52,000 and 72,000 Slavs, depending on the source, emigrated from Greece to Bulgaria. Kofos (1964, p. 27) writes that only 42,000 Slav Macedonians left Greece between 1912 and 1926. According to figures produced by the League of Nations, quoted by Lithoxoou (1992, p. 60), no fewer than 66,132 Slavs emigrated to Bulgaria only as a result of the Convention (that means from 1920 onwards).

[6] The refugees were registered with the aim of obtaining a foreign loan and their number might therefore be inflated. Aleksandăr Cankov, who was prime minister from 1923 to 1926 and must have been well informed, claims that 'for propaganda reasons, the number of refugees was greatly exaggerated. Actually, their number was between 50,000 and 60,000' (Cankov n.d., p. 321). However, as he personally was not in favour of a foreign loan, and moreover his successor and rival Andrej Ljapčev was credited with having obtained the loan, Cankov probably deliberately underestimated the numbers.

3.3 Instrumentalizing the Refugees

The Bulgarian authorities from the very beginning (that is, from the Second Balkan War onwards) 'used' their immigrants and refugees[7] in the same way as did the other Balkan nations—namely, to populate deserted or economically important areas, or to change the ethnic composition of the population of certain areas in order to create an overwhelming Bulgarian majority, especially in precarious border areas. Refugees from Eastern Thrace and Macedonia were particularly encouraged to settle in Western Thrace, where there was a considerable presence of Greeks, Turks, and Pomaks: the last, though Bulgarian-speaking, were also distrusted. As has already been mentioned, this settlement policy was successful, because refugees preferred to look for shelter in areas adjacent to those they were expelled from (anticipating an opportunity to return) and because there were plenty of houses, emptied by Greeks and Turks expelled by the Bulgarians. Here, the territorial interests of Bulgaria coincided with concern for the everyday necessities of the refugees. However, an additional reason for Bulgarian refugees to settle in Western Thrace seems to have been that in this newly-acquired area, the power of the corrupted Bulgarian administration was apparently less oppressive (Grebenarov 2006, p. 41).

The refugees were also used as an argument for Bulgaria's irredentist claims at the 1919–1920 Paris Peace Conference and later, at the ensuing conferences of San Remo and Lausanne in 1920 and 1923, respectively. Although Bulgaria belonged to the camp of the defeated and could harbour few illusions about the generosity of the victors, its ambitions were considerable: Bulgaria claimed not only the whole of Macedonia and Western Thrace, but also Eastern Thrace up to the line of Enez-Midye (Kosatev 1996, p. 62). The Ottoman Empire, which had not survived World War I, must have looked to the Bulgarians a defenceless prey. As long as no final decisions on new borders were made, the refugees were mobilized to support these claims.

Of course, the refugees were not only a tool in international politics, but also a heavy financial and social burden. Providing urgent humanitarian aid to the refugees required resources that Bulgaria did not possess; certainly it was unable to properly shelter the refugees and offer them jobs within a short span of time. Most refugees were poor, as they had been able to take with them only a small proportion of their belongings, and were in great need of aid. Most of them were peasants, but arable land was scarce in Bulgaria. While the Bulgarian authorities did their best to help the refugees, they did not hurry to settle them definitively, as this could have produced the impression that Bulgaria was prepared to accept the territorial

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[7] Properly speaking, Bulgarians and Greeks who left their native lands for Bulgaria and Greece respectively, as a result of the Treaty of Neuilly, were not refugees but emigrants, as the population exchange was 'voluntary' in principle. Indeed, many Bulgarians did not leave, especially in Western Macedonia; similarly for many Greeks in the coastal cities in Bulgaria. Nevertheless, in most cases, emigration had a compulsory character, which justifies to some extent the use of the term 'refugees'. However, we use the term here without the dramatizing and mythologizing connotations that the words '*prosfiyes*' and '*bežanci*' have in Greek and Bulgarian.

curtailing and that the refugees would never return to their homes. Actually, the refugees themselves wished to return, and this would also have relieved the Bulgarian state budget and served the aim of continuing the presence of a Bulgarian population in the claimed territories.

3.4 Refugees Serving State Interests

Three main concerns—providing humanitarian aid to the refugees, securing their return to their native countries and contributing to the realization of the territorial ambitions—were dealt with by the post-war Bulgarian governments in close collaboration with the refugees' organizations. The refugees from Macedonia and Eastern Thrace had already united in 1912 in 'brotherhoods' (*bratstva*), organized on the basis of the places of origin of their members. These brotherhoods had elected a common Executive Committee (EC), with Aleksandăr Protogerov, the leader of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), as chair. The EC wholeheartedly supported the policy of the Bulgarian government. After the Bulgarian invasion in the Serbian-annexed part of Macedonia in October 1915, the EC provided intelligence to the Bulgarian military. Members of the brotherhoods were offered important functions in the army and the civil administration in the occupied regions (Grebenarov 2006, p. 21). The brotherhoods themselves became superfluous as soon as the refugees were allowed to return to their native lands.

One month after the defeat of Bulgaria at the Macedonian front, the brotherhoods were re-established. During their first meeting in mid-October 1918, they elected a delegation which was to present the concerns of the refugees to the Peace Conference in Paris. (Such a delegation was not and would not be invited; it could only have informal meetings.) The standpoints that the delegation had to defend were also discussed. It was decided that the delegation would plead for the unification of Macedonia with Bulgaria and for preservation of Western Thrace as a part of the Bulgarian state. If this turned out to be unachievable (as it soon did), the delegation would demand preservation of the territorial integrity of Macedonia, as a protectorate of the Entente Powers or the League of Nations (Grebenarov 2006, pp. 22–46). In the very worst case, the delegation would beg for continuation of the mandate of the Entente Forces in Western Thrace, with strong guarantees that the area would be transferred neither to Greece nor to Turkey (Kosatev 1996, pp. 82–83).

The constituent conference of the Union of Macedonian Brotherhoods (UMB), which was to elect a new EC, on 22 November 1918, is illustrative of the way the organization and the Bulgarian state cooperated. The chair of the former EC, Protogerov, was not a candidate for the chairmanship of the UMB. As the leader of the IMRO, he preferred to have his hands free to proceed to violent actions if necessary, without compromising the Bulgarian government, which tried hard to soften the standpoints of Athens and Belgrade (Grebenarov 2006, p. 27).[8] Palešutski believed

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[8] In Serbia, Protogerov had been indicted as a war criminal, which rendered him an inappropriate representative of the Macedonian refugees at the Peace Conference in Paris.

that 'the quick creation of the EC immediately after the defeat at the southern Front in September 1918 was due to one single reason—the attempt of the Bulgarian state policy to link at any price the cause of the Bulgarian Macedonians with that of Bulgaria' (Palešutski 1993, p. 12). The government obviously used the organization for its own aims. Although at the conference in October 1918 brotherhoods of all political tendencies were invited, the government was reluctant to cooperate with the so-called 'Group of Serres', consisting of supporters of the late Jane Sandanski, which was quite influential in Serres, Thessaloniki, and Strumica. The 'Group of Serres' was in favour of an independent multi-ethnic Macedonian state, organized as a federation after the Swiss model. It enjoyed the support of a considerable number of refugees, but understandably the government, aiming at the annexation of Macedonia, was less enthusiastic. In addition, the group's eagerness to resort to violent action if the demands were not met, did not fit in with the cautious diplomacy of the government (Grebenarov 2006, pp. 25–26).

In October 1918, the government also established a Commission for the Housing, Feeding, and Distribution of the Refugees from Macedonia and the Region of the Morava River (eastern Serbia), answerable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Emil Sprostranov, Secretary of the UMB, was elected chair of the Commission. However, the Commission apparently was responsible in the first place for the payment of salaries to teachers and priests in Vardar Macedonia, and of agents sent out to gather information about cases of maltreatment of the local Bulgarian population and movements of the Entente armies. Again, the interests of the state seem to have weighed more than the fate of the refugees. In December 1918, a liquidation commission was founded, accountable to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Public Health Services. This commission offered immediate humanitarian aid to the refugees and helped them 'return to their homes' (Grebenarov 2006, pp. 33–34). However, since all these commissions and organizations (including the IMRO) worked closely together, obtaining urgent humanitarian aid—and eventually housing and arable land—greatly depended on whether the claimant supported the (radical) political standpoints of these organizations (Dragostinova 2006, p. 563).

By the end of December 1918, a conference of the UMB approved of the functioning of the EC and proclaimed the UMB as the only body representing 'the legal Macedonian cause in Bulgaria'—an implicit refutation of the standpoint of the 'Group of Serres'. Discussing the position of the UMB vis-à-vis the Bulgarian government, the conference gave total freedom to the leadership as far as fund-raising was concerned (Grebenarov 2006, pp. 34–35). As the Bulgarian state was the main sponsor of the UMB, the organization in practice soon became financially dependent on the government and was obliged to support state policy. One should keep in mind, however, that state policy greatly reflected Bulgarian public opinion insofar as the Bulgarian claims on Macedonia and Western Thrace were concerned.

When it became obvious that the Paris Peace Conference was not inclined to meet the requests of the Bulgarian negotiators, the Bulgarian claims were adjusted. The government insisted on the incorporation of Macedonia and Western Thrace into Bulgaria, finally anchoring its last hope on the Fourteen Points of President Woodrow Wilson which proclaimed that state borders should be drawn as much as

possible along lines of nationality. However, in early 1919 at a new meeting of the UMB, the incorporation of Macedonia into Bulgaria was no longer explicitly mentioned; the 'indivisibility' (*nedelimost*) of Macedonia was instead emphasized. This compromise represented a move towards the standpoint of the 'Group of Serres', increasingly shared by the IMRO (Palešutski 1993, pp. 19–24). The idea of an autonomous Macedonia enjoyed growing popularity among the refugees, who were disappointed about the poor—if any—results achieved by the government and the EC of the UMB (Grebenarov 2006, p. 40). Incongruities between the government and the IMRO—with the UBM split in between—increased; this worsened as the IMRO drew closer to the communists, who were in favour of a federal solution to the national problems in the Balkans, with Macedonia as a separate federal unit. Their paths ultimately separated after the 'unjust' and 'humiliating' Treaty of Neuilly, which was entirely blamed on the government.

As the Treaty Conference had postponed a final decision on Western Thrace, the Bulgarian government concentrated on re-including the area within the borders of the Bulgarian state. Prime Minister Teodor Todorov, the leader of the Bulgarian delegation to the peace conference, transmitted to Georges Clemenceau, its host, a petition with the signatures of 31,176 family heads from Western Thrace, who demanded in the name of 166,650 Bulgarians the right to return to their native land and to live a peaceful life 'as Bulgarians' (Kosatev 1996, p. 69). This would have been possible only if Western Thrace was not transferred to Greece or Turkey. In either of these cases, the Bulgarian population would have been forcibly expelled or 'encouraged' to leave through administrative harassment. The Bulgarians proceeded the same way with the minorities on their own territory. Particularly ironical was the declaration of the representative of the Bulgarian Muslims in the Bulgarian parliament, Šefik bej Šefket Beëv, who recommended that Western Thrace be assigned to Bulgaria since 'currently, in Greece, there was no one left of the hundreds of thousands of Muslims who used to live within the old borders of the kingdom' (Kosatev 1996, p. 68). In 1913, Bulgaria itself had expelled most of its Turkish population and launched a campaign to forcibly convert the Bulgarian (speaking) Muslims (Pomaks) to Christianity (*Report* 1914, pp. 155–158). But the Bulgarian efforts were to no avail. The Entente Forces, which were in charge of administrating Western Thrace, in 1920 entrusted this task to Greek officials, who pressured the Bulgarians to leave.

3.5   The Last Options: Minority Rights

Finally, Bulgaria could do no more than insist on minority rights for those Bulgarians who had remained, and press for fair financial compensation for the property the refugees had lost. Here, too, Bulgaria failed. Minority rights were not respected in Greece or in Yugoslavia. Greece preferred the Bulgarians to leave the country and was not prepared to offer them rights which would only encourage them to stay. Moreover, it needed the emptied houses and abandoned lands to shelter and feed

the Greek refugees from Asia Minor. Greece even put pressure on the Greeks in Bulgaria to settle in Greece, not only to 'save' them for the Greek nation, but apparently also to avoid the bothersome demands of a reciprocal treatment of minorities (Dragostinova 2009, p. 192). Greece focused on building a Greek nation *within* the borders of the Greek state and in most cases seemed to reluctantly accept the loss of its 'lost fatherlands' (*chamenes patrides*), at least in Bulgaria and Turkey. What probably also played a role there was that Greece had no significant co-ethnic populations living in the areas bordering Bulgaria who could support possible claims. The 1924 Kalfov-Politis Agreement, providing among other things for schooling in the native language—the local Slav dialect, to be sure, not standard Bulgarian—was cancelled after the Greek parliament refused to ratify it. This resulted ultimately in another massive emigration of Bulgarians and Greeks to Bulgaria and Greece, respectively.

In 1923, the clauses on financial compensation for the refugees, provided in the Convention added to the Treaty of Neuilly, were extended to the property rights of the refugees from Eastern Thrace; however, the 1927 Mollov-Kafandaris Agreement on the practicalities, which resulted in a new, last wave of emigrants to Bulgaria, was extinguished in 1931, when Greece discontinued the payments. The 1925 Ankara Agreement between Bulgaria and Turkey stipulated that all Bulgarian estates on Turkish territory became the property of the Turkish state.

Bulgaria's insistence on its neighbours' respecting Bulgarian minority rights was without a doubt inspired by the intention of ameliorating the living conditions of the minority. In addition, it could help to prevent Bulgaria from having to cope with the financial burden of even more immigrants. However, it was also part of an irredentist policy, as Bulgaria's territorial claims were justified only as long as there was a Bulgarian population living there (Dragostinova 2009, pp. 186–187, 192). Emigrating to Bulgaria was considered an expression of Bulgarian consciousness; staying could also be such.

3.6   Keeping the Torch Burning

After the conclusion of the Treaty of Neuilly, attitudes towards refugees in Bulgaria somehow changed. Although the refugees continued to long for their lost native lands and Bulgaria did not accept the 'dictate' of Neuilly, Bulgarian governments adopted a more pragmatic approach to the problems. The Agrarian Union (AU) cabinets (1920–1923) under Aleksandăr Stambolijski took a number of well-intentioned but rather chaotic measures to provide the refugees with arable land. The idea that the refugees were potential AU voters might have been behind these measures as well. After a *coup d'état* ended the AU administration on 9 June 1923, the National Alliance cabinets under Aleksandăr Cankov (1923–1926) and Andrej Ljapčev (1926–1931) continued this same policy. Moreover, Ljapčev succeeded in obtaining an international loan to cope with the financial problems that the influx of refugees had caused. In general, Bulgarian historians consider the refugees' integration into

Bulgarian society as a success story. To some extent it was, given the enormous political, economic, and social problems that Bulgaria faced even without the refugees. The usual explanation is the patriotic satisfaction that the refugees experienced living in their own nation state and enjoying the hospitality of their fellow citizens (see, e.g., Dimitrov 1985). Dragostinova's (2009, pp. 198–202) assessment is more down-to-earth. Many Bulgarians—and, for that matter, Greeks—preferred to stay in their native lands and preserve their houses and fields without prioritizing their 'national identity'. Their new environments often regarded them as a threat. The image of the refugees grateful to settle in their 'own fatherland' and being brotherly welcomed by their co-nationals can be found in official discourses, but is in fact a nationalistic reduction of the many painful and contradictory emotions inevitably involved in compelled emigration. Briefly, the settlement of the Bulgarian refugees in Bulgaria caused the same problems as Karakasidou (1997) describes in her account of the fate of the Greek refugees from Asia Minor in Macedonia.

After Neuilly, Bulgaria attempted to normalize its relations with neighbouring states. This was cumbersome and risky, as the IMRO had resumed not only its terrorist actions in Greek and Yugoslav Macedonia, but also its assaults on Bulgarian politicians who displayed insufficient determination concerning the 'Macedonian question'. In June 1923, Stambolijski was killed by an IMRO squad. As members of the IMRO occupied powerful positions in the organizations providing aid and distributing houses and land to the refugees, the latter had no choice but to support, at least verbally, the IMRO policy and exploits, although—as already noted—they were probably more interested in improvement of their everyday living conditions (Dragostinova 2006, p. 563).

Stambolijski's successor, Cankov, who considered himself a nationalist and was thoroughly convinced of the righteousness of Bulgaria's claims on Macedonia and Thrace, describes in his memoirs how he tried to convince the IMRO leaders that violence in the given circumstances was inappropriate:

> The Bulgarian people and the numerous Macedonian migrants in Sofia and the rest of Bulgaria could not help grieving about Macedonia, we could not forget her, the sufferings were immeasurable. But every reasonable man could understand that the old means of revolutionary struggle were not only outdated, but also dangerous. There was a common awareness that we should by no means provoke Yugoslavia, that means Serbia. From Macedonia itself a cry was given out against the squads which somehow continued to cross the border: 'Leave us alone; we are Bulgarians, but do not provoke the authorities lest they kill defenceless people'. (Cankov n.d., p. 308)

However, the Bulgarian authorities did not try too hard to stop the activities of these squads, recruited mainly among the refugees. The IMRO was disbanded only in 1934– with an ease which suggests that the Bulgarian state had indeed tolerated its activities (Dragostinova 2006, p. 556). The Bulgarian governments, acting very cautiously on the international scene, took very few measures to make the refugees accept their fate and stop dreaming about returning to their native lands. Obviously, this was intentional. Politicians almost overtly kept the torch of irredentism burning. Bulgaria's neighbours were well aware of this covert agitation (Dragostinova 2009, p. 195).

Dimităr Hadžidimov (1875–1924), member of the 'Group of Serres' who joined the Bulgarian Communist Party in 1919 and in 1924 became a member of parliament, addressed the National Assembly as follows:

> A complete and final solution to the refugees question will be achieved only when there are no refugees any more, when all or at least a majority of them will have the opportunity to freely return to their liberated countries, when they stop to be outcasts, when they escape once for ever their outcasts' fate. It should be proclaimed and emphasized here, that, how badly the refugees in Bulgaria may be in need of a livelihood, of housing, of land and of means to exercise their crafts, in their hearts and souls never extinguishes and never will extinguish the burning desire to return to their hearths and homes. This ideal of them rises above all other worries they have as refugees, that means, their hope and belief that tomorrow or after tomorrow freedom will glow above their enslaved country represents the most precious in their refugees' souls. (Dimov 1924, pp. 9–10)

As Dragostinova (2006, p. 562) remarks, '[t]he leaders pursued radical solutions to the national question, and as a result they framed the public debate in exclusively nationalist terms and served as brokers of nationalist ideology among the refugees and within broader society'.

By the end of the 1930s, when the political situation in Europe seemed to offer new opportunities for an irredentist policy, the refugees were among the most ardent supporters of Bulgarian revisionism. In 1940, on the verge of the Bulgarian occupation—or liberation, depending on the point of view—of Western Thrace one year later, Anastas Razbojnikov concluded his brief monograph on the 'de-Bulgarization of Western Thrace' by summing up the various elements of Bulgarian irredentism—the suffering and heroism of the people, the transformation of the ethnic composition of the Thracian population, and the pursuit of the natural resources of the region—and predicting the imminent 'liberation' of the area by Bulgaria. Obviously, none of the considerations or emotions of the immediate post-World War I period had faded:

> I know that many youngsters from Western Thrace, who have grown up now, will think that the sufferings they underwent during their childhood are described here only insipidly; they will remember their lost parents and maybe will discover themselves and their dear ones on one of the scarce preserved photographs.
> Of course, the sufferings and the expulsion of the Western Thracians deserve a more elaborated and complete investigation. Probably this will be done in the future. Maybe one of our writers will find in these sufferings—and in the displayed heroism—rich material for a precious work of art.
> During the administration of General Scharpe, the Bulgarian population having fled already in considerable numbers, Western Thrace became a scarcely populated area; there were hardly 24.4 people per square kilometre. And her resources are so abundant!
> How many people live now in Western Thrace? Where do they come from? We know very well that her current Christian population is foreign to her and she herself is also foreign to the Greeks from the Caucasus and Asia Minor who have settled there.
> For nearly twenty years a black veil has covered Western Thrace. The settlers there await foreigners… They have never slept quietly. Their eyes are constantly staring to the north, where the curtain will be left and her people will enter in their native land. Really, the end of the all-Bulgarian tragedy is near. (Razbojnikov 1998, pp. 129–130)

3.7   Conclusion

During, and in the aftermath of, the Balkan Wars and World War I (that is, 1912–1927), Bulgaria's handling of its refugees and immigrants originating from neighbouring countries was essentially no different from the way Greece dealt with its refugees from Bulgaria and Turkey. First of all, they were considered to be martyrs for the cause of the nation and were cared for insofar as the difficult economic and social circumstances allowed. At the same time, they were involved in the ambitious project of building an ethno-culturally homogeneous nation. With their presence, they populated depopulated areas, homogenized ethnically mixed areas and served as a labour force. Bulgaria, though, pursued yet another policy.

Bulgaria was defeated twice. At the end of the Balkan Wars, it acquired much less territory than it had claimed; after World War I, instead of undoing what it considered to be an injustice, it had to cede parts of its already 'incomplete' territory to Greece and Yugoslavia. These two defeats and their unhappy consequences rendered Bulgaria a deeply frustrated country, eager to revise the 'dictates' that had been imposed on it. During the peace negotiations in Paris, Bulgaria 'used' the refugees to support its claims to the lost territories (Macedonia, Eastern Thrace) and to prevent the secession of areas claimed by its neighbours (mainly Western Thrace). It insisted on the return of the refugees—that was what the refugees themselves wished as well—or the right of the Bulgarian minorities to remain in their native lands. These demands, though supported by humanitarian considerations, equally served irredentist goals: a return of the refugees would increase the number of Bulgarians and actually justify the territorial claims. For that same reason, they were totally unrealistic. The refugees' organizations, initially created with the aim of providing humanitarian aid, were brought into play to defend the Bulgarian territorial claims abroad, although many refugees, apparently, were satisfied with solutions that enabled them to save their property rather than their national identity. Only when the territorial ambitions finally turned out to be unrealizable were measures taken to settle the refugees on a permanent basis and to provide them with housing and land. Subsequently, however, despite most Bulgarian governments' pragmatic foreign policy, aimed at normalizing relations with neighbouring countries, political leaders (often in opposition to the government) exploited the refugees' understandable frustrations to sustain a revanchist and revisionist mood among them and in Bulgarian society in general. By the end of the 1930s, when the political circumstances in Europe had radically changed as a result of the ascent of Nazi Germany, the Bulgarians were still hoping for a new chance to regain the claimed territories and for the refugees—or their children—to resettle in their lost homelands. However, many of them were to become refugees yet again—after World War II.

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Raymond Detrez is professor emeritus of Eastern European history at Ghent University, Belgium. His field of research is Balkan history in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Two of his recent publications are 'Pre-national identities in the Balkans', In: R. Daskalov & Tch. Marinov (eds.), *Entangled histories of the Balkans*, Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp. 13-66 and *The A to Z of Bulgaria*. Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2010 (paperback edition of the *Historical dictionary of Bulgaria*, Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2006). A third edition of the *Historical dictionary of Bulgaria* appeared in january 2015.

Chapter 4
Resettlement Waves, Historical Memory and Identity Construction: The Case of Thracian Refugees in Bulgaria

Nikolai Vukov

Alongside the dismantling of the communist system of public commemorations, the period after 1989 in Bulgaria was marked by an upsurge in commemorative initiatives dedicated to the history of Bulgarian people who had resettled from Eastern and Western Thrace[1] a century earlier. Soon after the restoration of the Union of Thracian Associations in 1990 and the revived functioning of around 200 of its branches, commemorative and monument-building activities began to mark the history of the Bulgarian population that came from these areas. The former tradition of celebrating special days in Thracian history was taken up anew and gained enormous popularity, particularly in relation to anniversaries of the 1903 Ilinden Uprising, the commemoration of major figures of the 'Thracian movement'[2] and

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[1] The terms for different parts of Thrace vary in the national historiographies and the public discourse of the three nation states in this area. Geographically, Thrace stretches between the central and eastern part of the Balkan mountain range to the north; the Mesta (Nestos) River to the west; the Black Sea to the east; and the Marmara and Aegean Seas to the south. The division between northern and southern Thrace generally identifies the upper part of the Thracian plain along the flow of the Marica (Evros, Meriç) River before Edirne, and the lower part—the area that stretches from this point below to the Aegean and Marmara Seas. Politically, the northern part falls within Bulgarian state territory, whilst the southern part is divided between Greece and Turkey along the water border of Marica River. The present-day Turkish part of Thrace is known as Eastern (Edirne or Turkish) Thrace, and the part within the territory of northern Greece—Western (Aegean or Greek) Thrace.

[2] The latter is understood in Bulgarian historiography as an organized movement since the late nineteenth century for the liberation of Thrace lands from Ottoman and Greek rule and for integrating the entire Thracian area into the Bulgarian state following the Berlin Congress of 1878. After the end of World War I, the Thracian movement was associated mainly with the fate of the refugees from Thrace and with territorial and property issues surrounding their expulsion, financial compensations and attempts to return. The movement has been increasingly linked with the activities of the so-called Thracian associations (local institutions of Thracian refugees in most Bulgarian

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N. Vukov (✉)
Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria
e-mail: nikolai.vukov@gmail.com

celebration of the Day of Thrace (26 March—the day Bulgarians captured Edirne Fortress in 1913). That last has been celebrated as a national holiday since 2006. Focusing mostly on the tragic events during the Second Balkan War, when Bulgarians from Eastern and Western Thrace were massacred or expelled by Ottoman troops, these commemorative events also relate to many other occasions of resettlement coerced by Ottoman and Greek authorities before the Balkan Wars and in the interwar period. These sober ceremonies and monument-building initiatives were paralleled by many other initiatives, including organized tours of Thracian descendants to the lands of their forebears, reconstruction of Bulgarian traces in Eastern and Western Thrace and trips by school and folklore groups to Turkey and Greece on national and religious holidays. All these reflect efforts of Thracian descendants to demonstrate the inexhaustible memory of the traumatic events at the beginning of the twentieth century, to affirm their identity as a 'community' through the idea of a shared trauma and its overcoming, and to reassert the symbolic connection of individuals and groups to the lost lands of their ancestors.

This chapter[3] traces the gradual formation of this community of refugees and their descendants—as has resulted from several major instances of border reshaping, the resettlement of huge masses of people and traumatic events conveyed through generations which still resonate in the memory of the 'Thracian Bulgarians'.[4] The chapter outlines major aspects of the collective identity of this community. These are related, for example, to a sense of common fate during and after expulsion, the community's distinctiveness from both the local population and other refugee groups in Bulgaria, and their shared awareness of unresolved issues around their status as refugees. Unlike the customary perspective of viewing Thracian refugees in Bulgarian historiography (mostly regarding them as a coherent group with explicit ethno-national characteristics),[5] the emergence of this collective

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towns) and with the cause of preserving the memory of the traumatic experience of the Bulgarian population from Eastern and Western Thrace.

[3] The research on the topic started within the framework of the project 'Resettlers and Migrants on the Two Sides of the Bulgarian-Turkish Border: Heritage, Identity, Cultural Interactions,' funded by the Bulgarian National Science Fund (2009–2012). See www.2sidesborder.org.

[4] The term 'Thracian Bulgarians' is commonly used in Bulgarian public discourse to identify Bulgarians who were refugees from parts of Thrace that remained outside Bulgarian state territory. Whereas only Bulgarians who were expelled from their places of birth in 1913 gained the status of 'refugees', the term was established as a general one that encompassed Bulgarians originating from Eastern or Western Thrace who moved to Bulgaria as a result of persecution, forceful expulsion, negotiations about population exchange or family choice of resettling. Although, in the Bulgarian language, the modifier 'Thracian' is used in a variety of contexts to include northern Thrace as well (e.g., Thracian music, Thracian culture, etc.), the term 'Thracian Bulgarians' is used exclusively for the Bulgarian population from Eastern and Western Thrace who resettled into Bulgarian state territory.

[5] The Bulgarian literature on Thracian Bulgarians and demographic processes in Thrace is extensive. For a historiographic overview of Bulgarian literature until the 1970s on the ethno-demographic aspects of the Thracian issue, see Trifonov (1976). For the most recent publications with overviews of existing literature, see Filčev (2007), Rajčevski (1994), Trifonov (1992). For a critical stance toward the interpretation of such population groups within 'national' frameworks, see the work of Theodora Dragostinova (2006, 2011) on the challenges of national inclusion of

identity will be understood, rather, as a continuous process that was triggered by historical events and territorial replacements; that was moderated by international agreements, state institutions, and refugee organizations; and that was catalysed by memories of the forceful expulsion and its aftermath. With the background of an abundant literature on shifting borders, forced population movements and changing loyalties to different nation states in eastern-central and south-eastern Europe during the twentieth century (Ballinger 2003; Naimark 2001; Skran 1995; Ther and Siljak 2001), the chapter addresses the specific case of the Thracian refugees in Bulgaria—a community shaped by traumatic experiences of expulsion and by a continuous split between the new destination of residence and the nurtured hope of returning some day.

With the purpose of better clarifying the multifaceted experiences encountered by Bulgarian refugees from the Thracian area, the chapter outlines the major factors that have contributed to the emergence of the 'Thracian community' in Bulgaria. Special attention is given to the waves of refugees that fled to Bulgaria after the onset of the Balkan Wars, the forceful expulsion of Thracian Bulgarians by Ottoman troops in 1913 and the exodus of the Bulgarian population from Western Thrace after World War I. The negotiations with neighbouring states about the refugee issues and the several agreements that sought to solve the refugees' problems are regarded as yet another factor in the consolidation of this community. A separate section is dedicated to the difficulties of accommodating Thracian refugees in Bulgaria, the attempts of these refugees at adaptation to their host environment, and their constant looking back to their ancestral lands, which remained across the border. In this situation, the preservation of a collective identity encompassing Thracian refugees of different waves and different parts of Thrace seemed crucial. The Thracian associations that were developed at the end of the nineteenth century played a significant role here. Finally, the chapter sheds light on the upsurge of identity expression of Thracian Bulgarians after communist rule. Based on the author's observations of commemorative occasions and cultural events held by this community in various parts of the country, this section emphasizes the importance of historical memory for the collective identity of Thracian refugees in Bulgaria and the transfer of this symbolic resource to the generations of Thracian descendants.

4.1 Population Movements and the Bulgarian Population in Thrace Since the Late Nineteenth Century

With the gradual dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century, Thrace became the stake of numerous conflicts between the states that emerged across this territory. The area had already been partitioned at the

Bulgarian refugees in the interwar period. On nationhood and nationalism, and how it influenced the interpretation of national minorities in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, see Brubaker (1996), Cowan (2008), Karakasidou (1997), Kitromilides (1989), Sugar (1995).

Berlin Congress in 1878, when the northern part fell within the semi-autonomous district of Eastern Rumelia (which was united with the Principality of Bulgaria in 1885), whereas the southern part (nowadays divided between Turkey and Greece) remained under Ottoman rule. The provisions of the Berlin Congress marked the beginning of the organized movement of Bulgarians in this region for the liberation of Thrace from Ottoman domination and its incorporation within the Bulgarian state, whilst similar initiatives were pursued by the Greek population for integration of this territory into Greece. Mass migration movements and resettlements of population started at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the area became a focus of political debates and diplomatic negotiations, resulting in geographical redrawing and frontier reshaping. Without intending to provide a comprehensive historical overview here, it is important to note that the Treaty of London of May 1913 put an end to the first Balkan War and conferred to the allies all of Thrace, most of which went to Bulgaria; with the Treaty of Constantinople after the Second Balkan War the Ottoman Empire regained all of Eastern Thrace, while Bulgaria kept Western Thrace; and with the Neuilly Treaty after World War I, Western Thrace was proclaimed a mandate territory of the Entente and was occupied by French forces. This last episode was followed by the conference in San Remo in April 1920 (which ceded Western Thrace to Greece), the Sèvres Treaty of that same year (by which Greece gained a large portion of Eastern Thrace as well) and the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 (which transferred this portion back to Turkey). Later, after the crushing of Yugoslavia and Greece by Nazi Germany in April 1941, most of Western Thrace was occupied by Germany's ally Bulgaria with the purpose of 'regaining lost territories'. This continued until the autumn of 1944, when the Bulgarian troops withdrew from Western Thrace and, with the armistice signed by Bulgaria on 28 October 1944, the boundaries that were once settled at Lausanne were reaffirmed.

All of these shifts in the partitioning of Thrace and in state rule of the area resulted in altered configurations of minority and majority groups and created a pulsation of migration flows in various directions: of Muslims and Christians to states with prevailing Muslim or Christian religious identities; of Bulgarians, Greeks, and Turks to their respective nation states; and of Armenians, Jews, and Roma in circumstances of exasperated nationalistic hatred. In most cases, population movements were carried out forcibly, under conditions of territorial occupation (whether Greek, Turkish, or Bulgarian), and were accompanied by enormous human losses. Cases of ethnic cleansing or related policies of cultural homogenization were associated with almost all of the border shifts that took place. The narrative of uniting 'national' groups in separate nation states was reflected both in state policies and in administrations to assimilate or expel different minority groups, and on behalf of minority groups themselves which (after persecutions and threats of assimilation) moved back and forth to join their 'mother nations'. In parallel with the groups leaving, waves of refugees were coming into these states, seeking to find their place within new administrative, economic, and cultural systems.

Affecting all the different ethnic and religious groups in the area,[6] the population movements and refugee waves were particularly important for the Bulgarian population, which—despite the varying data and ambiguous statistics—held a substantial (and, in many respects, even prevailing) presence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[7] Carl Sax's ethnographic map of European Turkey in 1877 (see Appendix) provides a comprehensive illustration of the variety and interconnectedness of the different ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups of the peninsula. In the wake of the Balkan Wars in Eastern and Western Thrace, the overall population (without those who lived in Istanbul) was around one million people, with approximately equal shares of Bulgarian, Greek, and Turkish representation. The number of Bulgarians—298,720, according to data provided by Miletič (1918)—consisted predominantly of Orthodox Christians, but included Muslims as well.[8] Substantial changes in the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural representation in the area had already started after the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877–1878, when—with the march of Russian troops—thousands of Muslims were murdered or forcibly expelled from what would soon become Bulgarian state territory.[9] Although some of these Muslims proceeded onward to Asia Minor, many settled in Thrace, which

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[6] The data in Bulgarian, Greek, and Turkish sources about the ethnic and confessional characteristics of the population in Thrace vary and are often contradictory, largely due to the different principles of estimating the religious and national communities on which the sources relied. Here, I do not discuss this issue in detail, outlining instead the problem from the perspective of the Bulgarian historiography. For a detailed overview of the Bulgarian sources, see Trifonov (1992, pp. 15–18).

[7] Aside from the numerous accounts by scholars, diplomats, and travellers in the Balkans (E. Čelebi, A. Boué, A. Dozon, L. Niderle, etc.), a strong claim in this respect was made by various villayet censuses, decrees, and political documents of the late nineteenth century, e.g., the Ottoman decree of 1870 and the Istanbul Ambassadors' Conference of December 1876. In 1878, the French newspaper *Courier d'Orient*, issued in Istanbul, reported the following composition of the population in Thrace area: Muslims—190,568; Bulgarians—372,476; Greeks—147,984. The data specified also the presence of 13,710 Jews, 10,440 Armenians, and 2880 'other' ethnic groups in the area (see Šiškov 1922, p. 107). These data, as most sources about the composition of population in the area at the time, are also marked by limitations, e.g., the lack of clear identification of the applied criteria and the grounding of such classification on exclusively 'ethnic' basis. Illustrative points in this regard are the cases of the so-called Patriarchists (who are classified as either Greek or Bulgarian) and the Pomaks (who are also viewed as coming from Greek, Bulgarian, or Ottoman and Turkish origins).

[8] The Christians belonged either to the Bulgarian Exarchate or to the Constantinople Patriarchate, which until the first decade of the twentieth century included around 25,000 Bulgarians from the Edirne area. Apart from that, there were also 1700 Bulgarian Uniates in the area (Miletič 1918, pp. 291–300; Stojanova 2012, pp. 15–16).

[9] The issue of the Muslim civilian casualties and refugees as a result of this war is heavily disputed. According to the detailed account by Crampton (1990), their number was around 130,000. Around 75,000 and 80,000 of the Muslims returned after the end of the war, and only in the mid-1880s started leaving after offers from the Ottoman government of free land in Thrace or Asia Minor (Crampton 2007, p. 426). On Muslim refugees and official policies towards the Muslim minorities in Bulgaria, see also Karpat (1990) and Neuburger (2004).

after the Berlin Congress was divided between Eastern Rumelia and the Ottoman Empire. This resettlement was paralleled by the mass migration of Bulgarian populations from Asia Minor and the easternmost territories of the Balkan peninsula to the north—mainly to Eastern Rumelia and the Principality of Bulgaria.[10] Most of these migrants settled in areas near the border, waiting for a possibility to return to their native lands. In parallel, organized activities against Ottoman rule in the area also increased, reaching their peak with the notorious Ilinden Uprising, which broke out in Macedonia and Thrace in the summer of 1903. Ottoman forces violently suppressed the uprising, leaving dozens of villages devastated and 2500 people killed in Thrace (Filčev 1999, p. 37). This was followed by a mass wave of more than 30,000 refugees from the areas of Macedonia and Thrace to Bulgaria. Half of these refugees came from Eastern Thrace (Dimitrov 1985, p. 14).

After a wave of population movements and resettlements in the area (including the flight of Greeks from Bulgaria, Thrace, and Eastern Rumelia to Greek territories), the Balkan Wars and their aftermath brought new waves of Bulgarian refugees from Thrace. The victories of the Bulgarian army in the First Balkan War and the inclusion of a large part of Eastern and Western Thrace in Bulgaria after the London Treaty of May 1913 were chilled, however, by Bulgaria's involvement in a second war for a redistribution of the territories between the previous allies. The country's catastrophic defeat in this war led to mass migration of Bulgarian populations from Thrace, Macedonia, Dobrudža, and the western borderlands with Serbia—and the consequent withering of the Bulgarian component in these areas. Among the most notorious cases were the massacres and forced expulsion of Bulgarians by the Ottoman army in the summer of 1913, when it reoccupied the entirety of Eastern Thrace, also crossing westwards and into the pre-war frontier with Bulgaria. Dozens of Bulgarian villages were burned and hundreds of people killed or captured and sent to Anatolia.[11] According to the *Carnegie Report* (Carnegie 1914, pp. 123–135), 50,000–60,000 Thracian Bulgarians were murdered, which was around 20 % of the Bulgarian population in Thrace at that time. Most of the villages with a Bulgarian population were destroyed and the survivors expelled from their places of origin. Fleeing to Bulgarian state territory, thousands of people (mainly women, children, and the elderly) found their death in massacres, such as those along the Marica River, in the Armaganska Valley and in the villages of Yatadžik and Avren. A detailed account of the devastation of Bulgarian communities in Thrace was systematically recorded in Miletič (1918), *The Destruction of Thracian Bulgarians in 1913*. The stories of survivors of these tragic events fill historical and memoir publications,

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[10] In 1879, the overall number of refugees from Eastern Thrace alone was around 30,000, with 23,000 coming from the region of Çorlu. According to the census of 1880, just in Eastern Rumelia, 17,970 refugees settled from Eastern and Western Thrace; around the same number of refugees arrived in the Principality of Bulgaria, settling mostly in the Varna region (Dimitrov 1985, p. 13; Genadiev 1998; Šiškov 1922, p. 79).

[11] Concerning the destroyed villages in Eastern Thrace, the refugees and their descendants, see Brajanov (1965), Razbojnikov (1930), and Šivačev (2008). For detailed lists of the ruined Bulgarian villages in Dimotiki, Alexandroupolis, Komotini regions, see Porjazov (2009), Razbojnikov (1940), and Šalapatov (2009).

forming a corpus of narrative references that recur in commemorative ceremonies of Thracian Bulgarians to this day. The refugee wave also continued in the months after the signing of the Constantinople Peace Treaty in September 1913, numbering some 15,000 people only in October of that year (see Trifonov 1985).[12]

The incorporation of Western Thrace into Bulgaria after the end of the Second Balkan War permitted the Bulgarian refugees from this area to return to their native places, albeit only for a short period. With the end of the Great War, in which Bulgaria was among the defeated nations, Western Thrace was occupied by Allied troops, which was followed in 1920 by the ceding of all Thrace to Greece and by another wave of refugees to Bulgaria. Later, the war between Greece and Turkey in 1918–1922 and the defeat of Greece in Asia Minor posed a new challenge for the Bulgarians living in Western Thrace, as they stirred attempts by Greek authorities to make them leave and to have refugees from Asia Minor settled in their place. This was largely facilitated by the Convention for Voluntary and Reciprocal Emigration of Minorities, signed by Bulgaria and Greece in November 1919 and implemented by a mixed commission from 1926 to 1931. Permitting the voluntary and reciprocal emigration of racial, religious, and linguistic minorities in Bulgaria and Greece, and aiming to regulate property questions for people choosing to resettle, the Convention was regarded by the Bulgarian public as enabling the destruction of the Bulgarian presence in Western Thrace (Ajanov 1942; Razbojnikov 1940; Razbojnikov and Razbojnikov 1999). Although peaceful, it effectively led to the large-scale resettlement of both Bulgarians and Greeks[13] and created a new set of refugee issues related to accommodating people in their new locations and ensuring compensation for their immoveable properties. Well aware of the problems that a substantial Bulgarian population would cause for the integration of Western Thrace into the Kingdom of Greece, Greek authorities pressured entire villages to leave for Bulgaria (as Bulgarian authorities also did to many Greeks at that time). On many occasions, they hardly allowed the liquidation of their property, thus dooming them to economic disaster.[14] Therefore, alongside the unresolved issue of the refugees after the Balkan Wars and World War I, the Bulgarian governments in the interwar

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[12] Parallel with that, according to Turkish sources, 6822 Turkish families left former Ottoman territories that were incorporated within Bulgaria, and they settled in Eastern Thrace (Stojanova 2012, p. 16). In the spring of 1914, around 10,000–12,000 Bulgarians from the Çatalca area near Istanbul were also forced to resettle (Stoyanova 2012: 16, Trifonov 1985: 185–203).

[13] A systematic account of the application of the Convention is provided by Theodora Dragostinova (2009, p. 186). It encompassed 1011 localities: 251 in Bulgaria, 501 in Greek (mainly Aegean) Macedonia, and 259 in Greek (Western) Thrace; a total of 101,800 Bulgarians and 52,891 Greeks submitted declarations for emigration and property liquidation; close to 40,000 on both sides emigrated but did not avail themselves of the mixed commission. Finally, some 140,000 Bulgarians and 12,000 Greeks remained in their places of birth as minorities. For the application of the Convention in the interwar period, see Dimitrov (1982), Dragostinova (2008), Ladas (1932), and Penkov (1946).

[14] The overall number of Bulgarian refugees from Western Thrace and Aegean Macedonia in 1924–1925 was 48,680 (Dragostinova 2006, p. 553).

period had to find solutions for support, accommodation, and future compensation of this refugee wave as well.[15]

For the refugees from Eastern Thrace, who were prevented from returning to their places of origin, the major issue was still the compensation for the properties that they had left behind. The question was posed many times in the first half of the twentieth century, but it was systematically suspended and has remained practically unresolved to this day. During World War I, the Ottoman authorities clearly stated that it was not necessary for Bulgarians to return to their lands and that the empire would accept the possibility of compensating them for their properties. At the end of the war, however, the issue was delayed due to the onset of the Greco-Turkish War of 1919–1922. The withdrawal of the Greek occupation forces from Eastern Thrace at the end of the war was seen by Thracian refugees as the last hope of returning to their native places. However, Turkish authorities refused to allow the return of Bulgarian refugees and, actually, even those families that had already taken the risk of coming back were pressed to leave. Bulgarian schools and churches were destroyed or closed, and on former Bulgarian and Greek properties, the Turkish state settled its own refugees (Turks, Albanians, and people from Bosnia). Finally, after long negotiations, in 1925 the Ankara Agreement was signed, which was supposed to regulate the payment of compensation to Bulgarians from Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor for the properties that they had left behind in the expulsions between 1912 and 1925 (see Ladas 1932; Kumanov 1971; Peeva 2006; Popnikolov 1928). This agreement excluded the possibility of resettlement, but accepted the refugees' rights to the properties left behind. In 1927, many documents were collected in Bulgaria for enforcement of the procedure. However, in contrast to the Mollov-Kafandaris Agreement between Bulgaria and Greece in 1927, when compensations were organized within a short period, for the refugees in Eastern Thrace this issue remained an open one. Whilst in the 1940s the economic situation in Turkey was difficult enough to undertake such a step, after World War II the two states belonged to different ideological blocs and the communist government in Bulgaria considered it unacceptable to 'ask' for financial compensation from a capitalist state. It was only after the end of communist rule that the issue of compensating refugees from Eastern Thrace was posed anew, triggering various political initiatives and contributing to the enhancement of memorial practices by Thracian descendants.

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[15] Later on, after the crushing of Yugoslavia and Greece by Nazi Germany in April 1941, most of Western Thrace was under the occupation of Bulgaria and there was a possibility for Thracian refugees to resettle back to their native places in Greece. This situation continued, however, until the autumn of 1944, when after the withdrawal of the Bulgarian troops from Western Thrace, this population moved back to Bulgaria again.

4.2 Accommodation, Adaptation, and Identity Construction of Thracian Refugees

The waves of refugees from Thracian territories over the course of several decades posed significant challenges to the Bulgarian state for their settlement, economic support, and social adjustment.[16] In the first years after 1878, as well as after the Ilinden Uprising (1903), the difficulties comprised mainly the weak economic and administrative capacity of the state to provide adequate support, as well as the continued hope that the resettlement was temporary, at least until a new redistribution of Ottoman territories in South-Eastern Europe. The forcible expulsion of the Bulgarian population from Thrace in 1913 was particularly dramatic—not only because of the scale of the refugee wave but also since it occurred in the context of mass migration from other territories (Macedonia, Dobrudža, Greece, and the western borderlands) to Bulgaria.[17] The number of refugees after the wars amounted to more than 5 % of the population in Bulgaria at the time,[18] and this created enormous difficulties in providing them with land, housing, and a basic means of subsistence. In the years between the Great War and the mid-1930s, the Bulgarian state introduced several laws and regulations for the accommodation of refugees,[19] founded several institutions with regional departments, secured separate financial means, and took a large external loan—all aimed at a solution to the refugee problem. The first step in the integration of Thracian refugees in Bulgaria concerned their reception and distribution for settlement in the country. They were distributed predominantly in the east, in the regions of Burgas, Yambol, Sliven, Varna, and Šumen, but in fact all parts of the country hosted groups of refugees from this area.[20] The flow of refugees continued in the following years, complemented by refugees from Western Thrace.

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[16] For details of the social and economic difficulties with the accommodation of refugees after World War I in Bulgaria, see Dimitrov (1985) and Genov (1935).

[17] The mass groups of migrants and refugees in that period were complemented by Russians who came to Bulgaria after the October Revolution and by the Armenian population from the Ottoman Empire.

[18] For a detailed systematization and insightful interpretation of the refugee issues in interwar Bulgaria, see Dragostinova (2006). The officially recognized refugees (i.e., people who arrived in Bulgaria between October 1912 and December 1926) included 55,940 families with a total of 253,067 members. There were also many people who resettled but did not acquire legal refugee status. The overall estimate of refugees is about 280,000, which was 5 % of the Bulgarian inhabitants in 1926. Around 48 % of these people came from Greece (Aegean Macedonia and Western Thrace), 25 % from the Ottoman Empire (Eastern Thrace), 12.5 % were born in what became Yugoslavia (Vardar Macedonia and the West Ends in Serbia), 11 % were from Romania (Southern Dobrudža), and 3 % arrived from Asia Minor (ibid., p. 553).

[19] Among those are the Law of Housing Crisis (1919), the Law for Settling of Refugees and Securing their Means of Living (1920), the Law of Agricultural Settling of Refugees (1925), the Law of Agricultural Settling of Refugees through the Loan Received from the League of Nations (1926), and the Regulation-Law for Easing the Refugee Situation (1937).

[20] In the Burgas region around 48,332 people stayed; Sofia—35,446, Petrič—34,900; Haskovo—22,346; Plovdiv—19,729; Momčilgrad—14,103; Varna—11,908; Stara Zagora—9311, Šumen—6218; and in the regions of Vidin, Vratsa, Veliko Tărnovo, Kjustendil, and Smoljan—

According to information from the Bulgarian Directorate of Refugees, until 1931, in the Burgas region alone (the most immediate destination for refugees from Eastern Thrace), 12,155 families were settled—9837 from Eastern and 2318 from Western Thrace. They were distributed across 73 villages, and their numbers totalled more than 60,000, two thirds of which were from Eastern Thrace.[21]

The conditions in which these refugees lived were extremely poor, and a substantial part of this population died of hunger, poverty, and disease. Having left behind fertile land, cattle, and housing, they were entirely dependent on the support of the state and the local population. The most pressing need was to accept the arriving refugees and to shelter them, at least temporarily (see Hitilov 1932; Gergova 2012; Uzunova 2005). Until the early 1920s, most of them were living in stables, sheep pens, and half-destroyed houses, and exposed to malaria and tuberculosis. In the aftermath of the Great War, the state was virtually incapable of supporting refugees materially and financially. Thus, the aid that it provided was largely symbolic and was distributed for only 3 years after the war. In 1920, the government of Aleksandăr Stambolijski managed to supply refugees with land, wood, financial loans, and free medical care; however, organization of this support was chaotic, and it did not reach all of those in need (Dragostinova 2006, p. 558; Šivačev 1987). It was only at the end of the 1920s that 42,510 refugee families received loans with the support of the League of Nations, which enabled them to build small houses, named *šaronki* (after René Charron, main coordinator of the settlement procedure). The construction of these houses marked in fact one of the first systematic attempts to provide refugees with proper housing, thus also settling them permanently.[22] Evidence of these constructions can be seen today in many towns and villages in Bulgaria, where they form the core of still-existing refugee neighbourhoods. The survival of the newcomers was also closely connected with the issue of agricultural land: most of these territories were infertile and poor—in very humid or dry areas, mostly in south-eastern Bulgaria. Yet, even when the allocation of Thracian refugees involved previously unused or unproductive lands, the local population often reacted against the refugees' settlement and resisted their integration.

The difficult economic and social conditions were accompanied by serious emotional trauma among the refugees, resulting from painful memories of expulsion from their places of origin, recollections about people and families that had died or were lost, nostalgia about their homes and villages, and difficulty in adapting as refugees in the new setting. There were numerous situations when refugees from a village or even family were separated and were additionally traumatized by not being able to find each other. Despite the compassion and support shown at first by local populations, the feeling that they were alien and unwanted in their new destinations

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between 1000 and 5000 people. For detailed accounts of refugees' settlement in Bulgaria, see Brajanov (1965, 1970).

[21] For Thracian refugees' accommodation in the Burgas region, see Ajanov (1939) and Kosatev (1975).

[22] The payment of this loan was bound, however, with a high interest rate and contributed to the bankruptcy of most refugees and to new economic disasters.

contributed further to their frustration. Many people attempted to return to their native places, but only for a short period—long enough to realize the impossibility of settling again in an environment that had changed completely, as a foreign land, with no familial or recognizable traces. The political developments after World War I made it virtually impossible to go back and with the Ankara Agreement of 1925 this impossibility was formalized. Memories among the generation that experienced these events of violent expulsion persisted in subsequent years and became an acute source of painful associations and mental reverie. The possibilities for visits became even rarer after World War II, when the chances to go for tourism to 'capitalist' Turkey were exceptional. The Association of Thracian Bulgarians managed to organize several group visits to Turkey, but the routes were firmly fixed, and possibilities for seeing their places of origin were limited.

What one may observe as a recurring theme in the public representations of Thracian Bulgarians during the years after their resettlement was their insistence on the 'unique' character of their fate and their separate identity among other communities in Bulgaria. The grounds for such an assertion of separate identity were several, but they often oscillated around the idea of the shared cultural characteristics of Bulgarians in Thrace, a common historical fate, and the specific contours of their collective memory. All these were posed mostly in comparison to the Macedonian refugees or to the local groups where Thracian Bulgarians were settled. In narratives gathered until today at various fieldwork occasions, Thracian descendants point out as inherently unique to their community their 'exceptional industriousness and diligence' combined with 'love of agricultural work', 'docile character', and 'naïve approach to life'. A comment that regularly comes up in conversation is the contrast with refugees from Macedonia, who are stereotypically labelled as 'people of the mountains', 'hot-blooded', 'eagerly involved in politics' and sharing a 'more dynamic and fervent worldview'. Thracian Bulgarians' descriptions of the local population vary depending on the areas where they are settled, but a customary point is that Thracian refugees outdo them in almost all aspects of work activity—in land cultivation, industriousness, innovation and trade. In memoirs and narrative self-descriptions of Thracian refugees, these cultural characteristics are regularly accompanied by examples of the tragic fate of Thracian Bulgarians as a persecuted and expelled population. Concrete cases are mentioned illustrating this fate—telling either of crimes committed against family members or of the poverty and starvation after their arrival in Bulgaria. The extreme suffering of Bulgarians from Thrace is stressed as resulting mainly from the nation state's lack of adequate attention to their cause. A common theme is the minimal (if any) reparations for the prosperous lands and real estate that they owned in the past.

With regard to the years immediately after their arrival in Bulgaria, it is important to note that most refugees were split between the choice (when such existed) of going back to their native places—gaining the status of a minority there—or the possibility of remaining permanently in their new destinations, as citizens of the Bulgarian state. Staying in Bulgaria, however, put them in a situation of being 'refugees' among the other co-nationals, thus both uniting with the 'national homeland' and also keeping a distance, as having their native land outside the state borders.

This split has determined a major aspect of their identity until today. It finds expression in their self-awareness as being 'the only real Bulgarians' and also in their constant gaze over the border—that is, where their ancestors were born and lived. Nurtured by recent memories of their native places and their resettlement to new locations, this dividing line in the group identity of Thracian Bulgarians dominated the overall experience of the first refugee generation and that of their children. In the course of time, and with a diminishing hope that refugees might be able to go back to their place of origin, permanent resettlement in Bulgaria was gradually accepted. Emphasis on the cultural specificity of Thracian Bulgarians then came to the foreground. Nevertheless, the motif of the split in their territory of belonging, and the contribution of this split to their traumatic experience, can still be traced among descendants of Thracian Bulgarians today.

4.3   The Role of Thracian Associations

The maintenance of the collective identity of Thracian Bulgarians was influenced by various factors that were projected at national, public, and private levels. Whilst there was a visible attempt on behalf of the state to embrace the refugees' cause as a symbol of national martyrdom and to use it as an argument in negotiations with state neighbours (see Detrez, this volume), an important role for the survival and adaptation of refugees has been played by various charity initiatives organized by the Bulgarian public after major refugee waves. A crucial role in the maintenance of the collective identity of this refugee community was played by the numerous Thracian associations which were established in late nineteenth century with the purpose of facilitating the social integration and cultural adaptation of refugees in Bulgaria.[23] After the creation of the first Thracian association 'Strandža' in Varna (1896) and the Inauguration Congress of the Thracian Union in Burgas (1897), the movement founded numerous branches across the country, which—despite merging with Macedonian associations in different periods of their existence—maintained a well delineated position on the specificity of the Thracian cause.

With the end of the Balkan Wars and the new massive waves of refugees to Bulgaria, the Thracian movement substantially changed the orientation of its activities. Whilst the original purpose was the joining of all Thrace to Bulgaria and the protection of the Thracian population's interests by the Great Powers, later, its activities were focused primarily on the refugees' land settlement, accommodation, and social and cultural adjustment. With the remainder of Western Thrace within Bulgarian state territory after 1913, the main focus was on Eastern Thrace, as well as on the refugees that came from this region. In May 1914, the 'Odrinska Trakija' (Edirne Thrace Association) was established in Sofia, with the goal of fighting for the return of the expelled Bulgarians from Eastern Thrace, but in the meantime, to facilitate their temporary settlement. The association issued a newspaper, distributed

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[23] For the history of the Thracian movement and the Thracian associations, see Filčev (1999).

memoirs and other historical publications, and organized public lectures. It proclaimed 13 March, the day of capturing the Edirne Fortress, as the main day of the association. In December 1918, near Edirne a congress was held which issued a resolution addressed to the Bulgarian government asking it to pay more attention to Thracian issues, as they tended to be overshadowed by those of the Macedonian refugees. In a separate resolution, a request was made to representatives of the Great Powers from the Entente and the USA to recognize the right of Thracian Bulgarians to return to the lands of their ancestors and to regain their occupied properties under the supervision of the Allied forces and the Bulgarian government.

After the congress, the organization quickly expanded, and association branches were created in many towns (e.g., Ajtos, Stara Zagora, and Provadija).[24] In 1921, the first issue was published of *Trakija* newspaper, which became a main organ of the Thracian movement. A year later, the Thracian youth association was established in Varna, soon followed by similar units in Plovdiv, Burgas, Haskovo, and other towns in southern Bulgaria. Open to people under 30 years of age, these units organized events such as speeches and seminars, evening readings, celebrations of special dates, theatre performances, and sports events. In 1925 the first Thracian students' association and in 1930 the first Thracian women's association were established in Varna. Both had numerous followers and developed branches in other parts of the country. The forms and names of these associations were different—some were called 'patriotic groups' whilst others identified themselves as 'emigrant associations', 'charity and cultural unions', and the like—but the scope of their activities was largely the same. Parallel to the wide range of educational and cultural activities that were carried out, they tirelessly issued declarations to Bulgarian and international institutions condemning the destruction of Bulgarian ethnic and cultural traces in Thrace, and also organized public demonstrations concerning the most pressing problems of the refugee population.

A peak of these activities was the protest against the 'Agreement of Friendship between Bulgaria and Turkey' that was signed in Ankara in 1925. According to the agreement, the real estate of Bulgarians who had resettled after 18 October 1912 until the signing of the treaty, as well as the real estate of Muslims who resettled during the same period from Bulgaria to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, would become the property of the state within which these estates had remained. The Thracian organization vehemently protested against the agreement, as—according to its claims—it 'transferred' the ownership rights of Thracian Bulgarians to the Turkish state and, thus, virtually precluded the refugees' possibility to return and claim inheritance of ancestral lands. By putting all Bulgarians from Thrace into the category of 'migrants', the Ankara Agreement was accused of neglecting the evidence of persecution and violent expulsion in many of these resettlements—particularly in the events of 1913, for which Thracian Bulgarians were internationally recognized as 'refugees'. The Ankara Agreement's claim that most of these people had resettled 'voluntarily'

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[24] By 1924 there were already 44 associations, 93 in 1925 and 151 in 1926. In 1927, the number of the Thracian associations was 170, 200 in 1928 and 235 in 1932, with around 20,000 active members (See Filčev 2007: 81–99).

as 'migrants' was interpreted as enabling Turkish authorities to view refugees' previous properties as belonging to the Turkish state. Despite the rigorous protests of Thracian activists against the Ankara Agreement, in 1926 the Bulgarian Parliament ratified it, in the hope that the agreement might permit Thracian refugees to receive compensation. However, at the request of the Turkish government, the negotiations were paused in the following year and the agreement did not come into force.

A similar situation of Thracian associations' protests surrounded the Mollov-Kafandaris Agreement between Greece and Bulgaria in December 1927. Though this agreement seemingly settled the financial issues, it was considered by Thracian associations as ensuring the legal framework for what was termed a 'de-Bulgarization policy' in Western Thrace. A major criticism raised along this line was that, on many occasions when Bulgarians were pressed to resettle, the compensation for their property was merely symbolic; yet the church, monastery, and school properties which belonged to church municipalities were liquidated. The very act of signing both these agreements was considered to be a heavy blow to the cause of Thracian refugees, who saw them as a betrayal of their interests and as downgrading the trauma they had experienced. Disappointment with these political developments led to a visible decrease in the organization's public activity. Following the military coup of 19 May 1934, which forbade all political parties and social organizations in the country, the Supreme Executive Committee of the organization was dissolved. What continued to function were 'Trakija' cultural and educational associations, as well as the youth, women's, and students' branches, but their activities also diminished. In the late 1930s, the commemorative meetings at Petrova Niva (to mark anniversaries of the Ilinden Uprising and to celebrate the Day of Thrace) were postponed, to be revived only after World War II.

Establishment of the government of the Fatherland Front in September 1944 nourished the hope that the Thracian question would finally reach resolution. In October 1944, the Supreme Executive Committee of the Thracian organization was restored and soon after that, a decision was taken to revive all former Thracian associations. This was partly related to the Thracian organization's gradual adjustment to the political order in Bulgaria during communist rule, as expressed in the co-opting of its leaders to the Communist Party and its reinterpretation of the struggles for national liberation and unification along the lines of the official communist ideology. In the three decades that followed, the network of Thracian associations expanded its activity, mainly in terms of educational and cultural events. In 1950, the Thracian organization was transformed into the Union of Thracian Associations in Bulgaria (STDB) and celebrations of the Ilinden Uprising and of the tragic events in the village of Yatadžik (Madžarovo) began to be held on an annual basis. Following the widespread fashion of building public monuments in communist Bulgaria, a monument to Kapitan Petko Vojvoda was unveiled in Haskovo in 1955 and another one in Varna in 1959. A grand monument to the Ilinden Uprising was unveiled in Petrova Niva in 1958, with some 5000 people present at the ceremony. In a period of restrictions on political claims other than those of the Communist Party, Thracian associations gradually indulged themselves with celebrations of historical dates and figures, organization of meetings and cultural activities, and propaganda work

about the building of communism in the country. However, despite these regular activities and adherence to the postulates of the ruling ideology, in 1977, a decision of the Communist Party closed down the Union of Thracian Associations (alongside the Union of Macedonian ones)—the official explanation being that it had exhausted its main purposes. The central committee and network of the associations were dissolved again and the local units joined with the Fatherland Front clubs, which had an overt ideological profile as representing the antifascist resistance. Remaining unclear in terms of actual reasons, the dissolution of the refugee organizations largely blocked the organized meetings and activities of Thracian refugees for about a decade and they could revive their activities with new force only at the start of the 1990s.

4.4   Reasserting Thracian Identity After 1989

With the end of communist rule in Bulgaria, the Union of Thracian Associations and its previous constituent associations were revived and the *Trakija* newspaper resumed publication. Starting from those towns with a substantial presence of Thracian refugees' descendants (e.g., Haskovo, Kardžali, Burgas, Yambol, Stara Zagora, and Varna), the remembrance practices for the traumatic historical events soon covered again the entire country. Sites that became major focuses of commemorative initiatives were the meetings in Madžarovo, Ilieva Niva, and Avren (dedicated to the victims of the 1913 persecutions), the annual celebrations in Petrova Niva (dedicated to the Ilinden Uprising) and meetings dedicated to prominent fighters for the Thracian cause, such as Kapitan Petko Vojvoda and Dimităr Madžarov. All these occasions included the building of monuments and commemorative structures, which expanded the memorial topography of Thracian refugees' history. Organization of these events involved a common ritual script—with reports on historical data, moving speeches, and solemn honouring of the dead. Focusing on Thracian refugees' suffering and fights, they outlined the significance of the latter in national history and highlighted the patriotic nature of their commemoration. Other important elements at these gatherings were the presentation of refugee folklore traditions on stage by various singing and dancing groups. In fact, many of these occasions were linked to other cultural events in towns and villages, facilitating a merging of the commemorative gatherings with festive presentations of regional folklore.

Alongside the commemorative occasions in Bulgaria, many initiatives were organized in the Thracian territories of Greece and Turkey, with the purpose of reviving traces of the former Bulgarian presence there and to assert affiliation with ancestral lands. This was made possible by the ability after 1989 to travel abroad freely, and many cross-border activities were organized to fill the vacuum that had existed during the decades of impeded access to former homelands.[25] Over the last

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[25] Such memorial visits are organized nowadays also by descendants of Greeks who left their native places in Bulgaria between 1906 and the 1920s, as well as by Turks who left for Turkey in

two decades, numerous excursions were made to ancestral places of origin in Turkey and Greece, most of them organized by the Thracian associations. These visits involved people of different ages and generations, and followed a ritual scheme that included meetings with local authorities, the presentation of gifts, visits to surviving churches and cemeteries, planting of trees and flowers from Bulgaria, and paying respect to victims.[26] A frequent location for these visits across the border is Edirne, where a policy for reviving the Bulgarian historical and cultural traces has resulted in the restoration of sites, such as the nineteenth century churches of saints George, Constantine, and Elena and the Bulgarian cemetery, among others. Carried out with the collaboration of Bulgarian state institutions and local authorities, the revival of such sites brought a visible increase in visits of Thracian descendants to Eastern Thrace, and their regular involvement in various cultural events in this area. The tours of refugees' descendants and folklore groups to towns and villages in Greece and Turkey hold a firm place in the cultural calendar of the Union of Thracian Associations and are inseparable from the list of commemorative events year-round.

All these cultural events and initiatives outline the present-day contours of a group identity that has developed over a century and has several main constituents. These include the painful memories of the suffering experienced, the awareness of the 'national' significance of the Thracian cause, the notion of cultural heritage preservation, and the claim for rightful compensation despite decades without a positive resolution. These constituents have been regular points of reflection in all the commemorative gatherings of the Thracian organization and in the various oral narratives and published memoirs produced by members of this community. They are reflected in the goals that the Union of Thracian Associations declared in its Statute of 1990: defending and accomplishing the Bulgarian national cause in Thrace, obtaining the right of return and resurrection of the Bulgarian culture in Eastern and Western Thrace, development of Thracian spirit, and preservation of Thracian heritage (Ustav 1990).[27] The Statute of 1990 omits some of the clichés derived from the communist ideology before 1989, but it retained others that have been used repeatedly by Thracian Bulgarians since the beginning of their organized movement. As such, it testifies to several claims that have remained relatively unchanged for more than a century and that continue to shape the collective memory and identity of Thracian descendants.

Although nowadays few promoters of the Thracian cause nurture illusions that it may be possible to go back to reside in the places of their ancestors, the idea of protecting the traces of the former Bulgarian habitation—alongside receiving financial compensation for what was lost—is still alive (Kozarova 2007). Clear indicators of this are the revived negotiations with Turkey after 1989 for resolving the issue

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different resettlement waves throughout the twentieth century, mostly during the peak of the assimilation campaign launched by the communist state in the 1980s (on the latter, see Vukov 2012).

[26] For a detailed presentation of these ritual activities, see Ganeva-Rajčeva (2011).

[27] The first statute of the Thracian associations was accepted at the inaugural Congress of 1907 and since then it has gone through several modifications depending on political circumstances of the interwar period and after 1944, but its core ideas have generally remained the same until today.

of Thracian Bulgarians' property in Eastern Thrace. In 1991, at the initiative of the Union of Thracian Associations in Bulgaria, an agreement was reached between Bulgaria and Turkey to discuss the problematic issues between the two countries. Since 1992, several attempts to discuss the application of the Ankara Agreement have been made by the Bulgarian Parliament, by government ministers, and during exchange visits of ambassadors and politicians to Bulgaria and Turkey. Despite the demonstrated willingness to carry out such negotiations, a general suspicion has appeared that, once again, the attempts at solving this may be postponed until the deadline of 100 years when the agreement's application ultimately expires. A peak in the Bulgarian state's efforts to reach a solution to this issue was the proposal of Bulgarian EU representatives and the ensuing decision of the European Parliament to bind Turkey's membership application to the EU with the requirement of resolution of the existing property disputes with Bulgaria. Following this decision,[28] Bulgaria and Turkey started new negotiations in 2009 and a mass campaign was initiated in Bulgaria to provide documentation on property in the lands left behind, including real estate that had belonged to the Bulgarian Exarchate and Bulgarian cultural monuments in contemporary Turkey. A special department was created within the State Archives of Sofia where documents and diverse testimonies that could verify the property rights of Thracian Bulgarians were collected, validated, translated from Ottoman Turkish, and analysed. These recent developments stirred new impulses in the community of Thracian descendants to collect necessary testimonies and mobilize family and kinship networks to assert ownership of properties lost a century ago. Thus, once again, as in previous decades, memories of the expulsion of the Bulgarian population from Thracian lands were revived by a suddenly emerging hope for successful resolution to this protracted issue, consolidated by the idea that the decades of dedication to the Thracian cause has not been in vain.

Doubtless, such claims have strongly influenced identity processes amongst Thracian refugees as a 'community', one whose members were dispersed across the country and could maintain their contacts mostly through such ritual gatherings. The reaffirmation of belonging to a community of origin and participation in the social network during commemorations and cultural events were also unavoidably linked with demonstrating a position on the issue of due compensation and with an expectation of at least a symbolic gain from what had been lost by their ancestors. However, despite the unconcealed attention to the claimed possession of once-owned property, the contours of Thracian memory and identity did not remain confined to the idea of material compensations: sometimes, it even contradicted or overtly opposed this idea. One of the directions of this line of thought was prompted by alternative voices coming from members of the Thracian community about the need to overcome the accumulated traumas and to stay open to the possibilities of cross-border cooperation, thus virtually annulling the relevance of any property claims. Yet another direction has been promoted by the view of Thracian belonging as a largely 'symbolic realm', which cannot be subdued by political and territorial negotiations, but rather persists as a timeless identity mark across generations. The oscillation between these

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[28] www.europe.bg/en/htmls/page.php?archive=2008-04&archive_day=22&category=374

several poles of interpretation is what marks the identity expression of Thracian descendants today—in narrative forms, commemorative activities, and public events honouring the history of Thracian Bulgarians.

4.5   Conclusion

Developing over the course of a century and in the context of traumatic historical circumstances, the various aspects of Thracian identity can hardly be covered by such a brief outline as provided in this chapter. Several points are worth re-emphasizing, however, in the form of concluding remarks. The first is related to the problem of Thracian Bulgarians as a 'community'. It was formed gradually by population groups coming from different towns and villages of Eastern and Western Thrace and in the midst of different cases of expulsion, resettlement, and accommodation in new places. Despite their different experiences and individual examples, the refugees and migrants from Thrace embraced a reference to their area of origin as something able to unite them and to express as a 'shared' fate. Nowadays, the term 'a Thracian person' (*trakiets*) is immediately recognized and connected with particular historical experiences by every Bulgarian, not only those of refugee descent. Although initially the term was supposed to encompass primarily the survivors of the most dramatic refugee waves (e.g., the massacres of 1913 and the expulsions from Western Thrace in the early 1920s), over time it stretched to encompass almost any of the other cases related to Thracian resettlement to Bulgaria. Even more importantly, it has also come to involve all subsequent generations and every one of the descendants of Thracian Bulgarians. In fact, personal identification as 'second', 'third', and later generations of Thracian refugees is widespread among members of this community in their narratives about place of origin and their relatives' fates in the past.

This specificity of Thracian Bulgarians as a 'community' is even more striking when considered against the background of the various directions of resettlement of Thracian Bulgarians in the country. Their presence was visible in large and small towns, where they were gradually involved in social and cultural activities, but up until today they have remained distinguishable by the neighbourhoods where their grandparents settled and by the specific family stories that they possess and reproduce on various occasions. Although Thracian Bulgarians were never considered a 'minority' within the national body, they have always remained distinguished from both the rest of the 'local' Bulgarian population and other refugee communities, such as those from Macedonia. This distinction is strongly evident in community meetings on various occasions and at commemorative events, where Thracian Bulgarians assert their specific historical memories. In situations of these kinds, Thracian Bulgarians from different parts of the country conduct a tour to honour the numerous people lost in the traumatic events, to acknowledge the 'everlasting presence' of historical trauma, and to reaffirm their belonging to the Thracian 'community' and their support of the 'Thracian cause'. In opposition to the growing distance from the

events of the past, Thracian Bulgarians have persistently maintained their stories of persecution and expulsion, their genealogical memory, and the recurring commemorative occasions as ways to preserve a sense of collective identity.

Finally, it is important to emphasize the role of state borders in shaping the idea of community among Thracian Bulgarians. The border is a recurring reference point in the memories and narratives of Thracian Bulgarians until the present day. In the dramatic days of the persecution and flight of refugees to Bulgaria in 1913, the state border was perceived as a 'horizon', the reaching of which would bring salvation from impending death. The border was a line whose crossing brought radical change in refugees' lives, as well as a line to approach in later attempts to return to the lands of ancestors. In the dynamic context of territorial redistribution after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, borders were not only created to delineate the territories of nation states, but they were also changed, shifted, assaulted, and reclaimed, exploding in a range of military actions and population moves. These metamorphoses of borders in Thrace not only determined the fates of Thracian Bulgarians as rooted out and directed to the territory of the Bulgarian state, but also influenced subsequent hopes and expectations—particularly the intention of returning or despair at no longer being able to go back. Heavily loaded with historical associations and traumatic memories handed down through generations, the border and its meaning in terms of separation from the territories of ancestors has played another constitutive role for the identity of the Thracian community. While it functioned (and still does) as a firmly established *topoi* in the various testimonies and memoir accounts of Thracian Bulgarians, it is also evoked in recollections during commemorative ceremonies, and it shapes the behaviour of those descendants who have traversed the border areas on various tours and commemorative occasions over the past two decades. These symbolic meanings of the border—alongside the continuing claim for recognition of the experienced suffering and the effort to maintain a collective identity over time—will certainly guide the practices of this community in the future.

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Nikolai Vukov works at the Ethnographic Museum of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, Bulgaria. His research interests are related to monuments, museum representations and public commemorations in Eastern Europe after 1945; communist rule and post-communist transition; and state borders and migrant identities.

Chapter 5
The Changing Waves of Migration from the Balkans to Turkey: A Historical Account

Ahmet İçduygu and Deniz Sert

This chapter elaborates on the migration flows from the Balkans into Turkey, taking a historical approach. In doing so, it focuses particularly on migration from that part of the Balkans consisting of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and former Yugoslavia[1] within four historical periods. The *first period* looks at emigration from these countries into Turkey during the late Ottoman period, beginning with the decline of the Empire. The *second period* describes the waves of Balkan migration into the newborn republic of Turkey until the end of World War II. Over this period there were two concerns of the founding fathers of the Turkish Republic: (i) the matter of the declining population of the country from 16 million in 1914 to around 13 million in the 1920s (Courbage and Fargues 1998, p. 128); and (ii) the issue of creating a homogenous sense of national identity in an otherwise ethnically and culturally diverse country. This latter concern was very much driven by a deep-seated belief that the Ottoman Empire had collapsed because of its multiethnic and multicultural nature (Ahmad 1993). Thus, the immigration policy pursued during this period was to encourage and accept immigrants who could speak the Turkish language and had an affiliation with Turkishness. In practice, however, those who belonged to a Sunni-Hanafi religious background were given preferential entry (Kirişci 1996, 2000).[2] Accordingly, the groups that were supposedly easier to melt into a Turkish identity were mostly Muslim Albanians, Bosnians, Circassians, Pomaks, and Tatars.

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[1] Owing to the fact that Yugoslavia did not exist as a country before 1929, it is taken here as a region at least until this date.

[2] The selection criteria for the period were not clear while conceptions of Turkishness were very vague.

A. İçduygu (✉)
MiReKoç, Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey
e-mail: aicduygu@ku.edu.tr

D. Sert
Department of International Relations, Özyeğin University, Istanbul, Turkey
e-mail: deniz.sert@ozyegin.edu.tr

The *third period*—between the end of World War II and the end of the Cold War—witnesses a transformation of Turkey's above-mentioned immigration policy into one that discouraged immigration on the grounds that Turkey's population had grown sufficiently and that land to distribute to immigrants had become scarce. Nevertheless, immigration during this period did continue with the migration of ethnic Turks and Muslims, in particular, with flows from Greece and Bulgaria; the latest large wave occurred in 1989 when more than 300,000 Turks and Pomaks were expelled from Bulgaria.

The *fourth period*—since the end of the Cold War—expands on both change and continuity in the nature of migration to Turkey from the Balkan countries under consideration. For example, while migration from Yugoslavia into Turkey during the break-up of the country did resemble the migration wave from Bulgaria in 1989, the return migration from Turkey to Bulgaria (caused by regime change in the latter in 1990 as the Cold War came to an end) was a rather new phenomenon. This trend of return was recently reinforced by Bulgaria's accession to the EU, when more and more of these migrants—that is, Turkish- and Bulgarian-speaking Muslims—re-claimed Bulgarian citizenship[3] in order to obtain the right to travel to Bulgaria and other EU countries without a visa. At the same time, the nature of immigration from the Balkans into Turkey is changing from permanent to temporary with increasing two-way transit irregular migration. To illustrate, Parla (this volume) wonderfully describes how Turkish-speaking migrants from Bulgaria have transformed from a group of migrants who were historically the most privileged among migrant groups in Turkey to a group whose legal status has so shifted over the last two decades to become one of systematic irregularity.

Since the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, more than 1.6 million immigrants from the Balkans have come and settled in Turkey; we argue that over time there have been changing patterns in these migration flows and in the migrants' characteristics. These changes reflect the dramatic transformations in the region throughout the twentieth century—initially through nation- and state-building, and more recently via globalization processes that have altered social, economic, and political structures in the Balkans.

There is a methodological concern that should be noted here. This study largely benefits from the analysis of secondary data and literature, which should not be seen as a deficiency for several reasons: (i) no single comprehensive study has been conducted on the migration flows from the Balkans to Turkey; (ii) existing studies are sketchy and limited; and (iii) a study that is broad enough to cover the issue thematically and historically is lacking. Thus, this study tries to go beyond what has been said before, as it presents a cross-temporal and cross-country analysis.

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[3] Such people retain their Turkish citizenship as both countries allow dual nationality.

5.1 The Late Ottoman Period

> Crying, while crying
> With the ballad of coy Bodin from Tuna
> With the anthem of Algeria from Africa
> With the elegy of 'O veterans!' from the seas of Arabia
> We migrated to the land of Anatolia…[4]

The Ottomans' reign in the Balkans lasted almost 400 years until the late nineteenth century when there was an emerging Russian influence in the region. Although the signs of decline had become evident much earlier with the Serbian (1804–1835) and Greek (1814–1827) revolutions, it was really with the loss of the 1877–1878 Russian-Ottoman War that the Ottoman Empire began to lose its importance in the region. Stola (1992, p. 328) states:

> The Ottoman Empire was the first of the multinational empires in Central Europe to decline and retreat. Turkish reprisals for rebellions and mutual hostility between Muslims and Christians generated thousands of refugees, who moved between Turkey and its former provinces, especially after the territorial changes caused by the Russian-Turkish war of 1877…. Up to 1912… the inflow of Muslim refugees apparently doubled the population of Constantinople.

As Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia established their nation states and embarked on their policies of creating homogeneous ethnic societies, Turks and non-Turkish Muslims (e.g., Cretan Muslims, Pomaks, Roma, Torbesh, and Vallahades) of the region began to search for new homes in the Anatolian peninsula (Duman 2008, p. 23; İpek 1999, pp. 14–21; Todorova 1997, pp. 348–349). This was a rather new migration flow: instead of the historical East to West migrations of the Turks to the newly conquered Ottoman territories, this migration was from the West to the East—this time from the lost lands to the safe haven of Anatolia. It was in this context that the Greek revolt was accompanied by the slaughter of many Muslims and the flight of many others (McCarthy 1995). Most of these refugees went just northwards to a part of the Balkans still under Ottoman control rather than to what is now Turkey. Many of them, however, undoubtedly migrated to Turkey at a later stage.

It is important to underline that in this late Ottoman period, religion rather than language was the defining characteristic of these flows. Even in the succeeding early Republican period, immigration was defined more in religious than in linguistic terms—that is, it was enough to be a Muslim to settle in the country. Eventually, the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 was also drawn up with this rationale, where religious rather than ethnic minorities were the main concern. Thus, it is rather hard to distinguish between these categories for those periods where the words 'Turk' and 'Muslim' were used interchangeably. As explained by İçduygu et al. (2007, p. 359):

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[4] Translated by the authors from the Turkish original: '…*Biz, Tuna'dan 'Nazlı Bodin' türküsüyle, Afrika'dan 'Cezayir Marşı' ile, Arabistan denizlerinden 'Ey Gaziler' mersiyesi ile ağlaya ağlaya, Anadolu toprağına göçettik…*' (Atay 1970, p. 86).

> Despite the use of the category of 'Turk' as a building block of the nation-state, what this
> word referred to was initially ambiguous and this ambiguity was to persist, with the defini-
> tion and content of 'Turk' undergoing changes in different eras, subject to the influence of
> events and developments (Kadıoğlu 1998). 'Turk' was used to refer sometimes to an ethnic
> group originating in Central Asia, sometimes to a legal status of citizenship on the basis of
> identity cards and passports and sometimes to individuals sharing a common culture, i.e.
> Turkish culture (Deringil 2000). As to the religion of the 'Turk', Islam was frequently used
> to define Turks, the Turkish nation and Turkish culture. In other words, Islam provided a
> reference point in the definition of the ordinary Turk (Kirişci 2000; Meeker 2002; Özbudun
> 1998; Özdoğan 1996). As a result, the inclusion of non-Muslims has been problematic in
> the normative definition of 'Turk'. (Keyman and İçduygu 1998)

There were two substantial migration waves from the Balkans during the late Otto-
man period predating the founding of the Turkish nation state. The first consisted
of migrations that occurred during the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877–1878, which
marked the beginning of the dissolution of the Empire and caused more than a mil-
lion Muslims to be uprooted (Kocacık and Yalçın 2008; McCarthy 1995); the sec-
ond wave was during the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913, during which approximately
200,000 Turks died and another 440,000 migrated from Thrace and Macedonia in
the aftermath of the wars until the Republic was founded (Eren 1993, pp. 292–293).
Hence, both events caused Muslims' retreat from the lost territories of the Ottoman
Empire.

Especially following the latter, the admittance and settlement of the population
dislocated from the lost territories became one of the major issues that the ruling
Unity and Progress Party (*İttihak ve Terakki* hereafter) of the Young Turks had to
tackle (Dündar 2001, p. 121). The most important tool that *İttihak ve Terakki* used
to deal with the issue was the signing of population exchange agreements. With the
changes in the borders and the emergence of new nation states in the aftermath of
the Balkan Wars, the newborn states began to pursue ways to create a homogeneous
population within their new borders. Thus, the population exchange agreements
were regarded as the most legitimate way of achieving this goal. Within this frame-
work, the first voluntary population exchange agreement was part of the Treaty of
Constantinople (also known as the Treaty of Istanbul), which was a treaty between
the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Bulgaria signed on 29 September 1913
in the Ottoman capital Istanbul after the Second Balkan War (Babuş 2006; Dündar
2001, p. 60). The main terms of the treaty were: (i) Bulgaria acknowledged Ottoman
gains of Edirne, Kırklareli, and Demotika (Didimoteicho) and the surrounding ter-
ritory; (ii) the Ottoman Empire ceded the port of Dedeagach (now Alexandroupoli)
to Bulgaria; (iii) the exchange of lands was to be completed within 10 days; (iv) the
armies on the border would be demobilized within 3 weeks; (v) prisoners of war
from both sides would be released; (vi) both political and economic ties between the
two countries would be re-established; and (vii) the voluntary exchange of popula-
tion would be organized within the next 4 years (see Anderson and Hershey 1918). It
was at this point that 47,000 Bulgarians in Ottoman Thrace left their homes in return
for 49,000 Turks being accepted into Turkey from Bulgaria (Psomiades 1968, p. 60).

In fact, most of the population was already subject to forced displacement dur-
ing the wars, and the agreements were only relevant for smaller populations (Tekeli
1990, p. 60). Beyond population exchange, the agreements also stipulated exchange

of properties, protection of property rights, and guarantee of the rights of minority populations left behind. However, a year after the Balkan Wars—with the advent of World War I—many such agreements were nullified and the population exchange process was halted.

A second tool that *İttihak ve Terakki* utilized to manage the problem of displaced populations was the combination of conscription and resettlement strategies, which first targeted the resettlement of migrants from the Balkans to nearby border regions in Thrace, where the cities and towns were mostly inhabited by non-Muslim populations (Ağanoğlu 2001, p. 110). Those newly arrived Muslim migrants were not only settled in these regions, but male immigrants were also conscripted in the same regions. Consequently, this strategy served both external and internal security purposes. Looking at the records of the Ministry of Interior of the time, Dündar (2001, pp. 71–72) argues that the combination of resettlement and conscription was an essential mode of 'Turkification' of those areas with insufficient Turk and Muslim populations within the Empire (see also Ulukan 2008).

The censuses were the third policy that *İttihak ve Terakki* employed as a means of controlling population movements. Realizing that it was important to know the number of outgoing non-Muslim populations in order to be able to settle the incoming Muslim populations in an efficient manner—that is, making the population within the borders as Turkish and Muslim as possible—unofficial censuses were conducted and Anatolia's ethnic and religious distribution was figured out. Population movements were closely scrutinized and ethnographic maps of the Ottoman state were drawn (Dündar 2001, pp. 71–72; Ulukan 2008).

All in all, the policies pursued by *İttihak ve Terakki*, motivated by Turkish nationalism, designated the ethnic and religious distribution of the contemporary Anatolian peninsula. Migration and settlement policies largely focused on creating a homogeneous Turkish and Muslim community—rather than economic interests, human conditions, and/or utilization of unused land for production.

Within this context, Albanians are an illustrative case. Until the independence of Albania was proclaimed in 1912, voluntary migration and the *devşirme*[5] practice had caused an emergence of Albanian presence in the Ottoman army and administration in Istanbul (De Rapper 2000). Migration of Albanians to Istanbul continued even during the early years of the Albanian state, as the government could exercise its authority in only a small part of the territory—the rest being occupied by the Greeks in the south, and by the Serbs and Montenegrins in the north. Violence and insecurity caused many Albanians to flee. Istanbul was a major destination for two reasons. First, many Albanians already had relatives or friends in the Ottoman capital and could count on the support of established networks. Second, rural Albanian populations were mostly Muslim. They did not have a developed Albanian national consciousness and were accustomed to being referred to as 'Turks' (a religious category rather than a national or ethnic community); thus, the Ottoman Empire and

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[5] It is translated as 'collection of children', 'child-gathering', or 'blood tax' in different Balkan languages. This was the practice by which the Ottoman Empire recruited boys, forcibly, from Christian families, who were selected by skilled scouts to be trained and enrolled in one of the four imperial institutions—the Palace, the Scribes, the Religious, and the Military.

Turkey seemed a natural destination (De Rapper 2000). In this case, the definition of the category 'Albanian' had different meanings: on one hand, albeit to a lesser extent, it referred to those groups of people with Albanian nationality (ibid.). On the other hand, it referred to those ex-Yugoslavs in Albania and Greece who were recognized as of Albanian origin based on personal experience or verified familial ties (ibid.). Thus, a subjective definition of Albanian is being utilized that reposes on the identification of the people to the 'Albanian' category, and that does not take into consideration objective criteria like nationality (citizenship), language, or birthplace. As seen in the next section, especially for Albanian Muslims from western Greek Macedonia, such a subjective categorization proves to be problematic; however, there is no better classification owing to a lack of accurate data on the characteristics of the people in the region (i.e., their origins).

5.2   The Early Years of the Republic

> We want a numerous population, a satiated population, a happy and affluent population. Against the history that left Anatolia empty, poor, old and ruined, we have a grudge that is growing every day. The energy of creating a numerous, happy and affluent Anatolia is coming from the force of this growing grudge. Today's Anatolia that we took over from the past government is in its most desolate and neglected position in its history. If we do not at least double the number of this population of fourteen million, whose entire civil capabilities have been unnoticed, whose needs are diminished, and who is almost ignored of civilization, in a rather short period of time, we would jeopardize our survival against the populous and technologically developed nations of the future. Under its perished nature that seems to be desolate, Anatolia is an untouched country that hides all the conditions of a life in heaven. This country is waiting for the Turkish nation to get crowded and numerous. Our target is a technologically developed, satiated, happy and numerous Turkish nation (Aydemir 1932, p. 35).

The founding fathers of the Turkish Republic were troubled by the recently reduced population of the country. The decrease was not only the result of the wars, but also of the towering death rates owing to general lack of health care, and to illnesses such as malaria, syphilis, trachoma, typhoid, and dysentery (Duman 2008, p. 24). Within this context, the founding fathers sought the means of generating a homogeneous sense of national identity in a fragile country that was otherwise ethnically and culturally diverse (İçduygu and Kirişci 2009). Thus, people who were either Muslim Turkish speakers or could easily melt into a Turkish identity (such as Bosnians, Circassians, Pomaks, and Tatars from the Balkans) were given exclusive priority and accepted as immigrants into the country (Kirişci 1996, 2000).[6] From

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[6] The immigration of Turks from Western Thrace was an exception. According to Article 2 of the Exchange Agreement between Greece and Turkey, which comprised 19 articles and which was appended to the Lausanne Treaty, the Greeks in Istanbul and the Turks in Western Thrace were to be excluded from exchange. For strategic reasons, Turkish governments did not view immigration from Western Thrace positively. For a detailed elaboration, see Öksüz (2004).

the foundation of the Republic in 1923 until 1997, more than 1.6 million people migrated to Turkey, settled in the country, and were successfully assimilated.

The demographic conditions that the Republic of Turkey inherited from the Ottoman Empire are known to be the result of the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877–1878 and the subsequent wars, which caused the uprooting of many Muslim migrants from various ethnic backgrounds (Ulukan 2008, p. 47). During the years of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, many immigration flows took place—mainly from the Balkans, the Aegean Islands, Cyprus, Hatay,[7] the Middle East, and the Soviet Union (Çağaptay 2002; Ulukan 2008). The immigration of the Muslims caused drastic demographic changes in the proportion of non-Muslims within the population: before World War I, while one in every five persons was a non-Muslim within the geography consisting of the territories of the Republic, after the war this ratio had decreased to one in every 40 persons (Keyder 1989, p. 67; Table 5.1).

With such changing demographic conditions, the issues of settling the newcomers as well as homogenizing the new population became important items on the agenda of the founding fathers. Accordingly, the 1926 Law of Settlement—the first significant official text governing voluntary immigration—charged the Ministry of Internal Affairs with the tasks of admitting the immigrants and refugees to the country, and of determining their regions of settlement as well as stating who could not be admitted as an immigrant or refugee (Ulker 2007). Thus, based on Article 2 of the law:

> People who do not belong to Turkish culture, who are infected with syphilis, who are subject to leprosy and their families, who are imprisoned because of committing murder except political and military reasons, anarchists, spies, gypsies, or who are exiled outside of the country cannot be admitted.

Table 5.1 The Muslim and non-Muslim population in Turkey, 1914–2005 (in thousands). (Source: İçduygu and Kirişci 2009, p. 2)

Year	1914	1927	1945	1965	1990	2005
Muslims	12,941	1329	18,511	31,139	5686	71,997
Greeks	1549	110	104	76	8	3
Armenians	1204	77	60	64	67	50
Jews	128	82	77	38	29	27
Others	176	71	38	74	50	45
TOTAL	15,997	13,630	18,790	31,391	57,005	72,122
Percentage of non-Muslims	*19.1*	*2.5*	*1.5*	*0.8*	*0.3*	*0.2*

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[7] Hatay was part of Aleppo in Ottoman Syria. Following World War I, Hatay (then known as Alexandretta) was under the French Mandate of Syria. Unlike other regions historically belonging to Syrian provinces, Alexandretta was considered as Syrian territory in the Treaty of Lausanne, but it was granted a special autonomous status because it contained a large Turkish minority. Concomitant to a series of border disputes with France-mandated Syria, in 1937 an agreement was signed with France recognizing Alexandretta as an independent state, and in 1939 following a referendum this state, called the Republic of Hatay, was annexed to Turkey as the 63rd Turkish province.

Thus, this law linked the admission of immigrants and refugees to the condition of belonging to Turkish culture. However, who was to be considered within this category was not specified in the law. Indeed, beside the Muslim-Turk population living outside the borders of the Republic, this category also referred to the non-Turk, but Muslim, ethnic and linguistic groups, especially from the Balkans. Here culture very much refers to being Muslim, which was a deviation from Ziya Gökalp's idea of Turkish culture being based on religion, language, a common history *and* values. Thus, with this law, while the conditions of resettlement of Ottoman Muslims were alleviated, non-Muslim Ottoman subjects' resettlement to the country was outlawed (Çağaptay 2002, p. 225; Ulukan 2008, p. 50). This importance given to religion was in contradiction to the secular foundations of the Republic, a major paradox of the initial years:

> While seeming to reject their Ottoman and Islamic heritage, the new regime (Republic) still continued to respect the common historical heritage with those non-Turkish groups [of Bosnians, Albanians, and Macedonians]. Those groups were placed within the Muslim *millet*[8] in the Ottoman Empire, and, it might be argued, there is a reflection of that *millet* system in the Turkish Republic in its recognition of the groups that previously were parts of the Muslim *millet* as Turks (İçduygu et al. 1999, pp. 195–196)

As time passed, the 1926 Law of Settlement on population problems proved to be inefficient, and it was decided that a more general settlement law was needed. Thus, the 1934 Law of Settlement came to be the most comprehensive law of its time—not merely regulating *only* migration or settlement, but really a tool for creating a homogeneous national identity of the 'new Turk' (Kirişci 2000, p. 4). The law aimed at increasing the population and production capacity, attaching the refugees and immigrants to the national culture, settling nomadic populations and providing them with land, teaching everybody the Turkish language and their citizenship rights, and thus, creating a nation to protect the unity and security of the state (Babuş 2006, p. 298; Ulukan 2008, p. 51).

According to the 1934 Law of Settlement, only those of Turkish descent and culture would be accepted as immigrants in Turkey. In practice, this excluded non-Muslim Turks (like the Gagauz Turks), but included non-Turkish Muslims (like Pomaks, Tatars, and Bosnians). However, the law did not define who was of Turkish descent and culture, but left the matter to be determined by the Council of Ministers. Looking at Table 5.2, it can easily be observed that the people from the Balkans—that is, from Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia—were the largest group who migrated to Turkey.

Thus, immigration from the Balkans comprised an important part of the immigration history of the Republic. Some of these movements were a result of population exchange agreements signed after the War of Independence. For example, the agreement on the 1923 Turkish-Greek population exchange, which was signed in Lausanne, was an important historical document. Nearly 900,000 out of

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[8] *Millet* is a term for the confessional communities in the Ottoman Empire, referring to the separate legal courts pertaining to 'personal law' under which communities (Muslim Sharia, Christian Canon law, and Jewish Halakha law abiding) were allowed to rule themselves under their own system.

Table 5.2 Migrations to Turkey by region of origin and time period (1923–1997). (Source: İçduygu and Kirişci 2009, p. 10)

Region of origin	1923–1939	1940–1945	1946–1997	TOTAL
Bulgaria	198,688	15,744	603,726	818,158
Greece	384,000	NA	25,889	409,889
Romania	117,095	4201	1266	122,562
Yugoslavia	115,427	1671	188,600	428,260
Others	7998	1005	11,509	20,512
TOTAL	823,208	22,621	83,099	1,676,819

approximately 1.5 million Anatolian Greeks had already left the country following the Greek retreat in the Turkish War of Independence, and the population exchange agreement provided legitimacy for that de facto emigration (Psomiades 1968, p. 120). The agreement set out some further emigration: during the agreement's implementation, 150,000 Greeks left behind in Anatolia were sent to Greece in return for 360,000 Muslims accepted into Turkey from Greece (Geray 1970, p. 10). The number included both ethnic Turks and the Albanian Muslims from western Greek Macedonia who were classified as Turks at the time of the exchange of populations and were forced to leave their villages for Turkey in 1924 (De Rapper 2000).[9]

There is also an asymmetry that is worth noting regarding the agreement—namely, that while most of the Greek migrations were forced by circumstances, a very large proportion of the Muslims going to Turkey were obliged to do so solely by virtue of the agreement. It not only drastically changed the two countries' demographic characteristics, but also affected their economic activities. To illustrate, with the emigration of the Greek population—historically known as the entrepreneur class of the Ottoman Empire—the newborn Turkey became deficient in trade and industry capacity; at the same time, it gained in agricultural production capacity as the newcomers brought with them important know-how concerning agriculture.

Another state-regulated—not compulsory, merely regulated—agreement was one signed with Bulgaria. The 1925 Treaty of Amity, together with a settlement contract, set rules for protection of Turkish and Bulgarian minorities in Bulgaria and Turkey, respectively, as well as provisions on citizenship and voluntary resettlement (Değerli 2009). According to the Treaty, Turkish and Bulgarian citizens could freely move and settle in each other's countries, provided that they had the religion of the country of settlement. From 1923 until 1939, almost 200,000 people emigrated from Bulgaria to Turkey, a number that dropped considerably in the following period (see Table 5.2).

There were also migrations from Romania. The Romanian government's land confiscation policies, imposed co-habitation with the Vlachs, lack of security for minorities, and heightening economic problems led the ethnic Turks to migrate to Turkey, which had a welcoming immigration strategy at the time. The immigration

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[9] The exodus of the Muslims from Greece began much earlier; for details, see Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatou (2008).

of Turks from Romania can be analysed in two stages during the early Republican period: (i) the 1923–1933 migrations, which were lesser in scale and could be characterized as immigrations of small groups of voluntary migrants; and (ii) the 1934–1938 migrations, which were larger flows—of a *less* voluntary nature—who were received as migrants-to-be-settled by the Turkish state (Duman 2008). This latter interwar period was characterized by the emergence of states where authoritarian regimes were introduced in Central Europe, and when anti-Semitism became an important additional factor, increasing Jewish emigration from Romania (Stola 1992). It was also the time when ethnic purification, rather than assimilation or integration of ethnic minorities, was becoming a dominant idea in Romania (Achim 2001). Accordingly,

> Romanian Turks were to benefit from 'a gradual transfer operated by the Turkish government', a reference to a convention signed by the Romanian and Turkish governments on September 4, 1936 that mentioned the possibility of a *voluntary* emigration of the Moslem Turkish minority living in Dobrudja. The convention had remained in effect, and by April 15, 1941 70,000 ethnic Turks had already left. (Achim 2001, p. 605)

There were also migration flows of Turks from Yugoslavia[10] during this early Republican period, which were a result of the economic, political, social, and cultural conditions. The world economic crisis of 1929 and the Agricultural Reform Act of 1931 (along with confiscation of the properties of religious and charitable foundations) affected the Turks as the segment of society that owned the largest agricultural lands and whose income had been dependent on agricultural productivity (Öksüz and Köksal 2004). 'The negative effects of the land reform and the confiscation of the properties of the religious and charitable foundations can be seen in a complaint made by the Turks and Albanians to the League of the Nations in 1930' (Öksüz and Köksal 2004, p. 150).

While Turks of Yugoslavia were subjected to political pressures—which made it impossible for them to unite and take action—socially and culturally, they were also devoid of minority rights to vote and for education in their own language. Moreover, there were massacres against the Turks in various parts of Yugoslavia[11] at the time (Öksüz and Köksal 2004). Thus, based on the official statistics, between 1923 and 1949, some 5894 people within 1449 households emigrated from Yugoslavia to Turkey as *permanent immigrants*, that is, they were settled by the state, and 111,318 people within 27,030 households came to Turkey as *free immigrants*, that is, they arrived voluntarily without any state regulation of settlement (Öksüz and Köksal 2004).

It is important to note that in this period, while the importance of religion compared to language was declining in terms of defining the characteristic of these

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[10] The usage of the name 'Yugoslavia' needs careful exposition of the different territorial names and realities of different periods. Here it refers to the country called Yugoslavia that existed between 1929 and 1946. That country is not the same one as the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia in 1946.

[11] Unfortunately, there are no data providing specific information on how many people came from different regions, such as Macedonia.

flows, immigration was still considered more in terms of religion than nationality. The Albanian case was illustrative in this sense, as many Albanians migrated to Turkey between 1918 and 1941, during the colonization of Kosovo by Yugoslavia (De Rapper 2000). Even during this incident, the categories of Albanian, Turk, and Muslim were interchangeable. As described by de Rapper (2000):[12]

> Especially after 1928, measures were taken to encourage the emigration of Albanians to Albania and to Turkey. An agreement was signed in July 1938 between the Yugoslav and Turkish governments, the latter agreeing to take up to 200,000 Albanians, Turks and Muslims from Kosovo and Macedonia (40,000 families). This agreement however was not ratified by the Turkish Parliament and the funds were never released to implement the movement and settlement of refugees in sparsely populated Anatolia. Between 1929 and 1941, however, Yugoslavia strove to organize the departure of Albanians on the basis of international agreements, and managed to provoke a wave of departures to Albania and Turkey.

5.3   The Cold War Years

> Edirne[13] resembles the Armageddon
> People hugging each other, filled with tears, bewildered
> Uprooted and forced to leave
> They have a wry look around
> Blow thy demented blow, blow
> You are not blowing, where are you?
> Where on the Earth are you?
> Now there you are
> A hurricane, a tornado, a thunderstorm
> As you are not in Bulgaria
> Deliorman is enclosed in gloominess
> Birds not singing, leaves not moving
> Flowers cut off from the stems
> People not smiling
> Blow thy demented blow, blow
> Tell freely about us, the oppression
> To the entire world… (Yalınkılıç 1991, p. 19)[14]

During the period following World War II until the 1990s, there were two kinds of international migration on the Balkan peninsula—ethnic and labour migrations (Bonifazi and Mamolo 2004). Only the former is applicable to the context of Balkan migration to Turkey, which was very political in nature. After the establishment of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, those parts of the population who were not pleased about the passage to communism, especially among the Turks and

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[12] Quotation translated by the authors.

[13] The western province of Turkey, which is a point of entry from the Balkans. Also known as 'Ludogorie' in Bulgarian, it is a region that was largely inhabited by Turks.

[14] Quotation translated by the authors.

the Muslims (i.e., Albanians, Bosnians, etc.), began to migrate to Turkey after relations were reinstated by the two countries.

These movements can be categorized as refugee movements, but in a rather different sense than the conventional refugees who are subject to the 1951 Geneva Convention. Kirişci (1996, 1991) defines the Turkish refugee system using three categories: The *first* category is that of *convention refugees*, who are individuals seeking asylum from European countries and who are subject to the rules and conditions of the Geneva Convention. The *second* type is *non-convention refugees* and consists of those coming from non-European countries, such as Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan. Owing to the geographical limitation that Turkey holds to the Geneva Convention—that is, only asylum seekers from the West can settle in Turkey as refugees—these people are usually resettled in a third country. The *third* category is that of *national refugees*, which refers to immigrants of Turkish origin mainly coming from the Balkans, including non-Turkish speaking Muslims, ethnic groups associated with the Turks from Central Asia and the former Soviet Union, and Muslims associated with the Ottoman Empire, such as Albanians, Bosnian Muslims, Pomaks, and Tatars. Thus, the movements mentioned above fit into this third category of so-called *national refugees*.

Between 1954 and 1990, a total of 185,000 people migrated to Turkey, including—besides those of Turkish origin—many Muslim Albanians and Muslims from Bosnia and Sandjak, who declared themselves to be Turks in order to be able to migrate to Turkey (Kirişci 1995). By 1950, there were 16,079 Albanian speaking, 24,013 Bosnian speaking, and 1605 Serbian speaking Yugoslav migrants in Turkey (Dündar 1999).

The migration flows from Bulgaria to Turkey during the Cold War years can be divided into three stages: (i) 1950–1953, the period shortly after the declaration of a communist state and collectivization of land in Bulgaria when almost 250,000 people of Turkish origin[15] were granted permission to emigrate from Bulgaria; (ii) following the 1968 family reunification agreements between Turkey and Bulgaria, when more than 95,000 Turks obtained the right to emigrate to Turkey; (iii) in 1989, when the Bulgarian state's assimilation campaign against the Turks incited new migration flows into Turkey. It is important to note that especially for the first two periods, it is rather hard to provide exact figures for the migration flows, as the sources on both sides are biased, either reducing or increasing the numbers based on their own ideological interests (Parla 2003, 2006).

The migration flows of the 1950–1953 period were a result of the policies of the newly-formed communist state, which decided to unify the education system, restrict religious practices, and centralize agricultural production. All of these, besides affecting other Bulgarian citizens, also concerned the Turkish community, which made up almost 10 % of the population in Bulgaria at the time and had enjoyed considerable freedom both in practising their religion, language, and traditions, and in running their own schools (Beltan 2006, p. 25). As a result of these policies,

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[15] The number included Pomaks who were considered to be of Turkish origin through their Islamic orientation, but there are no data differentiating this group from the larger Turkish minority.

154,393 Bulgarian Turks migrated to Turkey between January 1950 and November 1951. They were accepted by the Turkish as settled immigrants and received financial support (Beltan 2006, p. 25).

Estimates of the number of Turks migrating from Bulgaria to Turkey after the 1968 agreements (which aimed at uniting separated families), vary from 50,000 to 130,000 depending on the source (Parla 2003, 2006). Parla (2003, p. 562) argues that these migrations 'depended not only on the political regimes in Bulgaria, but also on those in Turkey, with the latter's attitudes towards its "racial kin" (*soydas*) ranging from welcoming to indifference to reluctant acceptance, contingent on the political and economic climate'.

The third stage of migration flows from Bulgaria to Turkey was during the so-called Revival Process in Bulgaria, which was an assimilation campaign that began in 1984 with bans on wearing traditional Turkish dress and speaking Turkish in public places. It continued with a name-changing campaign targeting Turks. As a result of this assimilation campaign, almost 350,000 Bulgarian Turks[16] migrated to Turkey between June 1989 and August 1989 (Kirişci 1995, pp. 63–66).

The Revival Process was implemented not only in Bulgaria, but was part of a socialistic unification policy in all of the communist regimes of the Balkans. Thus, during the Cold War period, immigrants from other Balkan countries also disembarked to Turkey. After Bulgaria, the second largest population movement from the Balkans was from Yugoslavia, from where 186,925 people migrated to Turkey between 1945 and 1990 (Kirişci 1995, p. 70). As Yugoslavia did not permit migration of the Turkish and Muslim community during the period 1939–1950, it was only after the political rapprochement between Yugoslavia and Turkey and the signing of the Balkan Pact in the later period that most of these people could take their leave (Altuğ 1991, p. 115; Eren 1993, p. 296; Beltan 2006, pp. 25–28). From the 1950s to the 1960s, approximately 150,000 immigrants arrived in Turkey composed not only of Turks, but also Albanians, Pomaks, and Bosnians (Beltan 2006, pp. 25–28). Concerned about their status in post-war communist Yugoslavia, even those Muslim Albanians who could not speak Turkish claimed Turkish ancestry in order to use this immigration status (Kirişci 1995, p. 71; Poulton 1991, p. 92).

In this sense, Albanians were an interesting case. Until 1948, the Albanians of Yugoslavia benefited from the situation created by the good relations between Albania and Yugoslavia. However, as Yugoslavia broke its ties with the USSR and its satellites, including Albania, the Albanians of Yugoslavia started to be suspected of being manipulated by Albania and aiming to destabilize Yugoslavia (De Rapper 2000).

> Although an Albanian state had emerged from the Ottoman Empire, many Muslim Albanians took advantage of various emigration agreements between Yugoslavia and Turkey, and seeing Turkey rather than Albania as their kin-state, moved to there; this could be explained largely by Enver Hoxha's post-war fortress mentality and militant atheism (Poulton 1997, p. 200).

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[16] Quotation translated by the authors.

With the 1953 Balkan Pact, many Albanians began to depart for Turkey. There were three novel characteristics of this new wave of departures (Poulton 1997, p. 200). *First*, in addition to the political dimension of the previous departures, there was a national dimension of these movements. While political opposition was still a characteristic of Albanians—anti-communist sentiments among them were widespread—there was also resentment among those people who had passed 'religion before the nation'. *Secondly*, in order to legally migrate to Turkey in line with the Balkan Pact, Albanians pretended to be members of the Turkish minority. According to De Rapper (2000), one third of the people who then declared themselves as Turks did not speak Turkish. *Thirdly*, though 20 years after the previous wave, these latter immigrants benefited from the existence of an Albanian community in Turkey with family ties, which facilitated their rapid integration.

Following the consolidation of the communist regime in Yugoslavia and an improving minority status, from the 1970s to 1980s migration to Turkey declined noticeably. Only 1797 people—most of whom were joining close relatives—chose to migrate to Turkey in this period (Table 5.3; Beltan 2006, pp. 25–28; Kirişci 1995, p. 71).

During the years of the Cold War, migration from Greece was the third largest demographic movement to Turkey after those from Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. In the course of World War II and the subsequent civil war in Greece, many Muslims from Greece were granted asylum in Turkey (Kirişci 1995). It was only after the internal situation had returned to normal in 1951 that Turkey ended its policy of admitting Muslims from Greece. Subsequently, approximately 26,000 Muslims from Greece migrated to Turkey during the 1950s and 1960s (Beltan 2006, pp. 25–28; Kirişci 1995, pp. 72–73).[17]

The smallest migration flows during the Cold War years came from Romania, with only 1200 immigrants arriving in Turkey. This small number can be explained by the fairly liberal cultural and minority rights that the Turkish community enjoyed in Romania[18] after World War II (Kirişci 1995, p. 74). Accordingly, it would not be wrong to argue that while bilateral relations were also important, the levels of migration from the Balkans during this period were highly correlated with the internal

Table 5.3 The Turkish population in the FR Yugoslavia according to official documents. (Source: Geray 1962, pp. 10–14)

Area	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981
Kosovo	1315	34,583	25,764	12,244	12,513
Macedonia	95,940	203,908	131,481	108,552	86,691
Yugoslavia	97,255	229,672	157,245	120,796	101,291

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[17] There are no data available for the war period between 1939 and 1945.

[18] To illustrate, Turks have comprised almost 2 % of the population in Northern Dobrudja from the 1950s until today.

politics of the Balkan countries—especially with their treatment of their minorities. The reasons for migration to Turkey in the next period were rather different.

5.4   Current Stage

The end of the Cold War had two main consequences for migration dynamics in the Balkans. *First*, the transition stage from communist totalitarian regimes to capitalist democracies generated ethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, which produced certainly the most dramatic forced ethnic migrations on the European continent in the last two decades (Bonifazi and Mamolo 2004). *Secondly*, this transition formed the political and economic foundations for the extension or emergence of a series of migration flows that previously had been strictly controlled by states. Generally, it can be argued that while migrations of the previous periods were more ethno-religious in character, the current movements from the Balkans to Turkey can be characterized more as labour migrations[19]—maybe with the two exceptions of the Bosnian Muslims and Kosovars who took refuge in Turkey during the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia. Although there are no statistics, in the case of Muslims from Greece (i.e., Turks and Pomaks) an important reason for migration to Turkey is also for continued education at university level.

Turkey accepted Bosnian Muslims as refugees after the outbreak of hostilities and persecutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992 where a total of 2819 Bosnian refugees were housed in refugee camps located in different cities of Turkey (Kirişci 1995, pp. 71–72). Between 1992 and 1995, around 20,000 Bosnians were granted temporary asylum; many have returned to Bosnia since the adoption of the Dayton Peace Agreement (İçduygu and Sert 2009). Similarly, in 1998 and 1999, about 18,000 Kosovars took shelter in Turkey and benefited from protection from the ethnic strife in their homeland, of whom a majority returned with the lessening of the conflict in Kosovo (Kirişci 2001).

With the fall of communism, Turkey became a strategic choice of emigration destination for Muslim Albanians from Albania, due to the presence of networks, existing relations, the lack of entry requirements (most migrants buy a tourist visa at the border), and the absence of anti-foreigner and anti-Albanian racism. There were two main waves (De Rapper 2000). The *first* was during the so-called 'crisis of embassies' in July 1990 in Tirana, when hundreds of people took refuge in foreign embassies. The Embassy of Turkey hosted about 30 people who settled in Turkey with the help of the authorities, promoting the arrival of others later on the basis of kinship networks. These first arrivals were mostly fathers. Once the situation was stabilized they brought their families. For a number of them, Turkey became a transit point for other countries, especially the USA.

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[19] While ethno-religious elements are still important, non-Muslims from the Balkans are also involved in these current movements.

The *second wave* was in 1997 and 1998, during the economic and political crises and rising corruption in Albania, when some 6500 families—42,000 people—arrived in Turkey (De Rapper 2000). Rather than the migration of fathers of families or young single men seeking employment abroad, this wave was for the purpose of taking the family to safety and ensuring normal living conditions.

Much of the recent migration flows from the Balkans to Turkey are a result of economic difficulties in the home countries. These movements are usually of *irregular labour migrants*, most of whom are from Bulgaria and Romania and arrive in Turkey on tourist visas to work informally as domestic labourers, sex workers, construction workers, or sweatshop workers (İçduygu and Yükseker 2008). Many of these migrants come to Turkey legally, in line with Turkish visa requirements, but overstay their visas and then become illegal while in the country (İçduygu 2009). Thus, while many economic sectors in western Turkey—mainly the textile, construction, sex, and entertainment industries—hinge on this type of cheap labour, upper and middle-class Turkish families provide work for female domestic helpers as nannies, babysitters, or carers for the sick and elderly (İçduygu and Yükseker 2008). These people's working conditions are precarious, with long hours and low wages—without social security, health insurance, or pension schemes.

The case of Romanian migration to Turkey is illustrative in showing that these countries are now part of a migration system in which economic conditions, not only in these countries themselves, but in the entire region, affect patterns of movement. For example, the first wave of Romanian migration took place from 1990 to 1995. During this period a new pattern of mass migration of Romanian-speaking Christian Romanians to the Turkish labour market emerged which was quintessentially transnational—that is, 'they worked in the host countries for fixed periods of time, stipulated in their work contracts, and were not joined by their families' (Ban 2009, p. 5). At that time, Turkey was a major destination for traders and informal service workers; once migration networks for the Italian, Spanish, and Greek labour markets started to consolidate in the second half of the 1990s, and economic opportunities shortly became modest for the prospective migrant in Turkey, the number of Romanian migrants in Turkey decreased substantially (Ban 2009, p. 5).

At the same time, it is possible to speak of a return migration to the Balkans from Turkey. With the regime change in Bulgaria in 1990, one third of the refugees who had arrived in the previous period returned, while the rest remained and acquired Turkish citizenship. Based on the figures provided for 2006 by the Bureau for Foreigners, Borders, and Asylum of the Directorate of General Security of the Ministry of Interior, Bulgarians still constitute the largest nationality with residence permits in Turkey (İçduygu and Sert 2009). However, following Bulgaria's recent accession to the EU, an increasing number of these Turks of Bulgarian origin have again applied for Bulgarian citizenship so as to obtain the right to travel to Bulgaria and to other EU countries without a visa.

Data confirm the decreasing scale of immigration from the Balkans to Turkey. Based on 31 December 2012 population and housing census data provided by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), around 1.3 % of Turkey's population were born

abroad. While around 43 % of this group were born in Bulgaria, approximately 8.7 % and 3.5 % were born in Macedonia and Greece, respectively. Bulgaria remains a part of migration trends towards Turkey, albeit of lesser importance. Compared to the 1980s, when Bulgarian migrants were the second largest group of immigrants in Turkey, they currently form around only 2 % of the migrant stock.

Figures provided by the Ministry of Interior also show a declining trend of immigration from Bulgaria and the Balkans in general. Until 2008, around 30 % of immigration in Turkey was from this region; subsequently, the proportion decreased to 12 %. One explanation for this decline is the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, two important migrant-sending countries, to the EU—leaving Turkey as a less attractive destination compared with the new opportunities in the EU (Sert and Korfali). Although there was a small upwards trend in 2010, to 16 % right after the euro-zone crisis, it fell back to 10 % in 2012. Looking at these numbers, one might claim that immigration from the Balkans to Turkey has taken a more rational volume and that migrants seem to be making their decisions based on economic interests rather than ethnic kinship ties.

5.5   Conclusion

Looking at the migration patterns from the Balkans into Turkey through a longitudinal analysis, we can apply Parla's claim for the Bulgarian case to the entire Balkans and argue that Turkey's attitudes towards these migrations ranged from reluctant acceptance or welcoming its 'racial kin' to indifference towards irregular migrants, depending on the political and economic environment. The late Ottoman period can be characterized as 'reluctant acceptance' of immigrants, as settlement and management of these people constituted an important problem for the Empire in its decline. Then, the early years of the Republic are a typical example of the 'welcoming' attitude towards the 'racial kin' from the Balkans. This was in line with the founding fathers' desire to increase the population of the war-torn and epidemic-rife Anatolia. The years of the Cold War were a direct reflection of the political and economic climate. In this period we observe many fluctuations in migration flows, which are largely ethnic in character, depending on the home countries' treatment of minorities. The current stage of Balkan migrations to Turkey is rather different—with less importance of ethnic kin, more significance of economic conditions, more two-way flows, and indifference on the part of the authorities towards the situation of irregular labour migrants. All in all, Balkan migrant flows to Turkey represent a lively migration system that has adapted to changing local, bilateral, and global conditions over time.

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Ahmet İçduygu is professor of international relations and director of the Migration Research Program (MiReKoç) at Koç University, Istanbul, Turkey. His areas of interest are international migration, Turkey, demography, irregular migration, citizenship, international organizations, and civil society. Içduygu is co-editor of Migration around Turkey: Old phenomena, new research, Istanbul: Isis Press, 2013 (with Deniz Yükseker and Damla B. Aksel) and of Countries of migrants, cities of migrants, Istanbul: Isis Press, 2013 (with Marcello Balbo and Julio Pérez Serrano)

Deniz Sert is Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations, Özyeğin University, Istanbul, Turkey. Her areas of interests are conflict, international migration, forced migration, internal displacement, transnationalism, border management, and civil society. Two of her recent publications are 'Turkey's integrated border management strategy?', Turkish Policy Quarterly, 12(2013), nr. 1, pp. 173–179 and 'Compensation Packages,' in L. Stan and N. Nedelsky (eds.) The new encyclopedia of transitional justice, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013

Chapter 6
'For us, Migration is Ordinary': Post-1989 Labour Migration from Bulgaria to Turkey

Ayse Parla

The website of the Turkish Foreigner's Department, revamped in line with the EU accession criteria of accessibility and transparency, hosts a separate page devoted to the topic of 'illegal migration'. The page opens with the declaration that 'it is a basic instinct of human beings to reside in the country in which they are born, the country to which they belong and the country to which they are tied with the tie of citizenship'. Implicating that all movement beyond borders is something aberrant, and privileging rootedness as something natural, the state discourse on migration goes on to define illegal migration as 'leaving the country where one legally resides and entering another country through illegal means, or, after legal entry, not exiting within the legally defined time period and living/working in that country without legal permission'.[1]

Malkki's (1992, 1995) prescient work on essentialist constructions of refugees has addressed the ways in which national identity is a deeply territorialized concept that renders suspect those whose ties to a singular national soil are regarded as tenuous. Since then, a growing body of critical scholarship has exposed the assumptions and contradictions that underlie the designation of migrants as 'legal' or 'illegal'. Some of these works emphasize the fluidity of the line that allegedly separates legality from illegality when one takes seriously the ways in which existing laws translate into everyday practice (Coutin 2005) and embodied experience (Willen 2007); others point to the ways in which migration policies often result in, and even actively produce, illegality (Calavita 1998; De Genova 2005); yet others focus on the ways in which the state rhetoric of fighting illegality masks a tacit tolerance of illegality (Balibar 2004; Favell 2008; Sassen 1996). Activists have also systematically taken to task the terminology that brands people as 'illegal': from the insistence on the term *sans papiers* in France to '*Kein Mensch ist Illegal*/no

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[1] www.egm.gov.tr/hizmet.yabancilar.goc.asp, last accessed 28 July 2011.

A. Parla (✉)
European Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Sabancı University, Istanbul, Turkey
e-mail: ayseparla@sabanciuniv.edu

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one is illegal' networks around the world, oppositional groups have rallied to raise awareness of the fact that the term 'illegal immigrant' makes sense only when one takes for granted the standpoint of the nation state with its *a priori* denial of the principle of the equal right of presence for all.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate yet another instance of the indistinct line between what gets designated as legality and illegality, honing in on the Turkish context through ethnographic analysis of the everyday practices of Turkish-speaking migrants from Bulgaria. The more novel aspect of this contribution to the extant literature lies in the fact that the ethnographic material presented concerns a group of migrants who were historically among the most privileged of the migrant groups in Turkey, but whose legal status has significantly shifted over the last two decades to become one of systematic irregularity. The trajectory of the Bulgarian Turkish immigrants—from prospective citizens to dispensable labour migrants—renders all the more cogent the contingent nature of legality.

This chapter begins by providing a historical and contemporary overview that traces the striking shifts in the legal status of the Bulgarian Turkish migrants. Simultaneously, it brings out the specificity of this particular case by drawing comparisons with immigration policies towards 'ethnic return migrants' in other nation states, with a special focus on the Southern Balkans. It then goes on to locate the unique narratives of three migrants within this broader structure, reading their stories against the grain of the prevailing legal designations. The analyses of this chapter are based primarily on qualitative data gathered through ethnographic fieldwork conducted over 2007–2011 among Turkish migrants from Bulgaria.[2] During fieldwork, the main anthropological methods of participant observation and open-ended interviews were deployed. As distinct from other qualitative research, however, it should be stressed that true to the spirit of 'thick description' (Geertz 1973), the vignettes presented here are the result of multiple encounters that spanned 4 years and different institutional and recreational sites rather than single interviews conducted in one sitting or setting.

6.1 The Migration of the Bulgarian Turks from Bulgaria to Turkey: A Story of Falling from Grace?

Starting with the founding of the Republic in 1923 and extending to 1989, migrants from Bulgaria with claims to Turkish ethnicity have received citizenship on the basis of an immigration policy that grants citizenship to those of Turkish descent (Kirişci 2000). But the favouring of the immigration of those deemed as co-ethnics is not

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[2] This chapter is based on ethnographic research funded by two TÜBITAK projects. The first one, 'A Comparative Analysis of Informal Networks among Bulgarian Turks, Iraqi Turks and Moldavians' was a collaborative project undertaken together with Didem Danış and Mine Eder and carried out between January 2007 and June 2008. The second project, entitled, 'The Legalization Practices among Turkish Immigrants from Bulgaria' took place between 2009 and 2012.

unique to the Turkish nation state and should first be situated within a comparative perspective. After the settlement of the Asia Minor refugees in (northern) Greece in 1922, the Greek government continued to settle 'repatriates' (*palinnostoundes*)—primarily Greeks from the former Soviet Union—under a special, more favourable regulation that differs from the constitutional regulations that other migrants in Greece are subjected to (Baldwin-Edwards and Kyriakou 2004). Similarly, around 4 million individuals of German descent (*Aussiedler*) from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union migrated to Germany under the legal auspices of 'the right of return' defined by the post-war German constitution. Other well-studied cases of 'return' migrations framed in terms of ethno-national identity include the migration of Jews from the Soviet Union to Israel (Remennick 2003), Hungarians from Romania to Hungary (Fox 2009), and Japanese from Brazil to Japan (Tsuda 2003).

However, such 'policy favoritism' towards ethnic return migrants, as Voutira terms it for the Greek context, has been subject to certain shifts since the 1990s, rendering legalization more arduous in both the Greek and the German contexts. In line with what seems to be a general trend in South-eastern Europe as well as at large, in Turkey, too, departure from ethnic favouritism may be observed with regard to the 'ethnic kin' migrating from Bulgaria to Turkey, who have been rendered systematically irregular since the 1990s. After providing a brief overview of the history of the reception of immigrants from Bulgaria, I will probe further the question of why Turkey seems to have departed from its previous attitude and adopted a different policy in the last two decades.

Historically, the Balkan Turks represent the most privileged migrant group in terms of access and acceptability. In legal terms, this privilege was enabled by the ethnicist bias of the first Settlement Law of 1934, which reserved the definition of migrants exclusively to those of Turkish descent and culture (Erder 2000; Kirişci 2000). The same definition still holds in the most recent Settlement Law of 2006. That is to say, only those who can prove Turkish descent or affinity to Turkish culture are legally designated as *göçmen* (migrant); the rest are simply called 'foreigners', in legal parlance.

In addition to this structural positive discrimination in the law towards co-ethnics, we also observe what Danış and I have elsewhere called the 'hierarchy of migrant desirability'—even within migrant groups that claim Turkish ethnicity (Danış and Parla 2009; see also Çağaptay 2003). While 'those of Turkish culture and descent' include other Turkish Muslim groups, such as Circassians, Afghans, and Turkmen who have also historically had more privileged access to citizenship (Çağaptay 2003; Kirişci 2000; Kadırbeyoğlu 2007), co-ethnics from the Balkans occupy the top echelons among those deemed as ethnic kin. Of the tens of thousands naturalized in accordance with Law 1312, the foremost recipients of citizenship during the founding years of the Republic were migrants from the Balkans (Kirişci 2000; İçduygu 2003). Indeed, this hospitable attitude towards the Balkan migrants was resented, especially among conservative Muslim groups, for being partisan (Bora and Şen 2009). On a comparative note, contemporary immigration policies in Greece confer a preferential status on Albanian citizens of Greek origin and yet

present them with fewer benefits when compared to Greeks from the former Soviet Union. Voutira (2004) thus suggests the similar analytic frame of a 'hierarchy of Greekness', to describe the differential criteria used to determine inclusion and exclusion, even for those identified as *omoyeneis* (same origin)—as Danış and I do for those identified as *soydaş* in the Turkish context.

One explanation for the preferential treatment of Balkan Turks is that after the Balkan War of 1912, the migrants fleeing the lost lands of the Ottoman Empire helped to cement Turkish nationalism (Canefe 2002; Köroğlu 2004), especially through what Keyder (2005) calls their 'revanchist' attitude. The desirability of these migrants seems to have stemmed also from their being seen as the last, teetering claim on Europe and Europeanness. Significant as well is the fact that the population from the Balkans was settled so as to compensate for the scarcity of human labour; and capital and property belonging to the exiled and massacred Greek and Armenian minorities was transferred to the newcomers to facilitate the formation of a local Muslim bourgeoisie (Keyder 1987; Akçam 1992). The migration of the Balkan Turks to Turkey was thus encouraged as part of the nationalist effort to create the semblance of a homogeneous Turkish homeland populated by 'ethnically pure' Turks.

The Cold War further reinforced the privileged treatment of Turkish migrants from Bulgaria. In 1950–1951, 150,000 were granted citizenship (Eminov 1997). This wave was primarily composed of migrants who resisted communist policies and particularly the collectivization of land in Bulgaria. They were, therefore, particularly welcome from the point of the Turkish state, not only in terms of their ethnic identification but also in line with Cold War ideology. Similarly, in 1989, when more than 300,000 Turks fleeing ethnic repression in Bulgaria arrived at the Turkish border, they were accepted with much ethnic zeal and political fanfare as kindred fleeing the oppression of a communist regime. Such utilization of Cold War rivalry through the movement of migrants resonates with the German case as well, where ethnic German immigration was cited by West German politicians as proof of the superiority of the West German nation state and economic system (Münz and Ohlinger 2003, p. 189).

However, the privileged treatment of the Turkish immigrants from Bulgaria was to change considerably after 1989. Migrations from Bulgaria to Turkey continued apace in the 1990s, given the failing economy in Bulgaria after the fall of communism and the employment opportunities in the informal sector in Turkey. But the migrants arriving after the 1990s no longer had the same access to citizenship. Throughout the 1990s and up until 2001, Bulgarian nationals wishing to come to Turkey needed to obtain a tourist visa to leave Bulgaria. At the Turkish consulates in Bulgaria, visas were granted to only one member per family. This was not an official rule, but the accounts of my respondents suggest that this was routine practice. Given the increasing difficulty of getting tourist visas, people began to seek illegal routes to reach Turkey, either in search of jobs or to unite with a partner who had already migrated.

In 2001, the Turkish government lifted the visa requirement for Bulgarian nationals. This was a response to Bulgaria's removal from the 'negative' Schengen

list—that is, the list of countries approved by the EU whose citizens must have a visa—and inclusion in the list of countries whose citizens are exempt from the requirement of having a visa ('the positive list') to travel within the Schengen area, which currently consists of 25 European countries. From 2001 to May 2007, Bulgarian nationals could thus enter Turkey on visa waivers valid for 3 months. In May 2007, yet another new visa agreement came into effect. The former procedure that permitted Bulgarian nationals' legal stay as tourists on visa waivers valid for 3 months was replaced by permission to stay for a maximum of 90 days in a 6-month period. The new visa regime was the result of a bilateral agreement signed between Bulgaria and Turkey, which in turn ensued from the ongoing harmonization with the Schengen visa regime. In the wider context of the EU, the new procedure harmonized the conditions for migration from Bulgaria to EU countries, on the one hand, and from Bulgaria to Turkey, on the other, by granting the right to free movement for Bulgarian passport holders within the whole Schengen area as well as in Turkey for a maximum of 90 days within a 6-month period. However, for the labour migrants who come to work in Turkey—mostly in the domestic sector—the 90 day limit has meant the stark choice between losing their jobs or lapsing into illegality.

The bigger question, then, asked also by the migrants themselves with much exasperation, is why Turkey seems to be letting go of its policy of favouritism towards the Turkish-speaking migrants from Bulgaria—initially, gradually throughout the 1990s and early 2000s and more exactly after 2007? The full explanation cannot be reduced to the impact of the EU and harmonization with the Schengen regime and needs to take into account a constellation of other factors.

One answer may have to do with the shift in the symbolic utility of the migrants from Bulgaria. As far as the state is concerned, the desirability of Bulgarian Turkish migrants may have waned after the end of the Cold War, since the discourse of 'saving ethnic kin' from communist oppression no longer had the same symbolic use and validity.[3] Another reason, which we have explored in detail elsewhere (Kaşlı and Parla 2009; Danış and Parla 2009) has to do with the political instrumentalization of Bulgarian Turkish migrants as potential voters for the Movement for Rights and Freedoms—the party in Bulgaria that represents the Turkish minority. At the time of each national election in Bulgaria, the Turkish government announces amnesties that grant 3- or 6-month residence permits to those who are illegal at the time. While no direct proof of voting is required to gain the permit, both the timing and the semi-official discourse by migrant associations and employers at the Foreigner's Department explicitly link the amnesties to the elections in Bulgaria. In fact, in 2009 some migrant associations even went so far as to say that those unable to prove that they had cast a vote would not be able to benefit from the amnesty—an unfounded claim that nonetheless reveals the instrumentalization of migrants' irregularity for the transnational political interests of the state.

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[3] A different, almost reverse version of the argument regarding the significance of communism, suggesting suspicion that after 50 years of communism these migrants had become less desirable is made by Hann and Beller-Hann (1998).

A related argument may have to do with what Glick-Schiller and Fouron (1998) discuss under the rubric of the 'deterritoralization of the nation state', a state of affairs that embodies not a move away from nation-state sovereignty, but rather, a re-envisioning of the state as expanding beyond its national borders to appropriate and vie for the loyalty of its 'nationals' abroad.[4] Finally, and perhaps most importantly, immigration policies in Turkey—as elsewhere—are shaped by the demands of the neoliberal labour market for cheap and vulnerable labour. This demand is best met by undocumented migrants.

In his book, *Selecting by Origin*, Christian Joppke (2005) explores ethnic migration in various liberal states, and points to various and often countervailing trends of de-ethnicization and re-ethnicization as manifested in and through migration policy. He locates the main tension as being between, on one hand, the favouring of ethnic migration for national identity reasons, and on the other hand, the increasing predominance of liberal-universalistic principles over parochially national ones.

I agree with Joppke in that to explain the change in policy towards the Bulgarian Turks, we should consider a variety of factors, not all of which are necessarily always in harmony with one another. Nor should the change necessarily be interpreted as a decisive, finely orchestrated break with the past. Elsewhere I have argued that the privilege of ethnic kinship continues to be smuggled in through the back door, despite the fact that the new Citizenship Law of 2010 purportedly eliminated all references to positive discrimination based on ethnicity (Parla 2011). However, unlike Joppke, who suggests that to the extent that ethnic migration is constrained, it is constrained by liberal norms of rights, I suggest that the historical privilege of ethnic kinship competes primarily with market concerns. Rather than the increasing pressure exerted by human rights ideals that restrain ethnic favouritism, as Joppke would have it, I locate the main tension in the struggle between the neoliberal labour market and ethnic citizenship.

Perhaps we could also interpret the cases of Greece and Germany, where ethnic kinship is being rendered more tenuous as a stepping stone towards legality, in a similar light. Although Greece continues its policy favouritism towards the *omoyeneis*, the reception of migrants from the FSU is not as unqualified as it was in 1989 and the early 1990s. After a shift towards containment between 1995 and 2000, the criteria for acceptance have become stricter since 2001—requiring proof not just of Greek descent, but also of 'the individual's possession of a Greek national consciousness' (Voutira 2004, p. 538). Similarly, for Germany, the right to return for those 'belonging to the German people' (*Volkszugehörigkeit*) has been more strictly regulated since the 1990s. In addition to the introduction of quotas, German resettlers now need to apply for immigration permission prior to arrival and in their countries of origin, and to pass a language test to confirm their *Volkszugehörigkeit* status (Dietz 1999).

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[4] From a historical viewpoint, this is probably not a new phenomenon at all: retaining a loyal contingency outside of its sovereign territory to strengthen its international interests has always been a tool of international politics.

A full analysis of the shifts in policy in each of these different national settings is beyond the scope of this chapter. What I want to underscore through these comparative examples is that legal status is a contingent category that is not decided in accordance with, for example, the right to mobility as a fundamental human right, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[5] Rather, legal status is designated through the interplay of the sometimes complementary, sometimes competing, forces around political interests, international relations, and the demands of the market. The migrants who continue to do in 2009 what they were doing in 2006, or in 1998, or in 1989, may thus find themselves constantly walking the tightrope between legality and illegality—performing as best they can a balancing act amidst constantly changing visa regulations. The next section seeks to capture how migrants themselves experience states of 'legality' and 'illegality', with the aim of demonstrating not only the arbitrariness of state policies where migrants' lives are concerned but also the inadequacy of the terms 'legal' and 'illegal' in both the normative and empirical sense.

6.2 'For us, Migration is Ordinary'

When Gülcan came to Istanbul in 2006 with her parents and her brother, she was 23 years old. Two years before, she had come on her own, stayed with her aunt for a year, working as a babysitter and saving money to complete her university degree in economics in Bulgaria. In 2006, the flexible visa regime was still in effect, enabling Gülcan to keep her residence status regular by exiting and re-entering every 3 months. However, she worked in the informal domestic market as a babysitter without a work permit—an act that rendered her 'illegal'. Already then, we have the first instance of illegality in which almost all migrant women from Bulgaria found themselves at that time—legal in terms of residence, illegal in terms of work. Up until 2003, foreigners were not allowed to work as domestics anyway; since the 2003 regulation concerning foreigners' work permits, it has technically been possible to get a permit for domestic work. However, ethnographic evidence—as well as statistics on how many people have obtained the permit to date—reveal its inaccessibility given the costs and intricacy of the bureaucracy entailed (Erder 2000; İçduygu 2003).[6]

Gülcan's mother had come to Turkey even earlier, in 1997, on a tourist visa, when the Turkish consulates in Bulgaria were issuing a visa to only one member per family. Gülcan's mother overstayed her visa and worked informally as a domestic

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[5] Also relevant is Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. My thanks to Hans Vermeulen for this reminder.

[6] During the course of fieldwork, I have indeed met one employer who obtained a work permit for her domestic worker. She did so through a lawyer's firm that specializes in these permits and asks for about 3000 $ for the task. Once I had this information, I passed it on to the employers of several migrant workers I knew; none, to date, have actually pursued this option.

for 3 years. Eight years prior to that, in 1989 when Gülcan was still a child, they had migrated to Turkey as a family. However, because her father never felt at ease in Turkey, they returned before receiving Turkish citizenship, which was granted to those who came in 1989 and settled.

This time around, the father was able to survive only 2 years in Turkey and went back to Bulgaria in 2008, his wife following shortly afterwards. Gülcan's brother and his wife stayed on until 2010, but they too recently left for Bulgaria, although the bride wants to come back to Turkey and they are undecided as to where they will settle. Gülcan herself is adamant about staying, even if that means she will be without papers. But this does not necessarily mean she is committed to staying for good:

> First let me get my papers and then we will see. I cannot entirely give up on Bulgaria, either. For us, there is always going back and forth, we can never say, 'this is it, I am settled for good'. Migration is a part of our lives. In Bulgaria, too, everyone always went somewhere else to work. For us, migration is ordinary, completely normal.

Gülcan's normalization of migration as ordinary and the recurrent movement of other members of her family back and forth subvert the nationalist narrative within which the 1989 migration was subsumed as a unique event of homecoming (Parla 2006). Gülcan's articulation of their migration routine, within which the passage across the border in 1989 is just one among many other subsequent migratory movements, also challenges the allegedly sharp contrast between the 1989 migration, framed by the government and nationalist discourse as a purely political migration, and the post-1990s migratory movements as a purely economic. Finally, Gülcan's effortless inclusion of other geographies within her mental map of possible migration routes severs the seamless connection between Bulgaria and Turkey which the Turkish state has historically posited for its 'kindred in exile'.

After their return to Bulgaria in 1989, Gülcan's father worked intermittently in Germany despite being caught and deported twice. Gülcan joined him after high school to give Germany a try herself. 'They don't treat you very well there if you are Turkish. I cannot stand things like that, so I went back to Bulgaria.' After finishing a bachelor's degree in economics, she also did a master's degree in accounting through a certificate programme. Although this degree is not recognized in Turkey, it is the area in which Gülcan wants to pursue a career. That is why she refuses to work as a babysitter this time around: 'I put up with it then because my goal was to finish school. But I won't sell myself short now. I want to have a proper career.' Gülcan worked for a while as an intern at a maritime company. Once the internship was over, however, the company did not want to deal with the bureaucracy involved in getting her a work permit. She contacted various other companies, 'and it was always the same thing: without documents, you are always treated like you are nothing. No papers, no insurance: it is precarious for us.'

When the new regulation came into effect in May 2007, allowing Bulgarian nationals only 90 days of stay within a 6-month period, Gülcan said that she went everywhere in search of information, from the Consulate to the Foreigner's Department. Everyone told her something different. She also heard rumours about the possibility of a free permit being granted as amnesty right before the elections in Bulgaria to encourage migrant voting. Knowing that a similar amnesty had been

granted in 2005, Gülcan decided to stay and risk illegality. Indeed, the 6-month residence permits were granted this time around as well, regardless of prior legal status. Paradoxically, those who abided by the new visa regime and went back to Bulgaria after the 90 day limit could not benefit from the amnesty. 'In panic, they ended up not only paying the penalty (for late exit) but they could not come back to Turkey for 3 months either', Gülcan said. 'So [I'm] glad we did not go. This all goes to show that illegal stuff rules the day in Turkey. Those who play by the rules simply lose.' Indeed, the irony not lost on Gülcan of losing when playing by the rules was a major source of discontent among the many migrants who found themselves in the same situation. Ethnographic evidence even suggests that these amnesties—which only reward, as it were, those who lapse into illegality—have increased the number of migrants who risk illegality instead of abiding by the 90 days visa regulation.

> Each time we went for our permits, [Gülcan said,] the migrant association leaders and officials told us, 'We are giving these for the elections. So that you will vote.' There was always talk of this sort. It is all very explicit. These [permits] are for the elections. They even said that they would send the list of people who voted—you know, we had signed our names at the municipality—that they would send this list of names to the consulate. This would count as evidence, they said, and the ones not on the list would not get the six-month renewal. Nothing of the sort happened, of course; still, we did not want to risk it and went. You cannot imagine what torture it was going to Bulgaria that night. No seats on the buses, since everyone was going.

While the threat of sending a list to the consulate is only that—a threat—such semi-formal talk circulating among officials and migrant association leaders is revealing in terms of how these amnesties are experienced on the ground. Gülcan, too, is perfectly aware of the emptiness of the threat. Yet, she 'did not want to risk it', putting up with the requirements so as to maximize whatever chance at temporary legality is thrown her way.

The 6-month permit did not turn out to be renewable. Between April 2008– when the permit expired—and June 2009, Gülcan resided in Turkey without papers. It was only more than a year later, at the end of June 2009, that she was able to regularize her status with yet another amnesty—again, before the elections in Bulgaria. While partly relieved, Gülcan was also discouraged that this permit was only for 3 months and once again non-renewable. 'I will get the permit, but this time I will not vote', she said defiantly:

> They are literally playing with us. In any case, those who live here could not care less about the elections in Bulgaria… Now I do not know what to do. And my mother keeps saying, 'Don't waste your time there.' You know, I had hoped that something would happen with this election. Perhaps a one-year residence permit, or perhaps one that I could extend. And then a work permit. And then it would not be a dream to apply for citizenship… But when I hear that this permit is only for three months, I think to myself, why should I bother staying? But then I am used to it, I have my routine. It is hard to leave now. I spent my last three years here. I put up a certain fight. If I give up all that, what will I have left, why did I come then? And although my father could get me a job at the municipality back in our town, I don't think I will be content with working in a small town after life in the city.

Currently, Gülcan works as an accountant for a small company. As far as her boss is concerned, her not having a work permit does not pose a problem. 'Even those with

citizenship work without social security in small firms, so they don't care.' Given the restructuring that the company is undergoing and the expertise that Gülcan has accumulated, she feels she has become indispensable and hopes for a promotion soon.

Gülcan returned briefly to Bulgaria after her 3 months was up, thus 'earning' another 3 months of stay in Turkey. Through the informal services of a self-declared 'legal advisor', whose actual credentials are those of a translator, she filed a petition with the Ministry to renew her permit, where she was advised to specify that she had relatives in Turkey and that she was single. The 'legal advisor' highlighted this latter point as being critical in evaluation of the applications. He submitted all her documents and gave her a phone number for an office in Ankara to follow up on her petition. Since December 2009, then, Gülcan has been residing without papers (given that her residency has expired); yet technically, she is non-deportable as long as she has a standing application with the Ministry. She has still not received a reply and is reluctant to follow up on it herself. 'See, to tell you the truth, I am anxious to go. I don't know what they might do; that is, in fact, why I keep putting it off.'

However, after a recent incident with the police, Gülcan says that she has changed her mind and will follow up her application more closely. Until then, Gülcan had not had any encounters with the police because of her not having papers. A couple of months ago, however, she was stopped by a police officer, who was conducting identity checks in front of the central mosque in a neighbourhood with a significant immigrant population. Her boyfriend was with her. When Gülcan showed her passport, the police officer said, 'Oh-oh, your 90 days have long expired.' Gülcan told him that she had petitioned to Ankara for an extension, and showed him the receipt for the petition. The officer said, 'How do I know you have a residence permit? Where is that?' Gülcan told him that she did not carry all her documents with her for fear of theft. The officer insisted on seeing it, and asked her to come to the police station, while someone else could go to her house and procure the document. Based on past experience, Gülcan did not trust that the officers at the station would understand the full details of her situation. She was not sure whether she could explain it herself. She realized that the officer was after a bribe when he said, 'Look here, sweetie, isn't it a shame that you two will have to spend your whole Sunday at the police station? What could we do about this?' So they gave him all the cash they had with them, amounting to 120 $, and he let them go.

6.3 'No Matter What we do, Nothing Comes of it…'

While it is true that single women on the move are increasingly becoming the pattern for many migrant groups in Turkey (see, e.g., Akalın 2007; Kaşka 2006; Keough 2006), the migrants from Bulgaria both partake in and challenge this trend in that often the entire family migrates. Aysel and Hasan, now aged 32 and 35, came to Turkey with their son 14 years ago with the aid of a smuggling network. The main motivation for their initial migration to Turkey was to be able to pay the gambling

debts that Hasan had accumulated in Bulgaria. They had one other option: Hasan, who worked as a house painter, was offered a painting job in Belgium through an acquaintance and was promised 2000 marks per month. He would have gone alone, leaving Aysel and their son behind. Yet Aysel did not want the family to be separated. So it was Hasan who first passed the Turkish border in 1996, entrusting himself to a group of 'kanalcı', which is slang for 'smugglers'. Aysel undertook the journey with her son, then 3 years old. They walked from 10 at night to 5 in the morning, passing under barbed wire. 'He was so small then, and it was night. He wanted to sleep, he wanted his bed, he wanted his comfort. We had to carry him all the way; he cried a lot. Fortunately, there were many men in the group and they helped carry him. I could not stand on my feet for at least a week afterwards.'

Aysel and Hasan stayed in the migrant settlements located where Aysel's mother lives. The mother had immigrated in 1989, and she was the one who paid the smugglers. In retrospect, Aysel is somewhat regretful about the decision to come to Turkey: 'If I had known it would turn out to be like this here, I would have urged him to go to Belgium. To have to resort to those means [meaning the smugglers], to have struggled so much; it just was not worth it… We thought we would work a bit and then go back.' However, when their child began school, they felt that he would have a better chance in Turkey and that he could no longer adapt to life in Bulgaria. It was a struggle to get Olcay allowed to attend school. Hasan had to go to the school every day, along with three other mothers whose children could not be registered because of their irregular status. They pleaded, insisted and protested; in the end, it was the principal's advocacy that they were able to get the children the necessary residence permits to attend school. Once their son had the certificate, Aysel and Hasan qualified for the 'accompanying person permit' (*refakatçi izni*)—a special residence permit given to those who are accompanying minors, the elderly, or the sick. Each time Hasan had to go to the Foreigner's Department to renew the permit, he encountered the same problem: he would be told that the date of the permit had expired. Hasan explained that he could renew the permit only when Olcay's school opened again in the autumn, which meant that there was an inevitable gap of 3 months between the date of expiration and the date of renewal. 'I have not left the country, I am renewing the permit', I said to them. '"You still have to pay", they would tell me. Once I went to speak with the head officer. He could not care less. "What is it to me?" he asked. That really blew my fuses. He said, "We will just get you and throw you out". I said, "Okay, then throw me out"'. Aysel intervened: 'I hate going to the Foreigner's Department. Hasan gets angry and I end up paying the price.' 'But you inquire about something', Hasan said in self-defence, 'and they never answer properly. Each time you go back, they find yet another missing document. Each time, I lose a day's worth of work. And I have to get in the queue at five in the morning. In the end, you just lose it, you know.'

Aysel and Hasan live in an extremely well-kept little flat in an otherwise dilapidated migrant settlement in an outer Istanbul suburb that hosts a low-income population. Such settlements were commissioned by the state for the earlier wave of 1989 migrants, but they were not completed on time. Meanwhile, most of the 1989 migrants were able to move into better housing and the flats were left to deteriorate.

Some have rented out these flats to post-1990s migrants, like Hasan and Aysel, for very low rates. Aysel currently works as in domestic services and Hasan works for a heating company. His employer is a 1989 migrant from Bulgaria and did not mind Hasan going to Denmark for a few months to do a temporary painting job; most of the people in the company are without insurance, anyway. Prior to this job, Hasan worked as a security guard for a gated community. Although the residents really liked him, even trusting him with their children when they ran errands, he was eventually fired because the residents were afraid that if he were be injured—an anxiety exacerbated by the gangs that had proliferated in the vicinity—they themselves would get in trouble for employing someone without papers. Hasan toys with the idea of migrating to a European country. 'If worse comes to worse, I would go temporarily, work and come back.'

At the end of the summer of 2009, Hasan and Aysel went to the Registrar's Office to 'have their days counted', and were told that they had acquired enough days to apply for citizenship. In addition to completing the various required documents, including a document of origin that 'proves' their Turkish ethnicity, they were warned to make sure that the names on the Bulgarian and Turkish documents matched—a major concern since transliteration from the Cyrillic alphabet results in different spellings and even a single letter causes a file to be disqualified. It took Hasan and Aysel a month to collect all the documents and official stamps and cost more than a thousand dollars. With their completed file, they went back to the registrar, only to be told that they were not eligible to apply after all. Their 2 years' worth of residence permits based on the special permit of accompanying a minor no longer qualified for citizenship applications. It turned out that the regulation allowing this special permit had already been revoked when they went to inquire at the Civil Registry, but the officer had not informed them of the change—perhaps because he himself did not know.

When they sought advice from the most active Balkan migrants' association in Istanbul, the president told them that in their situation, the only option was to try the 'exceptional circumstances' clause of the new 2010 Citizenship Law. Exceptional circumstances apply to those of Turkish origin and with a relative of the first or second degree who is a Turkish citizen. They could try this route because Aysel's mother was already a citizen. The president of the association said that he had filed about 150 such applications. 'We are certain to get positive results', he said confidently, and added with visible sarcasm, 'Let us hope that they do not change the new citizenship law yet again. So I would urge you to hurry.' The price for processing the applications for the whole family would be 4000 TL (3500 $), he said, which they could pay in three instalments.

After the meeting with the association president, Aysel was in high spirits. 'We have already spent so much, we can risk this much more', she said. She began calculating who could contribute how much. 'All right then', she said with playful defiance, 'if Mr. Hasan still wants to go, let him go'. After the terrible disappointment at the Civil Registry the day before, Hasan had called his brother in Bulgaria and said, 'I don't care if they are staying or not; I've had it and I am joining you.' But Aysel felt differently. 'We bought all this furniture; we have an arrangement here.

How will we start from scratch there again? Even moving the furniture would cost a lot of money. So I would rather pay the 4000 TL, if only I knew it would work.' Aysel went on planning in delighted chatter for a bit longer, then suddenly stopped in her tracks:

> Actually I don't even know what we will do with this citizenship. I really do not know why we even want it… If it had not been for the three-month rule, I would not put so much effort into all this. But if we were to get citizenship, we could go back and forth without worries, otherwise, we have to constantly struggle with these permits.

Five months later, they had not done anything. They decided that they could not risk investing that much money in something they had no reason to trust. When asked if they planned on doing anything before all the documents they had collected for the citizenship application expired, Hasan said, 'No, not really. You saw it too, no matter what we do, nothing comes out of it. Perhaps there will be another amnesty, or the regulations will change or something.' Meanwhile, Hasan has a new job as a ground cleaner at the airport for 400 $ a month, no bonuses. He is hoping to switch to another airport firm that offers a luggage-carrying service—a more demanding job, but with better pay. The best part, he says, is that he is insured for the first time.

6.4   Harmonizing 'Illegality'

A circular entitled 'Fighting Illegal Migration', issued by the Turkish Ministry of Interior on 19 March 2010 states that Turkey will step up its measures to prevent illegal migration as part of its ninth national programme and its concomitant commitment to meet the requirements for EU accession in the realm of policy concerning refugees and immigration. The circular states, among other directives, that bus companies and hotels will be regularly warned about human trafficking and that relevant personnel will take part in training programmes in which they will be taught to 'evaluate those signs likely to reveal the existence of illegal migration, such as the purchase of large quantities of bread from the bakeries, left-over food in vehicles, heavy smell emanating from vehicles, the increase in unknown guests in the villages' (Ministry of Interior press release 2010/22).

Juxtaposing this press release against the stories of Aysel, Hasan, and Gülcan reveals a jarring discord between, on one hand, reduction of migrant 'illegality' to smells emanating from vehicles and the stealthy consumption of bread, and on the other hand, the everyday experiences of people like Aysel, Hasan, and Gülcan, which revolve around routine life including work, children, school, and outings. The depiction of illegal migration by the state as something completely undercover not only distorts the wide range of how illegality is experienced in everyday life but also further reinforces the criminalization of migrants. As the stories above describe in detail, migrants like Gülcan, Hasan, and Aysel—who, at one time or another, reside and work without the papers that particular national boundaries require of them—still pursue career opportunities and dreams, seek work and security, and go about their daily lives in as ordinary and dignified a manner as possible.

Secondly, the rhetoric about control or fighting 'illegal migration' does not address the question of arbitrariness of the law-in-practice (Koğacıoğlu 2009). After an identity check, the police may let those without documents go if they are paid a bribe, as when Gülcan was stopped with her boyfriend. An inadequately informed or unwilling official may fail to mention the crucial information that 'accompanying person' permits are no longer valid for citizenship applications, thus causing candidates to waste money and effort, as well as losing hope of legalization. Arbitrariness also serves as a politics of 'wearing out'. Many migrants do not attempt to regularize their status in the first place because of the opacity of the bureaucratic process, or they give up midway because of unexpectedly changed requirements of which they are not duly informed. Gülcan's disillusionment with the amnesties that only regularize status temporarily; Hasan's frustration with renewing the permit where each time he is held accountable for the inevitable 3-month gap because of the summer school holiday; Aysel and Hasan's failed application for citizenship because of a change in the regulation: these all add up to the exasperation summed up poignantly in Hasan's remonstration, 'No matter what we do, nothing comes of it!'

If language not only reflects but also constitutes our reality, we need to ask what in fact gets occluded through the terminology of legality and illegality that purports only to describe and categorize migrants. At the empirical level, what Gülcan, Hasan, and Aysel's stories demonstrate is that the line between legality and illegality is much harder to pin down than the dichotomy suggests. Gülcan entered the country 'legally,' but lapsed into illegality when she worked without a permit. Currently, she is 'illegal' in terms of her residence status, but given that she has registered a petition with the Ministry of Interior, she is non-deportable. However, this does not stop the police from exploiting her vulnerable status. Hasan and Aysel are periodically able to renew their accompanying persons permit through their son who attends school. Yet they have a built-in interruption to their 'legal' status because of the summer holiday. Since they cannot apply for citizenship with this type of residence permit, once their son finishes school, the legal basis on which they reside will disappear.

At the normative level, there is further reason to be wary of the rhetoric of fighting illegal migration. Much of the rhetoric of control and restriction in fact goes hand in hand with a certain degree of tacit tolerance in accordance with the dictates of the labour market. It is thus not a coincidence that those designated as illegal are, for the most part, migrant *workers*—as global capitalism with its constant restructuring needs a flexible and disposable workforce (Bauman 2007; Sassen 1996). Many employers are indifferent, as Gülcan, Hasan, and Aysel's work situations demonstrate; in fact, they may prefer to employ those without papers. The state meets market demand by tolerating informal employment to a certain degree. In fact, some scholars go further and speak of the legal production of illegality, claiming that the law systematically reproduces the irregularity of migrants in order to ensure a vulnerable and dispensable workforce (Calavita 1998; De Genova 2005). De Genova also suggests that it is *deportability*, not deportation per se, that is the most strategic tool for ensuring migrant vulnerability. Rather than being deported *en masse*, migrants live under the constant threat of deportation, rendering them even more vulnerable to exploitation at the hands of the police or employers.

If, as De Genova (2007, p. 436) urges us, 'we begin not from the epistemological standpoint of the state and its functionaries but rather, from the standpoint of the elementary freedom of movement as a basic human entitlement', and not presuppose that there is something inherently suspect about human beings who migrate, then we need to be more critical of both official and scholarly designations of migrant illegality. This chapter has aimed to contribute to this awareness, already politicized by activist networks around the world, by demonstrating how illegality is experienced by a migrant group in Turkey that has historically occupied the most privileged position in the hierarchy of migrant desirability. Tracing the trajectory of a migrant group from prospective citizens to dispensable migrants underscores the historically specific condition of legality and illegality and demonstrates that legality is not a secure condition even for apparently privileged migrants.

Finally, it is within this historically contingent, unpredictable, and often arbitrary matrix of illegality that the most recent regulation concerning Bulgarian nationals of Turkish origin should be viewed. At the time of this writing, the Ministry of Internal Affairs had just released a circular announcing an amnesty in the form of free 6-month residence permits for Bulgarian Turks who were currently without papers (12 June 2011). This amnesty in itself is not unique, as this chapter has elaborated. What is unprecedented, however, is the accompanying clause in the circular that enables Bulgarian nationals who can prove Turkish origins and who have Turkish-citizen relatives of the first or second degree to apply for citizenship under the 'exceptional status' clause, even if they do not fulfil the 5 years of uninterrupted residence required by the current Citizenship Law. During the months of June and July 2011, thousands of migrants (including those mentioned here) practically held camp at the Foreigner's Department and the Civil Registry, trying to obtain information, procure the necessary documents, and submit their application before the designated September deadline. Thus, the tide appears to have turned: are the Bulgarian Turkish migrants, after two decades of loss of privilege, again becoming the most likely candidates for citizenship? It would be too hasty to offer a definite answer before witnessing the actual fate of the thousands of applications being filed with the Ministry.[7] Regardless of the outcome, however, the struggles of the migrants from Bulgaria in Turkey are an apt reminder of the fact that states of *legality* are elusive even for those migrants designated as ethnic kin, and that states of *illegality* are defied daily by the lived experiences of migrants who insist on finding work, sending their children to school, or taking a stroll with their loved ones on the streets—with or without documents.

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[7] Of the two major Balkan migrant associations, the Balkan Turks Solidarity Association representative is sceptical and the İzmir BAL-GÖC representative speaks with caution regarding the actual outcome of these applications. Interview with Balkan Turks Solidarity Association representative in Istanbul, July 8, 2011; phone interview with İzmir BAL-GÖC representative, 21 June, 2011.

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Ayse Parla is Associate Professor of Anthropology in the programmes in Cultural Studies and European Studies at Sabancı University, Istanbul. She has published on migration, citizenship, labour and ethnicity in various journals including: *American Ethnologist, Alternatives, Citizenship Studies, Differences, Ethnography, and International Migration.* As a 2011 recipient of the Turkish Academy of Sciences Exceptional Young Scholar Award, her current research is a critical examination of the 'Europeanization' of the field of migration in Turkey through a focus on access to education for undocumented migrants'' children. Website: http://myweb.sabanciuniv.edu/ayseparla/

Chapter 7
Albanian Immigrants in the Greek City: Spatial 'Invisibility' and Identity Management as a Strategy of Adaptation

Ifigeneia Kokkali

Albanian population movements to Greece have been among the most important intra-Balkan fluxes of the end of the twentieth century. Today, Albanians form the most significant immigrant 'stock' in Greece; counted as 438,000 individuals in the 2001 Greek census;[1] by 2010, they were estimated to have reached 700,000 (Maroukis 2008, pp. 6–8) out of a total population of about 11 million. Over a period of less than twenty years, their migration to Greece has presented all the 'classic' stages of a migration movement: labour migration of young men, regularisation of the migrants' statuses, extension of their intended stays, stabilization of the flux with the arrival of women and children, questions of incorporation, and then second-generation issues.

Unlike many other immigrant groups, however, which present high concentrations in specific cities or regions of the country, the Albanians offer a more diffused pattern. Furthermore, in the field of my investigation—Thessaloniki—one cannot refer to an 'Albanian neighbourhood': there are few visible signs of the Albanians' numerically important presence that mark the urban space, such as Albanian cafés, restaurants, or grocers.

[1] For a discussion on the problems of measuring immigrant stocks and flows in Greece and an attempt to do so, see Baldwin-Edwards with Apostolatou (2009, pp. 233–262). The aforementioned numbers include those of Greek-ethnic origin (co-ethnics/*omoyeneis* in Greek) coming from the Greek minority in Southern Albania), estimated, circa 2001, at 150,000–200,000 (see, op. cit., 241; Pavlou 2003a).

I. Kokkali (✉)
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of Florence, Florence, Italy
e-mail: ifigenia.kokkali@polimi.it

The study of the way in which the Albanians locate themselves in the city is revealing of their migration strategies, as well as of their modes of social insertion in the host country. The object of this chapter is to relate the physical setting of the Albanians in Thessaloniki—their 'spatial invisibility' as a group—to the way that many migrants (but certainly not all) reshape and negotiate or even dissimulate their ethno-national identities in Greece. As will be outlined below, these negotiations involve mainly name-changing and religious shifts: they thus suggest a collective 'social inconspicuousness'.

This chapter draws on research materials provided by the programme 'Supporting the Design of Migration Policies: An Analysis of Migration Flows between Albania and Greece', commissioned by the World Bank and conducted from December 2005 to June 2006 by the Laboratory of Demographic and Social Analyses of the University of Thessaly, Greece. The sample was based on information gathered during the Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) carried out in Albania in 2005.[2] Some 128 semi-structured interviews were conducted with Albanian immigrants in Greece. Of these, 29 were in-depth interviews that took place in northern Greece (including 19 in Thessaloniki) and focused on issues of adaptation and exclusion.

The chapter also relies upon statistical and cartographic analyses of data from the 2001 Greek census regarding the foreign population of Thessaloniki. Though this dataset is actually dated, its mapping produces an overall idea of the Albanians' patterns of settlement in the city.

7.1 Albanians in Thessaloniki: A Spatially 'Invisible' Migratory Group

The geographical dispersion of Albanians in the Greek territory is rather balanced compared to other groups of foreigners (Kokkali 2010, pp. 132–138). According to 2001 census data, approximately 40 % of all Albanians settled in the two major cities—Athens and Thessaloniki. The ratio of the Albanian population to the total population is similar for both cities and close to the country's average;[3] this 'balanced' spatial pattern at the national level is also visible at the local level.

After having mapped the census data of 2001, I have shown elsewhere (Kokkali 2010) that the Albanians' mode of territorial insertion is best described as a pattern of dispersal in the urban and the suburban space, at least as far as greater Thessaloniki is concerned. At the geographical scales examined (district, commune, postal code entities), I found no large concentrations of Albanian households.[4] In contrast, groups such as the Bulgarians, the Georgians, the Russians but also Pontic Greeks

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[2] See: http://go.worldbank.org/IFS9WG7EO0.

[3] The ratios of the Albanian population to the total populations of Athens, Thessaloniki and Greece overall were respectively 5, 3 and 4 %.

[4] We see a similar territorial insertion in Athens (Maloutas 2010).

who emigrated from the ex-Soviet Republics in the 1990s, are over-represented in some areas of the city, and they mark 'ethnically' the neighbourhoods in which they settle.[5]

In the 2001 Greek census, the district of Thessaloniki counted about one million inhabitants of which nearly 9% were foreign nationals. The Albanians accounted for 47% of the city's foreign population, followed at a distance by the Georgians (16%), the Russians (7%) and the Bulgarians (4%).

When talking about ethnic markers in some of the city's districts, I refer to the ethnicization of cityspace. Taboada-Leonetti (1984, p. 66) calls this 'ethnic infrastructure', meaning a group's specific commercial facilities, as well as particular services and networks (e.g., places of worship, clubs, schools, and doctors). It is these services and activities which support a group's functioning as a distinctive entity in the city of settlement, and they usually mark ethnically the urban landscape. They attribute in this way (spatial) visibility to the group in question.

In Thessaloniki, we can find several money transfer agencies and cafés that are exclusively Georgian (where everything is written in Georgian and named after Georgian cities, such as 'Colchis'), as well as Russian restaurants and mini-markets, churches, and doctors who are 'coloured' ex-Soviet (where, e.g., information on the service is given in Russian) (Kokkali 2010, pp. 345–350). The Filipinos have their own places of worship and the Palestinians, too; both groups have collectively rented apartments that have been transformed into places of worship.

Albanians, however, did not adopt similar practices. They are surprisingly absent from the ethnic mosaic emerging in the city of Thessaloniki. Unlike other groups, they do not possess of any of the above-mentioned ethnic infrastructure. 'Ethnic' services addressed specifically to Albanians include some translation bureaus, a number of bus agencies with Albanian destinations, and the Albanian-language newspapers that hang in the kiosks and tobacco shops (Kokkali 2010, p. 336).

A study carried out in 2006 by Visoviti et al. (2006), with the task of exploring the expression of multi-ethnic cohabitation in the public spaces of Thessaloniki, identified two *piazzas* for job-finding and a central square of the city with a substantial presence of Albanian migrants. Those three places are the only ones to offer a regular collective visibility of Albanians in the public space. The very large presence in the square of Albanian migrants (especially from Korçë) of all ages and both sexes, at any time of the day, resulted in the renaming of the square—at least, in the migrants' discourse—from *Plateia Makedonomachon* (Square of the Macedonian Fighters) to *Bachtses tis Korytsas* (Garden of Korçë) or *Alvaniko parko* (Albanian Park). At the two *piazzas,* Albanian men of all ages look for jobs, particularly unskilled ones. Yet, the piazzas are not meeting points for friends or compatriots.

The piazza at the west end of the city centre (near the train station of Thessaloniki) is situated in front of the travel agencies that offer daily bus transport to Albania. This is a sector with an intense Albanian presence. The clientele of the area's coffee shops and fast food restaurants is mostly Albanian, while, a few blocks

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[5] For more on the patterns of settlement of Pontic Greeks in Thessaloniki, see Katsavounidou and Kourti (2008).

further on, the only over-representation of Albanian households in Thessaloniki's centre is recorded (Kokkali 2010, pp. 333–335). Although it recently moved, the Albanian consulate in Thessaloniki used to be here as well, thus attracting a number of Albanian translation agencies and the only Albanian bookstore in Thessaloniki (recently closed).

Accordingly, a particular Albanian dynamics have gradually developed in the district, involving some very specific functions—finding a job, making use of the translation services, or taking a bus to Albania. Still, ethnicization of city space remains very weak, since the only 'Albanian imprint' in Thessaloniki concerns the signs of the bus agencies and those of the translation bureaus, both of which are written in Albanian. As for the above-mentioned *piazzas* and the Garden of Korçë, once emptied in the afternoon they offer no sign of their previous occupation by Albanians. The Albanians' ephemeral presence, as in the district around the train station, is thus not comparable with the Pontic settlements and the Russophone centralities of the city. In other words, there is no Albanian centrality in Thessaloniki—nothing to remind us that the aforementioned places are highly frequented by Albanians. This would possibly provide some kind of visibility of the Albanian culture, including language, customs, music, and culinary habits. If we follow a definition from the Chicago School for the city centre as—among other things—the 'space of highest symbolic meaning', an Albanian centrality would be a symbolically significant place or a point of reference for the Albanian culture and lifestyles. This occurs in Little Italy for Italians in New York, in the *Quartier Latin* for the Greeks in Paris, and Brick Lane for Indians and Bangladeshi in London.

The situation elucidated suggests a remarkable 'spatial invisibility' of the Albanians. However, the way in which they take up their position in the city cannot be irrelevant to their migratory strategies and, thus, to the way their adaptation occurs in Greece. This chapter will attempt to show that the Albanians' spatial invisibility, in the sense conveyed here, constitutes a spatial expression of their strategies of adaptation. These involve identity negotiation or dissimulation and, as such, could probably be taken as an indicator of a pronounced 'social inconspicuousness' of Albanians as a group.

7.2   Identity Negotiation and Collective 'Social Inconspicuousness'

The Albanians' spatial invisibility is coupled with a set of practices that seem[6] to aim at the dissociation of the individual from the generic Albanian group, 'the Albanians'. These practices include religion shifts and name concealing. In the abundant literature that exists on Albanian migration in Greece, it is not uncommon to find reference to these practices (De Rapper 2002a; Kretsi 2005a; Psimmenos 2001).

In summary, in the 1990s to the mid-2000s, many Albanians in Greece adopted Greek names, while many Muslim Albanians seemingly disavowed their religious

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[6] These practices may have become less important over time, since my empirical study was conducted.

affiliation, claiming to be Orthodox Christians (Kretsi 2005a, pp. 131–132; see also Kokkali 2010, pp. 293–306). Many had themselves and their children christened Orthodox, irrespective of their previous religious affiliation (Muslim or Catholic). The name thus adopted would be used in the person's contacts with Greeks, and sometimes even in the domestic sphere. As an informal practice, the name-changing was not reported in any official documents such as identity cards or passports.[7]

One third of the migrants interviewed during our empirical study in 2005–2006 admitted using a Greek name instead of their original name. My findings also showed that children born in Greece, whose parents were of Muslim or Catholic affiliation, were often christened—this being a kind of obligation for parents, as one implied: 'I have christened them [his children], that's it: I've done my duty…' (E., man, Muslim affiliation, Thessaloniki, 17 December 2005).

Agreeing to a formal ritual demanded—explicitly or implicitly—by the host society seems thus to have represented a necessary action for some parents, who wanted to give their children an opportunity to integrate in Greece and particularly into the Greek state school system. The practice of adult name-changing has similar traits; though in theory a deliberate choice, it has undoubtedly been an implicit (or not) requirement of the dominant society. In our interviewees' words it was often the Greek 'bosses', who—under the pretext that they could not pronounce the names of their Albanian employees—decided to replace them: 'I will call you Yiannis', or even, 'What is this name? I'll call you…' (Kokkali 2010, p. 296).

The name-changing and the disavowing of the original religious affiliation are indicative but are not the only elements of a broader process of identity negotiation. Use of the term 'the Albanians' or the pronoun 'they' by our interviewees was also revealing, since they referred to the generic Albanian group without including themselves.[8] There are thus explicit efforts to dissociate the self from 'the Albanians in Greece'. This is demonstrated even more distinctly in an expression that was frequently used at the time, 'I am not like the other Albanians'—often followed and completed by another one, 'I am a family man'. As Psimmenos (2001, pp. 190–191) explains, such attitudes underline a process of self-differentiation which results in some Albanian individuals breaking away from their co-nationals. It is obvious, however, that not *all* the Albanians react in the same way. Some of our interviewees identified strongly with the group of 'the Albanians'. These were mainly men living in Greece without a nuclear family. They socialized with co-nationals and stressed

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[7] However, it seems that official changes did take place regarding co-ethnic Greeks from Albania, as for instance in the case of S. and his wife M., both interviewed in Thessaloniki, on 15 December 2005. Georgia Kretsi (2005a, pp. 132–133), in her study of those practices in the villages of Fterra and Çorraj in Albania, maintains that there are cases in which the name had been officially changed already inside Albania. Potential migrants to Greece would take advantage of the disorganisation and corruption of the Albanian administration to falsify their documents and thus appear to the Greek authorities as having some kind of Greek origin that is a fast 'passport' to Greece. On the 'visa trading' that has taken place in the Greek consulates of Albania, see Pavlou (2003a). Gilles De Rapper (2005, p. 189) too has shown that in some villages in southern Albania, villagers (until very recently) were more than willing to manage a Greek-Albanian identity in order to enter Greece more easily and live there in a relatively privileged way.

[8] A salient indication of a migration of community or individual type is the respective use of 'us' or 'me' when informants are interviewed (De Rudder 1987, p. 119). For Albanians in Greece, see the extracts quoted in the following section.

their indifference towards Greeks, since they 'didn't have anything to discuss with them', as many of those interviewees admitted.[9]

Mai (2005, p. 553), in research on Albanians in Italy, has stressed that they proceed to a negotiation of their national identity: this is to avoid, at the individual level, the bad reputation and negative stereotype, which went hand-in-hand with the adjective 'Albanian', at least until the mid-2000s. The migrants have thus developed strategies to circumvent the use of the word 'Albanian', focusing on expressions such as 'I come from Tirana' or 'I come from Albania', rather than using the adjective itself. Erving Goffman (1963, p. 37) described in the 1960s such techniques of excision of a stigmatized word from common use.

Pavlou (2001, p. 135), drawing on critical discourse analysis, has shown that media discourses in Greece have gradually transformed the adjective 'Albanian' to a keyword noun that is inclusive of stereotypical behaviour and de facto a token of criminality. It is unnecessary to discuss here in detail the harsh campaign of criminalization and stigmatization that Albanian immigrants have been subjected to since 1991, as these are well-documented (Karidis 1996; Pavlou 2001, pp. 135–137; Psimmenos 2001; Tsoukala 1999; for Italy, see Mai 2005). But in light of this campaign, according to which 'the Albanian' rapidly became synonymous with 'clandestine' and 'criminal', the practices of dissociation from the Albanian group and, overall, the process of identity negotiation of Albanians in Greece[10] seem—if not satisfactorily explained—at least logically justified.

The factor that seems to have promoted the peculiar 'identity game' of name-changing and claiming to be Orthodox Christian in Greece can be traced back to the catalytic presence of a Greek minority in southern Albania. The mass emigration of its members to Greece, together with the preferential treatment they received from the Greek state and society (at least, on arrival)[11] triggered the identity dissimulation and enabled its operation.

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[9] For more on this 'ideal-type', see Kokkali (2010a, pp. 156–158, 303). It is interesting to note that I did not find any correlation of this type with the age of the interviewee nor with length of stay. The main differentiating factor (from the category of immigrants that try to dissociate themselves from 'the Albanians') has been the presence or not of family (wife or wife and children) in Greece. Probably the rural origin is also significant, but I haven't been able to observe a clear correlation, given the limited sample. Actually the tendency of dissociation might have changed as, in the perception of the dominant society, Albanians, from a highly stigmatized group, became highly preferable compared to more recently arrived immigrant groups (Kokkali 2011b).

[10] Another outcome (discussed in the following section) is the internalization of the stigma by Albanians, as in the case of G., who justifies the harsh treatment of Albanian immigrants by the police in the village where he was settled: 'What do you expect? We were illegal, without documents… The cops were doing their job'. [G. male, Nikomidia, District of Imathia,13 February 2006].

[11] Even if the difference in treatment between Greek-Albanians (omoyeneis) and Albanians has become less important over time, actually having no importance at all, Law 1975/1991, which set the premises of the Greek immigration policy, has been highly preferential to individuals of ethnic-Greek origin and for this reason harshly criticized by NGOs and humanitarian organizations. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the impact of this first law in the overall perception of foreign immigrants by the Greek society. Let us recall, however, that the law required that the Ministry of Labour would grant work permits for specific employment, in theory, only before the

Let us recall that already from the 1920s, when Albania was obliged to officially recognize the Greek minority, Greece was trying to increase the minority's size, encompassing all Orthodox Christian populations living close to Greek-speaking villages. Albania, in contrast, adopted the opposite approach, trying to underestimate the minority population (Dodos 1994, pp. 142, n.8).

The attempts of the Greek state to 'inflate' the minority found fertile ground in the thousands of Albanian citizens who wanted to migrate to Greece. In Greek consulates in Albania (in areas close to the Hellenophone villages) an 'identity option' was introduced in relation to migration opportunities: the recognition of 'Greek origin' increased the chances of obtaining entry and work permits for Greece. A prosperous trade thus emerged with Albanian citizens—mostly Christians, but gradually extending to Muslims who managed to become 'Christians' via the falsification of their papers. The 'visa trade' and its clientele network thus expanded far beyond the 'real' minority (Kretsi 2005b, p. 196, 205).

I think that the practice of falsifying one's identity went beyond the falsification of documents. At least during the 1990s and early 2000s, it became very popular among Albanian immigrants to Greece to claim that they were *Vorioepirotes* (literally, Northern Epirots, i.e., members of the Greek minority in Albania), even without having any (false or real) certificate of Greek origin. This practice was then gradually expanded: dissimulating one's identity did not remain a question of claiming to be *Vorioepirotis*. It could also mean introducing oneself with a Greek name, while claiming to be Christian.[12]

This was not without reason. The ethno-cultural perception of the Greek nation has given rise to the creation of 'multiple categories of Greeks' that, in Greek lay discourses, are constructed hierarchically; the category of a person with Greek ethnic origin who was born, raised and resides in Greece and feels Greek is constructed as a central category (Xenitidou 2007).

This multiple categorization entails then who is more or less Greek; the different 'degrees' of Greekness not only reflect the ethos of reception in Greece, but also the governmental policies adopted for each migratory group. As mentioned above, the preference of the state and of the society for the kin groups of foreign citizens

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arrival of the foreign employees in Greece and valid for one year (only renewable for another three after which the renewal could only be granted by the Ministry of Public Order). The legislation was less demanding for individuals of Greek descent, who would thus enjoy a favorable legal status, as for instance in employment in which they were preferred to other foreign nationals. The same law comprised preferential provisions on issues of welfare, pension and medical insurance (see Law 1975/1991, Article 24 and also Art. 1, para. 3 and Art. 108 of the Greek Constitution). The advent of the 2001 immigration law put an end—at least on paper—to this preferential treatment.

[12] Very telling of this is the following quote from Veikou (2001, pp. 206): 'Sotiris […] told me that, when he arrived in Athens for the first time and was looking for a job, many asked him from which part of Albania he was coming from, whether he was Vorioepirotis and whether he was Orthodox Christian. He didn't like to "pass for an Albanian". "I soon understood that who you are in Athens depends on the behaviour. […] I drive my car and behave as a Greek and the others treat me correctly"'. Similarly, in an empirical study I conducted with Albanian immigrants in 2003 in Thessaloniki, many interviewees admitted that the first question asked of an Albanian by a Greek national concerned his/her religious beliefs.

has been more than obvious. As such, the Pontic Greeks, followed by the Greek-Albanians, were found at the highest level of this imaginary scale. Given that Orthodox Christianity is the official religion in Greece,[13] it would not be surprising to classify the other Christian Orthodox migrants directly below these two privileged groups,[14] while those who are Muslims would find themselves towards the bottom of the hierarchy (Kokkali 2010, p. 303).

Albanians in particular, given their systematic criminalization, were immediately classified at the very bottom of the social hierarchy in Greece. Without any doubt, this is an additional reason for the expansion of the phenomenon of identity dissimulation or negotiation. The title of De Rapper's (2005) article 'Better than Muslims, not as good as Greeks' is rather eloquent: Albanians—and particularly Muslim Albanians—find it disproportionately difficult to be accepted by local communities. As such, finding a place within the extended boundaries of Greekness is a possible way towards inclusion.

In changing one's name and claiming to be Orthodox Christian—or even claiming Greek origin, even if only as a matter of display—some Albanian immigrants aspired toward and achieved, more or less successfully, wider acceptance within the dominant society, in particular at the local level and as regards personal social bonds with Greek nationals.[15] Besides, given that some degree of 'Greekness' has been thought to make life in Greece easier, the exceptional extension of practices of identity dissimulation is not surprising. Yet, as all 'identity' games are played dialogically (Schippers 1999, p. 21; Taylor 1994, p. 18), this could not have been implemented in such an extensive way if Greek nationals were not willing to participate. The gradual expansion of the boundaries of Greekness, operated by both the society and the state in Greece (and even in Albania), has had a severe impact on the expansion of practices of identity negotiation of Albanians in Greece. As these boundaries were extended, the 'game' was also extended: starting from claiming *Vorioepirotiki* identity, it ended up involving any trait that could imply a degree of Greekness—be it a Greek name, Orthodox Christian faith, and so forth.

Still, not all Albanian immigrants practised this 'identity game'; the characteristics of this differentiation has implications that seem to draw from the migratory project. As discussed previously, disclaiming Greekness has been strongly associated with families as opposed to male Albanian individuals, who were probably engaged in 'circular migration' with Albania, especially in the case of nuclear family

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[13] The role of Orthodoxy is even greater, as being Orthodox Christian is normally a prerequisite for being Greek. For a synthetic discussion of the close connection between Greekness and Orthodoxy and the way in which it has been shaped, see Özkırımlı and Sofos (2008, pp. 21–26, 45–46), who also critically review the literature on nationalism in Greece and Turkey in a comparative perspective.

[14] The degree of privileges awarded to the former and the latter was however different. It is because, owing to migration, the Greek minority in Albania was literally 'evacuated'—a result that was not favoured by the Greek diplomatic service. See Pavlou (2003b).

[15] Among our interviewees who have used a Greek name, more than three out of five did so when looking for a job for the first time. In the dissimulation of the Albanian identity, the role of Greek employers and neighbours is very significant, as very often they proposed to christen their Albanian employees and neighbours, thus becoming their godfathers/godmothers.

left behind. This dichotomy is important for identity negotiation. In trying to dissociate oneself from the stigmatized group, expressions such as 'I am not like the other Albanians' and 'I am a family man' are used. This stresses the difference between the two categories—of which, clearly 'the other Albanians', who are not 'family men', are more stigmatized than the rest. As in the case of 'the degrees of Greekness', this kind of identity negotiation echoes, once again, the differences in the perception—and, in turn, the degrees of acceptance—of the different categories of Albanian immigrants by the dominant society. In the aforementioned imaginary scale, Albanian immigrants with 'something Greek' would be 'better than Muslims, but not as good as Greeks', and family men would be better than single men.[16]

7.3   The 'Cultural Legacy'

In the previous section, I have tried to elucidate the conditions under which the practices of identity dissimulation and negotiation were generated and the reasons why they were extended. This is only part of the explanation: in the next section, I focus on the Albanian side of the interaction, which implies looking at Albanian history and culture.

7.3.1   Albania and the Albanians: Negative memories of the homeland, negative perceptions of the national self

The recent history of Albania has been marked by poverty, while its political and socio-economic situation has been shaped by repetitive crises shaking the country since the fall of the previous regime. Migration became the main livelihood strategy. Migration also meant the discovery of the outside world, given Albania's total isolation during the 45 years of communist rule. As foreign migrants, Albanians discovered this new world, literally from the bottom, for they almost automatically entered the lowest socio-economic categories of the host societies.

French ethnographer De Rapper (1996) argues that discovering the outside, in the early 1990s, naturally caused a great shock to the Albanian people and the collapse of many identity certainties (see also Lubonja 2002, p. 101; Fuga 2000). He remarks that, beside this discovery, the disorders of the transition period in Albania, with the exponential increase of criminality and amorality,[17] aroused questioning of the character and the 'nature' of the Albanians inside the country.

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[16] There is nothing new about this in the study of migratory phenomena. French sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad (1999, pp. 112–113) very tellingly described the 'good immigrants' for dominant societies, essentially related to 'our' family values.

[17] In 1997, a significant bank crisis quickly became political crisis. The collapse of the state has brought the country into chaos, where armed gangs, engaged in various illegal trafficking (drugs,

The following extract (for more, see Kokkali 2011a, pp. 85–114), though refer-
ring to 'distrust'[18] among Albanians, reflects an opinion (shared by many of my
interviewees) on the 'nature' (the 'race'), the way of thinking, and the mentality of
Albanians.

> In general, Albanians help each other but only among relatives; never strangers…. You can-
> not understand Albanians: now they like each other and then, after two minutes, there is the
> brawl…It is like that, by their blood, their race (S., Muslim affiliation, man; interview with
> his wife, N., Veria, Imathia district, 14 February 2006).

To this perception of the national self are added the hardships of everyday life and
the absence of basic individual liberties during Enver Hoxha's presidency, imprint-
ed in the memories of people as the following extracts evoke (for more, see Kokkali
2010, pp. 199–200):

> We do not care about [Albania], nor can we help.… When I left it, I left like a chased wild
> animal. There is nothing which I care about in this country; I don't want to hear anything
> about it.… I don't think that the situation will ameliorate there; there's neither water nor
> public light in the streets. I think that in the future they [the politicians, the State] will rob
> people even more (L., co-ethnic Greek, man, Thessaloniki, 22 December 2005).
> Here's my home. We are well here, happy.… When I go back there, I see that they are all
> [the family, in particular her parents] doing fine and this is enough for me.… I don't want
> to return. Because in Albania it has been very hard for us; I wasn't able to buy a banana…
> a sweet for my children (D., woman, Thessaloniki, 17 December 2005).

Depicting Albania and the Albanians as such is in sharp contrast with the regime's
propaganda about the superiority of the Albanian people and the claim that Albania
was the happiest country in the world. The identity uncertainties that this contrast
seems to have generated are persuasively described by Albanian journalist Fatos
Lubonja (2002, p. 96, 101–103):

> Albanians continue to live divided between the glory of their virtual world and the misery
> of their real world. One of the most eloquent expressions of that separation is the paradox in
> which on the one hand Albanians express their pride in being Albanians, considering them-
> selves to be natural superiors while on the other hand, they regularly defame their country
> and try to escape from it in search of a better life.

This duality—the pride of being Albanian while escaping Albania (and dissimu-
lating identity in Greece under an adopted name)—becomes clear from the last
interviewee quoted above, who also remarked, 'I am proud of being Albanian. I
have never hidden the fact that I come from Albania.… Some people know me as
A. [Greek name] and some as D. [original name]'.

This, however, should be considered together with the 'external' world context.
Beside the negative memories of, and the simultaneous unrest in, Albania (with the
consequent identity questionings that this may have aroused), the concurrent trans-
mission of a representation of Albanians as bandits and barbarians by the Greek,
Italian, and other European media resulted in this image of a 'nation of thieves and

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weapons and human beings that might also have been relatives of the traffickers), had taken the
full control of some towns and villages. Albanians often refer to this period as a 'civil war' or
'when we took the guns'.

[18] For this issue, see Kokkali (2011b).

robbers' ending up by finding a particular echo even within Albania (De Rapper 1996). The image of Albanians constructed by the rest of the world and mirrored back to them, yet marked by prejudice, has undoubtedly had a decisive influence on the perception of the self within the country and in a migratory context.

Internalizing the stigma has thus been a result of a twofold situation related both to the source and the settlement country. The latter's role is quite obvious and has been discussed in the previous section. The source country is linked to this process via the people's memories of a harsh life depicted by deprivation, the regime's deception about the state of the outside world compared to Albania, and the discovery of this world with its negative perception of Albanians and Albania during the country's chaotic situation in the 1990s. All are factors that seem to have given rise to identity uncertainties for Albanian migrants and non-migrants, and, in turn, to identity negotiations in the country of settlement.

In his study on the management of stigma, Goffman (1963, p. 31, 152) stresses techniques—such as 'passing' and 'covering'—by which the stigmatized individual tries to dissimulate his or her stigma. The intention behind such devices (which include practices like name-changing) is mainly to restrict the way in which a known attribute obtrudes itself into the centre of attention—because, 'obtrusiveness increases the difficulty of maintaining easeful inattention regarding the stigma' (ibid.: 127). In this sense, 'covering' the Albanian origin and trying to 'pass' as Orthodox Christian and/or Greek-Albanian or somebody coming from Tirana or Korçe is a strategy that seeks to advocate comforting—for the local society—inattention to the stigmatized origin.

Overall, managing the stigmatized identity one way or another is a strategy of adaptation of the Albanian individual to a double situation: non-acceptance and stigmatization in Greece, as well as uncertainty regarding Albania and the Albanians.

7.3.2   Legacies of the Past and 'Flexible Religious Practices'

The legacy of atheism imposed by Hoxha could probably explain the apparently 'low religiosity' of Albanians; this, in turn, could justify the ease with which at a minimum a superficial religious shift (i.e., pretending to be Orthodox Christian) was carried out in Greece.

In 1967, in Albania, there was official abolition of all religious activities, even in the private sphere. Harsh persecution of religious practices and the closing down or destruction of many places of worship also took place. The regime's nationalist propaganda promoted elimination of the divisions of the past—namely, the split among four different faiths (Orthodox and Catholic Christians, Sunni and Bekhtashi Muslims), for the sake of the nation's unity.[19]

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[19] This was not an 'invention' of the regime; it has only been a different version of what Albanian nationalism (since its birth) was anyway based on: the idea that the religion of Albanians is

However, for several reasons, the regime did not erase the primordial community identities, such as family, regional, or religious. For example, mixed marriages remained rather rare, except among the urban elite (Clayer 2003). This is probably because, for Albanians, to be Christian or Muslim is very important in the construction of the self. While the nationalist rhetoric (relaunched during the communist regime in a slightly different version) insisted that one is Albanian before being Christian or Muslim, it seems that—at least locally—one should be Christian or Muslim in order to be Albanian (De Rapper 2002b).

This brings into light the complexity of the issue of religiosity in Albania, which comes in stark opposition to a widely diffused view on the religious indifference of Albanians (Malcolm 2002, p. 84); for many researchers, this would explain the 'facility' with which Albanians practise a religious shift in Greece. Instead of religious indifference, I would rather refer to 'flexible religious practices' among Albanians that seem to be related to two different facts.

First, according to ethnographer De Rapper (2002a) and historian Clayer (2007), for Albanians, the religious affiliation is more a form of social organisation, collective involvement and recognition of a common origin than religious belief alone. The community identification based on religion persists today, even though it is less assertive in religious practice than in the conscience of belonging to a distinct group (Clayer 2007; De Rapper 2002a).

One is Muslim or Christian by following the patrilineal religious affiliation. This means belonging to a cultural community, but also to a quasi-biological one, given that specific kinship groups are involved in this belonging. In that sense, nominally adopting a faith that is different from the original religious community could not affect the quasi-genealogical relation to this latter. As such, the massive phenomena of religious 'shift' in Greece (either only outwardly or involving conversion and christening as well) could be elucidated by the fact that assuming a different religion is superficial, since one would remain anyway what one is originally 'by birth', through one's familial affiliation.[20]

Since the restoration of religious freedom in 1990, the new religious scene that emerged has added more complexity to the issue. Religion in Albania appears now to be both marginal and central, argues Clayer (2003). It is marginal because, as in other former communist countries, the secularization of the society is very pronounced, since the elite was trained in the 'Marxist school' and the younger

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'Albanianism'. Religion formed a dividing factor for the Albanian population and thus it would not be included in the construction of the nation (Clayer 2007).

[20] In conducting ethnographic research in South-East Albania (Devoll), De Rapper (2002a) argues indeed that a person cannot flee the belonging represented by his/her religious affiliation, even if s/he was converted to another religion. Religion is intrinsic to origin and birth, and therefore displaying a different religion is a merely superficial act that could not alter the person's 'nature', i.e. the affiliation attributed by birth. The author stresses, besides, that even when the level of religious practice is low, people are aware of their religious affiliation and origin. Even during the communist era, when—theoretically—no Christians or Muslims existed, religious affiliation was still mentioned (even in official documents) and expressed in forms such as 'family of Christian origin'.

generations have grown up in an atheist environment. Religious practice continues to be rather limited, although places of worship have blossomed again all over the country(ibid.).[21]

Still, in some respects, religion is central. As mentioned above, collective identities based on religion have remained strong. Clayer (ibid.) stresses that the society is partly structured according to denominational affiliations: everybody knows the religious origin of everybody. As a result, religion seems to appear in the behaviour of individuals and, more importantly, in socio-political developments.[22]

Overall, there is a whole constellation of different meanings, perceptions and attitudes towards religion in Albania. Conversions to Christianity are often a means to express an adhesion to the Western world. Clayer (ibid.) argues that Catholicism, although of limited importance regarding religious and political life in Albania, enjoys great prestige in the sphere of culture and in the process of identity construction. The Catholic community is often presented as the main force in the historical development of Albanian nationalism, even if this does not really coincide with reality. Still, this perception is adopted even by non-Catholics, and it seems to form a way for the Albanian nation to acquire a more 'European' dimension. Christianity understood as Catholicism is promoted by an intellectual trend that rejects Islam, while presenting Catholicism both as the original religion of the Albanians and as the only religion and culture that would allow Albania's integration into Europe.[23] Albanian writer Ismail Kadareis part of this trend, despite his Muslim origin. He wrote in the early 1990s:

> I was convinced that Albania would lean towards the Christians' religion, because it was linked with the culture, with the memory and with the nostalgia of the period before the Turks. … The Albanian nation would proceed to this great historical rectification, what would hasten its union with the mother continent: Europe (Kadare 1991, pp. 50–51, quoted in Clayer 2003).

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[21] According to a survey conducted by the University of Tirana, in 1999 (quoted by Clayer 2003), 33 % of the sample very rarely visits a place of worship, 30,5 % at least once a year, 23.9 % at least once a month, 9 % once a week, and 3.1 % more than once a week. Yet, as a value, religion seems to be important for the Albanians, while the proportion of atheists is trivial. For more than 70 % of the sample, religion is very important or quite important and, from those, 90 % believe in God. Another survey shows that, among peasants, religion is considered to be the most important value after family, work, friends, and before leisure and politics (Fuga 2000, pp. 210–211).

[22] As a collective belonging, religion is often used in the political field, through relationships or discourses. The political changes have shown that the rightwing circles generally instrumentalize Islam (without considering Bektashism separately), while the leftwing ones use Orthodoxy to a greater extent and are in favour of the promotion of Bektashism as the basis of a separate community, as well as a form of nationalism. Catholic circles are closer to rightwing milieus, but they can be instrumentalized by more important groups in their relationship with the West. This does not mean that religious communities are politically homogeneous; besides, often, these instrumentalizations are parallel to uses of regional belonging (small regions against small regions, or North against South) (Clayer 2003).

[23] Some of my interviewees of Muslim affiliation referred indeed to the idea that 'originally Albanians were Christians'.

In light of these trends, the conversions and shifts (or pseudo-shifts) of religion in Greece (but also in Italy) are better understood. In order to explain them further, we should also consider the frequent declarations of Albanians in Albania or in Greece on 'the uniqueness of God'. One of my respondents in Thessaloniki in 2005 declared, 'I am a Muslim, but I go to church.… God is one and only'.[24] Kretsi (2005a) reported similar declarations. One of her interviewees in Albania remarked, 'We're going to church regularly…. There is only one Lord. Regardless of religion.' Both these statements on the uniqueness of God and the needlessness of distinguishing between churches and mosques seem to underline a perception of God and religion among Albanians that appears to permit a 'flexible religious practice'. As Kretsi (2005a) points out, this attitude towards the divine that transcends sectarian divisions and appears strange to 'foreign' eyes, seems to facilitate Albanians' adoption of the Christian religion in Greece (and Italy). When studying this phenomenon and the Albanians' 'flexible religious practices', it seems useful to look at the religious syncretism widely spread in the Ottoman Balkans—in particular among Albanophone populations.

Ethno-religious border-crossing and syncretism has been widespread. Sharing of sacred sites, worshipping the same saints, exchanging amulets, and even sharing ritual practices was indeed common during the Ottoman period and even afterwards (Hasluck 1973/ 1929, pp. 31–36, 68–69).

In studying an Ottoman Balkan city, in his book on Salonica, Mazower (2004, p. 68) observes that even when confessional boundaries were not crossed, the daily life of the city fostered a considerable sharing of beliefs and practices. He stresses that there was far less theological policing under the Ottomans than there was in Christendom at the same time. This laxity and the absence of heresy hunters enabled the emergence of a popular religious culture that united the city's diverse faiths around a common sense of the sacred and divine.

In the Albanophone Balkans, more particularly, there are numerous examples in Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Bosnia, where Muslim and Christian forms of pilgrimage and saint veneration have amalgamated, while formal religious divisions have become blurred (Duijzings 2000, p. 2). In his book on Kosovo (1998, pp. 129–130), Noel Malcolm, too, observes that syncretism of rituals and folk beliefs were shared among Catholics, Orthodox, and Muslims. He remarks, besides, that with so many practices either shared or replicated between faiths, 'these people probably did not notice such a dramatic difference in kind between all forms of Christianity on the one hand and Islam on the other'.

This idea of amalgamating religious practices, thus blurring the boundaries of faith, seems rather akin to the reference that Skendi (1967, p. 227) makes on 'double faith' in the Balkans.[25] He stresses that it is not always easy to distinguish between double faith (having two religions) and the phenomenon of Crypto-Christianity

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[24] Interview on 20 December 2005, in Thessaloniki. See also Clayer (2003).

[25] Mazower (2000, pp. 65–66), besides, notices that the blurring of the divide between the three great monotheistic faiths was a feature of one of the fastest-growing religious movements of the seventeenth and eighteenth century Balkans—the strain of Islamic mysticism known as

(publicly professing Islam, while practising Christianity in private). Besides, he adds, it is also difficult to distinguish between Crypto-Christianity and pure prejudice. As Malcolm (1998, p. 129) too remarks, the main function of religion for ordinary people in this kind of society was quasi-magical—a set of practices for warding off evil, curing illness or ensuring a good harvest. As such, in areas where different religions intermingled, people would make use of all available forms of magically efficacious protection.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to explore if Balkan populations during the Ottoman rule practised a 'double faith', conversion, or Crypto-Christianism or whether their practices were more led by prejudice than by anything else; more importantly, it goes beyond our objective here to address the question of whether Albanian populations adopted such practices more (or less) than other Balkan peoples. Yet, it appears to me that there is a close connection of those practices and the aforementioned idea on the 'uniqueness of God'. It is not a coincidence therefore that a Franciscan report of seventeenth century Kosovo makes a reference to this: 'Those impious people [Muslim proselytisers] also said that the difference between them and the Christians was small; "After all", they said, "we all have the same God, we venerate your Christ as a prophet and holy man, we celebrate many of the festivals of your saints with you, and you celebrate Friday, our festive day; Mohammed and Christ are brothers"… And this error was so widespread, that in the same family one person would be Catholic, one Muslim and one Orthodox'. (quoted in Malcolm 1998:133–134)

Regarding the practices of the Albanian immigrants in Greece, Kretsi (2005a) remarks that many of her respondents considered baptism solely as a public act: 'I remain, however, Muslim', claimed one of her informants, whereas another one was ready to baptize if his employer asked him: 'like that, for friendship, for *gief* [pleasure], not by obligation, since I have anyway another religion'. As Kretsi observes, with these perceptions, Muslim faith and Christian baptism are absolutely compatible—exactly as in the aforementioned attitudes towards faith and religious practice met largely in the Ottoman Albanophone Balkans, I would add. Similar to contemporary practices, transcending the boundaries of faith or even adopting a faith of façade at the time was largely accompanied by the practice of also adopting another name.[26]

Bektashism. Bektashism spread throughout southeastern Europe and became popular in much of southern Albania. For the role of Bektashism in Albania, see Clayer (1995).

[26] Circa 1650, a Catholic missionary in Prizren reported that some of the many converts to Islam were claiming that 'in our hearts we are Christians; we have only changed our names [adopted Moslem names] in order not to pay taxes imposed by the Turks' (quoted in Skendi 1967, p. 228). Crypto-Christianity in the Balkans can find an equivalent to the Marranos in Spain (op. cit.: 227). Referring to the Marranos, converted to Catholicism already many generations before leaving Portugal to come to Ottoman Salonica, Mazower (2004, p. 69) reports that they were baptized and went to church, but would be Jews 'inside': 'Some of them […] had kept Jewish customs alive secretly for decades, and equipped their children with two names ["If I ask one of their children: 'What's your name?' reported one observer, 'they will respond: 'At home they call me Abraham and in the street Francesco'"]'.

This incomplete reminder of religious practice in the Ottoman Balkans permits us to explore some analogies between 'now' and 'then' and therefore shed light on the 'cultural factor'—related more to the source country and its history, rather than the circumstances in the destination country (i.e., the 'structural factors', see Vermeulen 2001). In doing this, I hope to have made a small contribution to the renewal of the scientific debate around the Albanian immigrants' identity negotiation/dissimulation in Greece that tends to underestimate the legacies of the past.

7.4   Conclusion

Albanian migration to Greece deserves closer attention, because it forms the most important intra-Balkan population movement post-1990, while it deviates in some crucial respects from more common patterns of settlement and adaptation of immigrants in new homelands. There is no 'natural' response to a hostile ethos of reception, such as that experienced until the mid-2000s by Albanian immigrants in Greece. The 'Albanian way', as described in this chapter, is an option among others; it is diametrically opposite to the reaction of withdrawing into one's own group and emphasizing the difference with the dominant society, as suggested by the theory of 'reactive ethnicity' (see Portes & Rumbaut 2001, pp. 148–152). Albanian immigrants, at least the first-generation immigrants studied here, opted for name-changing and religious shifts, trying to stress their similarities with Greeks. But, because this possibility was one among many, the hostile social climate in Greece on its own is unable to explain this choice of strategy. For this purpose, apart from the 'structural factor' that impacts on immigrants' social mobility in host societies, I have also sought to look at cultural factors that may influence this mobility and overall the integration of immigrants (Vermeulen 2001). In so doing, I have examined more closely the history of the source country before the emigration episode. This has helped me to understand how history and culture may affect the newcomers' attitudes, practices, behaviours, and, in turn, their strategies of adaptation in the country of settlement.

Indeed, the study of the more—and the less—distant past shows that name-changing and religious shift are not novelties in Albanian history. All immigrants reconstruct their identities in the host countries. Not all of them, however, opt for identity dissimulation *en masse* as with the case of Albanians in Greece. Even if activated by the circumstances encountered in this country—namely, a hostile reception and the existence of a Greek minority in Southern Albania—neither the name-changing nor the religious shift seem to be unknown practices for Albanian populations. Rather, they represent strategies employed in similar modes at many times in the past, particularly in the long Ottoman history.

Nonetheless, the more recent history of the country, namely the autocratic regime of Hoxha, also left its mark on people's behaviour. The fall of the regime left the Albanians exposed to a severe identity crisis, seeking to understand whether the stereotypical image of them conveyed by the 'West' was true or not. In the

light of this crisis, and—needless to repeat—stigmatization by the host societies, the des-identification, that is, the effort to differentiate oneself from the rest of the (stigmatized) group, has been a highly practised option at least among immigrants in Greece.

The absence of any physiognomic markers that would render their difference from the dominant society visible, together with their identity management, seems to have suggested the 'social inconspicuousness' of the Albanian immigrants in Greece. Probably every Greek sought to distinguish her or his Albanian neighbours; but, outside this local scale of personal relations and close vicinity, the Albanians were collectively visible in very few cases. For Thessaloniki, the field of my study, the Albanians were distinctively perceptible as a different group only in the *piazzas* for job-seeking. Compared to their numeric weight in the city's population, however, this visibility can be considered negligible.

As I have tried to demonstrate in this chapter, the Albanians' 'social inconspicuousness' is reflected in the way in which their physical setting is contained within the Greek city. The remarkable absence of ethnic infrastructure and the dispersion of Albanian households throughout the city suggest the 'spatial invisibility' of the most important immigrant population of Thessaloniki. As maintained in this chapter, despite their great numbers, Albanians do not reveal any visible trace of their ethnicity in the urban space. As such, apart from being socially inconspicuous, Albanians are also spatially 'invisible'.

It is important to note, however, that both outside forces and the preferences of the migrant group may lead to residential dispersion. This latter is not a sign of weakening of the group's identity. Besides, it would be wrong to interpret the counter-practice of clustering as a refusal to integrate, while understanding the residential dispersion as an enthusiastic volition to inclusion. In its way, each option expresses a form of response appropriate to the circumstances created by the migration situation and from the specific resources available to each group of migrants in order to deal with the situation (Barou 2003, p. 263).

In this respect, Albanian migrants' relative invisibility in Greece, and more particularly in Thessaloniki, reflects a specific adaptation strategy among other options—a strategy which is not, anyway, an option for *all* Albanians in Greece. Moreover, apart from representing the Albanian immigrants' adaptation to the conditions encountered in Greece, these strategies respond too to the process of adaptation of Albanians to the post-communist era—meaning the realities that emerged after the discovery of the outside world, namely Albania's position in this latter and the questionings that have arisen on what it may mean to be Albanian. These strategies also make use of the cultural legacies of a more distant past. As such, I argue that the practices of inconspicuousness respond to a complex situation that draws on both the Greek context of reception and the Albanian background.

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Ifigeneia Kokkali is a research fellow at the Politecnico di Milano, Department of Architecture & Planning. Since 2009 she has been an adjunct professor at the Institut Français d'Urbanisme, Université Paris-Est. Previously she has worked at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece and the European University Institute, Italy. Her research interests revolve around migration and the city, ethno-cultural diversity of urban populations and segregation. A recent publication on these topics is 'Absence of a "community" and spatial invisibility: Migrants from Albania in Greece and the case of Thessaloniki", in F. Eckardt and J. Eade (eds.) *Ethnically diverse city*, Future Urban Research in Europe 4, Berlin: Berliner-Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2011. Website: http://www.eui.eu/Projects/ACCEPT/Consortium/People/IfigeneiaKokkali.aspx.

Chapter 8
Albanian Seasonal Work Migration to Greece: A Case of Last Resort?

Julie Vullnetari

Since the collapse of the communist regime in 1990, Albania has witnessed large-scale emigration—particularly to neighbouring Greece and Italy, but also further afield to the UK and the USA. By 2010 it was estimated that more than 1.4 million Albanian emigrants lived abroad, comprising nearly 45 % of the resident population of Albania of 3.2 million (World Bank 2011, p. 54). However, such emigration was not without historical precedent. Albanians had migrated far and wide for centuries, whether for work or forced to do so by wars, local conflicts, and strife. Indeed, labour migration played a central role for Albanians as it did for all Mediterranean peoples (Psimmenos and Georgoulas 2001, p. 9). The earliest mass migration in the collective memory of Albanians took place in the second half of the fifteenth century, following the death of Albania's national hero Scanderbeg in 1467 and the beginning of the Ottoman conquest. Five centuries under Ottoman rule were accompanied by further emigration. Many Albanian men fled to escape blood feuds, local lords, or Ottoman persecution; yet others simply emigrated to escape poverty or to work in various trades and professions, especially craftsmen such as masons, road-builders, carpenters, ironsmiths, and goldsmiths (Tirta 1999). Others left to study in key centres of learning such as Cairo and Constantinople, while many professional men settled in the bigger cities of the Empire for a career in administration, the army, or in professions such as medicine and the law. The vast space of the Ottoman Empire provided ample opportunities for such movements, and destinations included Bulgaria, Romania, and Egypt (Tirta 1999). During that time, present-day Turkey became an important destination, where an Albanian presence is noted from the beginning of the fifteenth century (De Rapper 2000, p. 3). Greece too was important, especially for communities living along what is now its border with Albania. Patterns of what were then translocal movements and activities were part of everyday life and continued to some extent even after the creation of the Greek state and border demarcation (see Green 2005; also Vullnetari and King 2013). Much of this Ottoman period emigration is known in Albanian history and collective memory as *kurbet*, referring to the act of going away and being distant in a foreign land, usually for work (King and Vullnetari 2003). At the turn of the twentieth century,

J. Vullnetari (✉)
Geography and Environment, University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom
e-mail: J.Vullnetari@soton.ac.uk

Albanians became (a very small) part of the transatlantic migrations from Southern Europe. Some were refugees fleeing the bloodshed that resulted from the Balkan Wars and the two world wars. Others sought to improve their lives by emigrating for work in the rapidly expanding industrial cities of North America and the agricultural industries of Australia. As a result of these historical migrations, significant communities of Albanians formed in Greece, Italy, Romania, Egypt, Turkey, and the USA. With the ascendance of the communists to power at the end of World War II, unauthorized emigration from Albania was banned and severely punished, with the result that only a trickle of people managed to escape during these years. The large-scale post-communist emigration, therefore, was not simply the expression of economic necessity but also of the desire for freedom and re-connection with the neighbouring world and beyond.

Given its geographical and cultural proximity, Greece became once again the most important destination for post-communist Albanian migrants. During most of the 1990s these movements were largely irregular and short-term in character. The first regularization in Greece in 1998 signalled the beginning of a stabilization period for the migrant community there, as well as more diverse flows towards it from Albania. One of these flows is composed of seasonal labour migrants—the focus of my analysis in this chapter.

There is now a burgeoning literature on Albanian migration to Greece. However, most of it has focused on urban areas, particularly in and around Athens and Thessaloniki, with rural areas largely overlooked (for key texts of the latter see Kasimis 2008; Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2005; Kasimis et al. 2003; Labrianidis and Sykas 2009a, 2009b). On the Albanian side, the impacts of migration on rural areas, especially from seasonal migrants working in agriculture, are not well understood (but see Gërmenji and Swinnen 2004; Gërmenji et al. 2001; McCarthy et al. 2006; Miluka et al. 2007; Samson 1997; Vullnetari 2012a; Vullnetari and King 2011). This chapter seeks to make a modest contribution to both of these bodies of literature. Migration for seasonal work in the agricultural sector in Greece is considered by many Albanian migrants as the least preferable form of migration, yet it is often the last resort for many poor and lower-skilled individuals. The discussion in this chapter is also situated within debates on migration and development, with particular relevance to the recent global discourse on circular (temporary) migration and its effects on development in migrants' areas of origin.

The aim of this chapter is threefold. First, it presents a picture of seasonal migration from rural Albania to Greece through the words and perspectives of migrants and their families. Secondly, it discusses the impact of this migration on migrants and their families: to what extent does this form of mobility perpetuate dependence on seasonal remittances or provide a lifeline and skills to build sustainable livelihoods back home? Finally, it considers the impact on a local scale in areas of origin, especially on rural landscapes and economies. Issues of mobility, border controls, and Albanian-Greek relations are explored as part of these three overarching streams.

The chapter is structured as follows. After this introduction, I present a brief overview of Albanian migration to Greece within the context of wider debates on

seasonal and temporary migration. This is followed by a background section on Albanian rural life and agriculture. I then say a few words about the study from which data for this chapter is drawn. This brings me to a discussion of the findings, followed by a conclusion.

8.1   Albanian Migration to Greece: Background

Albania emerged from almost five decades of communist rule as the poorest country in Europe, with a third of its population under 15 years of age, high underemployment, and in dire poverty. The latter two problems escalated over the early 1990s, as the closure of industries and rural cooperatives led to mass unemployment, while 'shock therapy' economic reform meant that prices and inflation shot upwards overnight. Desperate Albanians rushed towards the coastal cities of Durrës and Vlorë in the hope of boarding one of the ships leaving for Italy, while many more walked over the mountains to Greece. The scale of this exodus was not easily quantifiable, since most of these migrants were irregular, and there was much to-and-fro, especially with Greece (King and Vullnetari 2003). However, an indication of the numbers is given by figures for mass expulsions from Greece: an average of 200,000 migrants per year between 1990 and 1995 (Baldwin-Edwards and Fakiolas 1998, p. 197).[1]

  Contemporary Albanian migration is considered a significant and unique case by reason of its massive concentration over a short period of time as the country moved almost overnight from total closure to large-scale out-migration (Barjaba and King 2005). Starting off as a crisis migration, its typology has changed over the years. First, the largely irregular feature characterizing these movements throughout most of the 1990s gradually made way for more managed flows of regularized migrants. This was primarily a consequence of the regularization schemes in Greece (1998, 2001, 2005, and 2007) and Italy (1995, 1997, and 2002), in which considerable numbers of Albanians participated successfully. Some irregular migration does take place these days, but it is far from the dominant type. Secondly, the migration destinations have diversified. Although Greece and Italy remain the top countries in terms of stocks, flows to other countries such as the UK and the USA have seen the largest increase over the years, especially during the 2000s (Government of Albania 2005). Thirdly, the typology of individuals participating in the migratory flows has transformed from a dominance of young men, to families being the norm rather than the exception. The presence of women has been particularly strong in the transatlantic flows. As Albanian migration has been maturing (see for this especially, King et al. 2011), a considerable second generation has become an important group to reckon with. Finally, although most migrants have settled in their countries of destination, temporary migration is a continuing feature of overall Albanian migration, particularly to Greece.

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[1] These figures include repeat migrants.

The first reliable figures of the Albanian presence in Greece came to light after the first regularization programme of 1998 in which 241,561 Albanian immigrants applied, constituting 65 % of the total non-EU, 'non-ethnic Greek' immigrant population in Greece. Only 17 % of them were women (Cavounidis 2004, p. 41). The male-to-female ratio has changed over the years, and according to the 2001 census it was around 60:40 (Baldwin-Edwards 2004). A similar ratio was present amongst the stay permit holders as of March 2010 (Maroukis and Gemi 2010, p. 15).[2] By 2010, an estimated 700,000 Albanians lived in Greece, representing more than half of the total migrant population there; the next most important group was Bulgarians at only 5 % (Maroukis 2008, pp. 6–8; Maroukis and Gemi 2010, p. 13).

The Albanian migrant community in Greece has undergone significant changes over the years in terms of migrants' profiles, demographic composition, and socio-economic conditions. There is broad agreement amongst researchers that there is generally an improved socio-economic situation, especially as migrants settle in urban areas. Many have moved from rural to urban areas of Greece and from work in agriculture to employment (and even self-employment) in industry and services—especially in construction and the tourist sector. Comparing data from the 2001 Greek census with those collected by Labour Force Surveys in 2006, Baldwin-Edwards (2008, p. 23) suggests that employment of Albanians in Greek agriculture decreased by 50 %. Yet, they continue to constitute a considerable—if not a dominant—presence in Greek agriculture (Kasimis 2008). Albanians are especially found in the plains of Thessaly and close to the Albanian border (Fakiolas 2003; Kasimis et al. 2003). Until recently they performed the heaviest and most stigmatized tasks, such as harvesting, hoeing, weeding, and fertilizing. However, according to newspaper reports, new arrivals from Asia have been taking over these jobs as the lowest-paid migrants in agriculture.[3] Albanians also perform many other minor tasks around the farm, for which they are not always paid. However, as Labrianidis and Sykas (2009b) find in their study, Albanians have an opportunity for upward economic mobility after some years of work on the same farm. Studying the impact of immigrant labour in the agricultural sector in three rural areas of Greece (Ioannina, Corinthia, and Chania), Kasimis (2008, p. 520) confirms that Albanians present faster upward professional and socio-economic mobility than other migrant groups in rural areas. In addition, as many settle in these rural areas, they play a key and multifunctional role not just as workers. Migrants' overall support for Greek elderly households—which constitute the majority of the rural population—is particularly important (Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2005). According to Cavounidis (2006), immigrant—especially Albanian—labour has replaced virtually all waged as well as a large part of 'family' labour in Greek agriculture.[4]

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[2] In March 2010 there were 368,269 valid stay permits held by ethnic Albanians living in Greece, a share of more than 70 % of third country migrants in Greece (Gemi et al. 2010, p. 26).

[3] Greek daily newspaper Kathimerini, 22 August 2010, p. 4. Thanks to Hans Vermeulen for this update.

[4] The role of Albanian migrants in the Greek economy is extensive and covers a wide array of sectors and jobs. Providing an analysis of this is a major task, which is important but beyond the remit of this chapter.

Demand for migrant labour in rural Greece increased after the first 1998 regularization, when many newly regularized Albanians (and others) moved from rural to urban areas, where they had access to better-paid and more secure jobs. But demand continues to be high for fruit-picking and other labour-intensive tasks, especially during summer peaks of activity. During these periods, additional labour is recruited from Albania through the seasonal work visa programme introduced in 1997.[5] Although the government of Albania has released no statistics, it estimates that some thousands of Albanians, mainly from the southern regions of the country, have benefited from the programme over the years (Government of Albania 2005). On the Greek side, Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatou (2009) suggest that the number of such visa holders was at around 7000 between 2003 and 2004, the majority of whom worked in agriculture. Recently released data from the Greek Ministry of Interior show that more than 40,000 stay permits for seasonal and temporary employment were granted to Albanians during 2007–2009: 13,416 in 2007, 13,732 in 2008, and 13,697 in 2009 (Gemi et al. 2010, pp. 27–28).[6] Typically such migrants spend up to six months in Greece and the rest in Albania.

While these seasonal workers are invariably referred to as 'temporary', many return to Greece to work year after year—giving credence to the adage that nothing is more permanent than temporary migration.[7] In fact, temporary migration—repackaged as circular migration—is becoming fashionable again amongst policymakers and researchers worldwide, as high-income countries struggle to strike a balance between supplying their economies with the right amount of labour, at the right time, yet to absolve themselves from responsibilities for migrants. In Hahamovitch's (2003, p. 92) words, states try to 'open their markets without opening their borders', thus creating the 'perfect immigrant'. Hahamovitch (ibid.) further argues that within the framework of global capitalism, such programmes are designed to keep the cost of production low, to put downwards pressure on wages, and to keep migrant workers segregated in low-wage sectors of the economy (see also Hennebry and Preibisch 2012). The interest in temporary migration has also increased within debates on migration and development. In this context, while emphasis is on migrants as 'agents of development' for their origin countries—primarily through the financial capital that they remit—their temporary status provides host-country governments a way out of granting social and citizenship rights. Temporary migration provides a lifeline for numerous families from low-income countries worldwide,

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[5] Seasonal labour migration in Greece is managed (at least in theory) mainly within the framework of *metaklisi*, or the system of inviting foreign workers to enter through visas for dependent work. This is regulated by existing bilateral agreements which Greece has with Albania (Law 2482/1997), Bulgaria and Egypt (see Maroukis 2008, pp. 12–13). See also Gemi et al. (2010) for a discussion of the legislation and data on temporary and seasonal migration in Greece.

[6] Not to be confused with 40,000 individuals, as there is a core of repeat migrants who benefit from these permits each year. Furthermore, a number of other migrants enter Greece without documents (over the mountains from Albania) and work there seasonally, as we shall read later in this chapter.

[7] For definitions of seasonal and temporary labour migration, and the distinction between the two, see Triandafyllidou (2010).

especially pertinent in the context of global and regional economic and political restructuring.

As Albania moved from a centrally-planned, one-party system to a politically pluralist market economy, it gradually integrated itself within the wider global structures of markets and capital, although retaining a peripheral position. This affects the agricultural sector, whose importance in overall GDP has been slowly shrinking over the years, as we shall see in the following section.

8.2   Rural Life and Agriculture in Albania

During the communist period, private agricultural land in Albania was collectivized in large Soviet-type cooperatives and state farms, thus stripping peasants of titles to the land. More than half of rural workers were women, and this share was higher in areas close to industrial centres, as men took up paid off-farm work (Samson 1997, p. 172). The land reform of 1992 aimed at land distribution amongst members of the cooperatives and state farms, in one of the fastest land privatization processes in all of Eastern Europe. By 2004, agricultural land consisted of around half a million private farms averaging 1.1 ha each (McCarthy et al. 2006, p. 4). Each household's 'farm' was further fragmented on average into four plots, bringing the total number of single plots to almost 2 million (World Bank 2007, p. 6; see also, for micro-level examples, Stahl and Sikor 2009).[8] Land ownership is also complicated by various land titles—with titles to the same plot held by pre-collectivization and post-1992 owners. The outcomes for the sector have been harsh, as disputes over titles have weakened the land property and rental market, while in some cases old blood feuds have been ignited. In addition, there are difficulties with land consolidation and mechanization, which in turn affect private investment (Samson 1997). The situation is exacerbated by ineffective and short-sighted development policies—where they do exist—whether they are designed at the central or the local level. Generally, rural areas have borne the brunt of corruption and nepotism as both the causes and consequences of limited and badly managed public investments in rural roads, education, and medical care. This has led to deteriorating socio-economic conditions in villages, resulting in intensive rural to urban migration, especially from the northern and southern highlands (King and Vullnetari 2003; Vullnetari and King 2011).

Yet, agriculture remains one of the most important sectors of the economy. Although it contributes only 25 % to the country's GDP, it provides, according to official statistics, almost 60 % of total employment countrywide and half of the household income for rural families (McCarthy et al. 2006; World Bank 2007).[9] Some

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[8] This fragmentation was due to the distribution process—the criteria for which involved household size (number of persons per household) and grading of land type according to land quality, terrain, its access to irrigation, distance from main roads, and markets.

[9] The employment rate in agriculture is slightly misleading because all those who own agricultural land in rural areas, including those who have migrated abroad but are still registered as living in

large-scale farming has been on the increase, but by and large the sector continues to be dominated by low-productivity subsistence farming, based primarily on the (often unpaid) labour of family members. The latter, combined with stigmatization of manual labour in agriculture, is a strong factor affecting decisions of rural youths to take up off-farm work such as construction in local urban areas or to migrate seasonally to rural Greece. Ironically, most of those who take the second route become employed in agriculture, thus replacing Greek youths who themselves have left in large numbers for the cities, for precisely the same reasons (Cavounidis 2006, p. 108; Kasimis 2008; Kasimis and Papadopoulos 2005).

8.3 Methods and Fieldwork Sites

Data for this chapter are drawn from research for my doctoral degree, which examined the links between internal and international migration in Albania from a development perspective. Taking inspiration from Marcus's (1995) theorizing on multi-sited ethnography, I 'followed the people' on their migration trajectories. My fieldwork started in a cluster of four villages of origin in Devoll, southeast Albania, from where I traced migrants and their families to their internal destinations—Korçë, the biggest town close to the villages, and Tirana, the capital of Albania—and to their international destination—the Greek city of Thessaloniki. Experiences and perspectives of migrants and their families in these four locations were collected through 150 in-depth interviews, two group discussions and ongoing participant observation during 2005–2006. Participants in the rural areas included seasonal work migrants, returnees from Greece and migrants on short visits to the village who worked in Greek agriculture. Although my fieldwork in Greece focused on urban Thessaloniki where obviously migrants were employed in urban jobs, the vast majority of them had previously lived and worked in rural areas of Greece in their early migration years. They thus had many stories to tell about those experiences. All names of interviewees in this chapter are pseudonyms, in order to safeguard interviewees' anonymity.

8.4 The Bean Farm and the Peach Orchard: Working and Living in Rural Greece

Migrants in my research who worked seasonally in Greek agriculture constituted three groups: those who had a long-term residence permit but worked seasonally for family reasons; those who had a seasonal work visa; and those who ventured

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Albania, are considered—for statistical purposes—as fully employed in agriculture, thus obscuring underemployment.

seasonally over the mountains to Greece without documents.[10] Let us now look at their working and living conditions in Greece and discuss their socio-demographic profiles.

8.4.1 Working and Living Conditions for Agricultural Workers

The majority of migrants from my study villages who worked seasonally in Greece went primarily to two locations: (i) the small Greek villages (such as Microlini) near the Greek-Albanian-Macedonian border and (ii) the rural areas near Veria, north-western Greece. In the first location, employment was often on family farms cultivating beans; these farms were owned by older Greeks. Migrants earned € 15 a day for 10 hours of work. The employer provided two meals a day—'a thin potato soup' as one of the migrants put it—and free accommodation, often in barns. For many migrants, this 'spartan' way of life was a compromise allowing them to save money for their return. In Veria, migrants worked in larger commercial farms pruning fruit trees and picking fruit—mostly apples and peaches—at orchards that supplied the chain of agro-industry, locally and for export. They earned slightly more than on the bean farms, at € 18 to € 20 a day for eight hours of work, but they had to pay for their own food and accommodation. Pajtim, 53, working in rural Veria told me:

> We earn €20 a day, this is the wage in the Veria area. *Merokamato* as they call it [in Greek]. We work fixed hours, eight hours. So from six in the morning till two pm… If we work in the afternoon we get paid for extra hours, an additional €10, so we may work for two or three hours if there is work. But it's usually just the eight hours.

Although these wage-rates are quite low, there has been progress compared to the 1990s. Berti, 39, has been going to Greece to work since 1991 and has always worked in agriculture—picking peaches, grapes, tomatoes, and cotton and hoeing tobacco in areas as wide as Athens, Lamia, Kilkis, and Crete, but especially rural Veria. This is how he recounts those early years:

> In the beginning the wages were really low… Then gradually they started going up year by year… Especially here in Veria they [employers] paid 2,000–3,000 drachmas per day. If you calculate it in euros it was about € 10 a day.

Another seasonal migrant Drini, 35, who had also worked in various jobs and various geographical areas in Greece, added:

> We would work until the employer [using the Greek word *afentiko* derived from the Turkish for boss] completed a particular process. Sometimes even until midnight. Non-stop, just like a petrol station.

While Greek employers usually paid the wages owed, there were those who took exploitation to extremes, not paying the migrants at all for the work they had done. This unleashed retaliation of the latter, as Berti recounted:

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[10] The latter two types fit the definitions of Triandafyllidou (2010) of 'seasonal legal labour migrants' and 'seasonal irregular migrants', respectively.

> Every time you were employed you would agree the wage with the prospective employer…. But in some cases the employer would delay paying us our wages, or didn't want to pay. When the work was over he would say: come to pick up your wages after a week because I don't have the money now. There were good employers who paid, but at other times you had to go and beg the employer for your money every day…. There were also those who didn't pay at all…. Albanians would work for months and months on their farms, it wasn't just a day or a week, but several months. They had been told they would be paid their wages at the end of the working period. But when the time for payment came the Greek employer would simply send them away and withhold their money. So the Albanians would destroy their orchards, or set fire to their greenhouses for revenge.

Two key factors that improved their situation were the regularization of their status and the extended duration of their migration. That latter, especially, facilitated relationships of mutual trust. Thus, as Rogaly (2008) argues, it is important to emphasize the dynamism of labour relations and migration in time and space, and to acknowledge migrants' agency in shaping these relations even when the space for doing so is constrained by structural factors.

Relationships and trust are particularly important for those on seasonal work visas as the permits can be obtained only after a Greek employer submits a request for a named individual through the Greek Organization of Employment and Labour (OAED) to a Greek consulate in Albania. The permits are valid only for work in the agricultural sector and are tied to a particular employer, that is, migrants are not allowed to work for anyone other than the sponsoring farmer, although many do and with the latter's permission.[11] Labrianidis and Sykas (2009b) argue that unlike in other high-income countries where such seasonal work schemes are used, the interpersonal labour relations between migrants and farmers still prevalent in the Greek countryside, facilitate migrants' strategies for continued employment during low peaks of agricultural demand. During such periods, migrants may take up jobs in the agricultural sector in other parts of Greece, or in other better-paid sectors in urban areas such as construction and small-scale manufacturing. As the jobs are carried out informally, migrants crucially depend on strong social capital—a network of friends and relatives who are already settled in Greece with long-term permits and who are able to introduce the migrant to potential employers, as well as being able to help them with accommodation.

For first-time migrants who lack ties to Greek employers, Albanian friends and relatives act as intermediaries. At the same time, these migrants often need to place an informal bond of € 500 with their prospective employer for protection of the latter's 'investment' against the migrant's absconding before the season's work is over. This sum is roughly equivalent to a worker's monthly wage, which the employer

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[11] For a more detailed account of this process, see Maroukis (2008) and the discussion in Gemi et al. (2010). The European Commission recently issued a proposal for a directive regulating the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of seasonal employment (2010). It aims to bring closer the member states' provisions on this issue and goes some way to addressing the vulnerability of seasonal labour migrants, a condition which results primarily from tying the migrant worker to his or her employer, not allowing them to work in more than one sector of the economy, and not being granted a multiple-entry visa. For a critical review of this proposal, see Triandafyllidou (2010).

is required to place as a guarantee bond with the relevant insurance fund before the work visa is issued (Articles 14 and 16, Law 3386/2005; Maroukis and Gemi 2010, p. 26, n 27). The burden is once again shifted from the employer to the migrant worker. First-time migrants who have no one to facilitate their visa process sometimes buy a visa from a dealer who is allegedly linked to consular staff in Korçë or from a local non-governmental organization, as the latter may get visas for their members much easier. The fee of € 1000 to € 1300 is recouped with great difficulty from 6 months' work in Greece. Some poorer Albanians who have neither much money nor social contacts, simply venture over the mountains to the Greek border villages and work there as undocumented migrants until they are caught by the Greek police and deported back to Albania. Roma and Egyptians constitute a significant share of this group (Vullnetari and King 2011).

8.4.2   Migrants' Profiles

Seasonal migrants have been, and continue to be, overwhelmingly men (hence, the frequent reference to migrants as 'he' in this chapter). It is very rare for women to work seasonally on their own. When they migrate, they do so with their husband or another male family member such as a son. Drita, 32, is one such case:

> My husband arranged a work visa for me. So I stayed there [Greece] for six months and worked with my husband. I was working in a cooling warehouse, they called it *psygeio* in Greek. I was selecting apples…. This is where I worked for three months…. The rest of the time I worked with my husband in the apple orchards picking apples.

The male-dominated character of migration to Greece is to a certain extent a reflection of the strongly patriarchal norms of Albanian society, even for more egalitarian regions such as the study villages in the south-east of the country. Women in rural areas who travel for work on their own are not well regarded (Vullnetari 2012b). Particularly in seasonal agricultural work, women's participation is further conditioned by the circumstances in which seasonal migrants live in rural Greece. Most live in barns or outdoor sheds and in old kitchens of their employers; they do not have separate spaces—they sleep and eat in the same room. Showers and toilets are also shared and, especially in the 1990s, many simply washed with cold water out in the courtyard. Petrit, a returnee aged 55, recalls those early years as a 'dog's life'. Others pointed out that such living conditions depended on the geographical location within Greece itself. Berti again:

> If you went to rural Veria, where they have always had day labourers [using the word *argatë*][12] they have gradually created some better conditions for *argatë* there. Separate rooms, bathrooms, and showers, etc. Whereas if you go to more remote areas it's more difficult. Imagine that there is absolutely nothing there, he [the farmer] puts you in a big hangar… you have just a blanket for cover and that's it…. To the point where you have to wash yourself with cold water outside… Living conditions in agriculture are very bad.

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[12] This is likely derived from the Greek *ergatis*, meaning worker or labourer. The Albanian word has a strong pejorative connotation of servitude and perhaps exploitation attached to it.

A further reason for the absence of women is that since most seasonal migrants come from rural areas of Albania, wives are needed back home in order to look after the household and other family members—sometimes younger grandchildren of migrant sons (and less often daughters)—and also to take care of the family's farm and livestock.

Men's dominance amongst seasonal migrants is also confirmed by two other sources. First, quantitative analyses of data from the 2005 Albanian Living Standards Measurements Survey (ALSM) show that men are by far in the majority as temporary international migrants (Azzarri and Carletto 2009). Secondly, primary quantitative research carried out in rural Greece also confirms that Albanian women are far less numerous in rural Greece, especially as agricultural workers (Iosifides et al. 2006; Labrianidis and Sykas 2009b).

In terms of age, most seasonal migrants are either single men in their early to mid-20s or married men in their 40s and 50s. However, as one of the migrants put it 'there are also men in their 60s who come to work' on such visas. In the first group—the young men—are generally from relatively poor families, or young men who are not keen to work in agriculture in their village, but at the same time cannot access opportunities for other employment or for other types of migration. Those comprising the group at the other end of the spectrum generally are household heads of poor families who work in agriculture. In their analysis of the 2005 ALSMS, Vadean and Piracha (2009, p. 8) find that circular—that is, mostly seasonal—migrants working in agriculture come from poor households. Similarly, Labrianidis and Sykas (2009b) researching Albanian and Bulgarian migrant workers in northern Greek agriculture confirm the more economically disadvantaged position of seasonal immigrant workers compared to other workers in agriculture; the gap in relation to those doing off-farm work was even greater. According to this study, seasonal migrants earned on average around € 4600 per year, or only 65 % of the wages of agricultural workers with longer staying permits, and almost three times less than more skilled workers in longer-term agricultural employment (ibid., pp. 804–805).

8.5 Back Home in the Albanian Village: Survival or Development?

As we saw earlier, work in agriculture is poorly paid and quite precarious. Despite being target migrants—that is, their main aim is to earn as much as possible and return home with the savings—many seasonal workers find it hard to bring back any substantial amount of money. Depending on the various factors discussed earlier, such as location, type, and availability of work, they are generally able to save € 230 to € 350 per month, or a total of € 1500 for their entire stay in Greece. Rarely does this amount exceed € 3000. Usually, migrants send € 150 to € 200 to Albania as soon as they have been paid their first wages. The most common channel for doing so is through family and friends, though sometimes, in case of emergency, a money transfer operator (MTO) such as Western Union or MoneyGram is used. The rest of

the money is brought back when migrants return home at the end of their working period.

Given that most of those on seasonal work visas come from the poorer ranks of Albanian society, the money earned in Greece is often used to cover the daily expenses of the family in Albania—such as food, some clothing, and electricity and water bills. I illustrate with a quote from Mira, the 39-year old wife of a seasonal migrant:

> He [her husband] brought home € 1,000 this year. What can you do first with that? It's difficult, because there are many things in the household to take care of. Our sons are growing up and the eldest wants trousers for 2,000 lek [€ 17],[13] a jacket for 3,000 lek [€ 25], wants trainers and shoes; then the house needs this and that. You go to Korçë and before you know it you have spent all that money without having bought anything big. Everything is so expensive now, and there is no money.

However, migration is not simply a survival instrument. For numerous households it also represents one aspect of a more complex risk-diversification and income-generating strategy, alongside (meagre) old-age pensions, wages from local day labouring, and especially farming. As such, some remittances are also invested in agriculture, as Pajtim, whom we met earlier, described:

> With that money [remittances] we planted an apple orchard, bought stuff, made repairs to the house, bought furniture…. We have 1,000 apple trees, 600 of which are producing fruit and the others are still saplings…. With the money I also pay for a tractor to spray them.

Although most farming is at subsistence level, some profitable farming activities have been on the increase, especially apple orchards. They are preferred for three main reasons. First, they provide an opportunity for higher household incomes; secondly, they require less intensive labour than other farming processes;[14] and thirdly, this activity is considered to be semi-skilled, so rural youths attach less stigma to it than the back-breaking work required for row crops.

Such agricultural undertakings have been sustained by financial and skills transfer from Greece to Albania. Seasonal migrants working in apple and peach orchards in rural Greece have acquired a number of skills—such as pruning, spraying, and watering techniques—related to this farming sector. They have introduced these in their villages of origin in Albania by developing and expanding their own apple orchards there. Pajtim continued his story:

> I have been working there [rural Veria] for 15 years now… I have learnt a lot about how to prune, how to tend the trees. Because there I work in orchards of apple, pear, peach trees…. When I come here [in the village] I do all these myself, I know how to do it now… I work here and there [in Greece]. I also bring all the pesticides from Greece with me when I come here to visit (interviewed in the village in Albania, August 2005).

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[13] The rate of exchange averaged 120 lek to the euro over the period during which this fieldwork took place.

[14] McCarthy et al. (2006), using data from the 2002 and 2003 ALSMS, similarly conclude that migration in rural Albania has affected land reallocation towards less labour-intensive production, although their findings suggest that most of this diversion is towards the livestock sector.

In a much larger and quantitatively significant study of Albanian migrant workers—including seasonal—in Greek agriculture, Labrianidis and Sykas (2009a, p. 408) found that almost all of them (97 % of respondents) had successfully applied experience gained from work in Greek agriculture to their own agricultural undertakings in Albania. The authors' main suggestion is that geographical proximity enables such migrants to work both on the Greek farms and on their own agricultural plots, and to combine the various farming processes to this effect.

Nonetheless, the nature of Albanian farming—as discussed at the beginning of this chapter—combined with global structural forces presents difficult challenges for the vast majority of farmers. Even when yields are high, it is not unusual for entire stocks to be left to rot in barns and warehouses, while cheaper imported produce floods local markets. Consequently, many households, especially young people, continue to aspire to leave rural areas. This is not unique to Albania. For instance, as mentioned earlier, a similar trend was evident amongst rural youths in Greece as part of the rural-urban exodus during the 1950s and 1960s (Kasimis 2008). It is also part of the ongoing post-communist rural to urban relocation, a large share of which is fuelled by international remittances (Vullnetari 2012a; see also Miluka et al. 2007). While the richest segments of village populations aim for the big cities—Tirana, Durrës, and Korçë—this is generally out of reach for seasonal migrant households, owing to the high capital investment required for such a move. Most of such investments would go towards buying a home where the family could live, whether it is an apartment in a block of flats or—more often—buying a plot of land and building a house. This is a common pattern for internal moves, particularly from southern Albania, since the move to an urban area is considered a permanent one (Vullnetari 2012a). Moreover, it is a sign of prosperity to own one's home as opposed to renting—which, in the Albanian psyche signifies poverty and can be acceptable only as a very short-term and temporary solution. Bukurije, 57, the mother of a migrant son who works seasonally in Greece, explained:

> To move to Tirana or Durrës you need at least 5 or 6 million lek [€ 50,000] to build a house or buy an apartment… Where can you find all that money? Of course then you have to emigrate, work abroad, and make such a move, if that is what you plan… I am talking about those who have been there [abroad] for years, because my son is working seasonally. He can't save that sort of money.

Under such circumstances, many similar households seem to find themselves trapped in a perpetual cycle of seasonal migration to Greece and survival in the village (Gërmenji and Swinnen 2005). In the words of Çimi, a 23-year-old seasonal migrant, such migration is 'a case of last resort. There is no other solution.'

8.6   Conclusion

This chapter sought to contribute to our understanding of one stream of post-communist Albanian migration: that of migrants working seasonally in agriculture in Greece. In spite of its small numerical size compared to the longer-term migrant

communities, this migration type deserves attention for several reasons. First, as has been demonstrated here, and as previous analyses confirm (e.g., Azzarri and Carletto 2009; Vadean and Piracha 2009), it concerns some of the lowest-paid migrant workers in Greece, many of whom come from poor segments of Albanian society. These groups are often—or at least ought to be—the focus of development policies and accorded a key place in migration-development debates. There are two aspects related to this debate: the contribution these migrants make to the economies of their areas of origin; and the expense at which this takes place, such as exploitation and lack of rights in host countries. The data presented in this chapter illustrate this duality quite well. Seasonal migrants work under deplorable conditions in order to save money which they remit or bring back home. In Albania, these remittances and savings are often only sufficient to sustain their families' most basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter: this is particularly the case for irregular seasonal migrants.

The second reason for examining seasonal migration is related to rural development and migration, brought together by both the overwhelming rural origin of these seasonal migrants and their employment in rural areas in Greece—usually in agriculture. As the financial benefits from such work are low, it is generally the least preferred form of 'regular' migration: a 'last resort' option rather than a choice. This is especially the case for those who seek ways out of agriculture and not just out of poverty. There is no legal transition from a seasonal work visa holder to a longer-term permit holder, which would allow migrants to negotiate better work and pay. Some households, however, do manage to deploy remittances to set up or to support existing agricultural undertakings in their own village of origin in Albania. Of particular importance here are the skills and knowledge that migrants gain while working in Greece and that they transfer to Albania: these relate to farm work and processes, although they are quite limited, since seasonal migrants in Greece perform manual and least-skilled tasks. When looking at development on the Greek side, such labour is absolutely crucial for the functioning of many rural areas there (Kasimis 2008).

This brings me to my third point: the recently increasing interest in seasonal labour migration amongst policymakers. The need for immigrant labour in agriculture is not a feature limited to the Greek economy but one that has become almost universal. Temporary migration has become the preferred tool to address developed countries' labour needs without giving away rights—as migrants are imagined and treated as a flexible and cheap labour force (Hahamovitch 2003). It is fitting that such migrants are also considered as 'tools' for fostering development of origin countries, as they bring back all their earnings and do not pose a threat in terms of a skills drain or brain drain.

Yet, this 'development tool' or the '*argat*', depending on which perspective one takes to describe the temporary migrant—origin or host country, respectively— seems to be the least heard. This chapter has sought to present a platform for the voices of these individuals to be considered, especially in policymaking. Their stories speak of human and social rights that states must protect and ensure. The most recent attempt to address the issue of seasonal labour migration at the EU level goes some way towards addressing this need (European Commission 2010). Yet,

as Triandafyllidou ([2010]) succinctly argues, the positive steps proposed need to go much further in their reach to protect such migrant workers and ensure that they, too, have opportunities to negotiate better work and pay and a dignified life.

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Julie Vullnetari Lecturer in Human Geography at the University of Southampton, Southampton, United Kingdom. This chapter was written while Julie was at the University of Sussex. She is interested in the themes of migration and development, and socialist societies. She has published widely in peer-reviewed journals such as *International Migration, Global Networks and Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Her latest book *Albania on the move: Links between internal and international migration* was published by Amsterdam University Press (2012).

Chapter 9
Transnational Mobility and the Renegotiation of Gender Identities: Albanian and Bulgarian Migrants in Greece

Riki Van Boeschoten

> Before, in Albania, it was a terrible shame for men to help their wives with the chores. Now that has changed. When I go out to work, my husband washes up all the dishes and even sweeps the floor. (Konstandina, born 1961, interviewed by Alexandra Siotou, 2 May 2006)[1]

> I tell my son to find a girl who has not been touched by anyone else. And we still think that the girls from Albania are more suitable to set up a family with. Albanian girls over here don't know how to cook, they prefer to order a pizza from the delivery. They go down to the beach for a coffee. We don't have money for that. And they want equal rights with men. For us, for our generation, that is not right. For our children it may be different. (Illir, born 1958, interviewed by Lambrini Styliou, 7 July 2005)

These two conflicting statements by Albanian migrants in Greece give a good sense of the reshuffling of gender relations going on within the Albanian migrant community. A man and a woman—both born more than 40 years ago in Albania and now living with their families in Greece—speak in quite different terms about their perceptions of the changes in gender relations in their households. While for Konstandina the sharing of the household chores between husband and wife is a positive development, Illir considers the influence of the host society on Albanian migrant families to be a threat to traditional notions of masculinity. In this chapter I use the life stories of 40 adult migrants of both sexes from Albania and Bulgaria to examine the dynamics of gender relations in the context of the migration process.

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[1] The interviews quoted in this chapter were collected between 2004 and 2007 in the Greek town of Volos. The research project, during which we recorded 60 life stories of migrants from Albania and Bulgaria, was entitled, 'Gendered Aspects of Migration from South-East Europe: Labour, Public Culture and Intercultural Communication' and was financed by the European Commission. For more information, see http://extras.ha.uth.gr/pythagoras1/en/index.asp. All names are pseudonyms and all interviewees have signed a release form by which they grant their interviews to the Laboratory of Social Anthropology of the University of Thessaly.

R. Van Boeschoten (✉)
Department I.A.K.A., University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece
e-mail: riboush@uth.gr

Specifically, I discuss two questions that our interview material presented. First, how can we explain the revelation via the interviews of a substantial degree of empowerment for migrant women (in different ways for Albanian and for Bulgarian women) alongside a disempowerment of men (both Albanian and Bulgarian), with obvious signs of a crisis of masculinity? This study seeks to understand this tendency of going against the widespread phenomenon of disempowerment of women in their post-socialist home countries, a trend often termed 'patriarchal backlash'. The second question concerns the striking differences between the discourses, attitudes, and social practices of Albanian and Bulgarian women. Can these differences be explained by the changing status of women in their home country or rather by their position in the Greek labour market? To address these questions the life stories give us important insights into the individually and socially constructed gendered subjectivities of migrant men and women, but they cannot give all the answers. They have to be set against the historical background of the development of gender relations in these two home countries over the last century and the specific migration regime in their host country.

9.1   Gender and Migration: Some Recent Theoretical Insights

The increased feminization of migration has been correctly characterized as one of the hallmarks of post-1990 transnational mobility (Castles and Miller 2009, p. 12). Although women were never absent from the migratory flows of the past (Morokvasic 1984), the sheer mass of women on the move, as well as their important role in gender-specific networks of labour migration, has made migrant women more visible and this, in turn, has redressed the gender imbalance of earlier studies (Kofman et al. 2000). Since the 1980s, this global phenomenon has produced an influential new body of work within migration studies, focusing on gender issues and, until the mid-1990s, it focused almost exclusively on female migrants. This work has shown, amongst other things, that women are not just following men in the migration process but are increasingly migrating on their own initiative and for their own reasons, which are often very different from those of their male counterparts. It has also shown that in many cases female migrants' income is not just 'pin money' to supplement the family's budget. Rather, women may take over the predominant male role of breadwinner. It has been suggested that women's employment abroad may contribute to their emancipation and social improvement, but it does not necessarily do so: it may just as easily lead to an increase of the burdens on migrant women or to greater social isolation (Morokvasic 1984). If this was true for the post-war migration flows of the1960s, when most migrant women were largely unskilled and came from rural areas, this ambivalent position is even more in evidence in contemporary migration. In the new globalized settings, migrant women are better educated and more urbanized than their earlier counterparts. They are often deskilled upon arrival in their host country and forced to work in the worst

paid and most precarious sectors of the labour market, usually in domestic work. They have thus become 'servants of globalization' (Parreñas 2001) and members of a new 'service caste' (Andall 2003).

These women-centred studies have gradually been supplanted by a new focus on gender as an analytical category permeating the whole migration process. This shift was inspired by the understandings brought to the fore by feminist scholarship: that gender does not concern women alone, but the dynamic and contextual relationships between men and women; that it is a power relationship connected to other axes of power beyond the private sphere of the family, such as class, race, and ethnicity; that it is a social construction influenced as much by subjective processes as by structural aspects of the relation between men and women (Donato et al. 2006; Kofman et al. 2000, pp. 21–43).

This concern has also given rise to a recent trend in migration studies of looking at migrant *men*, no longer as 'normal' gender-neutral subjects of migration, as in the 1970s, but as gendered subjects in their own right. This in turn has led to an emerging body of work on shifting masculinities among men involved in migration processes. Such research may focus, for example, on men left behind at home (Elmhirst 2007; Parreñas 2005), the effects of downward mobility on migrant men employed in low-paid jobs (Datta et al. 2009; Papailias 2003), on male marriage migrants (Charsley 2005), and on male return migrants (Osella and Osella 2000). These studies show that it would be wrong to think of migrant 'masculinity' as a single, homogeneous concept. The construction of male identities is influenced by a variety of factors, such as class, ethnicity, cultural context, and historical developments. Different, conflicting, and shifting masculinities can co-exist within the same migrant community or within the same country, and some authors have proposed a distinction between 'hegemonic' and 'subordinate' masculinities (Charsley 2005; Datta et al. 2009). Yet, beyond these variations, this work has also shown that when migrant men fail to achieve their preconceived ideals of manhood, this may lead to a crisis of masculinity, often compensated for by some form of performative hypermasculinity (Datta et al. 2009, p. 869; Elmhirst 2007, p. 229).

Another emerging trend in gender and migration studies is a focus on family-related migration. In the introduction to a special issue of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, Kofman (2004) notes that this topic is rather surprisingly understudied and has been treated as a subordinate and secondary form of migration, in spite of the fact that over the past two decades it has become the dominant mode of legal entry into the EU. She attributes this neglect to an over-emphasis in migration studies on the individual as an independent, mainly economic, subject (ibid., p. 243).[2] Kofman explores the implications of changing forms of family-led migration linked to specific phases in the life cycle (family reunification, marriage migration, and retirement or return migration), as well as the increasing restrictions imposed by nation states on this form of migration (ibid.). Here I take a different approach to the role of the family in the migration process. I am mainly interested

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[2] Greece is no exception to this rule, but see Baldwin-Edwards (2008, pp. 14–16) for data on family arrangements of immigrants based on the 2001 census.

in how shifting gender relations between migrant men and women are embedded in and influenced by kinship and family relations—both prior to migration and after arrival in the host country. The biographical approach adopted in this chapter, based on the life stories of migrants belonging to different age groups, clearly show how gender relations have changed over time and what biographical resources migrants take with them on their journey abroad.

9.2 Gender Relations in Albania and Bulgaria: Historical Perspectives

The hierarchical gender and power relations that developed historically within the kinship system of the Western and Central Balkans have been generally defined as 'patriarchy'. According to Kaser (2008, p. 33), pre-modern patriarchy can be understood as a 'complex of hierarchical values embedded in a social structural system defined by both gender and age.… It is based on patrilineality, patrilocality, a patriarchically oriented customary law and the formal subordination of women'. Inheritance rules excluded most women from the transfer of property, and women and children owed strict obedience to their husbands or fathers (ibid., p. 35). Within this system, family forms were characterized by the universality of marriage, young age at marriage for both sexes, high rates of fertility, the co-existence of extended and nuclear households, and a predominance of arranged marriages (ibid., pp. 56–84).

While this description offers an accurate account of the general pattern of gender and family relations in the region until the end of World War II, various factors contributed to a loosening of patriarchal bonds beginning in the twentieth century. The most important of these factors were the effects of the first demographic transition (leading to a drop in fertility and mortality rates), the increase of literacy, urbanization, and mass migration.

The most spectacular changes to patriarchal relations, however, occurred during the socialist period. Balkan communist parties were committed, at least initially, to breaking the impact of customary law, to legislating equality between men and women, and to establishing a new ideal type of family, based on love and partnership instead of hierarchical relations between the sexes. At the socio-economic level they aimed at the modernization of society through industrialization, increased literacy, and generalized access to education for both sexes. These policies led to the nuclearization and urbanization of families, increased education and employment of women, liberalization of divorce and abortion, the reversal of generational relations, and the decline of patrilineality as well as of the honour complex related to it (Kaser 2008, pp. 184–185). However, patriarchy was not abolished—far from it. It was transformed. Communist societies were portrayed as large patriarchal households, with the Communist Party ruling as a 'patriarch' over their dependent members. In the 1960s and 1970s this 'parent state' (Verdery 1996) began to develop pronatalist policies to ensure a labour reserve, to restrict its former liberal policies on abortion and divorce, and to stress once again the 'nurturing' responsibility of

women and their role as reproducers of the nation (Kaser 2008, p. 135; Verdery 1996, pp. 66–69). In the private sphere, in spite of the multiple interventions of the state in this domain, patriarchal relations persisted to a considerable extent, especially in rural areas.

After the end of communism, inequality between men and women increased once again and a general trend towards the 're-traditionalization' of gender relations was observed. Women were pushed out of the public sphere, both in employment and in politics (Kaser 2008, pp. 218–221). While under socialism they constituted a substantial proportion of the workforce, they were the first to be dismissed, and they suffered the most from restrictions of state welfare benefits (Kaser 2008, p. 192, 212).[3] When employed, they earned on average 30–50 % less than men (Chakarova 2003, p. 63; Kaser 2008, p. 217). Divorced women, widows, and pensioners were extremely vulnerable. Domestic violence increased as a result of widespread unemployment, poverty, and insecurity. Public attitudes towards domestic violence show considerable support for this practice. In 2008, 36 % of men and 30 % of women in Albania justified wife beating.[4] In Bulgaria, too, domestic violence has been a widespread phenomenon, although not openly acknowledged (Chakarova 2003, p. 73).

Although the retreat of women from the public sphere was at first the result of state policies and economic hardship, the return to more traditional female tasks in the home is increasingly accepted by both men and women as a legitimate choice. Public discourse extolled the virtues of motherhood and associated the communist experience negatively with the 'double burden' of wage labour and domestic chores and with a perceived loss of 'femininity' (Daskalova 2000; Petrova 1993, p. 24). Thus, the traditional role of the male breadwinner made a resolute come-back. While in 1991 only 20 % of Bulgarian women thought that women should stay at home and not work (Petrova 1993, p. 26), in 1999 this percentage had increased to 46 %. The figure for Albania was about the same (Kaser 2008, p. 215).

The impact of the post-socialist transformation, including mass migration, on family relations reveals contradictory tendencies, with marked differences between Bulgaria and Albania. As we shall see below, this differentiation stems partly from developments in the interwar period. Yet, in both countries, the available data do not confirm a return to the patriarchal system that prevailed before World War II; and there are obvious signs of change, as well as continuities with the past. In Albania, universal marriage remains largely unchallenged, but the age at first marriage is on the rise, especially for men (Republic of Albania 2010, pp. 88–93). The fertility rate long remained the highest in the region, but it recently dropped to a similar level as neighbouring countries.[5] Both trends are obviously related to the massive

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[3] In Albania and Bulgaria women made up about 50 % of the labour force in 1989 (Kaser 2008, pp. 146–147), but in 1999 54 % of the unemployed in Bulgaria were women (Chakarova 2003, p. 63; Daskalova 2000, pp. 339–342).

[4] Republic of Albania (2010), *Demographic and health survey, Albania, 2008–2009*, pp. 280–281. On domestic violence in Albania see also Kaser (2008, pp. 223–224).

[5] In the period 1990–1994 the total fertility rate was 2.7 children per woman, compared to 1.57 in Bulgaria and 1.29 in Greece (Kaser 2008, p. 107). In 2008 it had dropped to 1.6 (Republic of Albania 2010, p. 55).

wave of out-migration. There are no signs of a reconstitution of large extended households, except in some isolated areas in northern Albania. Most individuals, especially those in urban areas, live in nuclear families.[6] In general, marriage practices are conventional. The divorce rate in Albania, at only 1%, is the lowest in the region (Republic of Albania 2010, pp. 86–87). Cohabitation is rare and not well regarded, but it is on the rise among young middle-class urbanites (Kaser 2008, p. 265). Family life and marriage are held in high esteem (ibid., pp. 260–261), and single mothers are disapproved of (ibid., p. 249). For married couples, most decisions are taken by husband and wife together, but 6% of women declared they had no say at all in household decisions (Republic of Albania 2010, p. 276). In spite of this rather dismal image of the situation of Albanian women, the life stories of three generations of women recorded by a US researcher in 1994 (Pritchett-Post 1998) also reveal changes in gender relations since the end of World War II. This collection ranges from narratives of older village women who married very young under an arranged marriage to women who broke the rules of patriarchy and lived quite independent lives—among them, partisan women, an ethnologist who never married and travelled across Albania on her own to do research, and three sportswomen. One of the terms these women used to describe the strict rules of patriarchy constraining the lives of other women was 'fanaticism', a term we also encountered in our interviews in Volos. The story told by Efigjeni, born in 1934, and a leading member of a Tirana sports club, illustrates the potentially positive role of emigration in the loosening of patriarchal bonds:

> We have tried to be successful at a very difficult period of time, a time of fanaticism. When other girls our age were still wearing veils, we were wearing shorts! My father was emancipated in his views because he had spent ten years in America. All of the children in our family were involved in arts, music and sports. We pursued the passions of youth. (Pritchett-Post 1998, p. 84)

If Albania appears as the most conservative country of south-eastern Europe in gender matters, Bulgaria seems to represent the opposite pole. But Bulgaria too shows clear signs of a deepening crisis of the institution of the family. Some of the differences between these two countries have their roots in developments going back to the interwar period. In Bulgaria the restructuring of society through urbanization and industrialization started long before the socialist period (Kaser 2008, p. 121, 125, 126). At the end of World War II, women already constituted 36% of the industrial workforce. According to Todorova (1993, p. 32), women were quite well respected because of their active role in production, even if they were still dominated by men. Bulgaria also saw an early increase of literacy among Christian women, reaching 67% in 1921 (Kaser 2008, p. 92). The country also had an influential women's movement starting in the mid-nineteenth century (ibid., pp. 156–157). As the persistence of traditional gender patterns is stronger in rural areas—a trend largely confirmed by our interview material—the urban-rural divide is an important factor to take into account. During the period of socialist rule, industrialization in Bulgaria led to a mass exodus from the countryside towards the cities. In 1980, only 37.5% of the population continued to live in rural areas (Brunnbauer and Taylor 2004,

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[6] The average size is 3.8 persons per household (Republic of Albania 2010, p. 20).

p. 189). In Albania, the regime of Enver Hoxha kept rural-urban migration under strict control, aimed at keeping a large percentage of the work force in collectivized agricultural firms in the countryside (Fuga 2000, pp. 45–50). After the end of socialism, the level of urbanization increased significantly in that country. Yet, until today a striking difference remains between the two countries in this respect: according to World Bank data, in 2010, 72 % of Bulgarians lived in cities compared with 28 % in rural areas, whereas the figures for Albania were 48 % and 52 %, respectively.[7]

The differences between these two countries in gender and family matters, partly resulting from this demographic structure, is borne out by recent statistical indicators. According to data relevant for the period of our research, Bulgaria scored far better than the other countries discussed in this volume, except for Greece, on the UN Gender-Related Development Index.[8] Bulgaria also had, together with Greece, the lowest fertility rate in the region, at 1.3 in 2005 compared to 2.2 for Albania and Turkey and 1.6 for the Republic of Macedonia.[9] Finally, in 2004 Bulgaria had the highest percentage of women in parliament, at 22 % (Kaser 2008, p. 221). Although Bulgarians continue to attribute great importance to family life, they do so to a lesser extent than their Balkan neighbours (ibid., p. 261) and various indicators show that traditional family forms are experiencing a crisis. This is evident, for example, in high divorce rates (reaching 19 % in 2005), declining marriage rates, high rates of births outside wedlock,[10] and a rise in cohabitation (to 13–15 %, Kaser 2008, p. 277). Finally, the Bulgarian public shows more tolerance towards homosexuality, single mothers, and abortion (ibid., p. 228, 248, 249, 258, 259).

At first sight, the mainly statistical data presented in this section seem to support the view that the differences noted between Albanian and Bulgarian migrant women from our interview material can be fully explained by developments in their home country. It would, however, be wrong to consider the dynamics of gender relations in the country of origin and in the host country as two separate components. We cannot neglect the fact that most migrants form part of a transnational family network and that many of the trends observed in the home country may actually be the result of the massive waves of out-migration. As Datta et al. (2009) observe, gender identities travel, but they travel both ways. To get a clearer view of the itineraries of these journeys, I now turn to an analysis of the migrants' life stories.

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[7] See the World Bank database at http://data.worldbank.org.

[8] The score for 2005 was Greece 24, Bulgaria 50, Albania 61 Macedonia 64, and Turkey 79. The Gender-Related Development Index was introduced in 1995 in order to add a gendered dimension to the UN's yearly Human Development Index. It measures factors such as life expectancy at birth, training, GDP per inhabitant and literacy, broken down by gender. http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_20072008_GDI.pdf.

In 2010 the GDI was replaced by the Gender Inequality Index, which measures factors related to reproductive health, participation of women in the labour market, and empowerment (e.g. education, women in parliament). According to these most recent data, among the countries examined in this book, Macedonia ranks first with 23 points (mainly due to the high percentage of women in parliament), Greece second with 24, Bulgaria third (40), Albania fourth (41), and Turkey fifth (77). http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/gii/.

[9] http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=GenderStat&f=inID%3A14.

[10] Some 18.5 % in 1992 (Kaser 2008, p. 246), over 46 % in 2004 (Vassilev 2005, p. 17).

9.3   Gendered Journeys: Living Betwixt and Between

The life stories of migrants from Albania and Bulgaria which we analyse here represent very different migration patterns, rendering a comparative approach quite interesting. While both migration flows were the result of the collapse of communism, their timing, gender composition, and migration systems were very different. Migrants from Albania were initially almost exclusively young men who, right from the beginning of the 1990s, crossed the border illegally. This migration followed the patterns of the *pečalba* or *gurbet* system of temporary migration inherited from the nineteenth century (see Hristov, this volume), whereby groups of young men left their villages, leaving behind their wives and sisters to care for the household. This pattern changed radically after 1997 as a result of the internal upheaval in Albania after the collapse of a pyramid investment scheme (King and Mai 2008, p. 46), but also following the first regularization programme of migrants in Greece. Since then the percentage of women migrating from Albania has increased dramatically, and now most Albanian migrants live in families.[11] In Bulgaria, the collapse of communism did not immediately lead to mass emigration. As our life stories show, many Bulgarians tried first to survive the transition period at home, some of them by opening their own businesses. Moreover, the privatization of state-owned factories and the related rise of unemployment started later in Bulgaria than in Albania. Most of our Bulgarian informants arrived in Greece after 2000. The foremost difference, however, between the two groups concerns gender composition and household structures. While Albanian migration is primarily a family-based phenomenon, the great majority of Bulgarian migrants are adult or elderly women who work as live-ins in Greek households and have left their families behind. Many of them are divorced or estranged from their husbands. They use their wages to support their families and many have, in fact, become the head and breadwinner of a transnational household.

A number of trends can be distilled from our interviews of these migrants, as presented below. The analysis is organized by gender (male and female narratives) and country of origin; it focuses mainly on adults aged between 28 and 60 at the time of the interview. Each subset is preceded by a short description of the narrators' profile.

9.3.1   *Albanian Men: Wounded Masculinities*

We interviewed 13 Albanian men, born between 1954 and 1977. Most of them had crossed the border in 1990 or 1991, when they were in their 20s. Seven were already married, three through an arranged marriage, four for love. Four married later while

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[11] The proportion of Albanian migrants who are in a married relationship, with or without children, ranges from 61 % in rural areas to 77 % in major cities. Most households are composed of nuclear families, whereas the percentage of extended families ranges from 6 % in large cities to 20 % in rural areas (Baldwin-Edwards 2008, p. 16). Albanian migration to Italy shows a similar trend towards family-based settlement (King and Mai 2008, pp. 88–90).

in Greece, all of them with women they had brought from Albania. Two were still unmarried at the time of the interview. Four grew up in a large patriarchal household, but in Greece all but one were living in nuclear families or alone. All 13 were fairly well educated: eight had completed secondary education, two had some form of continued professional training and two had a university degree; only one had not finished high school. Most of these men were originally from rural backgrounds, but some had later moved to a city for studies. Eight of the thirteen had been employed in Albania prior to migrating, but three of them (a schoolteacher, a policeman, and a forester) were deskilled upon arrival. Five were still adolescents when they came to Greece and had no prior working experience. In Greece, the majority of these men were working in the construction sector, but two became self-employed and one, a physician from Tirana, eventually found employment at a local clinic.

In the narratives of these men we can observe the parallel existence of different and sometimes conflicting kinds of masculinities. A dominant type of narrative that emerges in most of the life stories is a defiant story of independence and male bravado, in which the male body and virility play a crucial role. Such accounts appear in stories about the adventurous journey on foot across the border—presented as a heroic tale of male bravery, defiance, and male companionship; a journey of discovery of a hitherto unknown world, full of promises; and an escape from the constraints of both the communist regime and parental authority. A former schoolteacher from northern Albania, described his decision to leave as a project to 'smash the border' and to 'root out the past' (Bouyar, born 1969, interviewed by Riki van Boeschoten, 30 May 2004). A similar rhetoric appears in stories about Albanian migrants' work experience in Greece, in which the narrators depict a strong male identity, based on bodily strength, endurance, and male working skills. Their work experience is presented as a personal success story of linear progress from apprenticeship to mastery. Work and male labour skills are used as symbolic capital, as a means of moral recognition, and an informal passport into Greek society.[12] While at first sight this triumphant discourse seems in conformity with traditional Albanian views on male dominance and independence, when seen in the context of the whole life story, it acquires a different meaning: a vindicating counterpoint to a sense of wounded masculinity, which also pervades many of the narratives (see also Papailias 2003).

Accounts about encounters with Greek men, in the workplace or on the street, reveal a different kind of masculinity, a subordinate masculinity, in which notions of class, gender, and ethnicity are intertwined. Living in illegality, as a person 'without a fatherland, without a name, without any rights at all',[13] being beaten up by police, being contemptuously called a 'dirty Albanian' by colleagues at work, or being refused payment by an employer are all moments of humiliation that are particularly offensive to Albanian men, who grew up in a society built around the notion of male honour. For younger men, being rejected by a Greek girl is perceived as another offence to their sense of male pride.

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[12] For similar narratives among male migrants to London, see Datta et al. (2009).

[13] Sokratis, born 1977, interviewed by Alexandra Siotou, 28 May 2006.

To compensate for this wounded masculinity, many Albanian men responded by reclaiming their own hypermasculinity or by presenting the self as part of a superior moral community based on traditional patriarchal values. For example, they portrayed their Greek colleagues on a construction site as lazy and feminine. Younger and less experienced Albanian workers adopted this same discourse, albeit with mild self-irony. Besí, a musician, commented on his failure to perform his manhood at work, by stressing his similarity to young Greek workers:

> I used to work like the Greeks, taking it easy. You know, have a cigarette. Have a coffee. Because I was only 23 and I had never worked in my life! I'd only played the accordion, never taken a spade in my hands. I had women's hands [he laughs]. And the other Albanian guys were laughing behind my back. I really had a rough time. (Besí, born 1977, interviewed by Pothiti Hantzaroula, 4 July 2005)

Illir criticized Greek men for their soft manners towards their own women folk and was appalled by the fact that Greek women had taken over control. He compared a Greek man lighting his wife's cigarette to a 'mouse' and commented, 'I didn't like the scene. If I caught my wife smoking, I would string her up! Look. *I* gave up smoking and I'm a *man*. How on earth could I let my wife smoke?' (Illir, born 1958, interviewed by Lambrini Styliou, 7 July 2005).

Another type of masculinity appears mainly in the narratives of married family men with children. In these narratives, Greek society is portrayed as a dangerous place of pleasures and sexual liberation. They stress the duty of the Albanian *pater familias* to protect his women folk from these dangers and thus reinforce traditional gender ideologies.

In spite of the fact that the life stories of Albanian migrants clearly show that gender relations changed significantly during the socialist period, especially in the cities and among youngsters who spent time away from their families for studies, the above examples reveal a strong trend of neo-traditionalism. A striking example of this is found in the marriage strategies of young Albanian men who came to Greece as adolescents. Although many had been involved in sexual relationships with Greek women and had gradually developed more liberal attitudes towards gender relationships, when they reached the age to start their own families, they often resorted to traditional practices such as arranged marriages and seeking a 'clean' virgin bride from Albania. In their own words, they were after 'a wife for the home', a condition for which few Greek women would qualify. Besí, whom we met before struggling with the notion of maleness shared by his Albanian colleagues at the workplace, and who had experimented with partnership relations with Greek women while working as a musician in Athens, resorted to more conservative attitudes when considering his own marriage:

> In Albania we used to say 'you can't keep a woman, she will let the devil out of the bottle'. But whatever you do, if she sets her mind on something, she will do it... For me the question of virginity is done and finished. It belongs to the past. We have been here for many years and we have adapted ourselves. Yet a woman should be foremost a good housewife. Because only a woman can keep the house. (Besi, born 1977, interviewed by Pothiti Hantzaroula, 4 July 2005)

Although younger migrants may adopt more liberal attitudes in matters of sexuality—in comparison with older family men, such as Illir (quoted at the beginning of this chapter), for whom virginity is still a crucial question—generally Albanian men insist on the 'good housewife' model and conceptualize gender relations in Greece as a threat to their sense of masculinity. As explained above, this should be seen more as a reaction to perceived humiliations and feelings of insecurity and exclusion in the host country than as an identity process imported from the home country.[14]

9.3.2 Bulgarian Men: Mixed Masculinities

Given the preponderance of women in the group of Bulgarian migrants settled in Volos, we were able to interview only five Bulgarian men, born between 1943 and 1975. All but one came from an urban environment. Four had finished a technical school, and one had a university degree. Three had been employed as craftsmen, one was a musician and one had been employed by an advertising firm. After the end of communism, they lost their jobs, but some tried unsuccessfully to set up their own business in Bulgaria. In Greece, two were deskilled: the advertising employee found work as a housekeeper and the musician as a construction worker. Two of the craftsmen (a marble-carver and a carpenter) found similar employment in Greece, while another man who had been a professional truck driver in Bulgaria became a warehouse keeper. Three had prior migration experience. One was a widower, three had been divorced in Bulgaria, and all had a new relationship with a Bulgarian woman (two were married to a second wife, three cohabited without being married).

The Bulgarian men did not dwell on their journey to Greece, although they all came illegally at first, after various failed attempts to cross the border. Most of them walked across the border between the Republic of Macedonia and Greece and then hired a cab to travel to Thessaloniki. Some, however, presented stories of male adventure, bravery, and companionship which were analogous to the heroic border-crossing tales of the Albanian men. These narratives concerned experiences of male labour migration to remote parts of the Soviet Union during the socialist era. Like their Albanian counterparts, Bulgarian adult men attached the utmost importance to their work experience, which they linked to their idea of masculinity.[15] Yet, in contrast to the Albanians, they drew their self-respect more from their craftsmanship and their sense of initiative than from bodily strength and endurance.

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[14] For a discussion of similar trends among male migrants in London, see Datta et al. (2009, p. 869). Another interesting parallel is Charsley's (2005) research on the frustrations of Pakistani 'unhappy husbands' who come to Britain to marry a Pakistani migrant woman. By living in their father-in-law's household they are obliged to conform to subordinate forms of masculinity, contrary to Pakistani ideals of manhood, a situation they see as a traumatizing and emasculating (ibid., p. 13).

[15] For the link between work and masculinity in socialist Bulgaria, see Koleva (2008).

This may be partially linked to the nature of their employment in Greece, but it is also related to the ways in which both groups have reconstructed their personal biographies in the present. For Bulgarian men their sense of self is located in their Bulgarian past, while for Albanian men migration often stems from a desire to wipe out the past and to rebuild their lives from scratch. In this sense, proving their worth on the construction site is a crucial component of their embodied and masculine sense of self.

The most interesting aspect of the Bulgarian men's life stories, however, concerns the crucial role of gender relations in their personal lives. These narratives confirm the deep changes brought about in the Bulgarian family during the socialist period. The oldest man, Gencho, who was brought up in a large patriarchal family near Plovdiv, explained that when his wife worked shifts at a factory, he assumed all the household chores and took care of the children,

> [I did] everything. I cooked the dinner, cleaned the house, looked after the baby. Everything. You can't… your wife is at work, the baby cries, you don't know what it wants, you need to give it some food. (Gencho, born 1943, interviewed by Raymond Alvanos, 4 March 2006)

Vasiliv, a truck driver, managed to overcome his wounded male pride after his wife emigrated to Greece leaving him for another man. He decided to look after their children alone:

> I am a man. Why should I go and look after the children? She left them behind to tie me down. But then I saw she wouldn't come back and I took the children home. And until today I am in charge of them. (Vasiliv, born 1962, interviewed by Lambrini Styliou, 8 June 2005)

As this example clearly shows, the narratives of Bulgarian men illustrate the links between migration and the crisis of the family in post-socialist Bulgaria. Although economic reasons were important in the decisions of all five men to migrate, emotional relationships that developed after failed marriages were equally crucial for three of them—a situation that is usually associated with women rather than men. Moreover, three of them adopted rather unconventional extramarital relationships after their migration. Yet, although they are clearly more liberal in their relations with women than their Albanian counterparts, they have adopted alternative practices more out of necessity than through a change in gender ideology. Overall, they do not question traditional gender roles, at least not verbally, and they develop ideas about manhood similar to those of Albanian men. Although these men have been marked by the loosening of patriarchal bonds in Bulgarian society over the past decades, they have failed to find a new role for themselves.

As we will see more clearly below, in Bulgaria out-migration has disempowered men in a different way than in the case of Albanians. Women experience greater opportunities to find employment abroad. This offers women the possibility to escape a relationship they find oppressive and to build a new life or to support their children independently from their (former) husbands. As a consequence, men feel they have lost control over a relationship in which they once had a dominant role.

9.3.3 Albanian Women: Escaping 'Fanaticism'

We interviewed 15 Albanian women born between 1924 and 1977.[16] The over-whelming majority (13 of the 15) had been married in Albania, usually in their early to mid-20s. Only five had married for love (one eloped with her future husband), the rest had an arranged marriage. One woman came to Greece to marry a migrant man through an arranged marriage, and only one was still unmarried at the time of the interview. Nearly all of the married women had lived with their parents-in-law prior to their migration, but in Greece all but one were living in nuclear families. Most women migrated to join their husbands in Greece, but two had migrated alone, leaving their husbands at home. One came to join her mother, who had also migrated alone. Only one woman divorced her husband after coming to Greece. The majority of these women (9 of the 15) grew up in a rural environment, but some had moved to a city before migrating. Their level of education is comparable to that of the men. The majority (10) had finished some form of secondary education; just two had only primary education and three had a university degree. Two of the women had no working experience before their migration. Three had been employed as a schoolteacher, three as an office employee, one as a ticket collector, two as a factory worker, and four in agriculture. In Greece nearly all of them found employment as domestic workers. Consequently, about half of the women in our sample were deskilled upon arrival in Greece.

In the life trajectories of these 15 women, the moment of migration appears to be a turning point: even though most of them had been educated and worked for cash in Albania, their personal lives had been embedded in a network of patriarchal relations in which they were supervised by their brothers, husbands, and mother-in-laws, as well as by the local community. The life stories of women born in the 1950s and 1960s are dominated by the conflicts generated in this setting between their own individual aspirations and the rules of the patriarchal extended family. The mass migration of young men undermined the formerly unquestioned power relations in extended households, especially the domination of young wives by their mothers-in-law. Many women experienced this as a liberation and were encouraged to follow their husbands abroad. Sofia constructed her earlier self as a rebel openly contesting the constraints of the patriarchal family:

> I put my foot down and didn't hold my tongue. I only spent two years with my mother-in-law, but to me it seemed they consumed 20 years of my life. Fortunately, the borders opened and we escaped. When I arrived in Greece, I felt I was reborn. (Sofia, born 1968, interviewed by Alexandra Siotou, 11 July 2005)

By contrast, when the patrilocal household is reconstituted in the host country, the 'migration project-as-liberation' might turn into a nightmare. Diana, who decided

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[16] Only two belonged to the pre-war generation, both of them members of the Greek minority of southern Albania. The almost total absence of this generation in the Albanian migrant population is a result of Greek immigration law which restricts family reunion to spouses and children, but excludes parents. These two grandmothers were much more conservative in their views on gender matters than younger women who reached adulthood during the socialist period.

to marry the first migrant man she could find to escape the control of her brothers, found herself once more ordered about by her mother-in-law and a jealous husband. For her, the only possible escape was to find employment outside the home (Diana, born 1976, interviewed by Lambrini Styliou, 1 April 2005).

Work (*puna*) is an all-important part of Albanian women's lives. Regardless of their degree of job satisfaction, work in Greece guarantees a certain extent of autonomy that they do not have at home. Especially women from a rural background, employment in another woman's home, in spite of the 'female' character of the work, is an empowering experience (Kofman et al. 2000, p. 123). For village women who used to work in the fields, work back home did not count as work, as it was considered to be part of their domestic chores. Domestic work is transformed into remunerated labour in Greece with fixed working hours and wages.[17] In their narratives, it is not working skills or pride that appear as core values, but money. It is *their* money which they can spend according to their own criteria and which allows them to free themselves from the moral standards of their village community, for example, by buying modern, 'feminine' clothes. In this sense, they considerably value the working experience.

In contrast, educated urban women who exercised a profession in Albania view their work in Greece as a downgrading and humiliating experience. They feel trapped in a closed labour market that does not offer them opportunities to practise their skills, owing to the ethnic division of labour. Their narratives convey a strong sense of insecurity, which is linked to the impossibility of their joining the Greek health insurance system independently and thereby obtaining an autonomous residence permit. Therefore, they remain legally dependent on their husbands. Yet even for these educated women, waged labour remains a major pathway to independence and to self-respect. Andrina, who studied economics in Albania and agreed to marry a Greek man through an arranged marriage (they met for the first time at the border), criticized her own decision to marry a man she did not love in order to settle down and become a housewife:

> I got fed up with being a housewife.… I said to myself, my life is not only to wash up the dishes, to cook the meal. I had other interests, about society. I got involved with educational programmes, with women's associations. But most of all I wanted to work, to be independent. And that is what I tell other women. Don't seek a 'convenient' marriage. Try to find a job first, to be independent and then you can decide to marry. (Andrina, born 1965, interviewed by Raymond Alvanos, 4 February 2006)

Consequently, migration deeply affected the gender awareness of both rural and urban women. It freed them from the control of the extended household, it guaranteed them a certain autonomy through their work, and it taught them different patterns of gender relations through encounters with another culture.

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[17] Indeed, research on domestic work carried out at the University of the Aegean found that the most important feature of Albanian domestic workers, in comparison with those from Greece and the Philippines, is that they seek to 'professionalize' their work (Papataxiarchis et al. 2009).

9.3.4   Bulgarian Women: 'Male Women' and Broken Families

We interviewed seven Bulgarian women born between 1946 and 1977. In contrast to the Albanian women, they all grew up in an urban environment. Their family situations were also very different from the Albanian women's, but quite similar to that of the Bulgarian men. In most cases, broken families were a major reason for migration. Only one woman lived in Greece with her husband and child, and one was still unmarried but migrated to join her mother who had divorced. The other five women had divorced or separated from their husbands before migrating. One of them came to Greece with her second husband, both of them leaving behind a first marriage and children, in order to live as a couple away from their parents who disapproved of the union. Another divorced woman married a Greek man in Greece, a decision she considers 'the worst mistake in my life'. One had a university degree, and the other six had finished secondary education or technical school. All of them had experienced an active professional life in Bulgaria but lost their jobs in the 1990s. One had worked as a schoolteacher, one as a nurse, three had been office employees and two had worked in industry. After their arrival in Greece, they found employment as live-ins caring for the elderly.

In contrast to most of the Albanian women, the narratives of Bulgarian women present us with a complete reversal of traditional patriarchal gender relations. In spite of the closed environment in which most of them work and live as migrants in Greece, their narratives reveal a strong, empowered identity. They present themselves as active heads of their transnational households, and they often speak in unmistakable denigratory terms about the husbands they left behind:

> I've got a husband I don't want to see. He is lazy. The only good thing about communism was that it broke the power of the husband and the father. He works and I work. I earn money and so does he. So he can't order me about. (Elena, born 1946, interviewed by Lambrini Styliou, 29 July 2005)

> My former husband was a strange person. Lazy! And he always wanted to show off his manliness. Many men are like that. You know, like the Greek song: 'I am a man and I'll have it my own way. ('*Eimai andras kai to kefi mou tha kano*.' Svetlana, interviewed by Alexandra Siotou, 28 May 2005)

Some women link their present dynamic character to early childhood. Olga, for example, claimed she was born a 'rebel child' always talking back: 'They had to tape down my mouth, because I talked so much' (Olga, born 1971, interviewed by Alexandra Siotou, 26–27 June 2005). In reality, however, the women's life stories revealed a gradual process of emancipation, punctured by various breaking points. Olga, the rebel child, had at first agreed to live with her husband and mother-in-law in a small apartment. Although she was still very young (she married at 17), she managed to convince her husband to go and live with her own parents. Once again, she rationalized this decision with the power of her tongue:

> We were like two cobras to each other. Two women with their tongues! We went through
> hell from morning to evening. Because I wasn't a chicken to say, 'Yes madam.' She said
> one, I said three, she said two, I said six!

Svetlana, who was kidnapped by her future husband, agreed to marry him to avoid bringing shame on her family. But after her divorce, she decided to take her fate into her own hands and instead of moving back to her parents' home, started a new life working in a mine: 'My parents insisted, but I wanted to be independent, to be in command. I wanted to show that I am a "male woman", that I can fend for myself.' For Svetlana, the road to emancipation passed through seeking employment in a male sector of the labour market, adopting a male identity and gaining recognition from her male colleagues. Her present-day affirmative self-presentation is constructed around the notion of pride she drew from this experience. In the mine, Svetlana was responsible for regulating the traffic of machinery up and down the shaft. 'I had to handle very big machines. The work was tiring, but I loved it, because I managed. I was proud of this job. Not everybody can do it.'[18]

As these stories show, Bulgarian women, in contrast to most of their Albanian counterparts, had already loosened the bonds of patriarchal gender relations prior to migration. The emancipation project of socialist Bulgaria was focused on opening up male sectors of the labour market to women. One of the possibly unintended consequences of this process was the adoption of a 'male' discourse by women. Our research, as well as other ethnographies of Bulgarian migrant women in Athens (Angelidou 2010; Kambouri and Lafazani 2009), reveal that such 'male' discourse also pervaded the narratives of Bulgarian women about their migration experience. Svetlana, in a powerful gendered metaphor describing the muscular power demanded from her in caring for an elderly woman, compared herself to Heracles. Olga presented us with a heroic and definitely 'masculine' account of her work as a waitress in a night bar, where she violently ousted a male client who had called her a 'Bulgarian whore' and made sexual advances, threatening her with a knife.

To some extent, we can see this strong male discourse as a compensation for the humiliation many of these women felt when they found themselves, after a fully independent professional life, once more in a situation of dependency. Svetlana, commenting on her first job in Greece, working in the fields, said she felt like a slave. Olga's life story is constructed as an assertive response to the daily denigratory comments about her country by her second Greek husband.

For other women, however, the 'male woman' symbolized the darker side of the emancipation process brought about during the communist period. Mira, a former nurse and the only woman in our sample who lived in Greece with her family, commented:

> We became like men. I don't know anything about electricity, but as none of the men has
> time to fix it, I'll have to do it. *Emancipacija* that came with communism has done much
> harm to women. (Mira, interviewed by Alexandra Siotou, 12 January 2005)

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[18] For a similar example of women taking pride in 'male' jobs in socialist Bulgaria, see Koleva (2008, p. 43).

In Mira's view, one of the pitfalls of '*emancipacija*' was a shifting of all the burdens of caring for the family, including as breadwinners, to women's shoulders. She bitterly concluded: 'That's why all the Bulgarian women are here!' Here, Mira's comments resonate with the criticism voiced by women in post-socialist Bulgaria about the 'loss of femininity' and the 'double burden' imposed on women during socialist rule (Daskalova 2000; Petrova 1993). Mira's views also explain why there is increasing support, as noted above, in Bulgarian public opinion for a return to the traditional role of the male breadwinner.

Another important insight we can gain from comparing the narratives of Bulgarian and Albanian migrant women concerns the migration process itself. Whereas the Albanian women in our sample who migrated alone form an exception and were faced with social outcry, our Bulgarian women migrated almost exclusively through female networks: they usually followed a female relative, in most cases their mother, or a female friend. These 'pioneers' were most often the first in their family to migrate. The explanations offered by our narrators for this 'women-only' migrant world give us deeper insights into the structural changes in family and gender relations in their country of origin. They stress, first of all, that in Bulgaria it is socially much more acceptable, in comparison with Albania, for a woman to migrate on her own and that this is their own independent decision rather than a family strategy. They also explain that most Bulgarian migrants are women because there is no work for Bulgarian men in Greece. There is some truth to this claim: because of the ethnic division of labour, Albanian men have taken up a dominant position in those sections of the labour market open to migrants.

But the social reality hidden underneath this argument is more complex. For most migrant women, migration is either a welcome solution to unsatisfactory marital relations or a necessity because of the vulnerability of single women in their home country. Our narrators explained that it is impossible for a single woman to survive on a meagre state pension, and that the rate of divorce has soared recently because of the increase of alcoholism and domestic violence after 1990. Some women also attributed their divorce to their husband's adultery or to the fact that they were too young (17 or 18) to choose an appropriate partner when they got married. Such reasoning offers new insights into the whole migration process from Bulgaria: the exceptionally high percentage of divorced women in our sample is not only linked to the high rate of divorce in their home country, but suggests that 'broken families' may be a primary motivation for migration. In other words, Bulgarian women in Greece do not seem to represent a cross-section of the Bulgarian female population, but have a specific social profile.

9.4   Addressing the Questions

Looking at migration through the lens of family relations rather than focusing on individuals has led us to an important conclusion. It appears that mass emigration from Albania, with more than one third of its population living abroad, has undermined

the social tissue of society, but the institution of the family has remained intact even though the structure of households has changed. In Bulgaria, however, migration was, to a great extent, the consequence of a severe crisis in traditional family relations. This crisis had already emerged during the last period of communist rule, and it escalated after 1990. With these findings in mind, we can now return to the questions raised at the beginning of this chapter.

The first question concerns the empowerment of migrant women and the disempowerment of migrant men. This seems puzzling, as in their home countries a postsocialist 'patriarchal backlash' has produced the opposite effect. To what extent can we attribute this change in gender relations to the migration process itself? Taking into account the ethnographic data presented above, this question must be answered differently for the Albanian and the Bulgarian cases.

For Albanian migrants, both men and women, migration played a crucial role in the reconfiguration of gender relations. According to our interview data, two factors were major contributors to the empowerment of Albanian women. The reconstitution of their households according to the nuclear family model disentangled women from the power relations of patriarchal extended families in which many had lived prior to migrating. The absence of the mother-in-law, partly owing to Greek immigration law, was experienced by many women as a blessing. Indeed, it often motivated them to migrate in the first place. The second factor was waged labour, which granted working women increased leverage over decisions taken in the household, as well as more individual autonomy. Since the onset of the economic crisis in 2010, which led to mass unemployment in the construction sector, the decisional power of women has further increased, as they are often their family's main breadwinner. We might also suggest a third factor leading to the empowerment of Albanian women, which, however, needs further investigation. While Albanian men usually work together with other Albanian men, Albanian women are exposed to a gender regime different from that in their home country, both through their work in Greek homes and through their children, who are socialized in the Greek education system. These three factors taken together have enabled Albanian women to renegotiate, to a certain extent, their relations with their husbands. Nonetheless, the reunification of Albanian families in the host country, along with the development of social networks based on region of origin, continue to exercise an substantial degree of social control and to constrain the empowerment of Albanian women.

For Albanian men, the new role of their womenfolk is perceived as a factor of disempowerment. In Albania, male honour was—and still seems to be—a crucial marker of male identity. Traditionally, male honour was linked to the role of men as providers and breadwinners and to their position as defender of their family's honour through control of their women's sexuality. This notion of male honour has been threatened in the host country by a variety of factors: unemployment, the sense of insecurity linked to the migration regime, daily humiliations by police and employers, negative stereotypes of migrant men in the media, the image of Greece as a country of sensual pleasure, and the men's inability to shield their women and children from these perceived dangers. As argued above, these experiences in the host country, as well as the increased autonomy of Albanian women, have produced a crisis of masculinity in migrant men, to which many have reacted with

different forms of hypermasculinity and a return to traditional gender practices and discourses.

In the case of Bulgarian migrants, the disempowerment of men and the empowerment of women are rooted in the past, especially the communist past, rather than being a consequence of the migration process. The migration of Bulgarian women was facilitated both by their earlier emancipation, which enabled them to migrate on their own, and by the Greek migratory regime with its specific demands for Bulgarian female labour. This does not mean, however, that migration has not had an impact on gender identities among Bulgarian migrants. Our narratives reveal that migration amplified the effects of a process that started earlier in the home country and which assumed larger dimensions under the impact of post-socialist transformation. We have suggested that the assertive self-representations of Bulgarian migrant women as 'male women' might be seen as a response to deskilling, the closed environment, and the new situation of dependency in which many of these women found themselves in the host country. For Bulgarian men, the perceived threats to their sense of manhood are less related to their own experiences as migrants in Greece, but stem more from feelings of insecurity in their relations with Bulgarian women and from their inability to assume a new self-respected role in a changed relationship.

The second question concerns the remarkable differences in the gendered subjectivities of the Albanian and Bulgarian migrant women in our sample. These differences can be partly understood by looking at the modalities of the migration process. While Albanian women usually followed their husbands, Bulgarian women migrated alone through mostly female networks. Albanian women live in families, and although they have gained a certain amount of autonomy through employment, they are still under the supervision of their migrant communities. Because of this social control, but also because of Greek immigration law, it is more difficult for them to gain full independence—for example, by seeking a divorce. Many of the Bulgarian migrants had left their family behind and were the head of a transnational household which included their married children but not their (former) husbands. They migrated due to economic necessity, but also out of desire to change their personal life or to support children.

However, this is only part of the explanation. New insights can be gained if we focus on migration as an interaction between the cultural capital that these female migrants have brought from their home countries and the new challenges they face in their host country. To do this, we should also take into account the historical developments that have influenced gender relations in their country of origin. As this chapter noted, the empowerment of Bulgarian women started much earlier, and the modernization project of the communist regime had a more profound impact on gender relations in Bulgaria than in Albania. Post-communist transformation in Bulgaria deepened the crisis of traditional family relations, whereas in Albania the family remained intact, even though it was affected by a number of structural changes (e.g., nuclearization of families, drop in fertility rates, and the rise of age at first marriage). A final important factor is the rural-urban divide. Although the level of education of Albanian and Bulgarian migrant women is comparable, most Albanian women were raised in a rural environment, while all Bulgarian women in our

sample grew up in cities. This social profile of migrant women reflects the overall situation in their countries: Albania is still predominantly a rural country, while in Bulgaria the majority of the population lives in cities.[19]

By way of conclusion, I would like to make a few remarks about the implications of the renegotiation of gender identities among Albanian and Bulgarian migrants during the process of their integration into Greek society. Although Albanian migrants have adjusted remarkably well to their new environment—as can be observed, for example, in their command of the Greek language and in the relative success of their children in the Greek education system—their social contacts remain mostly restricted to members of their own kin. One of the reasons invoked by Albanian migrants (mostly by men, but also by some women) to explain this 'embeddedness' has to do with gender: they want to protect their families from the extreme permissiveness, as they see it, of Greek gender relations. In the context of the present economic crisis, mass unemployment has confronted Albanian families with a painful dilemma: to leave or to stay? Once again, gender plays an important role in the choices made by individual migrants, and these decisions are different for men and for women. Men are more eager to return, and many have done so. They may hope to re-establish their self-respect by finding employment or setting up a business and thus to mend their 'wounded masculinity'. Albanian women do not want to go back for fear of returning to the 'fanaticism' that they have tried so hard to escape and because they do not want to be separated from their children for whom Albania is a foreign country.

Most Bulgarian women are also focused on their families—but in a different way—and they seldom seek integration into Greek society. With their remittances they try to build a better future for their children back home, and their social relations in Greece are mostly with other Bulgarian women. Although some Bulgarian women want to remain in Greece and construct a new personal life, most plan to return, but as independent women. Taking into account the improved economic conditions back home after Bulgaria's accession to the EU, this may appear to be an increasingly viable option.

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[19] Our research did not include Bulgarian women working in agriculture, most of whom come from a rural environment. Many of them are members of Pomak or Roma communities.

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Riki Van Boeschoten is Professor of Social Anthropology and Oral History at the University of Thessaly, Greece. Her research interests include memory, refugee studies, migration and ethnicity, civil war conflicts and post-socialism. She has directed a research programme on gender and migration from Albania and Bulgaria (http://extras.ha.uth.gr/pythagoras1/en/index.asp). Her most recent book, *Children of the Greek civil war: Refugees and the politics of memory*, co-authored with Loring Danforth, was published by Chicago University Press, 2011. Website: users.ha.uth.gr/boeschoten.

Chapter 10
Labour Migration and other Forms of Mobility Between Bulgaria and Greece: The Evolution of a Cross-Border Migration System

Panos Hatziprokopiou and Eugenia Markova

This chapter presents an overview of the Greek-Bulgarian migration system, focusing particularly on aspects of Bulgarian migration to Greece. Although largely empirical, the account is set within the broader transnational context of mobility between the two countries. This appears to be shaped primarily by geographical proximity and is dominated by labour migration from Bulgaria to Greece. However, it is also increasingly characterized by a constant 'back-and-forth' movement of people, as well as of goods, services, and money—in both directions. A turning-point in the evolution of this context has been Bulgaria's EU accession in 2007, which liberalized mobility—potentially diverting the course of population flows towards more advanced European countries—while also reconfiguring not only Bulgaria's but also Greece's borders and geographical position in both the Balkans and Europe. Indeed, for the first time Greece is now connected to the EU by land. Within this context, the chapter explores Bulgarian-Greek migration patterns and other cross-border movements and investigates the relevance of circular migration and its developmental potential. Thus, the Greek-Bulgarian case could be evaluated in the light of recent developments in academic and policy discourses on the benefits of circular migration.[1]

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[1] For an overview of the concept, experiences and policy implications of circular migration see, e.g., Bieckmann and Muskens (2007), Vertovec (2007), Fargues (2008), and Maroukis and Gemi (2010).

P. Hatziprokopiou (✉)
Department of Spatial Planning and Development,
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece
e-mail: panoshatziprokopiou@hotmail.com

E. Markova
The Faculty of Business and Law,
London Metropolitan University, London, United Kingdom
e-mail: E.Markova@londonmet.ac.uk

   The chapter draws on the authors' previous research on Bulgarian migrants in Greece,[2] revisited in the light of official statistics from various sources: the 2001 Greek census, residence permit data from the Greek Ministry of Interior, labour force surveys, marriage and birth registers, international trade and tourism data from the Greek Statistical Authority, Greek police statistics, and data on migration and travel from the Bulgarian Statistical Institute. Where appropriate, the analysis is further supported with 'grey material' such as press articles and Internet resources. It furthermore offers a perspective 'from the ground' derived from four in-depth interviews with Bulgarian informants in Athens conducted in the summer of 2011.[3] The chapter begins with an account of the evolution of migratory flows between Bulgaria and Greece since 1989. It then examines aspects of Bulgarian immigrants' social incorporation in Greece, with a focus on their position in the labour market. Finally, it explores other forms of mobility and types of flow, suggesting a shift from a unidirectional labour migration system towards a broader context of transnational mobility in the new Balkans.

10.1 Migration Dynamics Between Bulgaria and Greece

The collapse of Bulgaria's centrally planned system amidst the turmoil in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s expectedly produced outward population movements. The only movement that could be described as a mass exodus, however, was that of Turkophone Bulgarian Muslims, who left early on, heading mainly to Turkey (see İçduygu & Sert and Parla, both in this volume). There was also minor but steady emigration of highly skilled professionals towards Western Europe and North America which continued for most of the 1990s (Markova and Sarris 1997; Chompalov 2000) up to today (Glytsos 2010). Nonetheless, there is no consensus regarding the extent to which this constituted significant brain drain (Bagatelas and Kubicová 2003). At the same time, political instability and corruption, coupled with economic hardship, unemployment, and low pay drove many Bulgarians to seek employment abroad. According to data from the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute (Stanchev 2005, p. 15), the numbers of Bulgarians

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[2] The second author, Eugenia Markova conducted two quantitative studies (mainly) in Athens, one in 1996 based on a sample survey of 100 undocumented migrants and the second one in 1999 which questioned 153 recently legalized and undocumented Bulgarians (Markova 2001; Markova & Sarris 1997, 2002a, 2002b; Sarris and Markova 2001). She also conducted a qualitative study of Bulgarians on the island of Rhodes using a sample of 58 persons (Markova 2009). The first author, Panos Hatziprokopiou included a sample of 70 Bulgarian immigrants in his research in Thessaloniki in 2001 and 2002 (Hatziprokopiou 2004, 2006).

[3] The authors conducted four interviews with (i) a woman involved in the Bulgarian community who had worked in a Greek state programme offering information and legal support to migrants (SDz, 18 July 2011), (ii) the director of the largest supplementary Bulgarian school in Athens (D, 22 July 2011), (iii) an employee in a Bulgarian coach company (UI, 25 July 2011), and (iv) a Bulgarian entrepreneur owning three businesses in central Athens (BE, 26 July2011).

travelling abroad picked up in the early 1990s, then dropped considerably, increased in 1997, then declined again before increasing anew after 2000. Principal destinations were Turkey, Greece, Spain, Germany, Italy, and ultimately the UK, with the picture diversifying in the 2000s (Markova 2009, 2010; Markova and Black 2007). These movements have become even more pronounced since the country's EU accession in 2007, which initiated a broader scope of population mobility. At the same time, Bulgaria has started to become a country of transit as well as a receiving state for non-European migrants.

Greece emerged as a key destination for Bulgarian migrants from the very beginning. In contrast to Hoxha's isolated Albania, where the vast majority of Greece's immigrants come from (see, e.g., Vullnetari in this volume), the Iron Curtain was not entirely impenetrable in the Bulgarian case. Even before the 1990s, there was some degree of population mobility, concerning mostly Greek students in Bulgaria and partnerships resulting in mixed marriages, as well as professionals (scientists, artists and sportspeople) who had migrated to Greece before 1989 (Hatziprokopiou 2006, Chap. 4). At the same time, Greece was host to one of the largest communities of Bulgarian political refugees (Guentcheva et al. 2003), while Bulgaria had accepted about 7,000 refugees from Greece (SOPEMI 1993, p. 112) following the end of the Greek Civil War in 1949, of whom 4,500 remained in the country (see editors' introduction to this volume). Subsequently, the migration patterns between the two countries evolved in four stages (Nikolova 2010): (i) from 1989–1996 the dominant pattern was one of seasonal migrations[4] and undocumented border crossings; (ii) the period from 1997 to 2001 was marked by the severe political and economic crisis facing Bulgaria, but also by the first regularization programmes for immigrants in Greece; (iii) the period between 2001 and 2007, marked by the abolition of visa requirements for Bulgarians travelling in the Schengen area, as well as the maturation of immigrant communities in Greece; and (iv) the period from 2007 onwards, in which mobility patterns started to develop in the context of Bulgaria's EU accession.

Geographical proximity and relative ease of entry have largely conditioned Bulgarian migration to Greece since the beginning of the 1990s (Hatziprokopiou 2004, 2006; Angelidou 2008), perhaps more as a matter of necessity and convenience than as an ideal destination. In two International Organization for Migration (IOM) surveys, Greece featured in Bulgarians' intentions to work abroad temporarily rather than permanently, involving thereby the potential of circularity (Guentcheva et al. 2003, pp. 25–26). Greece was the second preferred destination in 1996 and the third in 2001, constituting 13 and 6.8 % respectively of the respondents' preferences regarding employment abroad 'for a couple of months' (following the USA and Germany). However, it does not appear in the eleven most favoured permanent destinations in the 1996 survey and is at only sixth place for just 2.4 % of the respondents in the 2001 survey. In the words of SDz, one of the female interviewees:

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[4] According to unofficial data from the Bulgarian Ministry of Interior, some 33,000 Bulgarian citizens migrated to Greece in 1990 as seasonal farm workers (Markova 2001, p. 11)

> Bulgarians chose Greece as a country to work in because it is the closest EU country….
> They think they can return more easily and quickly to their families.

However, the benefits of proximity could not be fully enjoyed during the early phase (until 1998) due to the restrictive legal framework that characterized Greek immigration policy, leaving thousands of people without any opportunity to legalize their status. The majority had either crossed the newly opened border illegally, or travelled on individual or group tourist visas—and, in some cases, business visas—which they subsequently overstayed. In a survey of Bulgarian migrants in Thessaloniki in 2001–2002, one quarter of the sample (mostly early arrivals) had crossed illegally, while another 43 % (mostly women) had arrived on a tourist visa (Hatziprokopiou 2006, pp. 98–100). Among the former, some were smuggled into Greece over the mountains, paying € 200–300 in 1997 (in German marks or US dollars).[5] As put by another interviewee:

> I had no papers; I came illegally, like everybody. There were no papers back then; all of us were without papers (BE).

Yet, mobility in this early stage was not entirely hindered, since migration projects were still quasi-experimental and followed largely temporary patterns of seasonal work in agriculture, tourism, and catering—especially from border regions to various places in northern Greece. It was the common experience of many, especially those who did have work back home, to come for a short period of employment initially and then go back again before taking the decision to settle in Greece for longer. A bilateral agreement on seasonal migration signed between the two countries in 1996[6] came to encompass these predominantly temporary early patterns, but was never put into general practice. More pronounced cyclical routes can be observed in the case of ethnic Greek Bulgarians (Sarakatsani) from various places on the southern slopes of the long mountainous line from Plovdiv to Sliven. Benefiting from a special legal status offering them temporary visas, they were able to combine cattle-breeding activities in Bulgaria with seasonal work in northern Greece (Hatziprokopiou 2006). Conversely, the predominantly female migration flows to Athens in the 1990s had a more permanent character, based on employment opportunities in child and elderly care in private households. In fact, independent female migration has been a chief characteristic of Bulgarian migration to Greece (see Van Boeschoten in this volume).

In general, the restrictive policy framework kept migrants in a limbo of life ambiguity and legal vulnerability, significantly restricting circular mobility. When economic uncertainty escalated with the 1997 crisis in Bulgaria, which led many factories to close, especially in the northern part of the country,[7] going back even

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[5] Some 27 % of the sample in Thessaloniki was comprised of Bulgarian nationals of ethnic Greek origin (Sarakatsani), and about 6 % had arrived after the liberalization of entry in April 2001 (Hatziprokopiou 2006).

[6] Law No 2407 of 4 June 1996 (*Greek Government Gazette* 103)

[7] The majority of early immigrants in Athens originated from large northern Bulgarian cities that were hit by the industrial decline of the 1990s; those arriving after 2000 came from a variety of

temporarily was not an option. Patterns of mobility became more fixed and unidirectional, from Bulgaria to Greece, even excluding in some cases the possibility of short visits back home for social or family reasons:

> When you don't have documents and you don't have the way open to go home you cannot return, these were very difficult years for Bulgarians. I remember cases when parents have died or there were ill persons in the family and we could not go back, because we would not be able to return here (SDz).

Other examples included mothers unable to travel back to see their children, who were very young or of school age and usually left behind in the care of grandparents or other close relatives until they completed a school cycle in Bulgaria or graduated. This reveals one of the most profound social effects of emigration, determined by restrictive immigration regimes—that is, changes in family composition and child outcomes in terms of health and education. The former occur when either one partner emigrates—which often leads to a break-up—or when both partners emigrate and the children are left behind. Transnational family arrangements take complex forms. For example, a Bulgarian man in Athens, involved in circular migration to Greece, reported having families in both countries:

> I have a home here and there; I have a wife in Bulgaria and two children; now, I have a partner and a child in Greece as well (Markova 2010, p. 16).

With the initiation of the first state regularization scheme in 1998, which launched a two-stage legalization process initially granting immigrants a temporary 'white card', entry and especially stay became more institutionalized towards the end of the decade. Problems of movement such as those described above went on even after regularization, mostly because of the bureaucracy of the Greek administration which produced extended delays in the issuing of residence permits, often becoming available shortly before they expired (or even after expiry). Overall though, the opportunity to reside legally in Greece signalled a major shift, stimulating feelings of security that gradually contributed towards longer-term migration projects, including family reunion and the migration of entire families with their children. For many, being legal acquired a symbolic form: 'I am not scared any more to talk in Bulgarian in public' (Monastiriotis and Markova 2009, pp. 50–51). In total, some 25,168 Bulgarian immigrants applied for regularization during the first stage of the 1998 scheme, making up a share of 6.8 % of the total number of applicants—the second most numerous nationality among migrants in Greece.

This remained so at the time of the 2001 census, which recorded some 35,104 Bulgarians—4.6 % of the total. The share of women among Bulgarian immigrants was one of the largest (over 60 %) among the principal nationalities, confirming the independent character of Bulgarian female migration. Moreover, in contrast to the 'typical' age composition of other immigrant groups in Greece (i.e., marked by overwhelming proportions of younger people), only about a quarter of Bulgarians recorded in the census were 20–29 years old, while another 37.3 % belonged

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places across Bulgaria, including Sofia and the South (Markova 2001, 2009; Hatziprokopiou 2006, pp. 90–91).

to the 30–44 age group, and nearly 23 % were 45–64 years of age. In addition, the geographical dispersion of Bulgarians' settlements were somehow different in comparison with the distribution of the migrant population as a whole. Although, as expected, higher shares are found in and around the two major urban centres, Bulgarian migrants living in Attica and Greater Athens were proportionally fewer, while significant shares had settled in Crete, Central and Western Greece, and nearly one fifth in the Peloponnese—partly reflecting the relatively large proportion working in agriculture at the time (see next section). Local concentrations are also interesting to note, since the relative weight of Bulgarians among the migrant population in those regions, as well as in north-eastern Greece, is comparably high.

As of April 2001, EU regulations in view of Bulgaria's forthcoming accession granted Bulgarian nationals the right to travel visa-free within the Schengen area. Although this may have stimulated outward mobility from Bulgaria, it does not seem to have substantially changed the lives of immigrants in Greece, partly because border authorities continued to apply strict controls on entry. Such was the experience of D, one of the interviewees, who was refused entry when she first migrated in 2002 'because they didn't let us in'. She was therefore forced to travel through Italy and then enter Greece by boat from Venice to Patras, as border controls on the Greek-Italian (Schengen) border were more relaxed. She then repeated the trip this way four times until 2007 in order to visit her son whom she had left with her parents in Silistra. Or, as another interviewee reported, the abolition of visa requirements 'certainly changed things', but:

> [F]or Bulgarian citizens it brought free movement only, but when you are a migrant you need to have a residence permit, so you still could not do anything without the permit. This was more helpful for Bulgarians who were in Bulgaria and needed to come here… for vacation or to visit someone (SDz).

This is confirmed by statistics on the actual number of Bulgarian nationals travelling to Greece at the time, which doubled from about 200,000 people in 2000 to more than 400,000 in 2001 (Stanchev 2005, p. 16). Despite the initial hesitation of Greek border officials to allow entry (in contradiction to the EU regulation, as suggested by the interviewee's experience above), these figures may include some cyclical and seasonal migratory movements, but it is near-impossible to assess their extent. After all, although movement as such was liberalized, residence in Greece remained restricted and penalized. Over the period 2000–2006, an annual average of 2,950 Bulgarians were apprehended and faced deportation (Maroukis 2008, p. 68, Table 18).

Far more significant in providing relative ease of movement, alongside legal security, was the possession of a residence permit, which became a possibility with the first regularization programme in 1998 and was extended in the 2000s with two subsequent schemes taking place in 2001 and 2005– following respective revisions in the immigration policy framework. Figure 10.1 suggests that Bulgarian nationals maintained their second place among immigrants in Greece, despite fluctuations in both absolute numbers and shares.[8] Their shares actually decreased: from 10 %

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[8] Data for 2004–2006 were kindly provided by Martin Baldwin-Edwards; 2007 data were obtained from the NGO Antigone (www.antigone.gr/stats/default.html, accessed February 2010); 2008 data
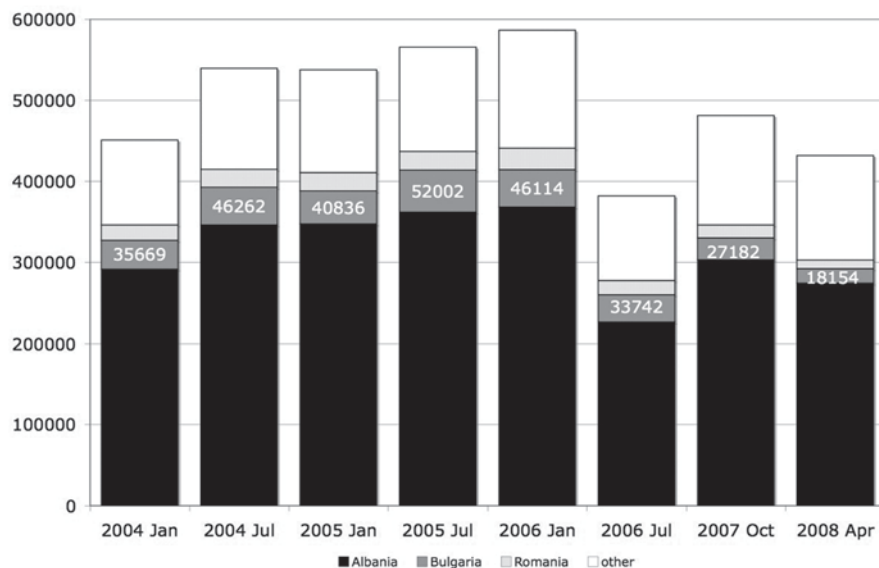
Fig. 10.1 Number of residence permits by country of citizenship, 2004–2008. (Source: Ministry of Interior, Residence Permit Statistics; various years)

in 2003, they comprised 8.4 of all permit holders in 2005 (on average), 5.6 % in 2007 and 4.2 % in 2008. Absolute numbers picked in July 2005, when over 52,000 Bulgarians had a permit to stay, and significantly decreased thereafter in the face of Bulgaria's EU accession.

Detailed data for October 2007 reveal interesting features: among the 27,182 Bulgarian permit holders, about half were older than 40 years of age and another 44.3 % were 18–40 years of age. Nearly two thirds had a permit for waged work (compared to 59 % of the total migrant stock), some 19 % had a permit given to spouses of EU citizens, and we assume that these concern mostly Bulgarians married to Greeks (nearly double the equivalent share among the total). A small but significant proportion (4.6 %) had a permit for seasonal employment, suggesting the importance of circularity in Bulgarian migratory patterns. The share of seasonal work permits among the total was just over 1 %, but nearly a quarter of them were issued to Bulgarian nationals. Seasonal migration was regulated by provisions of the 2001 Immigration Bill, according to which employers would state their labour needs by prefecture, basically concerning work in agriculture. Notably, the shares of seasonal residence permits seem to have decreased from about 12 % in 2003–2004, nearly half of which were issued to Bulgarians (Baldwin-Edwards and Apostolatou 2009, p. 251).

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are from Maroukis (2008, p. 5, Table 1). We did not have access to more recent data (after 2008), but even if we did these would involve complications as far as Bulgarians are concerned, since they are now EU citizens, with unrestricted mobility, stay and employment since 2009.

However, circular migratory patterns on a seasonal basis were reported by many migrants in a number of sectors. This did not necessarily involve a seasonal employment permit even when arrangements did take the formal route. Such an example was given by one of the interviewees, based on her family's experience:

> My brother, a school teacher [in Bulgaria], for many years has been working with his family at a camping site in Halkidiki… every summer… from June to August they worked here and then they would start the new academic year in Bulgaria (SDz).

Another female interviewee, working for a Bulgarian coach company operating in Greece, confirmed this constant 'back and forth' from the point of view of seasonal traffic in travel between the two countries:

> When people have their time off from work here and go on holiday, other people [who have jobs in Bulgaria] come here to replace them for the holiday period and then they go back again. So the 'traffic' increases during the summer months (UI).

Bulgaria's EU membership did not immediately end irregular migration. 'New Europeans' could move freely but had no legal right to live and work in Greece. What Fig. 10.1 may imply is that many may have decided not to apply for or renew their permits, waiting instead for Greece to withdraw restrictions on long-term residence and employment—which took place in 2009. In addition, a separate procedure for registering new EU citizens was set up: along with the 18,154 Bulgarians holding a residence permit in 2008, another 11,805 (22 % of the total) held the special EU citizens' permit. So actual numbers may have increased, and movements definitely increased, facilitated by the new EU context—despite the restrictions. A closer look at the overall migration trends in Bulgaria following accession reveals that net emigration escalated from about 1,400 people in 2007, to nearly 15,730 in 2009 and over 27,700 in 2010 (Table 10.1).

The decline over 2007–2008 may be indicative of an initial hesitation and period of adjustment—on the part of migrants themselves, but also by Greek officials and the bureaucracy of the Greek administration, border officials, and immigration services. Despite the initial problems, however, cross-border mobility is no longer restricted, nor are residence and work in Greece. As explained by the interviewees:

> After 2007, movement is without any problem; we constantly go and come back, there are people who come here to work for a few months. There is constant mobility (SDz).
> Since we joined the EU, how can I tell you, there are no borders… I have three lorries, they travel to Bulgaria every week. I don't think, for example, that before [2007] there were fewer Bulgarians here and now there are more; basically it's about ease in moving, in coming and going (BE).

Table 10.1 Migration flows to and from Bulgaria, 2007–2009. (Source: National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria, Population Statistics (Migration: Tables 5.7, 5.8))

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Inflows	1561	1236	3310	3518
Outflows	2958	2112	19,039	27,708
Net migration	−1397	−876	−15,729	−24,190

The new era of free movement and employment, however, has been obscured by Greece's unfolding economic crisis over recent years. The patterns of mobility may change anew, considering the emerging trends of migrants leaving Greece for their hometowns in Bulgaria, or even re-emigrating to more economically stable countries. As one female interviewee stated:

> Jobs are now fewer, and wages have dropped. For instance, the starting salary for a newcomer woman [in domestic service or care] used to be € 600, € 650, even € 700, now it may be € 400… but then again it depends on the market, where you are, the employers, etc…. But there are many Bulgarians who return, either return to Bulgaria or move to other countries… there are cases of families, usually young people, who choose other countries, usually northern countries with a better economy (SDz).

Still, however, the consistent job and income disparities between the two countries and the persisting demand for the cheap and flexible work that migrants in Greece perform in sectors and positions still unattractive to the indigenous population, do not suggest a reversal of the Bulgarian-Greek migration regime. Official statistics seem to confirm this picture, at least through the early years of the Greek crisis: preliminary data from the 2011 Census counted 75,915 Bulgarians in Greece; not only their number more than doubled since 2001, but also Bulgarians now formed 8.3 % of Greece's migrant population. According to the same interviewee:

> I think that the way things are going Bulgarians will continue to come here for work, even in smaller numbers, because wages in Bulgaria are the lowest among the 27 EU member states. Pensions are very low. So even with this really deep crisis now in Greece… Bulgarians stay in Greece…Immigrants, whether Bulgarians or [other] EU citizens or third country nationals continue to do the 'black' jobs, the difficult ones, because… Greeks many times avoid these jobs, they go for the public sector (SDz).

The current economic climate in Greece may 'push' some migrants back home. Nonetheless, the return is only temporary owing to the limited availability of jobs, and geographic proximity between the two countries facilitates circularity. Another interviewee told us that if someone were without work, he or she may go back for 5 or 6 months and then return again. There is thus the possibility of a proliferation of 'back-and-forth' movements. In the double conjuncture of an enlarged EU and Greece's economic crisis, cyclical migration patterns and the maintenance of livelihoods in *both* countries may become an attractive option to many immigrants. This may furthermore remain so as long as the structural conditions in the Greek labour market reserve a space for immigrant labour, even if this space shrinks in times of crisis. The next section reviews the employment patterns of Bulgarian immigrants, which have largely conditioned their economic and social integration in the past 2 decades.

10.2 Socio-Economic Incorporation of Bulgarian Immigrants in Greece

Migrant employment in Greece since the early 1990s has responded to an increased demand for cheap and flexible labour, partly functioning as a substitute for family workers in small businesses and households (Fakiolas 2003; Hatziprokopiou

2006; Cavounidis 2006). The demographic ageing of the indigenous population, the continued emptying of the Greek countryside, the growth of the middle classes, the increasing participation of women in the labour market, the link between higher educational attainments and better job prospects for younger generations, along with the size of the informal economy have provided for 'pull factors' for the employment of immigrant labour. Moreover, in a drive for competitiveness, small businesses have adopted cost-cutting strategies in labour-intensive activities via informal economic arrangements. The high seasonality of core economic sectors (e.g., agriculture, construction, and tourism), and the casual character of certain employment niches (e.g., domestic and care work) have favoured these developments.

The employment patterns of Bulgarian immigrants reflect this broader picture, though certain peculiarities may be noted. First, in general, immigrants' employment participation rates are higher than for Greeks, but this rate is even higher for the Bulgarians. Labour force survey data show this averages 84 % between 2005 and the first half of 2011. Secondly, Bulgarians' principal sectors of employment at the time of the 2001 census appeared to be agriculture and 'other services' (comprising nearly 63 %, compared to less than 40 % in total immigrant employment), while relatively fewer Bulgarians worked in manufacturing and construction (6.5 and 11 %, respectively, compared to about half among all immigrant workers). For women, services such as cleaning, care, and domestic work are important. Nearly half of Bulgarian women were employed in such jobs. Lastly, among Bulgarian immigrants, slightly larger than average shares were employed as skilled or unskilled manual workers (70.3 %), unqualified service employees (11.4 %, 16.7 % among women), and skilled farmers (9.5 %).

The authors' past research suggests that these patterns reflect the structures of local labour markets. For example, employment in agriculture is absent in studies of Bulgarian undocumented and legalized migrants in Athens and Rhodes (Markova 2001, 2009), and features only as past experience in studies of Bulgarian immigrants in Thessaloniki (Hatziprokopiou 2006), while employment in hotels and restaurants is far more significant in Rhodes (Markova 2009). The impact of time has been important, and in this respect the acquisition of legal status has proven to be a decisive factor. Conditions seem to have improved over time, including the migrants' capacity to negotiate their position and pay, or to find more stable and better-paid jobs—not just as a result of acquiring legal status, but also through knowledge of the country's language, familiarity with the local labour market, and embeddedness in wider social networks.

Recent data confirm shifts in Bulgarian migrants' work. Examining how the situation has changed since the 2001 census, we looked at labour force survey data for 2006 and 2011 (Table 10.2). First, employment in agriculture shrunk from about one third in 2001 to less than 16 % in 2006 and to nearly 13 % in 2011. Secondly, immigrant employment in construction work had increased in 2006 compared to 2001, reflecting both an increased participation of male Bulgarian workers and the intense construction activity in Greece during the first half of the decade (which included the Olympic Games preparations). However, employment in this sector had dropped to just over 7 % by 2011 as a direct outcome of the market's freezing

Table 10.2 Bulgarian immigrants' employment by sector (percentage share), 2006 and 2011. (Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority, Labour Force Surveys 2006, 2011 (second trimester))

	2006		2011	
	All immigrants	Bulgarians	All immigrants	Bulgarians
Agriculture	7.0	15.8	9.8	12.9
Mining	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.0
Manufacturing	14.1	4.7	11.2	5.1
Energy & Water	0.2	0	0.5	0
Construction	30.4	15.6	20.8	7.1
Trade & Repair	8.6	3.5	13.3	4.7
Hotels & Catering	10.5	9.2	12.4	15.4
Transport, storage & communications	2.2	1.7	3.2	1.9
Finance, real estate, business services	3.7	4.8	5.7	6.7
Public admin, education, health & welfare	3.9	2.7	4.1	6.0
Other services	1.9	1.1	2.3	5.3
Services to households	17.2	40.5	16.7	34.9

due to the crisis. These proportionate losses indicate a shift from such 'typical' sectors of immigrant employment in Greece towards a wide range of service activities. Employment in household services in particular jumped from 30 % in 2001 to more than 40 % in 2006, but dropped again to 35 % in 2011, possibly also with the advent of the crisis, as lower middle class households face difficulties in maintaining a regular domestic worker or carer. Employment in the hotel and restaurant sector, which was already quite important for women in 2001, reached 15.4 % in 2011. Employment in other tertiary activities, including business services, education, and welfare was also on the rise (Table 10.2).

There may be a difference between the educational attainments of migrants settling in large urban centres and those located in smaller cities and less urban areas, as Bulgarian migrants in Rhodes appear to have a lower educational level than those in Athens and Thessaloniki (Markova 2009). More recent data from labour force surveys (Table 10.3) show that although fewer Bulgarians have a tertiary education

Table 10.3 Bulgarian immigrants' education profile, percentage share (average 2005–2009). (Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority, Labour Force Surveys 2005–2009 (by trimester))

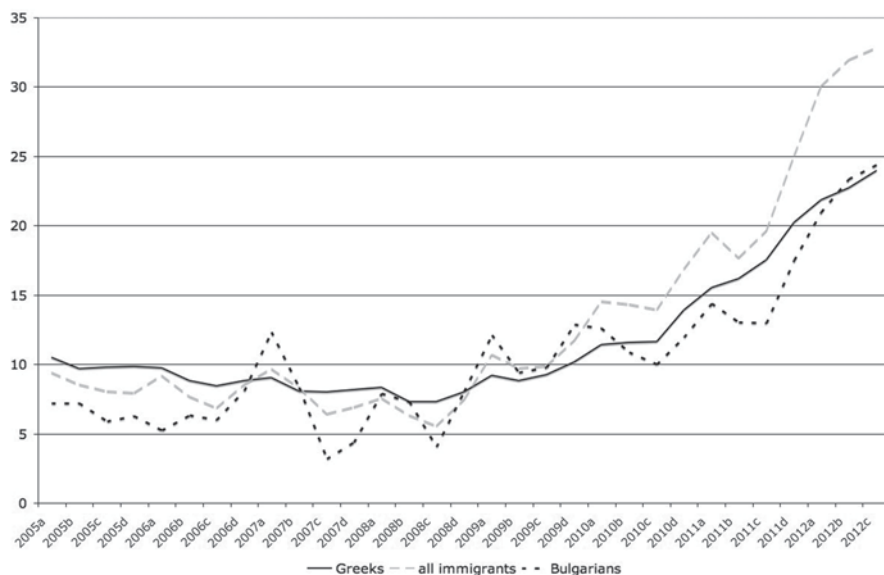| Education level	Greek nationals	Foreign nationals	Bulgarian nationals
Tertiary	23.3	17.0	14.2
Secondary	40.9	60.3	68.6
Primary	33.2	22.0	16.4
No schooling	2.6	0.8	0.8

Fig. 10.2 Bulgarian immigrants' unemployment rates, 2005–2012. (Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority, Labour Force Surveys 2005–2012 (by quarter))

compared to Greeks and other foreign nationals, the shares of those without a secondary education are significantly lower. This indicates a relatively good educational level, overall, among the Bulgarian migrants. We can thus speak of deskilling in the process of immigrants' labour market integration, especially at the early stages. Contributing factors to the mismatch between migrants' skills and the work they perform are the problematic transferability of skills and qualifications as well as migrants' limited knowledge of the Greek language. But the chief factor is the structural mechanisms of the Greek labour market.

Unemployment had been uncommon among migrants in Greece until the unfolding of the crisis, with the exception of short periods of moving between jobs. Figure 10.2 shows unemployment rates during 2005–2012. In 2009 immigrants' overall unemployment surpassed that of Greeks for the first time; subsequently, it escalated to nearly 33 % in the second half of 2012. Unemployment among native Greeks rose sharply at the same time. This trend reveals a darker picture for the near future, implying a reversal in the relative improvement of immigrants' labour market position so far. Among Bulgarian immigrants, unemployment rates have been lower that the average among all migrants and among Greeks. The peaks in the winter months are likely largely attributable to the seasonal character of their work.

The trends in immigrants' pay offer further testimony to a relative improvement of conditions over time. But they also reflect a seasonality of employment and some effect of the crisis. Figure 10.3 consists of data provided by IKA, Greece's major insurance fund.[9] At the end of 2003 the daily wage was € 20, but by June 2010 this had

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[9] Detailed monthly IKA statistics are available online (www.ika.gr, see «Monthly Employment Statistics») and since 2003 include insured foreign nationals. Official data on earnings obviously
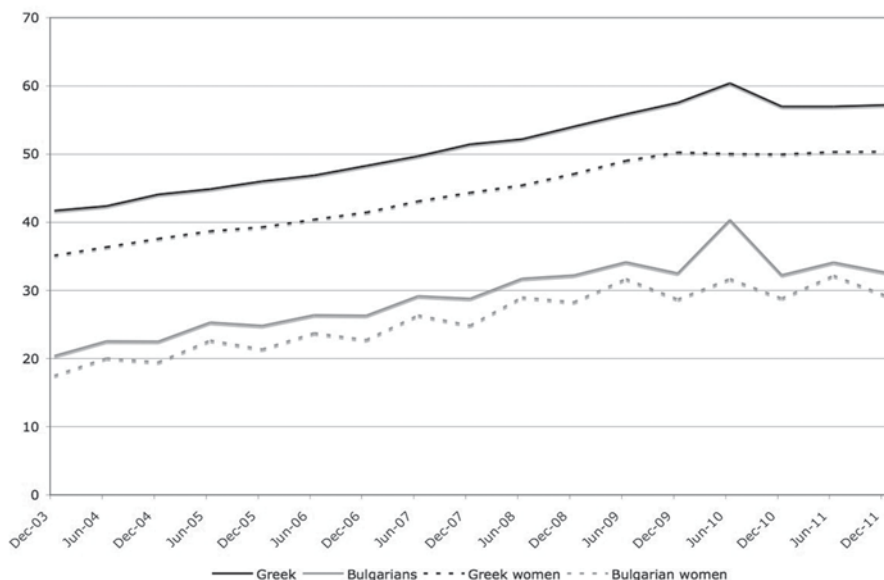
Fig. 10.3 Bulgarian immigrants' daily wages, 2003–2011. (Source: IKA Monthly Statistical Bulletins, December 2003– December 2011, www.ika.gr (accessed 29 January 2013))

doubled. Work experience in both Bulgaria and Greece was found to have a greater—though still weak—effect on earnings, compared to legal status or the migrants' educational level (Markova and Sarris 2002a), as well as the duration of residence in Greece and work in a specific sector or for the same employer (Hatziprokopiou 2006). Any assessment of growth in wages over the last 10 years, however, must also consider the rise of average prices in Greece since the introduction of the euro. With inflation considered earnings were shrinking: Greek citizens' average daily wages dropped from 2010, but for Bulgarians the reduction was about € 10 a day.

Figure 10.3 also shows the persistent gap between Bulgarian migrants' wages and those of Greeks. Despite their steady increase, Bulgarians' daily wages, even at their peak (June 2010), still remained lower than those of Greeks—the difference being € 20. Moreover, there was a marked gender gap, once again with significant differences observed between the earnings of migrant and Greek women. Interestingly, the data show no change owing to Bulgaria's EU accession and the subsequent change in the status of migrants in Greece. On the contrary, Bulgarians appear to be among the least well-paid groups of migrants, though this is mostly due to the large proportion of women, who are among the lowest earners in Greece. At the end of 2010, native IKA-insured Greeks earned on average € 57 a day; Albanian migrants earned € 38.50, Romanians € 37.70, and Pakistanis € 37.50, while Bulgarians earned € 32.25. Bulgarian women were earning less than € 28.85 per day, compared to € 49.90 for Greek and € 34.70 for Albanian women.

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concern only people who are insured with the fund, but in our calculations we have not included construction workers.

An unknown proportion of immigrant workers remained uninsured. Detailed monthly IKA statistics over the period 2004–2010 reveal major fluctuations—reflecting the seasonality of migrants' employment, as many of those insured during winter might pick agricultural produce in the summer months. No change is recorded with Bulgaria's EU accession or the Greek debt crisis. In November 2008, the share of immigrants in informal work was estimated to be about half of the total.[10] At that time, some 16,666 Bulgarians were insured (about 5 % of the total); the vast majority (76.1 %) were registered with IKA. If we are to expect that this proportion is representative, we might add the remaining 23.9 % to the IKA figures in order to estimate the total numbers registered with insurance funds. Throughout 2004–2011, the average number of Bulgarians insured on a monthly basis is then 15,174, which points to an estimated monthly average of 18,795 insured Bulgarian workers in Greece. Taking into account the presence of at least about 30,000 legally resident Bulgarians in the country, this suggests that a high share of Bulgarian migrants remain uninsured.

Considering that the informal economy was a major 'pull factor' throughout the 1990s, most migrants were in unregistered employment and lacked social insurance. Our own research suggests a positive effect of regularization. In a 1996 survey of Bulgarian migrants in Athens, almost the entire sample was undocumented and informally employed; though this was definitely not the case among immigrants surveyed in 1999 (Markova 2001). Among the 2001–2002 sample of Bulgarians in Thessaloniki, about one third were employed informally (Hatziprokopiou 2006, pp. 145–146) though many more reported working irregularly in the past. However, informal or semi-formal employment was also correlated with sector of employment and type of work—for example, nearly half of the women in care and domestic service were uninsured. By 2008, on the island of Rhodes, there was still a stark inconsistency between the migrants' legal status and their employment conditions (Markova 2009; Monastiriotis and Markova 2009). Documented immigrants reported no social insurance coverage; others—desperate to make up for employers not paying social insurance contributions that were compulsory for the renewal of work permits—were either paying the employer's share themselves or were contributing unlawfully to a social fund unrelated to their actual sector of employment. Even some 10 years after legalization, they still did not have equal rights with locals and reported no significant changes in their working conditions after legalization. According to one 32-year-old woman interviewed on the island of Rhodes, 'Employers don't care if you have the right papers; they would always try to save money by paying you less' (Monastiriotis and Markova 2009).

Clearly, there has been a trend towards registered employment and social insurance over time, especially in comparison to the 1990s. Nevertheless, despite improvements with the introduction of regularization programmes, there appears to be a policy paradox regarding legal status and immigrants' employment in Greece. While social insurance was a prerequisite for acquiring legal status, the possession

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[10] *Kathimeriní* newspaper, 29 November 2008, 'How many migrants can we have?' by M. Delithanasi, p. 18.

of legal status was at the same time a condition for registered employment and therefore also for insurance (as, in principle, the employment of undocumented migrants was prohibited). Given the structure of demand for migrant labour and the size of the informal economy in Greece, neither the acquisition of legal status nor—more recently—Bulgaria's EU membership appear to have decisively reduced informal employment. With the lack of formal opportunities, migrants developed strategies to cope with being uninsured. One practice—not uncommon among other groups of migrants or native Greeks—was to register with OGA, the insurance fund for agricultural workers. This had less costly contributions, even if workers were not in the agricultural sector. Another strategy, common among domestic workers, was to pay from their own pocket a reduced rate for 'partial' insurance with IKA. It is still uncertain how recent reforms of the Greek national insurance and pension systems will affect the situation of migrant workers in the country.

Employment conditions have mobilized local activists, organizations, and trade unions, including some immigrant workers, in support of migrants' rights. Women in particular have struggled to combine an often harsh working life with mother-hood, while they are also vulnerable to sexual harassment from male colleagues and employers. Indicative of the degree of immigrants' exploitation in the Greek labour market is a case that gained wide publicity: the tragic story of a Bulgarian female migrant Konstantina Kuneva (Kambouri and Zavos 2010). A single mother, then 45-years-old, Kuneva worked as a cleaner. She was brutally attacked with sulphuric acid on her way home on 22 December 2008. After months in hospital she recovered, yet suffering partial loss of sight and permanent damage to internal organs. Although the perpetrators remain unknown, they are alleged to have been commissioned by her employers—the cleaning company, OIKOMET—following a history of pressure and threats because of Kuneva's union activism. Her case shocked the public and brought the issues of exploitation of immigrants and employers' brutal treatment of immigrant workers to the forefront of public discourse—becoming the epicentre of struggles for migrants' rights, with campaigns and protests organized in her support. Investigations to bring the perpetrators to justice, however, were remarkably slow and no legal action had been taken, to date.

Kuneva's case may be revealing of the degree of exploitation of migrants in the Greek labour market; yet it also remains exceptional, since union participation among migrants was almost non-existent throughout the 1990s and remains limited (Hatziprokopiou 2006), especially outside the main cities. In an interview, the president of the Rhodes Labour Centre highlighted some additional difficulties in organizing migrant workers in the particular case of small, self-contained economies:

> The market is small, the community is small. If you report an employer for unfair treatment, you won't find any other job; the word will spread. Everybody knows everybody. People are scared. Migrants are even more scared. It's better in Athens for organizing (Monastiriotis and Markova 2009, p. 57).

Collective representation has taken other forms instead, focusing on the building of migrant communities—especially after the first regularization in 1998. It was in that year that the first Bulgarian migrant association *Vassil Levski* was established

in Athens, with trade union support and hosted by the Athens Labour Centre. Since then, other community organizations have appeared in the capital and across the country (Markova 2001; Hatziprokopiou 2006, pp. 214, 218–219). Indicative of the gradual building of community life are several Bulgarian-language newspapers published in Athens, the first one (*Svetlina*) starting in 1998. There were at the time of this writing at least three weeklies: *Atinski Vesti, Bulgarski Vesti,* and *Kontakti.* There were bimonthly newspapers as well: *Planeta, Bulgaria Simera,* and *Foni tis Bulgarias*.[11] At the same time, private spaces such as cafes and bars in Athens and Thessaloniki, owned or frequented by Bulgarians, became meeting places and local centres of community life (Hatziprokopiou 2006, p. 218; Angelidou 2008). Despite the mushrooming of community organizations and activities, however, individual migrants' active participation may have been decreasing in recent years, as a female interviewee (herself a member of an association) suggested:

> Before we were more 'concentrated', we'd gather both with the community, at a cultural level, as well as at a social level, among families. But now it's like everyone is closed to himself, probably because of the crisis.

Two of the longest-established organizations were initially founded by mixed couples (Greeks married to Bulgarians) and attract mainly professionals: the Association of Greco-Bulgarian Friendship (Cyril and Methodius)[12] in Thessaloniki and the Greek-Bulgarian Association of Mutual Aid and Friendship in Athens. These are perhaps testimony to the trend of inter-ethnic marriages between Bulgarians and Greeks, even before 1989. Official statistics confirm that inter-ethnic partnerships and parenthood constitute a sizeable proportion of families formed by Bulgarians in Greece.[13] Among a total of 2,453 marriages of Bulgarian women that took place in Greece during 2004–2009, the vast majority (about 80 %) were with Greek nationals. During the same period, 475 marriages took place in Greece involving Bulgarian men, 20 % of whom married women of Greek nationality. Moreover, 30 % of the 2,075 children born to Bulgarian mothers in 2005 and 2006 had Greek fathers. Naturally, family formation in Greece has been developing over the past 20 years or so, and there is already a generation of children born and growing up in the country.

Children appear to be very affected by the emigration of their parents. A study by Guentcheva et al. (2003) reveals high dropout rates from school among children whose migrant parents left them behind in the care of grandparents or other relatives. Such pupils enjoy the freedom of having more money and less parental control than children whose parents did not migrate. Yet many are inclined to start smoking and drinking, eventually quitting school. In the past few years, the Bulgarian press

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[11] See *Eleftherotypía* newspaper of 21 February 2008 and the website of the Greek Migrants' Forum (www.migrant.gr).

[12] Saints Cyril and Methodius were Christian missionaries among the Slavic people of the First Bulgarian Empire, Great Moravia, and Pannonia, in the ninth century. They are credited with devising the Glagolic alphabet, used to transcribe Old Church Slavonic.

[13] Data on marriages by nationality of partners, obtained from the Hellenic Statistical Authority, have been kindly provided by Ms D. Papadopoulou (PhD candidate, Middlesex University, UK; elaboration by the authors).

has described these children as having 'Skype parents'. Research on the island of Rhodes reveals that of the nine interviewees who arrived in Greece as minors, only four had completed their education. The rest had primary education only, obtained in Bulgaria. In the meantime, however, most children who followed their parents as dependants, or were born in Greece, have integrated into the Greek school system. Despite immigration restrictions, their acceptance in schools was unconditional of their parents' legal status, even since the 1990s. During the school year 2002–2003, there were 2,873 Bulgarian-born pupils studying in Greek state schools, constituting some 3 % of the total foreign-born pupil population (Baldwin-Edwards 2004a).

In September 2001, the Bulgarian migrant Association *Vassil Levski* established the first Sunday school for Bulgarian migrant children, teaching in both the Bulgarian and Greek languages. One of its successors managed to get recognition from the Bulgarian Educational System and support from the Bulgarian Embassy in Athens, and increased the number of teachers from two to nine and the range of subjects taught (now including Bulgarian history and geography, as well as folk dancing). This school saw its number of pupils grow from six when it started operating in 2004, to 105 children in 2011. In our interview, its manager reported fluctuations in pupil numbers in line with broader changes in the status and conditions of Bulgarian migrants in Greece, especially in relation to Bulgaria's EU accession and to the unfolding of the crisis in Greece:

> After Bulgaria's EU accession, the numbers of pupils dropped…. Then they went up again, especially this with the economic crisis… parents send them here because they think that as things go bad they may return to Bulgaria… at the end of the year ten families asked for the certificate we issue in order to actually go back.

10.3   New (and Older) Mobilities: Cross-Border Flows Between Bulgaria and Greece

As underlined in the introduction, the scope of this chapter is not simply to account for the dynamics of labour migration from Bulgaria to Greece and for the conditions of the Bulgarian migrant population. Indeed, these are situated within a broader context of mobility between the two countries, which involves a diversity of cross-border movements and various types of flows in both directions. Geographical proximity is the primary factor shaping such mobility, which has now entered a new phase following Bulgaria's EU accession. Hence, there has been some degree of political unification of the Greco-Bulgarian space. However, various elements beyond conventional labour migration existed long before 2007. These include migrants' informal practices, which stretch across the borders through social networks linking localities of origin and destination and transnational lifestyles between the two countries—often conditioned by necessity. Practices of this kind might include visits to home villages or towns, whether for holidays or other reasons (Hatziprokopiou 2006, pp. 207–212). Even when travel was not possible, some engagement with the homeland was feasible from a distance—for instance, as far as political participation

in Bulgaria is concerned.[14] Moreover, the sending of remittances seems to be declining as migrants build their lives in their places of settlement, as our past studies confirm. Remittances were usually sent through informal channels, such as relatives or compatriots who went back home or by bus companies travelling between the two countries. The funds were provided to support family members left behind, in some cases spouses and/or children. Apart from such 'grassroots' transnational activity, however, our interest here is to investigate empirically quantifiable forms of population movements and other types of mobility, beyond labour migration.

A first type of flow, and perhaps a key structural characteristic of immigration to Greece especially during the 1990s, concerns the relationship between the mobility of labour and that of capital. As explained by Labrianidis and colleagues (2004), at the same time as immigration into Greece intensified in the early 1990s, the country transitioned from being a net receiver of foreign direct investment (FDI) to a net capital exporter. Not only were the Balkans the primary source of migrant labour, but they were also the major destination of Greek FDI, as 'virgin' markets in which large multinationals were initially reluctant to invest. The Balkans offered natural resources, cheap labour, and the possibility to avoid tariff impediments. Most Greek investment projects in the Balkans were concentrated in Bulgaria; the majority were commercial enterprises and industrial plants, with a small but significant presence of service companies (Labrianidis 2000). Up until the early 2000s, many of these projects were undertaken by small and medium-sized enterprises, with or without a parent company in Greece that moved to the Balkans in order to overcome competitiveness problems at home and to reduce labour costs (Labrianidis et al. 2004). This is the same type of company that tends to rely on the employment of immigrants in Greece, reflecting the production structure of the Greek economy. Over the period 1996–2009, Greece was the fourth major investor country in Bulgaria in terms of value, accounting for nearly 8 % of the total.[15] There are more than 420 Greek businesses in Bulgaria; some 40 % of them were registered after 2000, following almost a decade of Bulgarian migration to Greece (Markova 2010, p. 33). It is worth noting that Bulgarian trade unions speak of highly exploitative conditions in border areas where Greek companies are most active.[16]

Part of this investment has been by the banking sector, as increased transactions by migrants in Greece since the mid-1990s—and their increasing demand for financial services—motivated Greek banks to expand their services in Bulgaria. Legal immigrants remain the main clients, transferring money home. The increased number of Bulgarian migrants legally residing and working in Greece may explain the growing number of Greek bank branches in Bulgaria in the last 10 years. For example, Alpha Bank has now opened branches in over 20 cities in Bulgaria. Five

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[14] For example, the Macedonian Press Agency reported on 21 October 2001 that about 260 Bulgarians living in Thessaloniki were expected to vote in the Bulgarian national elections on 11 November 2001 at the city's Bulgarian Consulate.

[15] Data from the Bulgarian National Bank reported in the Greek General Secretariat of International Economic Relations and Development Cooperation (www.agora.mfa.gr—thematic category on bilateral agreements).

[16] Interview conducted in April 2009 in Sofia as part of the EU-funded project, Mapping Discrimination in the European Union, Working Lives Research Institute, London Metropolitan University.

large Greek banks—the National Bank of Greece (which owns 99.9 % of the United Bulgarian Bank AD); Piraeus Bank Bulgaria AD; Emporiki Bank-Bulgaria EAD, the merger between Eurobank EFG Bulgaria (Postbank) AD; and Alpha Bank-Bulgaria Branch—currently have a market share of 25–30 % in the country.[17]

There has also been growth in commercial activity between the two countries, with Bulgaria's share in net imports/exports steadily increasing since 1989. Not only are Greek products now manufactured in Bulgaria, but increasingly they are sold to the Bulgarian market as well (Labrianidis 2000; Kamaras 2001). Although Bulgaria remained a secondary trade partner until recently, this seems to be changing with membership of the EU. In 2006, Bulgaria received 6.3 % of total Greek exports in terms of value (in euros); by 2007, this had grown to 6.5 % and Bulgaria was the fourth major buyer of Greek products; in 2008, it became the third major destination, with a share of 7.1 % of total Greek exports. Similarly, imports increased by 0.4 percentage points between 2006 and 2008, and Bulgaria had become the 16th largest supplier of the Greek market by the end of this period. Obviously, Greece's ongoing crisis may interrupt this trend: over the first three quarters of 2009, Greek exports to Bulgaria dropped by about 24 percentage points, and Bulgarian imports decreased by 30 %; in the first quarter of 2010, however, the pace of exports decline was reduced to 6.4 % and imports had registered a slight increase.[18]

Naturally, flows of goods and capital also translate into human mobility. Together with Greek companies, there are movements of Greeks travelling back and forth—merchants and distributors, professionals, bankers, and investors (Hatziprokopiou 2006, p. 254). The Greek presence in Bulgaria and other Balkan countries is so evident that some analysts speak of a 'Greek capitalist diaspora' in the region, constituted by a network of corporate entities and individuals (Kamaras 2001). According to the National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria, among 132,576 people who travelled for business reasons to Bulgaria during January-September 2002, Greeks made up the largest share, approaching 13 %.[19] 9 years later, in 2011, of the 52,434 professionals visiting Bulgaria in January alone, over 40 % were Greeks. Meanwhile, the number of (registered) permanent Greek residents in Bulgaria increased from 814 in 2004 to 964 in 2009. Among them, some may be students following the 'tradition' of young Greeks studying in Bulgaria, even previous to 1989, which may have slowed down but never entirely ceased.

Alongside business travel, there has been an increase in the number of trips for tourism, shopping, and entertainment. According to the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute, an annual average of 806,654 Greeks travelled for various purposes between 2004 and 2009, with the numbers gradually increasing since 2007. For the period January-May 2010, 184,690 Greek visitors travelled for 'holiday and recreation', constituting a share of 22.8 % of foreign tourists in Bulgaria. Some of

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[17] 'Invest in Greece' website (pages on investment in Bulgaria): http://www.invgr.com/se_europe. htm

[18] Data are from the Hellenic Statistical Authority as reported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (op. cit.)

[19] 2002 Data are from Hatziprokopiou (2006, p. 254); 2010 data are available from the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute (www.nsi.bg/index_en.htm).

these movements have been concentrated in the border areas. Back in 2003, Greek TV channels were reporting on Greeks from northern towns or villages, including Thessaloniki, who were visiting places on the other side of the border (e.g., the city of Petrich) for shopping (especially for duty-free goods, at that time still available at the border), but also for other reasons such as gambling in the local casinos, or having low-cost tooth fillings at local dentists (Hatziprokopiou 2006, p. 255). More recently, amidst the Greek economic crisis, during the summer of 2010 the Greek press commented on youths travelling from northern Greece to Bulgaria for live concerts: the combined cost of tickets and travel appeared to be cheaper for them than attending such performances in Athens (with retail petrol prices on the Bulgarian side of the border being about 33 % cheaper than in Greece at the time).[20] Our interviewee from the Bulgarian*travel agency confirmed this picture, based on her own experience from the business traffic:

> We have frequent travellers. There are those who go for business, but also increasingly for tourism, to the ski resorts of Bansko, Borovets, and Pamporovo (UI).

At the same time, an increasing number of Bulgarian tourists travel in the opposite direction. For them, EU accession seems to have marked a shift. The Greek Tourism Organization counted 470,232 arrivals of Bulgarian tourists at the borders in 2002, the seventh most numerous tourist group that year. By 2007, the corresponding figure approached 1.1 million, indicating an unprecedented growth in arrivals of Bulgarians in recent years. Similarly, a sharp growth of their share among the total foreign arrivals at the border was recorded, as depicted in Fig. 10.4. Since 2007, the
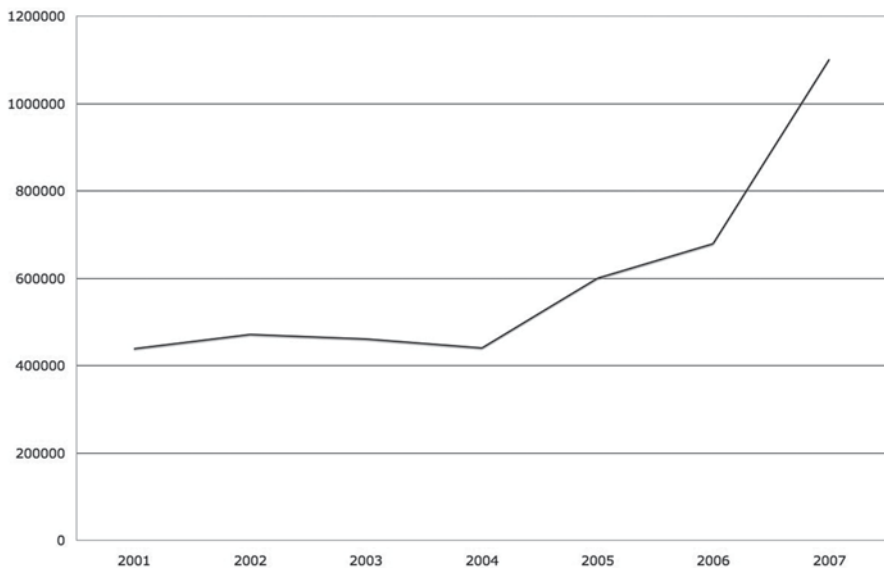

Fig. 10.4 Arrivals of Bulgarians at the Greek border, 2001–2007. (Source: Hellenic Statistical Authority, tourism and border statistics, 2001–2007)

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[20] *Eleftherotypía* newspaper, 1 August 2010.

Hellenic Statistical Authority has been distinguishing between arrivals of residents and non-residents (based on a sample administered by the Bank of Greece). Even so, the number of Bulgarian visitors remains high. A similar picture is sketched by Bulgarian sources. The number of Bulgarians travelling to Greece has grown steadily over the period 2004–2009 and picked up significantly after 2007, with 1,583,369 arrivals in 2009. The share of those going to Greece doubled during that period, from 14.4% in 2004 to 31.7% in 2009. Among nearly 1.5 million Bulgarians who had travelled abroad during the first half of 2010, some 26.4% were destined for Greece. Of those, 68% visited Greece for professional reasons, and some 18.1% as tourists. A local newspaper in Thessaloniki reported that increased numbers of Bulgarian tourists in northern Greece, especially in the areas of Pieria and Kavala, in July 2010, served to compensate for the overall loss of tourist income that summer, in the context of the Greek crisis.[21]

The dark side of tourist movements of Greeks to Bulgaria, especially in border areas, involves a trend of Greek men crossing the border for cheap paid sex. The new dynamics that have emerged on the Greco-Bulgarian border include issues of organized crime, including the smuggling of guns, tobacco, drugs, oil and pirated CDs.[22] There is also trafficking in people, especially women and minors destined for forced prostitution (IOM 2001). Within this context, the border cities of Petrich and Sandanski in southern Bulgaria have been described as 'the Balkan centres of white slavery' (Emke-Poulopoulos 2001, pp. 15). While in the 1980s most foreign sex workers in Greece were mainly from Asian countries, by the mid-1990s the majority were from Central and Eastern Europe and nearly one third were from the Balkans (Emke-Poulopoulos 2001, p. 4).

This phenomenon forms part of the new mobility dynamics developing along the Greco-Bulgarian border since 1989. Though ethical and political sensitivities remain, in the last 20 years, the emerging cross-border space and border areas themselves have been going though informal processes of economic and societal unification. An interesting example in this respect is the long-discussed Trans-Border Free Industrial Zone of Economic Exchange, which was meant to be established at the Ormenio border area in Thrace, in the town of Trigono, 8 Km away from Edirne (Turkey) and ten from Svilengrad (Bulgaria). Most of the companies planning to move there would have been labour-intensive factories, especially in the clothing sector. An estimated 60–80% of the workers would commute from Bulgaria on a daily basis (Labrianidis 1998). Long before the plan materialized, the Municipality of Trigono itself, in collaboration with the Bulgarian Municipality of Svilengrad, established a job-finding agency to recruit Bulgarian cross-border workers for agricultural work.[23] These were expected to compensate for the loss of the local labour force, owing to a trend of young people leaving for the cities. Considering that the majority of internally migrating locals were women, this also resulted in a growing number of men who 'were left without brides' and themselves crossing the border to find a partner. Over the period 2000–2004, some 50 mixed marriages took place

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[21] Newspaper *Aggelioforos* of 27 July 2010, article by P. Theodoropoulou, p. 16.

[22] See, for instance, *Eleftherotypía*, 21 November 2004, article by G. Linardos.

[23] Reported in Eleftherotypía newspaper of 29 December 2004.

between young locals and Bulgarian women from nearby Svilengrad, and 85 children were born.[24]

The case of Trigono is one of many examples of remote border areas in Greece being radically transformed through contact with the 'other side'. Poor and emptied by internal migration and 'forgotten' by the state, they are revitalized economically as well as demographically, in the context of cross-border mobility (see, e.g., Hatziprokopiou 2006, pp. 252–256; see also Deslondes et al. 2008). Even though the 'transborder zone' of Trigono had not materialized in a formal way, numerous informal zones of cross-border contact have spread along the Greco-Bulgarian border in the wake of the restructuring of agrarian systems in both countries, involving constant back-and-forth movements of Bulgarian agricultural workers to the fields of northern Greece (Minev et al. 1997; Darques et al. 2008; Koutsou and Petrou 2008).

10.4 Conclusion

The erstwhile impenetrable border of the Iron Curtain that separated Bulgaria and Greece for nearly half a century has now given way to a 'new Greco-Bulgarian border' (Deslondes et al. 2008), easily and frequently crossed for various purposes. This chapter explored primarily labour migration from Bulgaria to Greece, in an attempt to show how this developed over the past 20 years, and to highlight the importance of proximity in conditioning dimensions of transnationalism, cyclical migration, and constant back-and-forth movements. Within this context, the chapter also accounted for other forms of human mobility and other types of flows in both directions. The complex set of processes in place passed through several phases, and the timeline so far has registerd a number of 'milestones' since 1989: the regularization programmes in Greece, the abolition of visa requirements for Bulgarians travelling to the EU, Bulgaria's EU accession, and currently, Greece's economic crisis.

Mobility patterns in Eastern Europe should not simply be seen as a 'flood from East to West', but rather as a 'much wider field of mobility', with the majority of movements being short distance and cross-border (Rogers 2000, p. 10). In the Greco-Bulgarian case, this wider field of mobility suggests not only that the labour markets of Bulgaria and Greece have become increasingly interdependent, as Minev et al. (1997, p. 10) argued more than 15 years ago, and as we also showed in this chapter, but that the entire Greek and Bulgarian societies are increasingly interconnected. The Balkan space, fragmented after years of separate national histories and divided by nationalist conflicts (as the editors recalled in their introduction to this volume), is gradually regaining the unified character it used to have in the years of the Ottoman Empire (Todorova 2009; Mazower 2000). Greece's northern borders opened up in the early 1990s for the first time since World War II. The next step

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[24] Salimbeni (2004, p. 15) reports on a general trend of migrant women, including Bulgarians, marrying Greek men in the Greek countryside.

in this process took place with the EU accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, which linked Greece by land to the rest of the EU for the first time since it became a member in 1981. Labour migration from Bulgaria to Greece—as well as the multiple types of flows in both directions, relationships, networks, and 'back and forth' movements—are indicative of an evolving cross-border system and a transnational social and economic space, which is shaped by proximity and assumes regional characteristics. After all, the era of globalization is marked by similar integrations at a regional level. The experience of the Balkans post-1989 in particular manifests such expressions of regionalism regarding migration processes (Baldwin-Edwards 2004b).

The cross-border dynamics of labour and capital, and the political economy surrounding them, imply that the character of economic relations between Bulgaria and Greece since the 1990s has been shaped by relations of uneven development and imperialism, dominance, and dependence (Hatziprokopiou 2006; Deslondes et al. 2008), even if Greece is neither the only nor the major player in the area. Economic and other forms of exploitation in both Greece and Bulgaria are at the heart of migration and other forms of mobility. The nature of interdependence between the two countries suggests a cross-border system characterized by a relationship between capital and labour mobility fitting to some degree the analysis of Sassen (1999), whereby—simply put—the latter follows the former and vice-versa (Labrianidis et al. 2004). The micro-level manifestations of this relationship in border areas appear to be analogous, even if on a smaller scale, to the situation characterizing parts of the US-Mexico border, as Deslondes et al. (2008, p. 37) observe.

The Greek state's approach to migration over the past two decades has received extensive criticism for its unrealistic, exclusionary, and repressive logic as far as the control of borders, movement, and people are concerned, as well as for its laissez faire attitude in the labour market, which allowed (certain) employers to benefit in the short run from migrants' exploited employment conditions. With respect to migration from neighbouring countries in particular, one may additionally speak of two decades of lost opportunities to make things easier for the migrants themselves and release substantial potential for development in both Greece and Bulgaria. Cultural and geographic proximity have made possible various forms of mobility, contact, and exchange, which entailed some degree of—and much more potential for—circularity. Realistically managed and with respect for migrants' rights, this could have led to what is described in the literature as a 'triple win' situation, whereby mobility benefits all parties involved—that is, the countries of origin and destination and the migrants themselves (Vertovec 2007; Bieckmann and Muskens 2007). Instead, restrictions on movement, but also on regular stay and employment, have prevented 'full circles' from developing, apart from the limited experience of formal seasonal work and the dynamics in place at border regions. On the other hand, geographical proximity and human need have facilitated various types of flow and bridges built by the human factor. Migrants have been able to support livelihoods between places of origin and destination, establishing new bases for social and cultural contact. Nevertheless, any potential changes that may result from Bulgaria's EU membership and Greece's severe economic difficulties since 2009 are yet to be seen.

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Panos Hatziprokopiou is Assistant Professor at the Department of Spatial Planning and Devel-
opment, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. His research interests focus on aspects of migration
and immigrants' integration in Greece, as well as on issues related to difference, diversity and
social change in urban contexts. He has published widely on the above topics in peer-reviewed
journals and chapters in edited volumes, and is author of the book Globalisation, migration and
socio-economic change in contemporary Greece, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006.

Eugenia Markova is Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Business and Law of London Metro-
politan University. She teaches economics and quantitative methods for business. Eugenia has
published widely on issues of labour migration, with a focus on undocumented migration, agency
work and community cohesion. Her most recent co-authored article 'Migrant Workers in Small
London Hotels: Employment, Recruitment and Distribution' is forthcoming in European Urban
and Regional Studies and her co-authored book Undocumented workers transitions: Legal status,
migration and work in Europe was published by Routledge in 2011.

Appendix

Map 3 Sax's Ethnographic Map of European Turkey in 1877

At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, many maps were produced claiming to show the ethnographic composition of the Balkans. Almost all maps were published to substantiate claims on territory.[1] These maps were intended as weapons in nationalist struggles. Depending on the interests of the contesting nation states most were based on one of two criteria: language or religion. Nevertheless, some maps were better than others. One of the best—if not the best—is the map presented here by Carl Sax. Sax was Austro-Hungarian consul in various cities of the Ottoman Empire. He gathered information for the map by studying maps made by others, by consulting other Austro-Hungarian consuls and by travelling through the region. His *Ethnographic Map of European Turkey and her Dependencies* was published in 1878 by the Imperial and Royal Geographical Society of Vienna.

Sax's map uses both language and religion as criteria for ethno-national groups. The key organizes the linguistic differences in columns, with the rows indicating the three main religions of Oriental Christianity, Catholic Christianity and Islam. Within the language-religion cells, Sax makes a number of further differentiations. These are not all of one kind. In four cases, Sax distinguishes what could be called in-between categories: Greco Vlachs, Serbo-Bulgarians, Greco-Bulgarians and Greco-Albanians. But while Greco-Bulgarians are placed in the Bulgarian category, Greco-Albanians are classified as Greeks. Apparently—and understandably—Sax judged that the Greco-Albanians as a group were more Hellenized than the Greco-Bulgarians. The key here has been translated into English and superimposed onto the original. We have tried to keep the translations of the group names close to the original, with the exception of notating *Graeco-Albanesen* as Albano-Greeks.

The online version of the appendix (doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-13719-3) contains a high-resolution colour image of the Sax map

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[1] For example, see Wilkinson (1951), *Maps and Politics: A Review of the Ethnographic Cartography of Macedonia*, Liverpool University Press.

This volume collects ten essays that look at intra-regional migration in the Southern Balkans from the late Ottoman period to the present. It examines forced as well as voluntary migrations and places these movements within their historical context, including ethnic cleansing, population exchanges, and demographic engineering in the service of nation-building as well as more recent labor migration due to globalization.

Inside, readers will find the work of international experts that cuts across national and disciplinary lines. This cross-cultural, comparative approach fully captures the complexity of this highly fractured, yet interconnected, region. Coverage explores the role of population exchanges in the process of nation-building and irredentist policies in interwar Bulgaria, the story of Thracian refugees and their organizations in Bulgaria, the changing waves of migration from the Balkans to Turkey, Albanian immigrants in Greece, and the diminished importance of ethnic migration after the 1990s. In addition, the collection looks at such under-researched aspects of migration as memory, gender, and religion.

The field of migration studies in the Southern Balkans is still fragmented along national and disciplinary lines. Moreover, the study of forced and voluntary migrations is often separate with few interconnections. The essays collected in this book bring these different traditions together. This complete portrait will help readers gain deep insight and better understanding into the diverse migration flows and intercultural exchanges that have occurred in the Southern Balkans in the last two centuries.