

Master thesis

Middle Eastern Studies

LXX998M20.2018-2019.2

Connecting Thrace

Cross-border cooperation in the Bulgarian-Turkish border region

First supervisor:

Prof. Dr. W.J. van Bakkum

Second supervisor:

Dr. P.G.T. Nanninga

Robert Feller
S2828030

January 2019

Content

Introduction	3 - 10
1 How do the multi-ethnic, shared histories of Bulgaria and Turkey affect cross-border cooperation?	11 - 44
• 1.1 - External approach: comparative perspective and historical context	16 - 31
• 1.2 - Internal approach: sources of cultural identity and community and the giving of meaning to surroundings and activities	31 - 44
2 What is the state of local and regional institutions and civil society in Bulgaria and Turkey?	45 - 59
• 2.1 - Decentralization and sub-national autonomy	47 - 52
• 2.2 - Civil society	52 - 59
3 What are the socio-economic structures of Yugoiztochen, Yuhzen tsentralen and the Tekirdağ Subregion? What projects have been funded between 2003 and 2013?	60 - 74
• 3.1 - The socio-economic structures of Yugoiztochen, Yuhzen tsentralen and the Tekirdağ Subregion	60 - 68
• 3.2 - Funded projects between 2003-2013	68 - 74
Conclusion	75 - 76
References	77 - 88
Appendix 1: "CIVICUS CSI 2011"	89 - 90
Appendix 2: Bulgarian-Turkish cross-border cooperation programs (2003-2013)	90 - 92

Introduction

According to Robert Schuman, one of the founding fathers of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC, a precursor of the current EU), borders are the “scars of history”.¹ If we compare a map of Europe around 1800 and one of around 2000, we can instantly see that many of these scars in Europe were created in the nineteenth and twentieth century as empires disintegrated and came to be replaced by much more delimited nation-states.² The new borders of these nation states, often the result of wars, became scars that cut through Europe’s historical landscapes with their regions and ethnic groups.³ A prime example is the Ottoman Empire which, having existed for hundreds of years, disintegrated in the early twentieth century.⁴ Whereas many peoples used to be united within this one empire, many new lines were now drawn and divisions between peoples were soon made.⁵

The Bulgarian-Turkish border region is no exception in this regard.⁶ During the Ottoman Empire era, this region was regarded as one multi-ethnic and multi-religious territory with the name of Thrace⁷, which for the most part administratively fell under the *vilayet* (i.e. administrative unit) of Adrianople, which was named after the capital of the province, Adrianople.⁸ In 1888, the population of this vilayet was estimated at 200.808, of which 39.3 percent Muslim, 38.4 percent Greek and 15.9 percent Bulgarian.⁹ For a long time,

¹ Agnes Batory and Andrew Cartwright, "Re-visiting the Partnership Principle in Cohesion Policy: The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Structural Funds Monitoring", *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 49.4 (2011): 697-698. Also: Association of European Border Regions, *European Charter for border and cross-border regions*, (Gronau: AEBR, 1981/2011), 3-4.

² Andreas Wimmer and Yuval Feinstein (University of California) have been trying to find an answer to the question why the nation-state proliferated across the world over the past two hundred years, thus replacing empires and kingdoms. Based on an event history analysis of 145 of today’s states, they argue that: ‘a nation-state is more likely to emerge when a power shift allows nationalists to overthrow or absorb the established regime. Diffusion of the nation-state within an empire or among neighbours also tilts the balance of power in favour of nationalists’. Based on their analysis, they conclude that the global rise of the nation-state has been driven by proximate and contextual political factors situated at the local and regional levels. As I will argue in chapter one, this is something that can also be seen in the Balkan region, including Bulgaria. See: Yuval Feinstein, and Andreas Wimmer, “The Rise of the Nation-State Across the World, 1816 to 2001”, *American Sociological Review* 75, no. 5 (2010): 764, 776-786.

³ Association of European Border Regions, *European Charter*, 4.

⁴ It should be noted that the Ottoman Empire did not “just” entirely fall apart in the twentieth century, rather the empire gradually started to lose territory in Europe already in the eighteenth century.

⁵ Hans Vermeulen, Martin Baldwin-Edwards, and Riki van Boeschoten, eds. *Migration in the Southern Balkans: From Ottoman Territory to Globalized Nation States* (Imiscoe Research Series. Cham: Springer, 2015), 87.

⁶ Note that the Ottomans’ reign in the Balkans lasted almost four hundred years. Generally, the loss of the 1877-1878 Russo-Ottoman War is regarded as the start of the losing importance of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. See: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 87.

⁷ “Trakya” in Turkish.

⁸ Adrianople is also known as “Edirne” in Turkish and as “Odrin” in Bulgarian. Omer Bartov and Eric D Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 272.

⁹ As such, there was a non-Muslim majority in the region in the nineteenth century. See: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 272.

these (and more) groups had been living together within the confines of the Ottoman Empire. However, following the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878), the Bulgarian declaration of independence (1908) and the First- and Second Balkan War (1912-1913), the region of Thrace became divided between Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece.¹⁰ Not only the region was divided, both Balkan Wars also contributed to dividing the people living in the region.¹¹

What followed after the wars were far-reaching processes of homogenization in both Bulgaria and Turkey, which included policies of assimilation and (forced) migrations.¹² Because of these migrations, many people had to leave their ancestral lands and, due to the Cold War, were unable to visit these until the 1990s.¹³ In the meantime, because of the ongoing process of homogenization in the twentieth century, what remains of Turks in Bulgaria nowadays is about 588.000 people (8.8 percent of the total Bulgarian population), most of whom live in two compact regions – in north-eastern Bulgaria and in south-eastern Bulgaria, close to the Turkish border.¹⁴ In Turkey, around 350.000 people still speak Bulgarian, most of whom live in Edirne and the surrounding region.¹⁵

With the end of the Cold War, there also came an end to the impermeability of the Bulgarian-Turkish border, but the border itself, the “scar of history”, may just as well still exist. According to Schuman, these scars could be healed through cross-border cooperation (CBC).¹⁶ The rationale was that, by working together, mutual understanding would increase

¹⁰ For more on this see: Hakan M. Yavuz and Isa Blumi, *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and Their Socio-political Implications*, (Utah Series in Middle East Studies. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 85-90, 97. Also: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 66, 97. Also: Nurcan Ozgur Baklacioglu, “Borders, identities and kin politics in the Balkans: continuity and change at the Turkish-Bulgarian border”, *International Balkan Annual Conference* (2013): 167.

¹¹ Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 68. Regarding the brutality of both wars, see: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 18. Also: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the International Commission*, 15-16, 72, 113-114, 123-125, 231.

¹² Theodora Dragostinova, “Competing Priorities, Ambiguous Loyalties: Challenges of Socioeconomic Adaptation and National Inclusion of the Interwar Bulgarian Refugees”, *Nationalities Papers* 34, no. 5 (2006): 554. Also: Emma L. Baysal, et al., *Bordered Places – Bounded Times: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Turkey*, (Vol 51., British Institute at Ankara, 2017), 175.

¹³ Baysal, et al., *Bordered Places*, 172, 175.

¹⁴ Maria Koinova, “Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Bulgaria”, *Seer: Journal for Labour and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe* 2, no. 2 (1999): 149. And: National Statistical Institute, “2011 Population Census”, http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/PDOCS2/Census2011final_en.pdf, (accessed: 12-10-2018).

¹⁵ Due to processes of extensive assimilation, it is hard to estimate the exact numbers of Bulgarians in Turkey. For the number of Bulgarian speakers in Turkey, see: Ethnologue, “Turkey – Languages”, <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/TR/languages>, (accessed: 12-10-2018). Also: Osamu Ieda and Balázs Majtényi, et al., *Beyond sovereignty: from status law to transnational citizenship?*, (No. 9. Slavic Research Centre, Hokkaido University, 2006), 322.

¹⁶ For an exact definition of cross-border cooperation, we can look at the *European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation between Territorial Communities or Authorities* (signed in Madrid on May 21st, 1980) which states that all activities aimed at strengthening and promoting neighbourly relations between inhabitants of borderlands on both sides of the common state border are considered to be cross-border cooperation. See: Association of European Border Regions, *European Charter*, 3. The overall aim of cross-border initiatives has been, and remains, that national borders should not be a barrier to the balanced

and at the same time socio-economic development would be stimulated; something that is especially important to border regions which are, due to several factors, lagging in this regard.¹⁷ Through socio-economic improvement, disparities would decrease which, in turn, would have a positive effect on cross-cultural relationships.¹⁸

Starting in 1990, the EU launched its first cross-border programs to improve socio-economic cohesion between regions. The first program, known as Interreg, was meant as a financial support to border regions that had a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) that was below seventy-five percent of the EU average.¹⁹ Starting out as a Western-European project, cross-border programs have, since that time, also been extended to Eastern Europe. The first ad hoc “Cohesion Funding” (i.e. EU funds that are meant to improve socio-economic cohesion) in the Bulgarian-Turkish border region started in 2003 and more structural and planned funding started in 2004 and especially in 2007 when a six-year cross-border cooperation program was set-up.²⁰

Ever since the implementation of the first cross-border programs in the 1990s, there have been many studies that have evaluated their impact.²¹ Eventually, several factors have

development and integration of the European territory. The isolation of border areas has been of a double nature: on the one hand, the presence of borders cuts off border communities from each other economically, socially and culturally, and hinders the coherent management of eco-systems; on the other, border areas have often been neglected under national policy, with the result that their economies have tended to become peripheral within their national boundaries. The single market and the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) are strong catalysts for changing this situation, as adequate coherent policy requires socioeconomic cohesion between the different regions. See: Atila Eralp and Cigdem Üstün, et al., *Turkey and the EU: The process of change and neighbourhood*, (Centre for European Studies, 2010), 148.

¹⁷ Exactly because border regions are at the edges of countries, they have historically been neglected. Bertram notes: ‘In most cases, border regions [...] remained economically underdeveloped because of the danger of a military conflict, the agglomeration tendency of industry and the impossibility of market expansion See: H. Bertram, "Double Transformation at the Eastern Border of the EU: The Case of the Euroregion Pro Europa Viadrina." *GeoJournal*, 44.3 (1998): 215.

¹⁸ Robert Hassink, Ben Dankbaar, and Fabienne Corvers, "Technology networking in border regions: Case study of the Euregion Maas-Rhine", *European Planning Studies* 3.1 (1995): 67. Also: Marián Halas, "Development of cross-border cooperation and creation of Euroregions in the Slovak Republic", *Moravian geographical reports* 15.1 (2007): 24. Also: Association of European Border Regions, *European Charter*, 3.

¹⁹ Batory and Cartwright, "Re-visiting the Partnership Principle in Cohesion Policy": 697-698. Also: Association of European Border Regions, *European Charter*, 3.

²⁰ European Commission, "PHARE financing memoranda & project fiches", https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/former-assistance/phare_en, (accessed: 1-10-2018). Also: Cigdem Varol and Emrah Söylemez, "Border Permeability and Drivers of Cross-Border Cooperation in The Turkish And EU Border Region", *KnE Social Sciences* 1.2 (2017): 92.

²¹ F. Busillo, et al., *Working Paper: Measuring the Impact of the European Regional Policy on Economic Growth: A Regression Discontinuity Design Approach*, (University of Rome, 2010), 3. Also: Aadne Cappelen, Fulvio Castellacci, Jan Fagerberg, and Bart Verspagen, "The Impact of EU Regional Support on Growth and Convergence in the European Union", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 41, no. 4 (2003): 626. Also: Philipp Mohl, *Empirical Evidence on the Macroeconomic Effects of EU Cohesion Policy*, (Springer Gabler Research. Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler, 2016), 55. Also: Sascha O. Becker, "Going NUTS: The Effect of EU Structural Funds on Regional Performance", *Journal of Public Economics*, 94.9-10 (2010): 578, 589. Also: R. Camagni, A. Caragliu and G. Perucca, *Territorial Capital: Relational and Human Capital* (2011), 4-5. Also: U. Fratesi and G. Perucca, "Territorial capital and the Effectiveness of Cohesion Policy", *Investigaciones*

been distinguished that are crucial when it comes to the impact and effectiveness of the programs, namely: the extent of cooperation tradition (i.e. is there a history of cooperation between regions?), whether the actors in the cross-border cooperation have the same objectives (i.e. do they want to work on the same things, or do they have their own priorities?), and whether the cooperating regions have adequately been decentralized and possess the administrative capacity and civil society to implement the EU cross-border Cohesion Funds.²² What these three factors all point at is that the nature and quality of the cross-border cooperation is of vital importance for the Cohesion Funds to have a *positive* effect on a region.²³ As such, this Master thesis sets out to analyse the state of cross-border cooperation in the Bulgarian-Turkish border region by looking at the aforementioned three factors (and as such at the socio-historical context of the region), whereby the main question will be: **how is the cross-border cooperation in the Bulgarian-Turkish border region in the period 2003-2013?** To clarify: with the “Bulgarian-Turkish border region”, the five Nomenclature des Unités Territoriales Statistiques (NUTS) 3 regions that have been chosen for the Bulgarian-Turkish CBC programs are meant, namely: Burgas, Yambol and Haskovo on the Bulgarian side, and Edirne and Kirklareli on the Turkish side.²⁴ This area makes up most of the former Thracian region and *vilayet* of Adrianople. The periodization of 2003-2013 has been chosen, on the one hand, because it comprises ten years, which allows for getting a good overview of how cross-cooperation has been and developed over a longer period. On the other hand, in this way the analysis starts with the first cross-border cooperation that was set up in 2003 and ends with 2013, the year in which the Instrument for

Regionales 29, no. 29 (2014): 166. And for a critical view on whether econometrical studies can adequately explain and prove the connection between Cohesion Funds and socio-economic development, see: Peter C.B. Phillips, "Challenges of Trending Time Series Econometrics", *Mathematics and Computers in Simulation*, 68.5 (2005): 401-416.

²² See: Bertram, "Double transformation": 218-223. Also: Rolf Bergs, "Cross-Border Cooperation, Regional Disparities and Integration of Markets in the EU", *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 27, no. 3 (2012): 345, 355-359. Also: Batory and Cartwright, "Re-Visiting the Partnership Principle in Cohesion Policy": 701. Also: Gerard Clarke, "Civil Society, Cross-National Comparisons and the Problem of Statistical Capture", *Journal of International Development* 23.7 (2011): 960. Also: Jenny Pearce, *Civil society and development: A critical exploration*, (Lynne Rienner Publishers: 2002), 44. Also: Mohl, *Empirical Evidence on the Macroeconomic Effects of EU Cohesion Policy*, 25.

²³ To clarify the term of "positive effect", following the European Commission's way of measuring the success of Cohesion Funds, I regard increased economic cohesion (as measured by GDP, employment- and education rates) and increased integration (as measured by the number of cross-regional commuters, trade and investments) as "positive".

²⁴ The respective NUTS 3 codes for the regions are: BG341, BG343, BG422, TR212 and TR213. The NUTS is a geocode standard that has been set up by the European Commission for referencing the subdivisions of countries for statistical purposes. NUTS 3 is the smallest subdivision, followed by NUTS 2 and NUTS 1. In this specific situation, the NUTS 3 regions of Burgas and Yambol are both part of the overarching NUTS 2 region of Yugoiztochen (BG34), whereas Haskovo is included in Yuzhen tsentralen (BG42). Edirne and Kirklareli are both part of the NUTS 2 Tekirdağ Subregion (TR21).

Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) CBC program of 2007-2013 was completed, while also including six years of Bulgaria being part of the EU, which it joined in 2007.²⁵

To answer the main question, three sub-questions are posed that relate to the three above-mentioned factors. First: **how do the shared histories of Bulgaria and Turkey affect cross-border cooperation?** In his research, Rolf Bergs (evaluator for several EU funded cohesion policy programs, such as Interreg) found evidence that the “extent of cooperation tradition” (i.e. a history with cross-border cooperation) has a significant impact on reducing disparities and fostering cross-border trade.²⁶ Concerning new EU members - like Bulgaria - Bergs notes that cooperation is often still faced by frictions in understanding the common development needs and instead, there is more focus on unilaterally upgrading basis infrastructure than on experimenting with collaborative pilot projects. Also, there is a lack of administrative capacities ensuring genuine cross-border cooperation.²⁷ The hypothesis then is that, seeing that there was no cross-border cooperation between Bulgaria and Turkey during the Cold War, this has a negative impact on the cross-border cooperation. At the same time, we should consider that, for centuries, this region was not a divided region, but rather a part of the Ottoman Empire in which different ethnicities freely roamed and lived together.²⁸ As such, the question then is what has left its mark more on the region in the current context: cooperation or division. To get an indication of whether people feel they are a distinct group that is different from others, we can turn to the work of Anssi Paasi (University of Oulu, Finland), who made two distinctions, namely between “space” and “place” and between “borders” and “boundaries”, whereby Paasi sees a *place* as a *space* that people attribute meaning to. Similarly, Paasi sees *boundaries* as *borders* with a meaning that, in a gradual process of institutionalization are instilled in the collective mind of a community.²⁹ Thus, this

²⁵ IPA is the EU financial instrument that aims to support the pre-accession process for candidate and potential candidate countries in preparing for their accession to the EU. See: Ana-Maria Popescu Sfingaciu and Nicolae Eugen Munteanu, “Cross-Border Cooperation at the External Borders of European Union”, *Studia Universitatis Vasile Goldis Arad, Seria Stiinte Economice* 22, no. 2 (2012): 165.

²⁶ Bergs, "Cross-Border Cooperation": 345, 355-359.

²⁷ Bergs, "Cross-Border Cooperation": 349.

²⁸ A town like Edirne, which was also referred to as the “gateway to Constantinople” (and as such a gateway to much commercial- and trade activity), very much depended on this free movement. It was only following Bulgaria’s independence in 1908 and the subsequent Balkan Wars, that towns like Edirne, Kirklareli, Haskovo, Yambol and Burgas were suddenly on the fringes of their respective countries. Magdalena Elchinova, et al, *Migration, Memory, Heritage: Socio-cultural Approaches to the Bulgarian-Turkish Border*, (Lina Gergova, 2012), 45-46.

²⁹ More specifically, on the distinction between space and place Paasi notes: ‘Place is thus understood here as an abstraction referring to the cumulative archive of personal experiences and meanings which individuals gain from different locations and landscapes during their life history’. On the distinction between borders and boundaries he notes: ‘[Boundaries are] phenomena that are located in the socio-spatial consciousness and collective memory of people [...]. To establish and institute something, giving it a social definition or identity, means at the same time the establishment of boundaries. Power holding actors within social systems define and

chapter will look at the boundaries and the meanings people attribute to their surroundings (i.e. their socio-spatial consciousness). Use will be made of several theorizations on identity, such as Benedict Anderson's concept of *imagined communities*, and how identities are (re-)shaped and how they relate to a certain territory (i.e. space).³⁰

Next, the focus will be on the question: **what is the state of local and regional institutions and civil society in Bulgaria and Turkey?** One of the main demands from the European Commission (EC) when it comes to the implementation of CBC funds is that this is being done by the smallest, lowest, or least centralized authority and that a central authority should only have a subsidiary function (i.e. the *subsidiarity principle*). As such, in the vision of the EC, there should not only be a main role in cross-border cooperation programs for local and regional administrations, but also for local and regional organizations and the civil society.³¹ The Commission is proven right regarding the importance it attributes to the subsidiarity principle by recent research. Cornelius Bähr (Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, Philipps University Marburg), Philipp Mohl (economist for the European Commission since 2013), and Heike Bertram (University of Frankfurt) have all found that cross-border cooperation funds have significantly more effect in countries that are more decentralized and that, as such, have adequate local and regional institutions, as well as a

symbolize the social and spatial limits of membership. Members at the same time usually share an iconography (these are human creations that also render visible the power emerging from social practice, from social and spatial relations), which helps to differentiate insiders from outsiders and define the boundaries of the political community in the discourse'. See: Anssi Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries, and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border*, (Belhaven Studies in Political Geography, Chichester, England: J. Wiley & Sons, 1996), 27-28, 208, 305.

³⁰ Mark Eker, Henk van Houtum, Harry Cock, Paul Le Clercq, and Derek Middleton, *Border Land: Atlas, Essays and Design: History and Future of the Border Landscape*, (Wageningen: Blauwdruk, 2013), 175. Also: Sabine Fischer and Heiko Pleines, *Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe*, (Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2010), 126.

³¹ The main rationale for the inclusion of the civil society is that its involvement can help generate projects eligible for funding, feedback local expertise into the process for planning purposes and build local development capacities. At the same time, a strong civil society is also important for creating strong local and regional administrations. Gerard Clarke (Associate Professor in Politics and International Development, University of Swansea) notes: '[...] a healthy civil society has come to be regarded as a *sine qua non* [original italics], both of a functioning democracy that incorporates the concerns of the poor but also of a market economy calibrated to deliver equitable, pro-poor growth'. For purposes of the clarity, the civil society can be defined to include 'all non-market and non-state organizations outside of the family in which people organize themselves to pursue shared interests in the public domain. Examples include community-based organizations and village associations, environmental groups, women's rights groups, farmers' associations, faith-based organizations, labour unions, co-operatives, professional associations, chambers of commerce, independent research institutes and the not-for-profit media'. See: United Nations Development Programme, *Working Together with Civil Society in Foreign Aid: Possibilities for South-South Cooperation?* (UNDP: China, September 2013), 123. Also: Batory and Cartwright, "Re-Visiting the Partnership Principle in Cohesion Policy": 701. Also: Clarke, "Civil Society, Cross-National Comparisons and the Problem of Statistical Capture": 960. Also: Pearce, *Civil society and development*, 44. Also: Bertram, "Double Transformation at the Eastern Border of the EU": 223.

strong civil society.³² Regarding Bulgaria and Turkey, the question then is how strong local and regional institutions are and how much of an active civil society is existent.³³ In this chapter, this will be analysed by placing the development of local and regional institutions and civil society in a historical perspective and by making use of several indices that measure levels of decentralization and civil society strength.

The third and final sub-question is: **what are the socio-economic structures of Yugoiztochen, Yuhzen tsentralen and the Tekirdağ Subregion? What projects have been funded between 2003 and 2013?** Research shows that effective regional policy is more easily achieved when cooperating regions have the same socio-economic objectives. This can be an issue when there are significant socio-economic differences between regions as these will cause the regions to have different objectives regarding the way they deal with their problems. Especially when differences in income, levels and quality of infrastructure and access to subsidies are significant, it will be harder to define a coherent (and as such as successful) cross-border cooperation strategy.³⁴ There are two main ways to answer this sub-question. First, the socio-economic structures of the Bulgarian and Turkish border region can be compared. To do this, GDP, (un-)employment, education level, infrastructure and economic sectors of both regions will be analysed.³⁵ Second, the projects that have been funded in the period 2003-2013 can be studied as, in this way, it can be concluded whether the regional actors have predominantly chosen to unilaterally work on their own socio-economic issues and have used the cross-border funds for this, or whether a coherent cooperation strategy has been implemented. At the same time, analysing how the projects have been implemented allows to detect strengths and weaknesses in the cooperation.

³² Philipp Mohl, *Empirical Evidence on the Macroeconomic Effects of EU Cohesion Policy*, (Springer Gabler, 2016), 25, 156. Also: Cornelius Bähr, "How Does Sub-National Autonomy Affect the Effectiveness of Structural Funds?", *Kyklos* 61, no. 1 (2008): 15. Also: Roberto Camagni and Roberta Capello, "Macroeconomic and Territorial Policies for Regional Competitiveness: An EE Perspective", *Regional Science Policy & Practice* 2, no. 1 (2010): 17. Also: Bertram, "Double Transformation at the Eastern Border of the EU": 223. Also: Batory and Cartwright, "Re-Visiting the Partnership Principle in Cohesion Policy": 701.

³³ Several academics point towards a so-called "socialist legacy" whereby, due to decades of centralist Communist rule (which suppressed free speech and association and created a climate of distrust and suspicion of formal institutions), people became "passive and demobilized". The argument then is that this still causes civil society in Eastern Europe to be weak. See: Stephen E. Hanson, "The Leninist Legacy and Institutional Change," *Comparative Political Studies* 28 (July 1995): 306. Also: Ken Jowitt, *New World Disorder: The Leninist Extinction*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 56. Also: Cecilia Chessa, "State Subsidies, International Diffusion, and Transnational Civil Society: The Case of Frankfurt-Oder and Slubice", *East European Politics and Societies*, 18.1 (2004): 73, 75-76.

³⁴ Bertram, "Double transformation": 218-220.

³⁵ For this, Eurostat (the statistical office of the European Union) and the national statistics offices of Bulgaria and Turkey will predominantly be used.

It should be stressed that the goal of this research is not to prove a direct connection between the cross-border funds on the one hand and a certain socio-economic development on the other. Although there might be a correlation, this in no way means there is also a causation and rather, proving a causal connection is practically impossible in this regard.³⁶ Rather, the analyses are more general and more historical, taking in regional economic development and focussing on structural change and on the role of regional characteristics and identities.

³⁶ For an interesting debate on the risk of assuming a causal relationship from a correlation, see: Le Strat, Yann and Nicolas Hoertel. "Correlation is no causation: gymnasium proliferation and the risk of obesity." *Addiction*, 106.10 (2011): 1871-1872.

1 How do the shared histories of Bulgaria and Turkey affect cross-border cooperation?

In Robert Schuman's view, cross-border cooperation should encompass all spheres of life as 'having both knowledge and an understanding of a neighbour's distinctive social, cultural, linguistic and economic characteristics – ultimately the wellspring of mutual trust – is a prerequisite for any successful cross-border cooperation'.³⁷ Taking this and Paasi's previously-mentioned distinction between "borders" and boundaries" into consideration, it is clear that bilateral cooperation not only requires the breaking down of borders, but also the breaking down of boundaries.³⁸

In this regard, it is important to elaborate on the concept of nationalism and to take notion of Benedict Anderson's famously posed concept of imagined communities. The idea behind nationalism is simple enough: the world is populated by different peoples and each has its own culture; the final expression of cultural unity is the making of a state, an act that promotes the cultural or ethnic group to the status of a nation.³⁹ Although generally portrayed as a "natural" state of being, in Anderson's view a nation is an "imagined community" seeing that, although the people of a nation cannot possibly all know each other, they do feel that they all have something in common and, as such, are one. This imagining is a continuous process and, as such, it is wrong to think that a national identity has a solid basis.⁴⁰

How nationalism eventually creates boundaries and divides peoples depends on the kind of nationalism and state policies that are being deployed. In theorizations on nationalism two forms are generally distinguished: "civil" nationalism and "ethnic" nationalism, whereby civil nationalism is a more inclusive form that includes minority groups.⁴¹ In practice, there is

³⁷ Association of European Border Regions, *European Charter*, 3.

³⁸ To be precise, borders can be broken down by – for instance – stopping the visa requirement and allowing free cross-border movement. Breaking down boundaries is ultimately about decreasing the distance people perceive between each other.

³⁹ Gerd Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identities*, (Zones of Religion. New York: Routledge, 1999), 15. Also: Richard C. Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913: Prelude to the First World War*, (London: Routledge, 2000), 14.

⁴⁰ Rather, it is tangible and reinvented every day by the people themselves and especially by the nation's political entity, which continuously reproduces a border in space with the use of symbols (e.g. flags and a national anthem) and semiotics (e.g. language). Note that, according to Anderson, national identification is driven mainly by a desire for social cohesion. See: Eker, van Houtum, Cock, Le Clercq, and Middleton, *Border Land*, 175-177. Also: Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries, and Consciousness*, 27-28, 305.

⁴¹ To elaborate on the distinction between civil and ethnic nationalism, ethnic nationalism can be defined as a form of exclusive nationhood, defining the nation and providing the rights of its citizens based on cultural and ethnic criteria. Minority groups that do not fit into this ethnic criterion are excluded. Civil nationalism, on the other hand, includes all citizens and grants them equal social, political and cultural rights regardless of their ethnic or religious origins. According to Hobsbawm, roughly in the second half of the century, ethnic nationalism became the dominant type in Europe due to the 'increasingly massive geographical migrations of peoples, [...] the transformation of that central concept of nineteenth-century social science, "race". On the one hand the old-established division of mankind into a few "races" distinguished by skin-color was now elaborated into a set of "racial" distinctions separating peoples of approximately the same pale skin. [...] On the other hand,

not a black-and-white dichotomy between these two forms of nationalism within a nation, rather throughout time, the situation changes whereby either civil- or ethnic nationalism is approached more. Yonca Köksal (Koç University, Turkey) in this regard distinguishes between four different government policies to describe degrees of inclusion and exclusion in nation-states: repression, assimilation, pluralist policies (i.e. institutionalized tolerance) and indifference.⁴² It should be noted that inclusive policies do not necessarily result in decreasing boundaries between peoples. In a state with pluralist policies, the result can be that a minority group gradually comes to see itself more as a distinct group that stands apart from the majority and eventually may prefer independence. Likewise, assimilation can be inclusive and decrease boundaries between people, but at the same time can foster resentment and increase in-group feelings as a group feels an identity is forced upon it and, as such, increase boundaries.⁴³ The point made here is that it is always necessary to study the specific situation and context throughout time to come to any conclusion and to get an idea of the kind of nationalism (i.e. “inclusive” or “exclusive”) that is predominant.

Next to the theorization on nationalism, Gerd Baumann (late professor of anthropology, University of Amsterdam) argues there are two more “poles” that define our cultural – or community – identity, namely: ethnicity and religion.⁴⁴ What is not argued by Baumann is that either nationality, ethnicity or religion are absolute or “essential” concepts that create clear-cut divisions between people, but rather, like Anderson, he argues that culture is not a one-way street that shapes us into who we are; we as much continuously shape our own culture. This also means that claiming we have one distinct cultural identity

Darwinian evolutionism, supplemented later by what came to be known as genetics, provided racism with what looked like a powerful set of “scientific” reasons for keeping out or even, as it turned out, expelling and murdering stranger’. See: Clifford Geertz, *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, (London: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 108. And: E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, (2nd ed. Canto Classics. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 63, 107-108. And: Yonca Köksal, “Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey: The Struggle to Define a Nation”, *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 6, no. 4 (2006): 502-503.

⁴² Tolerant or intolerant attitudes towards language, education, and religious practice of minority groups range from the most extreme form of repression (including genocide and deportation) to policies designed to undercut potential bases for ethnic group mobilization through assimilation. Assimilation can aim at control over usage of common cultural and linguistic symbols in schools. It can also aim at administrative incorporation through the interaction or cooperation of ethnic group leaders into the structures of power and wealth in the society. See: Köksal, “Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey”: 503.

⁴³ Rather, there is a considerable body of research showing that ethnic identity is likely to be strong when members of minority groups feel a strong affiliation to their ethnic community because of contextual pressures to assimilate to the national culture. See: Dimitrova, et al., “Ethnic Identity”: 2, 6-8.

Also: Richard Alba, “Bright versus Blurred Boundaries: Second-Generation Assimilation and Exclusion in France, Germany, and the United States”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 21-23. Also: Radosveta Dimitrova, Michael Bender, Athanasios Chasiotis, and Fons J.R van de Vijver, “Ethnic Identity and Acculturation of Turkish-Bulgarian Adolescents”, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37, no. 1 (2013): 2.

⁴⁴ For Baumann’s legitimization for these three “poles”, see: Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle*, 14-16, 83.

that is different from other cultural identities would be wrong.⁴⁵ Perceiving identities as never-changing absolutes – something that Baumann calls an “essentialist” view – ‘cannot explain why cultures ever change or why, in fact, all cultures we know change all the time’.⁴⁶ Instead of seeing culture in an “essentialist” way, Baumann argues we should see it in a “processual” way, which means that we should acknowledge that: ‘We all participate in the keeping up, not to mention the remaking, of a national cultural, an ethnic culture, and a religious one’.⁴⁷

Taking notion of this, why would it still be beneficial to make use of Baumann’s multicultural triangle and to study these not so rigid identities of nationality, ethnicity and religion in the Bulgarian-Turkish context? As Baumann argues, the matter is not so much about two theories on culture whereby one (the essentialist) is “wrong” and the other (the processual) is “correct”, what matters is that: ‘informants are never wrong; they have reasons to think what they think. [...] If the people we study come out with theories we find false, we cannot simply rubbish them as “false ideology” or “false consciousness”. They form part of the realities we study, and we need to understand how they work, why people use them, and what people want to achieve with them’.⁴⁸ This is exactly what makes it worthwhile to look at nationality, ethnicity and religion in the Bulgarian-Turkish context.

When doing this, making use of Baumann’s theory of “grammars of identity” is also useful. Baumann identified three types of grammar of identity and alterity, that is: three different ways of referring to ourselves and the “other”, namely: *orientalizing*, *segmentation* and *encompassment*.⁴⁹ When people are orientalizing, they are constituting their own identity through a process of negative (or reversed) mirror-imaging of an opposing identity (this can be of another person, but also of another group). In this process, it is not about whether the

⁴⁵ Baumann argues: In the urbanized societies of the West, and in fact everywhere else in our urbanized world, different cultural cleavages do not run parallel to each other. Rather, they cut across one another to form an ever-changing pattern of what may be called “cross-cutting cleavages”. To give an example of this “cross-cutting”, and to show how impossible it is to keep these “absolute” cultural identities neatly separated, we can turn to the Bulgarian-Turkish border region. Is a Muslim, ethnic Turk with a Bulgarian nationality going to behave like a Muslim, a Turk or a Bulgarian? Does he or she have a distinct Muslim, a distinct Turkish, or a distinct Bulgarian identity? Claiming any would not only be arbitrary, but also misleading. See: Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle*, 84.

⁴⁶ Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle*, 84.

⁴⁷ Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle*, 84.

⁴⁸ Very often, what groups want to achieve is a sense of cultural continuity, a firm sense of cultural oneness or identity, and a stronger claim to community rights. It is not the social scientist’s job to discredit these aims, but to understand why and under what conditions people use an essentialist theory to achieve their aims. Moreover, exactly because we cannot “just” dismiss the essentialist theory of culture and “only” consider the processual theory, Baumann prefers to move away from calling these theories and instead, refer to a “double, or dual, discursive competence”. See: Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle*, 90-94.

⁴⁹ Gerd Baumann and André Gingrich, *Grammars of Identity/Alterity: A Structural Approach*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 18.

identity that has been constructed of the “other” is correct, but rather that by attributing certain negative characteristics to the other, the identity of the in-group is constructed. This process can be both explicit and implicit.⁵⁰

What characterizes the grammar of segmentation, is that the way people refer to themselves and the other is context-dependent, whereby the in-group may identify itself with someone else (or with another group) in a certain context, but not in another. As such, the system behind it is, in the words of Baumann, ‘a logic of division or hostility at a lower level [e.g. the local level] of segmentation, that is overcome by a logic of fusion or neutralizing of conflict at a higher level of segmentation [e.g. the national level]’.⁵¹ What Baumann’s grammar of segmentation shows is that division and unification is dependent on the level of segmentation that is chosen. Baumann himself also calls this grammar a “pyramid of identifications” from small to large, with the local and the personal at the bottom of the pyramid and the nation at the top.

Whereas with segmentation there are “sliding scales of selfings and otherings among parties conceived formally equal”, with the grammar of encompassment, there is no equality. Rather, what characterizes encompassment is that selfing and othering is done in an asymmetrical way through the ‘hierarchized inclusion of others who are thought, from a higher level of abstraction, to be really “part of us”’.⁵² Thus, a group that may see itself as a distinctive group, is “encompassed” by the other group that claims that it is part of it. For the group that is doing the encompassing, this is a way of redefining and expanding the boundary of their community.⁵³

Having discussed the three main cultural identities, how these are (re-)shaped and how these are defined, it should also be noted that cultural identities are always connected to a certain territory (i.e. *place*).⁵⁴ Paasi, in this regard, speaks of a process of “institutionalization” in four phases: the assumption of a territorial shape (borders); the formation of conceptual (symbolic) shape; the formation of institutional shape; and the

⁵⁰ Thus, when the other is portrayed as “backward” or “irrational”, the implicit assumption is that the in-group is not, but rather that it is “modern” and “rational”. Baumann and Gingrich, *Grammars of Identity/Alterity*, 21-25.

⁵¹ To give a concrete example: I can be a fan of local club A and oppose local club B and therefore feel animosity towards someone who is a fan of club B. However, this division can be overcome when the national team is playing a game and both me and the fan of club B cheer for the same country.

⁵² Baumann and Gingrich, *Grammars of Identity/Alterity*, 21-25. And: Barzoo Eliassi, “Statelessness in a world of nation-states: the cases of Kurdish diasporas in Sweden and the UK,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42, no. 9 (2016): 1417.

⁵³ In his work, Baumann gives the concrete example of the “low-caste Sikhs”, who are encompassed by the Hindi Southallians who claim that “Sikhs are Hindus”. See: Gerd Baumann, *Contesting culture: Discourses of identity in multi-ethnic London*, (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 117-118.

⁵⁴ Anssi Paasi, “The institutionalization of regions: a theoretical framework for understanding the emergence of regions and the constitution of regional identity”, *Fennia* 164.1 (1986): 105.

establishment as an entity in the regional system and consciousness of the society.⁵⁵ This, like the shaping of identities, is a continuous process and, as such, boundaries constantly change over time. Unlike borders, boundaries are not merely concrete lines or visible landscapes ‘located between socio-spatial entities, but above all [...] phenomena that are “located” in the socio-spatial consciousness and collective memory of people living in territorially constructed units on various spatial scales, whether communes, provinces or states. Boundaries are [...] structures that are produced, reproduced and contested in and between territorially bounded groupings of people’.⁵⁶ Connected with this, Henk van Houtum (Radboud University) et al. argue: ‘Identification with our own environment and our own community gives us a feeling of self-esteem, a national identity, a sense of belonging to a whole, a larger entity. Moreover, constructing and demarcating a territorial unit is an expression of the desire for clear spatial boundaries and priorities in daily life. Marking out a border is effectively saying “keep your distance”’.⁵⁷ In short, structuring the “borders” of our worldview and identity gives us peace of mind, comfort and security. This may also explain why in this time of globalization and mass migration, the function of borders is a source of unrest.⁵⁸ What we should take from this is that, while breaking down the boundaries and opening the borders is necessary to successfully cooperate, this process can, in turn, foster resistance, increase nationalist sentiment and make the boundary between different peoples more significant.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Paasi, "The institutionalization of regions": 105.

⁵⁶ Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries, and Consciousness*, 66, 301-302.

⁵⁷ Eker, Van Houtum, Cock, Le Clercq, and Middleton, *Border Land*, 175-177.

⁵⁸ Van Houtum in this regard argues: ‘For some people, openness feels like an intruder, it disturbs their comfortable orderly picture of the world and thus the purity of their own imagined unity’. Eker, Van Houtum, Cock, Le Clercq, and Middleton, *Border Land*, 175-177.

⁵⁹ In the scope of this research, we are generally dealing with two nationalities and ethnicities (Bulgarian and Turkish) and two religious groups (Christians and Muslims) that share a common history within the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Because of this shared history, it might be expected that there is not too much of a boundary between the two and, as such, that cross-border cooperation could be relatively easily achieved. However, keeping in mind the above-mentioned tangibility of communities and boundaries, the situation might have significantly changed over time since the establishment of the independent Bulgarian state in 1908 and with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I. Moreover, despite ongoing homogenization in the region, there are still significant minorities on both sides of the border. If the socio-spatial consciousness is that of a distinct Bulgarian community in Turkey, and/or that of a distinct Turkish community in Bulgaria, cross-border cooperation can be impeded as central governments may be hesitant to decentralize and give more political and economic power to their regions as they fear separatism. At the same time, exactly because there are minorities on both sides of the border, people might as well not experience much of a boundary and, as such, work together rather successfully. As mentioned in the introduction, central governments are usually rather hesitant to attribute too much political power and funds to regions with relatively large minorities as they fear of creating a state within a state and secession tendencies. See: Fischer and Pleines, *Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe*, 126. For a concrete example of where this has been the case, see: Richard A. Dodder and Lubomir Faltan, "Cross-border regional cooperation: Current concerns in Slovakia", *Nationalities Papers* 26.2 (1998): 310.

Exactly because of the tangibility of socio-spatial consciousness and boundaries through time, Paasi argues that studying them needs to be done through an external approach and an internal approach. In his view, an external approach should start with a broad comparative perspective and a sketch of the historical context in which local and individual manifestations of nationality and nationalism have occurred, whereas an internal approach should search for sources of cultural identity and community and by studying how people give meaning to their surroundings and activities.⁶⁰ The remainder of this chapter will follow these approaches.

1.1 - External approach: comparative perspective and historical context

In the Ottoman Empire, there was relatively much (institutionalized) tolerance and freedom towards minorities as the government recognized several confessional communities, also called *millets*, and granted them certain rights for religious practice and the expression of ethnic, linguistic and religious identity. As part of this, millets could deal with matters of justice and education within their own community as they seemed fit.⁶¹ Within this system, a broad spectrum of peoples lived peacefully together within the confines of the Empire, were in contact with each other and traded with each other.⁶²

Two nuances should be made. First, being institutionally tolerated is not the same as being equal and the different millets, as such, were not. Muslims were in fact the privileged community of the administration and this was also the case in Thrace where they were a minority within a non-Muslim majority.⁶³ It were the Muslim elites that were appointed as state officials and that were predominantly the prosperous landlords that had close ties to the

⁶⁰ In practice, this means the combination of analysis of scientific literature from historians, sociologists, and political scientists, with an analysis of the changing representations of borders by the collective that is studied. See: Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness*, 301. Also: Elisabeth Boesen and Gregor Schnuer, et al., *European Borderlands: Living with Barriers and Bridges*, (Taylor & Francis, 2016), 207. And: Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness*, 78-80.

⁶¹ Köksal, "Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey": 504.

⁶² Karen Barkey (University of California, Berkeley) argues: 'In the Ottoman Empire, because religious identity determined a person's legal and political status, boundaries and belonging were essential; ethnic and religious peace could be maintained by both respecting boundaries and allowing movement across them. Therefore, a mix of relations within and across communities, brokered by boundary managers, community leaders, and state officials, was key to peace'. See: Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 116-118, 146-150. For more on the millets ability to maintain peace and order among its multi-ethnic people for a considerable period, see for instance: M. Gül Kurtoglu Eskişar, "When State Becomes the Mediator: Understanding the Roots of Inter-Ethnic Peace in the Ottoman Empire", *International Review of Turkology* 2.4 (2009): 5-22.

⁶³: F. Turk, "Višejezičnost U Edirneu U 19. Stoljeću Za Vrijeme Otomanske Ere", *Jezikoslovlje* 13, no. 2 (2012): 440. And: Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 116-117.

Ottoman state.⁶⁴ It was only in the eighteenth century, when trade with Europe increased and European powers started to intervene more in Ottoman internal affairs, that the position of non-Muslims improved.⁶⁵ Second, the interethnic relations between the different groups within the Ottoman Empire should not be confused with modern notions of multiculturalism and social harmony seeing that the concept of the nation-state would only come up during the Romantic period.⁶⁶ At the same time, exactly because there was no notion of a national identity, inter-ethnic contact was relatively easily achieved, rather unproblematic and based upon socio-economic pragmatism. This had also been the case in the province of Edirne.

After the Ottoman conquest of Edirne in 1361, the city became the Ottoman capital (until the conquest of Constantinople in 1453) and acquired its cosmopolitan character whereby there were five predominant groups in Edirne: Bulgarians, Turks, Greeks, Armenians and Jews.⁶⁷ Geopolitically, the province was significant and it was economically well developed due to its favourable location whereby it connected Asia Minor and Europe. Within the economic system, Muslims were predominantly the landholders, whereas the non-Muslim communities took advantage of their religious affiliation and familiarity with European languages to advance their trade connections with European merchants starting in the eighteenth century. Trading partnerships between merchants, landholders and tax collectors resulted in a dense network of relations in which the members of the different

⁶⁴ Landholders were mainly Muslims because they earned land as fief grants in earlier centuries or gained control of land through tax collection. See: Yonca Köksal, "Rethinking Nationalism: State projects and community networks in 19th-century Ottoman Empire", *American Behavioural Scientist* 51, no. 10 (2008): 1507-1508. And: Köksal, "Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey": 516. What should also be mentioned is that better economic and social status, less taxation, and the privilege of belonging to the victorious class made it attractive for Christians and Jews (although to a lesser extent as Jews, due to historical development, were relatively prosperous due to their role in trade) to voluntarily convert to Islam. For more on this, see: Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 122-123, 125-128.

⁶⁵ Non-Muslim groups had the advantage that they were generally familiar with European cultures and languages, something they benefitted from when trade with Europe increased in the eighteenth century. Muslims, in contrast, were locked out of many trading relations because they were not Christian, or did not know the European languages. Basically, whereas the Muslim community used to be the privileged and generally "better-off" group within the Ottoman Empire, this shifted starting in the eighteenth century, not only because of the trade with Europe, but also because of the increased meddling of European countries in the domestic affairs of the Ottoman Empire. Through the "capitulatory regime", non-Muslim communities increasingly gained privileges and their socio-economic position improved steadily. See: Bruce Alan Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World: The Roots of Sectarianism*, (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 132. Also: Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 279-280.

⁶⁶ In this regard, it is important to note that the millet system was not along ethnic, but rather along religious lines. Thus, Greeks, Bulgarians and Armenians were united within the Christian Orthodox millet. Karen Barkey argues: 'Had religion and ethnicity been congruent in this classification, the Balkans might have emerged as rebellious forces long before nationalism came on the scene'. Only with the rise of nationalism did Bulgarians become increasingly dissatisfied with this situation and eventually split up to form the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. See Barkey, *Empire of Difference*, 151. Also: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 15-16.

⁶⁷ Since ancient times, Greeks had lived in the region, whereas Armenians settled there following the Turkish conquest and much of the Bulgarians came to Edirne for socio-economic reasons in the nineteenth century. See: Turk, "Višejezičnost": 440-443.

communities were in frequent contact with each other.⁶⁸ The result was that there were generally no tensions between the different groups, nor was there any conflict with the Ottoman administration in the city.⁶⁹

Several academicians point at one clear factor that would – supposedly - change the social structure and relative stability in the Balkan region starting in the nineteenth century, namely nationalism.⁷⁰ In their research on empires and how these were affected by nationalism, Omer Bartov (Brown University, USA) and Eric D. Weitz (The City College of New York) argue: ‘Nationalism was not just a sentiment of belonging related to religion, language and locality. Nationalism was expansive, indeed revolutionary, in its claim that the conformity of territorial and ethnic borders was the natural state of being. Espoused by whatever group, nationalism directly challenged the multi-ethnic and multiconfessional empires with their far more extensive border’.⁷¹ Following this argument, a straight line is then drawn from the rise of nationalism (whereby people became more aware of their national identity and of how they were being “oppressed” by the Ottomans) to a “longing for freedom” and (the fight for) independence.⁷² In the case of Bulgaria, it is then thought that growing nationalist awareness and sentiment – further inspired by the revolts and attainment

⁶⁸ Köksal argues: ‘Competition for economic benefits forced the local elite to form coalitions that crossed over religious and ethnic boundaries’. Köksal, “Rethinking Nationalism”: 1507-1508.

⁶⁹ Turk, “Višejezičnost”: 443.

⁷⁰ See for instance: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 17-18. The same argument is made by Richard C. Hall (Georgia Southwestern State University): ‘The Balkan peoples perceived nationalism as a justification for the creation of specific geopolitical entities. This concept of western European nationalism displaces the old Ottoman millet system in the Balkan’. See: Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 14. Also: Köksal, “Rethinking Nationalism”: 503. Also: Hakan M. Yavuz and Isa Blumi, *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and Their Socio-political Implications*, (Utah Series in Middle East Studies. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013).

⁷¹ A similar argument has been made by Richard C. Hall: ‘The Balkan peoples perceived nationalism as a justification for the creation of specific geopolitical entities. This concept of western European nationalism displaces the old Ottoman millet system in the Balkan’. See: Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 14. These academicians usually explain the rise of nationalism in the Balkans in three ways (or they make us of a combination of these three), whereby the oldest notion is that nationalism was always present in the region and, like a sleeping volcano, would erupt in the nineteenth century due to several favourable circumstances. The second, and most popular approach, is to see nationalism in the Balkans as a Western import, whereby it is believed that it was the introduction of Western (particularly German) Romantic nationalist ideology that gave non-Western peoples the notion that they should create states based on such characteristics. It then followed that these states should strive to incorporate culturally similar people outside their boundaries, and to exclude, assimilate, or restrict the freedoms of those within their boundaries who did not share the national culture. The third approach to nationalism is structural, whereby modernization is seen to create social and economic circumstances (e.g. increase of commerce and the following rise of a bourgeoisie) that result in the breaking down of the old, local solidarities and the forging of new, larger national ones. Often, the role of improved infrastructure and communication is also connected to this. See: D. Chirot and K. Barkey, “States in Search of Legitimacy: Was There Nationalism in the Balkans of the Early Nineteenth Century?”, *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 24, no. 1-2 (1983): 30-31. Also: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 17-18.

⁷² Victor Roudometof, “Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy: 'Unthinking' the 'Clash of Civilizations' in South-eastern Europe”, *European Journal of Social Theory* 2, no. 2 (1999): 240-241. Also: Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 14.

of independence by Serbs and Greeks - resulted in the Bulgarian April Uprising of 1876 - which, in the historiography, is then portrayed as an “anti-Ottoman revolt”. This was then followed by the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878 (which initially resulted in the creation of an independent Bulgarian state), the formal declaration of independence in 1908 and, eventually, the First- and Second Balkan War (1912-1913).⁷³ To back up this rationale, this group of historians points at rhetoric’s as used by nationalist activists and Bulgarian state officials that exclaimed how they “want to live in complete freedom” in their lands, “there where the Bulgarians live, in Bulgaria, Thrace and Macedonia”.⁷⁴ Moreover, they point at the policies of the Bulgarian government from 1878 onwards, which focused on establishing an ethnically homogeneous “greater Bulgaria”, which, it eventually wanted to achieve by forming an alliance (i.e. the Balkan League) with Serbia, Montenegro and Greece and declaring war on the Ottoman Empire on 8 October 1912, an event that, in turn, would further divide Bulgarians and Turks.⁷⁵

Although the argument of nationalism as a defining dividing force makes sense, it omits the importance of the other identity “poles”, while over-emphasizing the importance of nationalism. Rather, what is argued here, is that the Balkan Wars and preceding conflicts were not a mere “clash of civilizations” whereby the involved actors were mainly driven by nationalist sentiment.⁷⁶ In practice, many different factors played a role. Although it can indeed be argued that nationalist ideas had taken root in the Balkan Peninsula in the

⁷³ See for instance: Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 2, 14. And: Hakan and Blumi, *War and Nationalism*, 53, 89-90.

⁷⁴ Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 14.

⁷⁵ After the Russo-Turkish war and with the signing of the peace treaty of San Stefano (1878), Bulgaria - for a short time - had been a relatively large independent state. But the Great European powers (mostly France and Austria-Hungary) regarded this Bulgarian state as too big and as being too much influenced by Russia (as such threatening the power balance in Europe). Thus, with the treaty of Berlin (1878), Bulgaria was made significantly smaller and put under the sovereignty of the Ottoman sultan as an autonomous principality. Because of this, a large share of the ethnic Bulgarians remained outside of the Bulgarian state. Through different diplomatic channels (i.e. talks with Russia, Austria-Hungary and also the Ottoman Empire itself), the Bulgarian government tried to restore the previous borders, which included the full integration of Macedonia and Thrace. Eventually the Bulgarian government moved away from a peaceful solution, formed an alliance with Serbia, Montenegro and Greece and declared war on the Ottoman Empire in 1912. Interestingly, territorial claims from the Bulgarian government, as such, differed from those of the Serbs and the Greeks. Whereas the Serbian and Greek governments based their claims on historical associations, the Bulgarians, on the other hand, based theirs on the areas of the Balkans that sultan Abdülaziz had recognized as being part of the Bulgarian Christian Orthodox Exarchate. To a great extent this area matched the borders that were drawn in the treaty of San Stefano. The argument for the inclusion of Macedonia was that the Macedonian Christians were – allegedly - Bulgarian, because they spoke a Slavic dialect that resembled Bulgarian. This claim was challenged by both the Serbian and the Greek state who claimed that Macedonians were Serbian or Slavic-speaking Greeks. Keeping Baumann’s grammars of identity/alterity in mind, these are all typical forms of encompassment. See: Hakan, and Blumi, *War and Nationalism*, xxxiii, 52-53, 85, 88, 97. Also: Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 19, 22.

⁷⁶ Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 103. Also: Sinisa Malesevic, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?: nationalisms, wars and states in the 19th and early 20th century south east Europe”, *Journal of Historical Sociology* 25, No 3 (2012): 317, 325. Also: L. L. Farrar, “Aggression Versus Apathy: The Limits of Nationalism during the Balkan Wars, 1912-1913.” *East European Quarterly* 37 (2003): 258-259, 264.

nineteenth century, it needs to be noted that the impact of this emerging nationalism was – at least until the first two decades of the twentieth century – very limited. Generally, nationalism around this time was confined to the cultural sphere and to an elite (consisting of administrators, landowners, military officers, politicians and intellectuals) that predominantly used it for pragmatic reasons. Amongst the masses, on the other hand, there was little to no support for nationalist ideas.⁷⁷ For the Balkan ruling elites, nationalism functioned as an instrument that helped them mobilize their populations and legitimize their actions.⁷⁸ Declaring war on the Ottoman Empire provided them with an opportunity to consolidate their political power and economic position. Moreover, to acquire new territory would mean an extra source of economic growth, geopolitical power and state pride.⁷⁹ Recognizing the practical use of nationalism, this elite invested a great deal in educational systems, publishing, organizing cultural events, language policies and mass media to articulate and spread particular versions of nationalist narratives.⁸⁰ From the start, the Balkan Wars were, as

⁷⁷ Several reasons can be given for the absence of nationalism in Bulgaria until after the First World War. First, well into the twentieth century, the large majority of the Balkan populations was hardly educated and generally illiterate. As Ernest Gellner (University of Cambridge) emphasized with his theory of nationalism, there can be no strong nationalist ideology without full literacy and state sponsored educational systems. As such, the overwhelming majority of the population in Bulgaria had no sense of nationhood around this time. Second, with the millet system, religion was the principal source of social inclusion and exclusion in the Ottoman Empire and, as such, divisions were along religious, rather than ethnic or national lines. Nationalist elites in the Balkan states were very much aware of this and therefore chose to make religion a main tool for the promotion of nationalism, also because this circumvented the issue of illiteracy. Thus, the Balkan nationalists manipulated religious institutions to transform religious ties into national ones whereby the political cleavage between Christians and Muslims was reinterpreted as a national cleavage between “oppressed” Balkan peoples and Ottoman “oppressors”. However, at the time of the Balkan Wars, these were still not widely accepted ideas, if only because the higher clergy of the Orthodox Church and the Christian cultural and political elite of the Balkans had no interest in nationalist narratives seeing that they enjoyed significant political privileges and religious autonomy that were given to them by the Ottoman regime. This made them both a powerful and wealthy class whereby supporting a break-up from the Ottoman Empire would only undermine their position. Third, in all Balkan states peasantry constituted the majority and in general, these are not “natural born nationalists”. Moreover, as far as there was discontent amongst the peasantry, their quarrel was primarily with their landlords and whether these were Christian or Muslim mattered little to them. See: Malesevic, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?”: 301, 315-322, 326. Also: Roudometof, “Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy”: 240. Also for Gellner’s argument on how nationalism develops, see: Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, New Perspectives on the Past, Oxford: Blackwell, 2006. Also: Farrar, “Aggression versus apathy”: 259-262.

⁷⁸ As such, the First Balkan War was justified by framing it as a way of solving the “problem of national unity”, whereby it was argued that - because of the current borders – a group of Bulgarians was not included within the Bulgarian state and, as such, still had to live under the “oppression” of the Ottoman regime. See: Farrar, “Aggression versus apathy”: 260-261.

⁷⁹ And, as such, would mean an improvement of the elite’s (as well as the country’s) socioeconomically and political position and situation. See: Malesevic, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?”: 312-313, 325. Also: Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 14. Also: Roudometof, “Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy”: 240-242. Also: Farrar, “Aggression versus apathy”: 266-269.

⁸⁰ More concretely: they invested in standardizing and celebrating the Bulgarian language and frequently referred to the medieval Bulgarian states that had existed from the seventh until the fourteenth century, directly connecting it to their own time. Moreover, they also sponsored publications such as those of Georgi Stoikov Rakovski that glorified romantic views of oral and peasant culture as an uncorrupted depository of pure Bulgarian consciousness. See: Malesevic, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?”: 320-321. Also:

such, also portrayed as national struggles for freedom from the “Ottoman yoke” and previous conflicts – like the April Uprising of 1876 and the Ilinden Uprising of 1903 – were retrospectively framed in the same way.⁸¹ Although nationalists like to frame (previous) conflicts in such a way as to make it appear as if these are clear-cut struggles between nations, we would fall in an essentialist trap if we would indeed assume that there is such a thing as a historical struggle between peoples. For the general Balkan population, the actual reasons to fight were very diverse and based on socioeconomic, religious, as well as local motivations.⁸²

Likewise, to call uprisings in the Balkans prior to the Balkan Wars “struggles for national independence” is too simplistic. Rather, the leaders of independence movements were predominantly local landowners and other notables who simply sought to consolidate and improve their own recently acquired positions.⁸³ Whether the people of their districts were of the same linguistic (or religious) group mattered little to them. Usually, these insubordinate districts would – sooner or later – be brought back under the control of the Ottoman state, which tried to centralize its power during the Tanzimat.⁸⁴ However, great “Christian powers” (especially Great Britain, France and Russia) in some cases intervened, allowing regions to break away, as was the case with Bulgaria when Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire in 1877.⁸⁵ Although these powers legitimized their actions with

Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 14. Also: Roudometof, “Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy”: 239-240. Also: Farrar, “Aggression versus apathy”: 262-263.

⁸¹ The Uprising of Ilinden (a town that is nowadays located in Macedonia) was, as had been the case in 1876, violently suppressed by the Ottoman army. In this process, around 2.500 people had been killed and 30.000 people (predominantly Macedonians and Bulgarians) had fled to Bulgaria. See: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 68. Also: Malesevic, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?”: 316-317, 321-326. Also: Chirot and Barkey, “States in Search of Legitimacy”: 40. And: Roudometof, “Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy”: 243. Also: Andrea Boscoboinik, et al., *From Palermo to Penang: a journey into political anthropology*, (Lit Verlag, 2010), 180-185.

⁸² Malesevic, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?”: 316-317, 321-326. Also: Chirot and Barkey, “States in Search of Legitimacy”: 40. Also: Roudometof, “Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy”: 243. Also: Farrar, “Aggression versus apathy”: 262-263. Also: Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle*, 15.

⁸³ The rise to power of these local landowners and other notables had everything to do with the state of decline that the Ottoman Empire was in. Increasingly the Empire was financially and technologically overtaken by Western powers and gradually it turned in on itself, whereby internal competition for rewards fostered corruption. Governors and military garrisons of provinces, deprived of opportunities for new land and booty, withheld revenues from the centre, thus eroding Constantinople’s control. This, in turn, worsened corruption and inefficiency at the centre and made it much more likely that municipalities and regions would slip out of control, while everywhere taxes would be raised to compensate for other losses. Chirot and Barkey argue: ‘In other words, the decline of the Ottoman Empire was a classic case of degeneration of a “prebendal” [i.e. the support or allowance afforded by the state to a private person] agrarian state through a kind of “feudalization”’. See: Chirot and Barkey, “States in Search of Legitimacy”: 40. Also: Malesevic, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?”: 317, 325.

⁸⁴ The Tanzimat was a period of reform (the literal translation of the word is “reorganization”) in the Ottoman Empire between 1839 and 1876, which aimed to modernize and strengthen the state.

⁸⁵ Davide Rodogno, *Against Massacre: Humanitarian Interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815-1914*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2015), 25, 141-145.

nationalist and religious rhetoric and motivations (i.e. they presented it as “freeing” the Ottoman Christians from their Muslim “oppressors”), their reasons to intervene were similarly rather pragmatic. In the view of the European powers, independence would provide a group of client states which’ stabilization under their supervision would ensure a form of stability and peace in Europe.⁸⁶

The fact that European powers only intervened when it concerned movements that were led by Christian elites, did have the result that a division between Muslims and non-Muslims was increasingly created.⁸⁷ Moreover, due to the workings of the millet system, there was an overlap between one’s class and one’s religious and ethnic background, which meant that divisions between socio-economic classes automatically meant division along ethnic and religious lines.⁸⁸ Within this climate, it was rather easy for nationalists to claim that their group was being oppressed, which they did.

Thus, regarding Bulgaria it can certainly be argued that the seeds for nationalism were planted around this time and that the soil in which these would grow became more fertile, but nationalism cannot be seen as a decisive factor that divided the peoples in Thrace.⁸⁹ In line with Baumann’s thinking, the peoples of the Balkans had several identities and around this time, religious, class and local- and family ties were still more important than a national identity. As such, it should not be thought that there were no divisions between people at all,

⁸⁶ This pragmatic approach to maintain a balance between the “great” European powers was still the guiding principle for countries such as Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia towards the Balkan states during the Balkan Wars. See: Farrar, “Aggression versus apathy”: 269-276. Also: Rodogno, *Against Massacre*, 25, 141-145.

⁸⁷ Daniel Chirot (University of Washington) and Karen Barkey argue: ‘Muslim elites who tried to establish independent or autonomous states within the Balkans could never count on ideological support from Christian powers. It struck Muslim landowners and elites that rising Christian independence movements threatened their own control over their peasants and thus, as the nineteenth century advanced, independence from Constantinople began to seem less attractive. This was certainly the case in Bulgaria’. See: Chirot and Barkey, “States in Search of Legitimacy”: 40-42.

⁸⁸ Malesevic notes: ‘Being a “Serb” or “Bulgar” or other “Slav” implied one’s peasant status and moving to town and becoming a merchant meant often becoming a “Greek”’. See: Malesevic, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?”: 316.

⁸⁹ The revolts in the nineteenth century were triggered by pragmatic, political, socio-economic and localized motivations that were framed and (retrospectively) justified by nationalist elites and European powers on nationalistic and religious grounds to, in turn, serve their own pragmatic, (geo)political and socio-economic agendas. Moreover, “imitation” should also be factored in. Feinstein and Wimmer’s research points at a “domino effect”, whereby the chance of secessionism is bigger if more groups in the region have recently created a nation-state. Also, they find that the chance of nationalists being successful is bigger if the centre is weakened by wars (as was the case with the Ottoman Empire and especially with Bulgaria which was helped by Russia). See: Feinstein and Wimmer, “The Rise of the Nation-State”: 768, 781, 783. Also: Malesevic, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?”: 316.

but what should be emphasized is that these divisions were much blurrier than has been portrayed by nationalist elites and some historians.⁹⁰

In the Ottoman Empire, nationalism also still mattered little around this time, which – for instance – can be seen by the fact that the Ottoman regime continued to promote “Ottomanism” as the main identity of the empire.⁹¹ Starting in the Tanzimat era, the regime recognized that nationalism could potentially have negative effects on its multi-ethnic and multi-religious empire and, as such, embarked on a policy that promoted an inclusive Ottoman identity (i.e. Ottomanism).⁹² In line with this, with the outbreak of the Balkan War, the government chose to create an inclusive narrative that tried to mobilize all the peoples living in the Empire. From the start, the war that was launched by the Balkan League was described as an “anachronistic” and “bigoted religious war” that was waged against the

⁹⁰ The atrocities committed during the Balkan Wars, whereby not only the armies, but also the population actively participated in massive killings and deliberate destruction of entire neighbourhoods, must also be seen in this ideologically highly diffused light. For the nationalist military officers, targeting the Muslim population was a deliberate tactic to achieve a homogeneous national state. As such, deliberate terror created by burning entire Muslim villages, destroying and desecrating mosques, looting, murdering, and raping was intended as a spur to move populations out of a piece of territory. It should be noted that, in this process, a conscious distinction in Muslims was made between Turks and Pomaks. Turks were regarded as a distinctive “other” and, as such, were generally killed or driven away. Pomaks, on the other hand, were claimed (i.e. encompassed) to be Bulgarians who had been converted to Islam centuries ago following the Ottoman conquests and because of this, they tried to “revive a consciousness of lost nationality in the minds of their kinsmen” by converting them “back” to Orthodox Christianity. Again, pragmatism instead of nationalist ideology should be considered here and rather there were two primary motivations for assimilating this sizeable minority group. First, it enabled the young state to claim all territories settled by the Pomaks based on commonality of language. Second, it helped diffuse the freshly forged Bulgarian-Christian national identity to newly conquered populations, notably the Pomaks. Apart from that, it should be recognized that these forced conversions were also a pretext, whereby the main goal was that of personal enrichment as Pomaks had to pay for their forced conversions. For the soldiers and populations, the motivations for the atrocities committed were based on a mix of (local) socio-economic resentment and opportunism and pragmatism. To ascribe them to vague pretexts such as “centuries old hatred” would be too simplistic. Improving one’s material situation was probably the most pragmatic reason and in this regard, all minorities could become a target, especially if they were more prosperous than their neighbours. For the peasants who had a Muslim landlord, the defeat of the Ottoman army in the First Balkan War meant that, for several months, they were given the chance to become their own masters. Moreover, every peasant who cherished a grudge against a harsh landlord or a brutal neighbour, was now given the opportunity of vengeance. See: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the International Commission*, 71-72, 113-116, 123-130, 148. Also: Yavuz and Blumi, *War and Nationalism*, 316. Also: Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 102. Also: Richard J.A Crampton, *A concise history of Bulgaria*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 430. Also: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 12-18. Also: Farrar, “Aggression versus apathy”: 259-260.

⁹¹ Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 284-288.

⁹² Part of this policy was also administrative centralization and the giving of equal rights to different minority groups. The general reasoning was that, by forming direct links between the rulers and the ruled and by granting equal rights and responsibilities to all Ottoman subjects, belonging to the Ottoman nation would be created, regardless of ethnic or religious differences. To strengthen this direct link, a national assembly (i.e. Ottoman parliament) was established, which brought representatives of the different millets together (although it would be closed two years later). With the Gülhane Edict of 1839, equal taxation, equal military conscription and guarantees for life, honour and property for all Ottoman subjects were introduced. Starting from 1856, non-Muslims were also allowed to work in the civil services. In the end, formation of an Ottoman identity never successfully took place. Three reasons can be given for this: first, to avoid conflict with the existing local and regional elites, Ottoman reformers decided to incorporate elements of the millet system. See: Köksal, “Rethinking Nationalism”: 1502, 1507-1508. Also: Rainer Grote and Röder Tilmann, *Constitutionalism in Islamic Countries: Between Upheaval and Continuity*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 328-330.

Ottoman nation, whereby the origins of it were traced back to the Crusades. The response of the Ottoman nation to this “obsolete challenge” was portrayed as a total mobilization of all segments of the Ottoman nation.⁹³ A major indication of this inclusive policy was that sultan Mehmed Reşad V, in his capacity as *caliph* (i.e. the spiritual leader of the Muslim community), did not proclaim a *jihad* (i.e. holy war) against the – Christian - Balkan states. This omission was not a coincidence; in this way, an effort was made to depict the Empire as struggling for a noble cause that represented the interests of all its peoples.⁹⁴

However, during the First Balkan War (and especially after the Ottoman Empire had been defeated), this inclusive narrative shifted towards an exclusive – although still not nationalist - one. On the one hand, this was triggered by the increasing number of reports about the Bulgarian and Greek atrocities against the Muslim population. On the other hand, the government and army officers looked for a convincing story to explain the defeat and within this climate, it was tempting to blame the loss on the non-Muslims who had, for the first time, also been included in the Ottoman army and – allegedly – had done this without real fervour. Rather, there were stories (of which some were indeed true) that they had defected to the Bulgarian or Greek army and that they had participated in the atrocities against the Muslim population of Thrace.⁹⁵ This, combined with the drive for revenge for what had happened in the first war, resulted in severe reprisals against the Bulgarian and Greek populations during the second war, when the Ottoman Empire reconquered eastern Thrace.⁹⁶

The two Balkan Wars, in this way, were the first building stones for a boundary between peoples in the Balkans and in the region of Thrace. However, it should be noted that divisions still did not run clearly along national lines and although uncounted numbers of

⁹³ This discourse was promoted in official ceremonies, military parades and popular gatherings, but was especially espoused by the Ottoman press (including the minorities’ press) that spread messages and created an image of a general mobilization. Moreover, in various speeches, high officials employed terms implying Ottoman identity: “the Ottoman nation”, “the Ottoman fatherland”, “the national mission”, and “the sacred obligation toward the Ottoman motherland”. See: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 284-288.

⁹⁴ Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 284-288.

⁹⁵ Hakan, and Blumi, *War and Nationalism*, 54-55. Also: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 289.

⁹⁶ In the Second Balkan War the tables were turned and this time Greeks and Turks pillaged Bulgarian public buildings and houses, desecrating and destroying Bulgarian churches and killing Bulgarian civilians. In this process, approximately twenty percent of the Bulgarian population that was living in Thrace at the time was killed and tens of thousands of Bulgarians fled westwards. The Carnegie Report notes: ‘It seems that from the moment of crossing the frontier, which had appeared for some months so definitively established by the Bulgarian conquest, two sentiments ruled in the Turkish army and population. [First], [there was vengeance on those of their Christian subjects who had joined friendship with the Bulgarian invaders. [...] The second feeling, natural enough in the Muslim population returning with the army to deserted villages, was to recover their goods and take them away from their new owners’. See: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Report of the International Commission*, 127-128. Also: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 68. Also: Hakan and Blumi, *War and Nationalism*, 125.

civilians perished in, or fled from, the horrors of the Balkan Wars, no purely national states resulted either. Rather, each post-war state continued to include large national minority communities. Moreover, especially after the First World War, there was a predominant anti-nationalist and anti-militarist sentiment in Bulgaria and into the 1920s, the Bulgarian state continued to have a tolerant and – for some times - even favourable policy towards the Turkish minority.⁹⁷

In this regard, the Ottoman Empire had been impacted much more significantly by the Balkan Wars as these had dashed any hope for an “Ottoman union” and a common Ottoman identity that included the (Balkan) Christians.⁹⁸ Ottomanism proved to be an illusion for the government, which increasingly began to see the Christians as the traitors of the empire.⁹⁹ Within the government, the idea became prevalent that the Christian elements (which even were described as a “cancer” in the “body” of the empire) needed to be expelled.¹⁰⁰ In 1913, the state started with a policy of expulsion of Christians from the Ottoman territories, beginning with the Bulgarians and Greeks in Thrace.¹⁰¹ To do this, the Ottoman state used a “dual-track mechanism” which means that, on the one hand, they signed several population exchange agreements with the governments of the Balkan states and, on the other hand, terrorized Christian subjects - including with massacres - to force them to move.¹⁰² Moreover,

⁹⁷ In Bulgaria, nationalism would only gradually acquire mass popularity after the First World War as a nationalist elite continued to promote it through the educational system, historiography and literature, as well as by connecting Christian Orthodoxy with a Bulgarian national identity. With literacy levels rising, ongoing urbanization and an expanding national administration, more Bulgarians became acquainted with the constructed national narrative. During communism, Bulgarian history emphasized the Bulgarian nation’s superiority over all their Balkan and western adversaries and included much anti-Turkish propaganda. Although there have been recent attempts to liberalize this historical interpretation, these have, until now, borne fruit only to a limited extent. At the same time, a systematic revision of the school textbooks has not yet been fulfilled. See: Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 102. Also: Turk, “Višejezičnost”: 440-444. Also: Köksal, “Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey”: 508-510. Also: Malešević, “Did wars make nation-states in the Balkans?”: 322. Farrar, “Aggression versus apathy”: 262-264. Also: Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 41.

⁹⁸ Hall notes: ‘Ironically, of all the participants in the Balkan Wars, only the Young Turks succeeded in forging a maximalist national state’. See: Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, 102.

⁹⁹ Hakan and Blumi, *War and Nationalism*, 125. Also: Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, (Vol. 2. Cambridge University Press, 1983), 126.

¹⁰⁰ Again, it should be noted that – partially - this was a form of scapegoating whereby the Christian elements were blamed for the loss of the first Balkan War. On the other hand, in their search to modernize and improve the socioeconomic, technical and military situation in the country, the Ottoman state had especially been inspired by the success stories of relatively new nation-states and most notably by Germany, which, in the process of coming together as one nation, had defeated France in the Franco-German War of 1870-1871 and was regarded as a strong and modern country. See: Hakan, and Blumi, *War and Nationalism*, 54-55. Also: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 289. Also: Taner Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2012), 29.

¹⁰¹ Hakan, and Blumi, *War and Nationalism*, 126.

¹⁰² Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire agreed upon a first population exchange plan in 1913, which involved roughly 50.000 Bulgarians and 50.000 Muslims. However, most Bulgarians and Muslims that were included in

those Christians that stayed were subjected to policies of assimilation (i.e. Turkification).¹⁰³ With Bulgarians and Greeks increasingly fleeing from Ottoman Thrace, many villages became empty and the Ottoman government pursued an active policy of resettling Muslims and giving them the homes and lands that were left vacant by Greeks and Bulgarians.¹⁰⁴ For the Greek and Bulgarian refugees from Eastern Thrace, who were prevented from returning to their places of origin, it became a major issue to be compensated for the properties that they left behind. This 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.¹⁰⁵

Following the First World War, which left both Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire defeated, Thrace was ceded to Greece and, together with the Empire, became occupied by Greek and Western forces.¹⁰⁶ Seeing the non-Muslim minorities' (especially the Greek population) secessionist activities and collaboration with the Greek and Western armies, a strong feeling of hostility towards them was present in Turkey. As such, the Turkish War of Independence was not only directed against the occupying forces, but also against the non-Muslim minorities which increasingly started to leave the country.¹⁰⁷

Policies towards minorities in Bulgaria and Turkey from that time onwards changed several times throughout the twentieth century. In Turkey, between 1920 and 1925, they were relatively inclusive, if only because of pragmatism seeing that, after the Balkan Wars, the First World War, the Independence War and several epidemics, the population had

this deal had already fled from their homes by the time it was finished. Because of this, the treaty's stipulations had meaning only regarding regulating property matters in retrospect. At the same time, attacks against local Christians continued throughout 1913 and 1914, only to be interrupted by the outbreak of the First World War. See: Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity*, 29, 63-65, 69. Also: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 68-69, 88. Also: Fikret Adanır, *Non-Muslims in the Ottoman army and the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan War of 1912-1913*, (Oxford University Press, 2011), 125.

¹⁰³ Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity*, 29.

¹⁰⁴ Figures wise, it is nowadays estimated that between 150.000 and 200.000 Greeks fled or migrated to Greece between 1913 and 1914, whereas another 480.000 were deported during the First World War. Regarding the Muslim communities of Bulgaria and Greece, around 413.000 fled or migrated to the Empire between 1912 and 1920, whereas around 250.000 Bulgarians fled or migrated from Greece and the Ottoman Empire between 1912 and 1930. See: Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity*, 75, 87-89. Also: Dragostinova, "Competing Priorities, Ambiguous Loyalties": 554.

¹⁰⁵ Naxidiou, "Nationalism versus Multiculturalism": 97. Also: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 70. Also: Petar Stoyanov, "Bulgarian regions at EU external border: the case study of Bulgaria-Turkey border area". *Geographica Timisiensis*, 19.2 (2010): 197-205.

¹⁰⁶ Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 69.

¹⁰⁷ Down the line, the percentage of non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire/Turkey dropped from 19.1 percent in 1914 to 2.5 percent in 1927. See: Ahmet İçduygu, Sule Toktas and B. Ali Soner, "The Politics of Population in a Nation-Building Process: Emigration of Non-Muslims from Turkey", *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 2 (2008): 364. Also: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 91.

significantly shrunken.¹⁰⁸ Between 1925 and 1946, there was a shift towards an assimilationist policy, which included forced deportations.¹⁰⁹ For the region of Edirne, this meant that it definitively lost its characteristic ethnic and religious diversity.¹¹⁰ After the military coup of 1960, substantive rights were granted to minorities, including the freedom of expression and association.¹¹¹ At the same time, the Turkish government did continue to pursue a nationalist policy and, as part of this, encouraged Turkish-speaking Bulgarians to migrate to Turkey.¹¹²

In Bulgaria of the 1920s, the government tried to improve the life of minorities, hoping that, in this way, neighbouring countries where Bulgarian communities were still living, would reciprocate.¹¹³ However, there was an abrupt shift in minority policies following the military coup of 1934 which brought a right-wing, authoritarian government to power.¹¹⁴ Promoting Bulgarian nationalism and assimilation, the Bulgarian government cut down the number of Turkish schools, curtailed the autonomy of the Turkish community and closed several Turkish newspapers.¹¹⁵ Directly after the Second World War, the situation improved slightly, but only for a very short period.¹¹⁶ Soon, more aggressive assimilation

¹⁰⁸ Köksal, "Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey": 515. Also: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 90.

¹⁰⁹ This included a language campaign under the motto "citizen speak Turkish" in the 1930s, which resulted in more migrations. Ayse Parla, "Longing, Belonging and Locations of Homeland among Turkish Immigrants from Bulgaria", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 6, no. 4 (2006): 545. Also: Köksal, "Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey": 515.

¹¹⁰ Turk, "Višejezičnost": 444.

¹¹¹ Köksal, "Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey": 516.

¹¹² In this process, Turkish-speaking Bulgarians became the most privileged migrant group in Turkey. See: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 107-108.

¹¹³ Moreover, the fact that in 1919 the Agrarian People's Union (BAPU) came to power had a positive effect on the situation of Turkish citizens. BAPU was against big business interests and landlords in their agricultural policy and, considering that the majority of the Turkish population in Bulgaria was active in agriculture, the BAPU became the first government to focus systematically on the problems of the Turkish minority, especially in terms of education and religious practice. Thus, in 1921, equal rights for minorities were granted and with the National Education Law of 1921, the state started funding Turkish schools and learning Bulgarian was no longer obligatory. It was during this time that the Turkish minority became better organized, even more so because Turkish political opposition (i.e. supporters of the Sultanate) fled from Turkey after the establishment of the Republic in 1923, and in general these were well-educated elites and active journalists. It was this group that significantly contributed to the Bulgarian Turkish press and introduced some political concepts such as Turkish nationalism. In addition, increasing educational opportunities had raised the literacy level and had permitted the formation of the first Turkish associations. The improved Turkish organizational capacity culminated in the first Turkish Congress in Sophia in 1929. Elected delegates discussed the main problems and concerns of the Turkish community (such as education and property rights of Turks who had migrated from Bulgaria to Turkey) and reported their demands to the Bulgarian government, which – however – never put them into practice. See: Köksal, "Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey": 508-511.

¹¹⁴ Köksal, "Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey": 508-511.

¹¹⁵ Vera Mutafchieva, "The Notion of the "Other" in Bulgaria: The Turks. A Historical Study", *Anthropological Journal on European Cultures* (1995): 71.

¹¹⁶ Parla, "Longing, Belonging and Locations of Homeland": 545.

policies became the norm again.¹¹⁷ Because of this, there have been several waves of negotiated resettlement of Bulgarian Turks to Turkey during the Cold War.¹¹⁸ The biggest, and last, of these migration waves followed in 1989 because of an especially aggressive assimilation campaign in Bulgaria, known as the “Revival Process”. This campaign, which started in 1984, banned the wearing of traditional Turkish dress and the speaking of Turkish in public spaces and later, Turks were forced to change their names as a way of “Bulgarification”.¹¹⁹ Ultimately, in the 1980s the Bulgarian government made two extraordinary claims that can be labelled as clear forms of encompassment and that, at the same time, show how an essentialist theory and processual theory are easily combined and accepted. The first claim was that there were in fact no Turks in Bulgaria, but that all Muslims in Bulgaria were the descendants of Bulgarians who had been forced to convert to Islam during the Ottoman period (which was “proven” by the fact that they spoke Bulgarian). The second claim was that after all these years, the descendants of “forcibly Islamized Bulgarians” had now become aware of their “true identity” as Bulgarians and reclaimed it (e.g. by “voluntarily” and “spontaneously” replacing their Muslim names with conventional Bulgarian ones).¹²⁰ From 1985 until 1989, the Bulgarian authorities would continue to insist that Bulgaria was a single-nation state and that, apart from a small number of Armenians and

¹¹⁷ The main issue the Communist government had with the Muslim population of the country, was that religion in general was regarded as something pre-modern, backward, and an obstacle in building a Communist society. In the eyes of the Communist party and state officials, the whole Pomak social and cultural organization represented a remainder of the old order. The general idea was that the Pomak population was – in fact – Bulgarian and was forcibly converted to Islam in the past. By banning Islamic practices, by “proving” that Pomaks were Bulgarian through “academic” ethnographic research and by promoting a “Bulgarian identity”, the Communist government tried to include Pomaks in the majority Bulgarian society. See: Ulf Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece: Between the 'Self' and the 'Other'”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 21, no. 1 (2001): 46. Also: Köksal, “Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey”: 505, 510-511. Also: Parla, “Longing, Belonging and Locations of Homeland”: 545.

¹¹⁸ The first wave was between 1950 and 1953 and within this time frame of three years, around 250.000 Bulgarians of Turkish origin moved to Turkey. This first wave was triggered by two main factors. First, after the declaration of the communist state, the government started the process of a collectivization of farmland and seeing that a relatively large share of the Turks were agrarians, this had a big impact on the community. Second, the communist government wished to modernize the society and wanted to include women in the public sphere and the formal economy, which was something that more traditional Turks generally opposed. The second wave was in 1968 when 95.000 Turks obtained the right to emigrate to Turkey as part of a family reunification agreement that was struck between Bulgaria and Turkey. See: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 96. Also: Parla, “Longing, Belonging and Locations of Homeland”: 545. Also: Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 52.

¹¹⁹ Moreover: the Turkish-language daily newspaper *Yeni ishik*, began to appear only in Bulgarian, Turkish place names were changed, observance of Muslim customs was strictly banned, Turkish tombstones were destroyed, and in some libraries, Turkish-Bulgarian dictionaries were removed. This radical campaign was accompanied by a wave of “academic” literature which tried to prove the Bulgarian ethnic character of Bulgarian Turks. See: Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 53.

¹²⁰ Parla, “Longing, Belonging and Locations of Homeland among Turkish Immigrants from Bulgaria”: 545-546. Also: A. Eminov, *Turkish and Other Muslim Minorities in Bulgaria*, (New York: Routledge, 1997), vii. Also: Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 47.

Jews, the population of the country was entirely Bulgarian. In practice, there was nothing “voluntary” or “spontaneous” about the assimilation as the Muslim community was intimidated, harassed, assaulted and in some cases even deported to the concentration camp at Belene (on the border with Romania) if it would not cooperate.¹²¹ The lasting impact of the Revival Process on the inter-ethnic relations in Bulgaria should not be underestimated. The Muslim community in Bulgaria actively protested the campaign and in some cases resorted to violence.¹²²

In 1989, the Turkish government announced that it would open the borders to Bulgarian Turks, who were officially designated as “ethnic kin”. However, when the number of immigrants from Bulgaria surpassed 300.000, the government – facing the problems that resettling this number of people brought with it - abruptly closed the border. Moreover, in less than a year almost half of the immigrants went back to Bulgaria, as they felt marginalized by the local Turkish population and could not adjust to living in Turkey.¹²³ The Bulgarian Turks that did stay in Turkey are, to this day, recognized as a distinctive group.¹²⁴

Following the end of communism, a more exclusivist nationalist sentiment came to the fore in Bulgaria that emphasized that minorities “should either assimilate or emigrate”.¹²⁵ The Muslim minority - however - demanded equal rights, as well as the right to change their Bulgarian names back to Turkish ones. This, in turn, sparked resistance and protests from Bulgarian nationalists – especially in regions with relatively large groups of Muslims.¹²⁶ Bulgarian nationalists argued that restoration of the human and civil rights of Turks and

¹²¹ Even after these methods became widely known outside of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian government came under increased international criticism, the authorities insisted that such criticism was nothing more than “malicious rumours” spread by the enemies of Bulgaria, mainly Turkey, to harm the reputation of the country in the international arena. Only in late December of 1989 did the Bulgarian Communist Party acknowledge that the assimilation campaign had been wrong and announced its termination. See: Eleonora Naxidou, “Nationalism Versus Multiculturalism: The Minority Issue in Twenty-First-Century Bulgaria”, *Nationalities Papers* 40, no. 1 (2012): 89. Also: Alieva V. Shabanova, “The effects and appearances of namecide process from socialist to post-socialist Bulgaria”, *Вісник Національного технічного університету України Київський політехнічний інститут. Політологія. Соціологія. Право* 4 (2012): 33. Also: Eminov, *Turkish and Other Muslim Minorities in Bulgaria*, vii. Also: Parla, “Longing, Belonging and Locations of Homeland”: 545-546.

¹²² Boyka Stefanova, “Ethnocultural Voting? Explaining Ethnic Minority Preferences in Bulgarian Elections”, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 20.3 (2014): 330. Also: Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 54. Also: Stefanos Katsikas, *Bulgaria and Europe: Shifting Identities*, (Anthem Series on Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. London: Anthem Press, 2010), 66.

¹²³ Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 97. Also: Köksal, “Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey”: 505, 510-511. Also: Parla, “Longing, Belonging and Locations of Homeland”: 545-546.

¹²⁴ Not only do they generally still speak Bulgarian, they also tend to live together in villages or neighbourhoods. In the case of Edirne, Bulgarian Turks predominantly occupy blocks of flats that the Turkish state built for them in a brand-new residential area in the outskirts of the city. Nowadays, this neighbourhood consists of around 25.000 residents and has its own schools, a mosque, hospitals, parks, social communication places and shops. See: Elchinova, et al, *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 75-76.

¹²⁵ Eminov, *Turkish and Other Muslim Minorities in Bulgaria*, 19.

¹²⁶ Katsikas, *Bulgaria and Europe*, 69.

Muslims would inevitably lead to demands for cultural autonomy, which would weaken the Bulgarian culture. Another fear amongst Bulgarian nationalists was that, as birth rates amongst Muslims were higher than those of Bulgarians, they would eventually “overwhelm” the Bulgarian population, which would quickly lead to the “Turkification” or “Islamization” of Bulgaria.¹²⁷

In this situation of growing ethnic tension, the government tried to satisfy both the Bulgarian nationalists and the Muslim minority.¹²⁸ Thus, Muslims and Turks could choose their own names, practice Islam and observe traditional customs, as well as speak Turkish in everyday life.¹²⁹ At the same time, Bulgarian was affirmed as the official language of the country and groups and organizations that advocated autonomy or separatism were banned. Following these changes, the Muslim minority started to (re-)open Islamic schools, publish Turkish newspapers and reintroduce Turkish language classes in municipal schools in ethnically mixed areas. However, these developments provoked renewed nationalist agitation. Telling is a survey on inter-ethnic relations carried out by a sociological collective in June 1992, which show that 51.1 percent of the Bulgarian respondents considered the Turkish minority a “real danger to national security”, 98.3 percent thought Turks were “religious fanatics” and 61.7 percent thought that Turks occupied an “excessive number of crucial positions in the government”.¹³⁰

Apart from these continuously changing policies and attitudes towards minorities in Turkey and Bulgaria in the twentieth century, the Cold War had a significant impact as the closing of the border made it practically impossible for people who had been displaced in the previous decades to visit their ancestral lands. Rather, during the Cold War, both Bulgaria and Turkey implemented policies that aimed to construct the border as an impermeable and unbreakable line.¹³¹ With the end of the Cold War, there also came an end to the impermeability of the border and from a frontier zone, Edirne again turned into a province that is at the “gates of Europe”.¹³² However, with Bulgaria joining the EU in 2007, its border

¹²⁷ Eminov, *Turkish and Other Muslim Minorities in Bulgaria*, 19-20.

¹²⁸ Katsikas, *Bulgaria and Europe*, 69.

¹²⁹ Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 47.

¹³⁰ Eminov, *Turkish and Other Muslim Minorities in Bulgaria*, 20-22.

¹³¹ Apart from a military presence in the border region, both countries followed a strategy of propaganda indoctrination amongst their respective borderland populations, encouraging people to keep a watchful eye on the border and to report anyone who was planning to cross it. Also, access to the border region was limited and was only permitted when in possession of the right documents, whereas people living in the border region had special passports that allowed them to travel to neighbouring towns. See: Baysal, et al., *Bordered Places*, 172, 175. Also: Baklacioglu, “Borders, identities and kin politics in the Balkans”: 169. Also: Baysal, et al., *Bordered Places*, 170-172.

¹³² Elchinova, et al, *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 76.

with Turkey became an external border of the EU. As such, it has become more difficult again to cross the border. For Bulgarians, acquiring visa is significantly easier than for Turks, but the visa requirement does entail that Bulgarian nationals can only stay a maximum of ninety days within a six-month period, making working in Turkey in a legal manner impossible.¹³³ However, this situation does allow people to visit the lands of their ancestors and especially Bulgarians make use of this opportunity.

1.2 - Internal approach: sources of cultural identity and community and the giving of meaning to surroundings and activities

Paasi argues that, to analyse cultural identity and social spatial consciousness (i.e. to get an idea of the meaning that people give to their surroundings and activities), we should look at the actions and discourses of the communities that we are studying. According to Paasi, we can do this by looking at four elements that play a central role in identity - and social spatial consciousness formation: the use of myth to construct a national identity; the use of symbolism (i.e. the expressive aspect of culture whereby values of a culture are transmitted from individual to individual, from generation to generation; in this regard, language is the primary expressive form); the use of history (i.e. selected memories of past events); and the use of institutionalization (i.e. the role of laws, education and taxation in the construction of identities).¹³⁴

Two theorizations that are connected to these ideas of Paasi should shortly be highlighted as they help analyse the socio-spatial consciousness and identity formation. First is Hobsbawm's concept of "invented traditions". Hobsbawm argues that there are two kinds of traditions, whereby one emerges in a 'less easily traceable manner within a brief and dateable period – a matter of a few years perhaps', and the other is 'actually invented, constructed and formally instituted' and, as such, serves the construction of a national narrative.¹³⁵ Hobsbawm: 'Invented tradition is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to

¹³³ Illegally, on the other hand, there are many Bulgarians and Bulgarian Turks working in Turkey and, in this regard, there is an important distinction between political policy and the pragmatic socio-economic reality on the ground. See: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 111-112, 118-119. Also: Nurcan Özgür-Baklacioglu, "Dual citizenship, extraterritorial elections and national policies: Turkish dual citizens in the Bulgarian-Turkish political sphere", *Beyond sovereignty: from status law to transnational citizenship* (2006): 322.

¹³⁴ More concretely, apart from language we can also look at education, newspapers, books, maps, drawings, paintings, commemorations and memorials to get a better understanding of the existing socio-spatial consciousness. See: Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness*, 48, 62-69, 83-92, 304.

¹³⁵ Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, et al., *The invention of tradition*, (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1.

inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past'.¹³⁶

The second theorization is that of Pierre Nora's "lieu de memoire", meaning 'any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community'.¹³⁷ According to Nora even an apparently purely material site, like an archive, can become a lieu de memoire if the imagination invests it with a "symbolic aura". Thus, lieux de memoire are created by 'a play of memory and history, an interaction of two factors which results in their reciprocal overdetermination'.¹³⁸

When studying myths, symbolism, history and institutionalization, both the concept of invented tradition and that of the lieu de memoire are useful to get an idea of the socio-spatial consciousness that exists in Bulgaria and Turkey and in relation to each other. In what follows, first the development of cultural identity and social spatial consciousness in the twentieth- and twenty-first century of Bulgaria will be discussed, followed by that of Turkey.

In the nationalist narrative that was constructed in Bulgaria in the 1930s and 1940s, Thrace played a primary role. Rather, the nationalist elite emphasized the importance of "restoring" the borders of "Greater Bulgaria", which – in their view - included both Ottoman- and Greek Thrace.¹³⁹ However, with the internationalist character of communism, for decades there was no room for nationalism and as such, there was no emphasis on a specific Bulgarian identity and any organizations that promoted a Bulgarian, or Thracian, identity were banned.¹⁴⁰ Only with the decline of Leninist internationalism in the 1980s was there a rise of nationalism again whereby, in order to stay in power, the bureaucratic elites increasingly abandoned Marxism-Leninism and espoused the more appealing symbols of national interest.¹⁴¹ To deter independent groups and movements from challenging their authority, the established political class resorted to traditional forms of nationalist manipulation and mobilization, which eventually culminated in the assimilationist Revival

¹³⁶ Hobsbawm and Range, *The invention of tradition*, 1-2.

¹³⁷ Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Memoire", *Representations* 26, no. 1 (1989): 19.

¹³⁸ Nora, "Between Memory and History": 19. Also: Elchinova, et al, *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 29-30.

¹³⁹ During World War II, by cooperating with Nazi Germany, Bulgaria partially fulfilled this nationalist dream by conquering and occupying Greek Thrace, albeit for a short period, as the previous borders would be restored after the war. Subsequently, Bulgaria was included in the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union and became a communist state. See: Katsikas, *Bulgaria and Europe: Shifting Identities*, 64.

¹⁴⁰ Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 31-32.

¹⁴¹ Benedict DeDominicis, "The Bulgarian Ethnic Model: Post-1989 Bulgarian Ethnic Conflict Resolution", *Nationalities Papers* 39, no. 3 (2011): 445-446.

Process.¹⁴² Ultimately, these policies had the aim to create a “unified socialist Bulgarian nation”, whereby the Muslim community was encompassed into the Bulgarian national identity.¹⁴³ The effect – however – was the opposite and rather, the harsh assimilationist policies resulted in large protests from the Muslim community and the emergence of a violent Turkish movement.¹⁴⁴

With the implosion of the Soviet Union, internationalist communism as an ideology became defunct, which further boosted nationalism.¹⁴⁵ In this process, the Muslim community was no longer encompassed, but rather – through negative stereotypes (i.e. orientalization) – became instrumentalized to construct a Bulgarian national identity and narrative that was formed around the idea that the Bulgarian population had been oppressed for centuries by the Ottomans, until it revolted and acquired its national freedom.¹⁴⁶ Moreover, in this narrative, the term “Muslim” became equated with “Turk”, whereby the general thought is that Muslims might have affiliations with Turkey and, as such, are not loyal to the Bulgarian state, but rather are a “fifth column”.¹⁴⁷ Petva Nitzova (University of Oklahoma) notes: ‘Anti-Islamic sensitivities are a significant component of Bulgarian nationalism which grows from the hindsight that the Ottoman conquest greatly impeded Bulgaria’s political, economic, and cultural development and separated it from the mainstream of European progress by introducing an alien, Asiatic faith and culture into the

¹⁴² Vladimir Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation: Democracy, Nationalism, and Myth in Post-Communist Europe*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 3-7. Also: DeDominicis, “The Bulgarian Ethnic Model”: 446. Also: Peter Stamatov, “The Making of a ‘Bad’ Public: Ethnonational Mobilization in Post-Communist Bulgaria”, *Theory and Society* 29, no. 4 (2000): 553.

¹⁴³ Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 172-173. Also: H. Rusu and B. Voicu, et al., *EU Integration Process from EAST to EAST: Civil Society and Ethnic Minorities in a Changing World. Proceedings from a Round Table for young Social Scientists*, (Sibiu: Psihomedica Publ. House, 2005), 119-120. Also: Gavin Sullivan, *Contemporary Nationalism in East Central Europe* (Springer, 2016), 49-50.

¹⁴⁴ What should be noted is that this migration wave (which was encouraged by the communist government to “solve” the national unity issue) greatly impacted the economy of the concerned Bulgarian regions and intensified the process of dissolution of Communist rule in Bulgaria. See: Stefanova, “Ethnocultural Voting?”: 330. Also: Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 54. Also: Katsikas, *Bulgaria and Europe*, 66.

¹⁴⁵ Rather, all former communist countries show a significant shift towards nationalism. This can be explained by the fact that for many centuries this identity form had been repressed due to the internationalist character of communism, as well as by the fact that nationalism functions as an ideological surrogate that helps unify the public discourse and provide citizens with an easily recognizable source of identity. Moreover, nationalist myths and narratives provide fast, clear-cut explanations for the causes of the ongoing troubles that post-communist countries have been faced with because of their socio-economic restructuring. See: Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation*, 7-8.

¹⁴⁶ Many stereotypes about Muslims and Turks being “backward” and “oppressive” had already been formed during Ottoman rule and they were instrumental for the emergence of nationalist movements, which used them for their own ends. See: Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 41. Also: Tismaneanu, *Fantasies of Salvation*, 179.

¹⁴⁷ Naxidou, “Nationalism Versus Multiculturalism”: 89. Also: David Galbreath and Joanne McEvoy, “European Integration and the Geopolitics of National Minorities”, *Ethnopolitics* 9, no. 3-4 (2010): 371. Also: Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 41.

Balkan peninsula. The distorted image of Turkey is compounded by a customary Bulgarian perception that Bulgaria is more civilized and European than Turkey, and that Turkey will not be able to reach western standards in democracy, civic culture and market economy because in its very essence it is a somewhat backward country'.¹⁴⁸ This narrative is still actively (re-)produced by both the ex-communists and the right-wing parties in Bulgaria who count on nationalist votes.¹⁴⁹

At the same time, orientaling has also been made easier as the Muslim community - since the 1990s - has the right again to practice its religion, as well as talk, publish, broadcast and teach in Turkish; all of which makes the group appear more as a distinctive "other".¹⁵⁰ Also, the Muslim community has increasingly organized itself, also politically.¹⁵¹ Despite the fact that the Bulgarian constitution does not allow the establishment of political parties based on ethnic, religious, or racial lines, the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF) was established in 1990 and it is known to represent the Turkish and other Muslim communities in Bulgaria. Due to the political circumstances in Bulgaria the MRF has been part of the government several times.¹⁵² A Bulgarian majority believes that the Bulgarian Turkish community in this way has too much political- and economic power. Seeing they are a minority, the general idea is that they should "know their place" and keep a low profile.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ Petya Nitzova, "Bulgaria: Minorities, Democratization, and National Sentiments", *Nationalities Papers* 25, no. 4 (1997): 737.

¹⁴⁹ Also, it is a convenient way for these politicians to diverge attention from socio-economic problems that persist in Bulgaria. See: Ieda and Majtényi, et al., *Beyond sovereignty*, 335. Also: Naxidou, "Nationalism Versus Multiculturalism": 89-90.

¹⁵⁰ Rusu and Voicu, et al., *EU Integration Process from EAST to EAST*, 121-122.

¹⁵¹ Research of Boyka Stefanova (University of Texas) shows that the ethnic Turkish minority in Bulgaria represents a coherent segment of the Bulgarian electorate. What should be noted is that this is not just caused by ethnic affiliation, but also by sociological characteristics, political attitudes and economic interests. Rather, in Bulgaria, there is an overlap between ethnic identities and socio-economic positions, which also explains the coherent political organization of the Turkish minority as voting for the MRF not only means to vote for ethnic representation, but also for socio-economic interests. It should be noted that Bulgarians generally see the MRF as a religious (i.e. Muslim) party and not as an ethnic (i.e. Turkish) party. See: Boyka Stefanova, "Ethnocultural Voting? Explaining Ethnic Minority Preferences in Bulgarian Elections", *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 20, no. 3 (2014): 328-344. Also: Stefanos Katsikas, *Bulgaria and Europe: Shifting Identities*, (Anthem Series on Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. London: Anthem Press, 2010), 72-73. Also: Anne Krasteva, "Religion, politics, and nationalism in post-communist Bulgaria: elastic (post)secularism", *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 21.4 (2015): 435-436.

¹⁵² In the twenty-first century, the MRF has been part of the coalition government between 2001-2005, between 2005-2009 and between 2013-2017. This, even though they generally get only around ten percent of the votes in the parliamentary elections. For more on the role of the MRF in Bulgarian politics, see: Stefanova, "Ethnocultural Voting?": 338-344. Also: Antonina Zhelyazkova, Maya Kosseva, and Marko Hajdinjak, *Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses in Bulgaria: The Bulgarian Ethnic Model-Parallel Cohabitation or Multicultural Recognition*, (European University Institute, Florence, 2010), 22.

¹⁵³ Zhelyazkova, Kosseva, and Hajdinjak, *Tolerance and Cultural Diversity*, 23.

Overall, within this climate, tolerance towards the Bulgarian Turkish minority has steadily decreased in the past twenty years.¹⁵⁴

With the shift in the shaping of identity and alterity from encompassment to orientalization, Thrace and Thracian history have come to play a primary role in the national narrative. What can be seen since the 1990s is an upsurge in commemorative initiatives that are dedicated to the history of Bulgarian people who fled from Thrace during and after the Balkan Wars.¹⁵⁵ Regarding these commemorative activities, the Union of the Thracian Societies in Bulgaria (UTSB) plays an important role. The UTSB was originally established in 1885 and its main objective was to strive for the restoration of the borders of San Stefano (the treaty that was signed after the Russo-Turkish War in 1878, which gave most of Thrace to Bulgaria) and thus unite Thrace and the Thracian Bulgarian people. During and after the Balkan Wars, the primary objective of the UTSB shifted towards solving the problems of Bulgarian refugees regarding accommodation and property compensation. Having been dissolved during the communist period, the UTSB was resurrected in 1990. The main objectives were to “complete” the Bulgarian national cause in Thrace, to fight for the right to have “Bulgarianness” brought back to, and reborn in, Eastern and Western Thrace, to develop Thracian spirituality, safeguard Thracian heritage and protect human- and property rights of the Thracian refugees and their descendants.¹⁵⁶

Although the “Thracian identity” might as well be defined in an inclusive way (thus also encompassing Greeks, Armenians, Jews and Turks), the UTSBs definition is exclusivist and the organization explicitly focusses on Bulgarians.¹⁵⁷ Soon after the restoration of the UTSB and the revived functioning of around two-hundred of its branches, many new commemorative activities and monument-building activities were taken up.¹⁵⁸ It is worth giving some examples of these activities and how they are connected to the constructed national narrative. What should be noted beforehand is that these activities all emblemize

¹⁵⁴ Stefanova, "Ethnocultural Voting?": 330.

¹⁵⁵ Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 63-64, 77.

¹⁵⁶ Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 31-32.

¹⁵⁷ “Thracian Bulgarians” is a term that is commonly used in Bulgarian public discourse to identify Bulgarians who were refugees from parts of Thrace that remained outside Bulgarian state territory. See: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 73.

¹⁵⁸ With all these activities, the narrative that is constructed is that of a suppressed Bulgarian people that started to fight for its freedom from the “Ottoman yoke” in the nineteenth century, as “marked” by such events as the April Uprising of 1876 and the Ilinden Uprising of 1903, whereby independence was attained in 1908 and war was declared against the Ottoman Empire in 1912 in an attempt to unite all Bulgarians within the borders of a greater Bulgarian nation-state. Being “betrayed” by its former allies Serbia and Greece, as well as being confronted by the Ottoman army, the recently acquired Eastern Thracian lands were lost again in the Second Balkan War, during which the Ottoman army massacred and expelled the local Bulgarian population. It is these events that characterize and affirm the Bulgarian national identity. Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 63-64, 73. Also: Yavuz and Blumi. *War and Nationalism*, 365.

and connect towns and villages with traumatic moments of national history and, in this way, aggravate separation and reinforce boundaries between Bulgarians and Turks.¹⁵⁹ This can also be seen with the commemoration of the “Massacre of Batak”. As mentioned, starting in the nineteenth century, there were several instances of secessionism in the Balkans, amongst which the period from April to May 1876. The Ottoman army intervened in a violent way and in the specific case of the town of Batak, irregular soldiers were especially brutal, killing between 1.500 and 5.000 inhabitants, including women and children. This massacre - that became worldwide news – was an important pretext for Russia to intervene, resulting in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-1878 and, subsequently, in the establishment of the Bulgarian principality in 1878. It is exactly because of this chain of events that the Massacre of Batak has been integrated into the national narrative that starts with the ancient Thracians and the medieval Bulgarian empires and is followed by being the victim of the “Ottoman yoke” for four centuries, the heroic resistance of badly equipped freedom fighters against the hated Turkish rule in 1876, the sacrifice of the innocent (which is heightened into a conscious self-sacrifice for the freedom of the fatherland), and eventually the acquirement of freedom and national independence.¹⁶⁰ The village of Batak, which has a history museum commemorating the massacre (and where the stacked bones of the victims are still being displayed in one of the churches), in this way serves as a lieu de memoire since 1892 at the instigation of, and with the help of, renowned Bulgarian nationalist intellectuals and politicians, who recognized how the story could support the nationalist narrative they were constructing.¹⁶¹ Up to this day, the Massacre of Batak functions as a lieu de memoire. In 2011, the victims were canonized by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.¹⁶² Moreover, all Bulgarian history books tell of Batak and all governments of the twentieth and twenty-first century have utilized the event in one way or another. Up to now, Batak functions as a resource that can, at any time, be used to fuel any resentments that are felt against the Turkish or Muslim minorities in the country, or against Turks or Turkey in general.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 36-38.

¹⁶⁰ Boscoboinik, et al., *From Palermo to Penang*, 180-185.

¹⁶¹ Boscoboinik, et al., *From Palermo to Penang*, 179, 182.

¹⁶² Plamen K. Georgiev, *Self-Orientalization in South East Europe*, (Springer Science & Business Media, 2012), 115.

¹⁶³ Another example that can be given is that of the Day of Thrace, which became a national holiday in 2006 and is celebrated on 26 March - not incidentally the day that the Bulgarian army captured Edirne during the First Balkan War in 1913. As such, this date symbolizes two momentous events: the battlefield glory of the Bulgarian army (whereby the conquering of Edirne is portrayed as “liberating” the city) and the attempt of Thracian Bulgarians to achieve freedom and re-join the fatherland.¹⁶³ On the Day of Thrace, the UTSB, and other local Thracian societies, organize commemorative ceremonies and events to mark the day whereby political figures, the Bulgarian army, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, and civilians join in to pay their respect. See: Boscoboinik,

Certain historical figures likewise function as “a safeguard of historical memory” and in this regard, the UTSB has made its contribution in, what Magdalena Elchinova (New Bulgarian University, Sofia) calls “rescuing a number of freedom fighters from oblivion”.¹⁶⁴ A good example is that of Petko Kiryakov Kaloyanov (known as Petko Voivoda), who was a nineteenth century revolt leader and founder of the first Thracian society. In 2009, cultural events were marked by the celebration of his 165th birthday. Apart from that, folk songs, works of literature and studies are dedicated to him; as well as a biographical television series. Elchinova: ‘More than thirty monuments have been built to commemorate him. By methodically placing memorial signs, UTSB has constructed an entire system of locations that function as memory triggers. [...] Apart from their significance as memory sites and places to pay respect to, they visualize the image of the guard at the border, the protector of Bulgarians and Bulgarianness; what is more, they send the message that this is where Bulgarian lands reach to and they are guarded and protected’.¹⁶⁵ It is telling that the checkpoint Novo Selo (at the Bulgarian-Greek border) was renamed Kapitan Petko Voivoda in 2004, an initiative of the UTSB. In the discourse of the leaders of the organization, the captain “guards” the southern border.¹⁶⁶

Alongside these commemorative occasions in Bulgaria, numerous excursions have been made to ancestral places of origin in Turkey and Greece since the opening of the border. These trips follow a standard scheme: meeting the local authorities, sharing knowledge about the birthplaces of the forefathers and their lives prior to 1913, discussing the village and its current population, seeking out the old houses, and taking away evidence (e.g. soil, a pebble, a roof tile, a tree branch, water, or photographs). These ritual activities during the visits aim at joining the “threads” of the historical narrative and “restoring” the memory of the Bulgarian presence and, as such, they are meant to designate the Bulgarian space symbolically. In this way, the political border (i.e. the border between Bulgaria and Turkey and Bulgaria and Greece) does not coincide with the social spatial consciousness of these

et al., *From Palermo to Penang*, 185-186. Also: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 63-64. Also: Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 34, 45-46.

¹⁶⁴ Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 35.

¹⁶⁵ Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 34-35.

¹⁶⁶ Another example of a commemorated historical figure can be found in the village of Brod, which is close to the Bulgarian-Turkish border, and where the local community honours the memory of Pano Angelov. Angelov, who was born in Brod, took part in the Ilinden Uprising of 1903 and led a revolutionary group from Malko Tarnovo. The commemoration of Angelov dates to 1990 when it became part of the traditional July fest, which commemorates the men killed by Ottoman irregular forces during the April Uprising. In Brod, a street is named after Angelov and so is the local culture house and in 2004, a monument of him was unveiled in the village. See: Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 34-35.

Bulgarians. This is further being strengthened by the fact that across the border, Bulgarians can generally still pay with their own currency and speak Bulgarian.¹⁶⁷

A frequent location for these visits is Edirne which, as such, does not just play a role in Bulgarian traditions, but also functions as an important lieu de memoire. Edirne is regarded as a Bulgarian symbol for several reasons: first, it housed a significant Bulgarian population up to the first decades of the twentieth century. Second, many Bulgarian traces (e.g. houses, churches) are still preserved. Third, there is historical evidence and archaeological data that show the presence of Slavic settlements in Eastern Thrace and as such “prove” there is a longstanding Bulgarian presence in the region.¹⁶⁸ What is not argued is that these points are (historically) correct, or that they justify a Bulgarian claim on Edirne, but rather that they are utilized to fit within a constructed Bulgarian narrative that portrays Edirne as part of the “Bulgarian space”. According to Elchinova, this view has been gaining popularity in the last couple of decades, whereby it is aided by the developing political relation between Bulgaria and Turkey, by the preserved Bulgarian traces, as well as by the easier physical crossing of the border.¹⁶⁹

All the above-mentioned commemorative ceremonies and lieux de memoire - together with the various historical testimonies and memoires from ancestors - contribute to the preservation of a distinct Thracian Bulgarian collective identity.¹⁷⁰ In the end, this has the result that the boundaries in Thrace are becoming more predominant and both national institutions and non-governmental organizations (such as UTSB) contribute to this.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷ In general, shopping across the border in Turkey is a popular activity for Bulgarians, seeing that the goods are relatively less expensive and often of good quality. See: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 52-54, 77-78. Also: Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 45-46.

¹⁶⁸ In this discourse, the focus is then – for instance - on the First- (681-1018) and Second Bulgarian Kingdom (1185-1396). See: Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 45-46.

¹⁶⁹ To emphasize the “Bulgarian identity” of Edirne, Thracian and Bulgarian associations have followed a policy for reviving Bulgarian historical and cultural traces, which has resulted in the restoration of sites, such as the nineteenth century churches of saints George, Constantine, and Elena and the Bulgarian cemetery. What should be noted is that Bulgaria is not alone constructing Edirne and the surrounding region as part of “their” space, both Greece and Turkey in - a similar way - use history in a selective way to “prove” their claims on Edirne. To Greece, the region is the birthplace of renowned Greek scholars and philosophers, whereby Edirne was known by the Greek name Adrianople. The Turkish discourse, on the other hand, focusses on the Ottoman period and on the inherited and contemporary culture. See: Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 45-46. Also: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 81.

¹⁷⁰ Elchinova argues: ‘The Thracian sites of memory construct the space of the settled area of the landscape, placing new symbols creates and emphasizes a system of purposeful references. Monuments, anniversaries and rituals make memory enduring. Through symbolic reminders and tributes, memories become established and are entrusted to the next generations. [...] The policies of UTSB on paying tribute to the victims and heroes aim at a long term “implantation” in the collective memory of the Thracian community and in the memory of Bulgarian society’. See: Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 39.

¹⁷¹ Nikolai Vukov (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences: Sofia) argues: ‘These institutions establish a certain style of thinking and classifications that do not exactly facilitate the alleviation of boundaries’. See: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 81. Also: Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 60.

In Turkey, nationalism became the primary ideology already directly after the First Balkan War - which had effectively made Ottomanism defunct.¹⁷² The government – inspired by Germany and France – argued that, to be able to strengthen the country and reach modernity, it should work towards creating a nation-state with a homogeneous people. In the early years however, the definition that was given to nationalism was still of a rather inclusive kind that was based on sharing the same language, religion and morality and, as such, was not based on ethnicity.¹⁷³ Initially, the policies of homogenization were therefore predominantly along religious lines and were accompanied by a rigorous attempt to exclude non-Muslims in every field, to erase the memory of any pluralism and instead focus on ethnic and religious unity.¹⁷⁴ As part of this, a new book of regulations from the government, issued on 5 January 1916, would transform the practice of renaming the human settlements and geography into a central aspect of government policy.¹⁷⁵ The Turkification of place names and geographic features would continue up to, and throughout, the period of the Turkish Republic, eventually eliminating all non-Turkish names.¹⁷⁶

Following the First World War and the Turkish War of Independence (1919-1923), the emphasis on religion as a main indicator of the national Turkish identity shifted with the rise of secularism (especially after the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924), whereby common

¹⁷² Köksal, “Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey”: 513-514.

¹⁷³ The Turkish state was built on the principle of “one nation, one state” and this nation was supposed to be inclusive and civic. Bulgarian nationalist elites used the same “one nation, one state” idea, but defined this nation as being Bulgarian in opposition to legal minorities such as Turks, Greeks and Tatars. Although the Turkish concept of nationalism was more inclusive, whereby the term “Turk” meant to refer to everyone living in Turkey, it still had ethnic connotations. The idea of including all minorities under the category of Turk was fraught with contradictions, as it necessitated the adoption of a common culture and morality in different minority communities. Moreover, when the Islamic bond was removed, nothing much was left for a minority like the Kurds who neither spoke Turkish, nor shared the same “culture” with Turks. See: Köksal, “Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey”: 514-515.

¹⁷⁴ The exclusion of the non-Muslims after the Balkan Wars was most obvious in the economy. Several policies were implemented that opposed the consumption of imported products and instead “national” products were promoted. Not only was this policy meant to be directed against non-Muslims, it was also a way of shaping a new Muslim class of merchants and entrepreneurs who would implement the new national economy. In the field of consumption, a major role was bestowed on women, who could now “demonstrate their patriotic devotion toward the motherland” by consuming local products. See: Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*, 280. Also: Aktar, Niyazi, and Umut, *Nationalism in the Troubled Triangle*, 28-32. Also: Ayhan Aktar, Kızılyürek Niyazi, and Özkırımlı Umut, *Nationalism in the Troubled Triangle: Cyprus, Greece and Turkey*, (New Perspectives on South-East Europe. Basingstoke England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 23-24. Also: Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 52. Also: Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 87.

¹⁷⁵ The first article in this document stated that: ‘It has been decided that all of the provinces, provincial districts, villages, towns, mountains, rivers, etc. within the Ottoman domains which have been given non-Islamic names, such as Armenian, Greek and Bulgarian, shall be changed to Turkish’. See: Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity*, 54-55.

¹⁷⁶ The same happened in Bulgaria, mainly in 1934, when Ottoman places names were changed into Bulgarian ones. See: Brunnbauer, “The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece”: 45. Also: Akçam, *The Young Turks' Crime against Humanity*, 54-55.

morality, language and education became the key concepts of the Turkish nation.¹⁷⁷ Starting in the 1920s, Turkey's national identity would increasingly become exclusivist and policies of assimilation became more common.¹⁷⁸ Xenophobia, once regarded as an “infantile” disorder of Turkish nationalism, now attained momentum and imposed its will on almost every aspect of social and political life. Within this climate, anything that challenged the unconditional supremacy of Turkish ethnic identity triggered a sense of distress and concern among the ruling elite. All that was “alien” or that had not been Turkified created a potential threat for the country and the wellbeing of the Turkish nation.¹⁷⁹

During the Cold War, propaganda by Turkish nationalists asserted the uniqueness of the Turkish motherland and its superiority to communist Bulgaria (whereas counter-propaganda by the Bulgarian communist regime, on the other hand, emphasized the “depravity” and “corruption” of capitalist Turkey and the allegiance of the Turkish minority to the Bulgarian state). The fact that 300.000 Bulgarian Turks – due to the Revival Process – wanted to leave Bulgaria and move to Turkey fitted well within this narrative. As such, it was presented as a “homecoming” of “kindred spirits who retained their distinct ethnic and cultural essence at all costs”. As Turkish nationalist historiography would have it, Bulgarian Turks were considered “inseparable and indivisible from Turkish Turks” and “a part of their blood brothers in Turkey”. This statement is emblematic of the nationalist creed that ethnic affiliation, primordially defined, irrevocably ties a specific group of people to a specific space that is designated as the place of origin. Furthermore, this view assumes that place of origin has priority over the lived homeland, and that there is an essential, indivisible link based on shared blood between those who have left and their “blood kindred” who have remained in the original homeland. According to these terms then, the migration of 1989 should be classified as a “return migration” which is exactly how it was presented. Moreover, Turkish press accounts of the time were rich with the trope of the arriving immigrants kissing the earth. The fact that half of these 300.000 people returned to Bulgaria after the end of

¹⁷⁷ Although in the early years of the Republic, Islam was still seen as the primary binding force for a common morality. See: Köksal, “Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey”: 514-515.

¹⁷⁸ For a large part, this was a reaction to growing Kurdish nationalism. See: Köksal, “Minority Policies in Bulgaria and Turkey”: 515-516.

¹⁷⁹ Ayhan Aktar (Istanbul Bilgi University) argues: ‘Resultant laws and regulations [...] centralized xenophobia in such a way that the institutional and educational framework generated “paranoia” right down to an individual level for generations to come. Even today, whenever the officially disseminated feeling of “authenticity” is challenged publicly by remembering or using the original Greek, Armenian or Kurdish name of some location, the act of doing this is regarded as a covert operation against the unity and integrity of the Turkish fatherland. [...] Unfortunately, the legacy of institutionalized xenophobia that we have inherited from the founding fathers of the Turkish Republic does not die easily’. See: Aktar, Niyazi, and Umut, *Nationalism in the Troubled Triangle*, 35.

communism went virtually unreported. In practice, many had trouble adjusting to their new way of life and/or felt marginalized by the local Turkish community.¹⁸⁰

In a similar way, there is much animosity towards the approximately 1.1 million “dual citizens” – which possess both the Bulgarian and the Turkish nationality.¹⁸¹ With the Bulgarian Citizenship Law of 1998, dual citizens are treated as Bulgarian citizens from the moment they enter Bulgarian territory, giving them the rights and obligations as Bulgarian citizens; including the right to vote. Seeing that Bulgaria has around seven million inhabitants, the influence of this group (which predominantly votes for the MRF) should not be underestimated.¹⁸² Moreover, dual citizenship comes with certain privileges: the chance to work, study, live or invest in an alternative country, depending on where the general situation is better.¹⁸³ As a reaction to this, locals (both in Bulgaria and in Turkey) started to regard dual citizens with certain resentment. Whether intended or not, dual citizenship came to be characterized as an unfair advantage and misuse of rights and freedoms. Moreover, especially in Bulgaria, it has made people question the loyalty of this group towards the state. Opponents of dual citizenship claim that loyalty can only be singular and they argue that dual

¹⁸⁰ In practice, Bulgarian Turks tended to be seen as being “Bulgarian” instead of “Turkish” by the local Turkish community. In this situation, many of the Bulgarian Turks became disillusioned and returned to Bulgaria. However, there the local population predominantly regarded them as being Turkish. This is telling for the situation that this minority is in, whereby neither the Bulgarian, nor the Turkish majorities fully accept them. Although in the Turkish nationalist narrative they are designated as “ethnic kin” and therefore - in theory - the Bulgarian Turks are fitting neatly into the Turkish homeland, there is, as Ayse Parla (Boston University) argues, ‘a disjuncture for this group between the experience of migration and the discursive structures that frame the meaning of that experience. The requirement to have allegiance to a particular nation-state is belied either by diametrically opposed locations of homeland [...], or by multiple geographical and mental border-crossings [...]. While such paradoxes are true to some extent for all migrants across national borders, they seem to be particularly prominent in those contexts of strongly ethnic nationalism, where hyphenated identities are always suspect. This seems to hold true even when the migrants in question are designated as “ethnic kin”. The consequence, it seems, is either denying one side of the land as well as the hyphen, or, as another 1989 immigrant put it, “harbouring irreconcilables within your very being”. See: Parla, “Longing, Belonging and Locations of Homeland”: 544-547.

¹⁸¹ Exact numbers are hard to obtain as this community is registered by their Bulgarian name in Bulgaria and by their Turkish name in Turkey. See: Ieda and Majtényi, et al., *Beyond sovereignty*, 321-322. Also: Parla, “Longing, Belonging and Locations of Homeland”: 554-555.

¹⁸² Giving dual citizens the right to vote from abroad was a policy that was especially pushed by MRF, which recognized that this would significantly increase their potential electorate. Other Bulgarian parties in a same way hoped to attract more voters, but after implementation of the law and the first elections, it became clear that especially MRF benefitted from this change. The reasons for this community to predominantly vote for MRF are as follows: first, people expect that this will help bring a solution for the enduring social and economic problems of the migrant community. Second, it symbolizes responsibility towards their Bulgarian past, present and future. Voting meant a say in preserving the centuries-old graves of family ancestors, the birthplaces, and cultural and religious heritages. As for the future, the ballot could mean retirement and burial at the place of birth in Bulgaria. For the present day, electoral participation serves as an option to refresh a once lost identity. See: Ieda and Majtényi, et al., *Beyond sovereignty*, 321-334.

¹⁸³ Ieda and Majtényi, et al., *Beyond sovereignty*, 324-325.

citizenship is a “tool” for Turkey’s influence in Bulgaria.¹⁸⁴ This argument is not without ground. As part of what is also called a “neo-Ottoman” policy, the Turkish *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (AKP) government has – especially since 2010 - put more emphasis on improving the socio-economic and cultural position of Turkish communities that live outside of Turkey, as well as their connection to the mother country. Part of this is that the Turkish government encourages Bulgarian Turks with incentives to vote in Bulgaria and, as such, to increase the number of votes for the MRF.¹⁸⁵

Bulgarian political parties on both the left and right are aware of this policy and have criticized it. In turn, this critique on Turkey fits within a more general anti-Turkish rhetoric that is being used by Bulgarian political parties to attract more votes from the more nationalist electorate. The effect then of this rhetoric is that it increases anti-Turkish sentiment within Bulgarian society, which is something that especially can be seen since 2009 when the centum right party GERB, led by Bojko Borisov (the former mayor of Sofia), received almost forty percent of the votes and, as the leading party, formed a coalition government. Borisov, who became prime minister of Bulgaria in 2009, is known for his relatively xenophobic and anti-minority stance. In the past he has referred to the Revival Process as having the “right objectives”, but being “wrongly implemented”. Moreover, he has stated that Bulgaria’s current main socio-economic problem is that it has too much “bad human material”, thereby referring to the Roma and Turkish minority. Eleonora Naxidou (University of Thrace, Greece), as such, concludes that, even though Bulgaria joined the EU in 2007 - which might have had a positive effect on Bulgaria’s policies towards minorities - ‘there has been no significant change in the attitudes of the Bulgarian ethnic majority towards minorities. Minorities are still considered as undesirable strangers jeopardizing national unity’.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ Ieda and Majtényi, et al., *Beyond sovereignty*, 325, 335. Also: Damla B. Aksel, “Kins, Distant Workers, Diasporas: Constructing Turkey’s Transnational Members Abroad”, *Turkish Studies* 15, no. 2 (2014): 212.

¹⁸⁵ Vermeulen, et al., *Migration in the Southern Balkans*, 109-110.

¹⁸⁶ She argues this is motivated by two major convictions: first, that minorities are representatives or collaborators of a foreign nation which subjugated and oppressed the ethnic majority in the past – for this reason, minorities belong to the enemy “other” and deserve to be “punished” for their previous contact. And second, it is motivated by a loyalty and security argument, calling into question the current loyalty of minorities and regarding them as a threat to national security through the affiliations with a kin state. This is in line with James Dawson’s (Coventry University) line of thinking who in 2014, following his fieldwork in Bulgaria, concluded that old narratives, which include the exclusivist narrative of nationhood, are ‘simply recast to fit the new alliances. The same highly mythologized historiographical tropes that were used to justify the forced assimilation of Turks in the 1980s - [like the] forced conversions to Islam during the 500 years of Turkish “slavery” – have retained currency into the present, albeit in a form that carries the more moderate language demanded by the liberal emissaries of the West. The long-term effects of such superficial alterations are unclear. Since the Ottoman Turks remain cast as the principal antagonist hindering the self-expression of Bulgarians in the curriculum, the newer descriptions of the Ottoman rule as “occupation” rather than “slavery” tend to be seen

Moreover, after decades of institutionalized hostility towards any religion (as was common within the communist system), Orthodox Christianity has been embraced fully within the nationalist discourse as well and has been presented as the defender of the Bulgarian national identity, sheltering and preserving it through all 482 years of Ottoman rule. Asymmetrically, Islam has become the archetype of the “other”. Whereas communism viewed the “enemy” in socioeconomically and ideological terms, with post-communism this has shifted to religious ones, such as “radical Islam” and “sects”, which are then presented as a threat to national security.¹⁸⁷ Although the Bulgarian Muslim community might as well be included in the Bulgarian identity based on its perceived ethnicity (as was the case in the 1980s), their religious affiliation is currently the focus point and results in their exclusion.¹⁸⁸ Also, through symbolism (e.g. the giving of certain names to border checkpoints, the construction of monuments and the restoration of – Orthodox Christian - Bulgarian heritage in Turkey), boundaries are continuously (re-)created and division is being reinforced.¹⁸⁹ A similar synthesis between nationalism and religion can be seen in Turkey where, rather than ethnicity, Islam is a defining factor in shaping the national identity.¹⁹⁰ A clear break between religion and nationalism appears unlikely in Turkey as the combination of the two remains a key feature of public education and identity discourse. According to Nurcan Ozgur

by most Bulgarians as a mealy-mouthed affront to the suffering of their ancestors rather than some sort of precursor to a more nuanced national debate about the Ottoman legacy. Any re-orientation of the educational system in a more civic direction remains elusive since none of the country’s political parties have ever demonstrated the political will to advocate a less nationalist curriculum’. See: Naxidou, “Nationalism Versus Multiculturalism”: 100-101. Also: Baklacioglu, “Borders, identities and kin politics in the Balkans”: 173. Also: James Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria: How Ideas Shape Publics*, (Southeast European Studies. Farnham, Surrey England: Ashgate, 2014), 149.

¹⁸⁷ Regarding the construction of Bulgarian identity and the role of nationality, ethnicity and religion in this, Daniele Kalkandjieva makes an interesting observation: ‘The Orthodox majority in post-communist Bulgaria [...] regards Orthodoxy as a source of national identity, but turns into a guardian of secular principles when faced with the growing religiosity of some religious minorities. It is especially sensitive about Islam’. See: Daniela Kalkandjieva, “‘Secular Orthodox Christianity’ versus ‘Religious Islam’ in Post-communist Bulgaria”, *Religion, State & Society* 36.4 (2008): 429. Also: Krasteva, “Religion, Politics, and Nationalism”: 432, 435, 441.

¹⁸⁸ Maria N. Todorova (University of Illinois) argues: ‘It can be safely argued that in many respects the [Bulgarian] national discourses of nowadays revolve around the “Turkish problem”. Questions about the study of Turkish at school, about the scope and character of the Turkish and Muslim propaganda, are often discussed in terms reminiscent of the multiculturalism debate in the United States’. See: Maria N Todorova, *Scaling the Balkans: Essays in National, Transnational and Conceptual History*, (Boston: Brill, 2018), 362.

¹⁸⁹ Elchinova, et al., *Migration, Memory, Heritage*, 60.

¹⁹⁰ Ioannis N. Grigoriadis (Bilkent University, Turkey) argues: ‘The “nationalization and étatisation” of religion and the extensive use of religious symbols in nationalist rhetoric remain mainstream. Religious minorities have faced discrimination because of the identification of religion with the national identity and even full citizenship rights. Globalization and Europeanization have been the two external factors promoting a more civic definition of national identity and achieving some progress in that direction, yet their influence has yet to achieve a breakthrough’. See: Ioannis N Grigoriadis, *Instilling Religion in Greek and Turkish Nationalism: A ‘Sacred Synthesis’*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 99. Also: Umut Uzer, *An Intellectual History of Turkish Nationalism: Between Turkish Ethnicity and Islamic Identity*, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016), 222.

Baklacioglu (Istanbul University), due to these nationalist discourses, cooperation between the two countries has been significantly impeded so far.¹⁹¹ In the current socio-political climate – whereby politicians instrumentalize nationalist and anti-minority sentiments, it is not expected that this situation will change any time soon.¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ The fact that there have been only a few cases of twin municipality initiatives between Bulgaria and Turkey is illustrative of this. See: Baklacioglu, “Borders, identities and kin politics in the Balkans”: 173.

¹⁹² Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria*, 132.

2 What is the state of local and regional institutions and civil society in Bulgaria and Turkey?

Active citizenship is of vital importance to successful cross-border cooperation for two main reasons. First, in the vision of the European Commission, a successful Cohesion Policy requires “close cooperation” between the Commission, the Member States and a range of other organizations designated by the given Member State governments, such as authorities from regional and local levels, social and economic partners as well as civil society organizations (CSOs)/non-governmental organizations (NGOs).¹⁹³ In the view of the EC, the contributions that the civil society can make to cross-border cooperation is that their (local and regional) expertise and know-how will help generate region-specific projects and that they can help build local development capacities.¹⁹⁴ Secondly, as Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) famously recognized: active citizenship is important for a good working democracy. He emphasized how a participatory citizenry could foster active engagement with politics.¹⁹⁵ This is very important in connection to the demand of the European Commission that Member States designate the most representative partners in cross-border cooperation (i.e. the subsidiarity principle).¹⁹⁶

Research shows that the ECs focus on to the subsidiarity principle in cross-border cooperation is justified as more decentralized regions profit more from the EU Cohesion Funds (i.e. show more socio-economic development than regions that are less decentralized). This is explained by the fact that local and regional authorities and civil society have better information on region-specific advantages and on specific growth-inducing projects and

¹⁹³ Note that in the literature, the terms NGO (non-governmental organization) and CSO (civil society organization) are both commonly used. However, the concept of the “NGO” is contested terminology, and for many has been subsumed within a broader category of “civil society organizations” (CSOs). For matters of consistency, the term civil society organization will be used throughout the rest of this research. See: United Nations Development Programme, *Working Together with Civil Society in Foreign Aid: Possibilities for South-South Cooperation?* (UNDP: China, September 2013), 123.

¹⁹⁴ Batory and Cartwright, “Re-Visiting the Partnership Principle in Cohesion Policy”: 701.

¹⁹⁵ Gerard Clarke (Associate Professor in Politics and International Development, University of Swansea) notes: ‘A healthy civil society has come to be regarded as a *sine qua non* [original italics], both of a functioning democracy that incorporates the concerns of the poor but also of a market economy calibrated to deliver equitable, pro-poor growth’. See: Gerard Clarke, “Civil Society, Cross-National Comparisons and the Problem of Statistical Capture”, *Journal of International Development* 23.7 (2011): 960. And: Jenny Pearce, *Civil society and development: A critical exploration*, (Lynne Rienner Publishers: 2002), 44.

¹⁹⁶ Bertram summarizes it neatly: ‘Cross-border cooperation cannot be prescribed “from above”. Although this cooperation needs planning and funds “from above”, it can only be the result of local actions made by local actors; that means, it must come “from below”.’ See: Bertram, “Double Transformation at the Eastern Border of the EU”: 223. And: Batory and Cartwright, “Re-Visiting the Partnership Principle in Cohesion Policy”: 701. For more on the EU partnership principle, see: Sabina Pavlovska-Hilaiel, “The EU’s Losing Battle against Corruption in Bulgaria”, *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law* 7, no. 2 (2015): 211.

therefore are able to implement more effective programs.¹⁹⁷ As such, it is important that the local and regional levels have the proper expertise, institutional capacity, as well as financial and political power to adequately draft and implement regional development policies and properly absorb the grants from the EU Cohesion Funds.¹⁹⁸

Two questions then arise: first, do Bulgaria and Turkey have strong local and regional institutions? And second, do they have an active, participatory citizenry? In the case of Bulgaria, the centralist style of governing that was characteristic in communist states tends to result in what scholars call a “socialist legacy”, whereby inhabitants in Eastern Europe are generally regarded as relatively passive and demobilized and where local and regional institutions and civil society, as such, tend to be weak.¹⁹⁹ Regarding Turkey, since the establishment of the republic in 1923, the country has known a rather tumultuous history of recurring military coups which, in a same vain, is not the most favourable environment for institutional decentralization or civil society development. Moreover, some scholars, like Bernard Lewis, argue that Islam is inherently hostile towards civil society (development) and, as such, that there is not much historical experience with it in countries where Islam is the dominant religion.²⁰⁰ This chapter sets out to analyse in how much Bulgaria and Turkey have decentralized and have established autonomous local and regional administrations. Also, the state of civil society in Bulgaria and Turkey is analysed. Regarding both, the focus will be on the period of 1990 onwards, with attention to historical developments and contextualization.

¹⁹⁷ Mohl, *Empirical Evidence on the Macroeconomic Effects of EU Cohesion Policy*, 25, 156. And: Bähr, “How Does Sub-National Autonomy Affect the Effectiveness of Structural Funds?”: 15.

¹⁹⁸ Brian Tomlinson, *Working Together with Civil Society in Foreign Aid: Possibilities for South-South Cooperation?* (UNDP: China, September 2013), 123. Also: Batory and Cartwright, “Re-Visiting the Partnership Principle in Cohesion Policy”: 701.

¹⁹⁹ Stephen E. Hanson (University of Washington) argues: ‘The long decades of separation from the West, the lack of historical experience with the rule of law and citizenship norms, the economic upheaval produced by the collapse of the Stalinist socio-economic system, and the production of a distinctive late Leninist culture of cynicism and alienation from the public sphere should combine to enable populist demagogues and authoritarian leaders to subvert attempts at liberal capitalist institution-building’. Moreover, Ken Jowitt (University of California, Berkeley) notes that: ‘The community political culture of a society in which state and society are related on the basis of an effectively institutionalized citizen-role should differ considerably from a society in which the mass of society has historically been excluded from political recognition and participation’. From this perspective, citizens from the former socialist states cannot be expected to automatically assign meaning and value to participatory forms, such as the EU cross-border programs. See: Hanson, “The Leninist Legacy”: 306. Also: Chessa, “State subsidies”: 73-76. Also: Jowitt, *New World Disorder*, 56.

²⁰⁰ Egbert Harmsen, *Islam, civil society and social work: Muslim voluntary welfare associations in Jordan between patronage and empowerment*, (Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 45.

2.1 - Decentralization and sub-national autonomy

In recent years, academicians have looked for different ways to measure the level of decentralization and sub-national autonomy.²⁰¹ In 2010, Liesbet Hooghe (University of North Carolina) et al. introduced the regional authority index (RAI), which utilizes ten dimensions to incorporate several indicators of regional authority.²⁰² As such, it becomes possible to produce a score of authority for the regional government under consideration. The advantage of this index is that it gives a good indication of the level of decentralization in a country over time (as data have been collected for the period 1950-2010; depending on availability) and allows for comparisons between countries.²⁰³ It is worthwhile to have a closer look at the profiles that Hooghe et al. have composed of Bulgaria and Turkey to get an idea of their government structures.

Bulgaria is a unitary state with a three-tier governance structure consisting of the central government, twenty-eight *oblasti* (i.e. regions) and 264 *obshtini* (i.e. municipalities). Despite their organizational and political power resources, *obshtini* have not been particularly successful in representing local interests on the national level, predominantly due to the lack of decentralized financial resources.²⁰⁴ Moreover, they have not taken a role in EU policymaking, are not involved in the management of the EU funds and are not enabled to co-

²⁰¹ Dan Stegarescu (Centre for European Economic Research, Mannheim), for instance, has looked at tax decentralization as an indicator for sub-national autonomy. The implicit assumption with this method is then that greater autonomy in deciding on spending on projects where structural Cohesion Funds are involved, goes hand in hand with greater sub-national tax-autonomy. Exactly because of this assumption and the rather narrow focus (i.e. taxes), this method has been criticized. Hooghe, et al., for instance, argue that the amount a government spends does not tell us whether spending is financed by conditional or unconditional grants, whether the central government determines how the money should be spent, or whether it sets the framework legislation within which subnational governments implement. For more on this discussion, see: Liesbet Hooghe, et al., *Measuring Regional Authority: A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance - Volume I*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 50-52. Also: Dan Stegarescu, "Public sector decentralisation: Measurement concepts and recent international trends", *Fiscal studies* 26.3 (2005): 304-306.

²⁰² The RAI presents five indicators of self-rule (the extent to which a regional government exercises authority over those who live in the region) and five indicators of shared rule (the extent to which a regional government or its representatives exercise authority in the nation). These indicators are concerned with the degree of independence and influence that the regional government enjoys in fiscal, financial, legislative and executive affairs. Each indicator has two, three or four descriptors attached to it, numbered on an ascending scale according to the autonomy of the regional institutions. For the exact methodology see: Hooghe, et al., *Measuring Regional Authority*, 60-108 Also: Henrik Enderlein, Sonja Walti, Michael Zurn, et al., *Handbook on multi-level governance*, (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2010), 3.

²⁰³ Of course, there are also limits to the RAI, but what is argued here is that it nonetheless provides us with an indication of the decentralized government structures within countries and allows for inter-country comparisons. See: Andrew Connell, "Book Reviews: Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks, Arjan H Schakel, et al., *Measuring Regional Authority: A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance, Volume I* and Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, *Community, Scale, and Regional Governance: A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance, Volume II*", *Political Studies Review* 15, no. 4 (2017): 651.

²⁰⁴ Rather, local government expenditures have declined from eleven to five percent of the GDP between 1991 and 2004 which is telling of the development of the financial situation in municipalities. See: Roger Scully and Richard Wyn Jones, *Europe, Regions and European Regionalism*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 224.

finance development projects. As such, Bulgarian municipalities are only used to implement EU policies, not to help shape them.²⁰⁵ Oblasti are governed by a state-appointed governor who ensures the implementation of the central state's policy and the safeguarding of national interests and law and public order. The twenty-eight oblasti were established in 1999 (replacing the nine districts that existed since 1987) and within the EU's NUTS system are classified as NUTS 3, whereby the NUTS 3 regions this research focusses on are Burgas, Yambol and Haskovo.²⁰⁶ In turn, these twenty-eight NUTS 3 regions are included in six NUTS 2 regions - which are used for the planning, programming and implementation of the EU funds. Burgas, Yambol and Haskovo are, as such, part of the NUTS 2 region of Yugoiztochen.²⁰⁷ The NUTS 2 regions have regional councils for development, which consist of representatives from the central state ministries and agencies, the governors of the included districts, representatives from the included municipalities and representatives of employers and trade unions. The influence of these councils is, however, limited as they only make drafts for regional development plans for the Finance Ministry and the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and these two ministries are free to make any changes before they submit any plans to the Council of Ministers for approval.²⁰⁸ Martin Brusis (Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich) concludes that regional and local interests in Bulgaria have been only weakly institutionalized in the constitutional order, public administration and political process. In turn, these weaknesses constrain the role these structures play in the European constitutional debate and in the domestic implementation of EU policies.²⁰⁹ Brusis' conclusion is reflected in Bulgaria's exceptionally low RAI score of 1 between 1991 and 2010 (the maximum RAI score being 30). Bulgaria is thus amongst the lowest scoring countries, not just amongst the Central- and Eastern European countries, but

²⁰⁵ Scully and Jones, *Europe, Regions and European Regionalism*, 224.

²⁰⁶ NUTS is a three-level hierarchical classification. Since this is a hierarchical classification, NUTS subdivides each Member State into several NUTS 1 regions, each of which is subdivided into a number of NUTS 2 regions and so on. The NUTS Regulation lays down the following minimum and maximum thresholds for the population size of the NUTS regions (the thresholds apply for the average population size in the case of administrative regional levels): NUTS 1 regions have a minimum of three million inhabitants and a maximum of seven million. NUTS 2 regions have a minimum of 800.000 inhabitants and a maximum of three million. NUTS 3 regions have a minimum of 150.000 and a maximum of 800.000. See: Eurostat, *Regions in the European Union: Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics NUTS 2010/EU-27*, (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2011), 5-6.

²⁰⁷ Eurostat, *Regions in the European Union*, 20.

²⁰⁸ Brusis argues: 'The planning regions may be characterized as artificially created institutions that do not reflect a regionally differentiated domestic economic, social or political infrastructure, and have been specifically designed to comply with EU requirements and ensure the absorption of EU funds'. See: Scully and Jones, *Europe, Regions and European Regionalism*, 226-230.

²⁰⁹ Scully and Jones, *Europe, Regions and European Regionalism*, 221.

worldwide.²¹⁰ Brusis points at several factors that explain the persistent weakness of decentralized or regional structures in Bulgaria. First, ever since Bulgaria's economic collapse in the mid-1990s, basically all fiscal and monetary policy has been firmly centralized and handled by the Ministry of Finance. Since that time, finance ministry officials have consistently argued that decentralization would jeopardize fiscal and monetary stability as municipalities would likely overspend and incur debt. Moreover, decentralization is considered less efficient and would provide more opportunities for corruption.²¹¹ The priority attached to fiscal discipline and the perceived lack of financial management skills in municipalities have also strangled enthusiasm about decentralization.

Second, Bulgaria has a tradition with a centralized form of government and incumbent governments since the 1990s have been reluctant to move away from this and decentralize. Because of this tradition, local and regional institutions lack experience and politicians and leading administrative officials therefore trust more in central ministries and prefer not to transfer powers to municipalities or regions. The result is that in recent years, there has not been so much a policy of decentralization, but rather a policy of recentralization, whereby the central government has transferred powers from municipalities to the regional level, rather than from the ministries to the regional level.

Third, decentralization initiatives have stalled because the EU has not included it as part of its accession conditionality. The only demand from the EU is that countries set up structures to manage the EU funds, but there are no formal rules for the constitutional status of the regional level, which is ultimately because the regional levels of government in EU member states vary greatly in terms of their legal status, administrative functions and political weight. Lacking harmonized, formal rules, the European Commission has confined

²¹⁰ To compare, other former socialist countries like the Czech Republic (RAI: 9), Hungary (RAI: 10.9) and Poland (RAI 8) all score significantly better. See: Hooghe, et al., *Measuring Regional Authority I*, 541-553.

²¹¹ Which is ironic seeing the fact that in the current centralized institutional climate, there is already relatively much corruption. Rather, based on alleged corruption and the misallocation of resources from the EU funds, the European Commission suspended payments of funds for the first time in 2006 and again in 2008 and in 2014. See: James Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria: How Ideas Shape Publics*, (Southeast European Studies. Farnham, Surrey England: Ashgate, 2014), 140. Also: Dessislava Hristova, "From Ambitious Goals to Improper Fit: Hybrid Performance of PHARE Pre-Accession Programme for Civil Society Development in Bulgaria", *East European Politics* 33, no. 1 (2017): 135. In 2017, Bulgaria scored 43 on the Corruption Perceptions Index (whereas the average is also 43, 0 being the most corrupt and 100 being the least corrupt) coming in a 71st place out of 180 countries. In the last few years, the situation did not improve, but rather stayed the same. By comparison: Turkey scored 40 in 2017, coming 81st. Since 2013, corruption has significantly increased in Turkey (in 2013 the score was 50). See: Transparency International, "Corruption Perceptions Index 2017", https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017, (accessed: 12-12-2018).

itself to expressing non-mandatory expectations regarding the creation of regions and regional self-government.²¹²

The fourth explanation (which highlights what has been discussed in the previous chapter) is that regionalization has been perceived as jeopardizing Bulgaria's cohesion as a state.²¹³ Brusic argues: 'The collapse of neighbouring Yugoslavia and the conflictual history of Bulgarian-Turkish relations in connection with the ethnic Turkish minority in Bulgaria have nurtured fears about a disintegration of the state. These concerns induced the Grand National Assembly to insert two articles in the Constitution that prohibit the existence of autonomous territorial formations and the creation of parties on an ethnic basis. Political representatives of the ethnic Turkish minority have respected these provisions and focussed their political strategy on participating in government, rather than calling for regional autonomy'.²¹⁴

Turkey's government structure has two regional tiers consisting of eighty-one *iler* (i.e. provinces), which correspond to the NUTS 3 level and, since 2009, twenty-six *kalkunna ajanslari* (i.e. regional development agencies), which correspond with the NUTS 2 level. In the scope of this research, we deal with the two NUTS 3 regions of Edirne and Kırklareli that together are part of the NUTS 2 region of Tekirdağ. As is the case in Bulgaria, the provinces are led by a centrally appointed governor who chairs the provincial council and coordinates the network of provincial offices. In theory, the provinces have competences for economic development, infrastructure, hospitals and other health services, primary and secondary schools, public order, and arts and culture. However, in practice, most of these competences are provided by the provincial offices of relevant ministries whose budgets are determined by the central government and which are under the control of the centrally appointed governor. Since 2002, in response to the EU accession requirements, Turkey has made efforts to decentralize and improve regional governance. In 2009, this resulted in the establishment of the *kalkunna ajanslari*, which became responsible for preparing, implementing and monitoring regional development programs. However, approval still needs to come from the central government and financially, both the *iler* and the *kalkunna ajanslari* are rather

²¹² Scully and Jones, *Europe, Regions and European Regionalism*, 225, 234-235.

²¹³ This is in line with a general trend in former socialist countries that has been described by Senka Neuman-Stanivukovic (University of Groningen), whereby countries with a more heterogeneous population have followed a relatively nationalist and centralized path as regionalization is 'portrayed as an attack on the stability of state structures'. See: Fischer and Pleines, *Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe*, 126-127.

²¹⁴ Scully and Jones, *Europe, Regions and European Regionalism*, 234.

dependent on the central government as well (i.e. iler only generate around one or two percent of their revenue themselves, the remainder comes from central funding).²¹⁵

Based on Turkey's RAI score of 8 between 2009 and 2010, it can be concluded that the degree of independence and influence that the regional government enjoys in fiscal, financial, legislative and executive affairs is higher than in Bulgaria, but still below the average of 9.6. Moreover, Turkey shows hardly any improvement if we look at the period 1961-2010, in which the RAI score increased by only two points.²¹⁶

Several reasons can be given for the relative weakness of regional structures in Turkey. First, it can be argued that Turkey has a tradition of centralized government that dates to the Ottoman Empire and which the Turkish Republic inherited in the early twentieth century. As such, there is a persistent sentiment to keep political and financial control in the hands of the central government and at the same time, there is a strong lack of understanding of local government.²¹⁷ Under Ottoman patrimonialism (i.e. a form of political organization in which authority is based on the personal power of a ruler, in this case the Sultan), local notables did not have extensive political rights. With the modernization efforts during the Tanzimat, local and regional rule was further curtailed as policies during this period had the aim to rather strengthen the centre.²¹⁸

Second, central control has been further strengthened during the socio-economic problems that Turkey faced in the 1970s, which increased public demands for affordable housing and welfare services and, as such, put more pressure on local administrative units. As the Municipal Law of 1930 had given municipalities very limited financial capacity, local governments were unable to solve these problems and therefore, most the tasks of local governments were transferred to the centre which then tried to resolve the socio-economic issues.

Third, a key reason for why decentralization efforts have not been very successful can be related to the perceived philosophy behind it. The Turkish understanding of local government is that of a mechanism of delivering services, instead of performing a political

²¹⁵ Hooghe, et al., *Measuring Regional Authority I*, 512-513.

²¹⁶ Especially regarding policy scope (i.e. the authoritative competence regions have), fiscal autonomy (i.e. it is rather the central government that sets the base and rate of all regional taxes), borrowing autonomy and executive representation the scores are low. See: Hooghe, et al., *Measuring Regional Authority I*, 514, 541-553.

²¹⁷ Aylin Güney and Ayşe Aslihan Çelenk, "Europeanization and the Dilemma of Decentralization: Centre-Local Relations in Turkey", *Journal of Balkan and near Eastern Studies* 12, no. 3 (2010): 241, 249-250.

²¹⁸ It is true that with the Tanzimat Edict of 1839, local administrative administrations were founded by the central government, but these had no autonomy and were rather just means of establishing and increasing the control of the central government at the local level. See: Güney and Çelenk, "Europeanization and the Dilemma of Decentralization": 249-250.

and democratic function. Through their political and administrative influence on the state bureaucracy, the political elites wish to tightly control local government politics and keep at bay the periphery through the distribution of patronage to local persons of influence. In their view, it needs to be the central state that performs the important and traditional functions of distributing welfare and justice.²¹⁹ Thus, authority is monopolized and power and resources are distributed by the centre in Turkey.

Fourth, similarly as in Bulgaria, in Turkey there has been a lot of hesitance regarding decentralization because of the fear that it would result in the fragmentation of the state due to Kurdish separatist movements.²²⁰ The suspicions about the long-term implications of decentralization in the form of secession in the south-eastern part of the country (which is largely populated by Kurdish-origin Turkish citizens) have prevented Turkey from initiating the necessary steps for decentralization of the administrative system.²²¹

In the early 2000s, Turkey seemed to be on its way to increased decentralization and improvement of local and regional government structures as a result of the accession talks with the EU. However, in the past few years, a process of recentralization has been going on that directly opposes the subsidiarity principle.²²² As this process started after 2010, the results of it are not yet accounted for in the RAI score of Hooghe, et al., but it can be expected that Turkey's score will drop, or at the least will stay the same.

2.2 - Civil society

How to research and analyse the civil society has been the subject of an ongoing discussion, if only because of the increasing vagueness and inclusivity of the usage of the terms CSOs and NGOs which, as Petra Guasti (University of Mainz) argues, have made them into “black box and catch-all” terms.²²³ In practice, they vary in organizational forms, degree of accountability to their members, forms of action and motivation. For the clarity of this research, the civil society is here defined as the sphere of institutions, organizations and

²¹⁹ Güney and Çelenk, “Europeanization and the Dilemma of Decentralization”: 251.

²²⁰ Hooghe, et al., *Measuring Regional Authority I*, 512-513. Also: Güney and Çelenk, “Europeanization and the Dilemma of Decentralization”: 252-253.

²²¹ Güney and Çelenk, “Europeanization and the Dilemma of Decentralization”: 253.

²²² Husniye Akilli and H. Serkan Akilli, “Decentralization and Recentralization of Local Governments in Turkey”, *Procedia - Social and Behavioural Sciences* 140 (2014): 685.

²²³ The range of actions NGOs and CSOs undertake seems to be almost infinite: from providing nearly invisible service provision for disadvantaged groups, to highly visible advocacy or direct forms of protest. Regarding the forms, or types, of NGOs and CSOs there is also a wide variety: from informal groups of friends to governmental, transnational, or even corporate agencies. See: Petra Guasti, "Development of Citizen Participation in Central and Eastern Europe After the EU Enlargement and Economic Crises", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 49.3 (2016): 221.

individuals located between the family, the state and the market in which people associate voluntarily to advance common interests.²²⁴ To ascertain whether a civil society organization is really civil is not as clear-cut as it may seem and this is not the only methodological difficulty. Rather, to measure how strong, or weak, a civil society is, has likewise been the subject of a lot of discussion.²²⁵ To tackle some of the difficulties that measuring the strength of civil society faces, several methodological tools have been developed in recent years, such as USAID's Sustainability Index, the John Hopkins Global Civil Society Index, the Global Civil Society Index, IDEA's²²⁶ Civil Society Participation Index (CSPI) and the CIVICUS'²²⁷ Civil Society Index (CSI). With these tools, researchers have tried to analyse the overall attitude within countries towards NGOs and CSOs by looking at and combining several defining factors, such as financial sustainability, institutional infrastructure and legal

²²⁴ According to this definition, political parties, trade unions, business associations, charitable bodies, cultural groups and other voluntary associations are all examples of civil society organizations. An exact definition is especially important when studying post-communist countries which were characterized by so-called *QUANGOs*: quasi-autonomous non-governmental organizations. These usually had a massive, though quasi-obligatory membership, and were in fact communist-controlled associations. See: Anna Gwiazda, *Democracy in Poland: Representation, participation, competition and accountability since 1989* (London: Routledge, 2015), 23. Also: Virág Molnár, "Civil Society, Radicalism and the Rediscovery of Mythic Nationalism." *Nations and Nationalism*, 22.1 (2016): 167. Also: Jürgen Habermas, *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. MIT press, 1991. Also: Marlies Glasius, David Lewis, and Hakan Seckinelgin, *Exploring Civil Society: Political and Cultural Contexts*, (London: Routledge, 2004), 77. Also: Chessa, "State subsidies": 73-76. Also: Clarke, "Civil Society": 960. Also: Pearce, *Civil society and development*, 44. Also: Caire Wallace, Florian Pichler, and Christian Haerpfer, "Changing Patterns of Civil Society in Europe and America 1995-2005: Is Eastern Europe Different?" *East European Politics and Societies* 26.1 (2012): 4. For more on QUANGOs in Turkey, see: Jessica Leigh Doyle, "State control of civil society organizations: the case of Turkey", *Democratization* 24.2 (2017): 252-253.

²²⁵ Just looking at the number of NGOs and CSOs in a country has its limitations as this approach only takes into consideration the "births" of organizations, not their "deaths" and, as such, leads to overblown figures as in some countries, organizations cannot be officially dissolved because the law does not recognize such acts. Thus, the number of CSOs is "inflated". Moreover, a CSO can technically consist of one person, as well as of a hundred, but this nuance is lost if we only look at the number of organizations. Moreover, by looking at officially registered NGOs and CSOs, one may not exhaust the organizational forms of civil society. After all, some groups prefer not to formally register to keep a low profile, or just because they wish to remain informal. Alternatively, we can look at membership numbers to get an idea of the state of civil society in a country, but the problem with this approach is that it treats residual membership in a formerly official organization (such as a trade union) in the same way as a membership in a new grass-roots group. This approach likewise fails to detect participation in informal groups. A third approach would be to analyse expectations that people attach to associations, something that can be measured by looking at "typical" civil society activities, such as signing petitions, participating in boycotts and demonstrating in strikes. However, what is "typical" is rather arbitrary and culture-specific, thus participation in certain selected activities is not wholly representational for civil society participation in every country. See: Nina Vucenik, "USAID's Approach to NGO Funding in Slovakia and Hungary," *IWM Junior Visiting Fellows Conferences*, Vol. 10 (2000): 3. Also: Glasius et al, *Exploring civil society*, 75-76.

²²⁶ The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide and researches the state of democracy and (as a part of this) civil society development.

²²⁷ CIVICUS is an international alliance of advocacy-based CSOs that researches the worldwide state of civil society and looks at ways to strengthen CSOs.

environment. Although these tools have their limitations, they do give us an idea of the state of a civil society and, moreover, allow us to make comparisons between countries.²²⁸

Within the scope of this research, use will be made of the CSI, which is based on Helmut Anheier's (Yale University) Civil Society Diamond (CSD).²²⁹ Between 2003 and 2006, the CSD was applied by CIVICUS' research teams in 44 states around the world and the results were published in the first CIVICUS Global Survey of the State of Civil Society. Looking at Bulgaria and Turkey, the scores of 2007 show that civil society is relatively weak in both countries. Turkey is holding the 42nd place (only leaving Egypt and Togo behind) with a score of 4.9 (the minimum is 0, the maximum is 10, whereby 10 indicates a strong civil society). The situation in Bulgaria is better as it holds a 28th place with a score of 6, however, amongst the former socialist countries, Bulgaria has one of the lowest scores.²³⁰

After 2006, CIVICUS worked with the Centre for Social Investment at the University of Heidelberg to rigorously evaluate and revise the CSI methodology.²³¹ With this new methodology in place, CIVICUS launched the new CSI in 2008 and after a pilot phase, published its results in 2011, which focused on 29 countries. The average score amongst these 29 countries was 51.2, whereas Bulgaria scored 49.4 (19th place) and Turkey scored 46.5 (25th place).²³² As such, both countries are below the average and considering that

²²⁸ Some limitations are: the vastness and diversity of the civic landscape in a country (this is especially the case in a large country such as Turkey, where diversity as such is big), the scarcity of data and research on civil society (which – again – largely applies to Turkey), and the fine balance between international comparability and country flexibility. See: A. İcduygu, Z. Meydanođlu, and D. Sert, *Civil Society in Turkey: At a Turning Point CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) Project Country Report for Turkey II*, (Istanbul, 2011), 17-21. Also: Guasti, "Development of Citizen Participation": 221.

²²⁹ Anheier's CSD (which is a civil society research tool) groups data around four main variables: 1. structure (the size and scope of civil society in economic, social and organizational terms); 2. space (the legal and political space afforded to civil society by the regulatory environment); 3. values (the values, norms and cultural expectations that civil society represents); and 4. impact (the contributions of civil society in terms of voice, policy-making, service provision or equity). Each variable generates a score between 0 and 5, and each score is then presented on a two-dimensional plane with four axes. Drawing a line between each of the four scores produces a distinct diamond shape which is the key visual representation of the data. For the complete methodology, see: Helmut Anheier, *Civil Society: Measurement, Evaluation, Policy*, (London: Routledge, 2004), 14-19.

²³⁰ By comparison: Poland scores 6.8 and Romania 6.6. See: Clarke, "Civil Society": 964-969.

²³¹ From then on, the CSI measured the following dimensions: civic engagement; level of organization; practice of values; perceived impact; and external environment. Again, these dimensions are then illustrated visually through the Civil Society Diamond (whereby the external environment dimension is represented visually by a circle around the axes of the CSD as it is not regarded as part of the state of civil society, but rather as something external that remains a crucial element for its wellbeing). To form the CSD, 67 quantitative indicators are aggregated into 28 sub-dimensions which are then assembled into the five final dimensions along a 0-100 percentage scale whereby a higher score means a more developed civil society. See: A. İcduygu, Z. Meydanođlu, and D. Sert, *Civil Society in Turkey: At a Turning Point CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) Project Country Report for Turkey II*, (Istanbul, 2011), 17-21.

²³² See appendix 1: "CIVICUS CSI 2011".

countries with traditionally strong civil societies – like Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands – are absent from this list, this is a rather telling result.

Although Bulgaria's scores have been higher than Turkey's, civil society development has been somewhat of a mixed bag. Since the 1990s, Bulgaria's civil society did show a significant growth, but starting in the early 2000s, development has stagnated, whereby minor growth and shrinkage alternate each year.²³³ Moreover, Bulgaria is a prime example of why just looking at numbers of civil society organizations and the overall (legal) environment is inadequate in analysing the strength of civil society. Doing this, the idea might rise that civil society in Bulgaria is – with the help of EU funds - rather “active” and “dynamic”, as Maria Spirova (University of Leiden) argues.²³⁴ Spirova bases her argument on the methodology and ratings from Freedom House, an American NGO that conducts research on democracy, political freedom, and human rights worldwide. She concludes that large protests in 2013 – sparked by the increased cost of electricity and later by the appointment of a media mogul as chief of the national security agency – show the “increased mobilization of civil society”.²³⁵ However, a main problem with the Freedom House's definition of a “well-developed civil society” is that it looks at “civil liberties” (i.e. the freedom to set up CSOs). Although there might be considerable freedom, the civil society may still have low capacity and participation, which is exactly the case in Bulgaria.²³⁶ As part of its historic legacy with over-centralization, civil society development has significantly been impacted, whereby the sector is highly politicized and rather, many NGOs and CSOs are politically operated.²³⁷ Because of this politicization of the civil society sector, there is a significant gap between citizens and the civil society (which - in fact - is a contradiction and points at the top-down development of civil society in Bulgaria, rather than a grassroots development) which can be seen in statistics such as membership- and participation rates. In 2015 these rates showed that only three percent of the Bulgarian population is a member of a

²³³ Sylvana Habdank-Kolaczowska and Zselyke Csaky, et al., *Nations in Transit 2014: Democratization from Central Europe to Eurasia*, (New York: Freedom House, 2014), 163-164, 169. Also: USAID, *The 2015 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia*, (USAID Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, 2015), 64.

²³⁴ For more on the issue of looking at the CSO sector in a quantitative way rather than a qualitative way, see: Hristova, “From Ambitious Goals to Improper Fit”: 134-138.

²³⁵ Habdank-Kolaczowska and Csaky, et al. *Nations in Transit 2014*, 169-170.

²³⁶ Nuno S. Themudo, “Reassessing the Impact of Civil Society: Non-profit Sector, Press Freedom, and Corruption”, *Governance* 26, no. 1 (2013): 71. Also: Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy*, 176-177.

²³⁷ Sabina Pavlovska-Hilaiel (University of Denver) notes: ‘NGOs are at best driven by a political agenda or at worst serve the interests of a particular political actor. Interviews with volunteers as well as members of NGOs show that this perception is widely spread not only among the public, but also among NGOs themselves. Further, this capturing of civil society has created a lack of trust among NGOs’, which, in turn, has created a significant ‘gap between citizens and civil society’. See: Hristova, “From Ambitious Goals to Improper Fit”: 130, 138. Also: Pavlovska-Hilaiel, “The EU's Losing Battle”: 214-215.

CSO (an increase of only one percent since 2007), and that only 6.4 percent of citizens is engaged in volunteer activities (down from seven percent in 2013). Moreover, according to a study by the Open Society Institute Sofia (OSI), a non-governmental organization that researches and promotes civil participation and inclusion, forty-five percent of the population does not trust CSOs, noting that ‘there is still confusion regarding what CSOs do and whether internationally funded CSOs defend foreign interests’. Concerning the latter, in recent years private-run media have continued a negative media campaign against CSOs, and especially against foreign-funded organizations, which media call “foreign agents”.²³⁸

James Dawson (University of Coventry), as such, argues for the necessity of a good analysis of the specific (historical) context and current socio-political situation in a country in order to go beyond mere numbers and to come to any conclusions regarding the state of democracy and civil society.²³⁹ In this vein, his analysis of the demonstrations of 2013 is very different from that of Spirova’s, whereby he argues that these should not be seen as proof of a vibrant civil society, but rather as a lack thereof. Dawson bases this idea on the insights of Marc Morjé Howard (Georgetown University), who argued that due to the demobilized nature of civil societies within the post-communist countries, there is an absence of a middle way between apathy and violence.²⁴⁰ Dawson notes that: ‘The explosion of very generalized and poorly articulated dissatisfaction in the form of protests reveal that the public sphere in this sense had failed to provide a context in which these disenchanted persons could form solidarities through practices of self-organized discourse’.²⁴¹ Moreover, he argues the demonstrations of 2013 have not “overturned the legacy of many decades of illiberal hegemony in Bulgaria”, noting that there is little evidence that ‘Bulgaria’s anti-government protesters aspire to any emancipatory vision approaching the philosophically-consistent liberalism of the cosmopolitan, anti-nationalist, feminist and LGBT movements’.²⁴² According to Dawson, the key problem with Bulgarian civic activism is not that liberal ideas are absent, but that they are almost uniformly conflated with illiberal and highly nationalist

²³⁸ USAID, *The 2015 CSO Sustainability Index*, 66-72.

²³⁹ Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria*, 130.

²⁴⁰ Moreover, Dawson notes that: ‘When the public sphere is more prominent, dissatisfied citizens are able to connect their own actions to the political context, recognizing the efficacy of airing their opinions, persuading adversaries, telling political jokes and ultimately “formulating [oppositional] interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs”. See: Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria*, 170-171. Also: Marc Morjé Howard, *The weakness of civil society in post-communist Europe*, (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 39-40. Also: Vladimir Tismaneanu, “Postcommunism between hope and disenchantment”, *Journal of International Relations and Development* 12.4 (2009): 360.

²⁴¹ Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria*, 170-171. Also: Tismaneanu, “Postcommunism between hope and disenchantment”: 360.

²⁴² Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria*, 130-132, 158.

ideas that hinder - and are ultimately liable to trump - progressive aims.²⁴³ Thus, civil society in Bulgaria is not only relatively weak, but also many of the CSOs – including the ones that challenge the government - employ nationalist and illiberal narratives that exclude minorities.²⁴⁴

Likewise, scholars regard the state of civil society in Turkey equally as relatively weak which, they argue, can be attributed to the above-mentioned lasting influence of the strong – centralized - state tradition. Throughout the twentieth century, the central government has either instrumentalized CSOs to let it serve its own purposes (as such, civil society development has not been a “bottom-up” but rather a “top-down” process), or has been highly suspicious and repressive towards CSO, fearing for its potential interference and power to undermine the political power of the central government.²⁴⁵ A second reason that is given is the disruptions of democratic rights and freedoms and civil society development due to the military interventions of 1960, 1971 and 1980, whereby especially the coup of 1980 had a great impact on the civil society as almost all CSO activities were suspended, while many CSOs were shut down permanently. Moreover, although the 1982 Constitution signified a return to democratic rule, it would be wrong to state this opened space for an associational life. Rather, the new constitution puts significant restraints on associations, trade unions and even political parties, and subjects them to heavy auditing and state control.²⁴⁶ Persistent cleavages in Turkish society – especially between the Islamists and the secularists – are another factor that thwarted CSO development. These cleavages act as sources of mutual suspicion and lack of trust and tolerance at both the citizens’ and the CSOs levels.²⁴⁷

²⁴³ Dawson argues that: ‘Actors and organizations that attempt to dissent against the power of establishment elites just as much use the same symbols of the nation. [...] In fact, this kind of articulation of national symbols with civic activism is so common that it is sometimes carried out rather unreflexively. Almost without fail, appeals to a liberal democratic system of checks and balances and the rule of law, were articulated together with illiberal ideas drawn from a menu that included authoritarian visions of order, attacks on the alleged privileges of Roma and other minority groups and pleas for a return to more “Bulgarian” (nationalist) values’. See: Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria*, 130-132, 158.

²⁴⁴ Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria*, 130-132, 158.

²⁴⁵ Cerem I. Cenkler-Özek, "Civic space in Turkey: a social capital approach to civil society", *Turkish Studies* 18.4 (2017): 692. Also: Meydanoğlu and Sert, *Civil Society in Turkey*, 25-26.

²⁴⁶ Meydanoğlu and Sert, *Civil Society in Turkey*, 26. Also: Cenkler-Özek, "Civic space in Turkey": 692.

²⁴⁷ Another constraint to the emergence of a civil society in Turkey that can be mentioned is the absence of a solid approach regarding the issue of the relationships between institutions and civil society actors, due to a lack of a comprehensive approach and understanding of what “civil society is about”. The absence of a legal definition of civil society in Turkey is considered as a shortcoming that undermines the impact of civic and political participation. See: Cristiano Bee, *Active Citizenship in Europe: Practices and Demands in the EU, Italy, Turkey and the UK*. Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 168. Also: Cenkler-Özek, "Civic space in Turkey": 692-693.

Contrasting these weaknesses, Wajih Kawtharani (Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies) points at the historical tradition that Islam has regarding the development and sustaining of civil society.²⁴⁸ Kawtharani maintains that the medieval Islamic state was established on two foundations: the legitimizing religious principle of *da'wa* (i.e. the proselytizing or preaching of Islam) and the political principle of *asabiya* (community spirit), whereby both principles served as instruments for the conquest and consolidation of power. Although political authorities and institutions of official Islam systematically abused the first principle, popular Islam offered permanent ideological support to opposition movements and made possible the resistance of the *mujtama' ahli* (i.e. the “popular”, or “peoples” society) to the incorporating pressure by the state. It is through this “people’s society” that Islam preserved its emancipatory essence through the ages. However, as Kawtharani himself also points out, these civil institutions came to be suppressed with the establishment of non-religious political authorities in the Islamic world in the twentieth century with the rise of the modern nation-state. Scholars that think along the same lines as Kawtharani argue that democracy and civil society in the Muslim world can be (re-) established through a revival of this Islamic citizens’ society.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ The role of Islam in civil society development is highly debated and often contains rather essentialized ideas about Islam, as well as a relatively Euro-centric view of the concept and definition of civil society. Bernard Lewis can be regarded as one of the main advocates of the view that Islam is an obstacle to civil society development. He claims that Islamic law is inherently totalitarian and thus prevents the emergence of strong societal institutions. See: Harmsen, *Islam, civil society and social work*, 45-46, 56-58. Also: Amr Hamzawy, et al., *Civil society in the Middle East*, (Vol. 4. Verlag Hans Schiler, 2003), 29-30.

Harmsen, *Islam, civil society and social work*, 47-48.

²⁴⁹ Kawtharani argues: ‘The *umma* [i.e. religious community] as a religious, cognitive and social frame of reference was never integrated into the state in an organic way [...], since in spite of the establishment of an (official) religious institution in the Middle Ages, which’ authorities were realized in the functions of the *ifta* (production of legal reports), *qada* (administration of justice) and religious education; a great number of the *ulama* (religious scholars) and of the *fuqaha* (legal scholars), especially within Sufi-movements and Shi’i groups, were not integrated in official positions. Many of them had been leaders of opposition and liberation movements, propagated reform ideas, and inspired groups which withdrew from politics and disdained worldly authorities’. According to Kawtharani, medieval state-society relations in the Islamic world were dominated by persistent conflicts, whereby the separation between the state and the *umma* led to the formation of two competing spheres of power. On the one side, there was the sphere of state intervention, which was concentrated around the institutions of *al-wilaya* (governance), *al-qada* (jurisdiction), *al-muhtasib* (tax authorities), and *ash-shurta* (police). On the other, there was the sphere of the *mujtama' ahli*, which mainly developed within the growing urban centres during the expansion of the Islamic world and the extension of its global trade relations. While the state continuously attempted to penetrate the sphere of the *mujtama' ahli* and crack down its organizations, the latter offered its members protection from the repressive power of the state, as well as various social, economic and cultural services. See: Hamzawy, et al., *Civil society in the Middle East*, 28-30. Also: Wajih Kawtharani, *Civil society and the state in Arab history and its role in the realization of democracy*, (Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1992), 119-127. Also: Harmsen, *Islam, civil society and social work*, 47-49. Another element of civil engagement within Islam is the widespread practice of charitable giving. As part of Muslim religious practices, Muslim citizens give a certain share of their income to the needy as a religious duty (*zakat*), and in the case of Turkey, surveys show that around eighty percent gives to charity on a regular basis. However, this generally takes place as a direct interaction between the giver and the person in need, rather than through CSOs, thus limiting the significance of charitable giving for the strengthening of organized civil

Coming back to the importance of decentralization and a vibrant civil society in the implementation of cross-border cooperation, in this chapter it has been argued that both are problematic in Bulgaria and Turkey. Moreover, recent trends and developments do not give much hope for improvement. In Bulgaria, the far-right United Patriots alliance won 27 seats and formed a coalition with Borisov's GERB party in 2017 – marking the first time a far-right party has been part of the Bulgarian government and raising concerns about the normalization of xenophobia and nationalist exclusivism.²⁵⁰ In Turkey, political power has become even more centralized in the aftermath of the coup attempt of July 2016. In the context of a wider purge of the leadership's perceived enemies, authorities have also initiated prosecutions of key figures in the CSO sector whereby, since the attempted coup, 1.500 civil society organizations have been closed and their properties have been confiscated.²⁵¹

society. See: Heinrich Volkhart, Lorenzo Fioramonti, et al., *CIVICUS global survey of the state of civil society: Comparative perspectives*, (Vol. 2. Kumarian Press, 2007), 131-132.

²⁵⁰ Freedom House, "Freedom in the world 2018: Bulgaria", <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/bulgaria>, (accessed: 13-12-2018).

²⁵¹ Freedom House, "Freedom in the world 2018: Turkey", <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/turkey>, (accessed: 13-12-2018).

3 What are the socio-economic structures of Yugoiztochen, Yuhzen tsentralen and the Tekirdağ Subregion? What projects have been funded between 2003 and 2013?

This chapter will look at the socio-economic structures of the NUTS 2 regions that are involved in the cross-border cooperation programs between Bulgaria and Turkey, namely: Yugoiztochen (BG34), Yuhzen tsentralen (BG42) and the Tekirdağ Subregion (TR21).²⁵² Doing this, we can analyse whether the socio-economic structures between these Bulgarian and Turkish regions are similar. This is of importance in cross-border cooperation since it increases the chances of the cooperating regions to have the same objectives and, as such, to come up with a coherent plan that both sides will benefit from. If this is not the case, there is less of an incentive to cooperate and instead regions tend to prefer to unilaterally upgrade their infrastructure and improve their own socio-economic situation, without truly working together.²⁵³

The subquestions of this chapter will be answered in two ways. First, the socio-economic structures of the regions mentioned above will be compared, which can be done by looking at several socio-economic factors which will be explained in more detail below. Second, the projects that have been funded in the period 2003-2013 can be studied as, in this way, it can be concluded whether the regional actors have predominantly chosen to unilaterally work on their own socio-economic issues and have used the cross-border funds for this, or whether a coherent cooperation strategy has been implemented. As it would go too far to look at all the projects that have been implemented as part of the cross-border cooperation programs, the focus will be on a sample that is partially based on fieldwork that has been conducted in the region in September 2018.

3.1 - The socio-economic structures of Yugoiztochen, Yuhzen tsentralen and the Tekirdağ Subregion

Statistical information is an important tool in shaping the EU's cohesion policy, as it helps to understand and quantify the impact of political decisions in a specific territory or region. In this regard, the EU focusses on eleven regional indicators: economy, population, health, education, the labour market, structural business statistics, tourism, the information society,

²⁵² If we look at the smaller NUTS 3 level, we are dealing with: Burgas (BG341), Yambol (BG343), Haskovo (BG422), Edirne (TR212), and Kirklareli (TR213).

²⁵³ Bertram argues: 'As long as there is competition between two national economic systems and harmonious decision-making by the administrations involved is unlikely, both personal contacts and cooperation which create trust, and consequently economic success, will have difficulties to emerge'. See: Bertram, "Double Transformation at the Eastern Border of the EU": 223. Also: Bergs, "Cross-Border Cooperation": 349.

agriculture, infrastructure, and science, technology and innovation.²⁵⁴ In the first part of this chapter, the focus will be on several of these indicators. Background information will be given regarding the regions of Yugoiztochen, Yuhzen tsentralen and the Tekirdağ as a way of determining whether the socio-economic structures of these regions are comparable.

Regarding gross domestic product (GDP), all three regions perform below the EU average, whereby especially the Bulgarian regions in 2003 were amongst the poorest of the EU. Although the situation has improved since that time, in 2008 the GDP per inhabitant in purchasing power standard (PPS) in percentage of the EU average was still only 36 percent for Yugoiztochen and thirty percent for Yuhzen tsentralen, whereas that of Tekirdağ was 59 percent. In 2014, this had gone up to 38 percent for Yugoiztochen and to 32 percent for Yuhzen tsentralen, while Tekirdağ in 2014 had a GDP per inhabitant in PPS in percentage of the EU average of 69 percent.²⁵⁵ Thus, whereas the Bulgarian regions both saw only an increase of 2 percent points, the Turkish region saw a much more significant growth of ten percent points, while its GDP was already higher in 2008. As such, economic disparities between the Bulgarian and Turkish regions only became bigger.²⁵⁶

Population density in all regions at the Bulgarian-Turkish border is rather low, especially in the NUTS 3 regions of Haskovo and Yambol where the biggest cities both have less than 100.000 inhabitants.²⁵⁷ The total population in the border cooperation area is around 1.5 million (784.480 inhabitants on the Bulgarian side and 742.000 inhabitants on the Turkish

²⁵⁴ More concretely, Eurostat looks at: GDP development, size and density of the population, population change, life expectancy, number of hospital beds and healthcare professionals per capita, the percentage of students in tertiary education, tertiary educational attainment, primary and lower secondary education attainment, (un-)employment rates, the share of agriculture, industry and services in the national economy, the number of nights spent in tourist accommodation establishments, access to information and communication technologies, internet usage, the average economic size of farm holdings, the state of roads, railways, airports and ports, research and development intensity, and employment in high-tech sectors. See: Eurostat, *Eurostat regional yearbook 2013*, (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2013), 3-4.

²⁵⁵ The purchasing power standard (PPS) is an artificial currency unit. Theoretically, one PPS can buy the same number of goods and services in each country. However, price differences across borders mean that different amounts of national currency units are needed for the same goods and services depending on the country. The PPS is derived by dividing any economic aggregate of a country in national currency by its respective purchasing power parities. See: Eurostat, “Glossary: Purchasing power standard (PPS)”, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Purchasing_power_standard_\(PPS\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Purchasing_power_standard_(PPS)), (accessed: 24-12-2018).

²⁵⁶ Eurostat, “Eurostat regional yearbook 2014”, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYP-2014.json&mids=2,45,127&o=1,1,0.7&ch=11,43,44¢er=50.01157,19.93633,3&lci=45&nutsId=TR21&>, (accessed: 19-12-2018).

²⁵⁷ The biggest cities in the cooperation area are Burgas (211.535 inhabitants) and Edirne 148.474 inhabitants. Population density in Burgas is 54.9 inhabitants per square kilometre, 45.3 in Haskovo, 39.7 in Yambol, 64.7 in Edirne and 53 in Kirklareli (2014 statistics). See: Joint Technical Secretariat Haskovo and Edirne, *Interreg-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria-Turkey*, (2014), 5.

side according to 2014 statistics).²⁵⁸ All the regions are confronted with a shrinking population, meaning that the population density is further decreasing. To a great extent, this shrinking population can be attributed to out-migration.²⁵⁹ Life expectancy at birth is similar, although slightly higher on the Turkish side of the border (76.8 in Tekirdağ, versus 73.9 in Yugoiztochen and 74.9 in Yuhzen tsentralen), but all three regions score below the EU average of 80.3.²⁶⁰²⁶¹

In the field of education, the percentage of persons aged 25-64 with tertiary education is relatively low in the entire Bulgarian-Turkish border region (19.2 percent in Yuhzen tsentralen, 18.9 percent in Yugoiztochen and only 11.6 percent in the Tekirdağ sub region).²⁶² By comparison, in the NUTS 2 region of Sofia, this is 32.5 percent.²⁶³ At the same time, the percentage of the population between 25 and 64 with less than a primary, primary and lower secondary education is significantly higher on the Turkish side (66.3 percent in 2008, 64.6 percent in 2013).

²⁵⁸ Joint Technical Secretariat Haskovo and Edirne, *Interreg-IPA*, 5.

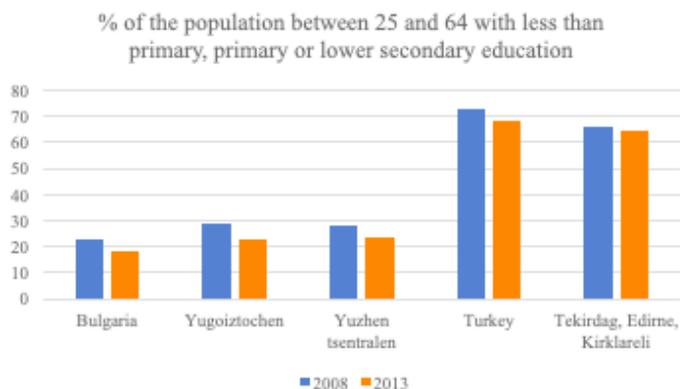
²⁵⁹ Eurostat, “Eurostat regional yearbook 2013”, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYB-2013.json&mids=2,17,119&o=1,1,0.7&ch=15,16¢er=50.01157,19.93633,3&lcis=17&>, (accessed: 19-12-2018).

²⁶⁰ Eurostat, “Eurostat regional yearbook 2014”, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYB-2014.json&mids=2,18,127&o=1,1,0.7&ch=10,11¢er=41.34301,29.08745,5&lcis=18&nutsId=TR21&>, (accessed: 19-12-2018).

²⁶¹ Diseases of the circulatory system include those related to high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes and smoking; the most common causes of death from diseases of the circulatory system are ischaemic heart diseases and cerebrovascular diseases. Eurostat focusses on these diseases to get a general idea of the state of healthcare in a country. See: Eurostat, “Causes of death statistics”, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Causes_of_death_statistics#Main_findings, (accessed: 19-12-2018). Also: Eurostat, “Eurostat regional yearbook 2015”, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYB-2015.json&mids=2,34,119&o=1,1,0.7&ch=11,26,33¢er=50.01157,19.93633,3&lcis=34&nutsId=BG34&>, (accessed: 19-12-2018).

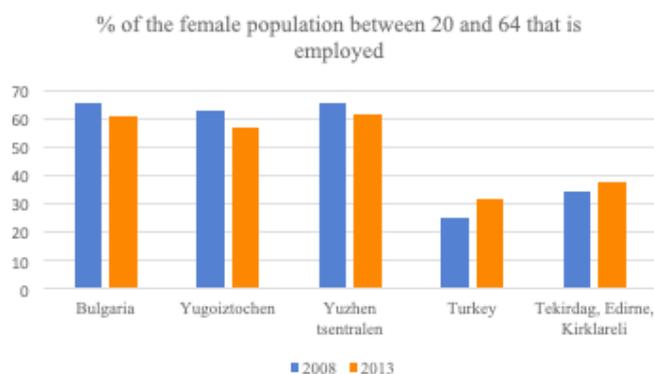
²⁶² Tertiary education — provided by universities and other higher education institutions — is the level of education following secondary schooling. It is seen to play an essential role in society, by fostering innovation, increasing economic development and growth, and improving more generally the well-being of citizens. See: Eurostat, “Tertiary education statistics”, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Tertiary_education_statistics, (accessed: 19-12-2018).

²⁶³ Eurostat, “Eurostat regional yearbook 2013”, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYB-2013.json&mids=2,41,119&o=1,1,0.7&ch=15,33¢er=50.01157,19.93633,3&lcis=41&nutsId=TR51&>, (accessed: 19-12-2018).



Graph 1 - Percentage of the population between 25 and 64 with less than primary, primary or lower secondary education.²⁶⁴

Unemployment is a major issue for the CBC region. When looking at employment rates in Yugoiztochen (66.7 percent), Yuhzen tsentralen (66.1 percent) and the Tekirdağ region (62.6 percent), we can see these are all below the EU average of 72.7 percent in 2017.²⁶⁵ In comparison to the rest of Turkey, Tekirdağ is performing as one of the best regions within the country. The relatively low employment rate in comparison to the EU average, however, can almost completely be explained by the particularly low employment rate amongst women. In 2013 only 31.8 percent of the Turkish women between the age of 20 and 64 was employed, versus 60.7 percent in Bulgaria. Rates for youth unemployment are at a very high level in all three regions, including the threat of brain drain occurrences.



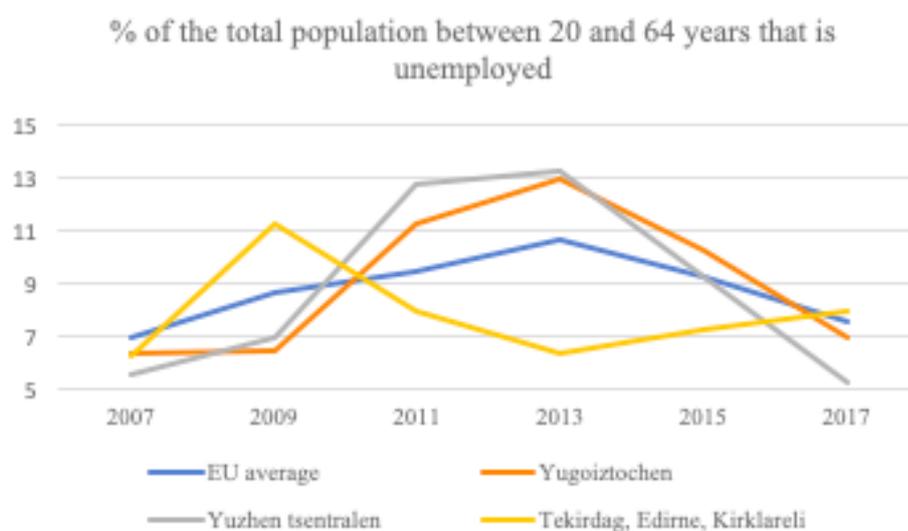
Graph 2 - Percentage of the female population between 20 and 64 that is employed.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁴ Eurostat, “Regions database: education”, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/regions/data/database>, (accessed: 17-12-2018).

²⁶⁵ Eurostat, “Eurostat regional yearbook 2017”, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYP-2017.json&mids=BKGCNT,C05M01,CNTOV&o=1,1,0.7&ch=POP,C05¢er=50.01157,19.93633,3&lcis=C05M01&nutsId=TR21&>, (accessed: 19-12-2018). Also: Eurostat, “Regions database”, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/regions/data/database>, (accessed: 17-12-2018).

²⁶⁶ Eurostat, “Regions database: employment”, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/regions/data/database>, (accessed: 17-12-2018).

Bulgaria was especially affected by the economic crisis, which started to take shape after 2008. This can be seen in the unemployment rates, which shot up from 5.5 percent of the total population between 20 and 64 years in Yugoiztochen in 2008, to 12.9 percent in 2013. Yuzhen tsentralen, which had an unemployment rate that was below the Bulgarian average in 2008 of 4.9 percent saw an increase to 13.2 percent in 2013. However, in the following years the situation normalized and in 2017, Yugoiztochen had a rate of 6.9 percent and Yuzhen tsentralen of 5.2 percent (as such, Yuzhen tsentralen has an unemployment rate that is below the Bulgarian average again). In Tekirdağ the unemployment rate was 9.5 percent in 2008, 6.3 percent in 2013 and 7.9 percent in 2017. Although this still accounts for a positive development since 2008, Tekirdağ's unemployment rate has been slowly increasing ever since 2013, thus following the general trend in Turkey.²⁶⁷



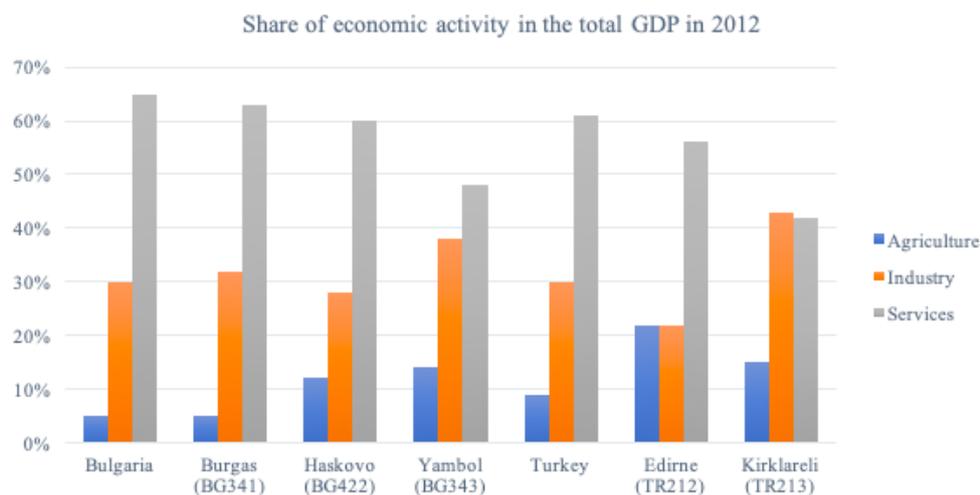
Graph 3 - Percentage of the total population between 20 and 64 years that is unemployed.²⁶⁸

Regarding the economic structures of the regions, we can see that there is an increasingly dominant role for the service sector. At the same time, the service sectors in Yugoiztochen, Yuzhen tsentralen and the Tekirdağ region are still below their respective national averages, which, in turn, are below the EU average. As is common in former socialist countries, there is a persistently significant role for the industry sector, although its importance has significantly been declining in recent years. In Turkey, on the other hand, we can see that the industry sector is growing and this is especially the case for the region of

²⁶⁷ Eurostat, “Regions database: unemployment”, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/regions/data/database>, (accessed: 17-12-2018).

²⁶⁸ Eurostat, “Regions database: unemployed”, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/regions/data/database>, (accessed: 17-12-2018).

Tekirdağ.²⁶⁹ In both countries, the share of agriculture in the economy and employment is still significant and above the EU average. In the region of Yugoiztochen, the share of employment in agriculture grew marginally between 2009 and 2012, whereas in Yuzhen tsentralen and the Tekirdağ region there was a decline, whereby for the latter this was against the national trend. Looking at a NUTS 3 level, agriculture plays a significant role in all regions except for Burgas where people are predominantly employed in services and construction due to the well-developed tourism sector.²⁷⁰



Graph 4 - Share of economic activity in the total GDP in 2012.²⁷¹

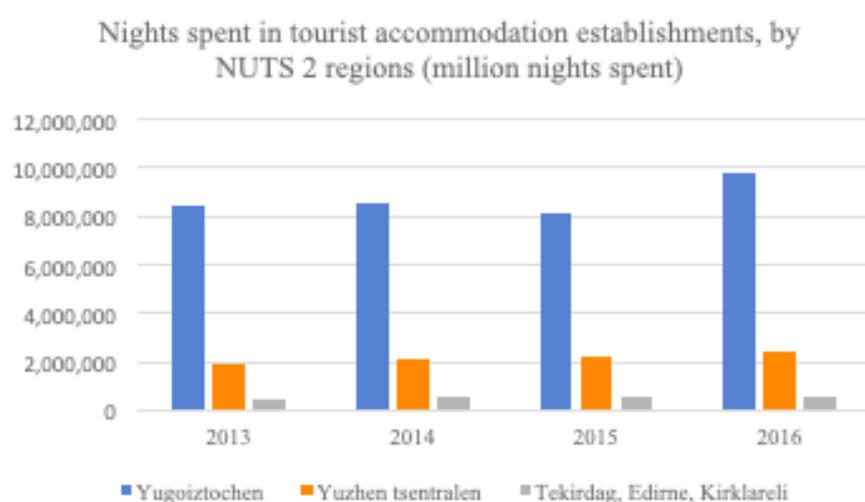
Currently, tourism only plays a significant role in the NUTS 2 region of Yugoiztochen (and especially in Burgas and the rest of the Black Sea region) where, in 2013, over 8 million nights were spent in tourist accommodation establishments as opposed to only 1.9 million in Yuzhen tsentralen and over 435.000 in the Tekirdağ region. In theory, abundance of cultural and historical landmarks and the favourable natural and environmental characteristics of the Bulgarian-Turkish border region provide plenty of opportunities for sustainable development of different forms of tourism. However, in the current situation, tourism is only well developed along the Black Sea coast in Bulgaria where several towns

²⁶⁹ On a more detailed level, we can see that in Turkey there is a greater concentration of industrial activities in, or next, to the main urban centres, while in Bulgaria industrial locations are more widely distributed. Moreover, the Turkish predominant industry sub-sectors include food processing, textile and metal and wood. The Bulgarian industrial sub-sectors are focused on chemical industry, machinery building for food processing, electrical engineering and glass and ceramic industries. See: Joint Technical Secretariat Haskovo and Edirne, *Bulgaria – Turkey IPA Cross Border Programme*, (Sofia/Ankara: 2007), 12.

²⁷⁰ Joint Technical Secretariat Haskovo and Edirne, *Bulgaria – Turkey IPA Cross Border Programme*, 10.

²⁷¹ Bulgarian National Statistical Institute, “Regions, districts and municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria 2013”, <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/12907/публикация/regions-districts-and-municipalities-republic-bulgaria-2013>, (accessed: 20-12-2018). Also: Turkish Statistical Institute, “Gross Domestic Product by Provinces by Kind of Economic Activity (2009 base)”, <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/UstMenu.do?metod=temelist>, (accessed: 20-12-2018).

and villages benefit from the impact of a relatively prosperous tourism industry that attracts both domestic and foreign visitors. The city of Edirne does attract visitors because of its historical past, numerous monuments and tradition (albeit usually just for one day as tourists tend to move on to Istanbul), but tourism could be further developed in the city, as well as in the rest of the province. The main problem that the tourism industry currently faces in the border area is the lack of infrastructure and facilities (apart from Burgas) for receiving mass tourism in the region. There is especially good opportunity for cross-border cooperation in the Strandja/Yildiz mountain area, which covers both countries. Rather, throughout the years, several projects have been funded through the Cohesion Funds that focused on this region and the improvement of the tourism sector.²⁷²



Graph 5 - Nights spent in tourist accommodation establishments, by NUTS 2 regions (in million nights spent).²⁷³

The CBC region is served by a number of transport infrastructures. Currently, three border crossings are in operation in the area: Kapitan Andreevo-Kapikule, Lesovo-Hamzabeyli and Malko Tarnovo-Dereköy. The region is crossed by the A1 Trakia Motorway from Sofia to Burgas and a relatively new motorway (the A4 Maritsa Motorway) is crossing the border region and connects both regions of Haskovo and Edirne. On the Turkish side, the O-3 motorway connects the province of Edirne with Istanbul. The state roads D100, D110, D550 and D555 are connecting both provinces with each other and to the motorway. Overall, in both Bulgaria and Turkey, the network is much more developed on the north-south axis than on the east-west one (these kinds of asymmetries are typical for border regions).

²⁷² Joint Technical Secretariat Haskovo and Edirne, *Cross-border co-operation Bulgaria-Turkey 2004-2006 Joint Programming Document*, (2004), 17-18.

²⁷³ Eurostat, “Regions database: tourism”, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/regions/data/database>, (accessed: 17-12-2018).

Moreover, roads in Bulgaria, especially the secondary or lesser roads, are in very bad state and need much upkeep and repair. The state of roads in Turkey is better, although there are occasional critical situations where conditions could be improved.²⁷⁴ The railway network in the cross-border area is operated by the Bulgarian State Railways (BDZ) on the Bulgarian side and by the Turkish Republic State Railways (TCDD) on the Turkish side. The only railway on the Bulgarian side of the CBC region is the old “Orient-Express” line (trans-European Transport Corridor No. 10), which is a single-track railway. No railway serves the south-eastern part and some municipalities closer to the border are not well connected with the rest of the country. On the Turkish side, apart from the Orient-Express line, there are several other lines as well, connecting a number of cities in the border region. The port of Burgas is the only one of international importance in the CBC region. It offers the possibility for freight transport, includes a duty-free zone and is specialized in processing cargoes (mainly oil, metals, timbers and agricultural products). Approximately forty percent of Bulgaria’s imports and exports go through the port of Burgas. The biggest airport of the region is in Burgas as well, which served around 2.4 million passengers in 2012, thus being the second biggest airport of Bulgaria.²⁷⁵ To get an objective idea of the quality of infrastructure in Bulgaria and Turkey, we can turn to the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) of the World Bank. This index is the weighted average of the country scores on six key logistics dimensions, and scores range from 1 to 5, whereby 167 countries are ranked.²⁷⁶ The aggregated LPI for the period 2012-2018 for Bulgaria is 3.00 (57th place)²⁷⁷ and for Turkey 3.29 (37th place).²⁷⁸ On the infrastructure score, Bulgaria takes a 64th position with a score of 2.71, Turkey comes 30th with a score of 3.36. Thus, Turkey’s infrastructure is significantly better than Bulgaria’s, which is lagging - even in comparison to other former socialist countries – like Poland and Hungary.²⁷⁹ As such, there is more incentive for Bulgaria to improve its infrastructure.

²⁷⁴ Joint Technical Secretariat Haskovo and Edirne, *Cross-border co-operation*, 25.

²⁷⁵ Joint Technical Secretariat Haskovo and Edirne, *Bulgaria – Turkey IPA Cross Border Programme*, 10-11.

²⁷⁶ To determine the Logistics Performance Index (LPI), the World Bank analyses the following six elements: 1. efficiency of the clearance process (i.e., speed, simplicity and predictability of formalities) by border control agencies, including customs; 2. quality of trade and transport related infrastructure (e.g., ports, railroads, roads, information technology); 3. ease of arranging competitively priced shipments; 4. competence and quality of logistics services (e.g., transport operators, customs brokers); 5. ability to track and trace consignments; 6. quickness of shipments in reaching destinations within the scheduled or expected delivery time. See: World Bank, “Aggregated LPI”, <https://lpi.worldbank.org/international/aggregated-ranking>, (accessed: 18-12-2018).

²⁷⁷ By comparison: Poland is at a 31st position with a score of 3.50 and Hungary is 32nd with a score of 3.41.

²⁷⁸ World Bank, “Aggregated LPI”, <https://lpi.worldbank.org/international/aggregated-ranking>, (accessed: 18-12-2018).

²⁷⁹ By comparison: Poland’s infrastructure is at a 40th position with a score of 3.17. Hungary’s infrastructure is at a 32nd place with a score of 3.31.

To give a brief overview of the similarities and differences between the three NUTS 2 regions that are involved in the cross-border cooperation programs, it can be noted that all regions are characterized by low population density, relatively low life expectancy at birth, few people with tertiary education, low employment rates and low research and development (R&D) rates. Moreover, the economic structures are comparable with relatively high shares of agriculture and industry. On the other hand, although all regions have low GDPs in comparison to the EU average, the difference between the GDP of the Tekirdağ region on the one hand and Yugoiztochen and Yuhzen tsentralen on the other has become only bigger in recent years. We can also see significant differences in tourism (whereby only Burgas has a developed tourist infrastructure), education (with a high percentage of low educated population on the Turkish side), and infrastructure (which is significantly less developed on the Bulgarian side).

3.2 - Funded projects between 2003-2013

With both Bulgaria and Turkey showing their willingness to become part of the EU in the 1990s, the European Commission decided to grant the two countries funds to support political and economic reforms that would prepare them for the rights and obligations that come with EU membership.²⁸⁰ This policy fits within the more general Cohesion Policy of the EU (nowadays accounting for over one-third of the EU's expenditures), which is meant to reduce disparities between the levels of development of the various regions, and to strengthen economic, social and territorial cohesion and integration. Seeing that border regions are usually the most socio-economically vulnerable, the EC regards cross-border cooperation funds as an important instrument for socio-economic development – and thus as an important element of the Cohesion Policy.²⁸¹

²⁸⁰ European Commission, "Overview – Instrument for pre-accession assistance", https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en, (accessed: 29-12-2018).

²⁸¹ The origin of the Cohesion Policy goes back to the Treaty of Rome of 1957. It was this treaty that formed the basis of the European Communities' acknowledged need to "promote throughout the Community a harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of economic activities, a high level of employment and of social protection", as well as "raising the standard of living and quality of life, and economic and social cohesion and solidarity among Member States". All of this is based on a principle of solidarity: through the provision of Community level assistance narrowing the gap between richer and poorer regions and help those regions, which are "lagging behind", disadvantages can be overcome and allow regions to catch up. See: European Commission, "Cross Border Cooperation", https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/cross-border-cooperation_en, (accessed: 29-12-2018). Also: Hassink, Dankbaar, and Corvers, "Technology networking in border regions": 67. Also: Petar Stoyanov, "Bulgarian regions at EU external border: the case study of Bulgaria-Turkey border area", *Geographica Timisiensis*, 19.2 (2010): 197. Also: Mohl, *Empirical Evidence on the Macroeconomic Effects of EU Cohesion Policy*, 155. Also: Halas, "Development of cross-border cooperation": 24. Also: Teresa Reeves, "Regional Development in the EU and Turkey", *Bölgesel Kalkınma ve Yönetişim Sempozyumu*, (2006): 30.

In 2003, to prepare Bulgaria and Turkey for more structural (cross-border) funding from the EU, the first cross-border program in the Bulgarian-Turkish border region, called the Joint Small Projects Fund (JSPF), was set up. The countries received 500.000 euro each to set up a cooperation network between local and regional stakeholders in the border region and to work on institution building. JSPF was continued in 2004 whereby Bulgaria and Turkey each received an additional 500.000 euro to continue working on institutional building. In the same year, the two countries also received funds from PHARE CBC, which came down to a total of five million euro that was equally divided between the two countries (which shows that cooperation around this time was limited; rather the two countries both implemented a project on their own).²⁸² Bulgaria used its share of 2.5 million euro to improve road I-9 (E-87) between Malko Tarnovo and the border crossing checkpoint with Turkey which leads to Kirklareli. Turkey invested its 2.5 million euro in the restoration of the “Ekmekcizade Caravanserai” of Edirne (a caravanserai can be compared to an inn where travellers and merchants, i.e. *caravaners*, could rest and trade), which was constructed in 1609. The intention behind the restoration of the caravanserai was to provide a site that would allow the hosting of Turkish and Bulgarian cultural events, business forums, congresses, seminars, visits by commercial delegations, trade fairs and other bilateral events to encourage cross-border cultural and economic exchanges and relations between the two countries. The restoration of the caravanserai continued until 2009 and afterwards it was indeed used for these purposes. However, since 2017, more renovations have begun (which are currently still under way) and, as such, the caravanserai has been closed since that time.²⁸³

Both PHARE and JSPF continued in 2005 for a total amount of five million euro (four million from PHARE and one million from JSPF). The four million euro from PHARE was – again – divided between the two countries, but this time, the two projects that were implemented required more cooperation as these were not limited to one specific country.²⁸⁴

²⁸² PHARE stands for “Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies”, which was created already in 1989 to strengthen the public administrations and institutions of these two countries, to promote convergence with the EU’s legislation (the so-called Community *acquis*), and promote economic and social cohesion. Later, PHARE was expanded to other former socialist countries as well and eventually covered ten countries (eight of which joined the EU in 2004, amongst which Poland and Hungary, and two in 2007, namely Bulgaria and Romania). See: European Commission, “Former assistance”, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/former-assistance_en, (accessed: 29-12-2018).

²⁸³ Esma Mihlayanlar and Aydın Dinçer, “Investigation of Edirne Ekmekçizade Ahmet Pasha Caravanserai in Terms of Refunctioning”, *ECSAC’17: European conference on science, art & culture* (Prague, 2017): 58.

²⁸⁴ 2 million euro was spent on capacity improvement for flood forecasting in the Bulgarian-Turkish border region. The other 2 million euro was spent on promotion of sustainable development in the Strandja/Yildiz mountain area (in the North-East of Bulgaria and north-west of Turkey). This project focused on creation of a trans-border green network, development of a trans-border regional community and identity through the marketing of regional products and marketing of the region as a cultural and eco-tourism destination, and

Two million euro from PHARE was spent on capacity improvement for flood forecasting in the Bulgarian-Turkish border region. The river Evros is the second longest river in South-eastern Europe - the Danube being the longest - with its headwaters in the Rila mountain chain in Bulgaria.²⁸⁵ It drains an area of about 53.000 km² and discharges into the Aegean Sea on the border of Greece and Turkey. The entire area of the Evros basin is distributed over the territories of Bulgaria (66 percent), Turkey (28 percent), and Greece (6 percent). The river basin hosts a total population of approximately two million people and the Evros flows through many urban areas including Pazardzhik, Plovdiv and Svilengrad in Bulgaria, Edirne in Turkey and Kastanies, Pythio and Lavara in Greece. Although there are many environmental problems in the river basin system, including water pollution and droughts during summer, the major threat to the – especially - Greek and Turkish parts of the river delta is serious flooding. Generally, one or two floodings occur every year and these have severe socio-economic and environmental impacts. A solution to this issue demands serious political, legal, social and scientific input and great cooperative efforts between Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey. Rather, it is especially in this regard that cross-border cooperation is necessary to improve the situation. The two million euro from the PHARE budget was meant to improve flood forecasting in the border region and, based upon these forecasts, to come up with improvements in the infrastructure to reduce the chances of future floodings. This project was completed in 2010, but so far no real improvements can be noticed and in fact more floodings have occurred in recent years, something that can – in the first place - be attributed to climate change.²⁸⁶ Moreover, Joris Verwijmeren (Radboud University Nijmegen), et al. argue there have been severe difficulties in the cross-border cooperation between Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey when it comes to combatting the issues the Evros delta is confronted with, something they contribute to the “inherited burden of bilateral wars, conflicts, disputes and mistrust” that originate in the distant past and last up to the present.²⁸⁷ Within this context, the three countries differ greatly in many respects, such as rules of the

investment in infrastructure to support the development of tourism in the region. See: Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services, *Study on the Contribution of Culture to Local and Regional Development – Evidence from the Structural Funds: Case Studies Part 2*, (European Commission, 2010): 15-17.

²⁸⁵ Evros is the Greek name of the river. In Bulgarian, it is known as the Maritsa and in Turkish as the Meriç.

²⁸⁶ See: Nurullah Sezen, Numan Gündüz, and S. Malkaralı, "Meriç river floods and Turkish–Bulgarian cooperation's", *International Congress on River Basin Management*, (2007): 648.

²⁸⁷ Verwijmeren: ‘Despite the fact that international treaties have been ratified, certain agreements and declarations have been made, protocols have been drafted and negotiations have taken place (albeit almost entirely on a bilateral basis over the last seventy years), the three countries have not yet arrived at a framework agreement for initiating and implementing river basin management in a formal, organized manner. The developments can be characterized by discontinuity, inefficiency and fragmentation’. See: Joris Verwijmeren and Marcus Antonius Wiering, et al., *Many Rivers to Cross: Cross Border Co-operation in River Management*, (Eburon Uitgeverij, 2007), 136.

game and discourses and resources of their policy arrangements. Part of the issue is that there are significant differences of interest that are hard to overcome. In Bulgaria, all dams engaged in hydropower-electricity generation are owned and/or managed by private companies which' prevailing interest is profit maximization. This is achieved by maximizing energy productivity rates by keeping the water volume in the reservoirs at the highest possible level throughout the year. Conversely, the maximum capacity of the water reservoirs to accommodate and retain flood water is achieved by keeping the stored water volume at the lowest possible level. As such, both Greece and Turkey have asked Bulgaria in the past to lower the levels of water in the reservoirs, but the Bulgarian government has been ambivalent to pressure – let alone by law force - private companies to do so.²⁸⁸ Moreover, Verwijmeren et al. argue that the cooperation was further inhibited and complicated by the relatively low level of institutional capacity, lack of human and economic resources as well as legislative and technical infrastructure, high levels of bureaucracy, corruption and weak civil societies.²⁸⁹

In the meantime, Bulgaria and Turkey received thirty million euro (fifteen million euro each) for cross-border cooperation from Interreg III (2004-2006).²⁹⁰ Three strategic priorities were defined: 1. development and modernization of cross-border infrastructures; 2. protection, improvement and management of the environment; and 3. people-to-people actions (i.e. activities that promote economic development, tourism, cultural exchanges and institutional capacity building at the local level). Down the line, the largest part of the budget was spent on infrastructure and environmental protection projects, while only a small portion was spent on technical assistance and cultural projects. This supports Bergs' claim that in areas where there is not a lot of experience with cross-border cooperation, countries prefer to

²⁸⁸ Verwijmeren and Wiering, et al., *Many Rivers to Cross*, 128-129, 133.

²⁸⁹ Illustrative for how there has been basically no progress in the cross-border approach to the flooding issue is how residents of the province of Edirne threatened to sue the Bulgarian government after a severe flooding in 2015 which – allegedly – again was the result of too high levels of water in the reservoirs for energy production. Suing the Bulgarian government was actively supported by Turkish Forestry and Waterworks Minister Veysel Eroğlu who complained about Bulgaria's "inaction" in a cross-border approach to the issue. Also, Bulgaria and Turkey failed to reach an agreement over the building of a joint dam on the Tundzha river (which flows from Bulgaria to Edirne and from there connects with the Maritsa/Meriç), resulting in the Turkish government to come up with an alternative plan to unilaterally solve the flooding problems by constructing a dam on their own side of the border. See: Hurriyet Daily News, "Residents of Turkish Thracian province eye suing Bulgaria over floods", <http://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/residents-of-turkish-thracian-province-eye-suing-bulgaria-over-floods-minister-77882>, (accessed: 05-01-2019). Also: Verwijmeren and Wiering, et al., *Many Rivers to Cross*, 136-137.

²⁹⁰ The Turkish government added over 5.9 million euro to this and, as such, the total Turkish budget was over 20.9 million euro, whereas the Bulgarian government added over 4.7 million euro, thus the total Bulgarian budget was over 19.7 million euro.

unilaterally upgrade the basic infrastructure, rather than to experiment with collaborative pilot projects.²⁹¹

At the same time, a report from 2008 of the European Commission on the management of EU-funds in Bulgaria noted some severe problems and based on its evaluation reports, the EC decided to suspend funding first in 2006 and again in 2008 because of financial irregularities.²⁹² Moreover, the report points out that Bulgaria was not able to fully profit from the EU funds because the public administrations suffers from “a high turnover of staff, unattractive salaries which create opportunities for corruption, and outdated, centralized procedures”. At the same time, the lack of accountability and transparency in public procurement when tendering EU funds is noted as a “grave problem”.²⁹³

In 2007, the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) was introduced to replace the multitude of different financial instruments that had been created by the European Commission in the past (e.g. PHARE and Interreg). Building upon the institutional frameworks and experiences that were created through JSPF, PHARE and Interreg, the first IPA cross-border cooperation program between Bulgaria and Turkey started in 2007 and lasted until 2013. Together, the two countries received over twenty-six million euro from the EC and contributed over 4.6 million euro themselves, thus the total budget between 2007 and 2013 was just over 31 million euro. At the end of the program, 69 projects had been funded and sixty-five percent was eventually spent by Bulgaria and thirty-five percent by Turkey.²⁹⁴ Down the line, most of the funds were spent on infrastructure (thirty percent), followed by social- and cultural projects (twenty-eight percent), environmental projects (twenty-seven percent) and promoting economic competitiveness (thirteen percent). Although this might point at a significant number of projects that try to involve both sides of the border, Varol and

²⁹¹ Varol, and Söylemez, "Border Permeability": 92. Also: Bergs, "Cross-Border Cooperation": 349.

²⁹² The report from 2008 noted that: 'Monitoring and audits show serious weaknesses in the management and control systems and point to several irregularities, suspected fraud cases and conflicts of interest between the program administration and contractors. In February [2008], the Commission services suspended payments to two Implementing Agencies, namely the [Turkish] Central Finance and Contracting Unit (CFCU) and the [Bulgarian] Implementing Agency at the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Work (MRDPW) and requested they take corrective actions to improve their management and control systems. To date, the Bulgarian authorities have not taken all necessary steps to ensure sound financial management and have not adequately followed up on the detected irregularities'. See: Commission of the European Communities, *Report from the commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Management of EU-funds in Bulgaria*, (Publications Office of the European Union, 2008), 3. Also: Dawson, *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria*, 140. Also: Hristova, "From Ambitious Goals to Improper Fit": 135.

²⁹³ Commission of the European Communities, *Report from the commission*, 9-10.

²⁹⁴ Within the framework of the IPA CBC 2007-2013 program, there were three main priority areas: 1. sustainable social and economic development; 2. improvement of the quality of life (e.g. protection of environment, nature and historical and cultural heritage, improvement of infrastructure, etc.); and 3. technical assistance (i.e. institution building and publicity and external communication). See: Varol, and Söylemez, "Border Permeability": 92.

Söylemez (Gazi University, Ankara) argue in their study on Turkish cross-border cooperation, that the main initiators of the projects were supranational and national bodies and, as such, not local or regional actors. For the (supra-) national bodies, the primary objective was to solve local economic issues, rather than to look for ways to create new opportunities that are linked to the exploitation of complementary assets over the borders.²⁹⁵ Moreover, the generated effects remained rather local, without having a significant impact on the territory as a whole. The same is concluded in the *Impact Evaluation Report* on the IPA 2007-2013 cross-border program, which additionally notes that the program has “often been used as an instrument aimed primarily at developing cooperation and linkages, without necessarily envisaging a strong leverage of this cooperation to a wider economic integration”.²⁹⁶ Apart from that, it concludes that the program may have contributed to the enhancement of factors of growth (e.g. improving companies’ competitiveness), better protection of the environment and improved access to markets and public services (e.g. through better infrastructure), but it made “no clear contribution to significantly higher economic and social integration of the border area”.²⁹⁷ The report also raises considerable doubts whether activities would be able continue after funding from the program had stopped as they lacked sustainability.²⁹⁸

The evaluation report points at several factors that impeded the cross-border cooperation between Bulgaria and Turkey between 2007 and 2013. First, it is argued that the relatively small budget resulted in projects and initiatives that remained rather “marginal” and, as such, had a very limited effect. Second, the report confirms the argument of Mohl that

²⁹⁵ Varol, and Söylemez, "Border Permeability": 95-96.

²⁹⁶ Bulgarian Consultancy Organization, *Performance of Impact Evaluation of the IPA Cross-border Programmes 2007-2013, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria: Impact Evaluation Report*, (Bulgarian Consultancy Organization Ltd., 2016), 38-39.

²⁹⁷ Bulgarian Consultancy Organization, *Performance of Impact Evaluation*, 39, 52.

²⁹⁸ An example along this line is the “Crafts demonstration centre in Nessebar and Edirne” project, which received funding between 1-7-2011 and 30-6-2013. This project aimed to promote local, traditional crafts in Nessebar and Edirne and let Bulgarian and Turkish craftsmen share knowledge and experience, by creating a Joint Crafts Demonstration Centre in both Nessebar and Edirne. During the project period, several events were organized, amongst which two trips whereby craftsmen from Nessebar visited Edirne to learn from the craftsmen there and vice versa. Ever since the end of the project period, no more events have been organized and the crafts demonstration centres have, in this process, lost their cross-border character. The centre in Edirne now simply serves as a place for a small group of locals to practice their crafting hobby. As part of the project, the building has been bought, renovated and gifted by the municipality to continue to function as a crafts centre - so in this regard there is a form of sustainability - but there is no more promotion of the centre (as such, locals are generally not aware of its existence), no more cross-border aspect, and there is also no oversight regarding the activities and general purpose of the building. The claims made here are based on field research and interviews with the local newspaper and craft coordinator of the crafts centre in Edirne on 6 October 2018. Also, see: Bulgaria-Turkey IPA Cross-Border Programme, “Projects funded: Crafts demonstration centre in Nessebar and Edirne”, http://07-13.ipacbc-bgtr.eu/page.php?c=29&project_id=27, (accessed: 08-01-2019). The claims made here are based on field research and interviews with the local newspaper and craft coordinator of the crafts centre in Edirne on 6 October 2018.

the extent of cooperation tradition matters to the success of a cross-border cooperation program, arguing that the “less-developed maturity” in the Bulgarian-Turkish border region negatively affected the cooperation as there was insufficient (experienced) institutional capacity. As such, it concludes the main contribution of the program has been to further develop the partnership framework. Of course, the result of this might be that, in the future, there is a more developed context in which cross-border cooperation between the two countries can be improved, but the lack of decentralization is a great impediment in this regard. Third, and connected to the previous point, due to the lacking experience and capacity, the program lacked coherence and effectiveness as it did not build upon previous cross-border cooperation programs (most notably Interreg). Thus, some projects overlapped, which resulted in double funding and “unnecessary replication of activities”.²⁹⁹

Apart from these difficulties and bottlenecks in setting-up and implementing projects, the type of projects that have been funded also highlight some of the differences in socio-economic structures – and thus of the differing interests - between the two sides of the border. Pointing at the relative importance of tourism for the Bulgarian regions, eight out of the twelve tourist-related projects that have been implemented as part of IPA between 2007 and 2013 have been initiated by Bulgarian municipalities or organizations. A similar imbalance can be seen regarding infrastructure as four out of five of the infrastructural-related projects were initiated by Bulgarian municipalities or organizations.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ Bulgarian Consultancy Organization, *Performance of Impact Evaluation*, 39-44.

³⁰⁰ Based on an analysis of the funded projects of IPA 2007-2013. See: Bulgaria-Turkey IPA Cross-Border Programme, “Projects funded”, <http://07-13.ipacbc-bgtr.eu/en/page.php?c=29>, (accessed: 08-01-2019).

Conclusion

This Master thesis started with quoting Robert Schumann, who argued that borders are the scars of history, which can be healed through cross-border cooperation. Working together and putting region-specific advantages to good use can improve the socio-economic situation in a border region (which, due to several historical developments, tend to lag in this regard) and, at the same time, can increase cross-cultural understanding. In other words, by deconstructing the border (i.e. treating the border region more as one coherent whole), the boundary (i.e. the distance people perceive between each other) can also decrease. Achieving this relies on three main elements: the history of cooperation, the extent of decentralization and strength of civil society, and the socio-economic structures of the regions in the cooperation area. This immediately points at a complicating factor. Indeed, cross-border cooperation can result in improved cross-cultural relations, but at the same time depends exactly on these cross-cultural relations to be successful.

Considering that there is a relatively large Bulgarian Turkish minority in Bulgaria and that people in the border area predominantly understand each other's language and can pay in each other's currency, can indicate that the boundaries between the people in the border area are limited. As such, there is potential to work together and to look for areas for cooperation that benefit the region as a whole, based on region-specific advantages. Seeing the rich natural- and historical heritage in the region, tourism would be one of the main areas that could connect Thrace. Instead of promoting nationalist narratives, the region could emphasize the Thracian heritage and traditions and use these to its advantage.

However, as Paasi rightly argues, it is power holding actors within the social systems that define and symbolize the social and spatial limits of memberships, whereby iconography is differentiating insiders from outsiders and defines the boundaries of the community in the discourse.³⁰¹ The problem is then that both Bulgaria and Turkey have a narrow-defined and limited membership. With the end of communism, ethnic nationalism and Orthodox Christianity have become the defining factors in (re-)shaping the Bulgarian identity. The grammar of orientalizing (i.e. negative mirror-imaging) continues to play an important part in this, whereby Bulgarian identity is partially constructed through negatively stereo-typing the Turkish and Muslim "other". Dealing with history in a selective way contributes to this and rather, portraying the Ottoman period as one of suppression of the Bulgarian nation is used to

³⁰¹ Regarding iconography, Paasi notes that these are human creations that also render visible the power emerging from social practice and from social- and spatial relations. See: Paasi, *Territories, Boundaries, and Consciousness*, 27-28, 208, 305.

contribute to the constructed nationalist narrative. In recent years, rather than combatting these narratives and looking for ways to cooperate more closely with each other, there has been a process of normalization of xenophobia and nationalist exclusivism - especially in Bulgaria.

Further troubling the chances for successful cross-border cooperation is that both governments are unwilling to decentralize and give political and financial power to the municipalities and the regions. On the one hand, this is caused by the fear for separatism and on the other hand by historical developments, whereby both countries have a tradition of highly centralized governments. In this situation, there is little room for local and regional actors to come together and propose and implement cross-border projects. Instead, it is the (supra-)national governments that are the main actors and that decide what the funds are spent on. In practice, the governments of the two countries have generally focused on ways to improve the socio-economic situation on their own side of the border (e.g. upgrading infrastructure), rather than looking at areas for cooperation that could benefit the cooperation region as a whole. The predominant use of the cross-border funds on infrastructure and tourism in Bulgaria is telling in this regard. At the same time, in areas where there has been cooperation, the lack of institutional capacity, civil society, human and economic resources and legislative and technical infrastructure, as well as contradicting interests, have all impeded the success of these projects.

It is not to be expected that these main obstacles will be taken away in the near future. Following the coup attempt of July 2016, the Turkish AKP government has rather strengthened central power and in the meantime, has shut down a significant number of civil society organizations because of alleged ties to the coup perpetrators. Seeing that a right-wing coalition came to power in Bulgaria in 2017 that promotes exclusivist nationalism and xenophobia, improvement in the relationship with the Turkish minority, or Turkey in general for that matter, is not to be expected and, at the same time, will also prevent the necessary decentralization.

References

- Adanır, Fikret. *Non-Muslims in the Ottoman army and the Ottoman defeat in the Balkan War of 1912-1913*. Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Akçam, Taner. *The Young Turks' crime against humanity: The Armenian genocide and ethnic cleansing in the Ottoman Empire*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Akilli, Husniye, and H. Serkan Akilli. "Decentralization and Recentralization of Local Governments in Turkey." *Procedia - Social and Behavioural Sciences* 140 (2014): 682–686.
- Aksel, Damla B. "Kins, distant workers, diasporas: constructing Turkey's transnational members abroad." *Turkish Studies* 15.2 (2014): 195-219.
- Aktar, Ayhan, et al., eds. *Nationalism in the troubled triangle: Cyprus, Greece and Turkey*. Springer, 2010.
- Alba, Richard. "Bright vs. blurred boundaries: Second-generation assimilation and exclusion in France, Germany, and the United States." *Ethnic and racial studies* 28.1 (2005): 20-49.
- Anheier, Helmut K. *Civil Society: Measurement, Evaluation, Policy*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Association of European Border Regions, *European Charter for border and cross-border regions*. Gronau: AEBR, 1981/2011.
- Bähr, Cornelius. "How does sub-national autonomy affect the effectiveness of structural funds?." *Kyklos* 61.1 (2008): 3-18.
- Batory, Agnes, and Andrew Cartwright. "Re-Visiting the Partnership Principle in Cohesion Policy: The Role of Civil Society Organizations in Structural Funds Monitoring." *Journal of Common Market Studies* 49, no. 4 (2011): 697–717.
- Baumann, Gerd. *The multicultural riddle: Rethinking national, ethnic and religious identities*. Routledge, 2002.
- Baumann, Gerd and Gingrich André. *Grammars of Identity/Alterity: A Structural Approach*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2004.
- Barkey, Karen. *Empire of difference: The Ottomans in comparative perspective*. Cambridge university press, 2008.
- Bartov, Omer, and Eric D. Weitz, eds. *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands*. Indiana University Press, 2013.

- Baysal, Emma L., et al. *Bordered Places – Bounded Times: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Turkey*. British Institute at Ankara, 2017.
- Becker, Sascha O, Peter H Egger, and Maximilian von Ehrlich. "Going Nuts: The Effect of EU Structural Funds on Regional Performance." *Journal of Public Economics* 94, no. 9-10 (2010): 578–590.
- Bee, Cristiano. *Active Citizenship in Europe: Practices and Demands in the EU, Italy, Turkey and the UK*. Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.
- Bergs, Rolf. "Cross-border cooperation, regional disparities and integration of markets in the EU." *Journal of borderlands studies* 27.3 (2012): 345-363.
- Bertram, H. "Double transformation at the eastern border of the EU: the case of the Euroregion pro Europa Viadrina." *GeoJournal* 44.3 (1998): 215-224.
- Boesen, Elisabeth, and Gregor Schnuer, et al. *European Borderlands: Living with Barriers and Bridges*. Taylor & Francis, 2016.
- Boscoboinik, Andrea, et al. *From Palermo to Penang: a journey into political anthropology*. Lit Verlag, 2010.
- Brunnbauer, Ulf. "The Perception of Muslims in Bulgaria and Greece: Between the 'Self' and the 'Other'." *Journal of Muslim minority affairs* 21.1 (2001): 39-61.
- Bulgaria-Turkey IPA Cross-Border Programme. "Projects funded". <http://07-13.ipacbc-bgtr.eu/en/page.php?c=29>. (accessed: 08-01-2019).
- Bulgaria-Turkey IPA Cross-Border Programme. "Projects funded: Crafts demonstration centre in Nessebar and Edirne". http://07-13.ipacbc-bgtr.eu/page.php?c=29&project_id=27. (accessed: 08-01-2019).
- Bulgarian Consultancy Organization. *Performance of Impact Evaluation of the IPA Cross-border Programmes 2007-2013, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria: Impact Evaluation Report*. Bulgarian Consultancy Organization Ltd., 2016.
- Bulgarian National Statistical Institute. "Regions, districts and municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria 2013". <http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/12907/публикация/regions-districts-and-municipalities-republic-bulgaria-2013>. (accessed: 20-12-2018).
- Busillo, F. *Working paper: measuring the impact of the European Regional Policy on Economic Growth: A Regression Discontinuity Design Approach*. University of Rome, 2010.
- Camagni, R., and R. Capello. "Macroeconomic and territorial policies for regional

- competitiveness: an EU perspective." *Regional Science Policy & Practice* 2.1 (2010): 1-19.
- Camagni, R., A. Caragliu, and G. Perucca. *Territorial capital: relational and human capital*. Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2011.
- Cappelen, Aadne, Fulvio Castellacci, Jan Fagerberg, and Bart Verspagen. "The Impact of EU Regional Support on Growth and Convergence in the European Union." *Journal of Common Market Studies* 41, no. 4 (2003): 621–644.
- Carnegie. *Report of the international commission to inquire into the causes and conduct of the Balkan Wars*. Washington, DC: CEIP, 1914.
- Çenker-Özek Cerem I. "Civic Space in Turkey: A Social Capital Approach to Civil Society." *Turkish Studies* 18, no. 4 (2017): 688–709.
- Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services. *Study on the Contribution of Culture to Local and Regional Development – Evidence from the Structural Funds: Case Studies Part 2*. Brussels: European Commission, 2010.
- Chessa, Cecilia. "State subsidies, international diffusion, and transnational civil society: the case of Frankfurt-Oder and Słubice." *East European Politics and Societies* 18.1 (2004): 70-109.
- Chirot, David, and Karen Barkey. "States in search of legitimacy: Was there nationalism in the Balkans of the early nineteenth century?." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 24 (1983): 30-46.
- Clarke, Gerard. "Civil society, cross-national comparisons and the problem of statistical capture." *Journal of International development* 23.7 (2011): 959-979.
- Commission of the European Communities. *Commission staff working document: annexes to 2007 annual report on PHARE, Turkey pre-accession instrument, CARDS and transition facility: Country sections & additional information*. Brussels: Publications Office of the European Union, 2008.
- Commission of the European Communities. *Report from the commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Management of EU-funds in Bulgaria*. Brussel: Publications Office of the European Union, 2008.
- Connell, Andrew. "Book Reviews: Liesbet Hooghe, Gary Marks, Arjan H Schakel Et Al, Measuring Regional Authority: A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance, Volume I and Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, Community, Scale, and Regional Governance:

- A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance, Volume II.” *Political Studies Review* 15, no. 4 (2017): 650-652.
- Crampton, Richard J. *A concise history of Bulgaria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Dawson, James. *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria: How Ideas Shape Publics*. Southeast European Studies. Farnham, Surrey England: Ashgate, 2014.
- DeDominicis, Benedict E. "The Bulgarian ethnic model: post-1989 Bulgarian ethnic conflict resolution." *Nationalities Papers* 39.3 (2011): 441-460.
- Dimitrova, Radosveta, et al. "Ethnic identity and acculturation of Turkish-Bulgarian adolescents." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37.1 (2013): 1-10.
- Dodder, Richard A., and Lubomir Faltan. "Cross-border regional cooperation: Current concerns in Slovakia." *Nationalities Papers* 26.2 (1998): 303-311.
- Doyle, Jessica Leigh. "State Control of Civil Society Organizations: The Case of Turkey." *Democratization* 24, no. 2 (2017): 244–264.
- Dragostinova, Theodora. "Competing priorities, ambiguous loyalties: Challenges of socioeconomic adaptation and national inclusion of the interwar Bulgarian refugees." *Nationalities Papers* 34.5 (2006): 549-574.
- Eker, Mark, Henk van Houtum, Harry Cock and Paul Le Clercq. *Border Land: Atlas, Essays and Design: History and Future of the Border Landscape*. Wageningen: Blauwdruk, 2013.
- Elchinova, Magdalena, et al. *Migration, Memory, Heritage: Socio-cultural Approaches to the Bulgarian-Turkish Border*. Lina Gergova, 2012.
- Eliassi, Barzoo. "Statelessness in a world of nation-states: the cases of Kurdish diasporas in Sweden and the UK." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42.9 (2016): 1403-1419.
- Eminov, Ali. *Turkish and other Muslim minorities in Bulgaria*. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Enderlein, Henrik, Wälti Sonja, and Zürn Michael. *Handbook on Multi-Level Governance*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2010.
- Eson. *Case study on Greece – Bulgaria – Turkey*. University of Thessaly, 2012.
- Eralp, Atila, and Cigdem Üstün, et al. *Turkey and the EU: The process of change and neighbourhood*. Centre for European Studies, 2010.
- Ethnologue, "Turkey – Languages." <https://www.ethnologue.com/country/TR/languages>. (accessed: 12-10-2018).

European Commission. “Cross Border Cooperation”. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/cross-border-cooperation_en. (accessed: 29-12-2018).

European Commission. “Former assistance”. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/former-assistance_en. (accessed: 29-12-2018).

European Commission. “Overview – Instrument for pre-accession assistance”. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/overview_en. (accessed: 29-12-2018).

European Commission. “PHARE financing memoranda & project fiches.” https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/instruments/former-assistance/phare_en. (accessed: 1-10-2018).

Eurostat. “Causes of death statistics”. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Causes_of_death_statistics#Main_findings. (accessed: 19-12-2018).

Eurostat. *Eurostat regional yearbook 2013*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2013.

Eurostat. “Eurostat regional yearbook 2013”. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYB-2013.json&mids=2,17,119&o=1,1,0.7&ch=15,16¢er=50.01157,19.93633,3&lcis=17&>. (accessed: 19-12-2018).

Eurostat. “Eurostat regional yearbook 2014”. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYB-2014.json&mids=2,45,127&o=1,1,0.7&ch=11,43,44¢er=50.01157,19.93633,3&lcis=45&nutsId=TR21&>. (accessed: 19-12-2018).

Eurostat. “Eurostat regional yearbook 2015”. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYB-2015.json&mids=2,34,119&o=1,1,0.7&ch=11,26,33¢er=50.01157,19.93633,3&lcis=34&nutsId=BG34&>. (accessed: 19-12-2018).

Eurostat. “Eurostat regional yearbook 2017”. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?config=RYB-2017.json&mids=BKGCNT,C05M01,CNTOVL&o=1,1,0.7&ch=POP,C05¢er=50.01157,19.93633,3&lcis=C05M01&nutsId=TR21&>. (accessed: 19-12-2018).

Eurostat. “Glossary: Purchasing power standard (PPS)”.

- [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Purchasing_power_standard_\(PPS\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Purchasing_power_standard_(PPS)). (accessed: 24-12-2018).
- Eurostat. "Regions database". <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/regions/data/database>. (accessed: 17-12-2018).
- Eurostat. *Regions in the European Union: Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics NUTS 2010/EU-27*. Luxembourg: Publications Office at the European Union, 2011.
- Eurostat. "Tertiary education statistics". https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Tertiary_education_statistics. (accessed: 19-12-2018).
- Feinstein Yuval and Andreas Wimmer. "The Rise of the Nation-State Across the World, 1816 to 2001." *American Sociological Review* 75, no. 5 (2010): 764–790.
- Fischer, Sabine, and Heiko Pleines. *Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe*. Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2010.
- Fratesi U, and Perucca G. "Territorial capital and the Effectiveness of Cohesion Policy." *Investigaciones Regionales* 29, no. 29 (2014): 165–191.
- Freedom House. "Freedom in the world 2018: Bulgaria." <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/bulgaria>. (accessed: 13-12-2018).
- Freedom House. "Freedom in the world 2018: Turkey." <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/turkey>. (accessed: 13-12-2018).
- Galbreath, David J., and Joanne McEvoy. "European integration and the geopolitics of national minorities." *Ethnopolitics* 9.3-4 (2010): 357-377.
- Geertz, Clifford. "The integrative revolution: Primordial sentiments and civil politics in the new states." *Old societies and new states* (1963): 105-157.
- Georgiev, Plamen K. *Self-Orientalization in South East Europe*. Springer Science & Business Media, 2012.
- Glasius, Marlies, David Lewis, and Hakan Seckinelgin. *Exploring Civil Society: Political and Cultural Contexts*. London: Routledge, 2004.
- Grigoriadis, Ioannis N. *Instilling Religion in Greek and Turkish Nationalism: A 'Sacred Synthesis'*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Grote, Rainer, and Tilmann Röder. *Constitutionalism in Islamic countries: Between upheaval and continuity*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Guasti, Petra. "Development of citizen participation in Central and Eastern Europe after the

- EU enlargement and economic crises." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 49.3 (2016): 219-231.
- Güney Aylin, and Çelenk Ayşe Aslihan. "Europeanization and the Dilemma of Decentralization: Centre–Local Relations in Turkey." *Journal of Balkan and near Eastern Studies* 12, no. 3 (2010): 241–257.
- Gwiazda, Anna. *Democracy in Poland: Representation, participation, competition and accountability since 1989*. London: Routledge, 2015.
- Habdank-Kolaczowska, Sylvana, and Zselyke Csaky, eds. *Nations in Transit 2014: Democratization from Central Europe to Eurasia*. New York: Freedom House, 2014.
- Habermas Jürgen, Thomas Burger, and Frederick G Lawrence. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989.
- Halas, Marián. "Development of cross-border cooperation and creation of Euroregions in the Slovak Republic." *Moravian geographical reports* 15.1 (2007): 21-31.
- Hall, Richard C. *The Balkan Wars 1912-1913: Prelude to the First World War*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Hamzawy, Amr, et al. *Civil society in the Middle East*. Verlag Hans Schiler, 2003.
- Hanson, Stephen E. "The Leninist legacy and institutional change." *Comparative Political Studies* 28.2 (1995): 306-314.
- Harmsen, Egbert. *Islam, civil society and social work: Muslim voluntary welfare associations in Jordan between patronage and empowerment*. Amsterdam University Press, 2010.
- Hassink, Robert, Ben Dankbaar, and Fabienne Corvers. "Technology networking in border regions: Case study of the Euregion Maas-Rhine." *European Planning Studies* 3.1 (1995): 63-83.
- Hobsbawm, Eric J. *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*. Cambridge university press, 2012.
- Hobsbawm, Eric, and Terence Ranger. 2012. *The Invention of Tradition*. Canto Classics. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hooghe, Liesbet. *Measuring Regional Authority: A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance – Volume I*. Transformations in Governance. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Hooghe, Liesbet. *Measuring Regional Authority: A Postfunctionalist Theory of Governance – Volume II*. Transformations in Governance. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

- Howard, Marc Morjé, and Marc Morjé Howard. *The weakness of civil society in post communist Europe*. Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Hristova, Dessislava. "From Ambitious Goals to Improper Fit: Hybrid Performance of PHARE Pre-Accession Programme for Civil Society Development in Bulgaria." *East European Politics* 33, no. 1 (2017): 126–142.
- Hurriyet Daily News. "Residents of Turkish Thracian province eye suing Bulgaria over floods". <http://www.hurriyettailynews.com/residents-of-turkish-thracian-province-eye-suing-bulgaria-over-floods-minister-77882>. (accessed: 05-01-2019).
- İçduygu Ahmet, Toktas Şule, and B. Ali Soner. "The Politics of Population in a Nation Building Process: Emigration of Non-Muslims from Turkey." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 2 (2008): 358–389.
- İçduygu Ahmet, Z. Meydanoğlu, and D. Sert. *Civil society in Turkey: at a turning point CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) Project Country Report for Turkey II*. Istanbul, 2011.
- Ieda, Osamu and Balázs Majtényi, et al., *Beyond sovereignty: from status law to transnational citizenship?*. Sapporo: Hokkaido University, 2006.
- Jelavich, Barbara. *History of the Balkans*. Vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Joint Cooperation Committee Bulgaria-Turkey. *Cross-border co-operation Bulgaria-Turkey 2004-2006 Joint Programming Document*. Sofia, 2004.
- Joint Technical Secretariat Haskovo and Edirne. *Bulgaria – Turkey IPA Cross Border Programme*. Sofia/Ankara: 2007.
- Joint Technical Secretariat Haskovo and Edirne. *Interreg-IPA Cross-border Cooperation Programme Bulgaria-Turkey*. 2014.
- Jowitt, Ken. *New world disorder: The Leninist extinction*. University of California Press, 1992.
- Kalkandjieva, Daniela. "'Secular Orthodox Christianity' versus 'Religious Islam' in Postcommunism Bulgaria." *Religion, State & Society* 36.4 (2008): 423-434.
- Katsikas, Stefanos, ed. *Bulgaria and Europe: shifting identities*. London: Anthem Press, 2011.
- Koinova, Maria. "Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Bulgaria." *SEER: Journal for Labour and Social Affairs in Eastern Europe* 2.2 (1999): 147-158.
- Köksal, Yonca. "Minority policies in Bulgaria and Turkey: the struggle to define a

- nation." *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 6.4 (2006): 501-521.
- Köksal, Yonca. "Rethinking nationalism: State projects and community networks in 19th century Ottoman Empire." *American Behavioural scientist* 51.10 (2008): 1498-1515.
- Krasteva, Anna. "Religion, Politics, and Nationalism in Post-communist Bulgaria: Elastic (Post)Secularism." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 21.4 (2015): 422-45.
- Kurtoğlu Eskişar, Gül M. "When State Becomes the Mediator: Understanding the Roots of Inter-Ethnic Peace in the Ottoman Empire." *International Review of Turkology* 2.4 (2009): 5-22.
- Le Strat Y, and Hoertel N. "Correlation Is No Causation: Gymnasium Proliferation and the Risk of Obesity." *Addiction (Abingdon, England)* 106, no. 10 (2011): 1871-2.
- Malešević, Siniša. "Did Wars Make Nation-States in the Balkans?: Nationalisms, Wars and States in the 19th and early 20th Century South East Europe." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 25.3 (2012): 299-330.
- Masters, Bruce. *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world: the roots of sectarianism*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Mohl, Philipp. *Empirical Evidence on the Macroeconomic Effects of EU Cohesion Policy*. Springer Gabler, 2016.
- Molnár, Virág. "Civil Society, Radicalism and the Rediscovery of Mythic Nationalism." *Nations and Nationalism*, 22.1 (2016): 165-185.
- Mutafchieva, Vera. "The Notion of the " Other" in Bulgaria: The Turks. A Historical Study." *Anthropological Journal on European Cultures* (1995): 53-74.
- National Statistical Institute Bulgaria. "2011 Population Census." http://www.nsi.bg/census2011/PDOCS2/Census2011final_en.pdf, (accessed: 12-10-2018).
- Naxidou, Eleonora. "Nationalism versus multiculturalism: the minority issue in twenty-first century Bulgaria." *Nationalities Papers* 40.1 (2012): 85-105.
- Nitzova, Petya. "Bulgaria: Minorities, democratization, and national sentiments." *Nationalities Papers* 25.4 (1997): 729-739.
- Nora, Pierre. "Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire." *Representations* 26, no. 1 (1989): 7-24.
- Özgür-Baklacioglu, Nurcan. "Dual citizenship, extraterritorial elections and national policies: Turkish dual citizens in the Bulgarian-Turkish political sphere." *Beyond sovereignty: from status law to transnational citizenship* (2006): 319-358.

- Özgür-Baklacioglu, Nurcan. "Borders, identities and kin politics in the Balkans: continuity and change at the Turkish-Bulgarian border." *International Balkan Annual Conference* (2013): 165-178.
- Paasi Anssi. *Territories, boundaries, and consciousness: The changing geographies of the Finnish-Russian boundary*. Vol. 1. Wiley, 1996.
- Paasi, Anssi. "The institutionalization of regions: a theoretical framework for understanding the emergence of regions and the constitution of regional identity." *Fennia-International Journal of Geography* 164.1 (1986): 105-146.
- Parla, Ayse. "Longing, belonging and locations of homeland among Turkish immigrants from Bulgaria." *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 6.4 (2006): 543-557.
- Pavlovska-Hilaiel, Sabina. "The EU's Losing Battle against Corruption in Bulgaria." *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law* 7, no. 2 (2015): 199–217.
- Pearce, Jenny. *Civil society and development: A critical exploration*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002.
- Phillips, Peter CB. "Challenges of trending time series econometrics." *Mathematics and Computers in Simulation* 68.5-6 (2005): 401-416.
- Popescu, Ana-Maria, and Nicolae-Eugen Munteanu. "Cross-border cooperation at the external borders of European Union." *Studia Universitatis Vasile Goldis Arad* 22.2 (2012): 164-169.
- Reeves, Teresa. "Regional Development in the EU and Turkey." *Bölgesel Kalkınma ve Yönetişim Sempozyumu* (2006): 29-38.
- Rodogno, Davide. *Against massacre: humanitarian interventions in the Ottoman Empire, 1815-1914*. Vol. 10. Princeton University Press, 2012.
- Roudometof, Victor. "Nationalism, Globalization, Eastern Orthodoxy: Unthinking the 'Clash of Civilizations' in South-eastern Europe." *European Journal of Social Theory* 2.2 (1999): 233-247.
- Rusu, H. and B. Voicu, et al. *EU Integration Process from EAST to EAST: Civil Society and Ethnic Minorities in a Changing World. Proceedings from a Round Table for young Social Scientists*. Sibiu: Psihomedica Publ. House, 2005.
- Scully, Roger, and Richard Wyn Jones. *Europe, Regions and European Regionalism*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Sezen, Nurullah, Numan Gündüz, and S. Malkaralı. "Meriç river floods and Turkish-Bulgarian cooperation's." *International Congress on River Basin Management*. 2007.
- Shabanova, Alieva V. "The effects and appearances of namecide process from socialist to

- post-socialist Bulgaria." *Вісник Національного технічного університету України Київський політехнічний інститут. Політологія. Соціологія. Право* 4 (2012): 32-36.
- Stamatov, Peter. "The making of a "bad" public: Ethnonational mobilization in post communist Bulgaria." *Theory and Society* 29.4 (2000): 549-572.
- Stefanova, Boyka. "Ethnocultural Voting? Explaining Ethnic Minority Preferences in Bulgarian Elections." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 20.3 (2014): 328-348.
- Stegarescu, Dan. "Public sector decentralisation: Measurement concepts and recent international trends." *Fiscal studies* 26.3 (2005): 301-333.
- Stoyanov Petar. "Bulgarian regions at EU external border: the case study of Bulgaria-Turkey border area." *Geographica Timisiensis* 19.2 (2010): 197-205.
- Sullivan, Gavin. *Contemporary Nationalism in East Central Europe*. Springer, 2016.
- Themudo, Nuno S. "Reassessing the impact of civil society: non-profit sector, press freedom, and corruption." *Governance* 26.1 (2013): 63-89.
- Tismaneanu, Vladimir. *Fantasies of salvation: Democracy, nationalism, and myth in post communist Europe*. Princeton N.J., Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Tismaneanu, Vladimir. "Postcommunism between hope and disenchantment." *Journal of International Relations and Development* 12.4 (2009): 354-364.
- Todorova, Maria N. *Scaling the Balkans: Essays in National, Transnational and Conceptual History*. Balkan Studies Library. Boston: Brill, 2018.
- Tomlinson, Brian. "Working with Civil Society in Foreign Aid: Possibilities for South-South Cooperation." *Beijing: UNDP China*, 2013.
- Transparency International. "Corruption Perceptions Index 2017."
https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017.
 (accessed: 12-12-2018).
- Turkish Statistical Institute. "Gross Domestic Product by Provinces by Kind of Economic Activity (2009 base)". <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/UstMenu.do?metod=temelist>.
 (accessed: 20-12-2018).
- Türk, Fahri. "Višejezičnost u Edirneu u 19. stoljeću za vrijeme otomanske ere." *Jezikoslovlje* 13.2 (2012): 439-445.
- USAID. *The 2015 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia*. USAID Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, 2015.
- Uzer, Umut. *An Intellectual History of Turkish Nationalism: Between Turkish Ethnicity and Islamic Identity*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2016.

- Varol, Cigdem, and Emrah Söylemez. "Border Permeability and Drivers of Cross-Border Cooperation in The Turkish And EU Border Region." *KnE Social Sciences* 1.2 (2017): 87-98.
- Vermeulen, Hans, Martin Baldwin-Edwards, and Riki van Boeschoten, et al. *Migration in the Southern Balkans: From Ottoman Territory to Globalized Nation States*. Springer, 2015.
- Verwijmeren, Joris, and Marcus Antonius Wiering, et al. *Many Rivers to Cross: Cross Border Co-operation in River Management*. Eburon Uitgeverij, 2007.
- Volkhart, Heinrich and Lorenzo Fioramonti, eds. *CIVICUS global survey of the state of civil society: Comparative perspectives*. Vol. 2, Kumarian Press, 2007.
- Vucenik, Nina. "USAID's Approach to NGO Funding in Slovakia and Hungary". *IWM Junior Visiting Fellows Conferences*, Vol. 10 (2000): 1-16.
- Wallace, Caire, Florian Pichler, and Christian Haerpfher. "Changing Patterns of Civil Society in Europe and America 1995-2005: Is Eastern Europe Different?" *East European Politics and Societies* 26, no. 1 (2012): 3–19.
- World Bank. "Aggregated LPI". <https://lpi.worldbank.org/international/aggregated-ranking>. (accessed: 18-12-2018).
- Yavuz, M. Hakan, Isa Blumi, and Edward J. Erickson. *War and nationalism: The Balkan wars, 1912-1913, and their socio-political implications*. University of Utah, 2013.
- Zhelyazkova, Antonina, Maya Kosseva, and Marko Hajdinjak. *Tolerance and Cultural Diversity Discourses in Bulgaria: The Bulgarian Ethnic Model-Parallel Cohabitation or Multicultural Recognition*. Sofia, 2010.

Appendix 1: “CIVICUS CSI 2011”

The CIVICUS Civil Society Index looks at five dimensions: 1. civic engagement (extent of socially based engagement, depth of socially-based engagement, diversity of socially-based engagement, extent of political engagement, depth of political engagement, diversity of political engagement); 2. level of organization (internal governance, infrastructure, sectoral communication, human resources, financial and technological resources, international linkages); 3. practice of values (democratic decision-making governance, labour regulations, code of conduct and transparency, environmental standards, perception of values in civil society as a whole); 4. perception of impact (responsiveness – internal perception, social impact – internal perception, policy impact – internal perception, responsiveness - external perception, social impact – external perception, policy impact – external perception, impact of CS on attitudes); 5. contextual environment (socio-economic context, socio-political context, socio-cultural context). Scores are given on a 0-100 scale to all sub-dimensions based on both qualitative and quantitative research and analysis and these scores together determine the dimension score’s, which in turn determine the overall CSI score. Scores in 2011 were as follows:

	CSI score	1) Civic Engagement	2) Level of organisation	3) Practice of Values	4) Perception of Impact	5) Environment
Ghana	60,5	52,8	62,1	55,4	68,7	63,5
Zambia	59,5	60,8	58,3	59,3	61,7	57,2
Nicaragua	59,0	54,3	67,2	60,6	59,9	52,8
Uruguay	56,3	44,8	59,5	43,1	60,9	73,0
Japan	56,2	44,5	62,3	41,3	57,2	76,0
South Korea	55,8	44,4	64,7	54,3	47,7	67,8
Philippines	55,1	54,7	57,9	48,1	62,0	53,1
Albania	55,1	47,6	58,1	58,6	51,2	60,2
Italy	54,4	48,5	63,2	45,8	42,1	72,4
Liberia	53,7	56,0	50,5	54,1	55,2	52,7
Chile	52,1	47,3	52,3	42,6	47,0	71,0
Malta	51,7	26,4	51,8	44,2	58,8	77,5
Kosovo	51,7	44,0	70,7	59,4	32,9	51,3
Slovenia	51,1	46,6	60,2	42,3	32,5	73,8
Jordan	50,7	36,8	55,3	57,2	49,0	55,4
Mexico	50,7	44,9	46,2	50,6	46,3	65,7
Togo	49,9	47,5	58,1	51,0	47,5	45,4
Croatia	49,6	39,4	60,0	41,1	43,2	64,1
Bulgaria	49,4	39,6	56,1	44,8	43,6	63,2
Argentina	48,6	38,8	52,6	39,6	47,6	64,6

Serbia	47,5	42,8	59,2	44,6	38,8	52,3
Georgia	46,7	17,6	64,5	63,6	28,8	59,0
Venezuela	46,6	37,5	56,6	37,8	46,5	54,5
Armenia	46,5	37,4	54,9	51,1	35,1	54,2
Turkey	46,5	31,4	54,6	49,0	40,2	57,6
Kazakhstan	46,1	47,2	48,4	47,4	40,9	46,7
Belarus	45,6	43,4	51,9	45,5	39,5	47,6
Madagascar	45,6	27,0	51,2	50,7	43,4	55,4
Russia	42,5	33,7	51,4	39,8	34,4	53,3

302

Appendix 2: Bulgarian-Turkish cross-border cooperation programs (2003-2013)

Program:	Year(s):	Budget:	What has it been spent on:	Lead:	Who can apply for funds?
Joint Small Projects Funds (JSPF)	2003	1 million euro (0,5 million euro per country)	Setting up cooperation networks between local and regional stakeholders in the border region. Institutional building.	The Contracting Authority in Turkey (CATR) is the Central Financing and Contracting Unit (CFCU). The Contracting Authority in Bulgaria (CABu) is the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW), CBC Implementation Agency. Responsible for the project is the Central Financing and Contracting Unit (CFCU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipalities and communities in the region - County and district level organizations - Inter-communal co-operation organizations - Chambers of Commerce - Trade Union Organizations - NGOs - Universities
PHARE CBC + JSPF	2004	6 million (2,5 + 2,5 + 0,5 + 0,5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JSPF (0,5 million per country): Setting up cooperation networks between local and regional stakeholders in the border region. Institutional building. - Investment in Road I-9 (E-87) construction of road Malko Tarnovo – Border crossing checkpoint with Turkey, including bypass of Malko Tarnovo (2,5 million). - PHARE CBC investment in Restoration of the 	CATR, CFCU, CABu.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipalities and communities in the region - County and district level organizations - Inter-communal co-operation organizations - Chambers of Commerce - Trade Union Organizations - NGOs - Universities - The road will be constructed by a contractor. - The restoration of the

³⁰² CIVICUS, CSI scores 2011.

			Ekmezcizade Caravanserai in Edirne to encourage the intensification of cross-border cultural and economic exchanges and relations by providing a venue for joint Turkish and Bulgarian cultural events, business forums, congresses, seminars, visits by commercial delegations, trade fairs and other bi-lateral events (2,5 million + 500.000 from the 2005 budget).		caravanserai will be done by a contractor.
PHARE CBC + JSPF	2005	5 million (0,5 per country for JSPF + 2 million PHARE + 2 million PHARE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JSPF: Setting up cooperation networks between local and regional stakeholders in the border region. Institutional building. - Capacity improvement for flood forecasting in the BG-TR CBC region (2 million) - Promotion of sustainable development in the Strandja/Yildiz mountain area (2 million) 	CATR, CFCU, CABu.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipalities and communities in the region - County and district level organizations - Inter-communal co-operation organizations - Chambers of Commerce - Trade Union Organizations - NGOs - Universities - Contracted company for implementation of flood forecasting. - Public organizations responsible for management of natural parks and protected areas - Cultural and educational institutions and vocational training organizations
Interreg III	2004-2006	40.678.000 euro.	3 strategic priorities: 1. <u>Cross-border infrastructure</u> (development and modernization of	Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC), Contracting authorities are: the CFCU (TR) and the MRDPW (BG)	

			cross-border infrastructures), 2. <u>Protection, improvement and management of the environment</u> (a. Integrated management and protection of waters, b. Protection and sustainable development of natural resources and biodiversity, c. Co-operation in case of natural calamities), 3. <u>People-to-people actions</u> (activities that promote: a. Economic development, b. Tourism, c. Cultural exchanges, d. Institutional capacity building at local level).		
IPA CBC	2007-2013	26.446.515 euro from EC, own funding: 4.667.032 euro, total IPA CBC budget = 31.113.547 euro.	1. Sustainable social and economic development (improving infrastructure and cross-border business contacts, investing in social capital) 2. Improvement of the quality of life (protection of environment, nature and historical and cultural heritage + capacity building for sustainable use of natural resources, cultural and historical heritage) 3. Technical assistance (institutional capacity building and promotion).	Managing authority (MA), Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) will select projects after “calls for proposals”. Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) will approve projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local and regional authorities - Local and regional associations - Chambers of commerce, industry and crafts - Tourist boards - Educational and training institutions - NGOs - Civil society

303

³⁰³ Varol, and Söylemez, "Border Permeability": 92. Also: Bulgarian Consultancy Organization, *Performance of Impact Evaluation of the IPA Cross-border Programmes 2007-2013, managed by the Republic of Bulgaria: Impact Evaluation Report*, (Sofia, 2016), 7, 19, 23, 38-39. Also: Espon, *Case study on Greece – Bulgaria – Turkey*, (University of Thessaly, 2012), 455-457, 460-461. Also: Commission of the European Communities, *Commission staff working document: annexes to 2007 annual report on PHARE, Turkey pre-accession instrument, CARDS and transition facility: Country sections & additional information*, (Brussels: Publications Office of the European Union, 2008), 124-126.