# Turkish Migration Conference 2015 Selected Proceedings

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# Turkish Migration Conference 2015 Selected Proceedings

Editors:

Güven Şeker, Ali Tilbe, Mustafa Ökmen,

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Turkish Migration Conference 2015 Selected Proceedings Co-edited by Güven Şeker, Ali Tilbe, Mustafa Ökmen, Pınar Yazgan, Deniz Eroğlu, İbrahim Sirkeci

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# TÜRK GÖÇ KONFERANSI 2015 - TÜRKÇE BİLDİRİLER

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# Turkish Migration Conference 2015 Selected Proceedings

TMC 2015 was hosted by Charles University Prague, Czech Republic from 25 to 27 June 2015. The TMC 2015 was the third event in the series that we were proud to organise and host at Charles University Prague. This selection of papers presented at the conference are only a small portion of contributions. Many other papers are included in edited books and submitted to refereed journals in due course. There were a total of about 146 papers by over 200 authors presented in 40 parallel sessions and three plenary sessions at Jinonice Campus of Charles University Prague. About a fifth of the sessions at the conference were in Turkish language although the main language was English. Therefore some of the proceedings are in Turkish too.

The TMC 2015 was a specialist event bringing researchers, scholars, and students investigating Turkish migrant dynamics and patterns, migrant experiences, the costs of migration, as well as the economic, social, educational and cultural outcomes. Including contributions from scholars and students from anthropology, demography, business, economics, psychology, sociology, political science, geography, development studies, law and other disciplines, the conference provided a forum through which to consider all aspect's related to Turkish migration around the world. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach to migration dynamics and patterns, and by drawing on comparative studies of international and internal migration process, the TMC 2015 included contributions covering country of origin, transit and destination countries focusing on human mobility from, to and in Turkey as well as studies on other migration cases from around the world.

We would like to thank all our colleagues who served on the conference committee, hundreds of authors who contributed by presenting their papers but they also reviewed substantial number of abstracts and papers. Once again, we thank to Charles University Prague for hosting the event, the University of California Davis Gifford Centre for Population Studies, Manisa Celal Bayar University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences and Center for Population and Migration Studies, Regent's University London Centre for Transnational Studies, Univerziti Publishing, Transnational Press London, for their support and contribution to the Conference. Our local hosts and co-chairs Inna Cabelkova and Wadim Strielkowski deserve a big thank you for their year long effort and hospitality during the three days in Prague. We thank to our great team of assistants, Burcu Oskay, Tereza Kalinová, Sonja Lovrentjev, Therese Svensson and Emine Akman who were heroes behind the scenes as well as smiling faces at the front desk.

We thank to the keynote speakers Douglas Massey of Princeton University, Caroline Brettell of Southern Methodist University, Nedim Gürsel of CNRS, and co-chairs Jeffrey Cohen of Ohio State University and Philip Martin of University of California Davis.

Among many other colleagues, we would like to thank M. Rauf Kesici and Tuncay Bilecen of Kocaeli University, Gizem Özgür of Karadeniz Technical

University, Veysel Gelberi from Middle East Technical University for their efforts in the editing process of the proceedings.

We are looking forward to seeing all at the TMC 2016 in Vienna, Austria.

Güven Şeker Ali Tilbe Mustafa Ökmen Pınar Yazgan Deniz Eroğlu Ibrahim Sirkeci

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- Migration Letters journal
- Göç Dergisi journal
- Kurdish Studies journal
- International Economics Letters
- ✤ Ria Financial
- University Servis Publishing
- Transnational Press London

# Programme Summary

## THURSDAY 25th June

# Parallel Sessions 1. 13:20 - 15:20

- A. Integration Processes
- B. Business, Economics and Immigrants
- C. Göç ve Edebiyat
- D. Syrian Movers in Turkey

## Parallel Sessions 2. 15:40 - 17:10

- A. Europe in Turkish Migration Policy
- B. Irregular Migration and Remittance
- C. Göç ve Sürgün Edebiyatı
- D. Migrant Identity

# Parallel Sessions 3. 17:30 - 19:00

- A. Integration, Harmonization, Marginalization
- B. Family Formation and Migration
- C. Göç ve Uyum
- D. Migration Policy and Perceptions
- E. Internal Migration

#### FRIDAY 26<sup>th</sup> June Parallel Sessions 4. 09:00 - 10:30

- A. Return Movements
- B. Circassian Diaspora
- C. Kamu Yönetimi Açısından Göç
- D. Gender and Sexuality

## Parallel Sessions 5. 10:50 - 12:20

- A. Counter-Hegemonic Migrant Spaces, Place-Making and Resistance
- B. Demographic Analysis of Migration
- C. Yeni Göç Eğilimleri

## D. Migration in Literature

## Parallel Sessions 6. 16:20 - 18:20

- A. Migration and Religious Identity
- B. Kamu Hizmetleri ve Göç
- C. Türkiye'de Göç ve İşgücü Piyasaları
- D. Integration and Identity

#### SATURDAY 27<sup>th</sup> June Parallel Sessions 7. 09:30 - 11:00

- A. Between Naturalization and Irregularity: Migrants and (II)legal Membership in Turkey
- B. Politics and Migration
- C. Integration and Identity
- D. Spatial Productions of the Social: Identity, Subjectivity and Power Parallel Sessions 8. 11:20- 12:50

## Parallel Sessions 8. 11:20- 12:5

- A. Integration in EuropeB. Migrants of Istanbul
- B. Migrants of Istanbul
- C. Migration and Literature

#### D. Identity in Kurdish Migration Parallel Sessions 9. 16:30 - 18:00

- A. Public Opinion and Syrian Movers
- B. Edebiyatta Göç ve Kimlik
- C. Education and Migration
- D. Conflict and Politics in Kurdish Migration

# Conference Dinner & Best Paper Prizes

19:00 – 21:00 Plzenska Restaurant Closing notes by Prof Jeffery H. Cohen Presentation of Best Paper Prizes

## Turkish Mosques in Britain as a Religious Socialisation Agent

#### Yakup Costu\* and Elif Büşra Kocalan\*\*

#### Introduction

A mosque, as a religious place, is one of the constituent institutions of social structure of Muslim society. It is not only a place where religious practices are carried out by participants, but it also has a significant role in the formation of their Islamic identity, and in creation and preservation of sacred memory of the community.

It is known that Turkish Muslim immigrants living in various European countries have established mosques/religious places. These places have many different social functions besides being houses of worship. In this regard, religious institutions represent a space where culture and values from the homeland are shared, where courses and educational activities are carried out, possible problems that are experienced in the host countries can be solved and religious and cultural differences towards host countries are symbolized.

In this paper, we will focus on the mosques established by Turkish Muslim immigrants in Britain. In this context, the paper will try to search for answers to the following questions: What kind of Islamic discourse Turkish mosques in Britain have? What types of activities are carried out by mosques? Are there any differences among their religious, social and cultural activities? What is the role of mosques in the Turkish Muslim immigrants' religious socialisation processes? This research is methodologically based on empirical evidence. To answer the abovementioned questions, observations which were obtained from on-going field researches, over a long period of time about these issues, will be used.

#### Turkish mosques in Britain

Starting with the migration of Cypriot Turks in the 1920s, growing with Turkish immigrants from Turkey in the 1970s, and also the Kurdish immigrants from Turkey in the 1990s, nowadays Britain has a significant number of Cypriot Turks, Turkish and Kurdish people from Turkey (see. Ladbury, 1977; Robins and Aksoy, 2001; Mehmet Ali, 2001; Issa, 2005). Aforementioned 'Turkish speaking communities'<sup>202</sup> do not have a homogeneous pattern due to the differences of their life styles, experiences, thoughts, feelings, hopes and expectations. Therefore, it has been observed that Turkish immigrants live in different ethnic, ideological, cultural and religious groups (see. Costu, 2013a).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>202</sup> This definition is used for Cypriot Turks, Turkish and Kurdish people from Turkey living in Britain in academic literature (see. Mehmet Ali, 2001; Issa, 2005; Atay, 2006).

Mosques are not only places that religious practices are performed in, but they also have a significant role in the formation of Muslim identity. This identity, in addition to possible social, political and cultural aspects, can also have aspects that depend on language, attitude, living place and favourite activities. In this sense, mosques function as a demonstration of cultural, religious and ethnic aspects of Muslim identity (see. Isgandarova, 2009; Kucukcan, 2009).

The first attempt of Turks living in Britain towards being organised as a religious sphere was in the beginning of the 1970s. However in these years, religious life for the Turkish society was only on a personal scale. The religious life of first generation immigrants was limited in practising some basic religious duties. Small spaces were hired or bought to practise these duties. When these people realised that it was impossible for them to return to their homeland, and when the second and third generations arrived, these places started to be insufficient. Moreover, needs of the society had increased and differentiated; therefore there was a need for an institutionalised and systematic organisation. In this sense, organisations in which national, religious and cultural values would be transmitted to future generations, and immigrants would build their own semantic world had started to be established. (see. Atay 1994; Kucukcan, 1996; 1999). Mosques and religious and cultural establishments around the mosques have an important place among the organisations based on social, political and economic reasons.

#### Islamic Discourse of Turkish Mosques in Britain

It has been understood that in the establishment of Turkish religious organisations, or in another words these religious support networks, migration reasons, inhabiting patterns, the identity focuses of lower class immigrant citizens, also political, ideological and religious structures in Turkey and North Cyprus had important roles. (see. Kucukcan, 1999; Costu, 2013a). A significant amount of foundations and unions within Britain that provide religious services for Turks are only footprints of religious groups, sects and movements within Turkey and North Cyprus. The content of discourse and the ideological standpoints of religious group in Britain, as similar the groups in continental Europe especially in Germany, follow the agenda of their homeland (See. Persembe, 2005; Adiguzel, 2011).

In field research done by Costu, ten (10) religious organisations established by Turkish and Cypriot immigrants were identified (Costu, 2013a, p.97-98; 2013b, p.496). Within the limits of legal legitimacy provided by the host country, they carry out cultural, religious and educational activities for their participants. As far as we detected, the content of religious discourse of these places established by Turkish immigrant in Britain can be classified into four main categories; (Costu, 2013a, p.97; 2013b, p.495):

1. Religious discourse inspired by the Sufi movements in Turkey and North Cyprus<sup>203</sup>,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>203</sup> Sufi organizations; the followers of Sheikh M. Nazim Kibris, the followers of Mahmut Ustaosmanoglu, the followers Muhammed Rasit Erol/Menzil (See for further information Costu, 2013a, 2013b).

2. Religious discourse inspired by the religious movements in Turkey<sup>204</sup>,

3. Religious discourse inspired by the religious-politic movements in  ${\rm Turkey}^{\rm 205},$ 

4. Mosques/mosque unions affiliated with the official religious discourse in Turkey<sup>206</sup>.

It is seen that the Turkish speaking communities are heavily concentrated in the Greater London region (DCLG, 2009). Due to the fact that most of the Turkish immigrants live in Central London, the head offices of Turkish religious organizations are located in London (Costu, 2013a).

#### **Activities in Mosques**

Unions and foundations which belong to Turks and conduct religious activities were mostly organised around mosques. In field research done by Costu, there are a total of 27 active religious prayer places (mosque, prayer room) across Britain (Costu, 2013a, p.144-145; 2013b, p.498). It can be observed that, these religious places, teaming up with other organisations around them, have differentiated from the roles they were given in the homeland and transformed into social spaces which have social, cultural and educational services alongside religious ones.

Taking immigrants' expectations into consideration, various services are provided in these social-religious places. These services can be categorised such as; (see. Kucukcan, 1996; 1999; Costu, 2013a):

*i)* Religious services: Support and assistance are given to immigrants with regard to the performances of religious practices.

*ii) Educational services:* Various educational activities are arranged for children, young-adult and adult immigrants.

*iii) Socio-cultural services:* Cultural activities, health, sports, accommodation services, legal and economic support, and supports and assistances in any other troublesome situations are arranged.

We tried to arrange service areas of religious based civil organisations in three main categories, but with every passing day they diversify, parallel with the needs and expectations of immigrants. Furthermore, in parallel with the increase in population, the number of religious places and civil organisations also increase. It can also be observed that this increase brings a differentiation within service forms and types of social solidarity networks of the Turkish immigrants in religious, cultural, political and economic spheres.

Religious places that belong to Turks in Britain have a great variety of religious and social functions. However, it has been observed that service fields of these organisations differentiate due to some religious and social variables. According to this:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>204</sup> Religious movement organizations; the followers of Suleyman Hilmi Tunahan/Suleymancis, the followers of Fetullah Gulen/Hizmet, and Alevis (See for further information Costu, 2013a, 2013b).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>205</sup> Religio-political movement organizations National Vision/Milli Gorus and Milliyetciler/Nationalists (See for further information Costu, 2013a, 2013b).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>206</sup> Official religious organization; Turkish Religious Foundation of the UK/Diyanet (See for further information Costu, 2013a, 2013b).

The number of mosques that belong to Turks in Britain increases each passing day. This increase brings along a rivalry in the religious service area. The rivalry is thought to cause an authority controversy via religion within the society.<sup>207</sup> In order to hold on among immigrants, the religious organisations diversify their service areas and aim to increase the number of followers. Moreover, there is a great effort in establishing new religious places, and with this, it is aimed to strengthen the institutional structure.

Another reason for differentiation of service areas of religious unions and foundations is diversified interpretations of "religious identity". For example, identifying the religious identity according to conservatism, nationalism, modernity, ethnic diversity, and political position transform religious support networks into a heterogeneous structure. Each group that try to determine their socialisation style and to form their religious attitude and behaviour based on criteria used to identify religious identity tend towards different fields of activity and try to serve in these fields.

Another differentiation can be observed in between areas significantly populated by Turks and areas that Turks are minority. Religious places positioned in the areas significantly populated by Turks, as a result of the law of supply and demand and to strengthen the institutional structure, might seek to serve in a large variety of areas. In addition to differentiation by population density, heavily Turkish populated areas also have segregation in itself. It can be observed that different religious groups that build new mosques around currently available mosques aim new service styles in order to appeal to the Turkish and Muslim population around those mosques.<sup>208</sup>

#### Mosques; as a Religious Socialisation Agent

Mosques are institutions that establish a social structure, alongside family, economy, education, politics and law. Due to this aspect, it has a continuous relationship with other institutions. Hence, as a social institution, mosque cannot be understood if it is separated from the society that it is involved with. The social organization of a mosque show parallelism with the social patterns of the society which the mosque is located in, and these patterns present a context to understand the role and importance of the mosque. In a society that Muslims are a majority, generally the mosque is only a prayer place, however in a society that Muslims are a minority or immigrant, the mosque also has the role of being a place of refuge which has social, cultural and educational functions. In this respect, as far as we can determine, the socializing functions of Turkish mosques in Britain can be expressed as follows:

It serves as a place for socialisation: Mosques have significance among Turkish Muslim immigrants as places of religious and social activities performed within.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>207</sup> In the interview made on 05/08/2013 with Prof. Dr. Seyfettin Erşahin who is a consultant for England Religious Services and the head of England Turkish Religious Foundation this subject was significantly pointed out.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>208</sup> As an example, it can be mentioned that in the month of Ramadan in 2012, one of the Turkish mosques performed tarawih prayer as eight-rakat. There is no doubt the main aim behind this implementation is to encourage individuals to pray. However, we also think increasing the number of attendees of the mosque was also another aim behind this implementation.

In these places, on one hand religious practices are being performed and on the other hand Muslim immigrants who live as minorities have a chance to socialise. At the same time, aforementioned religious places function as places to share knowledge, to establish social networks and as shelters for immigrants. (See. Aktay and Subasi, 2006).

It creates a specific religiosity as a typology: Every Turkish religious organisation in Britain has been built around certain religious places (mosque) and organised in a distinctive congregational structure. From the content of their religious discourse to conducted activities each organisation has a specific religious outlook (see. Sahin, 2012).

It provides an important contribution to the integration process: It is thought that with these services for immigrants carried out by aforementioned socio-religious places, religious and national identity is being protected, internal solidarity is increased, and moreover some contributions are being made on the integration process to the host country. Besides it is also observed, due to the reason that effects of assimilation, hidden or explicit, which second and third generations are faced with are being minimised by these services, sensitive parents regard these places as natural and matchless shelters (see. Cilingir, 2010)

It provides preservation of cultural and religious identity: It is observed that immigrants who stay close or attend activities of these religious places protect their cultural and religious identities. It is also witnessed that the ones who are not connected with these places or prefer secular lifestyles lose their religious identities in the process over time and are clearly assimilated culturally and linguistically (see. Kucukcan, 1998)

It provides preservation of native language: It is seen that in the religious places built by Turks, during religious practices (sermon, khutbah, etc.) sometimes Turkish, sometimes English, and sometimes both languages are being used (especially in Friday prayer). Considering each religious organisation conducts their religious services with a purpose in mind, it can be thought that the preferred language has a common side with this purpose. Hence, it can be said that the preferred language during religious ceremonies has a significant impact on language socialisation.

It triggers competition and tension among community: Due to the reason that unions and foundations were established by members or sympathisers of religious groups, sects and movements in Turkey and Northern Cyprus and in parallel with religious, political and ideological discourse within the motherland, some differentiations occur. These differentiations can form a basis for rivalry, conflict and segregation in between organisations. This situation is believed to be a major obstacle in front of social unison of immigrants (see Kucukcan, 1996; 1999). In some respect, it was observed that this subject was strongly emphasized in the interviews made with religious leaders.

Additionally, the efforts of each religious organisation to protect their distinctive congregation and to strengthen their institutional entity among Turkish immigrant society might cause rivalry and sometimes tension in between organisations. These tensions based on intellectual, social and economic reasons can provoke segregation among immigrants and have a damaging role on cultural integrity. It can be said that this situation might have negative effects on the religious socialisation processes of immigrants.

#### Conclusion

There are many organisations and mosques, established by Turks living in Britain, carrying out cultural and religious activities towards specifically Turkish immigrants and generally other Muslim communities. These organisations which were founded on elements such as their identity, ideological standpoint and religious view, with taking immigrants expectations into consideration, tend towards various service fields. As a result of this, it can be observed that the mosques founded by Turks living in Britain, teaming up with other organisations around them, have differentiated from the roles they were given in the homeland and transformed into social spaces which have social, cultural and educational services alongside religious ones.

For Turkish Muslim immigrants, the mosques are important spaces that carry out religious and social activities. On one hand religious practices are being performed; on the other hand Muslim immigrants living as minority find an opportunity for religious socialising. Also at the same time mosques are institutions where knowledge is shared, social networks are established, and immigrants find shelter for themselves.

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