

British migrants in the Turkish countryside: Lifestyle migration, loss of social status and finding ‘true life’ in difference

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Abstract

This paper discusses the results of a case study carried out on a particular group of British migrants settled in the Turkish countryside. This migration is part of a larger international migration flow conceptualised as lifestyle migration. The fieldwork shows that at least for this group of migrants, migration was motivated by the feeling of lost social status. By suggesting that an analysis which privileges the nexus of individualism and consumption is inadequate, this paper concentrates on this particular structure of feeling and discusses the results of the fieldwork in terms of the continuities with the colonial imagination.

Key words: Lifestyle migration, international migration, British migrants, Orientalism, Turkey

1. Introduction

A distinct mode of geographical movement particular to the relatively wealthy people of affluent parts of the world, pursuing the opposite route of labour migrants and asylum-seekers, has emerged during the last decades. Contrary to the lower classes that are confined to ‘space’ by means of immigration policies (Bauman, 1998: 100), this mobility pattern is distinguished by the relative economic privilege and ease of movement across global space and is motivated by a search for a ‘better

* This paper rethinks the findings of a research project report (SOBAG 105K170 ‘Muğla-Gökova Yöresine Yerleşen Yabancılar: Büyük Britanya Vatandaşları Örneği’ [‘Foreigners Settled in Muğla-Gökova Region: The Case of British Citizens’]) submitted to Tübitak (the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) through further discussions in the area of lifestyle migration. I would like to thank Tübitak for financing the research. I am indebted to Halil Apaydın with whom the fieldwork was undertaken between 2006 and 2007. I would also like to thank Martin Stanton for proofreading.

life' and self-realisation. Beginning in the early 2000's, Turkey has emerged as another destination of the 'pleasure periphery' (Selwyn, 2000) for both tourists and migrants.

This migratory flow from the global North-West to the South and Southeast has been determined by many structural factors such as the internationalisation of tourism markets, the crisis of capital in the Global North (Hayes, 2015), the increasing uncertainty in labour markets, retirement regimes, and an ageing population in Europe. It has been conceptualised by various terms such as 'retirement migration' (Warnes, et al., 1999; Williams, et al., 2000; King, et al., 2000; Truly, 2002; Casado-Díaz, et al., 2004), 'residential tourism', 'leisure migration', 'lifestyle migration' (or 'new lifestyle flows' [Benson, 2013]), 'privileged migration' and 'consumption-led migration'.

This paper draws upon the concept of lifestyle migration because of its heuristic value that enables inquiry into historically embedded imaginations and subjectivities. However, through the lens of data gathered in the Turkish context, this paper rethinks the meaning of lifestyle and the way it is related with contemporary social conditions through the nexus of individualism, consumption and late modernity.

The fulfilment of the desire to relocate depends on economic factors as the necessary preconditions, that is, 'the transnational relocation of savings earned in high cost labour markets' (accompanying 'the decline of welfare state institutions and stable labour markets') (Hayes, 2015: 10) and the fact that economic and cultural capital accompanying the First-World status is worth more in the local currency (Jacobs, 2010: 120). However, the subjective and ideological aspects are still crucial, as the 'cultural' connoted by the term 'lifestyle' cannot be reduced to the 'consumption of leisure experiences and the enjoyment of outdoor facilities' (see e.g. Huete, et al., 2013: 335).

Secondly, the topos of the pursuit of a cure to the malaise of the West and modernity through movement outside rather than inside is not new and has intricate relationships with a historical desire to experience 'difference' outside the West. However, the narratives of escape to a place where at last 'true life' and self are found in 'stronger' cultures of different geographies, also reveals how lifestyle migration articulates new modes of the topos of 'malaise of the west'.

The results of a case study conducted on a group of 'full resident' (see O'Reilly, 2000: 52; King et al., 2000) British migrants who settled in the Turkish countryside reveals that their narratives are marked by a criticism of the welfare system, and an 'invasion' of immigrants and multiculturalism. Moreover, the feeling that 'Britain has no culture' and that Britishness has become an empty signifier, is interlaced with a feeling of the loss of spontaneity due to both excessive political regulations and a regimented materialist life. These narratives of escape

from multicultural Britain to a 'stronger' culture and the desire to integrate and perform 'Turkishness' are not without apparent ironies or contradictions. This paper will try to question the meanings and paradoxes embodied in these narratives through two main themes: 'multiculturalism, the welfare state and the regimented life: loss of privileges' and 'performances of the Turkish way of life'. Through these themes this paper will argue that these narratives amount to feelings of lost social status that the white privilege seeks to retrieve through relocation to Turkey. This paper will also suggest that the valorisations of cultural, 'spatial and temporal' difference (Jacobs, 2010: 16) and particular 'subjective understandings of the self' (Benson, 2015: 15) that make this relocation imaginable can be grasped through lifestyle migration's continuity with colonial structures of feeling and its embeddedness in the ideology of intimacy (Sennett, 1977).

2. Lifestyle migration

Lifestyle migration is seen as an aspect of individualising liquid modernity (see Oliver and O'Reilly, 2010: 51) and a manifestation of a 'reflexive assessment of opportunities' made possible by relative economic privilege and 'the reflexive project of the self' under 'liquid modern conditions' (O'Reilly and Benson, 2009: 3; Benson, 2011: 15, 28). Huber and O'Reilly (2004: 328-329) see this migration as an expression of flexible capitalism's influence on lived experiences such as short-term goals, elasticity, the immediate moment and instant satisfaction. These contemporary migrants are described as 'artists of life', 'lone hunters' who follow 'the scent of a better way of life' (Benson, 2011: 41-42); 'hunters' of 'the late, liquid or post-modern world' (O'Reilly and Benson, 2009: 3, 10); and 'sun-seeking patchwork-biography makers' (Nudrali and O'Reilly, 2009: 137). For some, this 'new migrant' is a 'lifestyle importing migrant/tourist', who neither has a problem with his/her home country nor has an engagement with the host country and local culture (e.g. Truly, 2002). The desire for locality inherent in this act and 'the persistent significance of actual and specific places and conventional forms of belonging' have been generally ignored since this migration has been seen as fluid and transient (Croucher, 2010: 24). Benson (2011: 21, 48), on the other hand, views this aspect 'as a reaction to the perceived instability of a globalised world', an attempt to overcome the uncertainty and indeterminacy of their lives in Britain. The individualism that makes this mode of relocation possible is seen as laced with a contemporary irony, that this perceived escape from the 'horrors' of a western way of life, many of which stem from 'excessive individualism', is only made possible by the very 'excessive individualism' of the contemporary world (O'Reilly and Benson, 2009: 6).

Since this migration pattern collapses the conventional differences between migration and tourism and seemingly shows similarities with what a tourist wants

such as a better climate, sun, sand, low cost, slow pace of life, cultural richness and hospitality (O'Reilly, 2003; O'Reilly, 2000: 35), conceptualisations often highlight its 'consumption-oriented nature' (see Williams and Hall, 2000). Hence, contrary to the conventional migration spurred by necessities, this voluntary migration is seen as predominantly 'culturally determined' (see Benson, 2011) as it is motivated by a common pursuit of a 'better and more fulfilling life' marked by individualistic tropes of self-realisation, courage and independence (O'Reilly and Benson, 2009: 1). This image of free-floating late modern individuals with consumption-oriented lifestyles as the agency of migration has dominated most theoretical frameworks. However, more recently, recognition of the historical embeddedness of the cultural narratives adopted by these migrants has led to questioning of the way existing frameworks relate this phenomenon with contemporary conditions (see Benson, 2015: 15-16).

Empirically grounded studies conducted in various locations show that this western migrant is embedded in a class structure, reflected in the distinction practices that mould post migration practices (Oliver and O'Reilly, 2010; Benson, 2011: 22); ethnicity, (that is also reflected in methodology as 'ethnic-national elitism') (Huete, et al., 2013: 335); ('white') privilege (Benson, 2013; Korpela, 2009; Croucher, 2010; Hayes, 2014); and historicalness, reflected in cultural narratives (Benson, 2015) and geographical imaginaries (Jacobs, 2010).

3. Modalities of presence outside and encounters in other geographies

Thinking of Western culture through the tropes of absence and malady, and imagining the outside as providing a liberating experience do not just emerge with lifestyle migration; these tropes exhibit continuities with earlier colonial constructions. The topos of the alien lands that pull the western subjects, who suffer from alienation and ennui, and promise a cure and forgetting through the experience of difference is deeply rooted in Orientalist texts. In the representations of the distance between the near/ the far and the familiar/ the other, the latter appears as a way out, as an original opportunity to escape from mental and spiritual habits peculiar to Europeans (Said, 1989: 96, 247).

Deborah Root remarks that at the colonial situation constructs and valorises abstract difference by connecting it with pure, authentic and intense experience. The colonial mindset thinks and experiences the 'outside' around aristocratic distinction practices, which in turn, defines and orders its relations with colonised people. In this whole framework, other cultures appear as cohesive and discrete entities, while also affirming the westerners' view of itself as monolithic and universal. So, embedded in relations of power, 'the gesture of escape remains totally inside Western culture' (Root, 1992).

The imagining of 'that other side' that evokes a geography where getting rid of modernity and losing oneself are possible, has been inherited and absorbed by contemporary tourists and tourist marketing (Jacobs, 2010: xiii, 2, 9). The 'Orient' continues to be imagined as 'an anachronistic space' 'in which past and present' exist 'outside the space of the modern', as fixed objectivity and essentialised identity (Jacobs, 2010: 8). Travel becomes the symptom of a 'desire to belong' that is impossible to fulfil except through 'a migration in time and space backwards to the premodern pasts' (Pollock, 1994: 66; as quoted in Jacobs, 2010: 45).

As Yeğenoğlu suggests, the legacy of Orientalism survives despite the collapse of empires as 'it has articulated itself differently in each instance. As an unconscious memory it reappears through displacement, association, disruption; it intersects with newly emerging discourses' (Yeğenoğlu, 1998: 71). This legacy of colonial scripting has relevance for lifestyle migration. This study reveals that travel to the East, to the South represents not only a movement in space, but also a 'movement in time', a means to recapture an imagined past (of Britain). It also represents a stepping outside of the Western conception of time that appears to be a recurrent theme in many studies on lifestyle migration as well. While the earlier desire to escape from a negatively perceived West was imagined through a movement across certain abstracted 'difference', without actually engaging with that 'difference', it can be argued that the mode of presence in permanent lifestyle migrants, at least for certain tiers, now includes the desire to inhabit that space and to belong, by selectively appropriating features supporting that desire. Moreover, the topos of losing oneself is replaced with the rhetoric of finding one's true self. The articulations and justifications of the escape and the experience of difference are now mediated by middle class values. Presence becomes a private or intimate presence based on a purely personal choice as opposed to the colonial experience that was articulated through the grand narratives of a higher order.

This dimension of escape from the malaise of Britain/the West and the aspiration to construct an authentic life through a selectively constructed Turkish way, are the two sides of the same coin. Most of the studies in lifestyle migration tend to look down on this former aspect, giving it the status of a *post hoc* 'tale' (e.g. Benson, 2011: 35-38). However, capturing this singular dimension may help to reveal a particular 'structure of feeling', 'practical consciousness of a present kind, in living and interrelating continuity' (Williams, 1977: 132), that mobilises both the desire to relocate and post migration practices. Said also adapts this concept to retrace the ways in which the Orient emerged as a powerful imaginary that directs feelings and mobilises the spirit, thoughts and hopes for westerners (Said, 1989: 279). Richard Sennett's conception of the decline of public men/women and the rise of the ideology of intimacy helps to relate this structure of feeling to contemporary conditions. Sennett (1977) argues that under these new conditions,

where the public sphere loses its ground and the social retreats, a new subject who searches for personal meanings in objective conditions and privileges personal feelings emerges. Private relationships gain unprecedented importance and the public sphere is identified with emptiness, inhumanity, impersonality, alienation and coldness. All social relationships only appear ‘real, believable and authentic’ in so far as they correspond to the inner psychological concerns of each person (Sennett, 1977: 259). By transmuting political categories into psychological ones, this ideology produces a narcissistic personality that finds authenticity only in the drives and motivations of the self. This also results in the rise of a ‘refugee personality’ (Sennett, 1977: 220, 264), ‘a silent and passive spectator of a society’. This dominant ideology of intimacy also makes it unimaginable to construct a collective life in the West itself and may explain how most criticisms of Britain, although overtly political, are manifested through personal feelings of disillusionment and a need for authenticity.

4. Turkey as destination

Turkey presents a unique case. On the margins of Europe, it enjoys geographical proximity. It is integrated with international tourism markets. It is, at the same time, a part of ‘the East’ and a Muslim country. It is not an ex-colony but it is one of the constituting others of Europe, as imaginings of the Ottoman Empire are a significant part of orientalist colonial fantasies. It is also a comparatively low cost destination with a Mediterranean climate. Thus, it also attracts migrants from working class backgrounds, which challenges the privileged migration thesis (see also Nudrali and O’Reilly, 2009: 137). Furthermore, it is not a part of the European Union¹ and therefore most EU regulations are not applicable. These regulations are emphasised in most of the migrants’ accounts as one of the reasons for ‘escape’.

As O’Reilly and Benson (2009: 6) suggest, the representations of the chosen destinations in lifestyle migration have three main characteristics: ‘the rural idyll’, offering ‘the possibility of belonging’, ‘self-transformation’ and ‘renewal’; ‘coastal retreat’, offering leisure and pleasure; and ‘the cultural/spiritual attraction’, mediated by the historical and cultural imaginings of spaces and lives there. Turkey provides all these three for the Western migrants.

Existing studies on lifestyle migration to Turkey analyse this phenomenon as a part of lifestyle migration (Südaş, 2011; Nudrali and O’Reilly, 2009) and retirement migration (Balkır, et al., 2008). Survey studies such as Südaş’s focus on push-pull factors and satisfactions or dissatisfactions with the host country, leaving

¹ On the other hand, Nudrali and O’Reilly’s work see Turkey’s position vis-a-vis EU as a disadvantage, balanced by financial and geographic advantages (Nudrali and O’Reilly, 2009: 138).

what 'lifestyle' signifies to disappear under the statistical data. On the other hand, studies departing from the postulate of retirement migration accordingly limit their sample to the age of 50 and over and subsume different work and early retirement histories under the generic category of retirement, leaving the experiences of the other age groups unrecognised.

Nudrali and O'Reilly's study (2009) includes all modes of settlements (permanent, seasonal and peripatetic migrants) and concentrates on urban areas. Their work suggests that the stated motivations for migration are similar to those expressed by lifestyle migrants in diverse settings, such as the elderly northern Europeans in southern Europe, business owners in the Costa del Sol, and American retirees in Mexico. Those motivations are the quality of life, the climate, the low property prices and living costs, business opportunities, culture, closeness to home country and the desire to go somewhere where 'you can be yourself' (Nudrali and O'Reilly, 2009: 141). For Nudrali and O'Reilly, the common themes of discontent towards the home country such as the depiction of Britain as 'unhealthy, cold, depressing, isolated and lonely, unaffordable, highly regulated and taxed' with 'no sense of future of security, or control over one's own life' and 'anti-modern sentiments of the counter urbanites seeking a rural idyll' are also present in the statements of the migrants (Nudrali and O'Reilly, 2009: 142). Although they note the 'inherent anti-immigration tone' in the migrant narratives in passing, they do not elaborate on this dimension.

5. The fieldwork

The research focuses on a specific tier of the permanent British migrants who chose to settle in villages and hamlets that had little or no prior presence of other British people. These migrants were consciously keeping away from urban areas that have a highly visible concentration of foreign (mostly British and German) migrants and tourists. They reside in Turkey with renewable five-year residence permits. Most of them were planning to get double citizenship as soon as they meet the required conditions.

The focus was on the regions of Ula, Gökova and Köyceğiz (namely, Kızılağaç, Akyaka, Gökova, Ataköy, Çıtlık, Yeşilova, Elmalı, Döğüşbelen, Toparlar). This region is located in the highly touristic South-West of Turkey where the Aegean and the Mediterranean seas meet, and offers a secluded rural life as well as easy access to beaches and popular resorts. These migrants usually had bought land and then constructed their detached houses, while some lived in semi-detached houses. Two couples had bought old village houses and then restored them. A big garden in which they grow flowers and organic vegetables and fruits was essential.

By using official documents provided by the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre and Foreigner's Offices, contacting village headmen and

using snowball techniques, we reached forty-two British migrants who met the criteria of being property owners and were willing to participate in the study. As we included all these migrants (17 couples, 7 single females and 1 single male – the co-habiting son of a couple who was over 18 years old), selecting a representative sample was not applicable. In the cases of couples, we applied the survey forms individually but conducted the interviews together. In total, 25 interviews were conducted. The majority of the interviews were conducted in the migrants' homes.

We carried out semi-structured interviews guided by open-ended questions to access their migration and settlement stories and post migration practices in Turkey. These in depth interviews were also supplemented by a standard survey to elicit information regarding their economic conditions, work histories, and life trajectories.

We also used ethnographic participant observation techniques, and tried to spend as much time as possible with the interviewees. We arranged social meetings with each migrant or couple separately. This took the form of home visits, lunch or dinner parties, boat tours or meeting at cafes.

Traditional ethnographic studies include the figure of a researcher who goes to an alien land, learns the native language and observes the different people in their natural settings. The majority of studies on lifestyle migrants has been conducted by researchers who share a similar national and perhaps class status with the researched group. As Benson puts it, 'I shared with my respondents a particular national and class status, aspects of my identity which would certainly locate me as a native anthropologist. [...] My fieldwork was reminiscent of carrying out the fieldwork "at home"' (Benson, 2011: 18). In her fieldwork, she encounters 'new configurations of the familiar' 'through an unfamiliar landscape' (Benson, 2011: 19).

The research situation in this study neither corresponds to the traditional ethnographic situation nor the usual research situation in lifestyle migration research that Benson articulates as an 'ethnography of the familiar within an unfamiliar setting'. However, in this study, we, the researchers, were the non-western native researchers who tried to study the alien western people who came to our own locality and we spoke to them in their foreign language (English). Thus, it would not be wrong to define the research situation in this study as a study of 'the unfamiliar within a familiar setting'.

1.1. British migrants in Turkey's Muğla-Gökova region

At the time of the research, in the years between 2006 and 2008, the province of Muğla was the third in terms of foreign property ownership in Turkey after Antalya and Istanbul. The latest numbers show that Muğla had risen to second place

after Antalya. By 2012, 35.825 British citizens owned property in Turkey (Tuna and Özbek, 2012: 32-33). Furthermore, in the years between 2003-2005, after the annulment of the laws- which were in effect since 1934- that prohibited foreign nationals from buying property in villages, the number of foreigners who settled within the rural areas started to increase considerably. Even when new legal restrictions were introduced in 2006, these legal barriers were overcome through informal local connections.

According to the statistics provided by the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre, Department of Foreign Affairs (by the date 03.08.2006), in the county of Köyceğiz, 64 British nationals owned 58 properties with a total area of 48.304 m². They also owned total land of 75.154 m² in the county of Ula and 194.373 m² in the county of Marmaris. According to the data provided by the Foreigner's Office in Muğla by July 2006, 1308 British nationals had residence permits.

The focus group, although predominantly white and middle class, were not a homogenous category. Although a majority was from a middle-class background, there were also working class couples as demonstrated by their manual occupations, family background and self-referential definitions. The frequency distribution of their ages at the time of settlement was as follows:

Table 1
Age Distribution at the Time of Settlement

Settlement Age	Female	Male	Total
20-29	0	1	1
30-39	4	1	5
40-49	8	5	13
50-59	10	6	16
60-69	2	5	7
Total	24	18	42

Apart from those who had arrived in the late 1980s and those who had arrived only six months prior to the research, the majority had moved to Turkey within the previous five years. The average settlement age for women was 47 and for men was 52.

The previous occupations of the migrants were highly versatile, carrying the mark of Britain's socio-economic transformation in the last 30 years: closed mines, textile industry and factories; the rise of services and the telecommunication sector; the restructuring of work and the changes in the welfare state. Table 2 shows the distribution of interviewees' last jobs in Britain:

Table 2
The Last Jobs in England before Migration

	Female	Male	Total
Private Companies or Firms	12	7	19
Local Governments (Education/Fire Brigades/Police force)	1	2	3
National Health Service	2	1	3
Nationalised Industries	1	1	2
Non-profit Organisations and Trusts	2	0	2
Armed Forces	-	1	1
Self-employed	5	5	10
Other	1	1	2
Total	24	18	42

Six of the migrants spent most of their working life as manual blue-collar workers. Moreover, the under-representation of professional groups (except for one retired university professor) was striking. In the questionnaires, the respondents were asked to state which political party they supported and in the interviews they were asked how they defined themselves politically. These questions proved to be important in situating the interviewee's rhetoric. While ten people defined themselves as supporters of the Labour party; four people as socialist/anarchist; one as liberal, the majority of the interviewees defined themselves as conservatives. Most of them, however, were non-voters.

Work and retirement stories showed eight different types of work and retirement: retirement from a job in Turkey; currently working freelance mainly in the international telecommunication sector; the self-employed who took a break for an indefinite period of time; the ones who were made redundant as a result of the restructuring of work; leaving work and starting a new life after the death of a partner or divorce; the ones who inherited wealth; a woman who chose to raise her children in Turkey while her husband still works in Britain; and the regular retirees. However, this last category was complex in the case of partners with significant age differences as the younger partners had to leave their jobs to settle in Turkey. Almost all of them were economically independent (through pensions (the State pension, pension from a previous employer or private pension), personal savings, rents, freelance work or a working partner back home).

The results of the fieldwork will be discussed through two main themes, based on an analysis of the interviews: 'multiculturalism, the welfare state and the regimented life: loss of privileges' and 'performances of Turkish way of life'.

1.2. Multiculturalism, the welfare state and the regimented life: Loss of privileges

The promise of a Mediterranean climate with a low cost of living is tempting. However, as one participant said, *'the problem is not with the country as the country'* referring to the climate and the nature. There exist multilayered constructions of migration stories, marked by an overriding narrative of 'England is not England any more' and a nostalgic yearning for 'Britain's good old days'. It is possible to distinguish four main intermingling layers buried in these narratives: a strong criticism of multiculturalism and the policies of political correctness; the loss of British culture and identity and an inability to imagine what is purely British; abuses of the welfare state and a feeling of disillusionment towards the state; an overly regimented life imposed by the EU and the state's regulations and materialist values. The interviewees predominantly articulate their move to a different (Muslim) culture as a liberating escape from forced multiculturalism and policies of political correctness in Britain. This articulation appears to be paradoxical at first, as it marks the cultural differences in Britain as negative but the different culture in another country (imagined as monolithic, attributing to it an essence and identity) as liberating. However, I argue that, this signification is motivated by a feeling of lost social status. In this sense the relocation to a 'stronger' essentialised culture based on a free-choice that listens to and privileges the inner personal concerns, is mobilized by this feeling.

In this narrative, a feeling of lost privileges within a nation state and a promise of authentic lives outside, operates in the search for a more fulfilling life. The ways the migration stories are articulated invoke Benson's argument that the 'radicalized desire for the countryside' is linked with 'the recognizable whiteness of the British countryside' (Benson, 2011: 30). This possible link becomes more plausible through Gilroy's argument that, as a symptom of 'the loss of empire and the loss of certainty about the limits of national and racial identity', 'the inhuman political body of the immigrant' 'comes to represent all the discomfiting ambiguities of the Empire's painful and shameful but apparently nonetheless exhilarating history' (Gilroy, 2004: 110). Gilroy calls this consequent feeling 'melancholia' and 'postcolonial nihilism' (Gilroy, 2004: 125).

The prevailing feelings of disillusionment with regard to the welfare state were articulated with the decision to migrate, usually through personal stories of how they were left alone when they needed help from the state such as in illness, in redundancy or in their dealings with the state bureaucracy, while they believe the state has time and money for everybody else. These experiences were cited as the critical factors in the decision to migrate. For example a woman who decided to move to Turkey after her health problem was not treated by the NHS because of the

long waiting list, explained her reasons for migration as follows: ‘*Number one: old persons in Turkey are not second class citizens... number two: an English person, born in England, has become a second class citizen*’ (age 64, female, supporter of the Conservative Party).

Another participant, after a lengthy explanation of why he thinks ‘England is not England anymore’, with references to the history of the British Empire, identifies his redundancy as the decisive point:

When I was made redundant from my last job, I went to the employment department and asked for help... And they said no. Because in the previous two years, ignoring the 45 years (they ignored that) I had not paid enough tax in those two years because I was not working. But all the people from all over the world are being given money. They did not pay anything in. And there were unmarried mothers being given tax-credit to have more babies we felt that we were contributing to support. (Age 62, male, supporter of the Conservative Party)

This overriding feeling of disillusionment was then related with the misuse of taxes, redistributing working people’s taxes and contributions to the ‘undeserved’ who abuse the system, such as the ones who do not like to work, the illegal immigrants as well as ‘single-mothers who gain money by giving birth’. This rhetoric was supplemented by the personal experiences of the migrants, some of whom were social workers or police officers. Examples given for what was called the ‘abuse of the system’, such as people doing the ‘homeless scene’, were then mostly linked with the issue of immigration:

Originally when it was first implemented, it was there to help people who could not help themselves. And that was alright but more people abuse the system. [...] We have to pay big tax, council tax, and the tax on your wages, to pay for these people... There is more and more people now wanted to leave the country and live abroad... they are just disillusioned with the way things are. (Age 46, male, supporter of the Labour Party)

The possible charge of racism was usually bypassed by reference to ‘illegal immigrants’ or with the words of ‘I am not racist at all but...’:

So I think that is what really started disillusioning me... There is again people who shouldn’t be there are getting from the government, not working... a lot of people are coming in and coming in and not contributing to the country... I think another thing that I did not like about living in Britain was that as somebody that was British and English that I did not have any rights... that it was getting to the stage that there was people from all over everywhere, moving there they did have more rights than I did... I did not have a problem at all with people coming into

England you know and working, been there... But I have got a problem with the people coming to the country illegally and getting benefits but they would have more rights than I would. (Age 45, woman, supporter of the Labour Party)

The issue of single mothers appears frequently in the accounts such as this:

If you see a woman and she has got a black child and a black child is not the first child and then an Asian looking child. She has not made a mistake just once, has she? You know what I mean. But she will be getting very good benefits for that. She will be getting child benefit for the child. She will be getting housing benefit for the house. She will be getting unemployment benefit for something else... You put in back into the state. But a lot of people in Britain just take out from the welfare state and never put back... There seems to be a subculture in Britain of people owe me something. (Age 38, woman, supporter of the Labour Party)

The rhetoric of escape from Britain as an escape from a system that punishes the tax paying classes were heavily marked by a victimisation of the middle class:

England is not so good now for middle class people. We pay too many taxes, too many bills. Rich people will always be rich. Middle class is struggling. Lots of immigrants are coming in and getting everything paid for by the tax people and that is middle class. So it is hard. So we said let's sort our finances out, go to Turkey. (Age 62, male, supporter of the Conservative Party)

Victimisation of the middle class also intersects with a rhetoric of the erosion of the identity of the majority by the acquired rights of the minority. The feeling of a loss of spontaneity that then translates into a loss of British culture intersects with the feeling of disillusionment and increases it. Policies of 'political correctness' and the policies that ever-increasingly regulate every sphere of life, including EU regulations, were seen as the culprit for this loss of spontaneity. From the size of cucumbers to office furniture, the examples given were full of details of how life has become increasingly regimented in Britain. The expression of a 'suing culture' was articulated as another phase of this highly regimented society. The disruptive effect of the immigration policies were another multiplier of the feeling of a lost Britain. All these feelings contributed to the creation of the dichotomy of a 'segregated' British society and the spontaneous authentic life they were trying to construct in Turkey. A migrant who expressed his decisive moment with the words 'you go on holiday and it is holiday. Here I just felt as though... it is like a jigsaw puzzle and I fit perfectly in my puzzle' explained the migration decision as follows:

'England is not England anymore... let me tell you now. We have come to Turkey. We are trying to become Turkish or live the Turkish way. Everybody who goes to England now are trying to form their little communities. They do not mix. (Age 58, male, supporter of the Labour Party)

'There is no British culture because it is full of immigrants. England has multicultural now. We had an empire which is why Pakistanis, Indians, Jamaicans are going over there and the second thing which is a problem now is political correctness... to shout out it's frowned upon because they feel, it's what's called do-gooders [sic]. Maybe they feel you'd like, they are trying to do away with Christmas. Political correctness is one of the reasons we left. It is called nanny-state as well... (Age 48, male, supporter of the Conservative Party)

Phrases such as 'in order not to discriminate against the minorities, the majority is being discriminated against in their own country' and the feeling that 'the real minority is the native English people in their own country' were commonly expressed. This feeling that constructs the ethnic differences through an 'us' and 'them' opposition with a yearning for a lost national community was not only confined to the conservative middle classes but was also present in working classes:

They come to our country and say 'build the mosques' in our country and they say 'we do not like that Christmas tree'. It is pretty to us. It is not just doing religion. It is pretty. So the government takes the Christmas tree down because it offends the foreigners... and the English become to hate the foreigners. [...] We do not say 'look this offends us, we do not like that mosque in front of our'. We are not doing it because it is your country and we respect it and that is your religion, we try to understand. [...] A coloured man... We are not allowed to call him. You see I call a black black, if a Chinese yellowish, not for being nasty or prejudiced, we used to call them black. If I call him black he is offended and he could take me to court and fine me a lot of money but he could call me English or whatever and I could not do anything about it. (Age 62, woman, supporter of the Conservative Party (also a blue-collar worker))

Although the migrants articulate their migration in terms of a common discontent with multicultural Britain and the feeling of being a minority in their own society, they do not see their act of migration to a Muslim culture as contradictory because it is the result of their own freely made choices that contrasts to the forced conditions back home and their willingness to integrate and their appreciation of Turkish culture. This appreciation of local culture also serves to contrast positively their behaviour to the behaviour of immigrants in Britain who, they think, do not intend to integrate and instead continuously demand more rights

for their specific religions and cultures. Therefore, the accounts of these British migrants reveal a structure of feeling that their choice to appropriate 'the difference', which promises a genuine existence based on their inner concerns, is a response to lost privileges in their homeland - a place which no longer meets their desire for meaning and identity.

It is significant to note that although this group of migrants was united by a common residence pattern and aspiration, they were not homogeneous. The upper layers of the middle class (five of the participants, four of them had their own boat) highlighted adventure and experience more than the others and defined themselves as travellers. The differences in political opinion, 'race' and previous 'colonial experience' manifested themselves in the rhetoric used to articulate the migration story and the meanings given to their presence in Turkey. While the ones who define themselves as conservatives were expressing the source of their discontent in cultural terms, the socialists and anarchists were explaining their migration decision with references to 'progressive capitalism' and 'excessive liberalism'.

This difference was most visible in the case of two families for whom the decisive point for migration was the moment of realisation that they couldn't raise their children in Britain. For the one who defined herself as conservative, prevailing political correctness, 'the nanny state', a 'suining culture' and 'the way England is losing its national pride' were the factors that led her to search for another place to raise her children:

I decided that I had enough of political correctness of England and the way that England is losing its national pride. [...] There is an awful lot of immigration in Britain... I am not racist at all. What is happening is that the British has no national pride any more. And a classic example is we're becoming a nanny-state very much. Children are not allowed to throw snowballs at each other because it may injure one and in which case someone might sue. So to sue to school, then they loose money... You are not allowed to put nativity plays on at Christmas any more because it might offend other religions and races... What happens is it turns around completely. So the English or the Christians there are actually becoming minority... Nativity plays is just one of many things that the British are not allowed to do any more because it will upset. Because in England like wearing uniform in schools. But some other religions say 'well I do not wear that. I want to wear my religious costume'. Now it sounds that I am going down the religious route but I am not. I am just saying that political correctness in Britain, they have used, I think, religious banner to cover up the political correctness[...] That is the way Britain is [...] I did not want my children to be brought up in that culture.' (Age 47, female, supporter of the Conservative Party)

For the other family, who define themselves as socialist and anarchist, the capitalist mentality with all its egotism and competitive values was not suitable for rearing children. Becoming a parent was the decisive point for the realisation that England has become a '*nation of people who are oppressed*' and '*the whole mentality of a capitalist culture*' made England a place that is not suitable for raising children. In this case, the common rhetoric of multiculturalism and the welfare state were replaced by a concern with '*the way the West tries to manipulate you from a very early age*'. Britain was substituted by a general term 'the West' as a place where 'there is no real quality of life'. They were also saying that if Turkey joins the EU, they will keep going East, starting with Iran.

Although there was just one case to discern the differences in experiences due to racialisation, it is still possible to see how the intersection of 'race' and gender affected the experiences of one of the interviewees. A Jamaican British woman, who settled in Turkey with her English partner, did not have a romanticized view of Turkish life as she was not enjoying the symbolic power of whiteness embedded in the fact that 'in almost every corner of the globe, dark skin still correlates with inequality' (Winant, 2001: 109, 7th f.t.). Instead her encounters were marked by a disturbing interest in her physical features. The implicit racism in Turkey manifested itself in an over-interest in her physical qualities, by being stared at (sometimes even touched by village women) and by male verbal abuse with racialised sexual connotations. Britain meant anonymity which she missed in Turkey.

Previous 'colonial experience' was also another axis of difference. A woman, who called herself a 'colonial leftover' and 'ex-colonial', after working 25 years in Kenya could not adapt to Britain which had seemed like a 'black and white movie'. After a search for where they (later her husband had died in Turkey) would settle, they chose Turkey since Turkey was safer with warm people, had a 'thick culture' as opposed to Africa's 'thin culture' and there was not a problem of racial integration.

1.3. Performances of Turkish way of life

Turkey comes to signify two things: a place with a community spirit that corresponds to most personal innate needs and a 'strong' 'good culture' that they would like to integrate into. Belonging comes to be identified not with a birth place but with a choice.

The issue of integration features differently here compared to the cases where the sending country is marked by 'economic insecurity and poverty' and the receiving country becomes a field of 'marginalisation and discrimination' (see Gustafson, 2008: 471-472). Since the desire for difference and belonging in the search for a more 'real' life and self are the driving aspirations/justifications behind

migration, the issue of integration emerges as something desirable, part of a symbolic and normative fitting-in strategy to achieve the desired and romanticized 'authentic life' (see Hayes, 2014). It also becomes a 'symbolic marker' of gained cultural knowledge that differentiate these migrants from the others.

One side of the significations and practices that value integration was linked to a search for a meaningful life that was perceived as lost in Britain. This idea of a 'meaningful life' is imagined in two ways. Firstly, it meant a life-oriented life as opposed to a work-oriented materialist life. As opposed to the life in Britain which is seen as a 'rat race', time rush, a life mortgaged by credit debts, a poverty trap, self-centred competitive values, centrality of money, insatiateness, a 'diluted' culture and regimented life, life in Turkey is signified by tranquility, 'being outside of time', a 'mystical place', 'finding Nirvana at last', 'being at home', 'spontaneity', 'culture', 'stepping into the sun', 'freshness of everything', 'magical', 'joy of life' and 'fantastic'. This aspect is also noted by Korpela's work on lifestyle migration to India that reveals that through a romanticized image of India and a negative image of a homogenised West, the attractiveness of Varanasi lies in its being a sign of Eastern Otherness, a symbol of authentic spirituality in comparison with the 'dead' religious rituals of the West (Korpela, 2009: 23).

Secondly, this idea of a 'meaningful life' connoted a new life freed from the predicament of Britishness. The feeling that Britain has become a country without a culture and has turned into a '*ridiculous society of a culture of cultures*' prevailed and that '*I am not proud to be British anymore*' or '*I am more comfortable doing Turkish things*' were uttered frequently:

You obviously, I am sure, feel absolutely 100 per cent Turkish. But we don't feel that in England. That is probably because our culture is diluted. We do not have culture. Do we? We have the multiracial society. We have the culture of cultures. This is just ridiculous. What is definitively British? Because I do not feel anything like that. (Age 38, woman, supporter of the Labour Party)

In England the state looks after you... But here the state won't look after you. So your culture is more involved with each other. So you are genuinely interested... Here you think your neighbour more warmly... more involved with your neighbour... These are good things. Here community takes care of you more... Turkish culture is not selfish. (Age 48, male, supporter of the Conservative Party)

On the other hand, what were thought of as 'definitely Turkish' were cultural and family values, respect for elders, love towards children, a feeling of security and spontaneity. Turkey looked like Britain's past where community life and smiling and respectful people feeling secure existed. 'Being Turkish' meant

something like Britain's old ways. 'Living like a Turk' was defined as 'being where they become happy', 'being in an ideal world', 'being in a single world, not as British living in another country'. Hence, most of these migrants only visit their home-country for urgent matters and usually expressed that they did not feel at home in Britain anymore. By stressing their difference from tourists and the other British migrants who chose to live in a 'little Britain in Turkey', the interviewees were saying that they were living in the 'real Turkey'. This choice has its own semiotics such as wearing necklaces of the Turkish flag and certain demonstrations of their adaptation to Turkish customs (see also Nudrali and O'Reilly, 2009: 146). These symbols, however, are highly politically charged in Turkey and instead of being symbols of a homogenous, conflict-free organic community, they are the signs of ideological positions which are highly polarised. As Hayes argues in terms of Ecuador, 'symbolic and discursive nature of normative integration' allies these migrants with the dominant visions which are in fact an area of struggle (Hayes, 2014: 13).

The 'real' Turkey was a construction. It excluded the undesired parts: '*But it should not be that Turkish... By Turkish I do not mean village houses with animals next door.*' Hence, they prefer to live in detached houses with big gardens with an easy access to communication channels, relatively isolated from modern life but close enough to airports, main roads and the sea. Almost all of them had not been outside the coastal line and had never been to Central and/or Eastern Turkey.

As what is called the 'Turkish way of life' was a construction, it was materialised through certain performances. The performances of displays of acculturation practices such as respecting and adapting certain Turkish customs such as not hanging out female underwear where they can be seen by others; trying to learn Turkish; making local friends and neighbourly contacts; adapting to the 'Turkish sense of time' (though local notions of time also appeared as a joking matter via always late repairmen or official dealings) (see also Hayes, 2014: 12); giving financial support to the village mosque and other expenditures; for men, going to the village coffee-house which is traditionally a place for only men and playing cards. Some of them were also supporting financially the education of some poor village children. The aforementioned 'Turkish sense of time' was also the essential quality of a meaningful life with its slow-paced time and 'laid back' nature as opposed to the life seen as a 'rat race'. As one interviewee said, '*living in England is regimental, you do everything by the clock*' and as opposed to the pace of life in Britain that '*runs at the speed of 200 km per hour*', living in Turkey means living without a sense of time.

The issue of time appears as a nodal point in construction of the antinomy between life in Britain and life in Turkey. Other studies show that this is not specific to the Turkish case. Osbaldiston (2015: 30) suggests that this relation to time is

related to the 'romanticisation of the past in place' which he calls 'timescape': 'Place here is defined more by its imagined timescape wherein slowness and simplicity abound'. This relation to time involves the two senses of time: historical time (constructed by colonial nostalgia (Jacobs, 2010: 2)) and temporal time of modernity. Being in Turkey appears to mean going back in historical time and stepping outside of regimented time of the First World.

The privileging of the Turkish way of life also appears as a stake in the strategies of distinction from other British migrants and tourists. These 'other' groups are seen as inferior, manifested in the pejorative terms used to address them: '*Brit-packs*' or '*lager-louts*'. Hence, the researched group was constructing their life '*to get away from the British and British mentality*'. This good migrant/bad migrant distinction corresponds to the distinction between 'good tourist'/ 'bad tourist' (Clifford, 1992). Perhaps in the context of lifestyle migration, the signification of the differences between the 'superficial' and 'senseless' lifestyles of *Brit-packs* and *lager-louts* (a kind of labelling that evokes lower social class origins) and the lifestyles of more cultured classes in the search of a more authentic life shows similarities with the signification of differences between the labour migrants and asylum-seekers (necessity) and the 'white' migrants (choice).

6. Conclusion

This paper, by dwelling on a case study, tried to understand the experiences of a specific tier of British migrants who settle in the Turkish countryside. The fieldwork revealed that explanations based on the themes of individualism and consumption that are abstracted from political and social contexts do not suffice to understand all aspects of this migration pattern. This paper suggests that this phenomenon has continuities with colonial imaginaries and that conceptualisations that are not confined solely to the ideology of consumption are still needed to relate this migration pattern to social conditions. An analysis of narratives reveals that it is necessary to recognise the political nature of the cultural logic that leads to such a relocation. The loss of social status and continuities with colonial imagery appear to be important aspects of structure of feeling that mobilises such an act of migration in the pursuit of an authentic life through difference and 'culture'.

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Özet

Türkiye kırsalında Britanyalı göçmenler: Yaşam tarzı göçü, toplumsal statü kaybı ve ‘doğru yaşam’ı farkta bulmak

Bu makale, Türkiye’de kırsal bölgelere yerleşen belirli bir Britanyalı göçmen grubu üzerinde gerçekleştirilen vaka çalışmasının sonuçlarını tartışmaktadır. Bu göç, yaşam tarzı göçü olarak kavramsallaştırılan daha geniş bir uluslararası göç akışının bir parçasıdır. Yapılan alan araştırması, en azından bu spesifik göçmen grubu açısından, bu göçün toplumsal statü kaybı hissiyatıyla harekete geçirildiğini göstermektedir. Bu makale, bireysellik ve tüketim arasındaki bağlantıyı ayrıcalıklandırarak bir analizin yetersiz olduğunu ileri sürerek, alan araştırmasının sonuçlarını, bu spesifik hissiyat yapısına odaklanarak, sömürgeci tahayyülle süreklilikleri bağlamında tartışmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yaşam tarzı göçü, uluslararası göç, Britanyalı göçmenler, şarkiyatçılık, Türkiye.