

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI BERGAMO

**SCUOLA DI DOTTORATO IN ANTROPOLOGIA ED
EPISTEMOLOGIA DELLA COMPLESSITÀ**

CICLO XXVIII

Settore scientifico disciplinare: M-DEA/01

**Cultural resilience or the Interethnic Dobrujan
Model as a Black Sea alternative to EuroIslam
in the Romanian Turkish-Tatar community**

Candidato
ANDREEA MIHAI

Relatore
PROF. GIANLUCA BOCCHI

Correlatore
PROF. CRISTINA GRASSEN

ANNO ACCADEMICO 2014-2015

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*It is not the strongest of the species that survives,
nor the most intelligent that survives.
It is the one that is most adaptable to change.*

Charles Darwin

INTRODUCTION

If EuroIslam is to allay the fears of Western Europeans and build a bridge between Muslims and non-Muslims, it needs to address the needs of Muslims as well as non-Muslims. It is fundamental to understand and acknowledge the views of the Muslim communities in regard to nationality, to the boundaries of their culture, their idea on religion, nationality, coexistence in a Christian country and their everyday lives. The climate of peaceful coexistence hypothesized in some theories on multiculturalism, and often seen as utopia, represents a reality in borderline areas of Europe where historical premises have allowed for syncretic realities to form and melt into mosaical cultural realities.

1. Goal and Scope

This dissertation examines the applicability of the EuroIslam theory in an environment different from the one hypothesized by the theorists of EuroIslam, that is a small Muslim community of Turks and Tatars that withstood the passing from being a majority in the Ottoman Empire to being a minority within the republic of Romania, and survived in an apparently peaceful environment as a possible example of cultural resilience of a Muslim community within a European Christian country. My focus will be on the present-day reality of this community and on the process that led to the shaping of this community, thus the factors that have led to the creation of this singular situation. The dissertation seeks to interrogate to what extent the EuroIslam model can explain the Dobrujan cultural environment, its limitations and critics, and to explore other possible alternatives to the EuroIslam model to explain the Romanian model of coexistence. I will use a case-study methodology to examine the validity of the EuroIslam theory in a different reality than the one considered for this theory. Furthermore, a study of “EuroIslam”, as defined by two of its leading proponents (Tariq Ramadan and Bassam Tibi), will indicate whether there is a common understanding of this term or whether different understandings exist. The findings

in my case study will enable a determination as to what form of EuroIslam will most likely be accepted by European Muslims and non Muslims, as well as its main characteristics and the necessary preconditions for its successful becoming.

More concretely, the discourse in Western Europe for what Muslim migrants is concerned, revolves around the inherent cultural issues that may or may not prevent a peaceful coexistence with the Christian populations. More and more theories regarding the existence, co-existence, and future of these communities in Europe surface and disappear everyday, as the issue of the very right to existence of Muslim culture in Europe is put under question. I became very interested in the theory of EuroIslam and considering that most theories take into consideration Western Europe environments and relatively recent (talking in historical terms, the second half of the 20th century), my interest became that of putting to the test the EuroIslam theory within a Eastern European context and taking into analysis a long-established Muslim community, as to observe how this theory holds up to the peculiarities of a real-life situation of Muslim-Cristians long-time coexistence. Could the observations and findings of this type of context become a sort of look into the future for what European Western Muslim communities are experiencing now? Could the configuration of a long-established Muslim community in a Christian country offer and lessons learnt or best practices as to the present problematics experienced in the Western Europe?

Although the literature surrounding the main issues taken into consideration by this research is vast and growing continuously, I decided to focus on the most essential findings in the area of studies on Islam in Europe (See Cesari 2009, Dassetto 2004, Roy 2003, 2004). Recent research follows the concept of multiculturalism and the different ways of understanding the concept, as well as the attempts to go further and search for new concepts that go beyond a narrow understanding of multi- or pluri- culturalism (see Vertovec 2010, Grillo 2010, Werbner 2005, Modood 2012, Rattansi 2011, Kymlicka 1995). A third stand I chose to focus on is the one concentrating on the concept / theory of EuroIslam (see Tibi 2002, Ramadan 1999, 2002, Allevi 1999, 2003, Khakimov 2003). Within this category,

there are two directions divided into: one that focuses on a Western bound European Islam, while the other on a Eastern Tatar bound European Islam.

My thesis is most closely related with these strands of literature, although, as elaborated in the chapter dedicated to the literary review I expand the boundless literature dedicated to minorities, migration, Islam in Europe and especially in the Eastern Europe. In fact, Chapter 3 is dedicated to the various theories and directions of analysis within the field of study of European Islam and, in a second part, to the theories related to the concept of EuroIslam. Chapter 3 is dedicated to the historical contextualization of Romania with its relations with the Ottoman Porte, and of course of the Dobruja region within the Ottoman Empire. Also in this chapter the Tatar and Turkish communities in Romania are presented and framed within the Dobrujan and Romanian context. I argue that thoroughly studying the historical, geographical, social, and political context of reference of these communities is fundamental for a thorough understanding of their origin and their itinerary within the Romanian historical becoming. In other words, it is prejudicial to research Islam in Europe and not look into the long-time communities that have contributed decisively to the forging of the European culture (in some areas more than in others of course).

Of course, speaking of Muslims or Islam is very vague as they are very broad terms, which means that a differentiation must be made as to the actual focus of the research, which is the Turkish-Tatar community in Dobruja. As to grasp the complexity of the studied theme and the complexity of the broader field of research of migration and Islam in Europe, it is impossible to subdivide in this study between the Turkish community and the Tatar one. To make the analysis sharp and concrete, in this dissertation I will try to build on the existing literature on migration, Islam and EuroIslam, in order to capture some distinctive features of the Islam existing in Romania, especially Dobruja, that I think are crucial for the comprehension of this ample debate on Islamic presence in Europe. Although the EuroIslam theory has generated rich and interesting insights, many implications derived from the model presented by this theory prove to be detached from the real world (and thus the criticism to the theory), especially in long-time Muslim communities existing in Europe.

Based on all of the above reasons, I will take a multiple approach, whenever possible, to investigate how the Muslim community in Romania became part of the cultural core of Romania originating a singular model of coexistence called locally the “Dobrujan interethnic model”, which, if analyzed from the EuroIslam theory’s point of view, it might be seen as a Dobrujan / East European version of EuroIslam, even though throughout the research the answer to this hypothesis becomes more and more well-structured and clear. The multiple approach I decided to apply conceived putting to the test the theory of EuroIslam and of multiculturalism to the test in a new, under-studied, location such as that of a long-time Muslim community in Eastern-Europe; this approach which looked into the historical context and premises (as well as other historical implications such as social, economical, geostrategical factors) and into the ethnographic reality of the present day community with its peculiarities, its syncretism, and its singular characteristics, not only allowed to examine how the EuroIslam theory might apply to a different context than the one for which it was imagined, but also to see if the Dobrujan interethnic model is a type of Eastern-European EuroIslam or a different type of pluralistic model originated by the cultural resilience of the area and the interacting people of multiple faiths and ethnicities. Studying a long-time Muslim community in Europe therefore might give us a more complete view about the reality of Muslim communities in Europe that sometimes might be distant from the theoretical presuppositions made in Western Europe academic environments.

A. Historical approach

Most of the existing literature on migration and Islam focuses on the patterns of integration in Western Europe (see Cesari, Lawrence, Allevi, etc) and especially on the three major integration models, Great Britain, France, and Germany. However, in some Central and Eastern European countries, as well as the Balkans, there are endogenous Muslim communities that have made important cultural contributions to the European cultural development. But there are more factors that play an important role such as demographic,

economic, and political factors, as well as cultural and other policies adopted throughout the long Turkish-Tatar and Romanian coexistence. Therefore my dissertation not only highlights the present day situation of the Turkish-Tatar community in Dobruja but also takes into consideration the historical, geopolitical, geostrategical factors, and such the explicit roles played by the governments, public administrations in terms of policies and practices, as well as taking into consideration the human factor that contributed to the creation and becoming of the present climate of cultural coexistence.

B. Ethnographic approach

The purpose of the ethnographic research has been of closely looking into a present-day Muslim community situated in a European Christian country in order to assess the possibilities of the EuroIslam theory applied to a long-time community environment. The initial objective was that of making an assessment of the situation, the relationship, the climate between the present populations, and subsequently see if the environment had developed a type of EuroIslam as theorized by the sustainers of the theory in question. Within the theories on EuroIslam and multiculturalism there is a general idea that time, together with the relationship between Church and State (see Joel S. Fetzer and J. Christian Soper) are fundamental for developing a multicultural state. Since the Turkish-Tatar community in Romania has passed the test of time, as it counts centuries of coexistence with the Romanian population, I decided to observe this environment and see what kind of multiculturalism has developed over time and if we can talk about EuroIslam as a model of interculturalism in Dobruja.

4. Analytical Methodology

This research represents an effort to analyze and portray the identity dynamics of two of the most ancient ethnic communities in Romania, the Turkish and the Tatar communities. I emphasize on the historical and social context that forged the communities into the realities

they are today, but chronologically I am interested in the present situation and the way in which the community adapted to the historical and social environment, as well as what kind of Islam they have developed inside a Christian European country. I combined field research - life interviews and participant observation -, with archival research of the historical social and political context, as to identify the reasons behind the evolution and shaping of these two communities.

The field research was motivated by the following questions:

1. - What is the Interethnic Dobrujan model and does it really exist in Romania? If so, what are its characteristics?
2. - Is the cultural resilience within the Romanian Turkish-Tatar community a form of EuroIslam? If so, what are its characteristics?
3. - How do the Romanian Turks and Tatars view themselves from the perspective of their identity within the Romanian society?
4. - How do the Romanian Turks and Tatars view EuroIslam?

5. Content Overview and Organization Structure

Chapter 2 mainly explores the literature surrounding the vast areas of migration, Islam in Europe, the various theories related to this issue and in particular the EuroIslam theory and its characteristics, following then the study of the Muslim presence in Romania and especially Dobruja. In addition, this chapter includes a small review on the on-going debate on multiculturalism, as it represents one of the main focuses of this dissertation, in what way the Romanian reality fits into the broader multiculturalism debate in Europe. Chapter 3 examines the models of analysis of the Muslim presence in Europe (France, Germany, Great Britain) but also it extends to the second section that deals with the EuroIslam theory in particular and with all the debate surrounding it, supporters, critics, and also with the similarities with other theories developed in Eastern Europe. It takes a normative approach to study the existing theories within the area of study of Islam in Europe. Chapter 4

presents and reflects upon the historical context of the Dobruja region, taking into consideration the Ottoman legacy and how these Ottoman elements influenced the cultural becoming of Romania in general, not to mention the importance the Ottoman cultural influence had on Dobruja and on the cultural climate created in this area. Chapter 5 is dedicated to the methodology utilized during the field research conducted in Dobruja and Bucharest, it includes a note on explaining what the Dobrujan interethnic model is and what its characteristics are. It also includes the findings of the field research I took in the Constanta province (Dobruja region) and in Bucharest, with an interpretation of the findings. Chapters 4 and 5 are intrinsically related as Chapter 4 lays the premises that led to the creation of the Dobrujan model and to the findings of this research. Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter which includes my point of view based on the findings of the field research and correlated to the literature review and the EuroIslam model.

6. Concluding Remarks

In summary, this dissertation aims at drawing attention to the long-time Muslim communities in Europe in order to have a different perspective in the understanding of the Muslim presence in Europe. The dynamics existent in this type of communities provide insight into new challenges and new dynamics faced by Western Europe communities with regard to Muslim migrants and recent-date communities formed in Western European countries. My research highlights the fundamental relationship between historical premises, socio-political policies carried on by governments, social and cultural behavior towards minorities, especially in situations of co-existence between Muslim and Christian realities.

This research highlights the importance of multi-situated skilled visions that enable the analysis and exploration of a given area of interest in order to obtain multiple points of view that complete a complex image of a reality that is detached from the theory and that sometimes offers new insights for old issues, such as the co-existence of Muslim and Christian populations in Europe. Looking into long-established Muslim communities offers

new and different insights and may provide answers able to advance the research and further the analysis in this field where there are still gaps of knowledge concerning the behavior, objectives and expectations of Muslim communities.

Despite these difficulties in analyzing and theorizing the dynamics of complex communities, many theorists have dedicated their research and work to explain the outcomes and the possible interpretations of these complex realities. The following chapter will explore the existing literature surrounding the various areas of interest: migration, Islam in the Western Europe, Islam in Eastern Europe, the historical and social nature of the Romanian Muslim communities.



<http://rawromania.com/location/>

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

PART 1

Literature review

The topic of this research extends over multiple areas of study such as migration, minorities, Muslim communities in Europe, cultural hybridization, and complexity theory approaches to identity creation. In this chapter divided into three parts I will examine the main focus points of the literature dedicated to the areas of interest of this research. I will start with the first part dedicated to the literature on migration and Islam in the West, continue with the literature on European Islam introducing the theory of EuroIslam and the debates surrounding this theory, the following part will be dedicated to the concept of multiculturalism which will be elaborated further in the second part of this chapter. This part will continue with the literature on the creation of identity and the dynamics of hybridity, and it will end with a final section regarding the literature dedicated to the issue of Islam in the South East European context and especially Romania. The second part of this chapter will elaborate on the debates surrounding the multiculturalism concept, on how it has been theorized by the scholarship, on the criticism of the concept, and finally on the latest theories that push the concept of multiculturalism on different levels of understanding. The third part of this chapter introduces the theory that illustrates the *Interethnic Dobrujan model* of co-existence between different ethnicities and religions, a theory originated in the Romanian literature on the subject of hybrid dynamic ethnic and religious communities in Dobruja province.

The fascination of literature surrounding the Oriental culture and civilization can be traced as far back in history as the Middle Ages and the Crusades as no other two worlds have been more intertwined than Europe and the Middle East. Literary works, traveler journals, colonial depictions enriched knowledge about an exotic world but at the same time fueled stereotypes and images that have been lingering for centuries in discourses across Western Europe. In “Orientalism” Edward Said talked about a “a kind of Western projection onto and will to govern over the Orient”¹ that creates the dichotomy between East and West, Other and Self: “each age and society re-creates its ‘Others’. Far from a static thing then, identity if self or of ‘other’ is a much worked-over historical, social, intellectual, and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies.”² Although literary narratives do not count as academic studies, they have influenced the early studies and approaches to the Arab world. Said stated that what “we know of the Arab world is colored by distorted lenses of scholars who have historically defined this area as alien, corrupt, dangerous, and mysterious”³. Clifford Geertz, as he became interested in the Islam’s multiple manifestations, understood that Islam is not a monolithical block but that it mutates in the different geographical settings it can be found; in his “Islam Observed” he explored Indonesian and Moroccan Islam⁴ emphasizing the particularity and the historicity of different settings and religious experiences. The essence of Geertz’s findings in *Islam Observed* is that the same religion system can support and be supported by different social, cultural, political, geographical and economic contexts, as opposed to how it is stereotypically depicted in Western societies. My research supports Geertz’s idea that the mediating conditions that shape religion are more important than the doctrines that make up the content of religion by studying the Turkish Islam and cultural

¹ Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, Penguin Books 1978, reprinted 1995, p. 95

² Said, *idem*, p. 332

³ Said, *idem*, p. 63

⁴ Geertz, Clifford, *Islam. Lo Sviluppo Religioso in Marocco E in Indonesia Orig. Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia*. Cortina - University Of Chicago Press. 1971

milieux adapted to the Romanian context. The everyday life of believers is far more interesting and research-wise important than the theological content and debates, and my research observed the distance between these two universes: the abstract theology and the concrete application of lived religion that gives diverse meaning through experience.

The diversity of the concrete substance of religious experience as lived in the everyday life of believers remains far more important than its theological content. In contrast to Weber's work that considers religion as an independent cultural system Geertz's religion is more dependent on outside conditions. I take the lesson of Geertz seriously in that I apply this type of analysis with a focus on state society mediation to understanding the tolerant version of Ottoman Islam from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century.

This fascination with the Middle East conditioned large part of the studies on European Islam. Jocelyn Cesari sustained this argument saying that

In the West, the study of Islam began as a branch of Orientalist studies and therefore followed a separate and distinctive path from the study of religions. Even though the critique of Orientalism has been central to the emergence of the study of Islam in the field of social sciences, tensions remain strong between Islamicists and both anthropologists and sociologists. The topic of Islam and Muslims in the West is embedded in this struggle”⁵

The present literary review summarizes the main areas of study, theoretical paradigms and contemporary debates relevant to the issue of Islam in Europe and in particular Euro-Islam, multiculturalism and the construction of individual, national and European identities in connection with the process of integration of minority groups - especially Muslim - within European states. This thesis places itself in the larger debate on Islam in Europe, on identity hybridization, and on multiculturalism but focuses on the SouthEastern Europe reality. First, it divides the extensive literature on migration in Europe focusing on the Muslim

⁵ Cesari, Jocelyn, *Islam in the West: From Immigration to Global Islam*, Harvard Middle Eastern Islamic Review 8 (2009) p. 148 - 175

presence in Europe, the on the concept of European Islam, and subsequently the concept of Euro-Islam, its creation and evolution as a basic framework for the studying of the Turkish-Tatar community in Romania. Then the literature traces the debate on multiculturalism and the concepts of identity creation and hybridization relevant to the discussion of a particular type of integration and of multiculturalism in Dobruja. Finally, a regional focus on SouthEastern Europe literature regarding Muslim communities and the historical implications of the Ottoman Empire.

1. ISLAM AND THE WEST, MIGRATION

The field of minorities and migration includes a multitude of theoretical approaches that, throughout the years, have compartmentalized the studies instead of reaching for a cross-cutting approach to explain the movement of people, the processes of integration, assimilation, acculturation. Significant part of the studies made on this subject in the last 30 years have focused on the Muslim immigration to Great Britain, France and Germany and subsequently to other Western European countries such as Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden. Fetzer and Soper's 2005 "Muslims and the State in Britain, France and Germany", Reynolds and Grant's 2007 "The Future of Europe's Muslims: Four Scenarios" or Laurence' 2012 "The Emancipation of Europe's Muslims: The State's Role in Minority Integration" are just some of the studies tracing immigration patterns in Western Europe.

A number of scholars have outlined the history of the anthropological and sociological studies regarding the presence of Muslims in Europe. One of these scholars is Jocelyn Cesari who in a 2009 article traces the evolution of the research on Muslims in Europe:⁶ until the 1980s the research focused on on the integration process within the general theme of immigration but afterwards the interest broadened to include studies relevant to Muslims like their organizations, rights and needs (schools, mosques, associations, religious

⁶ Cesari, Jocelyn, *Islam in the West: From Immigration to Global Islam*, Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review 8 (2009), 148–175 and also Cesari, Jocelyn, *Muslim Minorities in Europe: The Silent Revolution in Modernizing Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in the Middle East and in Europe*, Rutgers University Press. 2003, Pp. 251 – 269.

authorities and representativity in the society). Cesari identifies three domains of interest that correspond to the three main theories of integration:

- A structural approach focused on economic issues
- A culturalist approach focused on stigmatization
- A political approach focused on participation

Another scholar who traced the evolution of research in the study of Muslims in Europe is Jorgen Nielsen.⁷ He argues that 1989 was the year that sparked interest in the research, with Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* in Britain and the *Foulards' Affair* in France. The following decade brought Muslims even more into the focus with geopolitical conflicts in Yugoslavia, Chechnya, Palestine, Sudan, then followed the events of 9/11, of the London and Madrid bombings, of the Danish cartoons. In the framework of these events, for years, and with recurring come-backs still today, one of the most echoed authors has been Samuel Huntington with his "Clash of civilization" (1996) in which he asserts that "culture and cultural identities, which at the broadest level are civilizational identities, are shaping the pattern of cohesion, disintegration and conflict in the post-Cold War world" where individuals define themselves in terms of "ancestry, religion, language, history, values, customs and institutions" identifying culturally with "tribes, ethnic groups, religious communities, nations and, at a broader level, civilizations"⁸. But Huntington's thesis, as Bernard Lewis' ideas of a monolithical Islam or of Islamized Europe part of Arabia⁹ soon become too rigid and limited to encompass the wide range of possible cultural articulations and dynamics between civilizations.

⁷ Nielsen, S. Jorgen, ed, foreword, *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, vol. I, BRILL The Netherlands, 2009.

⁸ Huntington, Samuel, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York: Schocken Books, 1996, 20-21

⁹ Bernard Lewis interview for Die Welt, Hamburg, 28 July 2004 and quoted in Le Monde Diplomatique, Alain Gresh, August 2005 <http://mondediplo.com/2005/08/16lewis>

After the 1990s, Felice Dassetto's¹⁰ studies mark a new paradigmatic shift that focuses the research on the acknowledgement of the cultural diversity within Islam, within Europe, on the inter-cultural dialogue, on socio-cultural integration and on comparative studies of practices in the West as to the countries of origin, on what it means to be a Muslim in Western Europe and on the young generations of Muslims. The fall of the Berlin Wall, the dissolution of the USSR, the wars in Yugoslavia, the EU enlargement policies have opened both Europe's physical as its mental frontiers giving space to a whole new area of research on minorities, ethnicity, globalization, transnationalism, hybridity and the various multi-ethnic situations.¹¹ Vertovec differentiates between the studies on hybridity as a "third space" (Bhabha 1994; cf. Werbner & Modood 1997) and complex arenas where, 'to operate effectively, people have to be multi-cultural' (Amit-Talai 1995b, p. 227).¹² Effie Fokas draws attention on the rapid pace of change surrounding Islam in Europe and the necessity for a new, continuous and multifaceted research to cope with the complexity of the matter. She calls for

"methodological rigor in the study of Islam in Europe, aimed to counter two trends in particular. One is cultural differentialism, and the second is monist conceptions of identity. Hackneyed dichotomous representations of 'liberal' versus 'traditional', moderate versus radical, and 'authentic' versus 'reactionary' Islam are clearly insufficient. A more nuanced approach is necessary, taking into account a number of key factors (as well as *combinations* of them, where applicable), including whether Muslim groupings are autochthonous or immigrant; the origins of immigrant communities and particularities of the host communities; differences according to

¹⁰ Dassetto, Felice, ed., *Paroles d'islam: individus, sociétés, discours dans l'islam européen contemporain*, Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2000 qtd. in Cesari, Jocelyne, *Islam in the West: From Immigration to Global Islam*, Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review 8 (2009), pg. 152 and Dassetto, Felice *L'incontro complesso. Mondi occidentali e mondi islamici*, Città Aperta 2004

¹¹ Ralph, Grillo, *Pluralism and the Politics of Difference: State, Culture and Ethnicity in Comparative Perspective*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998 qtd. in Vertovec Steven *Anthropology of Migration and Multiculturalism: New Directions*, Routledge 2010, p. 966

¹² Vertovec, Steven, *Anthropology of Migration and Multiculturalism: New Directions*, Routledge 2010, p. 967

generation and gender; objective versus subjective conceptions of identity; and cultural, ethnic, political and/or theological references and motivations. Such an approach goes a long way towards reflecting the intricate realities of Islam in Europe which tend to be so far from public purview: it also reveals the tremendous diversity of Muslim collectivities across Europe, including such contexts as Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Greece, with proportionately large numbers of Muslims; the differences between the experiences of Muslims living in Thrace and of those in other parts of Greece; and the clashes in perspective amongst Muslim intellectuals of the autochthonous Muslim communities in Bosnia - all of which relate to a number of factors well beyond culture and religion. This nuanced approach thus serves to counter tendencies towards cultural differentialism. Even deeper examination is needed to comprehend the diversity of individual identities, including the many shades of relation to Islam, and to different interpretations of the faith. Such examination renders evident the fact that, as Aziz al-Azmeh has articulated, ‘there are as many Islams as there are situations that sustain it’ (*Islams and modernities*, London: Verso 1993, p.1), and that these situations are national, local, familial *and* interpersonal.¹³”

One area of relevance for this research concerns the studies on Turkish Islam in Germany. Ruth Mandel¹⁴ analyses the multiple implications of the Turkish presence in Germany on the shaping of the idea of multiculturalism, ethnicity and identity - both German and Turkish - resulting in mutual transformations and appropriations influenced by traumas of displacement and loss, but also in participation and desire of belonging and acceptance. Baumann mentions Werner Schiffauer, German anthropologist who researched through comparison methodologies, Islam in Turkey and the Turkish communities in a Western country, concluding that the change in identity and religiousness is to be attributable to two

¹³ Fokas, Effie, *Introduction in Aziz Al-Azmeh*, Effie Fokas ed., *Islam in Europe. Diversity, Identity and Influence*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 2

¹⁴ Mandel Ruth, *Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany. Cosmopolitan Anxieties*, Duke University Press, 2008

factors: the nature of the Islamic community and the migration into a secular foreign society.¹⁵

2. EUROPEAN ISLAM AND EURO-ISLAM

A number of scholars has addressed the research transition from Islam in Europe to European Islam to Euro-Islam and also from various perspectives: that of the young generations facing identity crisis, the old generations facing nostalgia and socio-economic crisis viewed as cultural incompatibility. The argument draws as many interpretations as conflicting views on the contents, forms, process of this Europeanization of Muslims. On the concept of Euro-Islam ideated by Bassam Tibi at the beginning of the 1990s, other scholars have given their own perspective at times clashing with Tibi's ideas, other times furthering his studies. Jytte Klausen supports the idea of a developing European Islam stating that "I am convinced [...] that a 'European Islam' is emerging based upon a new epistemology of faith and a new hermeneutics of textual interpretation"¹⁶. Furthering these theories is also Gilles Kepel who states that it is the right time for the "hybridization of two distinct cultures" that will generate a new generation of Muslim scholars who will reconcile Islam with modernity.¹⁷

Stefano Allievi (1996) brings into discussion the concept of a dynamic umma that is fundamental to the creation of a European identity among Muslims; this dynamic umma has already been created by the constant movement of European Muslims in the EU space that, in turn, created contact with one another and thus exchange of views and perceptions¹⁸

¹⁵ Baumann Gerd, *L'enigma multiculturale: stati, etnie, religioni*, Il Mulino 2003, p. 79

¹⁶ Klausen, Jytte, *The Islamic Challenge: Politics and Religion in Western Europe*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 204-205

¹⁷ Kepel, Gilles, *The War for Muslims Minds: Islam and the West*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2004, 294-295

¹⁸ Allievi, Stefano, *Islam in the Public Space: Social Networks, Media and Neo- Communities*, in *Muslim Networks and Transnational Communities in and Across Europe*, S. Allievi and J. Nielsen (eds), Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003, p 8-9

but it is not a process without risk as this “Westernized” Islam viewed through the eyes of the converts and the new generations can act as a “two-headed syndrome”, a two-sided perceived reality (from the family culture and the acquired culture) that is schizophrenic and renders this Islam complex.¹⁹ Olivier Roy, on the other hand, addresses the fragmentation of religious authority and challenges the ‘religious’ label attached to Western social and economic conflicts saying that he observes a individual Islam that is deterritorialized and an Islam without a Muslim culture (he gives the examples of ‘chadior, Mekka-cola, halal hamburger’) thus underlining that what changes is not the dogma of religion, but the religiosity, the way in which a believer constructs and lives his own relationship with religion.²⁰ He studies the different Muslim expressions in the West and the way in which Muslims manage to reconcile secularism with being good Muslims.²¹ He argues that while some choose to adapt to secular life, others are turning to a Neo-fundamentalist type of Islam²² as a means of confronting and resisting an environment that considers them different:

We see then that the minority fact does not necessarily bring about a theological or jurisprudential aggiornamento but rather a disconnection between the theological debate and the creativity of a religiosity which is centered on the individual [...] It is not a reformed Islam because not only the dogma but also the corpus of interpreters and jurists remain uncontested. [...] European Islam is deterritorialized, deprived of institutions that could impose norms. [...] We are certainly wrong to wait for a theological reform, or a theological voice, for the liberalization of practices (like the veil, food) which would allow the Muslims to adapt to Occidental norms”²³

¹⁹ Allievi Stefano, *I nuovi musulmani: I convertiti all’islam*, Edizioni Lavoro, 1999

²⁰ Roy, Olivier, *Global Muslim. Le radici occidentali del nuovo Islam*, Feltrinelli Editore 2003, p. 50

²¹ Roy, Olivier, *Secularism Confronts Islam*, Columbia University Press, 2007 and *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, Columbia University Press, 2004

²² Roy, Olivier, *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*, Columbia University Press, 2004, p.1

²³ Roy, Olivier, *Vers un Islam Européen (Towards a European Islam)*, Esprit, 1999, p. 89,90 and 91

Ramadan presents his approaches to the study of migration and integration as following the point of view of the Muslim communities in the West stating that Muslims “should see themselves as citizens in the fullest sense of the term and should participate (while seeking respect for their own values) in the social, organizational, economic and political life of the countries in which they live”, adding that in the “European legislation as a whole, there is nothing to prevent Muslims or any other citizens, from making choices that accord with their religion.²⁴” He adds that Islam is a religion, not a culture and as such it can maintain its core principles while incorporating the cultural surroundings.²⁵ Ruba Salih in 2004 said that “European Islam is an outcome of a process of adaptation of a Universal religion to a European context, contested terrain between national/local/ European loyalties and identities”²⁶

A different approach that leads to the same concept of Euro-Islam is advanced by Raphael Khakimov, scholar of Tatarstan. The approach is different because it places the origin of Euro-Islam in the Tatar Jadidism movement elaborated in the dedicated chapter ahead. He states that “Islam in our country is bound to become Westernized. It will be Euroislam. Such are the requirements of life.²⁷” Following this footprint and giving credit to Khakimov for the concept of ‘Euro-Islam’, Tasin Gemil elaborates on this concept calling it a “Tatar initiative of reform”.²⁸

²⁴ Ramadan, Tariq, *Europe’s Muslims find a place for themselves*, Le Monde Diplomatique, English Edition, April 1998 <http://mondediplo.com/1998/04/07islam> and “To Be a European Muslim” Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1999

²⁵ Ramadan, Tariq, *Essere musulmano europeo: studio delle fonti islamiche alla luce del contesto europeo* in orig. “To Be a European Muslim”, Città aperta edizioni, 2002

²⁶ Salih, Ruba, *The Backward and the New National, Transnational and Post-National Islam in Europe*, vol. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 30 (5)., p. 4

²⁷ Khakim, Raphael, *Where Is Our Mecca? (Manifest of Euroislam)* 2003, p. 34

²⁸ Gemil, Tasin, *A New Tatar Initiative of Reform - EuroIslam* in orig. “O Noua Initiatiava Tatarasca de Reforma - Euroislamul” in “Mostenirea Istorica a Tatarilor”, 2010

3. MULTICULTURALISM

Pnina Werbner²⁹ illustrates the three forms of multiculturalism identified by Tempelman (1999) on the basis of Eisenstadt and Giesen (1995):

- ‘primordial’ associated with Charles Taylor’s approach - assumes an authentic, unchanging cultural identity
- ‘civic’ associated with Bhikhu Parekh - recognizes that cultures are open, and calls for dialogue between and within communities; it fails to address contexts where dialogue is refused
- ‘universalist’ associated with Will Kymlicka - demands that both majority and minority cultures, whatever their differences, safeguard liberal principles of individual liberty and the rights to dissent

Tariq Modood concentrates the debate around the ontogenesis of the concept of multiculturalism and the passage from assimilation to the right of acknowledgement of the difference, and traces the complexity of the term and its ‘polysemic’ nature and ‘chameleonic’ quality that facilitates its simultaneous adoption and rejection in the critique or defense of a position (Smith 2010)³⁰

“for some multiculturalism has facilitated social fragmentation and entrenched social divisions (Malik 2007, Policy Exchange 2007); for others it has distracted attention away from socio-economic disparities (Barry 2001, Hansen 2006); or encouraged a moral hesitancy amongst ‘native’ populations (Prins and Salisbury 2008, Caldwell 2009). Some even blame it for international terrorism (Gove 2006, Phillips 2006). While these political positions are the instigators of anxieties over multiculturalism, other beneficiaries have included a number of competing political orientations concerned with promoting unity, variously conceived, alongside or in a greater degree to recognizing diversity (Modood and Meer 2011). Some observe this focus in the discovery or rediscovery of national identity

²⁹ Werbner, Pnina, *The translocation of culture: ‘community cohesion’ and the force of multiculturalism in history*, The Sociological Review, Blackwell Publishing 2005, p. 761

³⁰ Meer, Nasar; Modood, Tariq *How Does Interculturalism Contrast with Multiculturalism?* in *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 33(2): 175–196, 2012, p. 179

(Orgad 2009); others point to its evidence in notions of civilness (Mouritsen 2008), or in a resurgent liberalism that allegedly proves, in the final analysis, to be ‘neutral’ (Joppke 2008). To this we could also add social or community cohesion (Dobbernack 2010).”³¹

Modood elaborates on the concept of ‘interculturalism’ as an alternative to ‘multiculturalism’ and comments on its meaning as Wood, Landry and Bloomfield formulate it:

Multiculturalism has been founded on the belief in tolerance between cultures but it is not always the case that multicultural places are open places. Interculturalism on the other hand requires openness as a prerequisite and, while openness in itself is not the guarantee of interculturalism, it provides the setting for interculturalism to develop.

And again

Interculturalism is a better term than multiculturalism. It emphasizes interaction and participation of citizens in a common society, rather than cultural differences and different cultures existing next to each other without necessarily much contact or participative interaction. Interculturalism is therefore equivalent to mutual integration. While multiculturalism boils down to celebrating difference, interculturalism is about understanding each other’s cultures, sharing them and finding common ground on which people can become more integrated. (NewStart Magazine 7 June 2006)³²

Rattansi furthers the discussion on the confusion surrounding the term ‘multiculturalism’ and the passage from a “simplistic view of ethnic cultures as homogeneous and having a static core, essential characteristics, thinking of multicultural societies as ‘salad bowls’ with separate, intact, ethnic cultures” to ‘interculturalism’ as an expression of multiethnicity and ‘superdiversity’.³³ Likewise, Bassam Tibi stresses the need to overcome a multiculturalism based on cultural relativism and to distinguish between cultural pluralism and multiculturalism. Multicultural communitarianism demands different laws and different treatment for people of different cultural communities and is just another type of hegemonic

³¹ Meer, Nasar; Modood, Tariq, *idem*, p. 176

³² Meer, Nasar; Modood, Tariq, *idem*, p. 183 and 188

³³ Rattansi, Ali, *Multiculturalism. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2011, p.1 and 5 quoting Vertovec’s term ‘superdiversity’

Western universalism; “I view multiculturalism as a romantic ideology, one that is clearly distinguished from a more realistic cultural pluralism.”³⁴ He continues saying that ethnic identities are too rigid and exclusive and can lead to neo-absolutism and social conflicts in a diaspora, while an all-inclusive civil identity based on cultural pluralism could not. One consideration Tibi makes that needs more reflection - as the outline presented in 2002 is too rigid to fit into the cross-cultural new paradigm he apparently advocates - is when he says that “the acceptance of secular European laws and above all secular constitutions separating religion from politics will require Islamic migrants to reconsider the concept of the legitimacy of the imam. Cultural reforms must enable a Muslim migrant to live under the governance of a non-Muslim imam/ruler.”³⁵ Nevertheless he argues that an Arab Muslim migrant can have three identities (religio-cultural: Euro-Islamic, ethnic: Damascene Arab as he is, political: German citizen) that are feasible within a framework of cultural pluralism and political integration.

Following this line of discourse, Effie Fokas argues that “there is a significant rift amongst Muslim thinkers (as amongst many non-Muslims) regarding multiculturalism and cultural relativism, with calls for multiculturalist policies being countered by condemnations of these as cultural relativism which betrays reformist trends in Islam and which protects ‘culture’ at the cost of continued segregation in society.”³⁶ Kymlicka stresses the diverse meanings the use of ‘multiculturalism’ suggests and as such suggests the use of ‘multinational’ and ‘polyethnic’ as the two main forms of cultural pluralism. In “Multicultural Citizenship” he emphasizes the importance of the historical incorporation of minority groups in shaping their collective institutions, aspirations and identities³⁷ in the

³⁴ Bassam, Tibi, *Muslim Migrants in Europe: Between Euro-Islam and Ghettoization* qtd. in Nezar AlSayyad, Manuel Castells, “Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam. Politics, Culture, and Citizenship in the Age of Globalization”, Lexington Books, University of Berkeley, 2002, 45-46 - 47

³⁵ Bassam Tibi, *idem*, p. 47

³⁶ Fokas, Effie, *op. cit.*, p. 5

³⁷ Kymlicka, Will, *Multicultural Citizenship. A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Clarendon Press - Oxford, 1995, Chap. *The Politics of Multiculturalism*, p. 10-11 and 17

“age of migration” and the “age of nationalism” as he calls the twentieth century, challenging countries with a new “politics of cultural difference” that does not have to be taken as a threat.³⁸ Cesari observes that “initially, the concept of multiculturalism ‘connoted compromise, interdependence, [and] a relativising universalism’ expected to lead to an ‘intercultural community’. Over time, however, it began to seem more that multiculturalism meant an institutionalization of difference, with ‘autonomous cultural discourses and separated interactional communities’”.³⁹

Vertovec and Wessendorf trace the debate on multiculturalism in a 2004 article⁴⁰ starting with differentiating between the positive understanding of the term - as tolerance, the right of ethnic minority groups to maintain certain aspects of cultural heritage, equal treatments and access to employment, education - and the negative understanding - as an agenda of those who threaten core national societal values like identity and constitution. They then emphasize the illusion of relating to the term as one philosophy, discourse, structure since it can be understood as:

- an actual makeup of society
- a general vision of the way in which society and the government should orient itself
- a specific set of policy tools for accommodating minority cultural practices
- specially created frameworks of governance allowing for the representation of immigrant and ethnic minority interests
- a variety of support mechanisms and funds for assisting ethnic minority communities to celebrate and reproduce their traditions⁴¹

³⁸ Kymlicka Will, *idem*, p. 193

³⁹ Jeffrey, C. Alexander, *Theorizing the ‘Modes of Incorporation’: Assimilation, Hyphenation, and Multiculturalism as Varieties of Civil Participation*, Sociological Theory, Vol. 19, No. 3, 2001 quoted in Cesari Jocelyn, *The Securitisation of Islam in Europe*, Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2009, p.5

⁴⁰ Vertovec, Steven, Wessendorf Susanne, *Migration and Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Diversity in Europe: An Overview of Issues and Trends*, COMPAS, University of Oxford, 2004

⁴¹ Vertovec, Steven; Wessendorf, Susanne, *idem*, p. 2-4

They continue elaborating on the different contexts the term “multicultural” can be used: as a demographic description, a broad political ideology, a socio-political policy, an institutional restructuring, resourcing cultural expression. Vertovec places the reasons for the rise of a wave of critics of multiculturalism and diversity on the rise of the number of immigrants, on the so-called ‘second generation’ marked by tension, on the 9/11 attacks and other similar attacks in Europe. Given this variety of meaning and use, Vertovec urges for clarity and specificity from both advocates and critics of the notion dividing the studies in:

- critics to the conventional models of multiculturalism such as Ralph Grillo 1998, 2000; Kymlicka 1995, Parekh 2000
- those who see multiculturalism as corrective to assimilationist approaches such as Castels 2000, Grillo 1998, Faist 2000⁴²

Vertovec deepens his analysis of the multiculturalism debate by citing Ralph Grillo’s deductions (1998:195 and 2006:105) drawing from Amselle 1998, Baumann 1999, Martiniello 1997, Stolcke 1995 that the key problematics of the multiculturalist theory are:

1. Multiculturalism’s implicit essentialism
2. The system of categorization which underpins it
3. The form that multicultural politics takes
4. The ritualization of ethnicity often associated with it
5. The elision of race (and class) that it appears to entail
6. The attack on the ‘common core’ which it represents.⁴³

Drawing on these and other scholars writing on multiculturalism, Vertovec calls for a differentiation between ‘de facto’ and ‘official multiculturalism’ (Joppke and Morawska 2003) or as Grillo (2004) calls it ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ multiculturalism. The distinction between these two stands is given by the recognition in the public sphere.⁴⁴ Grillo elaborates on three alternative scenarios: assimilation (here and the same), integration (here but different, weak multiculturalism), enclavement (here but separate, strong

⁴² Vertovec, Steven; Wessendorf, Susanne, *idem*, p. 18-19

⁴³ Vertovec, Steven; Wessendorf, Susanne, *idem*, p. 20

⁴⁴ Vertovec, Steven; Wessendorf, Susanne, *idem*, p. 20-21

multiculturalism) and then adds a fourth configuration that he calls 'betwixt and between' (neither here nor there) where multiple identities are accepted as normal.⁴⁵

While Baumann argues that the "bad side" of multiculturalism deprives cultural phenomena of their social, political and economical flexibility and freezes them to fixed essentialist ethnic states with an obsession for cultural borders,⁴⁶ Laura Menin focuses on the multiculturalism rhetoric that produces "cultural dilemmas" in which migrants and their descendants find themselves due to the contradictions of living between two cultures.⁴⁷ Ruba Salih urges for a "renewal within liberal societies of the concept of multicultural democracy understood as majority that oversees all versus a multitude of minorities bounded into clear and limited roles towards a decentralized pluralism where the State is composed of a series of minorities and it is the sum of a process of deconstruction of the single national histories"⁴⁸.

All considered, the topic of multiculturalism is very complex as it touches sensitive areas with a high potential for controversy and conflict such as ethnicity, religion, linguistics, national symbols and identity and as Werbner argues, "in a world of transnational migrations and blurred borders multiculturalism cannot be a nearly packaged once-and-for-all policy, or a series of loyalty testes devised by politicians in a futile attempt to create an illusion out of ambiguity and flux. It is, rather, a constantly evolving historical process of repeatedly negotiating difference and dialogical citizenship in the context of national and international conflicts, often beyond the control of the actors involved."⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Grillo, Ralph, *Transmigration and Cultural Diversity in the Construction of Europe*, 2000,p.2 www.europadiversa.org.

⁴⁶ Baumann, Gerd, *op. cit.*, p. 94-95

⁴⁷ Menin, Laura, *Bodies, Boundaries and Desires: Multiple Subject-Positions and Micro- Politics of Modernity among Young Muslim Women in Milan* in *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 16(4): 504–515, 2011

⁴⁸ Salih Ruba, *Genere E Islam. Politiche Culturali E Culture Politiche* in *Europa* in *Studi Culturali*. Studi Culturali (3), 2011, p. 127

⁴⁹ Werbner, Pnina, *op cit*, p. 763-764

4. IDENTITY CREATION AND DYNAMICS OF HYBRIDITY

For the studies concerning identity creation and in particular European identity this research draws inspiration from Frederick Barth's constructivism that explains the need to transcend this stage of theory and introduce a multilevel process theory, Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities (first published 1983) as discussed by Van Der Veer and Lehman,⁵⁰ only to realize that the existent concepts are too rigid to encompass the multiplicity of complex identity configurations within borderland cross-cultural realities and that the appropriate outset is given by Appadurai's ideas of multiple worlds built from historically located imaginations that act as fluid cultural flows and⁵¹ that compose and recompose themselves in a prolific continuum of dissonance that creates through contamination.⁵²

Ralph Grillo traces the metamorphosis of the views on culture and identity intertwining, among many others, Hannerz's 'culturespeak' (1999), Marc Augé's theories on ethnic communities, Baumann's "'processual theory' on constructed cultures dialectically from above and below in a constant flux" (Baumann 1999 *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic and Religious Identities*. London: Routledge); Parekh's theories on how culture "'has no essence' (2000: 175), it is a 'historically created system of meaning and significance' (Parekh, 2000: 143), 'constantly contested, subject to change... its identity... never settled, static and free of ambiguity' (2000: 148), 'not a passive inheritance but an active process of creating meaning' (2000: 152–3)".⁵³ Grillo elaborates on the relationship

⁵⁰ Van Der Veer, Peter; Hartmut, Lehman (ed. by), *Nation and Religion. Perspectives on Europe and Asia*. Princeton University Press, 1999

⁵¹ Appadurai, Arjun, *Modernità in polvere*, Meltemi Editore 2001, p. 52-53

⁵² Ceruti, Mauro, *Il vincolo e la possibilità*, Cortina Raffaello, 2009 and Bocchi Gianluca, Ceruti Mauro, *Origini di storie*, Feltrinelli, 2009

⁵³ Grillo, Ralph, *Cultural essentialism and cultural anxiety*, SAGE Publications, vol 3(2): 157-173, 2003, p. 160-161

between immigration and national identity outlining three phases of evolution from assimilation to multiculturalism:

- late 19th-mid-20th century: immigrants were expected to conform to national norms;
- 20th century: relaxed 'multicultural framework'
- eventually a 'backlash against difference' reaction.⁵⁴

Migration phenomena and the process of integration can create multiple identity crises both in the European identity as in the Muslim migrants' identity squeezed between the need to belong, the urge to integrate, the fear of assimilation and the feeling of identity loss. These dynamics have been studied in Western European countries by scholars such as Verena Stolcke (Stolcke: 1995) or Nezar AlSayyad and Manuel Castells who urge to overcome a scholarship of 'migration' when studying generations of Arab, Indian, North African and Turkish Muslims that are no longer migrants as they have been present in Europe for a long time; the time has come to acknowledge the "large, permanent, indigenous Muslim populations in most of the countries of Europe, that they will not assimilate in the same way as previous waves of migration; and that Islam is now a European religion". AlSayyad and Castells draw attention to the significant differences among Muslims in Europe: secular Muslims who reject assimilation, Muslims who reject secular society, Islamists, and those who are devising a "liberal form of Islam which is accommodating of European ideas of citizenship" stating that it is important to "turn from theories about Islam to what Muslims themselves think and do in specific settings."⁵⁵ About Turkish changing identity, Kevin Robins argues that "cultural identities can best be seen in the context of cultural relationships [as] only through others do we become aware of who we are and what we stand for. [...] These interactions allow us to explore the issue of dynamism versus closure

⁵⁴ Grillo, Ralph, *Immigration and National Identity in Europe* in *Antropologia ed Epistemologia per lo Studio Della Contemporaneità* a Cura Di Cristina Grasseni. 2006, Quaderni Del CERCO. Guaraldi. p. 97

⁵⁵ AlSayyad, Nezar; Castells, Manuel, *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam. Politics, Culture, and Citizenship in the Age of Globalization*, Lexington Books, University of Berkeley, 2002, 10 - 11

in cultural identities - what creates openness in cultural identities, and also what resists change, leading to rigidity and closure.”⁵⁶

On the issue of dynamic identities that transform and blend into a new form, Homi Bhabha elaborated the theory of ‘hybridity’ and the “third space” (Bhabha 1994,⁵⁷ 1996) as a process inside the decolonization framework that produces a hybrid in-between identities of interweaving colonial and autochthonous elements. This new hybrid ‘third space’ is an ambivalent environment where cultural meaning and representation have no ‘primordial unity or fixity’ (Bhabha 1994: 176) but represents the interweaving of elements of both sides (in Bhabha’s work - the colonizer and the colonized), the anti-essentialism that challenges the validity of any essentialist cultural identity.

For me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the ‘Third Space’, which enables other positions to emerge. (Rutherford 1990: 211)

Although Bhabha’s work has been criticized for not adequately illustrating the historical and material conditions that would emerge within a colonial discourse (Parry 1996; Mitchell 1997) I do believe that the importance of history, time, tradition and contingency as well as the perennial negotiation of cultural boundaries and overlapping, is essential for the creation of a hybrid culture and I think that for Bhabha this was implicit. On the other hand, I take the concept of hybridity from Bhabha and enrich it with a historical and contextual analysis of the Romanian environment. Bhabha actually argues that cultural identities cannot be ascribed to pre-given, irreducible, scripted, ahistorical cultural traits that define the conventions of ethnicity. Nor can *colonizer* and *colonized* be viewed as separate entities that define themselves independently. Instead, Bhabha suggests that the negotiation of cultural identity involves the continual interface and exchange of cultural performances that in turn produce a mutual and mutable recognition (or representation) of

⁵⁶ Robins, Kevin, qtd. in AlSayyad, Nezar; Castells, Manuel, op. cit., 16

⁵⁷ Bhabha, Homi K, *The Location of Culture*, London, New York, Routledge 1994

cultural difference. As Bhabha argues in the passages below, this "liminal" space is a "hybrid" site that witnesses the production - rather than just the reflection - of cultural meaning:

Terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic or affiliative, are produced performatively. The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation.

It is in this sense that the boundary becomes the place from which something begins its presencing in a movement not dissimilar to the ambulant, ambivalent articulation of the beyond that I have drawn out: 'Always and ever differently the bridge escorts the lingering and hastening ways of men to and fro, so that they may get to other banks....The bridge gathers as a passage that crosses.'

In the same direction of a cross-cultural, transnational identity creation, Yasemin Soysal (1997) describes the emergence of a "postnational" and "transnational" identity within migrant groups where the current models of assimilation, integration, adaptation are obsolete and "while nation-states and their boundaries are reified through assertions of border controls and appeals to nationhood, a new mode of membership, anchored in the universalistic rights of personhood, transgresses the national order of things".⁵⁸

The concepts to deal with are various and complex; Pnina Werbner makes an interesting argument putting together essentialism versus social constructionist that views culture in its contingent, fractured, ambivalent and reflexive nature.⁵⁹ Werbner criticizes Bhabha's theory on post-colonial space as 'marked ambiguously both by pathological ambivalence and

⁵⁸ Soysal, Yasemin, *Citizenship and identity: living in diasporas in post-war Europe?*, in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 2000, 23 (1) p.261

⁵⁹ Werbner, Pnina, *Essentialising Essentialism, Essentialising Silence: Ambivalence and Multiplicity in the Constructions of Racism and Ethnicity*, in *Fear of Essentialism*, p 226

violence and by multiplicity' and elaborates on the concept of 'community of suffering' as a 'hybrid assortment of Others'; of 'moral community' as a composite multiplicity under a semblance of unity; of 'aesthetic community' defined by cultural knowledge, passion and creativity.⁶⁰

Werbner argues that

“cultures produce their own indigenous forms of transgression [...] Moreover while transgression is a potential tool of resistance which upturns taken-for-granted hierarchies, it plays dangerously on the boundary and, taken out of context, can become a source of offense, especially for postcolonial diasporas struggling for recognition. This raises the question: what are the creative limits of cultural hybridity?”⁶¹

The concept of hybridity, of in-betweenness, of cultural ambiguity that generates liminal spaces that go beyond established boundaries and routines has been studied and developed by a number of scholars starting from Turner's theory of liminality (Turner 1967:97) inspired by van Gennep's ideas on rituals of passage, Evans-Pritchard's work and Gluckman's statement that “every social system is a field of tension, full of ambivalence, of co-operation and contrasting struggle” (Gluckman 1963: 127).⁶² Kapchan and Turner Strong traced the origin of the concept of hybridity passing through Herskovits' syncretism, Levi-Strauss' bricolage, Ulf Hannerz's creolization, and Victor Turner's 1982 observations that “what was once considered 'contaminated', 'promiscuous', 'impure' [was becoming the focus of postmodern analytical attention.⁶³ Werbner⁶⁴ draws on Bauman's theories on overlaid and reinscribed identities (Bauman 1997), and Hannerz's idea of a global cultural

⁶⁰ Werbner Pnina, *Essentialising op. cit.*, p 235, 238, 241 and Werbner Pnina, *The Translocation op.cit.*, 745–768.

⁶¹ Werbner, Pnina, *The Limits of Cultural Hybridity: Ritual Monsters, Poetic Licence and Contested Postcolonial Purifications*, royal Anthropological Institute, 7, 2001, 133-152

⁶² Werbner, Pnina, *idem*, 137

⁶³ Kapchan, Deborah A., and Pauline Turner Strong, *Theorizing the Hybrid* in *The Journal of American Folklore* 112(445): 239, 1999, p. 239

⁶⁴ Werbner, Pnina, *idem*, 142

ecumene, in order to differentiate between intentional (they transform and create new ordeals to be transcended, they generate liminal betwixt-and-between spaces) and organic hybridities which are part of the culture and history itself and do 'not disrupt the sense of order and continuity: new images, words, objects, are integrated into language or culture unconsciously'.⁶⁵

Peter Burke, on the other hand, in his "Cultural Hybridity"⁶⁶ traces the concept of hybridity in the works of Jean-Loup Amselle (Amselle: 1990; *Logiques métisses*), Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy and Edward Said. He also mentions Arnold Toynbee's reflection on the importance of the "encounters" between cultures and of the "colliding cultures".⁶⁷

Linking it to the EuroIslam phenomenon Bassam Tibi acknowledges the emergence of a transnational European-Islamic identity within Western Europe, and elaborates on the process of identity transformation in migrants calling for a "two-way change" both in Europeans as in migrants: "I thus proposed that Europeans overcome their Euro-arrogance, while Muslim migrants engage themselves in the unfolding of a EuroIslamic identity. Muslims living in Europe need to find a commonality between themselves and European civilization. At the same time, the de-ethnization of Europe is a prerequisite for the feasibility of EuroIslam."⁶⁸ He also elaborates on the polarization between rejection and the pressure to join a cultural ghetto, felt by Islamic migrants, which is particularly harmful for young Muslims born in Europe who seek to express their identities here.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Werbner Pnina, *The Limits of Cultural Hybridity: Ritual Monsters, Poetic Licence and Contested Postcolonial Purifications*, royal Anthropological Institute, 7, 2001, 143

⁶⁶ Burke, Peter, *Cultural Hybridity*, Polity Press 2009

⁶⁷ Burke Peter, *idem*, , 9

⁶⁸ Bassam Tibi, *Muslim Migrants op. cit*, 32

⁶⁹ Bassam Tibi, *idem*, 41

5. SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN CONTEXT LITERATURE

In order to grasp the complexity of the cultural hybridity resulted in SouthEastern Romania from centuries of coexistence of Tatars, Turks, Romanians and other minorities, it is fundamental to draw upon the main concepts presented such as immigration theories, Islam in Europe, EuroIslam, multiculturalism and hybridity, and view the influence of these themes through the lens of a borderline territory such as Dobruja and from the voices of peripheral Muslim communities traditionally dismissed, thus adding the historical factor to the complexity equation.

Islam studies in SouthEast Europe can be split into the following directions:

A. Balkan Islam

One figure attempting to link historical Islamic communities to the current debate on the emergence of an European Islam is Xavier Bougarel with his article on Bosnian Islam presented as a type of archetypical European Islam even though not yet a shared religious and intellectual space for debate.⁷⁰ Furthermore, Bougarel traces three dimensions of Islam in relation to Western modernity: individual faith, common culture and discriminatory political ideology.

B. Russian Islam

Islam in Russia cannot be ignored since in December 1991, just before the USSR disintegration, Russia counted 50 million Muslims, a fifth of its total population, and

⁷⁰ Bougarel, Xavier, *Bosnian Islam as "European Islam": Limits and Shifts of a Concept* qtd. in Aziz Al-Azmeh, Effie Fokas ed., *Islam in Europe. Diversity, Identity and Influence*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 96-121

Shireen Hunter makes a comprehensive outline of the Muslim presence and evolution in the Russian territory,⁷¹ which dates back to the tenth century Tatar-Mongol domination.

Raphael Khakim (2003) elaborates on the concept of Euro-Islam linking it to the Jadidism movement in the Russian Empire. It is yet to be established if Khakim was influenced by Tibi's writings or if he developed the concept in a parallel course studying the history of the Tatar presence in the Russian Empire.⁷²

The Tatars, living on the border between the East and the West both geographically and culturally, have formed their own subcivilization. Shar'ia does not function in Russia, and the majority of the population is made up by the Orthodox. So Muslims have to adjust to this way of life. They do not find themselves new to the Russian conditions or feel forced to adjust to them. They are born in this country and consider it to be their home, not a foreign land. This country is neither worse nor better than the Muslim states; it is just different. Our destiny and purpose lie in working out the experience of righteous life in these conditions. We will not turn into Saudi Arabia and are unlikely to become like Christian Europe either. We are what we are.⁷³

C. The Ottoman Empire and its influence

The historical presence of the Ottoman Empire in Europe and the influence it had on its SouthEastern European provinces has not been studied enough through the lens of the 'newly' discovered EuroIslam and its possible ties with the past. Modood mentions the Ottoman Empire as a multicultural society

"where the levels of religious tolerance and accommodation (shown by Muslim rulers towards Jews and Christians) were much greater than those found in western Europe til recent times." What makes today's multiculturalism different is that "it goes well-beyond

⁷¹ Hunter, Shireen, *Islam in Russia: the Politics of Identity and Security*, Center for Strategic and International Studies New York, 2004

⁷² Khakim, Raphael, *Where Is Our Mecca? (Manifest of Euroislam)*, 2003

⁷³ Khakim Raphael, *idem*, p 33

the experience of pre-nation-state multiculturalism that was achieved by imperial states such as the Ottoman Empire or the Muslim Spain or contemporary India”⁷⁴

The scholar Frederick William Hasluck studied at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century the syncretism between Islam and Christianity in Eastern Europe, in Anatolia, and in the Balkans. Hasluck explains how the religious thinking (which I would separate from the religious institutions) and especially the religious practice of Oriental Christianity and Islam (I would add, especially Ottoman Islam) have many common points despite the theoretical prejudices⁷⁵. Hasluck mentions elements of deep religious identification such as the baptism and explains how both Christians and Muslims adopted (in different times) each others’ traditions as a sign of superstition more than a sign of real conversion. As Hasluck explains, and as I had the chance to witness, there is not an issue of real religion conversion but a symbolic acceptance of the other’s traditions.

Strangely enough, as the geographic and administrative dominance of the Ottoman Empire faded, Turkey’s ties with its old provinces grew stronger and developed multifaceted connections with Europe. Linking the Islamic identity crisis with the geographical factor and looking at the entire situation from the Turkish point of view is Ozay Mehmet⁷⁶ who, while talking about Turks and Malaysians, asks himself if they who are living at the Islamic periphery are firstly Muslims or firstly citizens of their country?

D. Muslims in Romania

The Dobrujan interethnic model of integration as an alternative multiculturalist approach has been a theme of interest to some scholars even before the fall of the Iron Curtain. One

⁷⁴ Modood, Tariq, *Multiculturalis; A Civic Idea*, Cambridge, UK, Malden MA, Polity, 2013, p. 5 and 8

⁷⁵ Hasluck, Frederick William, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, edited by Margaret Hasluck, Oxford University Press, 1929, pp. 76-77

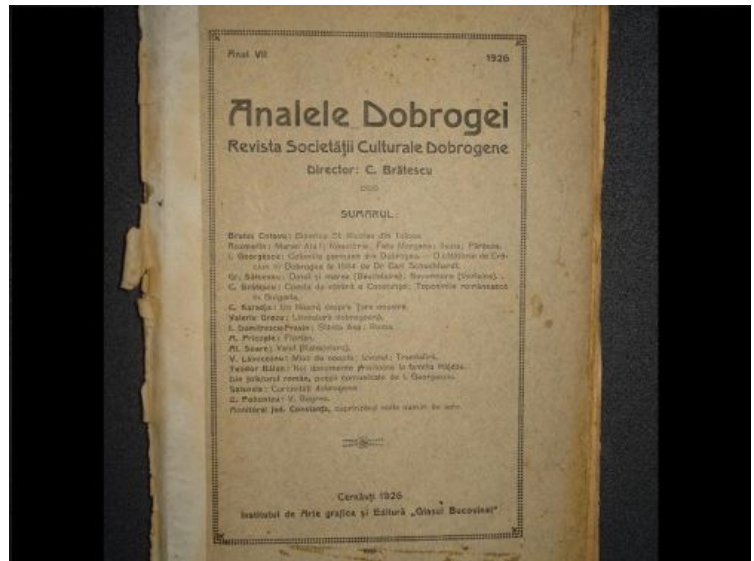
⁷⁶ Ozay, Mehmet, *Islamic Identity and Development. Studies of the Islamic Periphery*, Routledge, 1990

of the first ethnographic descriptions of Dobruja comes from foreign travelers such as Evliya Çelebi (17th century). One of the first scholars ethnographers interested in the Dobrujan environment was Eugène Pittard who in 1902, 1904, 1910 wrote “Anthropologie de la Roumanie” focused on the three main Romanian provinces and the Turks and Tatars among other minorities. Amedeo Giannini presented the reality of the Island of Ada-Kalé in a 1923 issue of *Oriente Moderno* (“La Questione di Ada-Kalé”, *Oriente Moderno*, Anno II (n.12), while Alessandro Baussani explored the community of the “Turks of Dobruja” in a 1941 issue of the journal *Oriente Moderno* (XXI n.3: 145-150).

Romanian scholars have mostly been interested in the historical nature of the Turkish-Tatar presence and the connection with the Ottoman Empire, but after the 1990 the study of the Muslim communities in Romania began to respond to the European Union programs on minorities and the numerous studies requested by the EU adhesion. Some of these studies are those carried by the National Institute for the Research on Minorities’ Problems on “Social cohesion and interethnic climate in Romania” (2008) or “Interethnic climate prior to the EU adhesion” (2006), SOROS Foundation “Studies on the Immigration Phenomenon in Romania” 2013.

Among the early Romanian scholars interested in the so called human geography of Dobruja there are Ion Ionescu de La Brad with his 1851 work, „Excursion agricole dans la plaine de Dobrougea (fr.) – 1879”. In the beginning of the 20th century there are scholars such as Simion Mehedinti, Constantin Bratescu, Alexandru P. Arbore and others. One of the most exhaustive magazines dedicated to the study of the Dobrujan culture from an ethnographical, geographical, economical and political point of view is “Analele Dobrogei” (“Dobruja’s Annals”) where Prof. Al.P.Arbore published thorough articles and analyses like “Dobruja’s ethnography” (1920), “Dobruja’s Ethnography. Thought about the Turkish and Tatar settlements in Dobruja” (1920), “An attempt to reconstruct the past of the Dobrujan Romanians” (1921), “Movements of population in Southern Bessarabia and Dobruja” (1929), but he also wrote about the different ethnicities existent in Dobruja, about

the Turkish and Tatar communities, about the historical coexistence between Christians and Muslims. Also linked to “Dobruja’s Annals” was Constantin Bratescu, geographer and coordinator of the magazine; he studied the composition and the evolution of the Dobrujan population where he illustrated as an asset the ethnographic mosaic of Dobruja’s population. Nicolae Iorga wrote in 1928 “Romanian history through its travelers”.



The Turkish-Tatar community has had a voice especially after the 1989 through the research of Prof. Tasin Gemil founder of the Institute of Turkology and Central-Asian Studies and the annual journal “Studia et Documenta Turcologica”. His studies follow various themes such as historical and archival heritage (1981, 1991, 2012), historical coexistence between Ottomans and Romanians (1991, 2005), and the Tatar ethnogenesis (1997). Another leading scholar interested in the broader theme of Muslims in Romania and in particular Arabic presence is George Grigore, editor of *Romano-Arabica*, an academic review published by the Center of Arabic Studies at the University of Bucharest. Other key Turkish and Tatar Romanian scholars are Mehmet Naci Onal and his 1997 ethnography “From the Dobrujan Turks’ Folklore”, Ibram Nuredin’s book on “Essential Moments in the Life of Dobrujan Turks” (1998), Mustafa Ali Mehmet and his numerous writings of which one is the 1965 study “Dobrujan history under Ottoman domination in 14th - 17th century (Testimonies of traveler Evliya Celebi), Ali Ekrem Mehmet in 1994 wrote “A history of Dobrujan Turks” or Tasin Gemil and his “Tatar Historical Legacy” (2012) or “Turkish Cultural Legacy” (2013), not to mention his on going detailed studies about Dobrujan ethnography, history, human geography.

Recent studies follow various themes such as:

- history: Neagu Djuvara and Maria Carpov 2013: “Between Orient and Occident: Romanian Principates at the Beginning of the Modern Era (1800-1848)”, Virgil Ciociltan (2008: “The Issue of Maritime Straights in the Politics of Murad II 1421-1451”); Giuseppe Cossuto (1996: “Il senso di identità dei turco.tartari di Romania dal 1878 ad oggi” in *Oriente Moderno* Anno XV (76): 113-166); Giuseppe Cossuto (1997 “I tatar di Romania e la creazione della ‘lingua nazionale’ tatar di Dobrugia: un esempio di differenziazione culturale in un paese dell’Europa dell’Est” in *Oriente Moderno* (numero speciale): 113-166;
- religion, Maria Bara (2006: “Interethnic Relations between Orthodox Christians and Muslims in Dobruja”),
- interethnic relations, Lucian Boia (2001: “Romania: Borderland of Europe” Reaktion Books London), Alina Branda and Ion Talos “Romania Occidentalis - Romania Orientalis”, 2009; Chiriac Marian and Monica Robotin (2006: “The Unknown Among Us. Asylum Seekers, Refugees, Illegal Immigrants”)
- language, Oana Cenac “Old and New in the Current Romanian Vocabulary. Neo-Greek and Turkish Element”, 2009
- business environment: Constantin Daniela-Luminita, Zizi Goschin and Mariana Dragusin 2010 “Ethnic Entrepreneurship as an Integrating Factor in Civil Society and a Gate to Religious Tolerance: A Spotlight on Turkish Entrepreneurs in Romania” in *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 7(20): 49–79.

PART 2.

The multiculturalism debate. Challenging the traditional views of Islam

This chapter presents the various interpretations of the concept of ‘multiculturalism, from assimilation and dissimilation processes of sociologists, anthropologists, various schools of thought, and the implications these theories suggest. Most of the research on social change with emphasize on assimilation process has been conducted in the United States, therefore the theories correspond to the realities there, a different type of process than in Europe. Thus multiculturalism, as Modood (2013: 2) argues, has different meanings in the United States and Europe; in the US multiculturalism represents a “politics of identity: being true to one’s nature or heritage and seeking with others some kind of public recognition for one’s collectivity”, while in Europe the meaning of the concept get more narrow as it represents a movement born out of the migrants. But as he adds, “‘post-immigration multiculturalism’ can be distorted if viewed in generic multicultural terms”. Throughout the 20th century disagreements over who belongs together within a common state and who should have states of its own- the core of the national question- have spawned wars and throttled democracy⁷⁷. According to John Berry the available options to individuals and to groups living together in a society are: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization⁷⁸.

Ethnic identities are not inherent but are fluid products, therefore the ethnic groups have to adjust to the surrounding political, social, and cultural conditions. In Europe during the last decades there have been significant changes in border regulations, free people circulation

⁷⁷ Roeder, G. Philip, qtd in Mungiu- Pippidi, Alina, *Nationalism after communism: lessons learned*, eds. Alina Mungiu-Pippidi and Ivan Krastev, Budapest: CEU Press, 2004, p. 200.

⁷⁸ Berry, John, *Acculturative Stress*, in *Psychology and Culture*, eds. Walter J.Looner, Roy S. Malpass, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1994, p. 212

throughout Europe, there are phenomena like globalization and transnationalism, movements of people, commodities, ideas, capital, as well as possible political alignments across the boundaries between sovereign states which are not ethnically homogeneous.

Multiculturalism is an overused concept to identify numerous sometimes contradictory ideas and situations. One basic but meaningful definition of multiculturalism is provided by Kureishi when he states that multiculturalism is a committed exchange of ideas and not just a superficial illusion:

You can't ask people to give up their religion; that would be absurd. Religions may be illusions, but these are important and profound illusions. And they will modify as they come into contact with other ideas. This is what an effective multiculturalism is: not a superficial exchange of festivals and food, but a robust and committed exchange of ideas – a conflict that is worth enduring, rather than a war⁷⁹

As Rattansi put it, modern Europe represents the sum of centuries of cross-cutting influences and of cross-pollination and interpenetration of diverse voices, resulting in a political and cultural hybrid⁸⁰. The challenge is to create a sense of *belonging* as Jocelyn Cesari⁸¹ called it, that is not boundary driven but is open regardless of ethnicity and religion. The Dobrujan situation embodies this sense of belonging that goes beyond ethnicity and religion as there are 22 minorities living in Dobruja, among which the Turks and Tatars who live in different linguistical and cultural environments, but interact with each other and bounce between different cultural frontiers: being Romanian citizens, Turkish or Tatar ethnics and Muslims. This multiple-belonging has had a decisive influence on the identity of both Romanians', and Turks' and Tatars' identity in Dobruja.

⁷⁹ Kureishi Hanif, *The carnival of culture*, The Guardian, August 4th 2005, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/aug/04/religion.uk>

⁸⁰ Rattansi, Ali, *Multiculturalism: a very short introduction*, 2011 and Rattansi, Ali, *Racism, Modernity and Identity: On The Western Front*, eds. Ali Rattansi and Sallie Westwood, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994, p. 146.

⁸¹ Cesari, Jocelyn, July 10th 2015 during the conference *Contradictions: Envisioning European Futures*, Paris, Council for European Studies and Science Po

Within the multiculturalism debate there are various approaches to what the concept implies or tackles:

1. EUROPE'S IDENTITY CRISIS

Europe's Christian roots exclusive claim discords with the historical evidence that shows that the Islamic influence on Europe's chrysalis has been vital for the culture, arts, technology, society, economy. As Ulrich Beck argues, this claim "denies the empirical reality of Europe" because Europe has always been a multi-ethnic, and as he continues, "If identities are mutually exclusive, Europe is an impossible project"⁸².

2. RELIGION

The concept of multiculturalism is closely linked to the concept of identity and in many European discourses identity implies its Christian roots, although the historical evidence shows that the Islamic influence on Europe's chrysalis has been vital for the culture, arts, technology, society, economy. Religion becomes a means of creating unity against what is perceived to be a threat to the very core of the national identities in question. This has happened in communist Romania when religion became a factor of unity between Orthodox and Muslim populations as both were discriminated and pushed towards assimilation.

In France the response to the groups of Muslims arriving in France in the last decades is a radicalization of the concept of *laïcité*. Jürgen Habermas has announced that we are currently witnessing a transition from a secular to a 'post- secular society' in which 'secular citizens' have to express a previously denied respect for 'religious citizens' (Habermas 2006). Olivier Roy, on the other hand, in an analysis focused on France, writes of 'the crisis

⁸² Beck, Ulrich, *Understanding the Real Europe: A Cosmopolitan Vision* in Diversity and Culture, edited by Policy Planning Staff (CAP) of the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, 24-53. Brussels: CulturesFrance, c2007, p. 41 and then 35

of the secular state' (Roy 2007). As far as western Europe is concerned, the 'crisis of secularism' seems to be the challenge of post-immigration multiculturalism.

3. ESSENTIALISM

Is the opposite of fluid understanding of multiculturalism, of hybridity and complex identities. As Modood and Werbner (1997) put it, "to essentialise is to impute a fundamental, basic, absolutely necessary quality to a person, social category, ethnic group, religious community, or nation. It is to posit falsely a timeless continuity, a discreteness or boundedness in space, and an organic unity. It is to imply an internal sameness and external difference or otherness"⁸³, This applies also when referring to the Muslim communities in Europe as 'European Muslims' or when constraining the communities diversity under one term such as "EuroIslam", thus essentializing and reducing various communities to one trait alone, their religion.

4. POLITICAL USES

Modood argues that the primary interest of multiculturalism is not in culture per se but in the political uses of non-European origin ethnic and related identities, especially in turning their negative and stigmatic status into a positive feature of the societies that they are now part of. This means that multiculturalism is characterized by the challenging, the dismantling and the remaking of public identities⁸⁴. Multiculturalism has gone beyond state neutrality and toleration, Modood continues, is a form of civic interaction which recognizes the normative and political significance of group identities but is not about merely inward-looking or self-interested communities⁸⁵.

⁸³ Modood, Tariq, *Difference, Cultural-Racism and Anti-Racism* in P. Werbner & T. Modood (eds), *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*, Zed Books, 1997, p.228

⁸⁴ Modood, Tariq, *Multiculturalism; A Civic Idea*, Cambridge, UK, Malden MA, Polity, 2007 /2013, p. 39-40

⁸⁵ Modood Tariq, *idem*, p. 59

5. MULTICULTURALISM VS. INTEGRATION VS. ASSIMILATION

For Modood (2013: p 44) multiculturalism is clearly not opposed to integration as each group is distinctive, and it needs a multiple approach to integration; integration cannot consist of a single template (hence the ‘multi’). Assimilation remains as before; so does what was previously called ‘integration’ but its individualist character, as presented previously (Modood, p. 44) is highlighted by the term ‘individualist-integration’. Cosmopolitanism is identified as a distinct mode of integration in an intermediate position between ‘individualist-integration’ and ‘multicultural-ism’ because it is significant in its own right⁸⁶

Disagreement about the extent to which post-immigration groups exist and/or ought to exist and be given political status means that there are two kinds of multiculturalism (Modood 1998; Meer and Modood 2009a). While in public discourse as well as in academia both are referred to as multiculturalism, and often without a full recognition that two different ideas are being expressed, I will reserve the term ‘multicultural-ism’ for the sociological and political position in which groups are a critical feature⁸⁷.

6. MULTICULTURALISM VS. COSMOPOLITANISM VS. TRANSCULTURATION

Cosmopolitanism, then, is a conception of multiculturalism as maximum freedom, for minority as well as majority individuals, to mix with, borrow and learn from all (whether they are of your group or not), so that individual identities are personal assemblages of bits from various groups and heritages and there is no one dominant social identity to which all must conform. The result will be a society composed of a blend of cultures, a ‘multiculture’.

Multiculturalism proper, on the other hand, rather than individualist-integration or cosmopolitanism, stretches beyond individuals to accommodate groups. For example, some

⁸⁶ Modood Tariq, *idem*, p. 152

⁸⁷ Modood Tariq, *idem*, p. 152-153

people will identify with a color identity like ‘black’ but there will be others for whom national- origin identities (like ‘Algerian’), or a regional heritage (like ‘Gujarati’), or a religious identity (like ‘Sikh’). ‘Multiculture’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’ are not enough, multiculturalism must be built upon anti-essentialism⁸⁸.

But there is yet another variable in the equation, that of transculturalism or the process of transculturation, a “reciprocal process in which two cultures give and take from each other.

As a result of this process a ‘new cultural reality’ occurs. The concepts of culture and identity are both formed as a result of an ongoing change, exchange and dynamism”⁸⁹ thus a two-way process of reciprocal contamination and not, as Codell underlined, a one-way process of assimilation, transculturation must not be confused with acculturation⁹⁰. Transculturation does not imply a loss, as assimilation or acculturation imply, but a “creative social fact”⁹¹ The difference in terminology is emphasized by Wolfgang Welsch who describes interculturality as two cultures often clashing and multicultural as diverse cultures sharing a place in society but still identifying themselves as distinct, despite attempts at mutual understanding⁹². Transnationalism applies to goods and people crossing

⁸⁸ Modood Tariq, *idem*, p. 156

⁸⁹ Ortiz, Fernando, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, New York: Vintage Books, 1970, qtd in Codell, F. Julie, *The Art of Transculturation*, Ashgate, https://www.ashgate.com/pdf/SamplePages/Transculturation_in_British_Art_1770_1930_Ch1.pdf

⁹⁰ Codell, F. Julie, *The Art of Transculturation*, Ashgate, https://www.ashgate.com/pdf/SamplePages/Transculturation_in_British_Art_1770_1930_Ch1.pdf

⁹¹ Ortiz, Fernando, qtd in Codell, F. Julie, *The Art of Transculturation*, Ashgate, https://www.ashgate.com/pdf/SamplePages/Transculturation_in_British_Art_1770_1930_Ch1.pdf

⁹² Welsch, *Transculturality*, 196–7 qtd in Julie F. Codell, *The Art of Transculturation*, Ashgate, https://www.ashgate.com/pdf/SamplePages/Transculturation_in_British_Art_1770_1930_Ch1.pdf

boundaries as in Arjun Appadurai's ethnoscapes⁹³ or to communications and information systems⁹⁴

Transculturation is tied to time and place, to historical conditions and social environment, and in my research it is clear that the cultural mosaic that the Ottoman Empire's long lasting heritage created would form a transcultural complex environment that goes beyond hybrid or multicultural environments. Even if cultures insist they are unique as an ideological expression, the praxis of existing cultures in a single nation produces constant cross-cultural and subcultural assimilations into new forms on macro (cultural) and micro (individual) levels. The result is that individuals all have "multiple attachments and identities" or "crosscutting identities" and allegiances to different cultures⁹⁵.

7. CRITICISM AND DEBATE

Modood argues that the novelty of contemporary multiculturalism is that it introduces into Western nation-states a kind of ethno-religious mix that is relatively unusual to those states, and that it brings notions of democratic citizenship and individual rights on the idea of co-presence of ethnic and religious communities which go well beyond the experience of pre-nation-state multiculturalism that was achieved by imperial states such as the Ottoman Empire or the Muslim Spain or contemporary India⁹⁶

Modood (2013:10-11) identifies the main critics and thus themes of debate surrounding multiculturalism:

⁹³ Appadurai, Arjun, *Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology*, "Interventions: Anthropologies of the Present, 1991, R.G. Fox (Ed.). Santa Fe: School of American Research, p. 192 qtd in Julie F. Codell, *The Art of Transculturation*, Ashgate

⁹⁴ Hannerz, Ulf, *Withering Away of the Nation?*, **Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology**, vol. 58, issue 3-4, 1993, p. 210 cited in Julie F. Codell, *The Art of Transculturation*, Ashgate

⁹⁵ Welsch, "Transculturality," p. 198 cited in Julie F. Codell, *The Art of Transculturation*, Ashgate

⁹⁶ Modood, Tariq, *Multiculturalism; A Civic Idea*, Cambridge, UK, Malden MA, Polity, 2007 /2013, p. 8

- from pluralistic centre-left: "multiculturalism has helped to segregate communities far more effectively than racism' (Kenan Malik, 'Connections', Winter 2001 quoted in Modood)
- multiculturalism as a Bible for any Muslim who insists that his religious-cultural priorities override his civic duties of loyalty, tolerance, justice
- state funding of multiculturalism should be redirected into a defense of the values of freedom and democracy
- 'politically correct' multiculturalism has fostered fragmentation rather than integration (Meer 2006)
- multiculturalism is out of date or is dead
- after the 2005 bombings where most of the individuals involved were Britain born - multiculturalism has failed or worse, it was to blame. The same happened in the Netherlands, Norway, France, Spain, ecc.

But Modood concludes that multiculturalism is nonetheless the way of integration that best meets the normative implications of equal citizenship and stands the best chance of succeeding. (Modood 2013: 13) Will Kymlicka on the other hand, supports a post-immigration multiculturalism and argues that 'the institutions of the larger society should be adapted to provide greater recognition and accommodation of these ethnic identities – for example schools and other public institutions should accommodate their religious holidays, dress, dietary restrictions, and so on' (Kymlicka 2001a: 33 quoted in Modood 2013)

Grillo on the other hand, examines current public discourse and interrogates the nature and impact that cultural concepts have on public understanding, policy development and everyday social relations. He particularly focuses on the 'backlash,' in the UK and across Europe, against multiculturalism, diversity and difference especially after 2005 bombing attacks in London. It is well known Angela Merkel's anti-multiculturalism declaration that

in Germany multiculturalism has “utterly failed”⁹⁷ or Nicholas Sarkozy’s denounces of multiculturalism as a failure and a cause for “home-grown” terrorism⁹⁸. Grillo describes a ‘complex, multifaceted, multivocal phenomenon’ in which certain key, albeit ‘fuzzy’ concepts have been deployed surrounding ‘integration’, ‘multiculturalism’, ‘diversity’, ‘difference’, and ‘cohesion’⁹⁹. The varied intentions of those initiating discourses or policies are compounded by reactions to what people think these terms mean.

Bassam Tibi, the creator of the concept of “EuroIslam” explained in an article that “if Islam wants to become European - and it can - must adapt to these five elements of the European identity: first, separation between religion and politics, to laicity; second, to democracy; third, to individual human rights; fourth, to pluralism, pluralism not multiculturalism - as multiculturalism means anyone can do anything one wants, while pluralism means uniting multiplicities around a mutual agreement upon values; fifth, civil society¹⁰⁰. Following the idea explained by Buruma in January 2011, that “in the debate on identity, tolerance and multiculturalism, attitudes and feelings take precedence over knowledge” and that “engaging in an informed debate that confronts the fears that fuel and are exploited by populism is a way to reverse this trend”¹⁰¹, I believe that Bassam’s underlying idea that Islam has to conform to five European “pillars” - ergo not being part of Islamic culture, which I disagree with - is a result of lack of information about the diversity within Islamic communities, such as those studied in this research.

⁹⁷ Merkel says German multicultural society has failed, Oct. 17, 2010 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-11559451> and <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/oct/17/angela-merkel-german-multiculturalism-failed>

⁹⁸ Irving, Hélène, *Has Multiculturalism Failed in Europe?*, February 17, 2011 by Open Society Initiative for Europe, <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/has-multiculturalism-failed-europe>

⁹⁹ Grillo, Ralph, *An excess of alterity? Debating difference in a multicultural society*, qtd in Steven Vertovec *Anthropology of Migration and Multiculturalism: New Directions*, Routledge, 2013, p. 20-21

¹⁰⁰ Bassam, Tibi, *La Francia, modello per l'Europa*, 19/07/2003, Caffè Europa, <http://www.caffeeuropa.it/pensareeuropa/islam-tibi.html>

¹⁰¹ Buruma, Ian, *The Limits of Tolerance in Europe: A Conversation with Ian Buruma*, February 25, 2011, Open Society European Policy Institute, a conversation with OSI-Brussels Director Heather Grabbe, <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/multimedia/limits-tolerance-europe-conversation-ian-buruma>

8. NEW DIRECTIONS

Nancy Foner follows a different direction, exploring how various factors and conditions, processes and structures, can create a specific type of multiculturalism, in the case studied by Foner a “New York way” of multiculturalism. Foner analyses how history, demography, geography, political institutions and policies interact to create a conceptual shaping around the meaning of “ethnicity” and “race”¹⁰².

The new hybrid level of composition reached in certain part of the world is called by Vertovec “super-diversity”, a state of facts that needs a re-evaluation of concepts and understandings as well as a new set of measures and policies, all included in a new multi-dimensional approach that can analyze a “highly differential composition”, transnational trajectories and the numerous facets of complexity¹⁰³. Vertovec continues in his book to illustrate the various ideas about multiculturalism and directions in which the study and analysis of this area went, such as William James (1909) who believed that plural society is crucial to the formation of philosophical and social humanism to help build a better, more egalitarian society; on the other hand, opponents of multiculturalism viewed it as contributing to cultural ghettos, undermining national unity and identity, and, in terms of Islam, as an attempt to Islamise Europe. European anxiety towards Islam and the Middle East was criticized by Edward Said (1979) in his book analyzing the prevailing Orientalism in the 20th century in the West for the inaccuracies of a wide variety of (postcolonial) assumptions about the Middle East and its cultures.

You can't ask people to give up their religion; that would be absurd. Religions may be illusions, but these are important and profound illusions. And they will modify as they come into contact with other ideas. This is what an effective multiculturalism is: not a

¹⁰² Foner, Nancy, *How exceptional is New York? migration and multiculturalism in the empire city*, Ethnic and racial Studies, vol 30, n° 6, November 2006, pp. 999-1023

¹⁰³ Vertovec, Steven, *Anthropology of Migration and Multiculturalism: New Directions*, Routledge, 2013, p. 10

superficial exchange of festivals and food, but a robust and committed exchange of ideas – a conflict that is worth enduring, rather than a war¹⁰⁴.

PART 3

Interethnic Dobrujan Model

The Black Sea area has seen throughout the centuries a mix and a turnover of populations, ethnicities, religions, and cultures that have left their mark into a singular pattern of coexistence. Social and political policies together with the population's aperture towards diversity mastered and polished through the years have been some of the factors that have influenced the creation of this environment. This peaceful coexistence untainted by conflicts among the population defines the Interethnic Dobrujan Model as it is called locally. The microcosmos created on a relatively small part of borderland area (6.5% area of the total Romanian surface an 4.5% number of



A symbolic image that can explain Dobrujan ambiance is represented in this photo I took in Constanta during my field research, which portrays the thinking Ovidius, exiled to Tomis, in front of the Great Mosque of Constanta

¹⁰⁴ Kureishi, Hanif in Cherribi, Sam, *In the House of War: Dutch Islam Observed* (Oxford: University Press, 2010), 217. and *The carnival of culture*, Aug. 4th 2005, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/aug/04/religion.uk>

inhabitants of the total Romanian population) represents a complex fusion of natural and cultural elements.

One of the first Romanian scholars who looked at Dobruja analyzing its peculiarity and noting a singular cultural environment is the father of Romanian musicology, Teodor T. Burada, who in 1880 wrote “A voyage through Dobruja”, one of the first if not the first monographic ethnography¹⁰⁵. One other Romanian scholar who dedicated his life to studying and disseminating information about Dobruja and its singular characteristics is Constantin Bratescu, a geographer who put together the “Dobruja Annals”, magazine about Dobrujan life, but also historical, geographical, ethnographical articles, published for over two decades, from 1920 until 1938 (trimestrial until 1923 and annual afterwards). He said in a 1928 issue of the Annals that Dobruja is “a miniature Europe and Asia, a huge living ethnographic museum”¹⁰⁶. In the same line of characterization, the historian, scholar and politician Nicolae Iorga called Dobruja a “land of synthesis”¹⁰⁷. During the same period and until the beginning of the 1950s, one foreign scholar who got interested in the Dobrujan environment was Eugene Pittard who in 1946 recalled the reasons why he became interested in these lands: “A phrase mentioned by Elisee Reclus who was charmed by the extraordinary mosaic of populations represented in this old province was decisive for this part of my career. No other European country expresses so vividly such an ethnic kaleidoscope. On a relatively narrow piece of land, populations from Central Europe (German colonies), Eastern Europe (Bulgarian, Romanian, Russians of various denominations, Albanians) and Western Asia (Turks, Tatars, Armenian, Gypsies) met here and live as autonomous cells. Dobruja used to be, during the Sultans’ era, a refuge for numerous human communities. Each of these ethnic groups lived here their own existence,

¹⁰⁵ Gibescu, Daniela Roxana, *Contribuții la promovarea și valorificarea științifică a folclorului dobrogean* (*Contributions to Scientifically Promoting and Preserving the Dobrujan Folklore*), Revista Muzicala n° 2, 2014, <http://www.ucmr.org.ro/Texte/RV-2-2014-6.pdf>

¹⁰⁶ Bratescu, Constantin, *Populatia Dobrogei* in *Analele Dobrogei*, (Dobrujan Population in Dobruja’s Annals), n. IX, 1928

¹⁰⁷ Daniela Roxana Gibescu, *Contribuții, op. cit.*

in houses built following their own ancestral traditions and working in their own ways. Each kept their own traditions and customs, religion, clothing habits, and language”¹⁰⁸ The same idea appears in a 1921 paper called “Dobrogea” by Romanian author I. Simionescu in which he states that “the Dobrujan lands represent a try Noah’s Ark. In Dobruja more than anywhere else we can find overlapping ancient extinguished civilizations, historical substratum adding to the geological stratum.”¹⁰⁹ Professor Al.P. Arbore described Dobruja like this:

*"Aussi mêle part ne trouverons nous, un matériel aussi intéressant et aussi varié pour l'ethnographie, qui disposent pour leur recherches, sur une territoire très restreints, d'une foule de données sur les aspects de la vie des différents peuples ainsi que réciproquement les uns sur les autres de point de vue ethnique dans cette enclave territoriale. Il serait possible, d'admettre également la présence continue d'un élément roumain"*¹¹⁰.

An UNDP 2010 report addresses the peculiar and “elaborate system of minority protection” active in Romania, that is “to a large extent, a consequence of active minority participation in the legislative process”. Minority deputies are not confined to dealing with a narrow area of culture and group identity preservation, but “engage in finding legislative solutions for a wide variety of social and economic problems which their communities face”¹¹¹.

¹⁰⁸ Pittard, E., Introduction to „Nord-Dobrudscha”, W.Kundig – Steiner, p. XIII-XIV, 1946, and Nicoară, Vasile, Dobrogea spațiul geografic multicultural, (Dobruja Multicultural Geographical Space), Ed. Muntenia, Constanța , 2006

¹⁰⁹ Simionescu, Ion, *Dobrogea*, 1921

¹¹⁰ Arbore, Al. P., *La culture romaine en Dobroudja - Extrait de la Dobroudja*, Bucarest, 1938 qtd in Dinu Cristina et al., *Aspecte etnografice în arealul Deltei Dunării, (Ethnographic Aspects of the Danube Delta Area)* http://www.deltadunarii.info.ro/cultural/ro_etno.htm

¹¹¹ Protsyk, Oleh, *Representation of minorities in the Romanian parliament*, IPU (Inter-Parliamentary Union) and UNDP 2010, p.3 <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/chiapas10/romania.pdf>

Legislative perspective

Besides the rights granted by the Constitution to all citizens, there are distinctive normative acts that grant certain rights reserved to minorities, such as the right to employ one's mother tongue:

- In one's relations with the state authorities (in areas where minorities represent at least 20%)
- In school, the right to study one's mother tongue
- In the justice system, the right to utilize one's mother tongue in all proceedings

These specific rights are the effect of the Council of Europe's European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages from November 5th 1992 (signed by Romania on July 17th 1995 and ratified through the Bill n.282 of October 24th 2007). Currently in Romania 20 minority languages are protected by the law. The Charter also addresses the risk of assimilation that minorities face; art. 5 mentioned the need to preserve culture and the essential elements of identity (religion, language, traditions, cultural background), art. 5.2 making a step further stating to obtain from assimilation policies or practices (adopted by a Government Decision n° 111/2005); art. 6.1. on the other hand is very interesting as it "encourages tolerance spirit and multiculturalism"¹¹².

- General Agreement for the Protection of National Minorities, November 10th 1994 (ratified may 11th 1995)
- The Romanian electoral system grants reserved seats for minorities and has thus allowed the most extensive number of minority represented in an European Parliament¹¹³. "Most of

¹¹² Chiriță, R., Săndescu A., *Analiza actelor normative privind drepturile minorităților naționale în România*, în *Politici de integrare a minorităților naționale din România. Aspecte legale și instituționale într-o perspectivă comparată*, Levente Salat (coord.), (Analysis of Normative Documents Regarding Romanian National Minorities' Rights) Cluj: Editura CRDE, 2008, http://www.edrc.ro/publication_details.jsp?publication_id=27 and <http://www.edrc.ro/docs/docs/politici/031-166.pdf>

¹¹³ Protsyk, Oleh, *Representation*, op. cit

its minority groups have been either overrepresented or proportionally represented in the parliament”¹¹⁴.

- In 1997 the Department for the Protection of Minorities was founded; it is directly subordinated to the Prime Minister and it has the role of monitoring legal matters on behalf of minorities, proposing bills, investigating complaints.
- In 2005 the Interethnic Relations Department was founded, directly subordinated to the Prime Minister; its main purpose is promoting ethnic diversity in Romania through consolidating and extending the protection framework granted to the multicultural society (Government Decision 111/2005).
- The Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities - studies the problems of national minorities
- The National Council on Action against Discrimination

Educational perspective

- In elementary and middle schools in three provinces (Constanta, Tulcea and Bucharest) there are Turkish language lessons introduced after the 1990s (following the tradition of the Turkish language schools closed in the 1950s-1960s). Turkish language classes can also be found in some Constanta and Tulcea provinces' high schools. The books for these classes are both edited by Romanian Educational Ministry as well as imported from Turkey.
- Pedagogical and Theological Muslim Highschool in Medgidia *Colegiul Național Kemal Atatürk* (previously Babadag), reopened in 1995 with the help of the Turkish government
- Two high schools with IT profiles and learning languages Romanian, Turkish and English, opened in Constanta and Bucharest both for Turkish/Tatar as for Romanian students
- Within Ovidius University in Constanta: the Turkish and Tatar language and culture departments (and within the Bucharest University, Department of Foreign Languages also), the Pedagogical College *Kemal Atatürk* (since 2000/2001, now closed)

¹¹⁴ Protsyk, Oleh, *ibidem*

Cultural perspective

- Already by 1880 the newspaper “Farul Constantei” (The Constanta Lighthouse) n. 16 of August 24th and n. 17 on August 31st publishes the list of elected Turkish and Tatar candidates to the Dobrujan local administrations¹¹⁵

- By 1909 the Turkish newspaper “Ikdam” mentioned the freedom and rights the Muslim communities enjoyed in Dobruja:

“În ambele județe, aceștia au doi muftii, plătiți de Guvern, două tribunale religioase, peste 300 moschei, 107 hogi, 100 imami, 81 muezini, 30 kaiami. Guvernul român plătește lunar muftiilor 2.500 piaștri, echivalenți în bani românești, judecătorilor 2.000, imamilor și profesorilor de religie, 500, muezinilor și kaimilor câte 300. La Babadag a luat ființă un seminar musulman care s-a mutat apoi la Medgidia. Musulmanii care își fac serviciul în armata română pot purta fes. Există turci ofițeri activi în armata română și ministrul de război Averescu vrea să alcătuiască o companie specială din musulmani în cadrul regimentului de Călărași din București“

“In both provinces they have Muftis paid by the Government, two religious tribunals, over 300 mosques, 107 teachers, 100 imams, 81 muezzins, 30 kaiams. The Romanian government monthly pays the Muftis 2.500 piaștri, equivalent in Romanian currency, the Judges 2000, imams and religion teachers 500, muezzins and kaiams 300. In Babadag they founded a Muslim Seminar afterwards moved to Medgidia. Muslims who enroll in the Romanian army can wear their fez. There are Turkish officers in the Romanian army and the War Minister Averescu wants to form a special company of Muslims within the Calarasi regiment in Bucharest”¹¹⁶

- In a 1926 newspaper “Curierul Caliacrei” (n.1) a list of the Dobrujan ethnic diversity is presented (Turks, Tatars, Gagauz, Bulgarian, Greek, Jews, Armenian, Gypsies) together with each group’s traditions¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁵ Panaitescu Nilgün; Omer, Minever, *References about Turks and Tatars in Dobrujan mass-media*, Haksas magazine, Year XXI, n. 8 (229), p. 20-21, August 2014

¹¹⁶ Panaitescu Nilgün; Omer, Minever, *ibidem*

¹¹⁷ Panaitescu Nilgün; Omer, Minever, *idem*, p.18-19

- In an article called “Let’s not emigrate” in the “Dobrujan Muslims Magazine” Plugarul Murat warns against leaving Romania for the the Turkish Paradise promised by Turkish authorities after the 1921 Turkish revolution; he calls upon his fellow ethnics to stay in the Dobrujan lands where their ancestors have built their lives and where life is peaceful and calm and not trust the unknown where they would have to start all over from scratch¹¹⁸.

It is important to mention the crucial role that the written press had on promoting an environment of dialogue and mutual understanding. In 1888 the Romanian government began publishing a bilingual magazine called „Dobruca Gazetesi” (Dobruja Journal), one of 29 magazines published at that time. During the same period numerous cultural associations and societies were founded to carry on cultural activities meant, on one hand, to bring together Turks, Tatars and Romanians, and on the other, to bring into the Turkish community Atatürk’s revolutionary changes.² In the same field of communication another great channel was the national radio service where programs in the minorities’ language have been transmitted since 1945 - Hungarian, 1990 - Czech and Slovakian. Turkish language shows were transmitted in Romania ever since the 1990s¹¹⁹. The local branch of the National Radio Company in Dobruja transmits programs in Greek, Turkish, Russian, Tatar, Armenian and the Aromanian dialect.

As seen in this chapter, the literature on the nature of presence of Islam in Europe is very dense and diversified, theorizing the subject at hand from numerous points of view and on various levels of understanding and meaning. It becomes challenging to keep track of all the theories and analysis surrounding this subject as it is intimately connected to the reality of national and international politics, with its complex dynamics and conflictual outbursts that affect the European population and echo well outside the European boundaries into geopolitical decisions and consequences into the lives of hundreds of millions of people.

¹¹⁸ Panaitescu Nilgün; Omer, Minever, *ibidem*

¹¹⁹ National Radio Company - <http://radiotimisoara.ro/stiri/actualitate/minoritati/>

The following chapter will introduce an important factor in the equation of understanding Islam in Europe and in particular, Islam in Romania: the political factor. I will set the stage for the study of the Muslim presence in Europe: the integration models as they have been identified and characterized within a Western European framework. I will then tackle, in the second part, the concept of EuroIslam in its depth, with its supporting theorists and its criticism.

*I am not what happened to me,
I am what I choose to become*
Carl Gustav Jung

CHAPTER 2

POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter introduces the political factor as one important element in the equation of understanding Islam in Europe and in particular, Islam in Romania. In the first part I will introduce the state of the art of the study of the Muslim presence in Europe: the integration models of Muslims in Western Europe; in the second part I will develop my framework for this research introducing the concept of EuroIslam and the various forms this concept is given by its supporters and by its critics; this chapter will end with an interesting twist on this concept developed within the tatar scholarship.

1. Islam in Europe. Facts and Figures

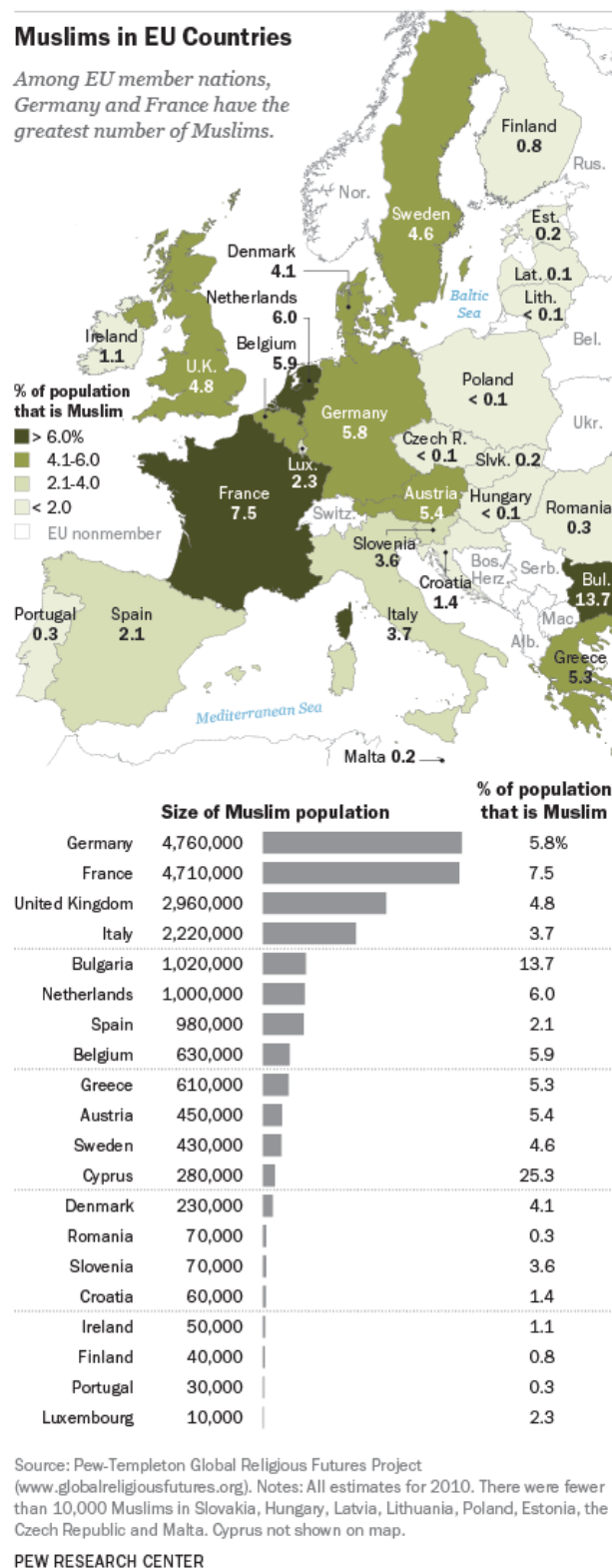
1.1. INTRODUCTION

More than 20 million Muslims live in the 28 countries that form the European Union¹²⁰ but finding an exact number has proved to be a difficult task as one recurring peculiarity of this

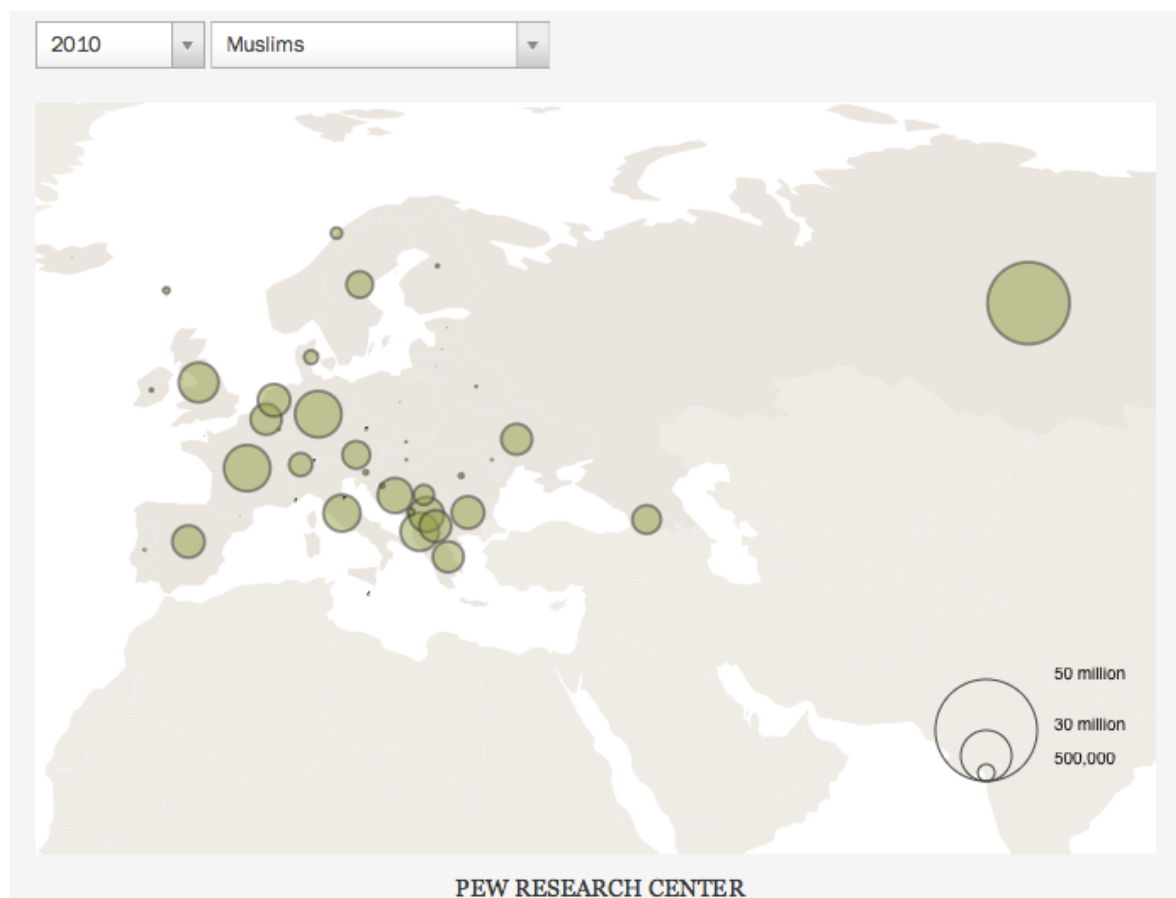
¹²⁰ PEW Research Center, Research on the Muslim population growth by country 2011, <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/table-muslim-population-growth-by-country/>

field of research is the blurriness surrounding numbers, concepts, and ideas. For once, there doesn't seem to be an integrated European statistic more recent than 2010, and even so it would still be difficult to have an accurate number since the idea of what Europe's frontiers are is volatile. Is Europe made of the EU States? Is Turkey's Muslims to be counted? Are Russia's Muslims Europeans? Are Albanians, Bosnian and Kossovarians European? Even though the subject at hand may seem circumscribed, the more one tries to examine it, the more it reveals its complexity. In some statistics all EU countries all included while in others only Western European countries, and not even all of them. Furthermore, in preparation and development of this thesis there arose a confusion in terminology as saying *Europe's Muslims* is not the same as saying *European Muslims* or *Muslims in Europe*. Each of these phrases carries a different baggage of assumptions and reactions from people and media. Saying *Muslims in Europe* implies a temporary recent and alien presence, *Europe's Muslims* on the other hand maintains that alien feature but in loses the temporary characteristic, while saying *European Muslims* takes into consideration the historical communities rarely taken into account when discussing the issue of Muslims and Europe.

The most accurate statistics can be found in the PEW



Research Center databases¹²¹ even though the choice of countries in analysis is once again open to question: why is Georgia taken into account and not Cyprus or Turkey? And the confusion continues as some statistics - on the same research outlet - include Cyprus, Georgia, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, the Balkans, Romania and others simply do not as in the following charts where Cyprus and Georgia swap places in and out Europe.

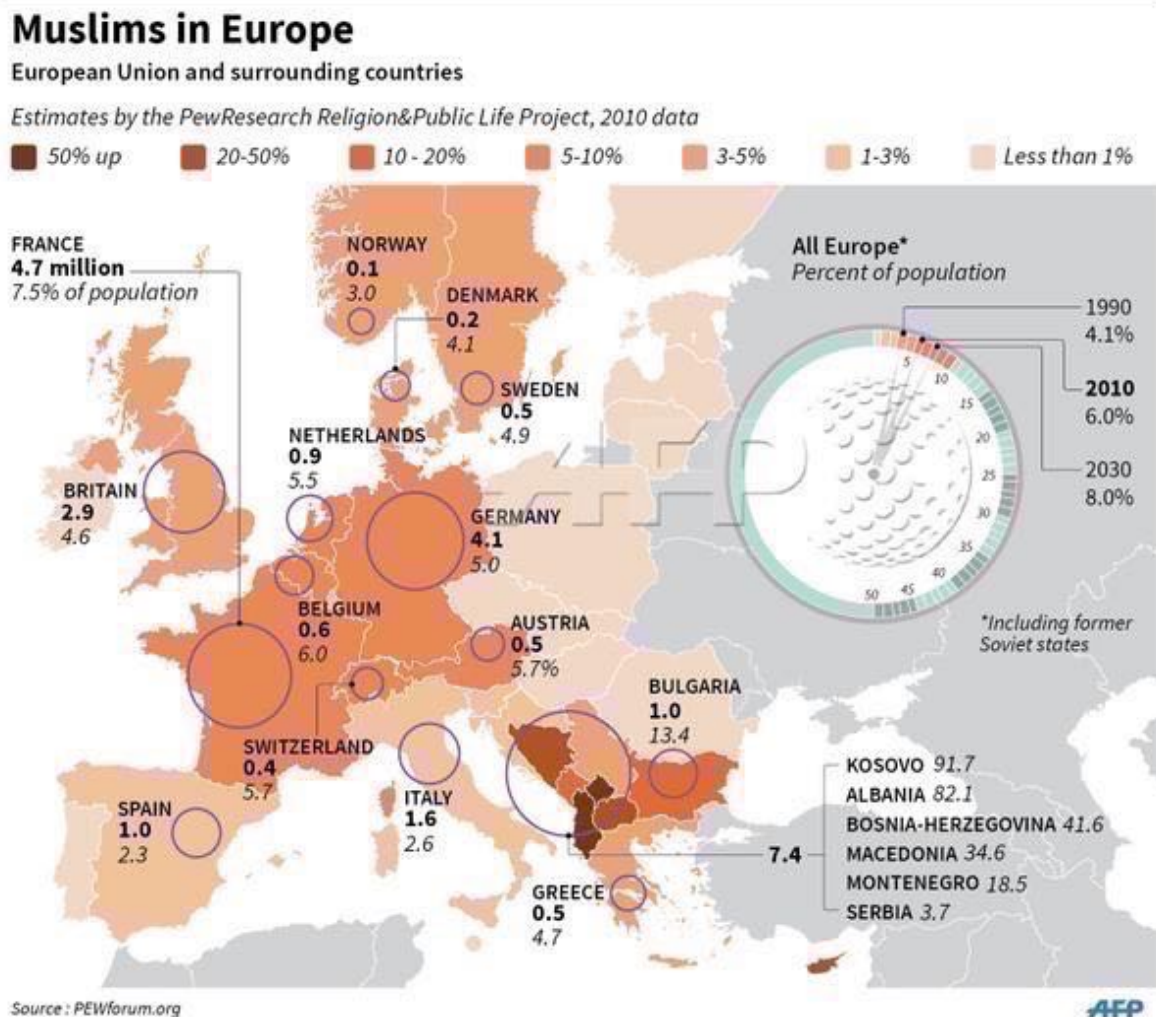


PEW Research Center database, www.globalreligiousfutures.org/regions/europe/

In this other PEW research Center graph related to the Muslim population present in Europe in 2010, it is clearly visible the confusion surrounding the localization of the Muslim population: it is here visible Georgia and even the remote Siberia, while in the next graph it mysteriously disappears, as do most of the Eastern European countries. I will argue

¹²¹ PEW Research Center database, www.globalreligiousfutures.org/regions/europe/

throughout the research that it is fundamental to analyze the Muslim communities in Eastern Europe as new and different insights could be observed and subsequently utilized as new keys of understanding for the Western Europe context.



PEW Research Center database, www.globalreligiousfutures.org/regions/europe/

As this graph illustrates, in 2010 the PEW research center found that the European country with the highest Muslim population was France, but the top place is almost a tie between France and Germany. But the data indicates the Muslim migrant population, as the European countries with a Muslim majority are the ones located in the Balkans. It is

interesting to note the difference of perception between various Muslim populations: apparently there are class A Muslims and class B Muslims. Class A Muslims are the ones in the Balkans (who have been “behaving” since after the former Yugoslavia war, thus falling under the radar), in Bulgaria, in Romania and the other Eastern European countries. Class B Muslims are of course all the Muslim migrants arrived in Western Europe. Another interesting element of this graph is that it allows to see the rift between the actual facts and numbers related to the Muslim presence and the perception created about the Muslim presence in Europe.

There have been attempts made by scholars to merge data from various outlets into one chart¹²² and the results illustrate that out of the 735 million of Europeans 49 million are Muslims, less than 7% of the total population. Kettani divided Europe into four regions:

- Southeastern Europe: 16 countries, 105 million people, 8 million Muslims (8.1%). Balkan countries included, Romania included.
- Southwestern Europe: 11 countries, 187 million people, 9 million Muslims (4.7%). Gibraltar and Liechtenstein included, so are Malta, Monaco or San Marino.
- Northeastern Europe: 7 countries, 240 million people, 23 million Muslims (9.5%). Belarus, Ukraine and Russia included.
- Northwestern Europe: 13 countries, 202 million people, 8 million Muslims (4.2%). British Crown Dependencies of Channel Islands and Isle of Man included.

Kettani did not include Turkey in Europe but in Western Asia region together with Cyprus, while Georgia is in the central Asia region.

The fact that most statistics and media articles take into consideration mostly Western European countries when it comes to Islam ignoring historical European Muslim communities is indicative of the anomalies created by the selective interpretations that surrounds the complex reality of Islam and/in Europe. Among rising nationalisms,

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¹²² Kettani, Houssain, *2010 World Muslim Population*, Proceedings of the 8th Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities, Honolulu, Hawaii, January 2010 , [http:// www.ohio.edu/orgs/muslimst/downloads/World_Muslim_Population_2010.pdf](http://www.ohio.edu/orgs/muslimst/downloads/World_Muslim_Population_2010.pdf)

Islamophobia and the multiculturalism debate, the rising visibility of Muslim communities calls for Europe to re-conceptualize its identity and its political and religious paradigms. The debate surrounding Muslims in Western Europe focuses on the relatively migrant communities and their need for acknowledgement and recognition; issues like the construction of mosques, wearing the veil, opening halal butcheries or Islamic cemeteries become insurmountable clashes hastily labeled as ‘cultural’, ‘religious’, ‘ethnic’. This selective perspectives fragmentize the reality and crystallize the various positions by reinforcing stereotypical images of Islam presenting it as extremist, dangerous and alien to European culture and values, and making it thus impossible to find a common ground when, in reality, this common ground exists in the greater Europe, the periphery borderland Europe that offers numerous examples of multicultural cohabitation. It is undeniable that the current discourse surrounding Europe’s Muslims orbits around the communities emanated from the immigration policies of the second part of the XXth century, but it would be an error to get trapped into a superficial level of understanding and a simplistic interpretation of the Muslim presence in Europe, while contemplating possible solutions without taking into consideration the historical Muslim communities existent in Europe.

1.2. KEY CONCEPTS

1.2.1. EUROPEAN IDENTITY

What does it mean to be European? What variables do we use to define this identity? Religious? Geographical? Political? Geopolitical? Economical? Historical? Cultural? What is it that defines being European? Greek Classicism or Italian Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the two World Wars? The Cold War? Nazism, fascism, Stalinism or the Marshall Plan, the Schengen space or the EU, the Single Market or the single currency, Charlemagne’s “*renovatio imperii*” placing at the core the Christian spirit, or is it a set of shared values developed in time and influenced by all these events and periods, in which all identify?

The Copenhagen Declaration Document on European Identity written in 1973 clearly states what the European identity is, what are the European values and principles and what a “United Europe” implies: unity, democracy, rule of law, social justice, human rights, diversity of cultures and the increasing convergence of attitudes to life, originality and dynamism.

...unity is a basic European necessity to ensure the survival of the civilization which they have in common.

...determined to defend the principles of representative democracy, of the rule of law, of social justice - which is the ultimate goal of economic progress - and of respect for human rights. All of these are fundamental elements of the European Identity.

...they have created a common market, based on a customs union, and have established institutions, common policies and machinery for co-operation. All these are an essential part of the European Identity

The diversity of cultures within the framework of a common European civilization, the attachment to common values and principles, the increasing convergence of attitudes to life, the awareness of having specific interests in common and the determination to take part in the construction of a United Europe, all give the European Identity its originality and its own dynamism.

The construction of a United Europe, which the Nine Member Countries of the Community are undertaking, is open to other European nations who share the same ideals and objectives.¹²³

Copenhagen Declaration Document
on European Identity - 1973

¹²³ Copenhagen Declaration (Document on European Identity), 14 December 1973, European Political Co-operation, Bonn 1988 http://aei.pitt.edu/4545/1/epc_identity_doc.pdf

European identity is a fusion of all these well-known elements and some others silent and often unseen or forgotten like the Balkan mosaic; as on individual level, national and European identity are a constant struggle and negotiation between various layers of identification: a constant dynamic shift between a common heritage, a personal diversity, a local individuality. Concept such as identity, ethnicity, religion, culture and nationality are particularly ambiguous and dependent on relational issues, as as such they are dynamic and contingent.¹²⁴ But for the last decades we have been witnessing the unfolding of a conflict, as Mauro Ceruti puts it, between a “fixed” (key notions: fear of / protection against change and desire to cling to immutable traditions) and an “evolutionary” (key notions: interaction, hybridization and complementary existence) concepts of identity.¹²⁵

Three metaphors can be employed to describe the complexity of the concept of identity and in particular, of the composite concept of European identity, and that can also be effective in describing the nature of European Islam: a Rubik’s cube made of infinite mosaical pieces combining into larger composite images, at times united, at times scattered, but always tied together by common basis; a complex fractal shape; and the idea of *Leitkultur* in the sense of a European guiding light.

For the first metaphor - a Rubik’s cube: identity is not an immutable block of steel but a dynamic composite that alters and transforms in a continuum of adjustments and adaptations, similar to a Rubik’s cube in which each little block is a piece of our identity and each colored face is a motif (geography, history, politics, ethnicity, religion, etc). Every day and in every occasion throughout our day this Rubik’s cube mutates in order to estimate the optimal combination for a given moment in time and space. This explains best both our own identity as well as any other type of identity be it national or European and

¹²⁴ Baumann, Gerd, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic and Religious Identities*, London Routledge 1999 in Jorgen S. Nielsen ed, Nadia Jeldtoft, *On Defining Muslims, Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, vol. I, BRILL The Netherlands, 2009. p. 11

¹²⁵ Grasseni, Cristina (ed. by), *Antropologia ed epistemologia per lo studio della contemporaneità*, Quaderni del CERCO, Guaraldi 2006, p. 7

with this configuration in mind it becomes impossible to get confounded in meaningless debates about who's right or wrong, who is "more European", "more Italian" or "more French" as we all have individual pieces that define our uniqueness and elements that unite us with the others.

The second metaphor is that of Arjun Appadurai's fractal, as he presented it in his "Modernity at Large"¹²⁶ -

What I would like to propose is that we begin to think of the configuration of cultural forms in today's world as fundamentally fractal, that is, as possessing no Euclidean boundaries, structures, or regularities. Second, I would suggest that these cultural forms, which we should strive to represent as fully fractal, are so overlapping in ways that have been discussed only in pure mathematics (in set theory, for example) and in biology (in the language of polythetic classifications). Thus we need to combine a fractal metaphor for the shape of cultures (in the plural) with a polythetic account of their overlaps and resemblances. Without this latter step, we shall remain mired in comparative work that relies on the clear separation of the entities to be compared before serious comparison can begin. How are we to compare fractally shaped cultural forms that are also polythetically overlapping in their coverage of terrestrial space?

Finally, in order for the theory of global cultural interactions predicated on disjunctive flows to have any force greater than that of a mechanical metaphor, it will have to move into something like a human version of the theory that some scientists are calling chaos theory. That is, we will need to ask not how these complex, overlapping, fractal shapes constitute a simple, stable (even if large-scale) system, but to ask what its dynamics are."

As Christoph Reinprecht argued:

The discourse on European identity is familiar with multiple cleavages and divisions, amongst East and West, Christianity and Muslim heritages, EU members and non-members, post-socialist and non-post-socialist countries, etc. In a recent article, Biebuyck and Rumford recommend a plural conception of "many Europes"². To their mind we should envision Europe as a 'fractal cultural configuration' (Arjun Appadurai) formed out

¹²⁶ Appadurai, Arjun, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Public Worlds Publications, University of Minnesota Press, 1996, p. 46

of various polythetic cultures which are (at best) weakly patterned and structured. A Europe that is characterized by disjuncture, fragmentation and uncertainty rather than ‘older images of order, stability, and systematicness’ remains a possibility” (Biebuyck, Rumford 2012: 16)¹²⁷

Biebuyck, Rumford, c, 2012, *Many Europes: Rethinking multiplicity*. In: *European Journal of Social Theory*, 15 (1), pp. 3–20.

The third metaphor is that of *Leitkultur*, introduced by Bassam Tibi in 1998 in his “Europe Without Identity” (*Europa ohne Identität, Die Krise der multikulturellen Gesellschaft*) to illustrate culture - especially European one not so limited to the German one - as a guiding light

“The values needed for a core culture are those of modernity: democracy, secularism, the Enlightenment, human rights and civil society”¹²⁸

Although deviated from its original meaning, especially in Germany, the term *Leitkultur* was not intended to indicate an assimilation of all migrants into German culture or a submission to the ‘guiding leading German culture’.¹²⁹ For Tibi Europe has a civilizing identity that does not erase individual identities as being Sicilian or Swedish, diversities that have never been under menace by XVIII or XIX century invasions. Tibi goes back to this concept to further detail it in a 2007 article where he links it to the term *asabiyya* (*esprit de corps*, or collective civilizational identity) coined by Islamic philosopher Ibn Khaldun (Tunis 1332 - Cairo 1406) to measure the strengths and weaknesses of a

¹²⁷ Reinprecht, Christoph, *Introduction: On a tentative pathway toward universalized social justice and global citizenship*, in *Changing Identities in South Eastern Europe. Between Europeanisation, Globalisation, Regionalisation, and Nationalism*. ASO Ljubljana, 2012, p. 13

¹²⁸ Bassam, Tibi, *Euro-Islam. L'integrazione mancata*, Marsilio, 2002, p. 134, first appeared in Bassam Tibi, *Europe without identity* 1998, p. 154

¹²⁹ For more on this debate <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leitkultur> or <http://www.welt.de/print-welt/article539521/Was-ist-deutsche-Leitkultur.html>

civilization; he argues that Europe must have its own *asabiyya* and stand strong by it while remaining open to incorporating others through Europeanisation.¹³⁰

Viewed in this perspective and keeping in mind the three images, a flexible relaxed relationship between self identity, national identity and European identity can be contemplated, because to a vary degree they are all interrelated, complementary and go beyond the limits of each one. There still is little clarity on what is supposed to be a European, a German, a French, a Christian, a Muslim, but one concept that attempted to approach a fluid composite vision of identity and culture is that of Habermas and his “post-national identity”¹³¹ best defined as an identity that is based on multiple identities but without the imposition of a general consensus - as it has been demonstrated that imposing a behavior on a community is never a good idea - but on acceptance of difference and dissent, highlighting the transformative feature of identity. From Delany’s viewpoint the distinction between a collective “we” and an alien “other” becomes unsustainable since as a result of three decades of cultural diffusion and mixing, there is no clearly definable “We”.

Francis Fukuyama explores the problematic concept of European identity in various articles in which he expresses his idea of a European identity that goes beyond that of national identities, thus relating to the concept of *Leitkultur*, but that is difficult to realize in the shadow of old national egos that came to life with the arrival of immigrants.

“European identity is problematic because the whole European project was founded on an anti-national identity basis. It was intended to get beyond the national selfishness and antagonisms that characterized twentieth century European politics. And therefore, there was a belief that there would be a new universal European identity that would supplant the old identities of being Italian, German or French. But it was also the case that these old identities never disappeared - even though politically they are not something that anyone

¹³⁰ Bassam, Tibi, *Europeanisation, not Islamisation* interview 22/03/2007, [http:// print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html](http://print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html) and Bassam Tibi, *Political Islam, World Politics and Europe. Democratic Peace and Euro-Islam versus Global Jihad*, Routledge 2008, p. 200

¹³¹ Delanty, Gerard, *Is There a European Identity?* in *Global Dialogue*, vol. 5, n° 34, 2003, *The Future of Europe*

spent much time talking about. [...] The ghosts of these old identities really became a problem with the influx of immigrants and the growth of immigrant communities that did not necessarily share traditional European values. [...] ... there is a deeper failure at the European level - a failure in European identity. That is to say, there was never a successful attempt to create a European sense of identity, and a European sense of citizenship that would define the obligations, responsibilities, duties and rights that Europeans have to one another beyond simply the wording of the different treaties that were signed.”¹³²

Fukuyama goes then to outline historically the determinant link between identity, migration and current European dilemmas about Muslim integration in a 2007 article¹³³ where he describes the concept of “identity politics” which began with the Reformation and Martin Luther’s idea of an inner state of faith separated from an exterior conformity to a set of social rules and was further developed by Rousseau, Johann Gottfried von Herder, Hegel.¹³⁴ Fukuyama links it then to the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor who extended the concept of “identity politics” adding that “modern identity is inherently political, because it demands recognition.”¹³⁵ Following this interpretation multiculturalism as mere tolerance of cultural diversity while keeping everyone separated is not enough because minorities demand legal recognition of the rights of racial, religious or cultural groups. Along these lines Fukuyama continues “the radical Islamist ideology that has motivated terror attacks over the past decade must be seen in large measure as a manifestation of modern identity politics rather than of traditional Muslim culture.”¹³⁶ It is undeniable that Europe is seriously challenged by Islamist extremists but it would be a terrible mistake to mix cultural

¹³² Fukuyama, Francis, *The Challenges for European Identity*, Global Minds, January 11th, 2012. <http://theglobaljournal.net/article/view/469/>

¹³³ Fukuyama, Francis, *Identity and Migration*, February 2007, Prospect Magazine, <http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/features/identity-migration-multiculturalism-francis-fukuyama>

¹³⁴ or further reading see Fukuyama’s article <http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/features/identity-migration-multiculturalism-francis-fukuyama>

¹³⁵ Taylor, Charles qtd in Francis Fukuyama, *Identity and Migration*, February 2007, Prospect Magazine, <http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/features/identity-migration-multiculturalism-francis-fukuyama>

¹³⁶ Francis Fukuyama, *Identity*, *op. cit.*

traits with political or economical ones reducing a complex issue to dichotomous ideas such as Huntington's "clash of civilizations", core incompatibilities, opposite values, innate Christian peacefulness vs. Innate Muslim violence. The fragility demonstrated by those nations uncertain about their own identity generates exacerbated spiral responses. Fukuyama's solution is that of rethinking multiculturalism in a sense of integration of non-western population into a common liberal culture; this implies an effort as much from the migrants as from the native Europeans and it means that no liberal democracy can be culturally neutral and as such all cultural groups must acknowledge "Leitkultur" as a form of multiculturalism.¹³⁷ The concept of European Islam fits perfectly in this line of thought as it does not imply a change of values or principles on either side but a common acknowledgement of shared values and principles.

During the last years of the debate on multiculturalism and identity it has become clear that a complexity-based approach is essential in order to elaborate a comprehensive theory which makes a sense of existing overlapping and sometimes outright antithetical theories and analysis within the field of study of migration and multiculturalism: from "post-national" states to the tightening of immigration policies in a new boost of nationalist sentiments, from multicultural impositions to the crisis of multiculturalism, from islamophobia to EuroIslam, we are living in a world that can only be described as a complex system that needs to be researched in its totality.

1.2.2. IMMIGRATION ISLAM

After the Second World War Western European states started to reach out to their former colonies and spheres of influences in order to retrieve laborers, man power able to re-built the war devastated cities and re-start economies. In a rather self-centered vision it only took into account its needs and desires and considered the foreigners as mere instruments in its plans of rebirth from the ashes of war. In this perspective the image was clear: it needed

¹³⁷ Francis Fukuyama, *Identity, op. cit.* Term introduced by Bassam Tibi in "*Europa ohne Identität, Die Krise der multikulturellen Gesellschaft*", 1998.

strong single men who would have went back home to their families once the job was completed. This strategy of poor judgement and short-period reasoning created the short-circuit 20 years after - in the late 1970s and beginning 1980s - when these strong men decided they wanted to make a family in their new homelands. A high degree of diversity among the origin of the Muslims and the fact that the policies implemented enforced the temporality of the migrants' stay are evident factors in the consequent conflictual situations created in Western Europe. As long as migration continued to be seen as temporary basic aspects such as identity and integration, rights and duties were not an issue.

No European country was prepared for this and thus substantially different ways of dealing with this issue were placed in action. Kymlicka, referring to Canadian and American contexts, talks about the 'Anglo-conformity' model of immigration in action prior to 1960s, which implies that immigrants "were expected to shed their distinctive heritage and assimilate entirely to existing cultural norms".¹³⁸ Applying first to the American context and then to the European one, Modood (2007) identifies two models of "cultural diversity" as he calls it: that of minorities (absorbed into a greater state, they remain distinct cultures and ask for autonomy and self-government), and immigration (they form ethnic groups). He then differentiates between a multinational state (as Romania, where more than one 'nation' formed of historical communities occupies a land and owns a distinct culture and language) and a polyethnic state¹³⁹ (where migrant groups claim their 'polyethnic rights' to express their ethnic diversity).¹⁴⁰

Francis Fukuyama summed up the three main European approaches to Islam and Muslim integration and¹⁴¹ gives an explanation as to why radical Islam fills an identity vacuum for

¹³⁸ Kymlicka, Will, *Multicultural Citizenship. A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Clarendon Press - Oxford, 1995, Cap. *The Politics of Multiculturalism*, p. 14

¹³⁹ Modood, Tariq, *Multiculturalism; A Civic Idea*, Cambridge, UK, Malden MA, Polity, 2007 /2013, p. 21-22

¹⁴⁰ Modood, *Multiculturalism*, p. 58

¹⁴¹ Fukuyama, Francis, *The Challenges for European Identity*, Global Minds, January 11th, 2012. <http://theglobaljournal.net/article/view/469/>

those migrants who need an answer to the question “Who am I?” and who find themselves in between cultures feeling like they are not living their forefathers’ Islam but not being accepted as full European either. This is why, according to Fukuyama, we can experience extremization - paradoxically - in the 3rd and 4th generation Muslims: because fundamental Islam gives a real identity in a much purer and universal form of Islam. What Europe is missing and could learn from the US, according to Fukuyama, are the post-ethnic citizenship ceremonies like the 4th of July, Thanksgiving, veterans’ celebrations, that are important in the American way of assimilating migrants and making them feel part of a community.¹⁴² Thus the universal umma gives these cultural in-betweeners a third option to feel part of a community that is in a way even more “traditional” than their fathers and at the same time innovative - even if in a negative radical way. But I believe this “in-betweeness” leaves room also for a positive outcome: historical European Islam.

In a 2007 analysis an interesting approach identifies four European scenarios: EuroIslam and a new Europe, Eurabia, Fortress Europe, and Green Ghetto, going from a highly improbable seamless integration based on a synthesis between divergent civilizations (moderate variant of religion, embracing European norms and practices, social habits and lifestyles),¹⁴³ to extremized variants of cohabitation.

THE BRITISH STRATEGY

The United Kingdom, embracing its colonial past and trying to reconcile with the various cultures they entered into contact with, especially in South Asia, adopted the multiculturalism policy which seemed to be working out perfectly until the London bombings on July 7th 2005 when the multiculturalism concept began to creak and an

¹⁴² Fukuyama, Francis, *Inno e alzabandiera, come costruire un’identità democratica*, 9 novembre 2012, RESET magazine, <http://www.reset.it/caffe-europa/inno-e-alzabandiera-come-costruire-unidentita-democratica>

¹⁴³ Reynolds, Michael A.; Thomas D. Grant *The Future Of Europe And Its Muslims. Four Scenarios.pdf*. Long Term Strategy Group, 2007, p. 6 - 9 - 10

entirely new lineup of critics of the concept became more and more explicit. Fukuyama explains the failure of British multiculturalism with a “mistaken interpretation of multiculturalism”:

“In Britain, there was a belief that pluralism meant you have to respect the autonomy of individual immigrant communities; the government had no role in actively trying to integrate them into a broader British culture.[...]...In terms of the number of attempted violent acts by members of this community, on a per capita basis, he notes that Britain has the highest rate by far - much higher than in France, Holland or Germany. The reason for that was that the British approach to multiculturalism simply left radical imams to preach in their local communities without any interference from the authorities, and without any effort by the state to actively use the education system to produce people that have an allegiance to the British state.”¹⁴⁴

The factors that have determined the ontogenesis of the Muslim presence in Britain are fundamental for the comprehension of the social and political conditions that have led to the present situation:

- Historical: colonial past and overall aperture to foreigners and curiosity towards the unknown,
- Social: in the 1948 under the British Nationality Act all the Commonwealth immigrants were granted the same rights as British citizens; the British multiculturalism policies concerned the educational system (religious-education classes included Islam among Christian, Judaism and Sikhism, open and flexible clothing regulations to allow the hijab as long as conform with the school color requirements for the uniform, approval of Islamic schools, collaboration with Muslim leaders for the content of religious classes); the 1985 Swann Report on education and ethnic communities emphasized the need for multicultural education in state-run schools that would expose children to Britain’s pluralism¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Fukuyama, Francis, *Inno, op. cit.*

¹⁴⁵ Fetzer, S. Joel; Soper, Christian, *Muslims and the State in Britain, France and Germany*, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 30

- Political: the State began to tighten immigration measures in the early 1960s¹⁴⁶ though not restricting the rights of the already present immigrants on its territory
- Religious: particular relation and history between Church and State that encouraged the manifestation of religious pluralism.

The British multiculturalism is not without without flaws but it has had a path of incredible breakthroughs and unbelievable setbacks. For example it was in Britain that the Runnymede Trust coined the term 'Islamophobia' in 1997 to address anti-Muslim prejudice, while just a year later in 1998 Lord Ahmed would go to become the first Muslim peer.¹⁴⁷

Modood¹⁴⁸ says that in the last 30 years, the "anglo-conformist" model of assimilation has been overcome by migrants who do not wish to give up all traces of ethnicity, diversity, and conform to the norms and customs of the majority.

THE FRENCH STRATEGY

Despite a noteworthy colonial past that could have set the tone for a multicultural framework the French situation is particular. French national identity is given by its republican tradition emanated by the Revolution: *liberté, égalité, fraternité, laïcité*. Thus theoretically the French basis would be the more suitable one for migrant integration since anyone who adheres to the principles of the République can be considered a citizen but in the last decades - within a trend of extremization as a reaction of defense against the new and as an implicit statement of fragility of one's own identity - the *fraternité* has disappeared and a rather severe form of *laïcité* has taken over. Moreover *laïcité* seems to not only embody State-Church separation and the privateness of religious beliefs, but an imposition

¹⁴⁶ Fetzer, S. Joel; Soper, Christian, *idem*, p. 4

¹⁴⁷ Fetzer, S. Joel; Soper, Christian, *idem*, p. 36

¹⁴⁸ Modood Tariq, *Multiculturalism*, Second Edition, Polity. March 2013, p. 56

on the freedom of worship that creates clashes and misunderstandings e.g. the ‘Scarf Affair’ during the 1990s that brought the ‘Islam vs European West’ debate into the public eye making it hard to say where the laïcité ends and where the freedom of religion begins and giving space to the most tangled outbursts spacing from extremism to humour as Ziauddin Sardar’s memorable phrase “a French woman with a scarf is chic, but a Muslim woman with a scarf is a threat to civilization”.¹⁴⁹

The French turn on tightening immigration policies began in the late 1970s - early 1980s with a “wholly ineffective policy of subsidizing migrants’ return to their country of origin”¹⁵⁰ This unsuccessful policy has since then been dusted off and made operational once again to counter the Roma immigration of the last years.

The factors that have contributed to the French migration configuration are the following:

- Historical: colonial past but different approach than the British to the unknown, a history of conflictual relations with the Church and thus a painful victory over religious imposition that generates passionate responses to public religious requests viewed as unacceptable intrusions; the “Dreyfuss Affair” resulted in a limitation of freedom of worship¹⁵¹
- Social: Fetzer and Soper differentiate between “soft” laïcité and “strict” laïcité (Joel S. Fetzer, J. Christian Soper, 2005: 73) where “strict” laïcité is “millitant” and rigid and “soft” laïcité is “pluralist” and tolerant of diversity. So the paradox is that the concept that is supposed to be neutral to religion is actually hostile to it and it is used to both guarantee and restrict religious freedom.

¹⁴⁹ Syed Z. Abedin; Ziauddin Sardar. *Introduction in Minorities in the West*, London: Grey Seal Books, 1995, pg 4

¹⁵⁰ Weil, Patrick, *La France et ses étrangers: L’aventure d’une politique de l’immigration de 1938 à nos jours* qtd. in in Joel F. S. Fetzer, J. Christian Soper, *Muslims and the State in Britain, France and Germany*, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 5

¹⁵¹ Fetzer, S. Joel; Soper, Christian, *idem*, p.70

THE GERMAN STRATEGY

The German case is different altogether given of course its historical background which plays a fundamental role in shaping the fundamental concepts at centre of this research: identity, minorities, migration policies. The German identity is centered around ethnicity and “blood”: the acting “jus sanguinis” approach to citizenship made possible for a person born and raised outside Germany by a German mother to be able to obtain German citizenship versus one born and raised in Germany by Turkish parents not to be able to obtain it. Since 2000 the citizenship law has been modified as to include “jus soli” cases; slow extensions to the rules made it possible today for all children born in Germany - even by both parents foreigners granted that they have been residing in Germany for at least 8 years - to obtain citizenship. This ethno-national model places itself as a middle path between the French strict separation and the British weak implementation models.

The factors that have contributed to the German model:

- History: 1732 King Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia sets up an Islamic prayer room for the twenty mercenaries in his employ. His successor Friedrich II, after returning from Istanbul in 1740 where he established diplomatic relations with Turkey, declared “If Turks come to Berlin, mosques must be built for them”.¹⁵²; in addition, “during the II World War the Nazi regime helped train imams to lead prayers for for the tens of thousands of foreign Muslims who found themselves fighting for Germany in Wehrmacht or SS units”¹⁵³
- Education: the German policy was that of providing young Muslim students with a version of Islam that is compatible with the liberal democracy and thus ease their path in the German society. For what the hijab is concerned, under the German law, forbidding it would violate a student’s right to practice her religion¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Fetzer, S. Joel; Soper, Christian, *idem*, p.99

¹⁵³ Abdullah Muhammad Salim qtd in Fetzer, S. Joel; Soper, Christian, *idem*, p.99

¹⁵⁴ Fetzer, S. Joel; Soper, Christian, *idem*, p.115

Historical context and the political choices made by the European states represent two decisive factors in creating the role of the migrant Muslim community within society and in shaping the identity of the future European Muslims as these choices make the difference between young Muslims who feel German, French or Italian and young Muslims who don't feel accepted by their country and reject its values and norms perceived as discriminatory and as imposing assimilation. The feeling of being considered integral part of the society in which you live is essential to the development of a real European Islam and this immutable requisite is the basis from which all discourse must begin but also in which all conflict resides.

As Effie Fokas argues, “there is a marked lack of consensus amongst scholars and practitioners concerning the roots of particular problem points - including references to prejudice, ‘clash of civilizations’, ‘clash of interpretations’, varying degrees of assimilation, socio-economic underdevelopment and/or exclusion, ecc. Discussions comparing the assimilationist policies of the secular French republic against the multiculturalist policies of the United Kingdom, for example, lead to cyclical debates regarding ‘the root of the problem’ - socio-economic underdevelopment in the former being pegged as a clear cause of the riots which swept across France in October-November 2005, whilst educated and financially secure British Muslims perpetrated the London bombings of July 2005. Clearly, generalized prescriptions are futile.”¹⁵⁵

1.2.3. HISTORICAL ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES

There has been a constant Islamic presence in Europe for centuries, at times in conflictual circumstances, other times in symbiotic realities, but only after 9/11 there has been a sense of “cultural Crusade”, of “Islamic invasion” dichotomy rhetoric influenced by numerous factors such as economic crises, geopolitics, state policies towards immigration, extremist outbursts and deviations. Jorgen Nielsen identifies four waves of Muslim presence in

¹⁵⁵ Fokas, Effie, *Introduction* in Aziz Al-Azmeh, Effie Fokas ed., *Islam in Europe. Diversity, Identity and Influence*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 4

Europe: the first is the Islamic Spain and the Muslim Caliphate in Sicily; the second brought the Mongol armies and the Tatars, the third was the Ottoman expansion and the fourth is the current post - II World War phase.¹⁵⁶ In Southeast Europe there are 8 million Muslims¹⁵⁷ frequently ignored when debating Islam's incompatibility with modernity or with European values, that have been forging a hybrid form of European Islam for the last five centuries. This historical amnesia is a result - among others - of the fact that "historically derived stereotypes of Islam and 'the Orient' are continuously latent within British [and European] popular culture and learning" that go to create, as Charles Husband puts it, a "negative bricolage of imagery" resulting in the perception of ethnic minority communities - especially Islamic ones - as an "enemy within".¹⁵⁸ The Ottoman Empire has always been seen as a military threat in Europe and the reasons were not to be underestimated since Sultan Mehmet II conquered Constantinople and put an end to the Byzantine Empire creating one of the most victorious Empires that tried to conquer the entire Europe, reaching Spain and founding the Muslim state of al-Andalus. Nevertheless, historical stereotypical assumptions about Islam and Europe are a result of the common blindness about European history, its influences and its century long bond with the Islamic world. As Cesari argues, it is necessary "to examine the social and historical contexts within which Muslims create discourses about what is important or unimportant to *their* Islam".¹⁵⁹ And this is where the importance of historical Muslim realities in Europe becomes fundamental. Their evolution in- and with- the European environments holds the key to the rethinking of the current multiculturalism debate in general and to the re-imagination of the Muslim communities status in Western Europe. Instead of focusing predominantly on extremist expressions of Islam that often don't carry cultural or religious,

¹⁵⁶ Nielsen, Jorgen, *Towards a European Islam*, Palgrave MacMillan 1999, p. 1-2

¹⁵⁷ Kettani, Houssain, *op.cit.* 2010

¹⁵⁸ Husband, Charles, *The Political Context of Muslim Communities Participation in British Society*, in *Muslims in Europe*, eds. Bernard Lewis and Bernard Schnapper, London: Pinter Publishers, 1994, p. 80, 81, 83.

¹⁵⁹ Jocelyne Cesari, *Islam in the West: From Immigration to Global Islam*, Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review 8, 2009, p. 162

but political and economical claims, the analysis of historical Muslim communities as the one in Romania - subject of this research - sheds a light into a hybridized type of Islam born in a symbiotic Christian environment that shatters most if not all stereotypes and prejudices on Islam regularly observed in discourses across Western Europe.

Many of the current confrontations can be traced to a misunderstanding of what multiculturalism is or should be, to a confusion between concepts like culture, ethnicity, religion (and within that, to what a Christian or a Muslim are supposed to be like), citizenship, law (EU laws, national laws, shari'a and how these could harmonize on a common ground). Music, art or cuisine are *fusion* and *ethnic* while displaying multiple multicultural traits, "yet the term 'multicultural' is taken to imply a multiplicity of unit cultures: how are these units to be labelled and distinguished? By nationality, religion or ethnicity?"¹⁶⁰ As Jocelyn Cesari puts it "a rigid presentation of Islam erases the actual diversity of practices and ways of being Muslim that exist alongside the so-called orthodox perspectives. It also ignores the importance of the societies in which Muslims are living and attempting to practice their faith and the extent to which different contexts often demand the reimagining of a living tradition. Muslims, like all religious practitioners, are constantly renegotiating their relationship to the dogmas and prescriptions of their tradition."¹⁶¹ The fractured and ambivalent discourse surrounding Islam viewed through essentialized fragments - and often from ethnocentric and Eurocentric points of view - creates the risk of looking "for Islam in places where it is not—in social, political, sexual, or cultural attitudes—and consequently subsuming this diversity under the catch-all adjective *Islamic*. One case in point is the debate on gender relations and gender roles among Muslims in the West, which tends to attribute to Islam as a whole attitudes that may in fact be expressive of other motivations, often from patriarchal cultures."¹⁶² Another example of this fallacious view on

¹⁶⁰ Sami Zubayda, *Introduction, Beyond Islam. A New Understanding of the Middle East*, I.B.Tauris, 2011, p. 9

¹⁶¹ Jocelyne Cesari, *op. cit*, 158

¹⁶² Jocelyne Cesari, *op. cit*, 160

Islam is “the idea that Muslims must necessarily adjust to the secular and cultural norms of the West and implicitly or explicitly consider this as an improvement over any other status.”¹⁶³

1.2.4. EUROPE’S BLINDSPOTS

Turkey, often viewed as ‘in-between’ place, has historically had a troubled relationship in the European imagination, as it is tied to memories of the Ottoman threat to Christendom, fears of Islamic revival, and resentment against Turkish migration. The European position, ‘that Turkey is not authentically of the West’, has consistently resulted in the blocking of Turkish membership to the European Union.¹⁶⁴

Turkey’s position in the European discourse on Islam is strategic especially given the political changes initiated by Tayyip Erdogan and cultural adjustments supported by his wife. Turkey has an important role in the Turkish diaspora - role that many Western European states fear and would want to limit - but that might be more beneficial than not if dealt with in a positive manner. It doesn’t simplify the situation the fact that Turkey has applied to join the EU - then the European Economic Commission - in 1987 (after it had signed various treaties starting with the 1963 Ankara Agreement) and was declared eligible to join the EU in 1997¹⁶⁵ but that nothing has happened since then. The reasons for this intricate delay are related to geography (more than 90% of Turkey is situated in Asia), Kurdish rights, the recognition of Cyprus, the Armenian case, but also economic reasons, immigration and altogether fear of the shift in the power balance inside the EU once a country with almost 75 million people - most Muslim - will join the EU. So many analysts assume that Turkey will slowly reach the role that Norway has: practically the same

¹⁶³ Jocelyne Cesari, *op. cit.*, 161

¹⁶⁴ AlSayyad, Nezar; Castells, Manuel, *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam. Politics, Culture, and Citizenship in the Age of Globalization*, Lexington Books, University of Berkeley, 2002, 16

¹⁶⁵ EU website, country information Turkey, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/turkey/index_en.htm

agreements but not quite. And in Turkey this is not good news because it feels like the EU wants to benefit from economical agreements, from a large market where it can place its own goods, but at the same time without the Turkish people themselves getting in the way. Undoubtedly the Western rhetoric surrounding the Muslim - in particular Turkish - migrant communities considering them as a foreign element in Europe and continuing to emphasize Europe's "Christian roots" influences Turkey's position on EU and on immigration policies. Various scholars have debated the discourse on Europe's Christian roots and one of them is Bassam Tibi who points out that the European idea is not Christian but secular, and with a clear origin in Hellenism and this is the common ground that can become a starting point for discussion as "at the highpoint of Islamic civilization, the same Hellenism was among the sources of medieval Islamic rationalism."¹⁶⁶

The revolution launched and carried through by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk at the beginning of the XXth century that ended the Caliphate and signed the birth of the Turkish Republic represents an undeniable evidence that a Muslim state can revolutionize its establishment, its politics and social system in order to reinvent itself in a modern form without betraying its Islamic principles and values. A greater acknowledgement of the Turkish reality could become a point of strength in the strategy concerning Islamic immigration in Europe without, by all means, overlooking the contradictory facts existing in the Turkish reality like the challenges to the freedom of speech, the risk of extremist drifts, the rural villages where old mentalities linger on, the fact that we often see a divided Turkey between modernity in the West and traditional Anatolia in the East, or the veneration still tangible across Turkey and in the Turkish communities abroad for Ataturk, criticized by some as cult of personality. One example of the Turkish passion for Ataturk is the preamble of the Turkish Constitution that forbids criticism towards him and his legacy: "The determination that no protection shall be afforded to thoughts or opinions contrary to Turkish National interests, the principle of the existence of Turkey as an indivisible entity with its State and

¹⁶⁶ Bassam, Tibi, *Europeanisation, not Islamisation* interview 22/03/2007, [http:// print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html](http://print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html)

territory, Turkish historical and moral values, or the nationalism, principles, reforms and modernism of Ataturk, and that as required by the principle of secularism, there shall be no interference whatsoever of sacred religious feelings in State affairs and politics”¹⁶⁷

As Europe’s frontiers, its politics, its “roots” and history, Turkey’s role in Europe is ambiguous and open to multiple interpretations but Turkey does not represent the only blind spot in Europe, the same occurs to the Balkans - home to a consistent Muslim community invisible to the eyes of those who pretend that Islam is an alien element on Europe soil. As Turkey is considered at times European, other times Asian, at times Occidental other times a Muslim threat to the European identity, the same occurs with the Balkans or with other ‘peripheral’ countries. As Michael Hertzfeld describes in his article “The European Self: Rethinking an Attitude” “if the nation-state is an ‘imagined community’, grounded in an idealized notion of ‘national character’ and the modal national self, it would be wise to ask whose imagination it is that we are discussing. The vision of the nation-state promulgated by elites may not be profoundly shared by most citizens even though they may speak of the nation using exactly the same language and imagery”.¹⁶⁸ The epistemological question of whose Europe, whose idea of European history, values, traditions, whose idea of what a moderate Muslim is and of who do fundamental Islamists represent is very complex and too extended to be included in this research, but nevertheless something to keep in mind while examining delicate matters such as the various articulations of Islam in Europe and its implications to the political, economical and social European environment.

¹⁶⁷ Turkish Constitution, http://www.servat.unibe.ch/icl/tu00000_.html

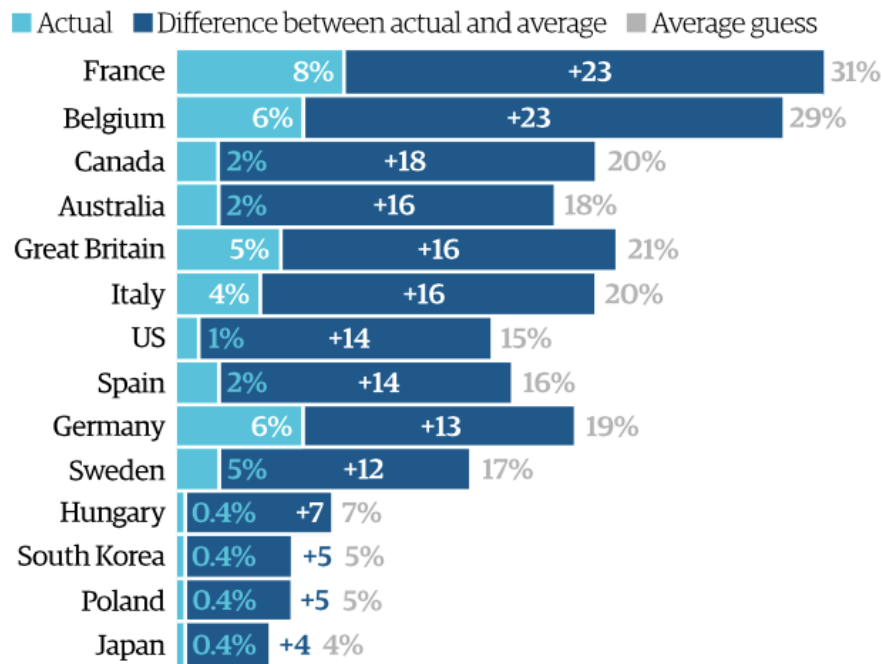
¹⁶⁸ Hertzfeld, Michael, *The European Self: Rethinking an Attitude* in *The Idea of Europe. From Antiquity to the European Union*, ed. by Anthony Pagden, Woodrow Wilson Center Series, Cambridge University Press 2002

1.3. FURTHER ANALYSIS

In an epistemology of power balance and politics, Islam is the old enemy that Europe does not get tired of and the fact that media and political ideology convey the message that the Islamic civilization is based on totally different values incompatible with European principles implies that violent extremist acts of terrorism are emblematic for the entire Muslim world. Asking in the aftermath of a terrorist act that moderate Muslims take voice and distance themselves from the acts for violence committed against Europe's core democratic values - as it happened after the Charlie Hebdo attack - represents another crease in the fragile equilibrium of coexistence in Europe; it is another example of how common places enter the circulation and become prejudice as it ignores that Muslims too were among the victims; it implies that millions of Muslims are to ask forgiveness for what a handful of terrorists are doing in name of what they call Islam but that has nothing to do with the real nature of Islam. It is like millions of Christians were demanded to ask forgiveness for what Breivik did in 2011 in Norway or for the acts of the IRA in Ireland. The heterogeneous uninformed views on Islam in general and on Islam in Europe interfere with an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the presence of Muslims in Europe capable of creating a knowledgeable set of approaches to the phenomenon of increasing Islamic migration in Europe. One image of the influence misconceptions can have on the public opinion is given by 2014 study carried by IPSOS-MORI¹⁶⁹ about the mis-/perceptions Europeans have about the Muslim population presence in Europe.

¹⁶⁹ IPSOS - MORI research center, Research on Muslim perceptions, 2014, <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3466/Perceptions-are-not-reality-10-things-the-world-gets-wrong.aspx> and The Guardian, <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2014/oct/29/todays-key-fact-you-are-probably-wrong-about-almost-everything>

Out of 100 people How many do you think are Muslim?



GUARDIAN GRAPHIC

SOURCE: IPSOS MORI

This IPSOS MORI graph offers a very interesting picture of the real Muslim presence and Europe, the perceived presence, and the resulting difference of perception. And even though many might say that perception is hollow as it lacks basis and substance, it is actually on the basis of the public's perception that most media and political campaigns are built. So it becomes of fundamental importance as the Thomas theorem states "if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences"¹⁷⁰. It is interesting to see the differences on this graph between the two European countries with the most numerous Muslim populations, France and Germany; although their actual Muslim presence is similar, the public's perception is totally different, putting France on top of the list.

Just by looking at the difference between the imagined number of Muslims and the actual number one can begin to grasp the complexity of this issue where plural views, as opposed

¹⁷⁰ W.I. Thomas; D.S. Thomas, *The child in America: Behavior problems and programs*, New York: Knopf, 1928: 571-572 found in *The Thomas Theorem and The Matthew Effect*. Robert K. Merton. *Social Forces*, December 1995, 74(2):379-424, <http://www.garfield.library.upenn.edu/merton/thomastheorem.pdf>

to single views that produce only partial truths destined to fail, become vital. Nevertheless, as Thomas' Theorem states, "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences"¹⁷¹ and as such, it is as important to acknowledge the misrepresentations of Muslims in Europe as it is not to dismiss them as being without repercussion.

There are multiple factors that need to be taken into consideration and that are so intricately tangled that missing one or ignoring another causes an irrefutable rupture in the system of analysis making it impossible to obtain a complete picture able to provide all the information necessary for the advancement of the research. All voices must be taken into consideration and analyzed; one example of minor voice that rarely cuts across media layers is that of Dalil Boubakeur, Dean of the Great Mosque of Paris, Muslim intellectual and known adversary of extremists who explains that "Islam is a dynamic reality, a religion and a culture that has combined itself with other cultures and that is now combining itself with Western democracy"¹⁷² After the Charlie Hebdo attacks in January 2015 Boubakeur publicly denounced the attacks as horrendous and as an "absolutely distorted, sick and psychopathological view of religion" adding that "in Islam human life is sacred".¹⁷³ As Bassam Tibi explains, we live in a world where it is unthinkable to imagine one unique civilization for all to comply with; there are many civilizations - different one from another, often in conflict, ever since Ancient Greece - among which we need to find a common ground of dialogue and exchange. He continues saying that after 9/11 it has become clear that we are living in a world of conflicts between civilizations but there would be a mistake to think that all Islam is one cultivating thus Islamophobia as a reaction to violent terrorist attacks considered as emblematic for the entire Muslim world. Nevertheless this conflictual environment must be acknowledged and bridges - as opposed to waging a war on Islam that

¹⁷¹ Marshall, Gordon, *Thomas Theorem*, A Dictionary of Sociology. 1998. *Encyclopedia.com*. (March 2, 2015). <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-ThomasTheorem.html>

¹⁷² Laurence, Jonathan; Vaisse, Justin, *Integrating Islam. Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France*, The Brookings Institution 2006, p.102

¹⁷³ Interview Boubakeur, January 2015, <http://www.bfmtv.com/societe/la-communaute-musulmane-condamne-l-attentat-contre-charlie-hebdo-856227.html>

is bound to be lost¹⁷⁴ - must be created. And Tibi offers two solutions for this situation: at an international level there must be a consensus on a international cross-cultural morality, while at interEuropean level he offers “EuroIslam” as the only possible direction. He coined the phrase “the simultaneity of structural globalization and cultural fragmentation” to express the complexity of the pluri-cultural world today in which it is possible to observe both globalization and local cultural self-assertion on cross-regional and cross-cultural grounds.¹⁷⁵

The polyvision - plural views in one snapshot - or poliorama (composed of *poli-* and Greek. ὄραμα «vision», derived from ὁράω «to see»)¹⁷⁶ as an instrument of analysis it is a methodological approach not intended to carry any value-laden judgement but only to open the discussion to the vast array of expressions from all those involved and not only from the ones with the loudest voice. Intercultural dialogue and polyvision or attention to detail (as in history, geography, politics, demography, economy as some of the factors to be taken into account) does not imply convincing others of one’s opinion or theory but creating an inclusive environment where all points of view can be taken into account and new, complex, and comprehensive ideas can emerge.

Jocelyn Cesari explains it best in an article first published in 1997 saying that clichés and historical prejudice obstruct a complex framework of analysis:

“Unfortunately, Western clichés too often provide the chief framework for coping with this unprecedented situation. The presence of Muslims in Europe is commonly perceived as a cultural or terrorist threat. With this reductive and biased point of departure, many

¹⁷⁴ Bassam, Tibi, *La Francia, modello per l'Europa*, n° 76, rivista Reset <http://www.caffeeuropa.it/pensareeuropa/islam-tibi.html>

¹⁷⁵ Bassam, Tibi, *Muslim Migrants in Europe: Between Euro-Islam and Ghettoization* in Nezar AlSayyad, Manuel Castells, *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam. Politics, Culture, and Citizenship in the Age of Globalization*, Lexington Books, University of Berkeley, 2002, 39

¹⁷⁶ Treccani Encyclopedia, <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/poliorama/>

reflections on Islam in Europe fail to reach any enlightening conclusion. The very question that many of these analyses seek to answer—"Do Muslims fit into European societies?"—presupposes a radical opposition between Islam and the west. This opposition formed the basis of Orientalism, which has implicitly informed many subsequent theories on Islam and politics, such as Samuel Huntington's theory of "clash of civilizations" (HUNTINGTON 1996). Orientalism is characterized by a substantialist approach to religion and a linear vision of history; the politics of the Islamic world, according to this view, are inherently theocratic and recidivistic (DUPRET 1994). A survey of the current scholarship on politics and Islam in the Arab and Muslim world often reveals a similar perspective. Rationalized language disguises a normative and value-laden approach, which tends to disparage the political legacy of the Muslim world while equating the Western political tradition with moderation, democracy and human rights."¹⁷⁷

Research in the field of migration and minorities must broaden its vision to include realities that defy rigid theoretical patterns that do not comprise the human variety of autochthonous, new migration and new European-born Muslims, and that advocate Eurocentric views in which Muslims are to be tolerated, accepted if they comply with what is expected of them. Among multicultural estrangement and ghettoization, secular assimilationism, ethnic segregation and new rise of discrimination - may it be racial, ethnic, religious - which model, if any, best explains European Islam, its past, present and future? Only an interdisciplinary methodology that can move across areas of interest putting together all the pieces of the puzzle can offer an accurate plurivision analysis of this new paradigm of migration and multiculturalism. The majority of the studies on European Islam have focused on Western Europe and on the models of integration provided by Western immigration patterns that are limiting to the comprehension of the entire European spectrum of symbiotic expressions. This research brings to light the Romanian "model of integration" and takes into consideration the Dobrujan legacy of cultural plurality that could

¹⁷⁷ Cesari, Jocelyne, *Muslim Minorities in Europe: The Silent Revolution* in John Esposito and François Burgat (ed), *Modernizing Islam: Religion in the Public Sphere in the Middle East and in Europe*, Rutgers University Press, 2003, pp. 251-269, p. 127 and CESARI Jocelyne 1997, *Faut-il avoir peur de l'islam?*, Paris: Presses de Science Po

become a focal point in the interpretation of the modern migrational trends by addressing multivalent factors that strengthen the mosaical reality of Muslims in Europe, and by offering a complexity-based way of thinking that favors an all-embracing perspective that takes into consideration a wide variety of forms and expressions.

2. EuroIslam: status-quo, definitions and interpretations

2.1. EUROISLAM

Neologismi (2008)

***EuroIslam** (Euroislam, Euro-Islam), s. m. inv. The process of integration and mutual infusion of the European culture with the Islamic culture. ♦ «Euro-Islam», Bassam Tibi defines the word that represents his key-concept with which we should better familiarize because - he explains - “there will either develop a European type Islam among the Muslim immigrants (able to learn tolerance, pluralism, democracy) or we will have to deal with the claim to Islamize Europe”. (Nina Fürstenberg, Repubblica, 18 ottobre 2002, p.45, Cultura) Composed by the prefix euro- and the subst. islam.¹⁷⁸*

The only online dictionary to include the word “EuroIslam” is the Italian Treccani that lists it with the sub-heading “neologism” adding to the definition some more or less relevant references taken from Italian newspapers. Wikipedia on the other hand presents an interesting image because while the English version is as thorough as Wikipedia can be, providing definitions, interpretations, main figures and developments, the Italian version does not mention the author of the concept of ‘EuroIslam’ and the only names mentioned are oddly enough not academics but politicians and not ones that can be considered as

¹⁷⁸ Treccani Encyclopedia, EuroIslam, translated by myself; [http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/euroislam_\(Neologismi\)/](http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/euroislam_(Neologismi)/)

supportive of the idea of 'EuroIslam' either. No reference to 'EuroIslam' whatsoever in the French version of Wikipedia but only an Islam in Europe with a sub-note to Olivier Roy studies on the subject. Although Wikipedia can hardly represent a scientific ground of interpretation it can be an interesting indicator of how - at a general mainstream level of information - the topic is placed in each national discourse on Islam and at a European level.

Yahya Pallavicini, Milan's Imam says that "neologisms of political, economical and religious nature as EurAsia, EuroMed or EuroIslam express the hermeneutic need to redefine international relations, cultural contaminations, and certain levels of commercial cooperation and juridical compatibility: it is exactly these needs that highlight the crisis of identity awareness - one's own identity and the identity of others - that often proves to be weak or insufficient. Avoiding artificial syncretism, shallow confusions, superficial political slogans, cultural relativism, demagogical solutions, pragmatic shortsightedness, xenophobic and Eurocentric discriminations, would allow greater scientific accuracy and objectivity, purifying the debate from emotional ideological slogans and sterile speculations. It's probably necessary to proceed recalling the traditional teachings of the singular/universal ratio, and thus protect the growth of national uniqueness in a more ample vision that avoids exacerbating peculiarities, and that at the same time protects from the danger of homogenization."¹⁷⁹

It was Professor Bassam Tibi who at the beginning of the 1990s created the concept of 'EuroIslam' as a vision for the future, an alternative for the "ethnicity of fear".¹⁸⁰ A quarter of a century later and counting we cannot talk about a clear and univocal understanding of what EuroIslam is or should be and if it exists only in theory or not. One of the difficulties

¹⁷⁹ Pallavicini, Yahya, *Identità in transizione. Chi vogliamo essere?*, 26-28 settembre 2008, Pontignano, http://www.coreis.it/documenti_13/42.pdf

¹⁸⁰ Bassam, Tibi, *Ethnicity of Fear? Islamic Migration and the Ethnicization of Islam in Europe*, in: *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2010, pp. 126-157. For the early interpretation of the concept see Bassam Tibi, *Conditions d'un Euro-Islam*, in R. Bistolfi und F. Zabbal (Eds.), *In Islams d'Europe*, Paris 1995.

encountered approaching this subject is that of the broad spectrum of meanings of what it means to be Muslim, to be a Muslim in Europe, to be a European Muslim, what EuroIslam is - a political proposal, a cultural trend, post-modern Islam, an abstract theoretical attempt to further divide Muslims and Europeans. It becomes essential to trace the most important interpretations of EuroIslam and to briefly analyze the influential, although contradictory opinions of Bassam Tibi and Tariq Ramadan, often erroneously acknowledged for the creation of the concept of EuroIslam. This too is symptomatic of the blurred reality surrounding the subject of Islam in Europe.

Etymologically 'EuroIslam' is still considered a neologism and has not yet entered the common vocabulary even though Bassam Tibi has invented it 25 years ago. Despite the fact that the academic discussion and also the political debate surrounding the Muslim presence in Europe have deepened during these years and have reached the public arena, the concept of EuroIslam has remained somewhat isolated to academic circles and often misunderstood. The confusion surrounding this concept naturally reflects the diversity of the Muslim community in general and the various expressions of Islamic denominations. There are several issues related both to the meaning as to the spelling of EuroIslam: is it a single word, a hyphenated one, two words, a phrase, and the complicated part comes with the various connotations each put upon the expression and they're all backed by political, religious, cultural, ideological factors. The vagueness surrounding the term EuroIslam is symbolic of the ambiguity surrounding this issue in particular and the situation of minorities, migration and Islam in Europe in general and, not to mention indicative of whose point of view is considered; some view it as a Europeanization of Islam - thus another type of assimilation -, others as an Islamic invasion of Europe, and very few as what is was meant to express and that is a hybridization between Islam and the European context able to create a syncretic coexistence between Islamic and European cultural values. In order to grasp the complexity of meaning and layers of different - at times conflictual - implications this term combines it is indispensable to start from the definition and interpretation of the phrase given by its author.

2.2. BASSAM TIBI'S EUROISLAM

Tibi defines EuroIslam and explains the process behind it as follows:

I knew other African countries and I have confirmed my idea of AfroIslam: AfroIslam is not bound to the shari'a, it is a very loose day-to-day culture. Islam arrives in Senegal, or better yet on Western Africa - as Senegal did not exist yet - from the end of the XIII century until the XV century: thinking through great historical eras, it is not so long ago. Nevertheless Islam in Africa is not alien, it is African.

In time I encountered Islam in Giava, in Sumatra and Indonesia: Islam there is Giavanese and Indonesian and not Arabic, even though all Muslims believe in Allah, in the Prophet and the five pillars of Islam. Then I asked myself: why is Islam alien in Europe? Islam is still alien in Europe because Europe has not yet accomplished what others have. African Muslims have Africanized Islam while Muslims living in Europe are foreigners because their Islam is not European.¹⁸¹

EuroIslam is thus Europeanized Islam that tolerates other faiths, a self-reformed enlightened Islam that would subject the Qur'an to the same rational scrutiny to which the Bible was subjected during the nineteenth century. It is compatible with liberal democracy, with the fundamental human rights, it does not imply assimilation of Muslims but the adoption of forms of civil society leading to an enlightened, open-minded Islamic identity compatible with European civic culture.¹⁸² As in the words of Tibi, assimilation should be abandoned in favor of a new concept of integration "that does not demand cultural surrender of the self through total conformity, but merely the participation in the civil society's system of civic values. Unlike assimilation, integration limits itself to the adoption of a citizen identity within civil society, it focusses on the rights and duties of the

¹⁸¹ Bassam, Tibi, *La Francia, modello per l'Europa*, n° 76, rivista Reset <http://www.caffeeuropa.it/pensareeuropa/islam-tibi.html>

¹⁸² Bassam, Tibi, *Muslim Migrants in Europe: Between Euro-Islam and Ghettoization*, in *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam: Politics, Culture, and Citizenship in the Age of Globalization*, eds. Nezar AlSayyad and Manuel Castells (New York: Lexington Books, 2002), 37-38.

'citoyen'".¹⁸³ The result is a Muslim identity developed in the secular context of the Western Europe, an Islam that interiorizes core European values such as democracy, tolerance and pluralism. Bassam Tibi calls for a plurality of cultures and not multiculturalism as monoculturalism, he argues, leads to assimilation and thus discrimination.¹⁸⁴

Although I agree to some extent with Tibi's idea of EuroIslam, I cannot help but perceive a Eurocentric view of the European Muslim communities that makes me doubt the actual relevance of this concept in the real everyday life of the European Muslims. The paradox with the concept of EuroIslam is that it is a new theory even though it first saw the light in 1990-1992, it announces the birth of a new kind of moderate Islam as if implying that the existing Islam in Europe doesn't know moderation, it suggests that Islam must reform and interiorize European liberal values as if these were unknown to the Islamic world. This kind of patronizing view is one of the reasons why EuroIslam is still a marginal theory and why the gap between Western Europe and its Muslims continues to become larger and larger.

In a 2007 interview, Tibi elaborated further his theory explaining the basis of his EuroIslam, advising that it was born within the French debate and that this should be kept in mind. He links it to the 1937 Henri Pirenne's thesis "No Charlemagne without Mohammed" on the basis of which he published his own book "Kreuzzug und Djihaad" (Crusade and Jihad) where he argues for a century-long relationship of mutual "threat and fascination" between Islam and Europe (crusades, colonisation, cultural influences) and presents EuroIslam as a bridge between the two civilizations, as a cultural cross-fertilisation that would overcome the tension between Islam and Europe.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ Bassam, Tibi, *Europeanisation, not Islamisation* interview 22/03/2007, [http:// print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html](http://print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html)

¹⁸⁴ Bassam, Tibi, *Muslim Migrants*, op. cit., p. 45

¹⁸⁵ Bassam, Tibi, *Europeanisation, not Islamisation* interview 22/03/2007, [http:// print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html](http://print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html)

In 2010 Tibi argued that EuroIslam is just a vision that has not become reality¹⁸⁶ and actually states that it is inflationary to speak of a European Islam, which is far from being a reality and only a concept embraced by some enlightened Muslims in Europe.¹⁸⁷ Although I agree with Tibi that EuroIslam as he contemplates it continues to remain an abstract theory that has not permeated the reality of the Muslim communities, I disagree with the statement that we cannot speak of a true European Islam; Islam is part of the European core identity and not an external alien element to be Europeanized. There are historical Muslim communities in Europe in Spain, the Balkans, Romania and undeniable examples of cohabitation but is this a manifestation of EuroIslam?

In other words Tibi's EuroIslam is a new culture created within the immigrant Muslim communities in Western Europe by the 3rd and 4th generation Muslims who mould together the Islamic tradition of their forefathers with the European reality in which they have been brought up, it is not assimilation and it is not multiculturalism. Tibi's EuroIslam is based on five pillars: (1) democracy according to Western understanding, (2) secularism and rejection of shari'a, (3) individual human rights, (4) tolerance in the modern understanding of this term, and (5) recognition of pluralism in a civil society.¹⁸⁸ I believe Tibi is looking from a Western European perspective at the issue of Islam when he states that change is a condition sine qua non for successful integration of Muslims in Europe [...] Europeanization of Islam can only be accomplished if —change and religious reforms are admitted by Muslims.¹⁸⁹ Although this is a true reading of some Muslim realities in Europe, it is not true for all Muslims in Europe and it definitely leaves out completely the historical

¹⁸⁶ Bassam, Tibi, *Der Euro-Islam als Brücke zwischen Islam und Europa*, www.perlentaucher.de

¹⁸⁷ Tibi, *Political Islam*, 180.

¹⁸⁸ Bassam Tibi, *Conditions d'un Euro-Islam*, in R. Bistolfi und F. Zabbal (Eds.), In *Islams d'Europe*, Paris 1995. Also found in Faruk Sen's ideas inspired by Tibi <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/euro-islam.aspx?pageID=438&n=euro-islam-2004-05-23>

¹⁸⁹ Bassam, Tibi, *Political Islam, World Politics, and Europe. Democratic Politics and Euro-Islam versus Global Jihad*, London and New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 189.

Muslim communities that are already part of the “European way of life”. He also critiques Europeans who - in his words - need to rethink their idea of identity which is often based on ethnicity rather than values; he asks for a de-ethnization of European identity as a prerequisite for the feasibility of EuroIslam.¹⁹⁰

Although Tibi's theory represented a plausible outcome 25 years ago something happened and EuroIslam - as Tibi outlined it - remained a vision. I argue that some type of EuroIslam - if this is what we eventually call it - or of European Islam already exists and has existed in Europe for the last couple of centuries. My research seeks to examine these real examples of European Islam and see if the theory holds up to the reality outside the limited context described by the author Bassam Tibi. My research thus relates with the studies of EuroIslam and European Islam and Islam in Europe as well as with the international debate on multiculturalism, the fail and future of multiculturalism as a political approach, the premises and the factors involved in the crisis of multiculturalism - that can also explain why theories such as EuroIslam have not yet made a real connection with the communities they apparently speak to - and why looking at the situation from only one perspective or only with one pair of eyes means denying any possibility of success. As supportive of Tibi's attempt to describe a 'vision' that he does not yet see portrayed in real life, I argue to take into consideration the possibility that he might be describing as 'visionary' something that already exists in some parts of Europe but is concealed from the vision of some because of the limitations set by his own theory. Tibi's theory is a good basis for discussion once it is set free from the reductionist approach that essentializes the Muslim communities in Europe to the stereotypical idea of Ottoman invader driven by the shari'a they need to renounce, stoning women and incapable of envisioning Illuminist principles. I believe, paradoxically, that this view, even though it advocated the birth of a European Muslim culture, and fought against Islamophobia by promoting dialogue, with its peculiar articulation it disseminates a stereotypical, depthless, one-dimensional image of the

¹⁹⁰ Bassam, Tibi, *Muslim Migrants*, op. cit., p. 32.

Muslims in Europe thus limiting the possibilities of discussion and bind EuroIslam to remain a theoretical elite-driven project.

Several scholars pursued the idea of EuroIslam created by Bassam Tibi and inspired by Habermas' post-secularism theory in which he includes the concept of EuroIslam saying that "the discussion on a desired EuroIslam makes us once more aware of the fact that it is the religious communities that will themselves decide whether they can recognize in a reformed faith their true faith."¹⁹¹ Faruk Sen¹⁹², former chairman of the German-based Turkish Research Center (TAM) stated in 2002 that "EuroIslam is not a concept that is far from reality; it is increasingly influencing the everyday lifestyles of Muslims living in Europe"; he too links the development of an active EuroIslam to the generational change saying that although among the younger generations can be linked to general changes in their values, it is still questionable whether in the future, among the migrants, a new authentic form of Islam will emerge, leading to EuroIslam, or whether this will just remain a normative settlement. Olivier Roy¹⁹³ picked up the concept of EuroIslam taking it further perhaps than what Bassam Tibi intended - getting him some criticism from Tibi (who said that both Roy and Ramadan distorted his concept)¹⁹⁴ - stating that in order to analyze and understand the phenomenon of terror that can rise from inside Western societies we must develop and consult a new sociology - that of EuroIslam. Jorgen Nielsen cited in an article in USA Today in 2005 says that "Europeanizing" Islam "requires changes in relations between the sexes, in relations between parents and children, significant changes in

¹⁹¹ Jurgen Habermas in Bilgi University's Santral Istanbul conference, published 6.10.2008, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/default.aspx?pageid=438&n=habermas-speaks-on-post-secularism-in-istanbul-2008-06-10>

¹⁹² Faruk Sen interview for La Stampa newspaper, published by Hurriyet Daily News on November 1st 2002, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/euro-islam-is-a-revolution-for-muslims-in-europe.aspx?pageID=438&n=euro-islam-is-a-revolution-for-muslims-in-europe-2002-01-11>

¹⁹³ Roy, Olivier, *EuroIslam: The Jihad Within?*, The National Interest, Issue: Spring 2003, <http://nationalinterest.org/article/euroislam-the-jihad-within-517>

¹⁹⁴ Bassam, Tibi, *Europeanisation, not Islamisation* interview 22/03/2007, <http://print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html>

attitudes to people of other religions, and in attitudes toward the state,” and adds that “the majority are sticking to their religion but divorcing it from the cultural tradition and redressing it in a new culture.”¹⁹⁵ Nielsen furthers his analysis of the concept by observing two divergent uses of the term ‘EuroIslam’ indicative of two trends emanating from within Muslim communities in Europe: first as a form of expression which allows Muslims’ constructive participation in their countries and second, an ideological content infiltrated from outside the communities aimed at controlling and setting limits to European Muslim expression.¹⁹⁶ Jocelyne Cesari accentuates the idea of secularization of the Islamic practices and institutions saying that Islam should be merged into European culture and that Islamic culture should be added to Europe's educational curricula.¹⁹⁷

Reynolds and Grant imagine four scenarios for the future of Europe and its Muslim communities, one of which is EuroIslam; the others are Fortress Europe, Green Ghetto and Eurabia. In their idea of EuroIslam “the Muslim populations develop and embrace a distinctive and moderate variant of their religion that reconciles their beliefs and practices with the norms of contemporary European life. After first mastering the languages of their host societies, Muslims then adopt the same modes of dress, lifestyles, and social habits. Education and employment patterns of Muslims and native Europeans become identical. Inter-marriage becomes widespread. A core body of secular beliefs and structures comes to characterize the Muslim populations as much as it does pre-existing European populations. In short, over time the immigrant Muslim populations become effectively indistinguishable from the native European populations. Traditional Christian sources of European values and

¹⁹⁵ Ford, Peter, *Europe's rising class of believers: Muslims*, February 23rd 2005, *USA Today*, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2005-02-23-islam-europe-csm_x.htm

¹⁹⁶ Nielsen, Jorgen, in Aziz Al-Azmeh, Effie Fokas ed., *Islam in Europe. Diversity, Identity and Influence*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 11

¹⁹⁷ Cesari, Jocelyne, *The Securitization of Islam in Europe*, Challenge Research Paper n° 15, April 2009, http://libertysecurity.org/IMG/pdf_The_Securitisation_of_Islam_in_Europe.pdf

historical symbols gradually fade from public life. In effect, a new synthesis of cultures transpires and a new civilization is born.”¹⁹⁸

In two apparently parallel settings, the idea of EuroIslam is articulated in characteristic patterns. First, Xavier Bougarel traces Bosnian Islam as “European Islam” elaborating on the fact that the notion can encompass distinct and even conflictual phenomena as it comprises both the sufi practices in Bosnian Islam that are of Ottoman origin, as the deep secularization in Bosnian society produced by fifty years of communism.¹⁹⁹ Enes Karić, Professor of Qur'anic Studies at the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Sarajevo and former Minister of Education and Culture, argues that “Euro-Islam is both a political and a ideological term addressing the question of coexistence in Europe from a European perspective. [...] It is to be seen if the concept will gain full acceptance not only in terms of social sciences but of European reality itself.”²⁰⁰

In a second setting, in the Tatarstan Republic Raphael Khakimov, Director of Institute of History Academy of Sciences of Tatarstan and State Adviser to the President on Political Affairs, is one of the few who directly links “Euro Islam” to a historical Islamic reality, the reform movement called Jadidism, saying that “we should understand the term ‘Euro Islam’ as a modern form Jadidism. Euro Islam mostly reflects cultural aspects of Islam, rather than its ritualistic aspects, the latter being left to one's own personal judgment. The key focus of Euro Islam is on ijtiḥād (a method of critical judgment) for modern interpretation of the Qur'an.”²⁰¹ Sufism is an Islamic branch that teaches spirituality and that promotes the

¹⁹⁸ Reynolds, Michael A.; Grant Thomas D., *The Future Of Europe And Its Muslims. Four Scenarios*, Long Term Strategy Group, 2007, p.6-9

¹⁹⁹ Xavier Bougarel, *Bosnian Islam as "European Islam: Limits and Shifts of a Concept* in Aziz Al-Azmeh, Effie Fokas ed., *Islam in Europe. Diversity, Identity and Influence*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 96-121

²⁰⁰ Karić, Enes, *Debate: Islam in Europe*, <http://www.muslim-lawyers.net/research/index.php3?aktion=show&number=169>

²⁰¹ Khakimov, Raphael, *Euro Islam in the Volga Region*, http://1997-2011.tatarstan.ru/?DNSID=2ddb050db9cd22573b383ba0213d56c6&node_id=2762

concept of tasawwuf, an individual quest to rediscover the heart, soul, and mind of Islam that can “lay the foundation of a new Islamic humanism and renaissance.” Therefore²⁰² ijtihad and tasawwuf lay the basis within Islam for the so-called Western values of pluralism, tolerance and humanism.

2.3. TARIQ RAMADAN'S EUROISLAM

Tariq Ramadan's views on Islam in Europe are controversial and have been cause for debate, often in light of his kinship to Hasan-al-Banna, founder and ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood. Qandil, a Palestinian French researcher, is among those who warn about Ramadan's views as “encouraging integration while demanding their inner and spiritual loyalty to their Islamist interpretation of Islam”.²⁰³

In his “To Be a European Muslim” (1999/2002) he elaborates on his idea of European Islam based on the fact that Islam is not one, only its fundamental pillars are unique for all, but the way in which each Muslim people adjusts these principles is different, and it is this the reason why a European Islam is not unconceivable. He argues that Islam is able to evolve and that Muslims as well as Europeans must keep in mind that Islam is a religion, not a culture; this is how it is possible for Muslims to live in a different culture and incorporate the elements of that culture that do not contradict their religious fundamentals. The main risk he acknowledges concerns children who find themselves torn between Western customs at school and Islamic out-dated teachings in the madrassas thus leading to an “unhealthy schizofrenia”²⁰⁴ that can be avoided by promoting native European imams. In “Noi musulmani europei” (2008) he argues that while Muslims must learn to define themselves

²⁰² Qandil, Yunis, *Euro-Islamists and the Struggle for Dominance within Islam* in *The Other Muslims. Moderate and Secular* ed by Zeyno Baran, New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 9

²⁰³ Qandil, Yunis, *idem*, p. 10

²⁰⁴ Ramadan, Tariq, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, Paperback OUP USA, 2005, p. 127

through multiple identities, the psychological integration is crucial as the feeling of belonging is not given by the law but by feeling at home.

Bassam Tibi sees Ramadan's version of EuroIslam as deception as it supports the creation of a "counter culture" in Europe; is 'Orthodox Islam' without Europeanisation.²⁰⁵ But what does Ramadan mean when he speaks of European Islam? For Ramadan there is one Islam²⁰⁶ but Muslims can live in Western societies and the Shari'a allows it since it is the expression of the universal principles of Islam but also the framework that allows their actualization in human history.²⁰⁷ So while Tibi argues that concepts like Sharia and Jihad must be abandoned and Islam culturally reformed "to get in tune with the fundamentals of cultural modernity (democracy, individual human rights, civil society) and embraces pluralism deserves to be defined as EuroIslam."²⁰⁸

One important aspect that Tibi points out is that a distinction must be made between Islam and Islamism where Islam is a religious faith and a cultural system while Islamism is a totalitarian ideology.²⁰⁹ Tibi's criticism towards Ramadan's view goes in this direction, of confounding and overlaying the two conceptions. This distinction became significant after the Charlie Hebdo attacks in January 2015 when media outlets and political debate were overwhelmed with discussions about the right terms to use when referring to terrorists. Another element that stands out is the religion/culture distinction scholars make: is Islam only a religion? Is it only a culture? Is it an ethnic identity? Is it a political expression? It is all of these? Roy and Tibi argue that Islam is both a culture and a religion - nonetheless to

²⁰⁵ Bassam, Tibi, *Europeanisation, not Islamisation* interview 22/03/2007, [http:// print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html](http://print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html)

²⁰⁶ Ramadan, Tariq, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, Oxford University Press, 2004,p. 9

²⁰⁷ Ramadan, *Western Muslims*, op. cit., p. 32

²⁰⁸ Bassam, Tibi, *Europeanisation, not Islamisation* interview 22/03/2007, <http://print.signandsight.com/features/1258.html>

²⁰⁹ Bassam, Tibi, *ibidem*

be kept distinct - and that it is exactly the fact that Islam is also a cultural view of the world of so many different Islamic people that renders it fluid and allows Muslims to embrace secular democracy.²¹⁰

The ongoing debate surrounding the status of Muslims in Europe is complex and cannot gain from one-sided views. One other aspect to take into consideration is that the current discourse on European Muslims raises doubt as much on the European perspective as on the Muslim one as each narrative that accompanies the discourse creates its own set of assumptions, interpretations and reactions that often are contradictory and provoke clashes. Tibi's ideas sound good to Europeans but are looked at with disbelief by Muslims themselves while Ramadan's views are welcomed by some Muslims but looked at with suspicion by Europeans. I believe that the focal point of disjunction between these apparent two sides of the same coin is the fact that while talking about roughly the same phenomenon one view is top-to-bottom 'model' that Muslims would have to adopt, while the other is a "Europeanizing shari'a" that finds little support both among Europeans as well as Muslims. They both ignore the realities of cross-cultured communities and do not take into consideration the European Muslim expressions existent throughout Europe as a starting point of debate. European Islam unfolds in many different ways as a social phenomenon and not only as a political one, as a reality attained in time by communities themselves and not as a theoretical utopia dropped onto 2^o and 3^o generation Muslims to deal with.

2.4. TATAR EUROISLAM

Mentioning the phrase "EuroIslam" during my field research in Romania raised many eyebrows, some interrogative about its meaning, others dismissive but only two people linked the Western concept that I had brought with me to a Tatar origin opening thus the discourse to a new historical thread that broadens the research on European Islam

²¹⁰ Roy Olivier, *Islam and Europe*, 30.05.2010, interview, <http://www.euro-islam.info/2010/05/30/interview-islam-and-europe-an-interview-with-olivier-roy/> and Bassam Tibi - "Islam Between Culture and Politics", Palgrave MacMillan, 2005,

supporting the notion that Islam is not alien to Europe and that historical grounds can advocate to the existence of an Islam in perfect harmony with the European environment.

"Khakimov's concept?" was the response I received from Prof. Tasin Gemil in Bucharest when I told him about my research. In a 2010 book, Gemil defines 'EuroIslam' as a recent "innovative trend able to adapt Islamic principles to the contemporary society demands. It promotes a non-dogmatic, pragmatic and modern Islam, compatible with the essential values of the present Western civilization" and traces its origin to the Kazan region.²¹¹

At the beginning of the 2000s Khakimov publishes a series of articles illustrating his idea of Euro Islam²¹² as a modern form of Jadidism and he explains his concept as "Euro Islam mostly reflects cultural aspects of Islam, rather than its ritualistic aspects, the latter being left to one's own personal judgment. The key focus of Euro Islam is on *ijtihad* (a method of critical judgment) for modern interpretation of the Qur'an."²¹³

Khakimov places the origin of Euro Islam inside the Tatar culture developed between the East and the West, inside a Russian Orthodox culture where "shari'a does not function" and where consequently the Tatar community had to develop its own "subcivilization"²¹⁴ in which they are not forced but born into and as such they have developed a different Islam that is not that of Saudi Arabia nor that of a Christian Europe. He explains it best from the point of view of a historical Muslim community not migrant into a Christian country but native:

²¹¹ Gemil, Tasin, *A New Tatar Initiative of Reform - EuroIslam* in orig. *O noua initiativa tatarasca de reforma - Euroislamul* in *Mostenirea isorica a tatarilor*, Ed. Academiei Romane, 2010, p 1

²¹² Khakimov uses this spelling "Euro Islam" as opposed to the one preferred by Tibi. Khakimov, *Euro Islam in the Volga Region*, Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Vol. XXVII, No.2, Winter 2004 http://1997-2011.tatarstan.ru/?DNSID=2ddb050db9cd22573b383ba0213d56c6&node_id=2762

²¹³ Khakimov, Raphael, *ibidem*

²¹⁴ Khakimov, Raphael, *Where is our Mecca? (Manifest of Euroislam)*, 2003 <http://1997-2011.tatarstan.ru>, p. 33

The world is becoming mixed. What may be treated as a deviation from “pure” Islam in Tatarstan will become normal for most countries in the future. The era of Islamic caliphates is over. The world is no longer homogeneous. Everything is interrelated. No one can create an isolated, purely Islamic environment. And there is no need striving for such an “ideal,” because Islam does not deny Christianity or other peoples’ way of life. It teaches us to understand them [...] Islam in our country is bound to become Westernized. It will be EuroIslam. Such are the requirements of life. Indeed, whom shall we choose as an example to follow? Sudan, Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia? The greater the backwardness of a country, the more severe the historical shar’ia there. [...] For us, Europe has always been a source of wisdom and knowledge. And it remains so today. Our task is not to set boundaries that separate the Tatars from other nations; not to isolate ourselves in a made-up ethnic and confessional reservation, but to establish ties between different religions, different conceptions of Islam, and between Islam and Christianity. Our mission lies in promoting tolerance, which will help to unite all of mankind.²¹⁵

Khakimov thus illustrates a type of Euro Islam that is native to historical European Muslim communities and that apparently has no connection to Tibi's or Ramadan's ideas of EuroIslam but that embodies a lived through Islam that present an even more important feature: the fact that it is not a new adjustment following migration or generational passing but that is intrinsic to Islamic culture and tradition. Ijtihad represents "in Islamic law, the independent or original interpretation of problems not precisely covered by the Qur’ān, Hadith (traditions concerning the Prophet’s life and utterances), and *ijmā’* (scholarly consensus)."²¹⁶ Khakimov goes to great extent as to demonstrate that Euro Islam is an innate characteristic of Islamic pluralism supporting his thesis by the existence of the concept of ijtihad in Islam which gave space to the Jadidism movement, Euro Islam's precursor according to Khakimov.

We should understand the term "Euro Islam" as a modern form Jadidism. [...] *Ijtihad* brings together the East and the West; it is the very beginning of liberal thinking. If a free

²¹⁵ Khakim Raphael, *idem*, p. 33 , 34 and 36

²¹⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/282550/ijtihad>

individual strives for education and progress in society, this is quite acceptable for both western and Islamic cultures.²¹⁷

2.5. ISMAIL BEY GASPIRALI (1851-1914) AND JADIDISM

Nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Russian Muslim intellectual movement, inspired by Ismail Bey Gasprinski, that developed in response to colonial hegemony and the modern age. Sought to reform education, raise the quality of life for Muslims, improve their economic and technical competitiveness, and restore something of the power, wealth, and dignity gradually lost over the previous decades and centuries. Began with Sufi brotherhoods stressing the inner awakening and moral reformation of the individual, and intellectuals reassessing the accepted traditions of Islamic civilization. Both promoted renewal and a better future by authenticating and implementing fundamental traditions of the early Muslim community. Sought to empower women and grant them a more central status and a greater role in society²¹⁸.

The movement took its name from *oşul-e jadid* (new method), which would replace the "old" (*qadim*) schools. "*Jadid*" became a synonym for reformer.²¹⁹ The Jadids were influenced by other political and social movements in the Islamic world but above all by the Young Turk movement within the Ottoman Empire to bring Central Asia into the modern age not by rejecting Islam - as the Young Turks - but by "bringing Islamic teachings into harmony with the norms of modern society".²²⁰ Their activity interested education reforms, school system reorganization, but their most important work revolved around literature, theater, journalism and their messages denouncing ignorance, religious fanaticism,

²¹⁷ Khakimov, Raphael, *Euro Islam in the Volga Region*, Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. Vol. XXVII, No.2, Winter 2004 http://1997-2011.tatarstan.ru/?DNSID=2ddb050db9cd22573b383ba0213d56c6&node_id=2762

²¹⁸ The Oxford Dictionary of Islam, *Jadidism*, http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e1152?_hi=0&_pos=13

²¹⁹ Encyclopedia Iranica, *Jadidism*, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jadidism>

²²⁰ Encyclopedia Iranica, *ibidem*

government corruption and oppression²²¹ while promoting women's emancipation, the improvement of public health, and local modernization and entrepreneurship. Reformers sought to end drug addiction, alcoholism, and pederasty.²²² They created a type of indigenous theatre to reach the illiterate by which they promoted moral behavior. The Jadids supported the Russian Revolution and were at first charmed by the Boshevik ideals but they soon turned away from all political engagement, Stalin's regime managing to completely crush the movement.

Ismail Gasprinski (Russian version that Ismail used)²²³ or Gaspıralı (Turkish version) was born in Gaspra, a small village on the Black Sea Coast of Crimea, and his legacy revolves around his periodical *Tercüman* (the Interpreter) which he published for more than two decades (1883 - 1916) and the motto "Dilde, fikirde, işte, birlik" (Unity in language, thought, and action) that many have linked to the broader topic of Pan-Turkism.²²⁴ Gaspıralı's four main interests can be divided into four categories:

the general question of Islamic renewal and relations between the Islamic and various Western worlds; language and its role in Islamic renewal; women's rights and emancipation as an essential ingredient for renewal; and finally, for Ismail Bey the panacea for the first three, education in a form new to the Islamic world.²²⁵

In 1881 Gaspıralı writes a small book entitled "*Russian Islam: Thoughts, Notes and Observations of a Muslim*" in which he calls for total and immediate renewal of Russian

²²¹ Encyclopedia Iranica, *ibidem*

²²² Encyclopedia Britannica, *Activities of the Jadid Reformers*, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1707518/Activities-of-the-Jadid-Reformers>

²²³ International Committee for Crimea, Inc, A Note on the Name *Gaspıralı* or *Gasprinskii*, <http://www.iccrimea.org/gaspıralı/name.html>

²²⁴ Fisher, Alan W., *A Model Leader for Asia, Ismail Gaspıralı*, in *The Tatars of Crimea: Return to the Homeland*, ed. Edward A. Allworth, pp. 29-47. Copyright 1998, Duke University Press. <http://www.iccrimea.org/gaspıralı/fisher.html>

²²⁵ Fisher, Alan W., *ibidem*

Islam²²⁶ and by which he shows his cutting-edge visionary ideas distinguishing a European Islam defined by the national identification. In Dobruja Jadidism was greatly supported by intellectuals and professors, as Mehmet Miyazi (1878 - 1931), professor of the Islamic Theological Seminar,²²⁷ who found themselves at the crossroad between the Jadidism coming from the North, the Young Turks movement in Dobruja and the reforms enforced by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey.

Tasin Gemil endorses Khakimov's theory that links EuroIslam to Djadidism stating that both advocate flexibility in the understanding and the practice of Islam. He links the development of EuroIslam or 'Neodjadidism'²²⁸ in the Tatar world to the type of Islam fostered by the Golden Horde and the Ottoman Empire that was pragmatic and religious tolerant and unlike Arab-Iranian Islam, Turkic Islam has always been more open to progress and modernity.²²⁹ Gemil argues that turning to the quintessence of Islam and supporting not the form but the spirit of the Islamic precepts, EuroIslam supporters minimize the relevance of the religious ritual and ceremony, and this makes it resemble the Protestant Reform.²³⁰

One other spiritual movement inside the Ottoman Empire is the Bektasi movement of Hagi Bektas Veli, an Anatolian dervish, well spread in Dobruja and the Deliorman area (entire Dobruja including the Bulgarian area), that stood at the basis of the Janissaries units. Hagi Bektas became the protector of these soldiers and imposed within these corps a tolerance of

²²⁶ Alan W. Fisher, *ibidem*

²²⁷ Fetisleam, Melek, *Djedidismul lui Ismail Bey Gaspirali în Dobrogea (Ismail Bey Gaspirali's Jadidism in Dobruja)* in Tasin Gemil, Nagy Pienaru *Mostenirea istorica a Tatarilor II* (Historical Legacy of Tatars II), Colectia Istorie, Cultura si Civilizatie tatara, Editura Academiei Române București, 2012 , pg. 558

²²⁸ Gemil, Tasin, *A New Tatar Initiative of Reform - EuroIslam* in orig. *O noua initiativa tatareasca de reforma - Euroislamul in Mostenirea istorica a tatarilor*, Ed. Academiei Romane, 2010, p 7

²²⁹ Gemil, Tasin, *idem*, p. 3-4

²³⁰ Gemil, Tasin, *idem*, p.8

religious beliefs (since the Janissaries also included young men taken from conquered or administered lands)²³¹

2.6. FROM EUROPEAN ISLAM TO EUROISLAM TO EUROPEAN ISLAM

Since the Middle Ages Islam has been an enemy to repel, an alien within, a strategic ally, a new element to deal with and tolerate today. Nonetheless, the image of EuroIslam that emerges in Western Europe paints Islam only as an alien element and legitimizes one model of Islam, the one that needs to incorporate European values, that needs to Europeanize, and as such it will never be seen as a viable alternative by the Muslim communities since it reflects a one-sided process and reinforces the idea of an opposition between Islam and Europe.

In order to have a European Islam of any sort - intended as a real cultural expression of a syncretic coexistence between Muslims and Europeans and not just an intellectual construct under perpetual negotiation - there needs to be connection between the communities involved on one hand and between the people and the territory they share. And this implies a shift in identity on all parts, a symbiotic relation that grows over centuries in the presence of certain factors - political, social - and that needs to be analyzed from all points of view: the majority, the minority, the territory, the people, the politics, social and economical implications etc.

The depthless distinction between recent migration Islam and historical Islam made in Europe is interfering with the analysis of the phenomenon by not providing a complete and accurate vision of the situation. Although there are cases of historical Islam in Western Europe - like Spain and Southern Italy - they are usually not considered when examining the issue of Islam in Europe typically stereotyped as the community of guest workers arrived between the 1960s and 1970s and expected to stay temporarily. This considered and granted that since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Balkan Wars the debate surrounding

²³¹ BEKTĀŠĪYA order, Encyclopedia Iranica, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bektasiya>

ethnic, religious, national identity in Europe has intensified at an alarming pace, in my research I decided to examine a European setting that has been cohabited by 20 different minorities in order to address the issue from a new and different point of view. The factors taken into consideration in this research can be grouped into the following aspects:

- The trajectory of the Muslim community in Romania divided into Turkish and Tatar, their individual experiences and history. By analyzing where Romanian Muslims come from, what their roots are and how these roots influenced the present situation one can begin to grasp the complexity of the Romanian context.

- The historical social and political Romanian context in which the Muslim community lives; the conditions of social, economical participation and transformation, the opportunities and limitations of the society regarding the preservation of Muslim identity, its immigration policies, education opportunities and the state-church relations; the relationship between the State and the Muslim community is one of the most important factors to consider especially when there is a majority-minority environment and of particular significance in the Romanian case where the roles of “majority” and “minority” were altered and reversed at a particular historical time between the Romanian and the Turkish/Tatar community. Some of the research questions resulted are ‘what are the implications of this cultural and religious articulation for the development of EuroIslam?’, ‘what makes the Muslim community in Romania different and what were the context-specific factors that created this situation?’.

From a different point of view my research can be seen as a time travel into the future to have a glimpse into what ‘EuroIslam’ could become - given specific conditions - in its own generation. Dobruja is a border region that has a feeling of being an open air ethnographic museum with its particular history and more than twenty different coexisting minorities. The main objectives of this research is to see if the “EuroIslam” theory as outlined by its author and by the other academics interested in the subject could stand the scrutiny of an actual field trial. Dobruja represents the optimal environment for a field experiment as it is offers an ample territory but at the same time rather circumscribed for a medium sized

community; it is a real world situation in an open, natural setting where a theory developed in a controlled isolated University office that is largely founded on projections of how the Muslim community will evolve in a European context can be put to test in a situation where these projections have been unfolding for the last two centuries.

This field research in Dobruja can also put to the test some of the issues in circulation in the “Islam versus the West” debate such as the “2° / 3° generation thesis” that makes the assumption that the “clash of civilizations” between outsiders and Europeans concerns more the 1° generation migrants and that it diminishes from the 2° generation on. This thesis is now criticized by many who believe in a well-defined separation between Islam and Western civilization and who support their convictions with the Madrid and London attacks, the Danish cartoon case or the recent Charlie Hebdo case. My field research can offer a glimpse into a Muslim European culture in its 18th or more generation (if we are to take into consideration the year 1400 as first pre-Islamic presence in Romania and a medium of 4 generations per century) and also answer some of the questions many continue to debate upon such as the capacity of the young generations to adapt to the realities of a new homeland while maintaining the traditions of their parents, the way in which they handle their religiosity into a cultural tradition²³² without radicalizing and becoming even more religious than their fathers because lost in a world that doesn’t accept them and in search of an identity. Allievi makes the point that it is pointless to continue to talk about second and third generations as we now have first generations of “neo-indigenous” who live in-between two cultures and who, emanating from both of these create a third one.²³³ Laurence argued that “the overwhelming majority of fourth- and fifth-generation Muslims in France, Germany, Britain, the Netherlands will settle into a minority group identity,

²³² Cesari, Jocelyn, *Muslim Minorities in Europe: The silent Revolution*, in *Modernizing Islam: Religion in the public Sphere in Europe and the Middle East*, ed. J.L. Esposito and F. Burgat, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003, p. 262

²³³ Allievi, Stefano, *Seconda generazione, il nuovo volto dell’islam*, 1.03.2005, [http:// www.stefanoallievi.it/2005/03/seconda-generazione-il-nuovo-volto-dell’islam/](http://www.stefanoallievi.it/2005/03/seconda-generazione-il-nuovo-volto-dell’islam/) and Allievi Stefano, *Islam italiano: viaggio nella seconda religione del paese*, Einaudi, 2003

referring to themselves as ‘European Muslims’ and socializing and engaging in organized political activities with one another across-borders”.²³⁴

The concept of EuroIslam cannot be limited to immigrant communities in Western Europe or to 2° and 3° generation youths, it cannot embody an Islamization of Europe nor can it imply an assimilation of Muslims into European culture. For it to become a real alternative it has to be interiorized and thus become a bottom-up reality that the communities develop without an active knowledge of "making EuroIslam". The phenomenon of syncretic Islam unravels in time and it can be observed in historical Muslim communities throughout Europe but it is still to analyze and determine if it is EuroIslam as the author intended it or something else.

What's in a name? that which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet;

Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet

If by EuroIslam we mean the forging of a syncretic culture between Islamic and European Christian ways of life where integration is understood as a two-way dynamic process where there is no value-laden discourse about toleration or assimilation, where there is space for political participation, open education and preservation of cultural and religious identity, then that is the Dobrujan mosaical reality. Is this EuroIslam - with the ideological and political density some put on it - or is it European Romanian Islam originated in a border region where the element involved - people, history, politics - fused into what there is called "interethnic Dobrujan model"²³⁵ of multiculturalism. To answer the first research question, the Interethnic Dobrujan Model (appeared as a concept in a 1994 symposia held in Constanta) represents a small scale anthroposystem that reproduces the diversity and cultural, ethnic and religious intermixture found in the Balkans. So are we talking about a

²³⁴ Laurence, Jonathan, *The Emancipation of Europe's Muslims: The State's Role in Minority Integration*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2012, p 267

²³⁵ The origin of this expression is traced back to the 1994 Conference called *Interethnic Dobrujan Model* organized in Constanta <http://www.ispmn.gov.ro/node/minoritaea-ttar-1994>

European Islam of Balkanic pattern and Ottoman origin? And is it so diverse with respect to the Western Muslim communities of newer origin? Is it possible to look into the Interethnic Dobrujan Model in order to obtain information useful to the analysis of the Western type Muslim communities?

Dobruja represents a particular environment where the coexistence between Muslims and Romanians was a reality even before Romania existed as a nation-state and before theories and ideologies were debated in sterile academic circles, an environment where discussions about Islam compatibility with European values are superfluous, the mere mentioning of the word "EuroIslam" created an array of reactions that went from irritation and puzzlement to laughter and dismissal, perplexity and a sort of offense and even though initially I did not understand the reason, they became clearer as time passed. "EuroIslam" by its sheer name suggests a denaturation of Islam and a "cultural appropriation" of Islam by European Christians trying to make Islam more "likeable" and "familiar" as one student told me.

In this articulation it seems to reinforce a "religious minorities model" thus resulting in another differentiating approach rather than an uniting one. Therefore the subsequent question - during my field research in Dobruja - became what is the "interethnic Dobrujan model" of multiculturalism? A different type of EuroIslam started from the bottom-up, from the historical co-existence of Muslims in Romania, or is it a form of Romanian, hence European, expression of Islam unique in its form and on a distinct and inconsistent course of analysis, a cross-cultural identity across all the minorities living in Dobruja based on common values, a sort of Dobrujan *Leitkultur* that doesn't erase ethnic individualities but creates a common trait to all groups living in the area. The following step became that of analyzing the "interethnic Dobrujan model" and trying to understand its structure and its correlation with the theoretical concept of EuroIslam that needs to be reconsidered when taken out of the French or German context and into a broader Muslim reality. The historical Muslim communities can add significant information to the research by answering one of the most obsessive questions: "can Islam reconcile tradition and modernity in a Western environment?" Can religion be separated from culture and is it a prerequisite for Muslims living in Western Europe? As seen, EuroIslam is a complicated concept still contested in its

various understandings; at its core it aspires to express a setting that might have already silently been forged both by historical as by 'neo-indigenous' Muslims.

At the conclusion of this chapter, after analyzing the nature of the political factor and the policies emanated towards the management of the Muslim presence in Western Europe, after illustrating the characteristics of the concept of EuroIslam and the various understandings (pro or against this theory), I can observe that looking from his perspective, EuroIslam - as a normative model - ceases to be a viable option as it reveals its core flaw: the fact that is perceived as something alien from the Muslim community and culture. Thus, in order to answer the second question of my research, in Dobruja there seems to be a pattern of cultural resilience, more so than EuroIslam as it is understood by its scholars, that allowed during centuries of cohabitation to create a pattern of intermixture and hybridization that acted as a shield of protection of cultural identity, of preservation of cultural traits, and of resistance in face of assimilation and homogenization. The next chapter will bring to the table yet another critical factor of the Muslim presence in Europe: the historical factor. It is this element that deeply differentiates between the present day situation on Western Europe and in Eastern Europe and the modalities chosen by politics to deal with the Muslim presence on their territories.

*A person without the knowledge of their past history,
origin and culture is like a tree without roots*

Marcus Garvey

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK

To present the complexity of the studied theme, I begin by framing the role of Islam in the Ottoman society, and then proceed to provide a short historical analysis of the ways in which religious boundaries, state action and inter-religious community relations were organized in order to maintain religious tolerance for such a long period of time. I follow the continuities and discontinuities in the role of Islam from the inception of the Ottoman Empire, through its establishment as the state religion, and the important linkage between state and society. Throughout this research I want to underline the particular nature of the relationship between the state, religion, and politics in the Ottoman context. The nature of the religion that came out of this particular context embodied both an anchor for a community of faithful and a mechanism for the rule of an empire; it was both an institution of rule and a worldview of an Islamic community; it was to be at the root of the social and economic basis of power as well as the substance of the legitimating ideology of the state. In order to understand a religious environment of this extent, we need to place religion in the empire into a relational context and steer clear of the temptation to study the empire simply through a religious lens. That is why following Geertz's interpretive anthropology is so appealing.

This chapter is devoted to the historical process of the transformation of a traditional community of peasants into a politically mobilized secular nation. It focuses systematically on the position of the two Turkic minorities, the Tatars and the Turks in East European

Romanian history. I cover the 'Tatars' and the Turks' history chronologically from their ethno-genesis in the pre-Ottoman era right up to the present. According to social scientists such as Pierre Nora²³⁶, memory is, as identity is, multiple, and yet specific: it paves the way for the creation of “*lieux de mémoire*” that are fundamentally remains that can be visible through institutions, monuments, museums, daily-life, literature, etc. I try in this research to follow these “*lieux de mémoire*” existent in the Turkish and Tatar communities in Romania, and especially Dobruja - Constanta.

1. The Ottoman Empire

1.1. THE PRE-OTTOMAN PREMISES

The Ottoman Empire which linked three continents, Asia, Europe and Africa, bringing together an array of religions, cultures, languages, peoples, climates, and various social and political structures emerged and became institutionalized between the 14th and the 16th century. At first, while the Ottomans conquered land in the Balkans, they acquired a predominantly Christian population and it is only with the expansion of the empire into the Arab lands in the 16th century that a balance between Christian and Muslim populations was reached.

The nature of the Islam observed in the empire at the emergence of the Ottomans, and its institutionalization at the height of the empire made it so that religion was adapted to the needs of the state, and contributed to the segmented integration of groups into the state.

²³⁶ Pierre Nora, *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire*, Representations 26, Spring 1989, The Regents of the University of California

First, in their construction of the imperial realm, the Ottomans separated and differentiated between religion as institution, and religion as a system of beliefs. Both the administrative and the belief systems of Islam thrived under the Ottomans, connecting the different levels of society, given that in this fashion, elites and common folk shared the Islamic idiom (Mardin, 1994, pp. 113–128 quoted in Barkey 2005).

Second, one must focus on the particular conditions of the emergence of the Ottoman state to understand the peculiar construction of an early model of toleration and incorporation. Here, the diversity of religions on the ground, the openness of the Ottoman leaders to the “other,” and the relatively weaker Islamic identification of the rulers allowed for a unique experience of permissiveness and forbearance.

Third, the Ottoman Empire was characterized by an important set of divisions and dualities in religious institutions and practice that made it possible for the state to dominate the accommodation of religion into the life of the empire. The separation and parallel deployment of religious and secular law, the diversity of beliefs and organizations along the orthodox–heterodox range provided the state with the tools for domination. The integration of religion into the state and the coeval use of religious and secular law framed a relationship between politics and religion that was quite different than that of medieval Europe. The mosque in the Ottoman Empire was not an alternative and competitive institution to the state; it was dependent for its livelihood and its existence on the state. It worked within the state; rather than outside and opposed to the state.

Finally, I briefly look at the millet system—an ad hoc procedure for the organization and integration of non-Muslim religious communities into the empire, in order to demonstrate how a particular understanding of Islam facilitated such a capacious administrative apparatus. These four factors succeeded to maintain a particular relationship between the state, religion, and the politics of difference where the diverse groups who lived under the rule of the Ottomans could live their lives and believe in their religion in the manner that they chose.

Since the first documented Turkic presence, the Turkish culture and civilization went through at least three phases: **pre-Anatolian, Seljuk and Ottoman.**



The pre-Ottoman Turkic tribes came into contact with great civilizations

such as that of the Arabs or the Persians which contaminated and enriched their culture without harming or weakening it. This cultural resilience and thus ability to adapt and incorporate elements that otherwise might endanger a civilization was the key resource in creating a lasting empire, and it was one of the features that the Turkic tribes disseminated across the lands they conquered, and transmitted to from generation to generation.

By the 1300, various Turkic peoples - such as the Oğuz tribe (also known as Turkmen or Turkomans), the Kazakhs, the Tatars, the Kyrgyz, the Uyghurs, the Avars, the Kumans among others - had spread throughout Asia, from China to Southeastern Europe. Within the Oğuz tribe the Seljuks created an empire that would settle in Anatolia and rise to defeat the Byzantine Empire.²³⁷ Osman I, called also Othman I (1299-1326), one of the Oğuz tribal chiefs, founded the new eponymous “Ottoman” Turkic state in Asia Minor, thus creating what would become the Ottoman dynasty²³⁸ (known in Turk as Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, the Empire of Osman or of the Osmanlis). Thus the Osmanli dynasty emerged from one of the

²³⁷ Enciclopedia Britannica - Turkic peoples <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/609972/Turkic-peoples>

²³⁸ Marushiakova, Elena; Popov Vesselin, *Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire*, University of Hertfordshire Press, Centre de recherches tsiganes, 2001, p. 23

many small states, emirates and principalities that housed the plains from the frontier edges of Byzantium and the foothills of Anatolia. They expanded to Southeastern Europe, the Anatolian plateau and from there to the heartlands of the Arabs, dominating Mecca and Medina. By the mid-sixteenth century, from the Danube to the Nile, from the Anatolian lands to the holy cities of Islam, the Ottomans had acquired a multi-ethnic, multi-religious empire. In 1453 the Ottomans conquer Constantinople and the Sultan Mehmet II begins to rebuild the destroyed city and restore it to its glory by bringing here not only Turks - in the beginning just a tribe like all the others - but also Greeks, Armenians, Jewish populations and Arabs, Genoese and Venetian merchants. It reached its greatest extent during the reign of the Sultan Suleyman I The Magnificent (1494 - 1566), when the empire comprised central Hungary, the Balkan Peninsula, Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine, Western Arabia, Egypt, territories in the Caucasus, Western Iran. In Europe the Romanian Principalities of Transylvania, Walachia and Moldavia, and Crimea were tributary vassal states, while in North Africa, Tripoli, Tunis and Algiers were semi-autonomous provinces. It continued its expansion ruling over the Middle East, North Africa and Southeastern Europe until its collapse after the first World War. As a result of the extensive territory it occupied - at its greatest extent it spread from Vienna to Egypt, from Russia to Iran - and the onerous political and administrative structure needed to control such a vast empire, the Ottoman Empire, officially an Islamic state, was tolerant to other religious and ethnic groups as it allowed the indigenous inhabitants - from Byzantines, Turks, various Orthodox Slavic peoples, Syrians, Georgians, Armenians, Persians, Egyptians, etc. - to practice their religion provided that they paid the due tribute.

The Ottoman Empire brought together in one of the most troubled epochs and regions of the world, a hybrid population that needed to be kept in peace with a strategy that maintained a constant flow of taxes, and relatively peaceful conquered peoples as to avoid rebellions and assure continuity to the Empire. From the beginning of the Empire, different ethnicities and religions cohabited in peace, under a State rule that pursued order and tranquility above all, in order to prosper. As a political system it was both multiethnic and

pluri-confessional, with a high degree of tolerance, but nonetheless under an Islamic rule that kept everything united.²³⁹ This status-quo was made possible by the fact that the Ottoman Empire was born out of a small emirate bound more to its Asiatic traditions than to the principles of Islam which the Sultans enforced with tolerance and liberalism motivated by their financial and political objectives.²⁴⁰ Large numbers of the Sultan's subjects were Christians, and although the issue of Christianity in the Ottoman Empire is complex and varies depending on the point of view, this research takes into consideration only the situation on Romanian Christians and does not enter into the delicate and complex topic of Armenians or Greeks in the Ottoman Empire. At the beginning of the 1500 in Rumelia (the "Land of the Romans", the present day Balkans, Greece, Southern Romania conquered by the Ottomans from the Byzantine Empire) there were 1.111.799 families, of which 862.707 non-Muslim; between 1453 and 1676 among the 71 Gran Vizirs only 13 were of Turkish origin, while 22 were of Slavic origin, 20 were Albanian, 7 Greeks and 9 of other origins although almost never Romanians.²⁴¹ By the 1530s, over 80% of the population of the Empire was not Muslim, therefore Sultan Mehmet II, named El-Fatih (the Conqueror) instituted the *millet* ('nation' in Arabic) system of law to deal with the various religious communities. Each religious group - mostly 'People of the Book' (*Ahl al-Kitab*), hence Jews, Christians, and Muslims, and later Armenians - was considered a *millet* with its own leader, religious (building churches or temples, practicing rituals, opening religious schools) and administrative rules (it had the legal right to use its own language and manage educational and cultural institutions); Sharia law had no jurisdiction over a *millet*.²⁴² The

²³⁹ Brusanowski, Paul, *Considerations regarding the Impact of the Ottoman Governing Attitudes on Balkan Christians* in Gemil Tasin, Symposium 2013, p.140

²⁴⁰ Gemil, Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans in the XIVth-XVIth Centuries*, Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 2009, p. 25-26

²⁴¹ From M.A.Mehmed qtd by Brusanowski Paul, *Considerations regarding the Impact of the Ottoman Governing Attitudes on Balkan Christians* in Gemil Tasin, Symposium 2013, p. 124

²⁴² Karpat H. Kemal, *The Muslim Minority in the Balkans* in *Studies on Turkish Politics and Society*, BRILL Leiden, Boston 2004, p. 523-543

millet system was, in effect, a federation of theocracies.²⁴³ Mehmet II viewed himself as an heir of Rome and tried to realize a Pax Ottomanica by creating a united non-Catholic front triggered by the fear of the Orthodox peoples of the forced Catholicisation promoted by the Holy See and Hungary;²⁴⁴ he thus re-established in Constantinople the Orthodox Patriarchate, the Armenian Patriarchate and the Chief Rabbi. According to the Romanian historian, Nicolae Iorga, “the sultan did not have any interest to weaken the hierarchical discipline of the Orthodox Church; quite the contrary, considering it as a special *instrumentum regni*, an iron organization that was very useful to his purposes”.²⁴⁵ El-Fatih soon proclaimed himself Kayser-i Rum (“Roman Caesar”) as he strongly desired to preserve and reenact the grandeur of the Roman-Byzantine Empire²⁴⁶.

It wasn't by any means a peaceful untroubled empire, on the contrary, it was filled with discrepancies that may as well have been the reason for its flexibility and cultural resilience. For example, in order to prevent the weakness linked with having so many different religions in the Empire, the Ottomans relied on the system of devshirme²⁴⁷ - that was viewed as a “tribute of blood” by the Christian vassals - of taking Christian boys aged 8-22 to be instructed by Turkish families into the language, culture, and religion in order to enter the ranks of the Janissaries and paradoxically be able to climb the social ladder and

²⁴³ Kymlicka, Will, *Two Models of Pluralism and Tolerance*, *Analyse & Kritik* 13, 1992, S. 33-56, p. 35

²⁴⁴ Gemil, Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans in the XIVth-XVIth Centuries*, Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 2009, p. 31

²⁴⁵ Iorga, Nicolae, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*, II, Gotha 1909, p. 37 cited by Brusanowski Paul *Considerations regarding the Impact of the Ottoman Governing Attitudes on Balkan Christians* in Gemil Tasin, Symposium 2013, p.132

²⁴⁶ *Studia et Documenta Turcologica Tahsin Gemil*, n. 1, 2013, Presa Universitara Clujeana, Institutul de turcologie si studii central-asiatice, Cluj-Napoca, p.31

More details in Tasin Gemil, *Romanians and Ottomans in the XIVth –XVIth Centuries*, Enciclopaedia Publishing House, Bucharest, 2009, p.170 and so on.

²⁴⁷ Topçu, Emel, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Fatih Dönemi Kamu Yönetimi*, Ankara: Ocak Yayınları, 1993, p. 34.

become Viziers or Pashas²⁴⁸; for instance, in the period 1453-1600 only 4 out of 34 great viziers were of Turkish origin²⁴⁹. It is estimated that 20,000 of war prisoners and 3,000 children were taken annually through the devşirme system²⁵⁰. Christian girls were taken for the Sultan's harem, although it was recorded that many of them became important in the Empire after marrying influential men and gaining power and respect. One of the most famous Christian women in the Ottoman Empire was Hurrem Sultan or by her real name Roxelana, daughter of an Orthodox priest, abducted in Ukraine and taken to the Sultan's harem; she became the most important woman in the reign as she convinced Suleyman the Magnificent to marry her.

The Ottoman multicultural system was based on few simple and cost-effective premises: plural background and composition, economical needs, and desire to preserve and perpetuate the authority of the Empire. It was not a democratic polity, but it was a "plural, tolerant, and open kind of imperial society, that did not choose to assimilate its population, it did not choose to homogenize its population, it did not choose to overwhelmingly convert the population to Islam. Instead, it accepted diversity and it decided in some ways to construct a plural society: to construct a plural symbiotic society where Muslims were together with Christians and Jews; different groups of Muslims were also together and that is one of the features that we need to think about in the present."²⁵¹ Barkey explains that in the Ottoman Empire there was a Sultan law called Qanun - customary law - even before the Empire became an 'Islamic' one, thus the two sets of rules created flexibility and fluidity in the system as a way of dealing with the multiplicity of subjects and realities on its territory. The Ottoman political, cultural, and ethnic stability led to what Tahsin Gemil

²⁴⁸ Uzunçarşılı, İsmail Hakkı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, Vol. 1, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1988, p, 510-511; Mansel, *ibid.*, p. 17-18

²⁴⁹ Uzunçarşılı, İsmail Hakkı, *idem*, p.11

²⁵⁰ Tasin, Gemil, *The Ottoman Cultural Symbiosis* in *STUDIA ET DOCUMENTA TURCOLOGICA*, n. 1, 2013, Presa Universitara Clujeana, Institutul de turcologie si studii central-asiatice, Cluj-Napoca

²⁵¹ Barkey, Karen, *A Lesson on Pluralism from the Ottoman Empire*, interview in Istanbul 2013 published 8 April 2014 <http://www.resetdoc.org/story/00000022365>

calls “Ottoman cultural symbiosis”²⁵² that influenced all peoples in the Balkans where the Ottoman had a significant influence. Modood said about the Ottoman multiculturalism that “there have been many multicultural societies in the past as the Ottoman Empire where the levels of religious tolerance and accommodation (shown by Muslim rulers towards Jews and Christians) were much greater than those found in western Europe until recent times”²⁵³.

The Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga affirmed that “in all places, life was allowed to unfold according to century or millennia old customs [...]. Nobody had to fear for their religion and nationality [...]. Nobody took the land away from the peasant, the shop or workshop from the townsman, the church from the priest, in which the divine Christian mass continued to go on. The qadi only judged the conflicts of his own according to Quranic Law or the conflicts in which Turks or Muslims were involved; whomever wanted was free to address the village elder (*protogeroi*), the priest or even the metropolitan at any time in order to obtain a solution from them”²⁵⁴

The structural elements that gave solidity to the Ottoman Empire were:

- Ghāzī warriors - the Ottomans were leaders of the Turkish warriors for the faith of Islam, known by the honorific title ghāzī (Arabic: “raider”), who fought against the shrinking Christian Byzantine state²⁵⁵

²⁵² Tasin, Gemil, *The Ottoman*, op. cit.

²⁵³ Modood, Tariq, *Multiculturalism; A Civic Idea*, Cambridge, UK, Malden MA, Polity, 2013, p. 5

²⁵⁴ Jorga, Nicolae, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*. Gotha, Perthes 1908-1913. Digitalized: <https://archive.org/details/geschichtedesosm02iorguoft> Reprint: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 1997, II, p. 197---198

²⁵⁵ Encyclopedia Britannica, *The Ottoman Empire*, <http://www.britannica.com/place/Ottoman-Empire#ref481963>

- Janissaries - Tr. Yeniçeri, (new soldier or troop), member of an elite corps made of Christian youths²⁵⁶
- Mamluks - slave soldiers of non-Muslim origin
- Millet system - communities/nations of faith that kept a state of toleration and religious autonomy
- devşirme system - the “gift” of blood to the Gate
- Qadi - local administrator and judge

This paper is an attempt to understand religion in an open context where Islam functioned for nearly four centuries as a tolerant and responsive framework of relations between the State and the various religious groups on its territory. Although not directly a part of this research, it is important to consider the way in which the Ottoman tolerance originated and how much was it based on the peculiar relationship between Islam and the Ottoman state. The *Ottoman Islam* played a significant role in the manner in which religion and politics became entwined in Ottoman society and the societies under their direct or indirect influence. That is, the Ottoman state became an Islamic state that subordinated religion to its administrative and political interests; moreover, the empire was cognizant that its rule over diversity, difference and the pressure of many dualities was liable to fragmentation. The solution was flexibility across difference and diversity, embracing alternatives and allowing them to flourish under the gaze and control of the state. From secular law to religious law, from orthodoxy to varieties of syncretism and heterodoxy, from the diverse administration of ethnic and religious difference, a space for alternatives and for movement existed. The concrete outcome of religious forbearance was actively constructed in the organizational and relational systems that the Ottoman state and the diverse groupings maintained.

The Ottoman rule ended with the rise of Mustafa Kemal, born in Thessaloniki in 1881, who became the first President of the Republic of Turkey. He led the Turkish War of

²⁵⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica, *The Janissary Corps*, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Janissary-corps>

Independence, he abolished the Sultanate in 1922 and the Caliphate in 1924, he received the surname *Atatürk* in 1934, and dedicated his life to modernizing his country. He looked to Europe for guidance but not because he wanted to copy the Western way of life, he wanted to adapt it to the Turkish environment and reach the Western level of civilization.²⁵⁷ Atatürk looked to Western civilization "not for it is the civilization of the West, but because it represents the modern civilization which incorporates values created by entire humanity in thousands of years by adding an independent, scientific, and rationalist philosophy of life"²⁵⁸. His program was embodied by the "Six Arrows": republicanism, nationalism, statism (state-owned and state-operated industrialization aimed at making Turkey self-sufficient as a 20th-century industrialized state), secularism, and revolution. The guiding principle was the existence of a permanent state of revolution, meaning continuing change in the state and society.

1. 2. THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE ROMANIAN PRINCIPALITIES

The bond between the Romanian Principalities (Walachia and Dobruja, Moldavia, and Transylvania) and the Ottoman Empire unfolded over five centuries since the end of the 14th century until the 19th century, and created a unique symbiotic connection that permanently signed Romanian identity. Great part of the Romanian historical memory is dedicated to the battles with the Ottomans, to the struggles of resistance before three great intrusive empires: Ottoman, Russian and Austro-Hungarian, and to the capacity of the Romanian Principalities of, partially but significantly, keeping their autonomy.

²⁵⁷ Bozkurt Güvenç in emphasizes the following point: "*Kemalist Revolution was committed to building a contemporary society and modern nation along the Western lines. The emphasis, however, was on modernity and development; not imitation but creation. Western sources and resources were examined, adapted but not adopted.* (...) *The goal was not Westernisation but modernisation, that is, development and progress in time-space.*" Bozkurt Güvenç, "Quest for Cultural Identity in Turkey - National Unity of Historical Diversities and Continuities," *Zeitschrift für Türkeistudien*, (1994) 7, p. 186-187 found in Bozkurt Güvenç, *Quest for Cultural Identity in Turkey*, http://ignca.nic.in/ls_03012.htm

²⁵⁸ Enciclopedia Britannica, *Kemal Atatürk* <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/40411/Kemal-Ataturk>

Undoubtedly the Romanian culture and identity has been influenced in various degrees by its past - Hellenic, Roman, Byzantine, Slavic, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman - from architecture to music, art, Greek philosophy, Roman law and Orthodox religion.

The first of the Romanian Principalities was **Transylvania**, formed as a duchy of the Kingdom of Hungary in 1111 (until the 1919 Versailles treaty). The principality most associated with early Romania, **Walachia** (Land of the Vlachs), was formed around 1250 as part of the kingdom of Hungary, gaining its independence in 1330 under Prince Basarab I (discovered and accepted by historians as being of Cuman origin, him and his long line of descendants had a great influence on the creation of the Romanian Principalities).²⁵⁹ In the 12th - 13th century **Moldavia** there were still some Cuman tribes controlling the territory, which Dragos defeated in 1347 starting a dynasty close to the Polish reign. **Dobrogea** remained in the Byzantine Empire until the 13th century, when it was incorporated into Walachia. In 1359 the County of Moldavia is founded under the suzerainty of the Hungarian Kingdom, then the Polish Kingdom and later the Ottoman Empire.²⁶⁰ The Ottoman influence and the subsequent evolution of the regions must be differentiated with reference to the four areas: the two Principalities: Walachia and Moldavia, Dobruja, and Transylvania. Dobruja, distinct area but part of Walachia, experienced the most profound influence due to the proximity to the Ottoman Empire and to its strategic positioning on the Black Sea (a thorough insight into its historical evolution will be the center of the next part of the research); Transylvania is located at the opposite pole as it experienced an extended Austro-Hungarian occupation. Within the Ottoman Empire, the three Romanian Principalities had a special position that wasn't that of an occupied land, but that of a vassal state that paid tribute (*harach* and *djizia* were the most important, both Islamic pre-

²⁵⁹ Gemil, Tasin, *Mostenirea culturala turca in Romania. Legaturile romano-turce de-a lungul veacurilor (pana in 1981)*, The Turkish Cultural Legacy in Dobruja. Romanian-Turkish Ties During the Centuries (until 1981), Ed. Top Form, 2013, p. 35

²⁶⁰ Giurescu, Constantin C., *Istoria românilor, (Romanian History)* vol. I, ediția a V-a, editura BIC ALL; and Predescu, Lucian, *Enciclopedia României, (Romanian Encyclopedia)*, Cugetarea, Editura Saeculum, București, 1999

Ottoman) although besides the *harach* there were often other financial obligations - most of the times as onerous as the *harach* - such as the *peşkeş*, which were the official gifts made to the Sultan and his Vizirs, and the *rüşvet*, which was the bribe which became regulated in the 17th-18th century.²⁶¹ The covenant governing the relationships between the Ottoman Empire and the Romanian Principalities was the *Mefruz ül-Kelam ve Maktu ül-Kadem*,²⁶² that stated that some regions were not registered as belonging to the Ottoman Empire and thus there was no *cadi* (or *qadi*), the organ with decisional power in the Ottoman Empire. Although they were ruled by the Ottomans and they paid collective / national taxes, there were no individual taxes. For the lands that were ‘too strong for the Muslims to subdue’, a treaty called *ahl-i difya* (ransom) and resulted after negotiations and not capitulation, sealed the agreement to pay a tribute in exchange for peace, the early Romanian-Ottoman arrangements entered in this category; in exchange, the territories would receive the *dhimmi* status of non-Muslim land protected by the Islamic community.²⁶³

In the 14th century, not long after Walachia obtained its independence, the Ottomans started their expansion from Anatolia to the Balkans and in 1352 they crossed the Bosphorus, crushing the Serbs at Kossovopolje in 1389. The situation North and South of the Danube was very different: the Ottomans had conquered the South but had no intention of crossing the Danube as the Hungarian kingdom was considered to be a great European power in the SouthEast, while Walachia was small but homogeneous state, with great military power and an incredible will to defend its lands.²⁶⁴ Rather than be affected by the fall of Byzantium, Moldavia and Walachia were strengthened and their national and religious identities awakened. The Principalities feared both the Catholic proselytism coming from Hungary as

²⁶¹ Dipratu, Radu, *Suleyman and the Romanian Countries*, Historia Magazine, http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/s-leyman-i-rile-rom-ne

²⁶² Lupsor, Andreea, *What did we inherit from the Ottomans?*, Historia Magazine, http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/ce-am-mo-tenit-otomani

²⁶³ Gemil, Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans in the XIVth-XVIth Centuries*, Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 2009, p. 54 (for an extensive explanation of the status-quo of the principalities) and p. 25-26

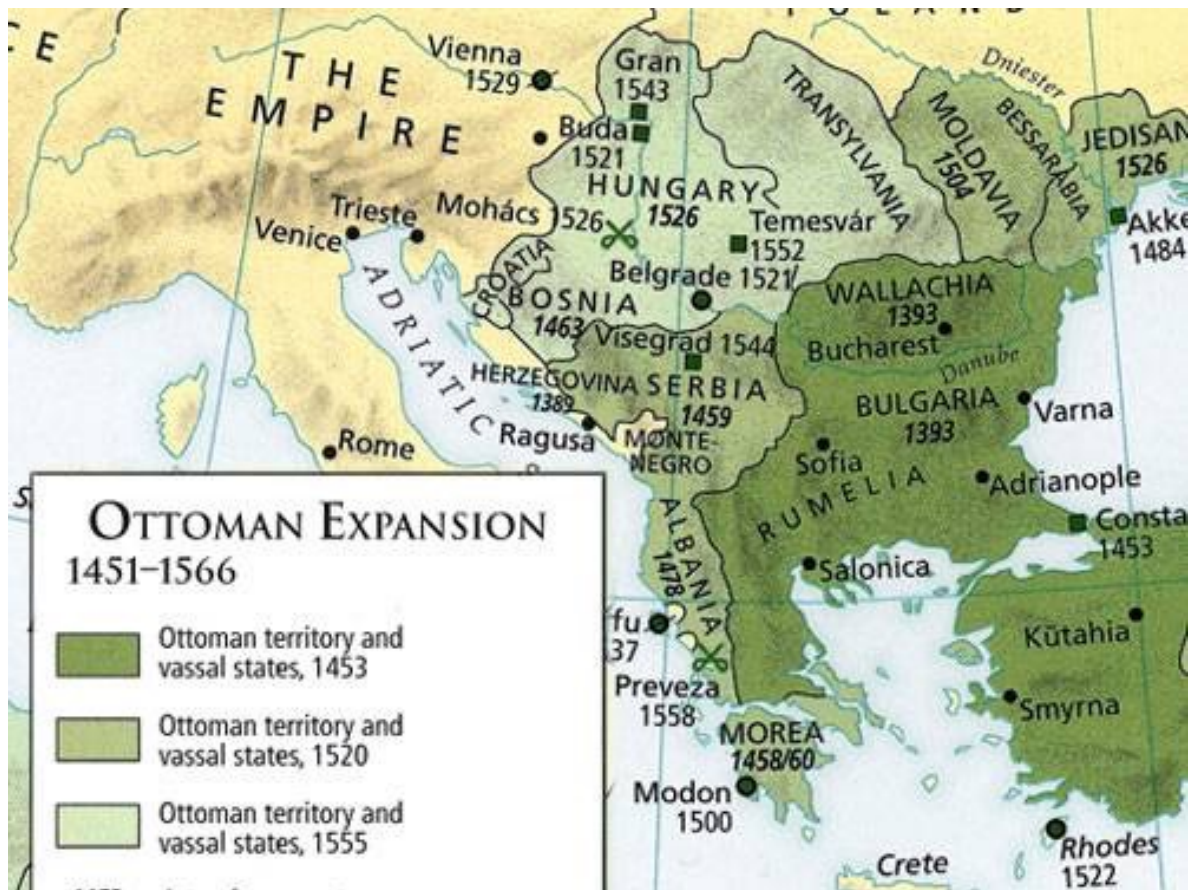
²⁶⁴ Gemil Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans*, *op. cit.*, p. 80-81

the Ottomans' Islam, but history has proved that in times of trouble and with their backs against the wall they preferred to momentarily convert to Islam but not risk being converted by the Hungarian kings supported by the Holy See. Prince Mircea the Old (1386 - 1418) of Walachia sent his troupes to fight besides the Serbs and this infuriated the Sultan Bayezid Yıldırım (the Thunderbolt) who marched on Walachia and imprisoned Mircea until he pledged to pay *harach*. A anonymous Ottoman chronicle, probably from the end of the sixteenth century, mentions that "Bayezid Khan passed into Rumelia, wishing to make a gaza of it. When he got near the borders of Walachia, Mirciu, Voyevod of Wallachia, submitted to him and promised him to pay *harach*".²⁶⁵ After decades of battles and of temporarily regained autonomy, Mircea capitulates to the Sultan Mehmet I once more in 1417 agreeing to pay tribute but in return obtaining a unique concession from the Sultan: Walachia was to remain a principality, and would keep its Orthodox faith.

A new era of battles with the Ottomans was signed by Vlad Tepes' brief reign in 1448, then from 1456 until 1462, and then a third brief reign in 1475, as he protected Walachia with an iron fist refusing to pay tribute the the Sublime Porte. Vlad was Mircea the Old's nephew and Stefan the Great's cousin. In order to grasp the complexity of this context it is interesting to take into account certain historical events such as the fact that Vlad Tepes' father had paid *harach* during his reign (1436 - 1447) and was even given a 'kaftan of honour' by the Sultan for his commitment to the Sublime Porte, which also implied leaving his two sons as hostages as a condition of the vassalage state and a proof of loyalty to the Sultan.²⁶⁶ Vlad Tepes, the one who would become the terror both of the Ottomans and of the Hungarians, the one who became infamously known for impaling his enemies, spent six years as a hostage under the Sultan's rule. He was liberated in 1447 after his father's death and assisted by the Sultan's troupes to take the throne of Walachia; he afterwards refused to pay the *harach* and was eventually betrayed, and assassinated by the Ottomans.

²⁶⁵ Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul, mss. Esâd Efendi, no. 2362, p. 92 qtd in Gemil Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans in the XIVth-XVIth Centuries*, Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 2009, p. 34

²⁶⁶ Gemil Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans, op. cit.*, p. 37



The Ottoman expansion and the clear image of the fragile political and territorial situation of the Romanian Principalities

<http://changingturkey.com/2012/03/22/the-quote-of-the-week-contributions-of-the-ottoman-empire-to-the-construction-of-modern-europe-by-dr-serdar-palabiyik/>

Moldavia's prince, Stefan the Great (1457 - 1504) continued after Vlad's death to protect the territory from the Ottomans as well as from the Hungarian desires of expansion; in 1471 Stephen's army invaded Wallachia in order to defeat the Turks. After numerous battles and failing to create a Christian alliance against the Turks with Pope Sixtus IV who ignored his request for assistance, despite calling him "Athlete of Christ", Stephen the Great found himself overwhelmed by the Ottomans who captured the Black Sea ports and burned

Moldavia's capital to the ground. Even though he paid the due tribute to the Ottoman Porte, he always sought to liberate Moldavia from the Ottoman rule and to protect it from all other attacks coming from the Reign of Hungary and the Reign of Poland from one side, and from the Golden Horde on the other side²⁶⁷. He strived to keep a geopolitical balance between European powers and the Sultan that could work to his small Principality's advantage.²⁶⁸

For all the Sultans before the Süleyman the Magnificent's rule the Romanian princes had been more 'allies and friends' than vassals, but all this changes with the conquest of the Arab world in 1517 when the Sultan assumed the position of Supreme Caliph. From this point on the survival of the Romanian autonomy becomes even more challenging.²⁶⁹ By 1541 the Ottomans under Suleyman's rule had defeated the Hungarians and transformed Transylvania in an autonomous principality under Ottoman rule, although it only lasted until 1699 when the Treaty of Karlowitz sealed the transfer of the province to the Habsburgs. As a vassal state, Transylvania paid a tribute, provided military assistance and endorsed the Ottoman foreign policy in exchange for protection from external threat, but could - as the other Romanian vassal states - keep its religion, elect princes who were confirmed then by the Sultan. Transylvania's evolution was influenced by its Hungarian and German Protestant noble families who did not want a unification with the other Romanian Principalities. The Hungarian Prince of Transylvania emanated in the Transylvanian Diet (Parliament) in 1568 the Turda Edict that affirmed freedom of worship and equal rights for the four recognized religions: Catholicism, Calvinism, Lutheranism and Unitarianism. Orthodox and Jewish confessions were tolerated even though not officially recognized.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁷ Murgescu, Bogdan, *Tarile Romane intre Imperiul Otoman si Europa Crestina* (The Romanian Countries Between the Ottoman Empire and the Christian Europe), Polirom 2012

²⁶⁸ Gemil Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans*, op. cit., p. 48

²⁶⁹ For further reading Gemil Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans in the XIVth-XVIth Centuries*, Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 2009, p. 61

²⁷⁰ Encyclopedia of Romania, *Turda Edict*, http://enciclopediaromaniei.ro/wiki/Edictul_de_la_Turda

The fact that Suleyman divided Hungary and Transylvania under different Voyvods helped the Romanian national aspiration and paradoxically protected both its religious identity, as well as its integrity of the future nation-state Romania that otherwise might have lost Transylvania to Hungary.

From 1545 and the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent, the Sultan started to appoint the Voyvods directly not trusting the boyars with the right choice. The first prince to physically succeed in uniting the three Principalities was Michael the Brave (1558 - 1601) who after convincing the Sultan and becoming Voyvod of Walachia, defeats the Transylvanian Prince and unites it to Walachia in 1599; confident in his army and success he goes for the Moldavian Prince becoming in the 1600 “Prince of Walachia, Transylvania and Moldavia”. This of course attracted the discontent of all the surrounding powers, Ottomans, Hungarians and Polish in the North, as they all knew that such a defiant act of insolence would cause rebellion throughout the Empires. The unified Romanian Principalities dissolved with Michael’s assassination, but he created a crucial precedent that ignited Romanian identity and desire for national affirmation, even within an Ottoman rule that lasted in Walachia and Moldavia until 1877.²⁷¹ The first documented mention of *Romania* as one entity covering the three Principalities comes from a Greek historian who in 1816 writes a detailed ethnographic account called *Geography of Romania* while two years later, Photinos analyses the ethnic diversity of these lands using the ancient name of *Dacia* to refer to the geographical composition of Romania.²⁷²

The Romanian Principalities were small countries profoundly influenced by their geographic position and by the regional policies of their neighbors. As such their Voyvods and princes had to pursue realistic and proactive policies meant to assure their autonomy

²⁷¹ Dipratu, Radu, *Suleyman and the Romanian Countries*, Historia Magazine, http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/s-leyman-i-rile-rom-ne

²⁷² Philippides, Daniel *Geography of Romania*, 1816, and Photinos Dionysos *History of Dacia*, 1818, in Kitromilides M. Paschalis ‘*Imagined Communities*’ and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans, European History Quarterly, SAGE, London, Newbury Park and New Delhi, Vol. 19 (1989), p. 154-155

and downright existence. It is indeed fascinating how such small pieces of land - furthermore divided into three separate areas - managed to enter into contact with and resist to all of Europe's Empires, Roman, Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian. In a geographic position of periphery to all of these Empires they acted as *buffer states* between all these expansionist powers.²⁷³ The French historian Edgar Quinet captured the quintessence of the particular nature of the relations between the Romanian Principalities and the Ottoman rule, emblematic for the syncretic nature that permeated the territory and the people, leaving a definitive mark on the Romanian identity:

“As regards the Ottoman Porte, I admit, if only for a moment, but it is not true, that the known treaties through which Moldo-Vlachia preserved their autonomy and their sovereignty were lost. I think there is more convincing evidence, more visible than treaties, which leaves no room for ambiguities... wherever Muslims have seized a territory, or a kingdom, they honored their God, Mohammed, for their victory. This great act of taking land seizure has been marked through sacred shrines that can be seen in Spain, Attica, Moreea, the Archipelago, Byzantium, Asia Minor, Serbia, and Bulgaria. There has been no Muslim conquest without this sign. Nothing similar can be found in the Romanian principalities. An extraordinary exception strikes the eye: no sooner had Muslims entered this country than they denied themselves the right to build a single mosque. From the very beginning and until the present day, they have never gone back on their word. There is no other more compelling evidence that the Romanian lands are not, and have never been Muslim; they have never borne the mark of conquest, and their autonomy and sovereignty have always been respected. Another consequence derives from this principle, which they [the Turks] have also strictly observed. That Romanian lands remained Christian lands, legal consequence of which was that, within their frontiers, no Muslims were allowed to hold property. They were not allowed to own land, property or even to reside there. For

²⁷³ Gemil, Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans in the XIVth-XVIth Centuries*, Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 2009, p. 33

three centuries, this rule has been enforced more rigorously than the strictest convention could have stipulated... ”.²⁷⁴

The internal and external factors that made possible for Osman’s small emirate to become the Ottoman Empire, the fact that the Osmanli (as called in Turkey and sometimes by their neighbors) favored political interests and territorial expansion more than religious interests, influenced by spiritual open and tolerant Anatolian movements, the fact that the Romanian Principalities were small enough not to arouse and provoke the full Ottoman potential, but positioned geopolitically in a borderline context that allowed them to play the buffer zone role, all this ultimately permitted them to maintain relative autonomy and to preserve their religion and identity.

Romanian nationalism began to rise in the mid-1800s with insurrections across the three Principalities, suppressed by the Ottomans or by the Russians. The unification was a long process started in 1848 with the customs union between Moldavia and Walachia; after the Crimean War ended in 1856, Walachia and



Romanian Principalities in 1848
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danubian_Principalities

²⁷⁴ Quinet, Edgar, *Les Roumains, Allemagne et l'Italie*. Mélanges, Paris, 1857, pp. 93-95 (Trans. into Romanian by Angela Cismao, in Edgar Quinet, *Opere alese, II*, Minerva Publishing House, Bucharest, 1983, pp. 362-365) qtd in Gemil Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans in the XIVth- XVIth Centuries*, Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 2009, p. 64

Moldavia became independent once again and in 1861 elected the same leader, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, creating the state Romania with its capital in Bucharest. The Ottoman Empire through the Sultan also had a meaningful role in recognizing Romania as a state in 1860, when the Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza after being elected both by Walachia as by Moldavia, thus realizing the de jure unification of the two principalities, went to Istanbul and was received with the greatest honors, convincing the Ottoman Porte and Sultan Abdul Medjid (or Abdülmecid) to officially recognize through a decree Cuza's double election. In 1878, political independence was achieved as the Berlin Congress recognizes Romania as an independent state and signs the return to the country of the coastal area of Dobruja to Romania, thus transforming the area from an Ottoman majority to a minority in a new state, the two political entities exchanged diplomats and in ten years more than twelve Turkish Consulates were opened in Romania and just as many Romanian Consulates in the Empire. During this period many official exchanges of friendship declarations were made, partnerships and agreements signed, the Sultan Abdülhamid II expressing his gratitude towards the way the Romanian state handled the Turkish communities in Dobruja and saying that "there is a need for Turkey and Romania to cultivate the most amicable relations"²⁷⁵. Romania becomes a monarchy in 1881 with the Hohenzollern reign, but will have to wait until December 1st 1918 for the final unification with Transylvania and Basarabia.

These are the historical premises that made it possible for two countries, one Christian and one Muslim, not adjacent but separated by the Black Sea and by Bulgaria, to consider themselves neighbors which cultivate the closest ties despite more than 500 years of battles and occupation and despite the quantity of historical biased presentations in the Romanian history and literature manuals. There were undoubtedly the premises for the positive development: the Turkic substratum, the years of multicultural cohabitation, the propensity of the Romanian people to absorb other cultural influences without losing their own, and

²⁷⁵ Gemil, Tasin, *Romanians and Ottomans in the XIVth-XVIth Centuries*, Editura Enciclopedica, Bucharest, 2009, p. 48 and 52

the Romanian cultural resilience that made it possible throughout centuries of domination to safeguard its core identity and national aspiration.

1.3. OTTOMAN LEGACY

Romanian culture was forged by its geographical and historical context, and the resulting multiple contacts with Oriental and Occidental peoples. The geographical, historical, and social factors left a decisive imprint on the Romanian identity, so much so that the core characteristics of this complex geopolitical reality, such as flexibility, the power of assimilation and adaptation, resilience, became quintessential elements of the Romanian identity. Not to be mistaken for an imitative identity, as in this case the focus goes to a culture's disposition towards a type of biological adaptation applied to the cultural environment, and a type of historical-cultural resilience. The Romanian people became quickly aware of their condition: first as a small population placed by history at the crossroads of empires, "at the border between two worlds: the East and the West"²⁷⁶ and thus conscious of the need to accommodate stronger local forces in order to safeguard their existence; and second, as a civilization born from diversity, from the numerous imprints left by passing empires and nomadic civilizations, making it Latin but also Balkanic, thus an Oriental, Turkish, Greek, Slavic melting pot. As Lovinescu argued, Romanian

"Latinity does not represent a somatic feature, but a mental configuration; regardless the mixture of different blood dripped into the composition of our race, the Latin mentality creates the characteristic and definitive configuration."²⁷⁷

Romanian culture represents the result of the confluence between two great but apparently opposite civilizations: first, Oriental, whose influence was predominant until the XIX century - linguistic (Greek vocabulary, Turkish and Slavic vocabulary), cultural (life-style) and clothing (many Turkish elements such as the fez, the turban, the long robes), literature (the chronicle, hagiography). And second, starting with the XIX century the Occidental

²⁷⁶ Lovinescu, Eugen, *Istoria civilizatiei romane moderne*, (*The History of Modern Romanian Civilization*), Bucuresti, Ed. Ancora 1924, p.7

²⁷⁷ Lovinescu, Eugen, *Istoria civilizatiei op. cit.*, p.7-8

influence became predominant, with the preference for the French and Italian vocabulary that quickly replaced the Greek and Turkish abundance. The Oriental clothing and life style became reason for ironical literature compositions as symbol of backwardness. Nicolae Iorga, philosopher, writer, literary critic and politician, makes a synthesis of the Oriental elements rooted in the Romanian society (immobilism, collectivism, despotism, spirit of contemplation, sacred science) and the Occidental elements (dynamism, individualism, pragmatic spirit, democracy, profane science) that characterized the Byzantine culture and civilization.

1.3.1. Lifestyle

As previously illustrated, the Romanian people experienced the first influences from the Oriental world very early on with the Turkic Pecenegs who chased away the Huns in the 9th century and were defeated by the Cumans in the 13th century, another Turkic people defeated in turn by the Mongol invasion (1060-1237) of which the Tatar tribe and the Golden Horde became most noteworthy. Both of these Turkic people left their heritage in the language, the topography, hydrography and anthropography, and they in turn became so blended into the Romanian culture and civilization that they gave their contribution without being forgotten or eliminated, but becoming part of the autochthonous Romanian origin. Important archeological sites mark the cultural legacy that the Ottoman Empire left on Romanian territory: the citadels of Yenısala (Enisala), Brăila, Turnu, Timișoara, Hârșova, Giurgiu, dating back to the 15 - 16 century; the mosques in Babadag, Esmahan sultan in Mangalia (1590), Hünkâr din Constanța (18 century)²⁷⁸.

The Western European travelers who at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century came to Romania, discovered a complex mix of ethnicities and cultures that made for a curious canvas of diversities. Boyars dressed by the Turkish style and smoking narghilè, who would fluently speak French, German or Italian, made the writers of the era develop a critical movement meant to denounce and boycott this “Turkished” derive in the

²⁷⁸ Gemil, Tasin, *Mostenirea culturala*, op cit, p. 75

Romanian way of living. One Italian secretary to three Romanian rulers gave detailed images of the 18th century boyars and their dressing codes:

“L’abito de’ Valachi adunque è totalmente lo stesso con quello de’ Turchi, eccettuatone il berretto, che è alla usanza polacca, cioè contornato di pelle nera riccia di agnellino””il vestir delle donne è un misto di abito alla greca e alla turchesca, ma non col viso coperto.”²⁷⁹

“The clothing costume of Valachs is identical to the Turkish one, except for the hat which is by Polish traditions, that is adorned with black lamb wool” ...”the clothing of the ladies is a mix between Greek and Turkish traditions, but without a covered face” (translated by myself)

Soon the “Turkished” way of living became synonym of backwardness and immobility, while the so called “Europeanized” way of living synonym of progress and modernity. But the Oriental influences had already entered the Romanian culture so deep that they forged the civilization and traditions in a unique syncretic way, being today recognized as fundamental parts of the Romanian life, inherent to the Romanian individuality and identifying the country as *România Orientalis*.



Adevarul newspaper, July 7th 2015 “*Bucharest dress code 300 years ago*” http://adevarul.ro/locale/targoviste/codul-imbracaminte-bucuresti-300-ani-salbe-aur-diferite-marimi-pana-valoarea-10-galbeni-1_559a8c4cf5eaafab2c4c2c15/index.html

²⁷⁹Del Chiaro, Anton Maria, *Istoria delle moderne rivoluzioni della Valachia*, first published in Venice 1718, utilized copy: Bucharest 1914, digitalized online <https://archive.org/stream/istoriadellemode00delc#page/n7/mode/2up>, p. 41

Another important influence on Romanian culture is Turkish culinary, maybe the most substantial part of the Ottoman heritage. Many traditional foods from Turkish culinary like the cult of bread, the deserts *baklava* or other dishes with meat like *mici*, *sarmale*, the soups *ciorba*, the rice *pilaf* or the *byrek* have been cooked in all Balkan Countries during the centuries. The



Exposition "Clothes make the man" (March 2014) - Romanian National History Museum - the evolution of clothing traditions between 15th-20th century

Turkish culture overlapped with the Balkan cultures, withstood time and did not violate the cultural, historical and social authenticity of the Balkan countries. For example, the Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian, Armenian, Macedonian national dishes were studied by the Romanian anthropologists Vintila Mihailescu and Radu Anton Roman in their article "How National Is 'the National Cuisine'" where we can find the following statement

Whoever visits the Romanian restaurants in Montreal may savour some of the "typically Romanian" dishes which are like "home made" – *sarmale*, *mija*, *chiftele*, *pilaf*, *musaca*, etc. Then if one fancies going to a Bulgarian restaurant, one may have the pleasure of relishing some of the "typically Bulgarian" dishes: *sarmale*, *mija*, *chiftele*, *pilaf*, *musaca*, etc. Finally, one can check in at a very good Serb restaurant, where a band of Gypsies play Serb music

(quite familiar to us, too) and where the chief offers a "typically Serb" menu: *sarmale, mija, chiftele, pilaf, musaca, etc.*²⁸⁰

1.3.2. Religion

Millet-i Rum designated the non-Muslim religious communities in the Ottoman Empire: the Armenian Millet, the Jewish Millet, and the Rum-Millet made of the Orthodox Christians in Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia, Greece, Romania and Egypt, who were under the guidance of the Constantinople Patriarch (called Etnarch) chosen by the Sacred Synod and confirmed by the Sultan; he had political, administrative, financial



A view from the Carol I mosque in Constanta of an Orthodox church (photograph taken during my field research 2014)

and religious authority, five advisers who made a small miniature government called “Byzantium after Byzantium”, and could defend his followers in front of the Sultan. The Ottomans succeeded in keeping their authority on their diverse and multi-religious Empire by allowing freedom of worship, by not destroying churches and allowing for new ones to be built and by not imposing the Islamic faith. By allowing people to keep their faith, the Ottomans created a double premise: on one hand they complied with some of the people’s requests thus minimizing the risk for rebellion and increasing the level of consent for the

²⁸⁰ Mihailescu, Vintilă; Roman, Radu Anton, *How national is “the national cuisine?”*, in Irina Culic, István Horvath, Cristian Stan, *Reflections on Differences. Focus on Romania*, Limes, Cluj – Napoca, 1999, pp. 125 – 136

Ottoman rule, while on the other hand enforcing the religious identity which in turn, became a powerful catalyst in creating a national identity “whereas language had provided the initial criterion in delineating the imagined communities of the hoped-for nations, Orthodoxy was enlisted last, its powerful psychological and symbolic force helping to cement the unity of the new nations which the states had created.”

1.3.3. Education

As early as the period between the two World Wars there were cultural and especially educational exchanges between Romania and the Ottoman Empire and later Turkey: student exchanges, Turkish and Islamic schools and medressa, e.g. the “Islamic Theological Seminar” in Medgidia, public bilingual elementary schools and kindergardens both in Turkish and Romanian with teachers from both Romania and Turkey. The traveler Evliya Celebi recounted that at the half of the 17th century there were 20 elementary schools and three middle schools in Babadag. In 1610, Gazi Ali Pasha funded an Islamic College that functioned until 1878 when it was relocated to Medgidia.

The literacy rate has always been high as the number of schools was considerable: all mosques had a religious school close by, there were elementary schools in all villages, and secondary schools in the main cities, and also the theological seminar. The imam who was also the hoca (teacher) of the elementary school was paid in cash or in produce by the children’s parents; the secondary school teachers were paid by the state and once the members of the Young Turks movement left the Ottoman Empire and found refuge in Dobruja, they became middle school teachers. A noteworthy information that comes to sustain the openness of the social and political environment of the period towards the Turkish population in Dobruja is the publication in 1874 of a “Turkish-Romanian Spelling Book” written by Constantin Petrescu²⁸¹.

²⁸¹ Gîlă, Cristina, *EDUCAȚIE INTERCULTURALĂ DOBROGEANĂ*, (Intercultural Dobrujan Education), ASOCIAȚIA PENTRU RESURSE CULTURALE, Colegiul Național Pedagogic „Constantin Brătescu”, CONSTANȚA, 2011, www.resurseculturale.ro, p. 16-17

The Babadag seminar was founded in 1610 by the General Gazi Ali Pasha who donated the land for the construction of the seminar. A 1891 royal decree stated that the Ministry of Culture and Education would appoint the teachers and the local imam would supervise the religious teachings. In 1895 a Romanian Language department was open within the Seminar. In 1904 the new Minister of Culture decides to reorganize the Seminar - now located in Medgidia - and for this he goes to Istanbul to see how the Seminars there are organized, he meets with all the mufti, cadi and teachers and the new organization procedure was adopted: after 8 years of study all students would have to pass a formal examination after which they would be qualified to teach (hoge); also the same reorganization stated that some disciplines would be studied in Turkish and Arabic (like the religious studies or music) and others in Romanian; the teachers and the maintenance would be paid for by the state²⁸².

The historical and social environment and the way in which the state decided to deal with the province that was at first mostly Turkish and Tatar. Three laws regulated the education system in the Romanian Dobruja area: July 26th 1924 (the primary school law) and May 8th 1928 (secondary school) - they approved the creation of state schools with teachings in other languages in the area where the number of minority populations were important; December 19th 1925 ensured the autonomy of all confessional schools of minorities. Atatürk's reforms came to strengthen and complete the modernization measures already taken in Dobruja. In Constanta in 1948 a Tatar Pedagogical High School was opened both for Tatar as well as Turkish future teachers but it only stayed open until the 1960's.

1.3.4. Literature and language

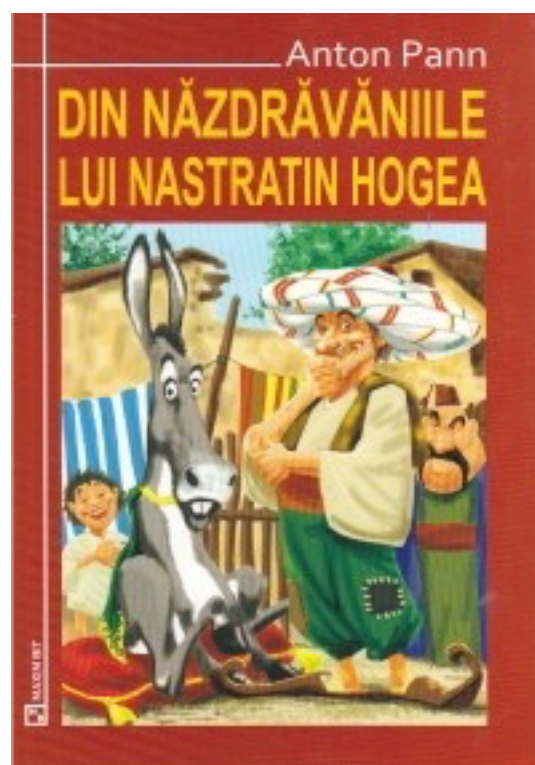
One cultural area of interest that is self-evident in terms of cultural cross-cutting and syncretic developments is literature. The iconography of the 'other' in the literature (both narrative as well as history text books) which was used starting with the communist era was based on the stereotypes meant to create an image of inferiority instrumental to the purpose

²⁸² Gîlă, Cristina, *idem*, p. 17-18

of nullifying the community's identity. But folk tales tell the story of mutual understanding, cultural exchanges and serene environment, as well as keeping track of the language modifications and vocabulary transfers (e.g. bulibaşa from Tr. bölack-başy, chief), social, administrative and political situation.²⁸³ The presence of Turkish vocabulary at the primary level of cultural manifestation that are the folk tales orally transmitted denotes a deep infiltration and diffusion of the Turkish culture and community. After the Second World War writers and editors both Romanian and Turkish began a work of translation and mutual publication of great literary classics.

Dimitrie Cantemir (1673 - 1723) born into a Tatar family from Crimeea, was a member of both the Berlin Academy and the Romanian Academy. Voyvod Dimitrie Cantemir intellectual, perfectly in line with the Illuminist trends of his times, became a link between the Ottoman universe he studied thoroughly during his 20 years of exile in Istanbul, and the Christian Occident he was born in and which he returned to rule. He brought to Romania the figure of Nastratin Hogea (Tr. Nasreddin Hoca, meaning The Teacher Nasreddin, where Nasreddin itself means the Victory of Faith, Nasr "Victory" and Din "Faith, Religion"), he created a new Turkish classical music system and composed more than 40 Turkish melodies, he was a philosopher, a historian, linguist,

ethnographer and geographer. Another Romanian writer who publicized the satirical character of Nastratin Hogea, becoming an Oriental model of La Fontaine's fables, was Anton Pann, who between 1847 and 1853 introduces to the Romanian children and adults to Nasreddin's errands and routine that always ended with a teaching.



²⁸³ Gemil, Tasin, *Mostenirea culturala*, op. cit., p. 77

The thief and Nastratin

One night a burglar entered Nastratin's house and started to steal all his belongings taking them to his house. Nastratin kept faking to be asleep until he remained alone in his empty house.

He then got up and in the middle of the night went to the thief's house and knocked.

- What got into you, Nastratin, to come here in the middle of the night?

- Well...what was the point of you moving all my stuff to your house if you did not want me to move in with you then?

Hoțul și Nastratin

Într-o noapte, un hoț veni să fure lucrurile lui Nastratin care, simțind, se prefăcu adormit, până ce hoțul, rând pe rând, îi luă toate lucrurile. Nastratin rămase cu casa goală.

Atunci se sculă și în plină noapte, hoțul se trezi cu Hoge la ușă.

– Ce te-a apucat, Hoge, de mă vizitezi în miezul nopții?

– Păi ce rost mai avea să-mi muți toate lucrurile, dacă nu voiai să locuiesc și eu la tine?



Timur and the mirror

Once upon a time, Timur called for Nastratin and confessed to him that he felt really sad because he felt ugly. While saying this he took a mirror and started to cry.

Nastratin suddenly burst into tears and even began shouting his tremendous pain.

Timur surprised by Nastratin's reaction and not knowing what to think asked Nastratin what had happened.

- If you looked once in the mirror and started to cry, what should I do because I have to look at you daily?

Timur și oglinda

Odată, Timur îl chemă pe Nastratin și îi mărturisi că este foarte trist pentru că arată așa de urât. Și spunând asta, luă o oglindă, se privi și începu să plângă.

Atunci Nastratin se puse pe un jeliț și pe un urlat de durere, din care nu se mai oprea.

Timur, neștiind ce să mai creadă, se opri din plâns și-l întrebă pe Nastratin ce l-a apucat.

– *Dacă tu ai plâns că te-ai privit doar o dată în oglindă, dar eu care te văd tot timpul?*



Reading and the fez

One day a man came to Nastratin with a letter received from Baghdad that he wanted the Hoge to read for him.

- I cannot read it, said the Hoge, it is not written in our language.

The man became upset:

- Aren't you ashamed of yourself?? You are wearing that fez (n.d. hat associated with the teacher / intellectual status) for nothing if you're not even able to read a letter!!

Nastratin also became upset. He takes his fez and shoves it on the man's head.

- Here you go...now you read it if you're so convinced that it's the fez that makes you smarter than the others.

Fesul și cititul

Un om primi o scrisoare trimisă din Bagdad și-l rugă pe Hoge să i-o citească.

– Nu o pot citi, spuse Hoge, pentru că nu este scrisă în limba noastră.

Omul se supără:

– Nu îți este rușine, Hoge, degeaba mai porți fesul dacă nu știi să citești nici o scrisoare.

Fu rândul Hogii să se supere. Își scoase fesul și îl trânti omului în cap.

– Na, acum citește tu, dacă crezi că fesul te face să fii mai isteț decât alții²⁸⁴

The linguistic influences in the Romanian language are not only Turkish but also Roman, Slavic, Cuman, and so on, as the following quote illustrates:

A la suivre de ces événements et de l'occupation préhistorique par les tribus indo-européennes des Thraces (au 15^os. av. J.-C. env) et des Illyriens (à partir du 13^o av. J.-C.), ainsi que des vagues de migration helléniques (18^o-12^os. Av. J.-C.), émergea une grande diversité ethnique et linguistique, semblable à celle du creuset mésopotamien; mais le relief

²⁸⁴ Pann, Anton, *Din nazdravaniile lui Nastratin Hoge, (From Nastratin Hoge's Shenanigans)*, Cartex 2012

balkanique s'avéra plus favorable au maintien de cette diversité. Aux peuples mentionnés se joignirent des tribus celtiques, des Goths (c'est ici que Ulfilas traduisit le Nouveau Testament), tous les Slaves méridionaux, différentes peuplades turques et même des Sépharades, parlant el ladino, arrivèrent jusqu'en Roumanie. Ces éléments exercèrent aussi une certaine influence sur les langues voisines, y compris la Romania de Sud-Est, même si cette influence ne peut pas toujours être définie d'une façon précise. Elle est évidente au niveau du lexique, surtout dans l'onomastique.²⁸⁵

As for the Turkish influence, the Romanian language displays the influence experienced with the 2000 - 3000 words of Turkish origin, representing 1/5 of the entire Romanian vocabulary.²⁸⁶ This important influence has been prepared and affected by the Cuman-Mongolian-Tatar pre-Ottoman period. One example is the Romanian archaic word 'odaie' (chamber) - Tr. *oda* (tent).²⁸⁷ Suciu researched this field and compiled a thorough study in which he identifies all the features related such as the channels of entry of the Turkish words (official or educated point of entry, popular linguistic borrowings, bilingual situations),²⁸⁸ or the phases of entry

1. mid 14th -15th century (23 borrowings)
2. 16th century (150 borrowings)
3. 17th - 18th century (503 borrowings)
4. 18th century (1036 borrowings)
5. 19th century (1044 borrowings)

²⁸⁵ Ernst, Gerhard, (ed. et al) *Romanische Sprachgeschichte. Histoire linguistique de la Romania, chapter Facteurs socio-culturels dans l'histoire des langues romanes*, Gedruckt auf säurefreiem Papier, Walter de Gruyter Berlin, New York 2006, p. 1154

²⁸⁶ Zafiu, Rodica, *Pacatele limbii: "Clipangiu"*, (*The Sins of the Language*), Romania Literara magazine, n° 42, 2004 <http://www.romlit.ro/clipangiu>

²⁸⁷ Suciu, Emil, *Influența turcă asupra limbii române, I: Studiu monografic*, Editura Academiei Române, București, 2009; and *II: Dicționarul cuvintelor românești de origine turcă*, Editura Academiei Române, București, 2010 (*Turkish Influence on Romanian Language*)

²⁸⁸ Suciu, Emil, *II: Dicționarul cuvintelor românești de origine turcă*, (*Turkish Origin Romanian Words*), Editura Academiei Române, București, 2010, p. 106-161

6. 20th century (2 borrowings)

concluding that at the beginning of the 21st century “the lexical core borrowed in time from the Turkish language amounts to 2,760 words”.²⁸⁹ In various cultural areas that were affected by these borrowings, the influences can still be observed today, although unknown to the general public as these words have such deep roots that they have become part of the Romanian language: toponyms, anthroponyms, hydronyms, literature, folklore, everyday objects and actions, the use of the suffixes -giu; -iu; -liu; -lîu; -lîk / -lâc; -man. Suciu concludes that at this time the active core of Turkish origin is made of 1,100 words (of which *cafea/coffee*, *tutun/tobacco*, *ciorba/soup*, *cearșaf/bed sheet*, *perdea/window drape*, *geam/window*, *ciorap/sock*, *murdar/dirty*, *degeaba/useless*, *haide/ come on*, *bacșiș/tip*, *leafă/paycheck*, *mahala/neighborhood*, *surgîn/subjugation* and so on) covering all areas of life. From the pre-Ottoman period the following words have been identified: *boier/boyar*, *cioban/shepherd*, *dușman/enemy*, *odaie/chamber*, etc.²⁹⁰ The Turkish influence can also be noticed in other areas such as the phonology and the morphology of the Romanian language: the /h/ phoneme that in other Romanic languages has lost its power and pronunciation, was strengthened in Romanian language by the entering in the common spoken language of Turkish words such as *habar/to know*, *hain/mean*, *hal/way/type*, *haimana/rascal*, etc.²⁹¹ The Tatar language influence, on the other hand, is more limited but can be noticed in regional forms of vocabulary or regional words, such as *alai/entourage*, *hoinar/wanderer*, *ciubota/old shoe*.

Some of the most important toponyms still existing in their Turkish form are linked with the cities around the Black Sea shore: Babadag (founded by Sarî Saltuk Baba), Medgidia

²⁸⁹ Suciu, Emil, *II: Dicționarul cuvintelor*, op. cit., p. 158

²⁹⁰ Gemil, Tasin, *Mostenirea culturala*, op. cit., p. 146

²⁹¹ Graur, Al., in Zafiu, Rodica, *Pacatele limbii: “Clipangiu”*, (*The Sins of the Language*), Romania Literara magazine, n° 42, 2004 <http://www.romlit.ro/clipangiu>.

For more on this subject see Șăineanu, Lazăr, *Infuența orientală asupra limbii și culturii române* (2 vol., București 1900), Al. Ciorănescu, *Dicționarul etimologic al limbii române, 1945-1966*, ed. rom., București, Ed. Saeculum, 2001; Iorgu Iordan, în *Limba română actuală. O gramatică a "greșelilor"*, 1943

(founded by the Sultan Abdul Medgid), Siutghiol (Tr. Milk Lake), Techirghiol (Tr. The Striped Lake), Mamaia (Tr. The Butter Village). Along with the various toponyms and daily use vocabulary we find words that imply a certain civilization, as the use of some Turkish words imply that certain daily use elements entered the Romanian society through the Turkish gateway, a social and cultural life and an Oriental approach to problems. For e.g. the porch houses (Tr. *Çardak* and Ro. *ceardac*) are widely spread in Romania and as they were widely spread in Berat, starting from at least the second half of the 17th century.²⁹²

2. Romania

The Kingdom of Dacia flourished in the territory that is now Romania until 106 a.D when the Roman Empire settled here its most remote border. The Romanian ethnogenesis includes a mix of people such as Dacians, Greeks, Thracians and Romans. The Romans were forced to retreat in 271-275 by the nomadic tribes arrived from Asia. Hence even before the 14th century there was a preexistent Turkic substratum left by the Pecheneg tribes and the later Cuman tribes. Although part of the great dominion of the Huns in Eastern Europe in the 4th - 5th centuries, the Daco-Romanian lands and population did not feel the influence of these Turkic nomadic tribes, and the same can be said about the passage of the Avars, another Turkic tribe. But the history and formation of the Romanian identity were influenced by the Pechenegs, the Oghuz, the Cumans and the Tatars.²⁹³ The Pechenegs arrive in the Daco-Romanian area around 890 a.D. and even though they are completely

²⁹² Xhemile, Abdiu; Spartak, Kadiu, in Tahsin Gemil, *Mostenirea culturala turca in Romania. Legaturile romano-turce de-a lungul veacurilor (pana in 1981)*, p. 147

²⁹³ Gemil, Tasin,, *Mostenirea culturala turca in Romania. Legaturile romano-turce de-a lungul veacurilor (pana in 1981)*, Turkish Cultural Legacy in Dobruja. Romanian-Turkish Ties During the Centuries (until 1981), Ed. Top Form, 2013, p. 33

defeated around 1123 a.D. they represent the ancestors to a group of Christian Turkic people still present today in Eastern Europe, the Gagauzi (even though Tasin Gemil²⁹⁴ traces the origin of the Gagauzi people to the Seljuk Turkmens tribe brought to Dobruja from Anatolia). Their permanence in Romania of almost three centuries can be traced in a number of toponyms.²⁹⁵ They were defeated and replaced as dominant tribes by the Oghuz for a short period of time and later by the Cumans who arrived in Dacia, as the previous nomadic tribes, from Asia, and remained undefeated until the great Tatar invasion of 1241.²⁹⁶ The passing and domination of these tribes is not to be seen as distinct entities changing places with one another but as related tribes from the same Turkic lineage who often lived at the same time and fought with each other for supremacy. The Cumans represented the main ethnic body of the Golden Horde and are the ancestors, along other elements such as Mongolian ones, of present day Tatars.²⁹⁷ Through intermarriage and assimilation, the inhabitants of Romania developed into a distinct ethnic group, known as the Vlachs, a name designating Latin-speakers of the Balkan Peninsula.

This passage of nomadic tribes has been considered as a first wave of Turkic immigration. The second wave is that of a group of Seljuks, Muslim, under the rule of Prince Izzedin Keykavuz and the famous Dervish Sari Saltuk Baba, who is said to have travelled the entire area of the Balkans and to have Islamized the Tatar Mongolian tribes from Crimea to Bulgaria. After his death in the eponymous town Babadag (Baba's forest) still existent today, his tomb became a pilgrimage destination, and the people who had accompanied him are said to have converted to Christianity and began to be called *Gagauzi*

²⁹⁴ Gemil, Tasin, *Mostenirea culturala*, op. cit., p. 36

²⁹⁵ Giurescu, Constantin C., *Istoria românilor*, (Romanian History), vol. I, ediția a V-a, editura BIC ALL

²⁹⁶ Giurescu, Constantin C., *Istoria românilor*, (Romanian History), vol. I, ediția a V-a, editura BIC ALL. and Predescu, Lucian, *Enciclopedia României* (Romanian Encyclopedia), Cugetarea, Editura Saeculum, București, 1999

²⁹⁷ Gemil, Tasin, *Mostenirea culturala*, op. cit., p. 34

after Keykavuz' name.²⁹⁸ The third wave is made of the Ottoman Turks who passed the Danube to the North into the Romanian Principalities, given their special status as provinces with a certain degree of autonomy.

2.1. ROMANIA DURING AND AFTER THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Being at the edge of history, as it had priorly been within the Greek Empire as within the Roman Empire, the civilized world ended with Dacia as their most remote border beyond which there were the Barbarians, desolation and unknown. The conquest of Dacia did not last long and Dacia Romana found itself once again left “outside” on the margins of the Byzantine Empire. Changing point of view and looking from East to West, the Romanian lands are once again at the farthest border of the Ottoman Empire or the most distant frontier of the Russian Empire. This geographic situation created a geopolitic condition that led, from early on, to the creation of a ‘crossroad’ identity open to hybridity, to alterations, and contaminations. This ‘condition’ has positive and negative sides: on the positive side, a syncretic culture was forged that is open to the new, the diverse, whose traditions are not immutable but adaptable, and whose people display - unconsciously - a cultural resilience that even through years and centuries of foreign domination managed to safeguard a core identity that instead of being endangered by alterity, makes it its very nature. The Romanian language, the political and cultural paradigms were all adopted from influential coeval cultures; for example, Romanian language is Romanic but with strong Slavic influences, Turkish (even Cumanic vocabulary heritage), Greek, and Hungarian. For a long period of time the Romanian elite utilized the Cyrillic alphabet (with Slavic language in the beginning to switch afterwards to Cyrillic writing of the Romanian language) as the Byzantine culture entered into the Romanian land through the Slavic Bulgarian route. During the Ottoman rule the elite and the boyars dressed in the Turkish-Phanariot custom: the Phanariots originary from the Fanar quarter of Istanbul, inhabited by Greeks who in the late dominion of the Ottoman Empire over the Romanian lands gave way to a Romanian-

²⁹⁸ Mustafa, Mehmet Ali, *Despre mostenirea culturala turca in Dobrogea* (About Turkish Cultural Legacy in Dobruja), in Tasin, Gemil, *Mostenirea culturala*, op. cit., p. 11-12

Turkish-Greek symbiosis in the language, the clothing and the cuisine. After that there is the French Parisienne influence starting from the clothes and finishing with literature and language.

The negative side to an open composite culture is that it risks political weakness, which is exactly what Romania experienced having a strong culture, but a weak political system, making it impossible to resist to surrounding Empires but proving to be the one thing that saved the Romanian identity: its flexibility, permeability and capacity of adaptation.

The “Romanian multiculturalism” was forged during 2,000 years of cultural blending where each of the cultures present left their mark, their individuality, their specificity to blend in with the others and thus create a mosaical environment able to survive and to spring back after hardships, proving to be a true resilient culture. As Kymlicka argued, one source of diversity is

the coexistence within a given state of more than one nation, where ‘nation’ means a historical community, more or less institutionally complete, occupying a given territory or homeland, sharing a distinct language and culture. A ‘nation’ in this sociological sense is closely related to the idea of a ‘people’ or a ‘culture’ - indeed, these concepts are often defined in terms of each other. A country which contains more than one nation is, therefore, not a nation-state but a multination state, and the smaller cultures form ‘national minorities’²⁹⁹.

Romania derives much of its ethnic diversity from its geographic position astride major continental migration routes. According to the latest data from 2011 census, 88.9 % percent of the 20 million population is Romanian, and more than twenty separate ethnic minorities account for the remaining 11.1 percent. Although many of these minorities are small groups, the Hungarian minority of about 1.2 million - represents 6.5 percent of the total population. The next largest component of the population is the Roma, who constitute up to 3.3 percent of the total population, with 621.573 people. There are also significant numbers

²⁹⁹ Kymlicka, Will, *Multicultural Citizenship. A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Clarendon Press - Oxford, 1995, Cap. “The Politics of Multiculturalism”, p. 11

of Ukrainians (50.920), Germans (36.042), Turks (27.698) and Tatars (20.282), Serbs (18.076) and Slovaks (13.654)³⁰⁰. A 1930 census showed that of the 18 million people, 71.89 % were Romanians, 1.4 million Hungarians (7.89%), 745.421 (4.13%) Germans, 728.115 (4.03%) Jewish, 582.815 (3.22%) Ruthenians (East Slavic people), 409.150 (2.26%) Russians, 366.384 (2.03%) Bulgarians, 262.501 (1.45%) Gypsies, 154.772 (0.86%) Turks, 51.062 (0.28%) Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, 48.310 (0.27%) Polish, 26.425 (0.14%) Greek³⁰¹. In 81 years the Hungarian minority slightly decreased, the Roma minority increased, the Turks and Tatars remained grosso modo the same and all the others had a dramatic decrease, but one constant remained: the plurality of these territories.

But the noteworthy fact is that this plurality of civilizations and ethnicities became an everyday reality very soon, as early as the Roman domination. After the fragmentation and subsequent fall of the Roman Empire its Eastern part survived as the 'Byzantine Empire' and described by Edward Gibbon in the 1776 as "the triumph of barbarism and Christianity", while Voltaire saw it as "a worthless collection of orations and miracles" and Montesquieu as a "tragic epilogue to the glory of Rome"³⁰². The implications made by these statements that the Byzantine Empire was backward and completely separated from the Western Empire in its influence and exchanges prove the aura of mystery surrounding Byzantium and the lack of knowledge about it.

The name "Romania" comes from the use of the Byzantine word "Romaioi" that was used by the Byzantines to call themselves and which meant "Romans"; well aware of their heritage as heirs of the Roman Empire, as the Byzantine Empire's capital name

³⁰⁰ The National Institute of Statistics, 2011 census http://www.recensamantromania.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/REZULTATE-DEFINITIVE-RPL_2011.pdf

³⁰¹ The National Institute of Statistics, Recensământul general al populației României din 29 decembrie 1930, (1930 General Census), Vol. II, pag. XXIV

³⁰² Browning, Robert, *The Byzantine Empire*, revised edition, The Catholic University of America Press, 1992, p. xi

remembered *Kōnstantinoupolis Nea Rōmē*, they spoke mainly Greek³⁰³ and called their Empire Ρωμανία Romanía or Βασιλεία Ρωμαίων Basileía Romaíon³⁰⁴. The term Byzantine was invented by the German historian Hieronimus Wolf who in 1567 wrote *Corpus Historiae Byzantinae* in order to differentiate it from the Western Roman Empire³⁰⁵. Romania thus developed on a multiethnic and multicultural substratum, influenced by Greek, Roman, Ottoman, Slavic and Austro-Hungarian elements, taking these influences and blending them into a unique mix of syncretic features.

Negro Voyvod, Hungarian by nation, father of Vlaicu, became lord of that side of Valachia which by Ptolemy's, Eustachius's, Suida's and Stefano Brochiero's words, was the ancient Dacia (as in Giornando Alano) where Goths and Dacians, called Geti and Daci by the Greeks, found a serene country of landscapes and fresh air, crossed by rivers and of lakes full of fish.

Valachia is placed beyond the Danube, between Transilvania, Moldavia and the Danube towards the Tribals, covered in gold veins, salt, bitumen like wax springs from the earth, it has small and large animals with which it feeds the entire Romania: the people follow the Greek's customs and they speak vulgar Latin modified by foreign words. It was made a Roman province by the EMperor Traianus who sent there many of his troops who eliminated the Goths' language and introduced the Latin language that the Barbarians called Vlach, and this is how the name of the province was given³⁰⁶.

'Negro Voevoda di nazione Unghero padre di Vlaico nel 1310 s'era impadronito di quella parte di Valachia, la quale secondo Tolomeo, Eustachio, Suida e Stefano Brochiero fu l'antica Dacia, dove (come s'ha in Giornando Alano) abitarono Goti e Daci, da Greci

³⁰³ Browning, Robert, *idem*, p. xvi

³⁰⁴ New World Encyclopedia, The Byzantine Empire, http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Byzantine_Empire

³⁰⁵ Wolf, Hieronimus, *Corpus Historiae Byzantinae*, 1567, free book Google books <https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=A6VCAAAAcAAJ&rdid=book-A6VCAAAAcAAJ&rdot=1>

³⁰⁶ Luccari, Giacomo di Pietro, *Copioso ristretto degli annali di Ragusa*, Stamperia pubblica Andrea Trevisan, 1790, p. 82 and 83 <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=aStXAAAcAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&hl=it&pg=GBS.PA88>

chiamati Geti e Davi, e trovando il paese risoluto in campagne, taglieto da grosse fumare e laghi pieni di pescagione e l'aria molto sana'

'La Valachia è posta di là dal Danubio, fra la Transilvania, Moldavia e il Danubio verso I Triballi piena di vene d'oro, masse di sale, la cera a guisa di bitume scaturisce di sotto terra, ha animali grossi e minuti con I quali nutrisce tutta la Romania: la gente segue le cerimonie de' Greci e parla la lingua latina corrotta ed alterata da' vocaboli forestieri. Fu fatta da Trajano Imperatore provincia del popolo Romano e vi mandò molte colonie de' suoi, I quali cacciato il parlare de' Goti introdussero il latino che I barbari domandano Vlaco, onde nacque il nome alla provincia.'

The present day form of the name as *România* is first officially utilized inside the country during the period 1862-1866, after the unification, although it was used to describe these territories by foreign travelers such as Evlia Celebi and by Romanian historians such as Miron Costin, Dimitrie Cantemir, Nicolae Iorga and others since the 4th century, all linking the name to Rome and the Roman Empire and the Latin *Romanus*.

*Auxentiu di Durostorum letter year 383*³⁰⁷

*Contra furorem Bulgarorum et Rume<n>orum (12th century - 1194 document)*³⁰⁸

³⁰⁷ Alzati, Cesare, *În inima Europei. Studii de istorie religioasă a spațiului românesc* (In the Heart of Europe. Studies of Religious History in the Romanian Space), Ș. Turcuș (ed), Cluj-Napoca 1998, p. 81, nota 4, in Pop, Ioan-Aurel, *Istoria și semnificația numelor de român/valah și România/Valahia*, (The History and Meaning of the Words Romanian/Valahian and Romania/ Valhi), Academia Romana, 29.05.2013

³⁰⁸ Nagy, Imre (ed), *Hazai okmánytár. Codex diplomaticus patrius Hungaricus*, vol. VIII. Budapest 1891, nr. 5, p. 9-11; Szentpétery, Imre (ed): *Regesta regum stirpis Arpadianae critica diplomatica*, vol. I, partea 1 (1001-1270). Budapest 1923, nr. 157, p. 50; see Simon, Alexandru, *Între coroanele Arpadienilor și Asăneștilor: implicațiile unui document de la Béla III.*, (Between the Crowns of Arpadians and Asanesti: Implications of a Document from Bela III), in „Studii și materiale de istorie medie” (Studies and Materials of History), vol. XXVIII, 2010, p. 127-136 in Ioan-Aurel Pop, *Istoria și semnificația, op. cit.*, Academia Romana, 29.05.2013

*In quella medesima provincia sono i Rumeni e i Valacchi, e quali sono due grandi generazioni e anno reame e sono paghani*³⁰⁹

*Poi visto ognj cosa, me misi a camino et passai lo Danubio sul paese de Vlachi, chiamati Rumenj, id est Romanj*³¹⁰

*Valachia inferior, quae Romandiola et Romaniola dicitur*³¹¹

Even after the end of the Byzantine Empire, when a fragmented Romania entered once again in the sphere of influence of the great empires, the multiculturalism remained a constant of Romanian identity and culture through various aspects like the Byzantine heritage: the Latin element, the Greek factor, the Oriental influence and the Orthodox church. In the spring 1918 Germany organizes a census in



Present day Romania and its historical regions
<http://romaniatourism.com/romania-maps/historical-regions-map.html>

³⁰⁹ Turcuș, Ș., *Prima mărturie străină despre etnonimul "român" (1314)*, (First Foreign Testimony about the Ethnonym "Romanian") in „*Cele trei Crișuri*” (Oradea), seria a III-a, an I (2000), nr. 7-9 (iulie-septembrie), p. 6. in Ioan-Aurel Pop, *Istoria și semnificația*, op. cit.

³¹⁰ Archivio di Stato di Milano, Archivio Ducale Sforzesco, Potenze Estere, carteggio 640, fascicolo Ragusa, nn (nenumerotat), 1499 in Pop, Ioan-Aurel, *Istoria și semnificația*, op. cit.

³¹¹ Papacostea, Ș., *Geneza statului în Evul Mediu românesc...*, (The Genesis of Romanian Middle Ages), p. 249-253 in Ioan-Aurel Pop, *Istoria și semnificația*, op. cit.

Dobruja from which it emerges that there were 135,000 Romanians, 65,000 Bulgarians, 31,000 Tatars, 20,000 Turkish, 20.000 Russians, 10,000 Greeks, 8500 Germans, 8000 Gypsies, 4500 Jews, 3500 Armenians, 2000 Italians. Less important numerically the Germans noted the presence of Gagauzi, Albanians, Montenegrins, Serbians, Polish, Kurdish. Just 12 years later, in 1930, in Dobruja there were 360,572 Romanians, 185,279 Bulgarians, 150,773 Turkish, 22,092 Tatars, 12,600 Germans³¹².

2.2. THE PRESENT DAY SITUATION

2.2.1. Romania's multicultural 'map'

In order to examine Romania's multicultural composition it is useful to provide an ethnic, linguistic and religious 'map' of the country. According to the 2011 census the population in Romania is made of Romanians, Aromanians, Bulgarians, Turks, Tatars, Roma, Jews, Greeks, Russians, Lipovans, Ukrainians, Germans, Italians, Hungarians, Serbs. Dobruja is the historical and geographical region of Romania and Bulgaria, that covers the area between the Danube and the Black Sea. From an administrative point of view, it includes the counties of Tulcea and Constanța in the South-East of Romania, while in Bulgaria it includes the regions of Dobrich and Silistra. About 90% of the ethnic Turks were recorded in Constanța county (20.8 thousand people) and Tulcea county (1.7 thousand people), as well as in Bucharest (2.3 thousand people)³¹³.

More than 2000 years of diversity and complex living created a symbiotic environment able to absorb problems and difficulties resulted from different cultures co-existing and sometimes clashing, and a resilient culture that allows every nationality and ethnicity to

³¹² Association for Cultural Resources, *Intercultural Dobrujan Education*, AUXILIAR DIDACTIC, CONSTANȚA, 2011, p. 99 - 100 www.resurseculturale.ro

³¹³ Results of the 2011 Population and Housing Census in Romania, available at http://www.recensamantromania.ro/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/REZULTATE-DEFINITIVE-RPL_2011.pdf, p. 5-6

preserve and promote their specificity protected by the Constitution, thus making a culture that is open–changing, heterogeneous, "multileveled," and infinite.

The majority of the Muslim communities live in Dobruja and are mainly made up of the historical ethnic groups. The 2002 census recorded 67,257 Muslims (0.3% of the total population of Romania), of whom 31,118 were ethnic Turks, 23,641 Tatars, and 3,310 Romanians³¹⁴. The last census, made in 2011, registers out of 20,121,641 people in Romania 27,698 Turks and 20,282 Tatars but only 85.6% of the ethnic Turks speak Turkish in the family, while the rest declared Romanian as their mother tongue³¹⁵.

The various Romanian censuses³¹⁶ counted through the years the following data relative to the Tatar and Turkish population:

Year	Turks	Tatars	Romanians	% T+T
1930	26,080	15,580	14,280,729	0.29%
1956	14,329	20,469	17,489,450	0.2%
1966	18,040	22,151	19,103,163	0.21%
1977	23,422	23,369	21,559,910	0.22%
1992	29,832	24,596	22,810,035	0.24%
2002	32,098	23,935	21,680,974	0.26%
2011	27,698	20,282	20,121,641	0.24%

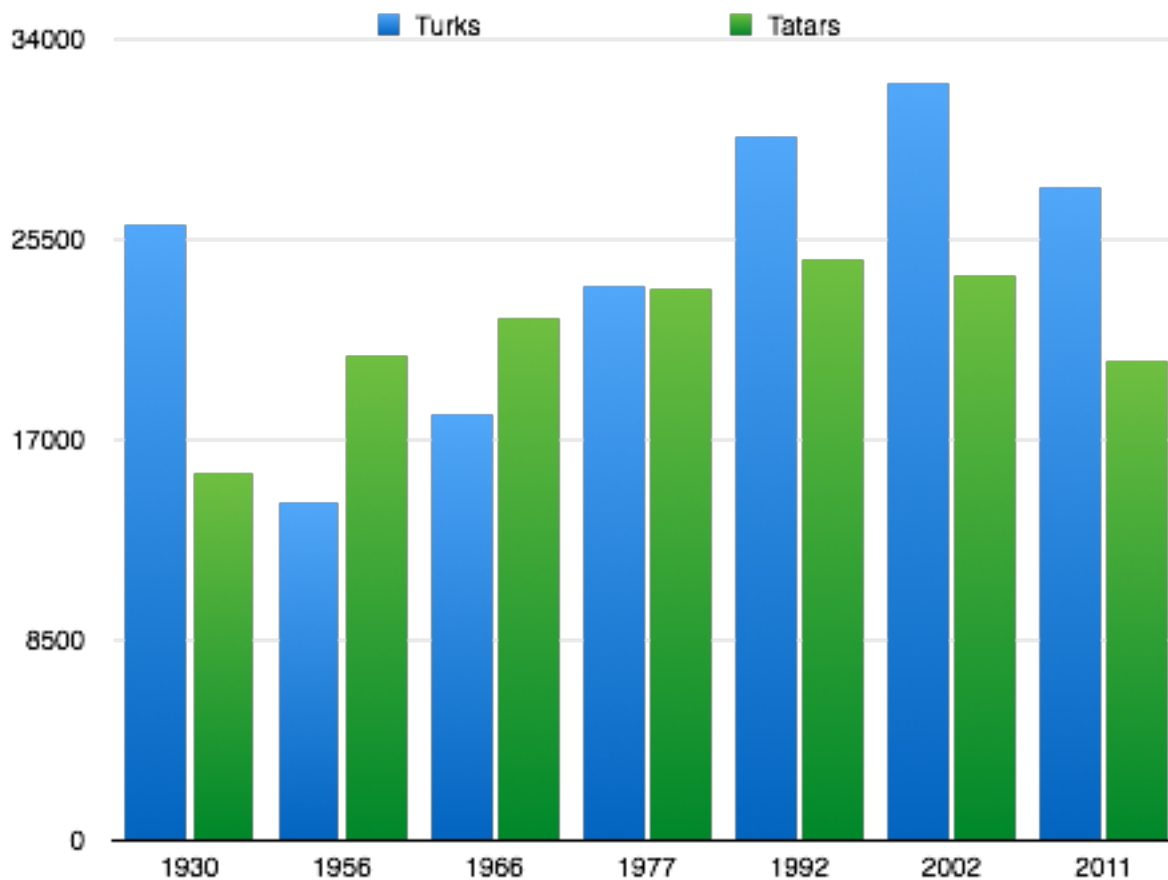
As it is visible, the altogether Muslim population has kept a linear trend, although a slight decrease in the population can be observed in the period after the Second World War, but it soon changed the trend and began increasing. There can also be seen a significant decrease in the population (Turkish, Tatar but also Romanian) in the period between 2002 and 2011,

³¹⁴ National Institute of Statistics, www.insse.ro/cms/files/RPL2002INS/vol4/tabele/t5.pdf

³¹⁵ National Institute of Statistics, <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/noutati/volumul>

³¹⁶ National Institute of Statistics, <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/noutati/volumul-ii-populatia-stabila-rezidenta-structura-etnica-si-confesionala/>

decrease related to the admission of the country in the European Union and the subsequent relaxation of the traveling and migration regulations.



It is interesting to see in this graph the decrease in the population after the World War II when Romania lost the area of Southern Dobruja to Bulgaria, area mostly inhabited by Turks and Tatars.

Of these 20,282 Tatars in 2011 most of them live in Constanta and Tulcea (19,752), and Bucharest (447), while 14,557³¹⁷ live in cities and only 5,725 in villages; the same can be told for the Turkish community, divided between Constanta, Tulcea and Bucharest. Tatar authorities, as the president Eserghep, estimate that the number of Tatars is a lot more

³¹⁷ National Institute of Statistics, <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/noutati/volumul-ii-populatia-stabila-rezidenta-structura-etnica-si-confesionala/>

considerable, at least double adding up to at least 55,000³¹⁸ people saying that many Tatars declare themselves as Turkish in front of the census officials not giving much importance to the differentiation Tatar-Turkish on one hand, and on the other, because they kept the custom of declaring themselves as Turks since the Communist regime when the assimilation policies made it so that all Romanian Muslims were considered Turks. The Turkish response I got when I asked about this claim of the UDTTMR president of being much more numerous, was of disbelief that the any Tatar would still declare himself anything else but Tatar. It would be an aspect to take into consideration for further more thorough analysis.

2.2.2. The Muftiate

The Turkish and Tatar communities in Romania relate to an official recognized religious authority called the “muftiate”.

Mufti

Arabic Muftī, an Islāmic legal authority who gives a formal legal opinion (*fatwā*) in answer to an inquiry by a private individual or judge. A *fatwā* usually requires knowledge of the Qurʾān and Ḥadīth (narratives concerning the Prophet’s life and sayings), as well as knowledge of exegesis and collected precedents, and might be a pronouncement on some problematic legal matter. Under the Ottoman Empire, the mufti of Istanbul, the sheikh al-Islām (Turkish: *şeyhülislām*), ranked as Islām’s foremost legal authority, theoretically presiding over the whole judicial and theological hierarchy. The development of civil codes in most Islāmic countries, however, has tended to restrict the authority of mufti to cases involving personal status, such as inheritance, marriage, and divorce; and even in this area, the prerogatives of the mufti are in some cases circumscribed by modern legislation³¹⁹.

³¹⁸ interview taken during my field research on May 19th 2014 with Tatar Union President, Gelil Eserghep

³¹⁹ Encyclopedia Britannica, *Mufti*, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/mufti>

The authority of the muftiate also serves to represent the Muslim communities in front of the law and the Romanian state and government. As an officially recognized religion, the Muslim community through its representative, the muftiate, receives funds from the government for the maintenance of mosques and monuments; all other associations and organizations must receive the muftiate's approval in order to carry on their activities. The muftiate is the one organizing pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina. There also is a Synoidal Council (Sura-i Islam) headed by the Mufti that takes all decisions regarding religious matters and the organization of the community. The Sura-i Islam is made of the Mufti, 4 members of UDTTMR, 4 members of UDTR, the principal of the Medgidia Seminar, and 15 imams with a diploma from an institution of education accredited by the Romanian state. It is the Sura-i Islam that chooses the mufti who must be a Romanian citizen born in Romania and without any other previous citizenship³²⁰.

Along UDTR and UDTTMR there are other associations and organizations, also of Arabic imprint, that have opened their activities after the 1989, like the Foundation Cultural Centre Islam Today (former Tuna Foundation, linked to the Gülen Movement), the Foundation Cultural Centre The Crescent (which also has a kinder garden and an elementary school), Association of Muslims of Romania (at the same address as the Foundation "Islam Today" Cultural Center in Constanta), Muslim Sisters Association (at the same headquarters as 'Islam Today'), Islamic and Cultural League (with a site for children <https://islamulpentrucopii.wordpress.com>), Association of Romanian Converts to Islam. Since 2011 however the Romanian mufti Murat Iusuf has been warning against attempts of entry in the Romanian environment of radical elements called foundations that do not have the muftiate's approval and that are trying to destabilize the serene Islamic environment

³²⁰ "Hotărâre de guvern privind statutul cultului musulman (Government Decision regarding the Recognition of the Muslim Denomination)" on the website of the State Secretariat for Religious Affairs www.culte.wbd.ro/library/files/biserici/statutul_cultului_musulman.doc and www.muftiyat.l/organizare/muftiu (The Muftiate of Romania), and State Secretariat for Religious Affairs, www.culte.gov.ro/cultul-musulman

existent in Romania for over 500 years³²¹. Taiba and Islam Today replied denying everything and accusing the Mufti of wanting to monopolize Islam under his control. On February 22nd 2011, the then member of Parliament from UDTTMR, Aledin Amet made an official inquiry about the presence of a number of “religious units opened by foundations” that have not been authorized by the muftiate. The official answer of the General Secretary of Cults was that as no complaints were received, according to the 2006 law of freedom of religion, any person can manifest his/her religious beliefs in the form of associations or organizations as long as no law is violated³²².

2.2.3. The mosques and schools

In Romania there are 77 mosques of which 10 are historical monuments:

- The oldest mosque is the Esfahan Mosque in Mangalia built in 1520-1525 and bearing the name of the daughter of Sultan Selim II (Esma-Han), with a 200 people capacity, a minaret, and surrounded by a Muslim cemetery
- Gazi Ali Pasa mosque and his tomb in Babadag (1610); for a certain period until 1989 its use was that of a museum

Both Esfahan mosque and Gazi Ali Pasa mosque have been renovated in the late 1990s with the help of the Muftiate and the Turkish Government through an inter-governmental agreement³²³.

³²¹ Interview with Iusuf Murat, Romanian Mufti, *Bătălia pentru Allah, pe pământ românesc*, (*Battle for Allah on Romanian Soil*), February 23rd 2011, http://adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/batalia-allah-pamant-romanesc-1_50ad21977c42d5a6638f429c/index.html and January 26th 2015 radio interview, *Liderul comunității musulmane trage un semnal de alarmă*, (*The Leader of the Romanian Muslim Community Raises Awareness*), <http://www.europafm.ro/liderul-comunitatii-musulmane-trage-un-semnal-de-alarma/>

³²² Chamber of Deputies, Aledin Amet’s interventions in the Parliament, <http://www.cdep.ro/pls/parlam/interpelari.detalii?idi=27672&idl=1>

³²³ Ibrahim, Ervin, Association for Cultural Resources, *Intercultural Dobrujan Education*, www.resurseculturale.ro, CONSTANȚA, 2011, p. 55

- Ada Kale Island (1799 – was sunk in 1970 in order to build a dam)
- Sultan Abdul Aziz mosque in Tulcea (1865)
- Hunkiar mosque in Constanta erected in 1869
- The Bucharest mosque - 1900 - disassembled by the Communist regime and rebuilt in another location
- Carol I mosque in Constanta commissioned by King Carol I (1866-1914) was erected in 1910

In Bucharest there are kindergartens, schools and high schools that offer classes of Islamic religious education; they are all private and while they offer education in Romanian language, they also provide classes in Turkish or Arabic. The high school opened in Babadag during the Ottoman Empire and closed by the Communist party in 1967 was reopened in 1996 in Medgidia and is now functioning with Turkish and Romanian government financing.



The Carol I Mosque's minaret - photographed during my field research 2014

In 2007 the Romanian mufti was officially asked by the Ministry of Education to give his opinion on the case of equivalence of higher degree diplomas received in Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Sudan and his opinion, which conditioned the final decision of the Ministry, was negative and motivated by the fact that in those countries and the universities attended by the students in question islam is taught in an extremist denatured way and as such, the Romanian muftiate would not allow for the centuries old Romanian Islam to be contaminated by radical views³²⁴.

³²⁴ Cernahoschi, Laura, *Conflictele musulmanilor din Romania atrag guvernul intr-un scandal diplomatic*, (*The Conflicts of the Romanian Muslims Drag the Government into a Diplomatic Scandal*), Cotidianul newspaper, June 27th 2007, <http://ziarero.antena3.ro/articol.php?id=1182975924>

For what education is concerned the 2011 census provided interesting information related to ethnicity and education / illiteracy.

43. POPULATIA DE 10 ANI SI PESTE ANALFABETA PE SEXE, DUPA ETNIE - CATEGORII DE LOCALITATI									
SEXUL ETNIA	POPULATIA STABILA DE 10 ANI SI PESTE								
	TOTAL			MUNICIPII SI ORASE			COMUNE		
	Total	Analfabeta	In % fata de total	Total	Analfabeta	In % fata de total	Total	Analfabeta	In % fata de total
Romani	15222069	153221	1.0	8198689	34294	0.4	7023380	118927	1.7
Turci	23255	2585	11.1	18024	1865	10.4	5231	720	13.8
Tatari	18922	224	1.2	13650	134	1.0	5272	90	1.7

As it is visible in the graph, of the 23,255 Turks of at least 10 years old, mostly living in cities (18,024), 11.1% are illiterate and most of them live in rural areas (13.8% of the 5231 living in rural areas). Once we take a look at the Tatar population, it is clear that there are more Tatars (in percentage) living in rural areas, but the illiteracy rate drops abruptly at 1.2% of the total Tatar population. It would be an interesting follow-up analysis understanding why there is such a difference between the two populations (the Turkish illiteracy rates are lower only to the Roma population ones, and although there is an ethnic group of Roma Turks, I don't believe it weighs so importantly on the illiteracy rate).

When we look at the higher education data we have the following results from the 2011 census:

23. POPULATIA DE 10 ANI SI PESTE PE SEXE, DUPA ETNIE SI NIVELUL DE EDUCATIE AL INSTITUTIEI DE INVATAMANT ABSOLVITE - CATEGORII DE LOCALITATI SI JUDETE											
JUDETUL SEXUL ETNIA	POPULATI A STABILA DE 10 ANI SI PESTE TOTAL	NIVELUL DE EDUCATIE AL INSTITUTIEI DE INVATAMANT ABSOLVITE									
		Superior		Post- liceal si de maistri	Secundar				Primar	Fara scoala absolvita	
		Total ¹	din care:		Total	Superior		Inferior (gimnazii)		Total	din care:
			Universit ar de licenta			Liceal	Profesion al si de ucenici				Persoane analfabet e ²
Romani	15222069	2254966	1946388	503958	9982366	3766290	2172362	4043714	2101700	379079	153221
Turci	23255	2141	1969	222	12575	4478	1332	6765	4828	3489	2585
Tatari	18922	3188	2843	579	12328	5509	2127	4692	2352	475	224

If one observes the graph, it becomes clear that most Turkish ethnics of at least 10 years old can be located in the secondary school category (more than half of these stop after the 8th grade and only 30% finish a high school); many stop after the elementary school and just as many remain illiterate, as seen in the table above also. In the tatar situation, while in the elementary school there are less people who stop after the 4th grade, in the secondary school the numbers are almost the same as with the Turkish community, but in the high education category the Tatar ethnics have indeed outrun the Turkish ethnics, just as president of UDTTMR Gelil Eserghep told me.

For what the occupation of adults is concerned, the census offers yet again interesting data:

32. POPULATIA OCUPATA PE SEXE, DUPA ETNIE SI STATUTUL PROFESIONAL - CATEGORII DE LOCALITATI							
SEXUL ETNIA	POPULATIA STABILA OCUPATA TOTAL	STATUTUL PROFESIONAL					
		Salariatii/ Angajati	Patroni/ Angajatori	Lucratori pe cont propriu	Membri ai unei societati agricole/ cooperative	Lucratori famillali (neremunerati)	Alte situatii
Romani	7277478	4948939	84585	1321569	2615	912561	7209
Turci	8005	6607	630	279	*	480	7
Tatari	7768	7074	236	92	-	366	-

As it is visible, of the total Turkish population there is a significant number of business men and employers (630 vs. 279), three times the number of Tatar business men, which goes to strengthen the popular belief that Turks are great business men and traders; the same goes for the number of self-employed Turks is higher than the number of Tatars.

2.2.4. Religious functions and cemeteries

The muftiate owns 108 cemeteries in Romania, most of them in Dobruja province. There is no official imam in the army or the hospitals but one can be provided upon request by the muftiate.

There are numerous Islamic religious holidays, such as Şeker Bayram and Kurban Bayram (the day of the sacrifice), Ramadan Bayram, iftar (Ramadan) community dinners (one is organized each year by the American ambassador in Bucharest in tradition with the one organized at the White House³²⁵). There are several non religious holidays that the Muslim community celebrates, such as Hadarlez (Turkic spring holiday), Nevruz or Nawruz (spring holiday for both Tatars and Turks), Kures (Tatar wrestling festival), Child Day (April 23rd), Tatar Language Day (May 5th), Turkey National Day (October 29th), etc.

One important aspect in the Western European cities is the halal shops and butcheries; in Bucharest, but of course many more in Dobruja, there are numerous halal shops which provide muftiate approved items. During the Orthodox fasting periods infinite produce labeled “fasting” (which means to eat vegan for Orthodox Christians) can also be consumed by Muslims. Restaurants and coffee shops organize themselves in order to offer the public “fasting” menus for the Romanians who want to observe the religious Orthodox fasting periods, which have alimentation rules that also apply to the Muslim population; there also are numerous Turkish or Arabic restaurants from which to choose.

2.2.5. Festivals and manifestations

Each year and almost monthly there are festivals, manifestations, seminars or symposia meant to celebrate, inform and debate the Muslim culture in Romania. There are the religious holidays which are celebrated, the non-religious occurrences which provide opportunities for cultural exchange and mutual knowledge.

There also is the government agency called Department for Interethnic Relations (www.dri.gov.ro) and non governmental institutions such as Intercultural Institute in Timisoara (DIR and the Intercultural Institute have published an intercultural calendar that puts together the festivities of all nationalities living in Romania <http://>

³²⁵ U.S. Ambassador Mark H. Gitenstein’s Remarks on the Occasion of an Iftar Dinner at His Residence, 24 July 2012, on the site of the US Embassy in Romania, <http://romania.usembassy.gov/policy/remarks/amb-07242012.html>, accessed 4 February 2013.

www.calendarintercultural.ro/index.php) or the Institute of Turcology and Central-Asian Studies in Cluj-Napoca which study the situation of minorities and organize symposia and events.

2.2.6. Media resources

The online version of Haksess (Turkish community magazine) - www.udtr.ro/haksess/index.htm - and the online version of the Tatar Union magazine Karadeniz - <http://uniuneatatara.ro/publicatii>.

There also are two magazines with their online versions: Zaman (www.zaman.ro published in Romanian and Turkish, it has a special section for news from Dobrudja) and Interetnica (www.interetnica.ro, apparently Tatar it has many informations and articles about Tatars, Turks, Armenians, Lipovans). Various youtube channels provide information about Islam practices and rules: www.dailymotion.com/AsociatiaSuroriMusulmane (linked to the Muslim Sisters Association), www.youtube.com/muhlisun (Foundation Islam Today), Radio Islam (internet radio), Islam Romania (Islamic and Cultural League and the Foundation Islam Today). The website <http://www.tatar.ro>, although it focuses on information about the Tatar community, also offers extended articles on Muslims in Romania in general.

In 2009 UDTR, UDTTMR and the Muftiate opened Radio T in Constanta with programs in Romanian, Turkish and Tatar, which adds to the programs transmitted by the National Broadcasting Society, which airs weekly half hour programs in most minority languages.

3. Other Muslim presence in Romania

New Muslims (individuals, insufficient knowledge to identify them as groups or communities) appeared in the public eye after 1989; previously the implicit climate of fear and imposed uniformity through assimilation made it impossible for the multitude of ethnic presences to be recognized as diverse. Palestinians, Kurds, Iraqis, Syrians, Lebanese and Jordanians entered Romania prior to 1898 as refugees, businessmen or students (especially Medicine and Engineering). After 1989 new arrivals continued to Romania from the Middle East but also from Turkey (mostly businessmen).

Since 1991 Romania has received 25,791 protection requests of which 5,450 received the asylum status. Most asylum seekers arrive from Iraq, Somalia, Afganistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Syria³²⁶

4. Tatar community in Romania

4.1. HISTORY

The origin of the Tatars is debated and not entirely clear. Some researchers claim a Mongolic origin, others a Turkic Anatolian one. The Chinese called these peoples “Ta-Ta” which became “Tatar”, often mistaken in Europe for Mongolian³²⁷. The term “Tatar” was

³²⁶ Press Note from the General Inspectorate for Immigration (IGI) and the UN Agency for Refugees (UNHCR), June 25th 2015, <http://www.mediafax.ro/social/aproximativ-700-de-cereri-de-azil-in-romania-au-fost-depuse-in-2015-cele-multe-de-cetateni-sirieni-14478222>

³²⁷ Akmolla, Güner, *Tatarii din Dobrogea, (Dobrujan Tatars)*, Ed. NewLine, 2005, Introduction

originally used to indicate Ural-Altaic tribes, related to the Cuman people³²⁸ that dominated Mongolian lands during the 12th century, but it soon started to be applied to the Golden Horde descendants, later to the Anatolian migrant warriors guided by Sari Saltuk Baba, and subsequently to all Turkic origin peoples (such as Seljuks, Osman, Oguz), until a shift was produced during the Romanian communist regime when both Tatars and Turks started to be known as Turk-Tatars, Nogay-Turks, Turkish-Tatars, Romanian Tatar Turks³²⁹, and eventually just Turks. Tasin Gemil gives an image of the origin of the Tatars tying it to the Golden Horde formation; the “ProtoTatars” as Gemil calls them were documented as early as the 7th century and were born out of a mixture of the Turkic-Asian Cuman tribe and various other influences such as Slavic, and especially Proto-Bulgarian, Mongolian, Finnic, Germanic. Starting with the dissolution of the Golden Horde in the 15th century, the Tatar people split into several states called khanates: Kazan, Crimea, Astrahan, Kasim, Nogay and Siberia. In time these states disappeared under the assimilation of the Russian culture and melted into the Russian people; only few remained such as Crimean and the Kazan khanates, the others either relocating into these areas or remaining as minoritarian populations inside Russia. The Crimean khanate is the only one that throughout its evolution kept a strong link with the Ottoman Empire, receiving protection and aid from the Sultan and later from Turkey.

In the 13th century the followers of the Golden Horde of Genghis Han's nephew, Batu Khan^{330,4}(which was made of Tatars, Mongols and Turks), became known as the Tatars, a Turkicized Khanate uniting people with a common language, traditions, and beliefs who gave birth to a culture of synthesis between Turkic and Mongolian elements with Slavic

³²⁸ Encyclopedia Britannica, Tatar, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Tatar>

³²⁹ Devlet, Nadir, The Question of National Identity among Tatars in the 20th century, in Gemil, Tahsin, *Originea tatarilor (The Origin of the Tatars)*, ed. Criterion, 1997, p. 38

³³⁰ Ekrem, Mehmet Ali, *Din istoria turcilor dobrogeni* (From the History of Dobrogean Turks), Bucuresti: Kriterion, 1994, p. 23-24 and Ablay, Mehmet, *Din istoria tatarilor* (From the History of the Tatars), Bucuresti: Kriterion, 1997, p.17

influences, and who converted to Sunni Islam in the 14th century³³¹. Romanian Tatars, currently around 25,000, originate mostly from Crimea and the Nogay Steppes (Nogay Tatars take their name after Nogai Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan); the Tatar dialects sustain this origin, as in Dobruja there are the Turkish Tatar, the Crimean Tatar and the Nogay Tatar dialects³³². During the first waves of Turkic migration to Dobruja the relation between Romanians and “Turks” was so disproportional that these lands started to be known as “Terra Turca”³³³ and from the 1512-1524 the Tatars in this area started to be known as Tatari Dobricenses³³⁴. A 1543 Ottoman document shows that in Dobruja there were four distinct groups of Tatars: Aktav, Ianbolu, Tarhala, Bozapa (or Bozata)³³⁵ while 30,000 Nogay arrive on the request of Sultan Selim II in 1568, rising up to another name given to the Dobruja province, Tartaria. After the breakup of the Golden Horde the fragmentation due to the mixed up ethnic composition made it impossible for the Tatars inside the Russian Empire to remain united as both their fragmentation as the influence of the Russian forces induced an assimilation process from which only Crimea remained immune due to its close link to the Ottoman Empire³³⁶.

³³¹ Encyclopedia Britannica, Tatar, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Tatar>

³³² Güner Akmolla, *Tatarii din Dobrogea*, op. cit., p.17

³³³ Arbore, Al. P., *La culture Roumaine in Dobroudja*, in AA.VV., *La Dobroudja*, Bucharest, 1938, p. 620 in Cossuto, Giuseppe, *I Tatari di Romania e la creazione della "lingua nazionale" tatara di Dobrugia: un esempio di differenziazione culturale in un Paese dell' Europa dell'Est*, published in *Oriente Moderno* (numero speciale 1997: “Problematiche islamiche nell’area balcanica: Albania, Bulgaria, Romania”), pp. 113-166. , p. 1

³³⁴ Radulescu, Adrian; Bitoleanu, Ion, *Dobrogea, Istoria Romanilor dintre Dunare si mare* (La Dobrugia, storia dei Rumeni tra il Danubio ed il mare), Bucharest, 1979, pp. 186 in Cossuto, Giuseppe, *I Tatari di Romania e la creazione della "lingua nazionale" tatara di Dobrugia: un esempio di differenziazione culturale in un Paese dell' Europa dell'Est*, published in *Oriente Moderno* (numero speciale 1997: “Problematiche islamiche nell’area balcanica: Albania, Bulgaria, Romania”), pp. 113-166. , p. 1

³³⁵ Cantemir, Dimitrie, *Descrierea Moldovei* (Descrizione della Moldavia), cured by Maciucă, C., ed. Tineretului, Bucuresti, 1971, p. 76 in Cossuto, Giuseppe, *I Tatari di Romania e la creazione della "lingua nazionale" tatara di Dobrugia: un esempio di differenziazione culturale in un Paese dell' Europa dell'Est*, published in *Oriente Moderno* (numero speciale 1997: “Problematiche islamiche nell’area balcanica: Albania, Bulgaria, Romania”), pp. 113-166

³³⁶ Gemil, Tahsin, *Problema etnogenezei tatarilor* (The Problem of the Tatars' Ethnogenesis), in Tahsin Gemil, *Originea tatarilor*, op. cit., p. 63

The shift in denomination was complete after the 17th century when all Ottoman documents spoke without distinction of Evlad-i Fatihan - the Sons of the Conqueror³³⁷ (Sultan Mehmet II). Tatars thus have rarely been acknowledged independently from the rest of the Turkic peoples but have seldom been associated with images of fear, terror, conquest and destruction as they are presented in the 1245 Lion Council and its Canon XVI called “De Tartaris” where it is stated that “indeed the wicked race of the Tartars, seeking to subdue, or rather utterly destroy the Christian people”³³⁸ (“Sane Tartarorum gens impia Christianum populum subjugare fibi...[...].fed in omnes indifferenter crudelitate horribili debacchante, inaudito ipsas exterminio devastarit...”)³³⁹ The Romanian literature and history school books abound in descriptions that see Tatars as barbarian invaders and cruel warriors who destroy, prey and burn everything in their path. One description in a historical school book for the 6th grade states that “Tatars are the typical exponents of the Asian nomadic peoples. They have a boney square face; black bright and spikey hair; rare and bristly beards; dark mat skin; wide nose; tar black eyes, almond shaped and protruding in the middle of the face. Short and thick, with wide shoulders, and short crooked legs because of riding horses, their dirty old leather clothes gave this conqueror people an image of deformity and hideousness”³⁴⁰. This stereotyped image of the Tatars came in conflict with the good state of the diplomatic relations between Romania and Turkey and with the actual relations between Romanians and Tatars living in Dobruja. There are also positive depictions of the Tatars in the historical works of Nicolae Iorga for example who narrates that Romanians

³³⁷ Ekrem, Mehmet Ali, in Cossuto, Giuseppe, *I Tatari di Romania*, op. cit., pp. 113-166

³³⁸ Documenta Catholica Omnia, http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/1245-1245_Concilium_Lugdunense_I_Documenta_Omnia_EN.pdf

³³⁹ Catalani, Giuseppe, *Sacrosancta Concilia oecumenica, prolegomenis et commentariis illustrata ad S.P. Clementem XII*, typis A. de Rubeis, 1748

³⁴⁰ Oțetea, A., *Istoria medievală și modernă pentru clasa VI-a secundară*, ediția I, (Medieval and Modern History for 6th grade, I edition), Cugetarea - Georgescu Delafras, București, 1936, p. 191 in Gemil, Tasin; Pienaru, Nagy, op. cit., p. 599-600

learnt from Tatars “the craftsmanship of archery and horse riding, as well as a system of customs that endures until the end of our medieval life”³⁴¹.

Currently the Tatar peoples are scattered throughout Europe and the East and Central Asia; more than 1,5 million live in the Volga and Urals regions and the Crimea and the Tatarstan Republics,¹ but also Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, and Romania. The movement of Tatars to Romania started with the Cuman migration and with the Golden Horde crumbling, and it continued during the Ottoman Empire, the Russian conquest of Crimea in 1783, the Crimean War (1853-1856)³⁴², and the deportation ordered by Stalin in the 1942-1944. A reverse movement started after the Berlin treaty when Dobruja was divided between Bulgaria and Romania because of the new laws, and the new minority status of the Muslim community. The Dobrujan environment appealed to the Tatar (and Turkish but we will see it in the next chapter) ideas of self-uprising as the community was relatively free to publish books, newspapers and magazine, to create associations, and cultural and religious institutions such as the Theological Seminar opened in 1610 in Babadag and moved to Medgidia in 1901.

A unique Tatar nationalist movement was born in Dobruja in the late 19th century when Ismail Gaspirali (Gasprinski by his Russian pronunciation), Crimean Tatar intellectual and politician considered by all Romanian Tatars as the father of Tatar nationalism visited Constanta (Tr. Köstence) and discovered the cultural ferment that led him to publish the *Terküman* magazine in 1883 (until 1918). His motto, noticeable in every Tatar headquarters and cultural establishment, was “Dilde, fikirde, işte birlik!” (“Unity of language, thought and action!”). His idea of modernity was through Europeanization and this, he thought, could only be possible through education. He wrote that the only cause of backwardness is ignorance and the only way to overcome ignorance is through education. He also published a women’s magazine and a children’s magazine; he founded the Islamic Union in the

³⁴¹ Iorga, Nicolae, *Studii asupra evului mediu românesc*, (Studies on Romanian Middle Ages), edition by Șerban Papacostea, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, Bucharest, 1984, p. 45

³⁴² Encyclopedia Britannica, Tatar, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Tatar>

Tzarist Russia and he organized the first ever Russian Muslim Congress at the beginning of the 1900's. Another intellectual giving voice to the nationalist ideas was the poet Mehmet Niyazi who founded "Emel" ("Ideal") magazine (January 1st 1930, then stopped by the war and republished after 2004), edited the Dobruca Sadasi (Dobruja Voice) daily newspaper, and who run the Turkish high school in Constanta, and founded the Education Society in Dobruja.

All the Tatars with whom I have spoken during my field research have identified themselves with the Crimean origin and have sustained, throughout the years, the Crimean cause, considering themselves a Crimean Tatar diaspora. This identity has been promoted through various cultural activities such as publications, history courses, conferences and regular visits to Crimea. In 2006 the Romanian Parliament adopted the law that instituted the National Tatar Day on December 13th, a date chosen for its significance to the Crimean Tatars, thus strengthening the ties of the Romanian Tatars to the Crimean Republic. On December 13th 1917 the first elected Parliament of the Republic of Crimea reunited and elaborated a Constitution and declaring on December 26th the Crimean Tatar Democratic Republic with its new President Numan Çelebi Cihan, soon after killed by the Bolsheviks³⁴³. The National Tatar Day is the only one existing at this time and it represents another element to sustain the existence of the particular ethnic and cultural environment in Dobruja and Romania³⁴⁴. The law also states that maximum support from the local administrations must be given for the organization of the celebrations and that the national radio and tv broadcasting company must cover at the events and give adequate space in its shows.

4.2. PRESENT SITUATION

At the 25th anniversary of the creation of UDTTMR, the president Gelil Eserghep declared that "we enjoy a deep sense of respect from the majority population and from the Romanian

³⁴³ Article on the Tatar Union website, December 7th 2012, "December 13th - The Day of Romanian Tatars", <http://uniuneatatara.ro/blog/comunicate/45/13-decembric-ziuatatarilor-din-romania.html>

³⁴⁴ Article on the Tatar Union website, *ibidem*

state. We thank our ancestors for choosing, during their wandering, to settle in Romanian lands where they found understanding and respect for our traditional values, our language, our Tatar culture, and our Islamic religion. It's only upon us Tatars to make sure that years from now it will be spoken of us in present tense and not on past tense, or if years from now we still be the same active and consolidated community.”³⁴⁵

12 million Tatars around the world divide themselves in two main areas: the Volga-Ural Tatars (around 7 million people originating in the areas of Tatarstan, Bashkurdistan and neighboring regions) and Crimean Tatars (around 5 million people living in Crimea, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria)³⁴⁶. After the difficult situation experienced during the Communist regime and its assimilation policies and after Stalin's deportations when the Romanian Communist regime retaliated against the Tatars who had helped and housed deportees, the Romanian 1898 Revolution created a new environment that rekindled the desire to rediscover, preserve and transmit the Tatar culture to the new generations. Thus the *Terküman* and *Emel* magazines were republished and a new drive determined the newly born UDTTMR - Union of the Turkish Tatar Muslims in Romania - to organize its activities as to preserve and rekindle the conservation of the Tatar language, literature, traditions and identity. Since the 1990's UDTTMR has opened 22 sections in the cities and villages with a consistent tatar population (in 31 provinces), such as Constanța, Medgidia, Mangalia, Valu lui Traian, București, Techirghiol, Basarabi, Ovidiu, Brașov, Tulcea and has had numerous mayors and city councilors, and a member of the Parliament (Chamber of Deputies) since 1990; the current UDTTMR president is Gelil Eserghep, while the current Tatar member of Parliament is Varol Amet. UDTTMR publishes monthly bilingual magazine - *Karadeniz* (Black Sea) - in Romanian, Turkish, and Tatar (it continues the tradition of the the first bimonthly magazine of 1926, “*Emel*”, Tatar for “*Ideal*”).

³⁴⁵ Ionescu, Sinziana, *Fascinanta istorie a turcilor și tătarilor din România: de la stăpânii Dobrogei otomane la supușii unei țări ortodoxe*, (The Fascinating Story of Romanian Turks and Tatars: From Being Landlord of Dobruja to Being Subjects of a Christian Country), February 14th 2015, http://adevarul.ro/locale/constanta/fascinanta-istorie-turcilor-tatarilor-romania-stapanii-dobrogei-otomane-supusii-tari-ortodoxe-1_54df44f2448e03c0fd9a10ee/index.html

³⁴⁶ Gemil, Tasin, *Problema etnogenezei tatarilor* (The Issue of Tatar Ethnogenesis), <http://udttmrmedgidia.3x.ro/files/PROBLEMA%20ETNOGENEZEI%20TATARILOR.pdf>

The official UDTTMR site states that it “is an ethno-religious organization of the Romanian citizens of Tatar Turkic-Muslim (Tatars of Turkic origin and Muslim faith) with cultural, social, economical, and humanitarian goals, that pursues the exercise of the Tatar Turkic-Muslim minority rights related to the preservation, development and expression of national identity under ethnic, cultural, political, juridical, social, economical, linguistic and religious aspects, as they are defined by the Romanian Constitution and the international treaties that Romania upholds”. The interesting part in the section dedicated to the UDTTMR’s objectives is the one in which the expression and protection of the Tatar minority’s rights are to be pursued by...

- the elevation of the cultural level of the minority by promoting state or private education in Turkish and Tatar literary language
- studying the Tatar language and Tatar and Turkish history in state and private system and mass-media
- ensuring representation in the Parliament and actively participating in the elaboration and passing of the bills that directly or indirectly concern the national minorities in general and especially the Tatar and Turkish minorities
- cooperating with the authorities, the NGO’s, the Romanian cultural and scientific organizations and the international organizations interested in promoting human rights and minority rights; and also with Turkish and Crimean institutions
- Keeping Islamic faith by supporting religious education in schools, by printing educational books and by training religious teachers; by appointing an Islamic imam in the military service and ensuring religious services for the military units, hospitals, retirement homes, prisons.
- Supporting Tatar and Turkish youth to obtain a high degree of professional and scientific education through national and international scholarships
- Creating and implementing projects with EU and other international funds

...as it unfolds an array of interests and means of achieving them through a vision both

towards the inside as to the Turkish community, as well as to the national and international bodies, both for support and cooperation, as for funding and representation.

In 2007 the then member of the parliament Aledin Amet proposed that December 13th become National Tatar Day and it was approved in almost unanimity (with 2 abstains) by the Parliament. The Tatar National Day is celebrated since then every year on December 13th (the date recalls the December 13th 1917 when the Congress of Crimea proclaimed its independence).

4.2.1. Demographics

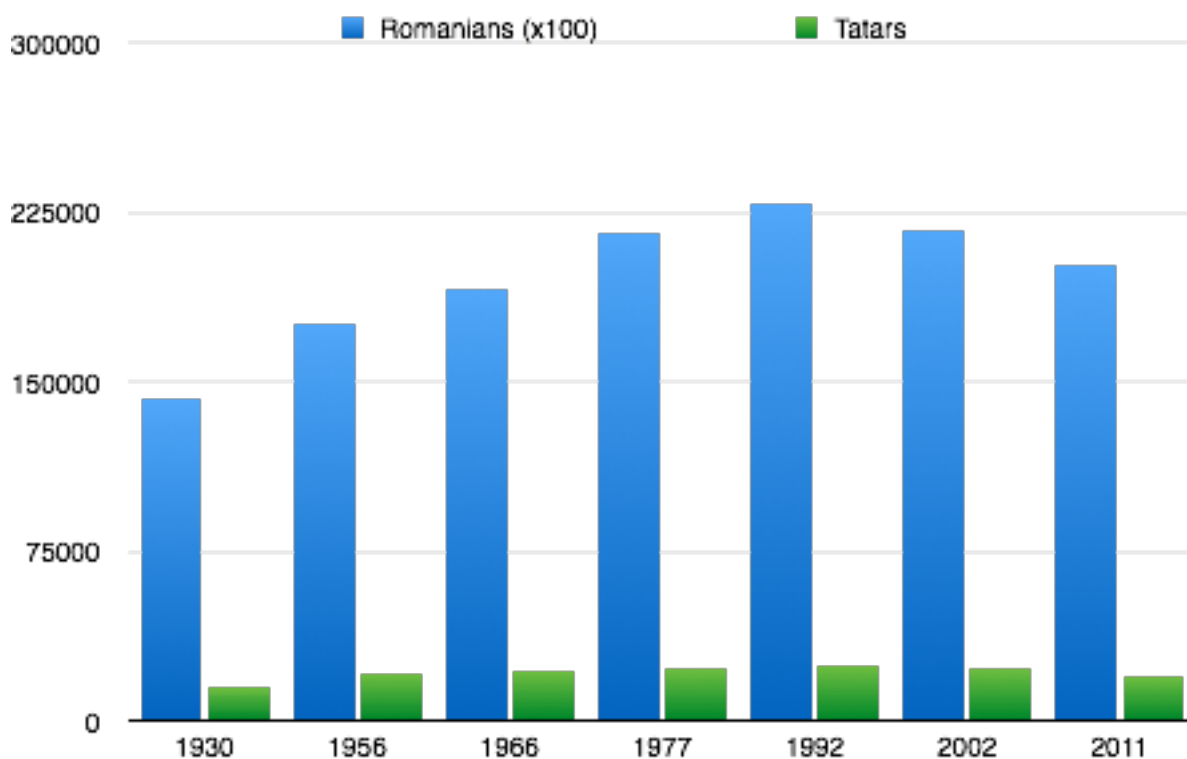
The demographic evolution of the Tatar population in Romania has been fluctuating throughout the centuries, one of the main reason being the fact that the Tatars lack a state of their own. Important demographic fluctuations continued throughout the years until a relative equilibrium was reached with the rule of the Ottoman Empire; this unstable equilibrium was by no means static, but dynamic, in a continuous transformation. By 1850 Ion Ionescu de la Brad's statistics³⁴⁷ showed that for Constanta and Mangalia provinces the Turkish-Tatar population reached 88% of the total population. Another great shift was produced once Dobruja joined Romanian state, but it did not end here as Crimean wars, the Russian - Turkish conflicts in 1877-1878, the Bolsheviks' rule, the two World Wars, Stalin's retaliations have continuously increased the flow of Tatars and Turks into Dobruja and out of Dobruja towards Turkey. The 2002 census acknowledged that 23,935 people declared themselves as tatars, living especially in the provinces of Constanta, Tulcea and Bucharest. More than 90% of Tatars live in Dobruja and 3/4 of them in Constanta province. From 1930 to the last census performed in 2011, the Romanian demographic data³⁴⁸ concerning the Tatar population counted the following:

³⁴⁷ De la Brad, Ionescu Ion, 1850 statistics qtd in Garlan, Mictat. A, Metodologia cercetarii etnopsihologice (The Methodology of Ethno-Psychological Research), Ed. Lumen, Iasi, 2011, p. 165

³⁴⁸ Romanian National Institute of Statistics, 2011 Census, Population in basis of ethnicity and religion, <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/noutati/volumul-ii-populatia-stabila-rezidenta-structura-etnica-si-confesionala/>

Year	Tatars	Romanians	%
1930	15,580	14,280,729	0.11%
1956	20,469	17,489,450	0.12%
1966	22,151	19,103,163	0.12%
1977	23,369	21,559,910	0.11%
1992	24,596	22,810,035	0.11%
2002	23,935	21,680,974	0.11%
2011	20,282	20,121,641	0.1%

It is possible to observe the two periods of population decrease: after the Second World War and after Romania's admission to the European Union. Given the fact that the number of (declared) Tatars is not substantial, the numbers in questions are in the line of thousands of people, while the increase / decrease in the population can be noticeable within a constant trend of Tatar presence in Romania.



What can be extrapolated from the table and chart showing the Tatar population in Romania is the trend of stability throughout the two World Wars and during the Communist repression (unlike the Turkish community in noticeable descent during these periods), likely related to the repressions suffered in Crimea and the lack of a Tatar state.

Of these 20,282 most of them live in Constanta and Tulcea (19,752), and Bucharest (447), while 14,557³⁴⁹ live in cities and only 5,725 in villages. Tatar authorities, as the president Eserghep, estimate that the number of Tatars is a lot more considerable, at least double adding up to at least 55,000 people³⁵⁰ saying that many Tatars declare themselves as Turkish in front of the census officials not giving much importance to the differentiation Tatar-Turkish on one hand, and on the other, because they kept the custom of declaring themselves as Turks since the Communist regime when the assimilation policies made it so that all Romanian Muslims were considered Turks. The Turkish response I got when I asked about this claim of the UDTTMR president of being much more numerous, was of disbelief that the any Tatar would still declare himself anything else but Tatar. It would be an aspect to take into consideration for further more thorough analysis.

4.2.2. Cultural aspects

Crimean Tatar language is on UNESCO's endangered languages list marked as severely endangered. UDTTMR organizes classes to study tatar language but being a language not used very frequently, it is sacrificed by Tatars themselves in favor of the Turkish language. Crimean Tatar is a Kipchak language from a Western Turkic language group strongly influenced by Oguz through Ottoman Turkish; there is no literary version of the Tatar

³⁴⁹ Romanian National Institute of Statistics, 2011 Census, Population in basis of ethnicity and religion, <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/noutati/volumul-ii-populatia-stabila-rezidenta-structura-etnica-si-confesionala/>

³⁵⁰ interview taken during my field research on May 19th 2014 with Tatar Union President, Gelil Eserghep

language, as Ottoman Turkish was used during the 500 years of occupation, thus making the Tatar language to be classified mostly as a dialect³⁵¹.

After Dobruja's unification with Romania efforts have been made to accommodate the Tatar community through the measures adopted for the Romanian Muslim community in general. Tatar schools were opened and books were imported in Tatar language from Kazan, but they did not last long as parents soon understood that with an all Tatar education their children would be isolated; the schools closed one after the other, with the last one closing its doors in 1957. The Mufti Iusuf Murat states that "it is very important to know the history of our people, of the Turkic peoples, of the values that unite us, that make us stronger and help us overcome these difficult times. We wish that all Tatars everywhere could enjoy the same fundamental rights and freedoms as do the minorities in Romania, enabling us to preserve our ethnic identity, our culture, traditions, and Islamic religion. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) urges us to respect each other, he shows us the way of dialogue between peoples and he teaches us how to overcome our problems by following the Quran and praying for common good. I am glad that the Tatar and Turkish ethnics have lived and continue to live harmoniously with the majority population and with the other minorities. This way of life will positively influence our descendants and will live a sense of respect within the history of Tatars. God bless Tatars everywhere! God bless Romania!"³⁵²

Besides the language, religion is the other cultural element defining Tatar identity. As the Orthodox religion became during the Communist regime an anchor to a different reality, a secret bond between people, so did Islam for the Muslim communities, both Tatar and Turkish. But preserving Tatar identity is a complex matter as the community must consider the matter from two perspectives: that of a minority, thus in relation to the Romanian majority, and that of a nation without a country in relation to the Turkish Romanian minority and to the Turkish state. The Tatar nation has always been in danger of losing their identity and be assimilated into the Turkish culture which has a stronger and more

³⁵¹ Minahan, James, *One Europe, Many Nations: A Historical Dictionary of European National Groups*, Greenwood Press, Eastport, Connecticut, 2000, p. 187

³⁵² Press release, *Solidari cu fratii nostri din Crimeea* (United with our Crimean Brothers), May 16th 2015, the Muftiate website, <http://www.muftiyat.ro/2015/05/16/solidari-cu-fratii-nostri-din-crimea/>

identifiable externally image than the Tatars, not to mention that it has a strong state to which reach.

At the Tatar Culture and Civilization course organized by UDTTMR and the Ovidius University in Constanta, there are plenty of Turks, tatars and Romanians. Professor Metin Omer who holds the course states that in Dobruja there has always been peaceful cohabitation and collaboration “Dobruja is the best example. Here there are no ethnic problems. Romanians have never marginalized Muslims as it happened in other places in the Balkans. And Muslims proved to be good Romanians”. Professor Omer also recalls the story of Kemal Agi Amet, the tatar mayor of Medgidia who in 1898, when in Dobruja the majority of the population was Muslim, asked the Culture Secretary of State for money to build an Orthodox church. The newspapers from the period reported the dialogue between the Romanian Secretary and the Tatar mayor where the Secretary tried to convince the mayor of the lack of money for the building and the mayor called for the dignity of the Secretary and his respect as Romanian and Christian for the Christian minority in Medgidia³⁵³.

5. Turkish community in Romania

5.1. HISTORY

As already seen, the Ottoman presence was preceded by Attila's Huns in the 5th century, the Avars, the Bulgarians, the Pecenegs, the Cumans, and the Tatars in 1241 with their Khanate of the Golden Horde; taking it in this perspective there has been a constant Turcic

³⁵³ Sinziana Ionescu, *Fascinanta istorie a turcilor și tătarilor din România: de la stăpânii Dobrogei otomane la supușii unei țări ortodoxe*, 14 februarie 2015, http://adevarul.ro/locale/constant/fascinanta-istorie-turcilor-tatarilor-romania-stapanii-dobrogei-otomane-supusii-tari-ortodoxe-1_54df44f2448e03c0fd9a10ee/index.html

- Turanic presence in the now Romanian lands. After the end of the Turkic-Mongolian movements, there is a new migration from the Anatolian lands, of Seljuks by many believed to be of the same Turkic-Mongolian lineage as the Tatars³⁵⁴. Between 1262-1264 the Byzantine Emperor Michael the 8th Palaeologus ordered the Turkish dervish captain Sarı Saltık Dede also called Baba and his Seljuk troops to settle in Dobruja in order to establish a good defense at the Western borders of the Empire³⁵⁵. Some accounts say that Bayezid II was the one who founded Babadag (Baba Dag in some older writings) and then populated This is how the eponym city of Babadag (Tr. Baba's mountains; baba - father) was born and opened the way to a series of migration movements and Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman settlements. Yazicioglu Ali, a 13th century Turkish historian, reports that the Seljuks called for other related Anatolian tribes "to enjoy the green plains, de good water and the clean air" in Dobruja³⁵⁶. There is a 1262 document that testifies to the existence of 10,000-12,000 Turks in Babadag³⁵⁷. Sarı Saltık's personality is very important for the Romanian Turks as it was important for the Ottomans who, in 1484 on Sultan Bayezid's orders, build a mausoleum in Sarı Saltık's honor; in 1677-1678 the Pasha's residence is relocated to Babadag³⁵⁸. Sarı Saltık's tomb dating since 1297 has become a place of pilgrimage in Dobruja as he is recognized as a famous Islamic thinker and venerated in the Balkans by

³⁵⁴ Interview with Prof. Mustafa Ali Mehmet, August 19th 2011, <http://www.radioamator.ro/articole/view.php?id=773>

³⁵⁵ Romanian Muftiate website, Sari Saltuk Dede monument, <http://www.muftiyat.ro/monumente/>

³⁵⁶ Intercultural Dobrujan Education, Association for Cultural Resources, Constanta, www.resurseculturale.ro, 2011, p. 52-53

³⁵⁷ Ekrem, Mehmet Ali, Sarı Saltuk Baba'nın Şimdiki Dobruca'ya Yerleşmesine Dair Bazı Mülâhazalar, Renkler, Kriterion Yayınevi, Bucureşti, 1995, p. 146

³⁵⁸ Anetshofer, Helga, *Legends of Sarı Saltık in the Seyahatname and the Bektashi Oral Tradition, Evliyâ Çelebi. Studies an Essays Commemorating the 400th Anniversary of his Birth*, Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism General Directorate of Libraries and Publications, Ankara, 2011

the Bektashis as a saint symbol of Islamic culture³⁵⁹. This link with the Bektashi order is interesting as the Bektashis were a syncretic group that embodied mystical sufi elements and is closely linked to the janissaries order in the Ottoman army, but also to modernization measures such as veil elimination in public for women, alcohol consumption, elimination of the 5 prayer a day duty. After the death of Sarı Saltık many Turks returned to Anatolia but some remained and converted to Orthodoxy, giving birth to a particular ethnic group still existing in Romania and Moldavia - the Gagauzi - Turkish speaking Orthodox group.

The 17th century traveller Evliya Çelebi told the stories of the Ottoman land and the neighboring territories in a 10 volume travelogue called *Seyâhatnâme*; about the Wallach lands he said that after Sultan Bayezid Yıldırım (1389-1402) conquered them he colonized them with people brought from Anatolia; he also mentions the Tatars living in Dobruja, who he does not include in the Ottoman's ethnic group, but keeps them separate.

The Sultans important for the Romanian historical development were:

Bayezid Yıldırım (reign 1389-1402) - his Romanian counterpart was Mircea cel Batran (reign 1386-1418)

Bayezid tried to conquer Constantinople but did not succeed; after a new Crusade launched to defeat him he tried to enter Europe through the Romanian launches his attacks at the South part of the Romanian Principalities.

Mehmet II El-Fatih (The Conqueror, reign 1451-1481) - his Romanian counterpart was Vlad Tepes (reign 1448, 1456-1462, 1476-1477) in the South of the Romanian Principalities, and Stefan cel Mare (reign 1457-1504) in the Eastern part, Moldavia.

³⁵⁹ Hasluck, F.W., *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans*, "Sarı Saltık, the Bektashi apostle par excellence of [Rumeli](#), seems to have had a similar history. He appears to have been originally the saint of a Tatar tribe in the Crimea, which emigrated to Baba Dagħ in Romania, carrying its cult with it. Developed by the Bektashi, Sarı Saltık loses every trace of his real origin and figures as one of the missionary saints sent by [Ahmed Yasevi](#) for the conversion of Europe", Oxford University Press, ed. by Margaret Hasluck, 1929, vol. I, p. 340

Mehmet II El-Fatih is the Sultan who conquered Constantinople and managed to arrive in Italy, conquering the Negroponte Island and defeating Venetia making Venetians pay a substantial tribute to the Ottoman Gate.

Suleyman I the Magnificent (reign 1520-1566) - in his times in the Romanian Principalities there was not a strong figure to oppose the Sultan; these were times of small continuous confrontations.

Suleyman extended the Ottoman Empire to Persia and Northern Africa, dominating the seas surrounding Europe. He married one of the women in his harem, Roxelana, a Christian Orthodox woman who became Hürrem Haseki Sultan.

Abdul Medjid I (reign 1839-1861) - his Romanian counterpart was Alexandru Ioan Cuza (reign 1859-1866), both in the South as in the East, as Romania was engaging in unification efforts.

Abdul Medjid tried to ally with Western European countries against the Russian Empire in the Crimean War. He is known for his reforms (monetary, legislative, educational) that set the basis for Atatürk's modern transformation from the Ottoman Empire into Turkey.

Dobruja has always been a strategic border land between the Black Sea and the great powers. Through the years of Ottoman domination these lands have changed numerous times between Ottoman and Romanian rule; given also their ethnic composition they represented at times a disposable cushion area for Romania and a military outpost for the Ottoman Gate. Dobruja thus has had a particular status being in effect under Ottoman rule until the Romanian Independence War and the Berlin Treaty that assigned Dobruja to Romania. The 400 years of Ottoman dominance have left numerous prints in the Dobruja area: various villages still bear a Turkish name like Babadag and Medgidia, Sarichioi (Tr. Yellow village), Siutghiol (Tr. the Milk River), Techirghiol (Tr. Striped Lake), Mamaia (Tr.

Mamakioi, Butter Village)³⁶⁰, Teleorman (Tr. Crazy Forest), Baragan (Tr. Tempest), Caraiman (Tr. Heavy Snow).³⁶¹

During the long Ottoman domination (1418-1878) various movements of Ottomans from the Empire came to settle in Dobruja and the Southern part of Romania. A new migration of Oğüz Ottomans occurred after the conquest of Varna by Sultan Bayed II, in 1484, making these lands of Tatar and Ottoman supremacy. In the 17th century the majority of Dobrujan cities and villages had Turkish names: Küstendje - Constanța, Carasu - Medgidie (founded by Said Pasha in honor of Sultan Abdul-Medjid, 1839-1861), Techirgiol, Alakapu - Poarta Albă, Kara Omer - Negru Vodă. Ion Ionescu de la Brad, wrote in 1850 that within a total of 15,764 families in Dobruja there were 4,800 Turkish families, 3,656 Romanian families, 2,225 Tatar, 2,214 Bulgarian, 1,092 Cossack, 747 Romanian Russian, 300 Greek, 212 Egyptian, 145 Arab families, 119 Jewish families and 59 German families³⁶². In the 1900 in Dobruja there were 238 mosques and several vakıf (cultural and charitable institutions) that contributed in preserving and spreading the Turkish culture.

The first newspaper in Romanian language sees the light in the period between 1888-1894, Dobruca Gazetasi (The Dobruja Gazette) and many more bilingual newspapers and magazines follow; bilingual and Turkish only schools open (they would be closed in 1954 by the communist regime) and between 1935-1949 there is even a Turkish language theatre in the city of Bazargic³⁶³. On November 9th 1891 in Medgidia is opened the Islamic Theological Seminar for imams and religion teachers (hoge); it too would be closed in 1963 and reopened after 1989. In 1908 Ibrahim Themo creates the Young Turks of Dobruja

³⁶⁰ Constanța și împrejurimile ei: ghid turistic, (Constanta and its Surroundings: Turistic Guide), Ed. Științifică, București, 1960

³⁶¹ Vasilescu, Nini, *Comunitatea turca din Romania (Turkish Community in Romania)*, interview with Prof. Mustafa Ali Mehmet, September 28th 2011, <http://www.radioamator.ro/articole/view.php?id=773>

³⁶² Tomis Magazine, Constanța, n°. 6 (459) / 2008

³⁶³ Ekrem, Mehmed Ali, *Din istoria turcilor dobrogeni, (Dobrujan Turkish History)*, Editura Kriterion, București, 1994; Nuredin, Ibram, *Comunitatea musulmană din Dobrogea. Repere de viață spirituală, (Dobrujan Muslim Community. Elements of Spiritual Life)*, Editura Ex Ponto, Constanța, 1998

Union which intends to bring the ideas of the Young Turks movement and of Atatürk into life in Dobruja.

After the Romanian independence the relations with the Ottoman Gate became excellent: in 1891 a Theological Islamic Seminar opens its gates at Babadag; it would be moved in 1910 to Medgidia; in 1906 the Romanian King decides to build two grand mosques, one in Constanta and one in Bucharest; the Parliament decides right away to keep 4 places for the Turkish members of the Parliament: two senators and two deputies³⁶⁴.



Graduates of the Medgidia Theological Seminar - end of 19th century - beginning 20th century³⁶⁵

³⁶⁴ Garlan, Mictat, *Metodologia cercetării etnopsihologice* (Methodology of Ethno-Psychological Research), Ed. Lumen, 2011, p. 202

³⁶⁵ Ionescu, Sinziana, *Fascinanta istorie a turcilor și tătarilor din România: de la stăpânii Dobrogei otomane la supușii unei țări ortodoxe*, (The Fascinating Story of Romanian Turks and Tatars: From Dobrujan Landlords to Subjects in a Christian Country), February 14th 2015, Adevarul newspaper, http://adevarul.ro/locale/constantina/fascinanta-istorie-turcilor-tatarilor-romania-stapanii-dobrogei-otomane-supusii-tari-ortodoxe-1_54df44f2448e03c0fd9a10ee/index.html

A first Constanta Mosque was built in the 18th century with the name Mahmudie, after the Sultan Mahmud I (1730-1754); when at the beginning of the 19th century the mosque needed intervention, King Carol decided to build a new mosque around the old Oriental mihrab. The style of the new mosque, called “Carol I” in honor of the King has a unique architectural style (indicative for the Dobruja area) that blends Egyptian-Byzantine motifs with Romanian elements, all based on the Konya mosque in Anatolia, a plan made entirely by Romanian by architects and builders³⁶⁶.

5.2. THE PRESENT SITUATION

After 1990 Turkish Democratic Union in Romania (UDTR) was born. The current president of UDTR is Osman Fedbi, the member of Parliament is Iusein Ibram. UDTR publishes books and a monthly bilingual magazine called Hakses (The Authentic Voice), it has a radio station called Radio T; it supports various folk music and dance groups, festivals and seminars dedicated to the diffusion of the Turkish culture and also to the Romanian-Turkish cohabitation in Dobruja.

As stated on the UDTR internet page, the organization’s main objectives are expressing, preserving and promoting Turkish etho-cultural, linguistic, and religious identity. The organization counts 31 branches throughout Dobruja and Bucharest and five special commissions: culture, women, education, youth, and religion. After the 1990’s UDTR worked to reinstate the Turkish language in all public schools in Constanta, Tulcea and Bucharest (where needed). Two universities offer studies in Turkish language in Constanta and Bucharest.

On December 28th 1989, during the Romanian Revolution, the Turkish Muslim Democratic Union in Romania was born to “unite into one national minority organization the Romanian

³⁶⁶ Gîlă, Cristina, Intercultural Dobrujan Education, Association for Cultural Resources, www.resurseculturale.ro, CONSTANȚA, 2011, p 12

Tatar and Turkish population, on the basis of ethnic origin, language, historical tradition and Islamic faith”, as the official UDTTMR site reports, but shortly after (April 1990) it splits into the Democratic Turkish Union in Romania (UMETR later become UDTR - Romanya Demokrat TÜRK BİRLİĞİ - officially recognized in 1993) and the Democratic Tatar-Turkish-Muslim Union in Romania (UDTTMR - ROMANYA MÜSLÜMAN TATAR TÜRKLERİNİN DEMOKRAT BİRLİĞİ).

The two most important branches are the ones in Constanta and Bucharest.

Bucharest’s Youth Commission is very active and it is the one with whose members I collaborated during my field research. Besides the Youth Commission there are the Culture Commission, the Women’s Commission, and the Religion Commission.

As stated on UDTR Bucharest website³⁶⁷ the organization is apolitical and it belongs to the Turkish ethnics, Romanian citizens, and its objectives concern the expression, preservation and promotion of Turkish ethnocultural, linguistic, and religious identity, of which religion has been a very important element for keeping alive the Turkish spirit:

- Preservation of ethnic identity, and especially language, literature, music, religion, traditions, and material values
- Protection of the cultural and the holy sites that represent the Turkish culture
- Maintenance of the archeological sites and the historical and architectonic monuments that illustrate the past and the permanence of the community in these lands
- Protection of the freedom of Islamic religious expression
- Creation of a social program of assistance for its members
- Cultivation and development of the traditional relations of Romanian-Turkish friendship

³⁶⁷ <http://www.udtr-bucuresti.ro>

- Promoting the image of the Romanian citizenship Turks abroad

The activities organized by UDTR concern organizing meetings between the members, free Turkish language classes for the Turkish members and for anyone willing to learn the Turkish language, evenings for the youth (games, chatting, movie watching, etc.) symposia, religious meetings with the Mufti.

5.2.1. Demographics

The official Romanian censuses³⁶⁸ undertaken between 1930 and 2011 counted, for what the Turkish population is concerned, the following data:

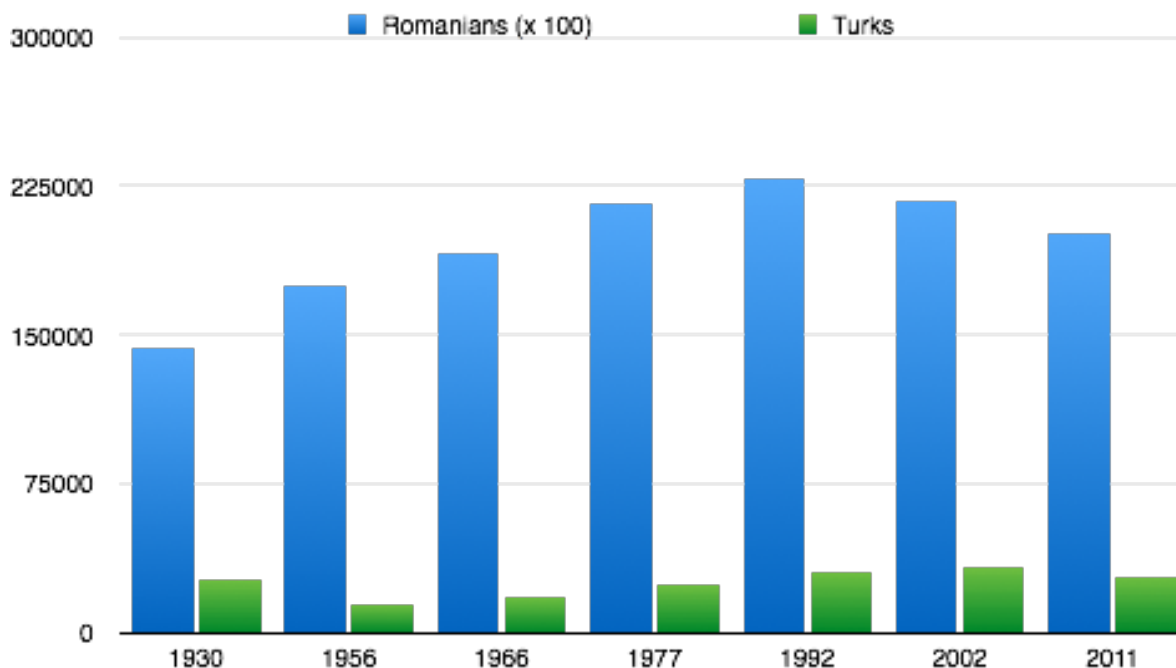
Year	Turks	Romanians	%
1930	26,080	14,280,729	0.18%
1956	14,329	17,489,450	0.08%
1966	18,040	19,103,163	0.09%
1977	23,422	21,559,910	0.11%
1992	29,832	22,810,035	0.13%
2002	32,098	21,680,974	0.15%
2011	27,698	20,121,641	0.14%

As it is clear from the previous graph the Turkish population in Romania, similar to the Tatar population, experienced two periods of decrease in the number of people present in Romania: one after the Second World War and the other after the Romania's admission to

³⁶⁸ Romanian National Institute of Statistics, 2011 Census, Population on ethnic and religious basis, <http://www.recensamantromania.ro/noutati/volumul-ii-populatia-stabila-rezidenta-structura-etnica-si-confesionala/>

the European Union; and also as for the Tatar population, we are talking about a linear presence in Romania.

The following graph I made to illustrate (even given a Turkish presence not very substantial in Romania) the trend of the population, with its decrease and increase periods.



The vast majority of Turks lives in Constanta and Tulcea, while on the third place is Bucharest. It is interesting to see the decrease in the population after the World War II when Romania lost the area of Southern Dobruja to Bulgaria, area mostly inhabited by Turks and Tatars.

What can be extrapolated from the table and chart showing the Turkish population in Romania is the general trend in descent during the two World Wars and the first period of the Communist era, and a continuous growth of the population once the political situation became more equilibrated.

5.2.2. Cultural aspects

Demographics is important for the cultural environment and how the community managed to preserve and transmit its culture and traditions. If the 1930 census showed a Turkish presence in Romania of 0.18% and in Dobruja of 7.9% (reaching 13.37% together with the Tatars, as they were considered as a whole Muslim community in Romania).

After the Berlin Treaty (1878) and the Romanian Independence (1918) large numbers of Turks and Tatars left Dobruja for Turkey. The same phenomenon occurred after the second World War and the conflicts with Russia, Crimea and the political disruptions in Romania, the famine after the war, the newly created Turkey and the “Anatolian dream” promoted by the Lausanne Treaty in 1923 of exchange between Turkey and Greece. A 1928 article written by a Turkish author urged the Turkish community to remain in Romania and not go to Turkey:

“Muslims, don’t make such mistakes! Because the bread and the knife is here where your ancestors have brought you. They have travelled for long to find a place more suitable for a poor farmer, and they have found it here. If you leave Dobruja where will you go? Why go into the unknown? Where you go do you think there is butter and honey waiting for you? No, it’s just like here, if you work you have, if not, you suffer. So if it is like that, then why leave the home left to you by your dear parents, to which you also have added sentiments and soul?”³⁶⁹

The cultural environment has been fertile from early on, the Romanian reforms after the unification and the independence, and Atatürk’s radical changes by abolishing the Ottoman system and creating the Turkish republic have ignited intellectual movements all over the former Ottoman territories. Dobruja became a fruitful cultural environment for young Turkish intellectuals. In 1929 the “Alumni Association of Medgidia Seminar” intended “to fight with every legal mean possible for lifting the moral and intellectual level of the

³⁶⁹ Murat, Plugarul, *Sa nu mai emigram, (No More Emigration)*, Revista Musulmanilor Dobrogeni, (Dobrujan Muslims Magazine) year I, n°. 2, Constanța, November 16th 1928

Muslim population” by opening libraries, choir groups, magazines and newspapers, typographies, banks, organizing public conferences, excursions, etc”³⁷⁰ In 1930 the “Association of Muslim Priest of Dobruja” wanted similarly to educate the population and raise the intellectual level. In 1931 the “Medgidia Muslim Community” intended to “represent and protect the Muslim community in front of the public authorities”³⁷¹. A 1931 statistics registered 454 mosques in Dobruja, of which 38 in Tulcea province and 140 in Constanta³⁷², and also took note of the fact that the Romanian Minister of Education had accepted to raise the Turkish professors’ pay by 30% and would consider to raise the imam’s pay also, after allocating the mosques 10 hectares of land to provide an economic entry in their budget³⁷³.

Since 2002 UDTR organizes together with the State Department in Interethnic Relations, the City of Constanta and the Cultural Centre for Research, Development, Education, and Culture “Lower Danube” the Festival “Communitarian Spring” that brings together all Dobrujan ethnicities in a manifestation that unites dance, music, and symposia.

This chapter investigated the importance of the historical framework within the study of the Muslim presence in Europe; the historical premises of a certain territory and the way in which each country created a positive development of its historical legacy or let itself be torn by it, impacted greatly on the present day situation of the Islamic presence in Europe and the nature of this presence within European culture. Especially in the Eastern Europe the historical legacy of the Ottoman Empire deeply influenced the shaping of the Romanian identity and the nature of the relationships with the

³⁷⁰ Scurtu, Ioan; Nordea, Ioan, *Minoritatile nationale din Romania. 1925-1931* (National Minorities in Romania., 1925-1931), Tipography Moldova, Iasi, 2011, pp. 349-350 qtd in Cojocaru, Ionut, *Aspecte ale vietii turco-tatarilor din Romania. Mirajul emigrarii* (Aspects of Turkish-Tatar Life in Romania. The Mirage of Emigration), in <http://www.ionutcojocaru.ro/aspecte-ale-vietii-turco-tatarilor-din-romania-mirajul-emigrarii/>

³⁷¹ Scurtu, Ioan; Nordea, Ioan, *Idem*, pp. 542-543

³⁷² Scurtu, Ioan; Nordea, Ioan, *Idem*, p. 554

³⁷³ T. C. Hariciye Vekealeti, n°. 2476686 in April 9th 1934 qtd in qtd in Cojocaru, Ionut, *Aspecte ale vietii turco-tatarilor din Romania. Mirajul emigrarii* (Aspects of Turkish-Tatar Life in Romania. The Mirage of Emigration), in <http://www.ionutcojocaru.ro/aspecte-ale-vietii-turco-tatarilor-din-romania-mirajul-emigrarii/>

Muslim community. With this chapter ends the analysis of the various factors that have influenced the creation of the particular cultural environment surrounding the Islamic presence in Romania. Starting with the following chapters the research enters the part dedicated to the field research carried within the Turkish - Tatar community in Romania, in the two locations, Bucharest and the Constanta province. The fourth chapter presents the methodological choices made for the field research, the research questions that have guided the observations and analysis, the methodological considerations and limitations, and some terminological notes.

Confusion is the word we have invented
for an order which is not understood
Henry Miller

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This chapter investigates the methodology chosen for this research, the motivation behind the preference of certain field research instruments to others, the ethical and epistemological problematics encountered during the field, and other elements such as the choice of the interviewed subjects, the validity of the data collected and a brief explanation of the terminology used as the confusion that the use of a certain terminology over another is a factor to be considered during all phases of the research (may it be linked to the studied material or to the choice of words utilized during the interviews and during the analysis of the data collected).

Ethical and epistemological issues

The main concerns in preparation of and during my field research were the following: raise voluntary participation from the people in the communities studied, obtain consent for their participation in the research and respect their privacy by protecting their identities.

My interest in obtaining information concerning attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, opinions on sometimes delicate arguments such as personal religious beliefs and practices, matrimony

and funerals, discrimination and stereotypes, induced me to carefully value the way in which to pursue my research goals whilst attempting to abstain from unnecessary invasions of participants' privacy. This challenge presented complex issues as entering a community as an outsider is never easy and entering it with the direct intent to observe and study raises eyebrows and mistrust in the community.

Returning from the field these questions became more and more present as I faced the interpretation of the data collected and the expression or translation of the data into theories, and towards a public unaware of the cultural settings and patterns existent in South-Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Romania, Dobruja. As an example, after explaining to few colleagues my findings regarding matrimony and funeral practices and traditions, one colleague swiftly dismissed my enthusiasm towards a hybridized situation as unimportant as "religious practices cannot change as if they do, they come less to their meaning of existence and hence the individuals do not really represent their religious group". I then realized that the Romanian, and especially Dobrujan, anthroposystem would be challenging to translate for the comprehension of those not familiar to the particularities of this borderline maritime area. And the other question that came into mind was: as I am facilitated in understanding certain dynamics by my origin, is this a good or a bad thing for the outcome of the research?

THE SETTING

I always conducted the interviews within the community and not on neutral ground: within the Turkish or tatar Unions headquarters or in people's home, in chosen places within the ones frequented by the community members. I extensively tried not to invade the privacy of my interviewees and to let them narrate freely - part of the time spent with them - in order to grasp attitudes, ideas, representations about the world they live in.

LANGUAGE

In the beginning of the field research conducting the research in the Romanian language - and the subsequent fact that I did not speak the Turkish language -presented itself as a slight problem that turned out to be a misunderstanding. When meeting someone for the first time, I would find myself constrained to answer to the question of “why don’t you speak Turkish?” Those first moments of the conversation became awkward to me as I did not imagine there would be any problem in speaking Romanian as all Turks and Tatars in Romania don’t have any problems with the language. Had I been presumptuous and had I thought about this issue with carelessness from a majority point of view? But it soon became clear that this was not the issue; rather, considering that I was interested in the Turkish community, the interviewees who asked me why I did not speak Turkish, imagined that I must have Turkish origin, relatives, close friends, otherwise they did not see why anyone not related would have such an interest in their community. After clearing up the language choice, using Romanian ceased to be an issue.

I did however frequented some Turkish and tatar lessons, mostly to observe the activities and the participants; had the research been organized for more than 3-4 months, I would have enrolled in the Turkish class as being around my interviewees made me curious about the linguistic aspect of the cultural resilience process, the linguistic exchanges and transformations.

IDENTITY PROTECTION

In reporting the results of my field research I decided to protect my interviewees’ identity and employ initials and numbers to disguise the identity of the individuals encountered and observed. The technique of participant observation requires to register and report behaviors and personal opinion on sensitive matters, and as such, I considered a priority to hide the identity of people who, being part of a small community, may know each other well enough to establish who’s who in my research.

CONCLUSION

Is the cultural “embedding” an advantage or a disadvantage when entering the community you are about to research and observe? Does having a cultural insight help the understanding of cultural responses and practices, correlating them to historical and social changes, or does it distort the perception and understanding of the behaviors and actions witnessed? Or does the cultural insight equips the researcher with the skilled vision he/she needs in order to grasp the complexity of the reality observed, and not to miss any cultural hues and undertones?

These concepts and dilemmas have been long debated and discussed by the anthropologists interested in the shifting role of the anthropologist from an ‘outsider’ to an ‘insider’³⁷⁴, from an anthropology born within colonialism and looking from outside to the ‘exotic’ populations it gained access to, towards a near-sighted anthropology, situated in native and familiar environments. Anthony Jackson in his edited volume *Anthropology at Home* (Jackson, 1987) anticipated the core question of the insider/outsider dilemma opening the discussion with the simple question that comes to the mind of anthropologists who enter a native field: would native anthropologists gain an insight in ‘playing’ on their own ground or this familiarity distort the field experience and misrepresent the observations, the informations, and the data collected? There is undoubtedly the possibility of both situations, but I believe that being aware of the position the anthropologist has in the at-home field, the impression in the studied community created by the researcher’s familiarity with the field, the image that the studied community would project onto the researcher, and the risks that these different role-perceptions will create, can make a research benefit from the insights available only to the native researcher who may grasp their cultural uniqueness while keeping aware of the objectiveness risks.

³⁷⁴ for more on this subject see Narayan, Kirin, *How Native is a ‘Native’ Anthropologist?*, *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 95, No. 3., Sep., 1993, pp. 671-686 and Jackson, Anthony (ed) *Anthropology at Home*, London: Tavistock, 1987

After entering my field and conducting my research, I reached the conclusion that there is a third category of anthropologists that unites in some way the ‘insider’ with the ‘outsider’ perspective: that of the researchers who migrated and relocated to other countries and who return to their home lands to do research non necessarily in their same city, area, same community of belonging, but the same country. It is how I felt during my research field, as a ‘native outsider’ since I am a Romanian, but one who left the country 10 years ago to relocate to Italy, thus I am seen by my fellow citizens and acquaintances or friends as ‘in-between’ (not a foreigner but no longer a native either, or at least not ‘as’ native as the ones who remained in Romania). Thus as I was a native Romanian, I was at the same time *seen* as an outsider by Romanians, and also I truly was *in the position* of an outsider with respect to the Turkish and Tatar communities with which I had never previously had any type of contact. I felt familiarized and de-familiarized with the field at the same time, a ‘native outsider’, a culturally distanced insider.

I agree with the fact that anthropologists are ‘positioned subjects’ as Okely perfectly illustrated and that “the autobiography of a fieldworker anthropologist is neither in a cultural vacuum, nor confined to the anthropologist’s own culture, but is instead placed in a cross-cultural encounter”³⁷⁵. I believe that as both a native and an outsider, one can grasp the full complexity of a field research: the ability to see certain cultural traits and conventions and understand their logic and reason to be, the familiarity with the history of the country allowed me to have a better and thorough understanding of the reality I was observing. In addition, being un-familiar and an outsider with respect to the Dobrujan ethnic co-existence and especially with the Turkish and Tatar communities living here, allowed me to have a fresh all-embracing look into the reality of these communities and a reasonably detached position in order to comprehend their dynamics.

³⁷⁵ Okely, Judith, *Anthropology and Autobiography. Participatory Experience and Embodied Knowledge*, in Okely J. and Callaway H. (eds.) *Anthropology and Autobiography*, ASA Monographs 29, Routledge, 1992, p. 2

Applied methodology

This research is guided by a qualitative tradition. It is a descriptive inquiry based on lifetime interviews, recordings, video material, written material, archival research, and participant observation. The purpose of these instruments is for analyzing the Turkish-Tatar identity in Romania.

For what the data analysis is concerned, I will apply a discourse analysis methodology. Goldman and Wiley³⁷⁶ claim that discourse analysis is “a method for describing the ideas and the relations among the ideas that are present in a text”. This chapter will present the methods employed, the reason behind the choice of methods, the choice of participants, and the data analysis. I include in the conclusion of this chapter a section that provides the validity of the research and the limitations faced during the field.

This research represents an effort to analyze and portray the identity dynamics of two of the most ancient ethnic communities in Romania, the Turkish and the Tatar communities. I emphasize on the historical and social context that forged the communities into the realities they are today, but chronologically I am interested in the present situation and the way in which the community adapted to the historical and social environment, as well as what kind of Islam they have developed inside a Christian European country. I combined field research - life interviews and participant observation -, with archival research of the historical social and political context, as to identify the reasons behind the evolution and shaping of these two communities.

The two ethnic groups studied have been, throughout the years, included in two monolithically shaped communities: either ethnic (Turkish-Tatar) or religious (the Muslim community). During my field research it has become clear that although the two communities must be separated and analyzed distinctively in some instances, it is rather

³⁷⁶ Goldman, S. R.; Wiley, J. *Discourse analysis: Written text* in N. Duke; M. Malette (Eds.) *Literacy Research Methods* (pp.62-91), New York: Guilford, 2004, p.64

impossible to separate them in others. Thus there are points of convergence (religion, some historical elements, Turkic origin) and of divergence (different place of origin, different traditions, different national identification) between the two communities. During the interviews I conducted, both Turks and Tatars, confirmed to me that the line of separation between the two communities is blurred and that it has - in some historical moments - been cancelled, but that it did not bother them to be considered as one Muslim community. Nevertheless, after 1989 a rekindle of national identity has sparked the two groups and thus the different associations were born to represent each community.

The main purpose of this research is to put to the ultimate test - the field - concepts like EuroIslam and multiculturalism, developed in sterile environments and based on similar premises (new migration communities, Muslim, mostly North-African but also Middle-Eastern), in order to see how, on one hand, these concepts are perceived and, on the other, how they hold up to the different conditions of an East-European setting and a historical Muslim community. I look into the cultural peculiarities of the Turkish-Tatar community in Romania and how they have preserved and modified their culture in a different environment; it was also interesting to observe the historical shift in the dynamics of the majority - minority balance between the Romanian and the Turkish-Tatar population, which constitute only a part of the ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of Romania and especially Dobruja, the Romanian province this research focuses on.

The topics addressed in this research cut across several disciplines and theoretical frameworks encompassing historical, political, social, cultural and religious concepts, through a multi-layered transdisciplinary analysis.

1. RESEARCH METHOD

Given the research questions that I presented, I chose to favor qualitative methods and thus I employed oral testimonies, life story interviews, archive investigation, participant observation, in order to record memories, impressions, opinions and feelings about the present situation of the communities studied, the efforts made to preserve their culture and traditions, the younger generations and concepts like EuroIslam and multiculturalism, phenomena like racism and discrimination. A quantitative methodology would not have captured the complexity of the cultural undertones and hues, the memories linked to cultural behaviors and the dynamics of the identity change and shaping.

The data collection was performed using written documents, official statistics, but also participant observation, semi-structured individual and group interviews. The semi-structured interviews shed light on that special peculiarity of the rural traditional community – orality – which offers insight into individual memory and therefore, according to Maurice Halbwachs³⁷⁷ (1992), into the social framework of memory.

The research conducted within this study is based on the interpretive orientations of Geertz and Weber as it offers thorough insight into the social construction of memory and the dynamics of identity. Max Weber states that the empirical study of concrete reality aims at understanding the unique characteristics of the reality in which we move: “We wish to understand on the one hand the relationships and the cultural significance of individual events in their contemporary manifestations and on the other the causes of their being historically *so* and not *otherwise*”³⁷⁸.

³⁷⁷ Halbwachs, Maurice, *On Collective Memory*, Edited, translated, and with an Introduction by Lewis A. Coser, 1992

³⁷⁸ Weber, Max, *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, 1949, p. 72 qtd in Endress, M.; Psathas, G; Nasu, H., *Explorations of the Life-World: Continuing Dialogues with Alfred Schutz*, Springer 2005, p. 150

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I chose to concentrate on both Turkish and Tatar individuals, both male and female, of various ages and educational background, as a means to acquire a proportionately thorough picture of the present situation of the Tatar and Turkish communities in Romania as to their views on the concept of EuroIslam and multiculturalism, but also on their situation as minority in Romania.

The empirical research was carried out between 2013-2014 (autumn 2013 and spring and summer 2014) during a time span of 4 months and 2 weeks (only 3 months continuous), in the cities and towns of Dobruja where population distribution by ethnic origin, according to the Romanian census of 2011, attests to the existence of important Turkish and Tatar communities in Constanța (and Cobadin) and Bucharest. The interviewees were chosen through the snowball method and on direct search and contact, trying to keep them as diverse and heterogeneous as possible in order to gather as much information as possible and from as many points of view as possible, as to be able to compile a multi-layered picture of the Turkish-tatar community.

3. SELECTION OF SUBJECTS AND DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Materials and instruments

Recordings and transcripts of the interviews, books and other material provided by the interviewees, material found at various locations, photographs taken on location.

3.2. Interviews

Face to face one on one interviews were conducted, group interviews and discussions; questions were previously written but given my interest on the dynamics inside the

community I let the interviews and the discussions follow a natural flow of memory and ideas. The areas of interest for the questions were: language, family, traditions, the relationship or opinion about the other Muslim community, historical recollections, present situation, perceptions about the future (appendix A).

3.3. Recordings

Not all interviews or group-discussions were recorded as I have not always received approval to record the discussions. I have always taken written notes (both when recording and especially when not recording) and kept a field diary throughout the entire period.

Throughout the research I sought to cover themes like: element of present identity, changes made over time in the Turkish-Tatar identity, EuroIslam knowledge and opinion on the subject, preservation of the culture and traditions and the dynamics between the old and the new (in cultural terms but also generational terms, their role in the daily life), elements of discrimination and racism if existing and how are these phenomena perceived by the Turkish-Tatar population, as well as the general sense of belonging in the Romanian society and how it is viewed from the Turkish-Tatar point of view. For these reasons the subjects selected for the research interviews are not statistically representative but they were chosen using the snowball technique, based on the criterion of ethnicity and on their willingness to share their knowledge and life stories, as Turks and Tatars who lived in the areas of Constanta and Bucharest. I tried to choose respondents of various ages (elders for their knowledge and memory, students for their perceptions on diversity and multiculturalism) and social backgrounds. Interviews were conducted with community leaders such as representatives of UDTR, UDTTMR, Department of Interethnic Relations (DRI), Yunus Emre Institute.

The work methods I have employed during my field research are predominantly qualitative such as direct participation, informal discussions, indirect observation, semi-structured interviews, life story interviews, group discussions. I conducted 22 interviews/discussions (individual and group) trying to keep a balance between community representatives,

leaders, ordinary interlocutors, young and elderly, urban and rural etc.; during my field time I participated in various manifestations, events, symposia, family gatherings, and I collected various materials such as books, photos, magazines and brochures useful for completing the information gathered directly in municipal libraries, cultural centers and publications of ethnic organizations. Interviews last anywhere from half hour to 3 hours; they were all taped and transcribed verbatim.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The data gathered was interpreted by analyzing the socio-cultural contexts, processes and meanings, of dynamics and interactions, of memories and reactions. As Whitehead calls it, ethnography is an “open-ended emergent learning process, and not a rigid investigator controlled experiment, but highly flexible and creative”³⁷⁹. I agree with Whitehead when he explains that he prefers the expression “ethnographic host” or “host population” to “informant” when referring to the members of the community studied, as the latter has been linked by the studied populations to the police - and in the Romanian case - to the Securitate system of the communist regime.

As Malinowski pointed out the point of ethnography is to “grasp the native’s point of view..to realize his vision of the world” (1922:25, cited by Whitehead:5) and this has been my intention from the beginning, to capture the Turkish-Tatar impressions and ideas on their place in the Romanian society, their objectives and goals, their ideas on EuroIslam and of the Romanian type of ethnic cohabitation. As such I tried to analyze behaviors, discourse, emotions, dynamics in an attempt to create a complete and somewhat complete image of the Turkish-tatar presence in Romania. The documented material was organized and coded into concepts and narratives that I analyzed from the point of view of their interaction.

The data collected can be divided as follows:

³⁷⁹ Whitehead, Tony L., *Basic Classic Ethnographic Research Methods*, University of Maryland, 2005 <http://www.cusag.umd.edu/documents/workingpapers/classicalethnomethods.pdf>

- What people say (interview transcripts, notes, audio recordings)
- What people do (field notes, photographs)
- What people leave behind (brochures, websites, blogs, archives, documents, letters)

Attempts were made at employing data analysis software such as Egonet, Ethnographer, MAXQDA, AGNA, ATLAS.ti. Not all softwares proved to be suitable for my type of data.

5. VALIDITY

In line with the debates on multiculturalism, Islam in Europe and EuroIslam, the return of the discourse on the “clash of civilizations”, this research attempts to test the validity of the EuroIslam theory and the complexity of the multiculturalism debate in a multicultural context and within a historical Muslim community that could shed new light on the present day Muslim issue in Western Europe.

The validity of this paper also rests on the concept that analyzing complex contexts where Muslim and Christian populations have been living together for centuries might bring new points of discussion in the debate on Western Europe multiculturalism. Focusing thus on a Eastern Europe country and a historical Muslim community this research proposes an alternative to the existing theories on multiculturalism and EuroIslam as they have been debated upon until now, from a Western point of view and taking into account new so-called 1° and 2° generation European Muslims. By looking at the historical developments and cultural legacies of the ottoman Empire in a Christian country, this paper puts forward a new light in the analysis of the Muslim presence in Europe.

6. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

I was particularly interested in the elements of interculturality at an individual level (perceived and observed of self and others), in social contexts (workplace, school, neighborhood, in relation with authorities). Hence one of the reasons why during my field research I decided to not concentrate only on the interviews but participate actively in the

manifestations organized and in the events to which I could attend. During the time on the field it became more important to observe and perceive the dynamics and the atmosphere of the community than to pursue the formal interviews, seen by many of my observants with diffidence and as an intrusion. I was more interested in the families, the memories of the elders and the perceptions and desires of the young, in the objectives of the community and their opinion on EuroIslam and the problems Muslims face in Western Europe, what it means to be a Muslim in Romania and if there is a pattern of cohabitation that can be unraveled. I also applied a comparative case study between the original Muslim community in Dobruja and the community created in Bucharest; I attempted to include in the research the group of Turkish business men who are not part of the original community, but are a new group formed mostly after the 1990s but soon after arriving in Bucharest it became clear that approaching this group (not enough data to say if it is configured as a community) would be much more difficult and would need more time to investigate. I spoke with few people and the subject would be interesting to further develop. This study nonetheless goes further information useful to analyze the influence of a variety of factors on the possible development of a coherent form of EuroIslam.

Given the theme of this research I decided to give more space to the qualitative methodology rather than the quantitative one, as it implied recording the lives of the community I entered as much as possible in its richness and multiplicity. Given more time, a more elaborate and thorough study can be conducted. Thus my main objective was to be sensitive and appreciative of my respondents and their opinions and voices; hence the use of autobiographical interviews in order to enter as much as possible inside the community and their dynamics and try to register everything in detail through the open-ended interviews, visual and written sources.

I believe a comparison between old Muslim communities and new Muslim communities in Europe, and a deeper look into the configuration of old Muslim communities could shed a new light on the issue of migrant Muslims in Western Europe, and on notions such as that of in-betweenness and ambivalence, and terms such as diaspora and hybridity.

I decided to interpret the data guided by issues of fluidity of ideas and coherence of discourse in relation to the chosen theme of the research. Thus the final analysis will add to the current research and debate on the relationship between Muslim communities and Christian European realities, with a specific understanding on identity development and the cultural factors involved in the creation of hybrid complex communities which behave in ways that are unpredictable and nonlinear (as it is clear by looking at the Muslim communities in the UK, France and Germany) and therefore sometimes difficult to understand. Communities develop complex behaviors that emerge bottom-up, from the people, migrants in most cases, who organize and develop into complex communities with group system interactions. These communities are in turn influenced by top-down decisions. In this research I focus on the bottom-up mechanism that allows the creation of a dynamic community, in an attempt to explore Vertovec's idea of "theory from below" which he associates with the phenomenon of "superdiversity" (Vertovec 2007), suggesting that the contact between language and culture has become highly problematic and necessitates new methodological approaches³⁸⁰.

During the research but also after returning from the field and starting to share some of the first impressions, I realized that one of the most important approaches is that of the "skilled visions"³⁸¹, awareness of the visions in ethnography as one inherent component of the methods utilized during the field research. Sharing pieces of information about my field findings with colleagues I was surprised to find an element of bewilderment towards events and behaviors of my respondents in the field, a blindness towards the reasons behind certain behaviors, and ultimately an incomprehension towards realities that are so mutable as to - sometimes - contradict socially and historically determined norms and patterns. Nonetheless they were crystal clear to me and I started realizing that being somewhat

³⁸⁰ Jef Van der Aa Jan Blommaert (Tilburg University), *Ethnographic Monitoring and the study of complexity*, January 2015 https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/upload/24266e94-2d00-41fc-b488-60e3845fc383_TPCS_123_VdrAa-Blommaert.pdf

³⁸¹ Cristina, Grasseni, *Skilled Visions. Between Apprenticeship and Standards*, Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2007

imbedded into the reality I was studying (being Romanian) offered me a fascinating scenario of understanding, an opportunity for acceptance from the community, but at the same time, not being totally imbedded (as studying and living in Italy since the last 9 years and not being part of the Turkish-Tatar community nor living in Dobruja), enough of an “outsider” as to keep a clear and accurate vision. Thus the role of context, of the social relationships and of the processes of apprenticeship that put a certain vision firmly *in place*, within a community of practice³⁸². I think these considerations can be made for ethnographers too, as I realize that looking at the Dobrujan reality with a culturally imprinted vision, although it can be a risk towards the objectivity of the findings and analysis, can offer an insight into meanings of practices and rituals otherwise neglected or passed by. But is this having “skilled visions” or is it just an imprinted vision that turns into an impaired vision and how can a researcher become aware of this shift in vision? I still believe that as Grasseni puts it, there is a necessity of an awareness of the vision and a sharing of the same interpretation criteria, the same vision criteria, in order to fully understand the cultural or social phenomenon and all its undertones. The complexity of the reality analyzed in this case from below requires the transdisciplinarity of multiple or multi-layered skilled visions (historical, contextual, social, political, etc) as the topic of migration, minorities, acculturation, hybridization, is rather unpredictable, unruly and with unstable results, often impossible to predict. As Nicolescu put it, only transdisciplinarity can deal with the complexity of dynamic cultural reality³⁸³.

One difficulty to deal with during my field research and afterwards, while analyzing the results, has been that of the terminology and of acknowledging the complexity of my study community as calling it Turkish-Tatar may be prejudicial to the understanding of the Dobrujan reality: “Turkish - Tatar” may be misleading and reductive, “minority” is

³⁸² Grasseni, Cristina, *Skilled vision. An apprenticeship in breeding aesthetics*, 2009 <http://www.easaonline.org/downloads/easa04/ws69.pdf>

³⁸³ Nicolescu, Basarab, *Methodology Of Transdisciplinarity - Levels of Reality, Logic of the Included Middle and Complexity*, Transdisciplinary Journal of Engineering & Science Vol: 1, No:1, December 2010, pp.19-38, http://www.basarab-nicolescu.fr/Docs_Notice/TJESNo_1_12_2010.pdf

definitely reductive for the Dobrujan and Romanian reality as there is not just one voice but many.

7. TERMINOLOGY

This section explains the reason behind using certain terms, the meanings of certain concepts and the decision to choose one terminology over another.

Islam in Europe

The expressions ‘Islam in Europe’ or ‘Muslims in Europe’ is not meant to suggest a monolithical view of Islam or Muslims in Europe as there are various articulations as a result of the different origins of Muslims, but as simple figures of speech to encompass the Muslim communities existent in Europe. “European Islam” generates confusion as it either implies a European typology of Islam or simply the Islam present in Europe. When used in this research it refers to the Islam presence in Europe

Islamism and Islamist vs. Islamic

There is a need to differentiate between Islamism / Islamist understood as Islamic militancy or fundamentalism³⁸⁴ and Islamic or relating to Islam as a religious and cultural system of beliefs. Mohammed Ayoob said that Islamism has to be understood as a political ideology and not a theology.³⁸⁵ Islam in this case is used to obtain political and economical objectives while being completely detached from the social and cultural contexts where it was developed.³⁸⁶

Islam and Islamic refers to the religious and cultural system and Tibi argues that EuroIslam aims to bring together a identity-religious system with a cultural European system.

³⁸⁴ Oxford Dictionaries, *Islamism*, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/Islamism>

³⁸⁵ Ayoob, Mohammed, *The many Faces of political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World*, Michigan University Press, 2008, p. 2

³⁸⁶ Ayoob, Mohammed, *idem*, p. 3

Islamophobia

- dislike of or prejudice against Islam or Muslims, especially as a political force.³⁸⁷
- n. f. [comp. *islam* and *-fobia*]. – Powerful aversion on prejudicial grounds towards Islamic culture and religion³⁸⁸

The term entered into common English usage in 1997 with the publication of a report by the Runnymede Trust condemning negative emotions such as fear, hatred, and dread directed at Islam or Muslims.

Multiculturalism is another debated concept; sometimes used as a political policy, other times as a social and cultural phenomenon. As Bhikhu Parekh notes, “Multiculturalism is not a homogenous body of thought”³⁸⁹ but as Homi Bhabha wrote in 1998, multiculturalism has become a “portmanteau term for anything from minority discourse to postcolonial critique”³⁹⁰. Used both as a uniting and/or dividing force³⁹¹ I do not use it in its political doctrine framework.

Pan-Turkism phenomenon

Pan-Turkism is a phenomenon of the end of the 19th century appeared within the community of Turkish intellectuals in the Russian Empire who desired the unification of all Turkic populations of the Ottoman Empire³⁹². One of the intellectual leaders of this

³⁸⁷ Oxford Dictionaries, *Islamophobia*, www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/Islamophobia

³⁸⁸ Encyclopedia Treccani, <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/islamofobia/>

³⁸⁹ Bhikhu Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, p. 349

³⁹⁰ Bhabha, Homi, *Cultures in Between*, in *Multicultural States – Rethinking Difference and Identity*, ed. D. Bennett, London, Routledge, 1998, p. 31

³⁹¹ Kepel, Gilles, *The War for Muslims Minds: Islam and the West*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2004, p. 245

³⁹² Encyclopedia Britannica, *Pan-Turkism*, <http://www.britannica.com/topic/Pan-Turkism>

movement was Ismail Gasprinski, who in his *Terkuman* newspaper called for “unity in language, thought and action”. Pan-Turkism faded away with the coming to power of Kemal Ataturk who nourished a Turkish nationalism oriented towards Turkey in first place and leaving the Turkic peoples behind. Pan-Turkism embodied a type of Turkic multiculturalism, an acknowledgement of diversity within Ottoman boundaries, a basis for present acceptance of diversity and coexistence and was linked to the Jadidism movement born in Kazan region in the middle of the 19th century. This link with the Young Turks movement, represent ants of the Pan-Turkism movement drew critics towards the movement and contributed to the fading away of the presence of the Pan-Turkism movements and ideology. Nowadays it represents a unifying element, a bond utilized as a catalyst for Turkic peoples to unite and rekindle the unifying ideologies.

Hybridity

Homi Bhabha

“the representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of pre-given ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed table of tradition. The social articulation of difference, from a minority perspective, in a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation.”³⁹³

Others who have elaborated the concept of hybridization, creolization are Ulf Hannerz and his ideas on cosmopolitanism, as well as Arjun Appadurai and his ideas on flows and scapes,

Essentialism

The view that categories of people such as members of ethnic groups have intrinsically different and characteristic natures or dispositions.³⁹⁴

³⁹³ Bhabha, Homi, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge London and New York, 1994, p.2

³⁹⁴ Oxford Dictionaries, *Essentialism*, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/essentialism>

Cultural essentialism

“By ‘cultural essentialism’ I mean a system of belief grounded in a conception of human beings as ‘cultural’ (and under certain conditions territorial and national) subjects, i.e. bearers of *a* culture, located within a boundaried world, which defines them and differentiates them from others. [...] I use ‘cultural anxiety’ to refer to ‘anxiety about *a* culture and what is happening to it, and not to a culture/society-wide *angst*, akin to ‘moral panic’, though cultural anxiety in Europe perhaps currently amounts to that.”³⁹⁵

Third space theory

Sociocultural theory on identity and community as unique individuals and realities born out of contamination and blurred cultural boundaries, hybrid realities that allow multiple level connections. It is attributed to Homi Bhabha.³⁹⁶

Cultural resilience

The concept of *resilience* comes from physics and describes a dynamic quality of a material to regain its original shape under stress, after being bent, compressed or stretched. Cultural resilience refers to a culture's capacity to maintain and develop cultural identity despite challenges and difficulties that menace the very core identity and values.

The following chapter is divided in two parts and presents the findings of the field research period I conducted in Romania. The first part presents the key themes identified during the research and the second part concentrates on the analysis of these themes.

³⁹⁵ Grillo, R.D., *Cultural essentialism and cultural anxiety*, SAGE Publications, vol 3(2): 157-173, 2003, p. 158

³⁹⁶ Bhabha, Homi interview by W.J.T. Mitchell, [Artforum](https://prelectur.stanford.edu/lecturers/bhabha/interview.html) v.33, n.7 (March, 1995):80-84, <https://prelectur.stanford.edu/lecturers/bhabha/interview.html>

CHAPTER 5

FIELD RESEARCH. ROMANIA - CONSTANTA AND BUCHAREST

This second part of the research is dedicated to the field research undertaken on location in Romania, in two different locations: the Constanta province for what the long-established Turkish and Tatar is concerned, and Bucharest as the capital of the country and an internal migration destination before and after the fall of the Communist regime.

What motivated the choice of this location is the fact that I was interested in a European Christian country with a long-established Muslim community that was not of North-African or Middle-Eastern origin, in order to put to the test the EuroIslam theory and see if the premises on which it's based apply to a different cultural setting of the ones in which it has been conceived.

This chapter is divided in two parts, one presenting the identified key themes of interest and the interviewee citations that supported the analysis made in the second part of this chapter. I have identified 9 key themes of discussion that were either introduced by myself as a conversation trigger meant to open the discussions to the research questions I identified, as well as to investigate the views of my interviewees about the general situation of Muslims in Romania and also of Muslims in Europe. These themes are: identity, cohabitation, cultural influences, religion, mixed marriage, discrimination/prejudice, premises, interethnic Dobrujan model vs. EuroIslam, and EuroIslam as a specific last key interview point.

The field research was motivated by the following questions:

1. What is the Interethnic Dobrujan model and does it really exist in Romania? If so, what are its characteristics?
2. Is the cultural resilience within the Romanian Turkish-Tatar community a form of EuroIslam? If so, what are its characteristics?

3. How do the Romanian Turks and Tatars view themselves from the perspective of their identity within the Romanian society?
4. How do the Romanian Turks and Tatars view EuroIslam?

As the European countries and the EU struggle to cope with the migrant situation developed in the second part of 2015 to a crisis to deal with, the questions concerning Islam and Europe return to everyone's mind. Are there channels of communication between Islam and contemporary Europe? My field research had also this question in mind and other subordinated sub-questions such as: is Islam compatible with a European culture and environment? Is the dialogue possible between the two? Can an environment of dialogue and cohabitation be constructed and encouraged?

1. Identified themes

I utilized more than one data analysis software in order to confront the data collected from various points of view in my attempt to uncover different layers of understanding of the Dobrujan reality.

I coded the 22 interviews I collected during my field research and came up with the following codes corresponding to various themes of interest. The first three themes that became clear as the most discussed were: personal identity (47 connections), cohabitation (46 connections), and discrimination (36) or rather absence of discrimination.

I have separated the ethnographic data into themes and not chronological frameworks, completing the analysis with examples, monographs and accounts of the ethnographic fieldwork. Through the interviewees' accounts I try to illustrate various layers of self-identity and community identity, as experienced during my fieldwork.

1.1 IDENTITY

The main element in the process of preserving identity appears to be family. No hesitation during the interviews was noticed as all interviewees assured me that family is the key element in preserving identity (identified through religion and language). Another element of identity is the village, thus the rural life versus the urban dimension. It has been underlined by most interviewees that life in the villages had a huge role in maintaining traditions and identity: as a reaction, life in the city became a factor of dissolution, of loss of identity. The village became a microspace of safeguarding traditions, values, religion, language both for Turks as for Tatars.



Photo taken during the annual manifestation “Dobruja’s ethnicities” organized by the Cumpăna City Hall (10.588 inhabitants, situated near Constanta); it shows the three flags (Turkish, Romanian, Tatar) and members of a Turkish company of folk dancers

As E.M. (Tatar) said to me, “identity is something you feel inside and you inspire in the family... but you cannot force it upon someone and you cannot import it. Will we lose it over the years? In hundreds of years until now we have not lost it...”

“As my grandma told me, the Faith and the Good that come from deep inside bring out the good and that’s what matters. [...] That which comes from the heart, with kindness and faith is always good. That is identity.” (I.P., Turkish).

Identity is often overlapping ethnicity as M.M. (Turkish) explains “if we lose the Turkish element, the Muslim element will be lost next, and vice-versa. This is why we are forced to preserve both these elements in equal manner in order to save our traditions, our culture, our identity”.

A. The issue of citizenship and nationality

a) Romania is the country of citizenship

- all the Romanian Turks and Tatars interviewed declared themselves as Romanian citizens and ethnic Turks or Tatars - “I’m *get-beget* Tatar from Crimea” (E.U. states in a discussion); the use of the term *get-beget* is interesting as I have always heard it with Romanian ethnics within my family (I had no prior Turkish or Tatar friends or acquaintances) and even though I knew it had a Turkish etymology I still felt a sense of familiarity as soon as I heard it. M.M. (Turkish) in Bucharest also used it when describing the community: “we are Turkish *get-beget*, and we are proud of it. And we are Romanian citizens and proud of it”.

E.U. (Tatar - with him and his family I had a long discussion during an entire afternoon at their home) said, when asked how he defines himself, that he is “Romanian and Tatar and Muslim; one does not exclude the other”, while D.T. (Turkish) says “we are very lucky to have two languages, two identities, two cultures. We are much richer as if we had been only Turkish”.

- E.U. (Tatar): “our only problem is that we don’t have a country, a flag, a hymn...we are a people without a country”.

b) Romania as homeland

- During my interviews and discussions, as well as during my participant observation occasions, Romania has always been described as a homeland and not as a ‘host country’ as E.I. (Turkish) told me during the long discussion - interview (3 hours) I had with him “I feel at home both in Romania and in Turkey”.

- S.M. (Turkish) states that she is “happy to live in Romania because here I feel at home, I feel accepted for who I am”.

- E.G. (Tatar) says that “we are the oldest Muslim community in Europe, together with the Bulgarian one; and we have the largest community of graduate students”.

B) The issue of personal identity correlated to historical memories

a) Turks are reliable people

- E.I. (Turkish) brings into discussion a historical recollection that states that “when Turks left Dobruja Romanians would say ‘the Turks left, justice is over’ because Turkish justice was swift and fair”. It is interesting to hear this point of view as in Romanian history textbooks Turks are cited as the origin of the use (became habit) of bribes through their elaborated system of payments and taxes, more or less official. The custom of bribing officials and the corruption is thought by many to have been instituted by the Ottoman system of taxes³⁹⁷.

b) Tatars are good breeders

- E.G. (Tatar) says that “Tatars are good breeders and they settled here because they found a geography similar to the one they knew in Crimea - steppes, dry and dusty lands, and plenty of sun.”

c) Hybrid identity

- As I.P. (Turk) explained, “our complex identity is a consequence of the Ottoman Empire’s multiculturalism: all sultans had Christian wives taken out of their own original environment. It wasn’t an ideal place but not a tragic one either” and then again “identity is not fixed, it interacts with the others and this is the beauty of it, this is its richness. I have never felt my identity as a weight, I have always looked at it with serenity, in a natural way.”

C) Identity as language

In all interviews identity was linked in some way to language: preserving identity is directly tied with learning and transmitting one’s own language. This favors the Turks who have Turkish language classes in schools, as Tatars do not have and most of the time find themselves (per choice) following Turkish classes; this is especially the case of children

³⁹⁷ Udrea, Matei, “Ocaratoarea mita” in istoria romanilor (*The “Infamous Bribe” in the Romanians’ History*), *Historia magazine*, http://www.historia.ro/exclusiv_web/general/articol/ocaratoarea-mita-istoria-romanilor AND Parlog, Nicu, *Blestemul domniilor fanariote (The Curse of the Phanariot Rule)*, *Descopera Magazine*, May 12th 2005, <http://www.descopera.ro/descopera-istoria-romanilor/5151505-blestemul-domniilor-fanariote>

who are expected to learn their mother tongue in family but not always happens; for adults both Turkish and tatar association organize language classes. As S.M. (Turkish) says to me as to why Tatar children follow Turkish language classes, “because they don’t study tatar at school, but at the Tatar Union, and then because Turkish language can help them for the future, Tatar cannot”. S.2. (Turkish) “many children here speak only Turkish until the first grade and only then they learn Romanian”.

a) S.M. goes further saying that “our identity is language; language is identity, language is culture, is tradition, is religion itself.”

b) G.M. (Tatar) says “our identity are the festivities, the traditions and the language... but with language things are complicated because we all speak Romanian”.

c) the Turkish language is divided into numerous dialects from area to area. The Turkish language spoken in Romania by the Turkish communities has become (thru the centuries) similar to a dialect of the Turkish language. As E.I. (Turkish) explained “as descendants of the Ottomans our Turkish language has been more conservative and kept older words, for eg. We say ‘I’m lucky’ in a way and in Turkey they say it differently”.

d) R.1. tells me that language is important, our grandfather’s language is important in order to keep tradition. Traditions get lost from one generation to the next. This aspect is more important for Tatars as their language is more fragile than Turkish, it is not studied in school and so many Tatars learn Turkish”.

e) G.E. (Tatar): “If in a room there are 10 Tatars and 1 Romanian, Tatars will speak Romanian as a sign of respect”.

D) Identity as religion

Many of my interviewees associated identity with religion.

a) E.M. (Tatar) explained that “our main element of identity is religion; this is something that characterizes us and of which we try to escape. But even is some are less religious than others, we all see each other as part of this religious community”.

b) S.2. (Turkish) “religion is the most important aspect of my identity, it’s what ties the community together”.

c) G.M. (Tatar) states that “we managed to protect and preserve our identity through religion. This is our identity: our faith that held us tied together as ethnicity”.

The preservation of both religion and language are seen as being a responsibility of the family: S.H. (Romanian married with Turkish ethnic) says “it depends on each family if they preserve their language and if they respect their religion”.

E) Identity as to geographical origin

The issue of origin - of Tatars on one side and Turks on the other side - has been open for debate. I made an effort to enquire about this issue with all of my interviewees in order to get a clear picture, but the air surrounding this issue is still blurred and, although I made an opinion about it, my interviewees do not all agree with each other. E.U. (Tatar) says that Romanian Tatars “arrived from Crimea in 1868 and are divided in two branches - the Nogay descendants of the Golden Horde, and the Tatars arrived from Anatolia through Bulgaria” but he also adds that “the Tatarstan Tatars have a different ethnic heritage, are more Bulgarian, something we from Crimea do not have”.

When asking Turks about the Romanian Tatars’ origin, M.M. (Turk) said “all Romanian Tatars come from Crimea” thus no recognition for the supposedly Tatar group come from Anatolia. For the Turks that group led by Sari Saltuk was Turkish (dervish) and not Tatar, as the Tatars claim.

P.U. (Turk) says that “all Turks in Bucharest have the same origin”, and this statement is very interesting as it does not take into consideration the Turkish businesses men community (that has an association and supports various NGO’s and schools, so it is rather rooted in the Romanian social environment).

- M.M. (Turkish) “all tatars in Romania come from Crimea. Those of whom it’s said arrive from Anatolia were not Tatars but Turkic groups”.

F) overlapping identity between Tatars and Turks

a) Sense of discrimination? While all Tatars whom I've spoke to told me that being considered Turks or included in a wider category of Muslims (mostly during the Communist period) did not bother them at all, most Turks suggested me to ask Tatars about it as - from their perspective - this overlapping identity must have bothered Tatars and must have left deep wounds. When I interviewed E.U. (Tatar) He explained to me that he never felt discriminated by being considered Turkish, "it was normal" he continues to say, "we also presented ourselves as just Muslims for a while, it was easier to do so". This links to the moments in which Tatars needed to hide their identity as they were pursued by authorities for helping the Crimean Tatars escaping from the Russian intervention. G.E. (Tatar) says on this subject that he has never been bothered by this overlapping of identities as "there would nevertheless be talking about a Muslim community at large that included all of us, and anyway there are more Tatars than Turks in Romania". This issue came up often among the Tatars with whom I've spoke: most of them are convinced that many Tatars in Romania declare themselves Turks "because it's easier for all", some census takers make mistakes, some still present the imprinting of the fear of retaliation during the Communist era. A.A. (Tatar) states "it is impossible to have exact numbers as some Tatars declare themselves Turks". When I asked the Turks I interviewed about this issue, all of them dismissed the idea as nonsense, even though during the interviews one Tatar recognized a Turkish community leader as actually being Tatar. This issue is complex and quite intricate to be thoroughly addressed during my stay in the field; it might be worth a further analysis but given the environment, the subjects at hand, and the historical premises, I fear it would be almost impossible to obtain a clear and neatly delineated image of the Turks and Tatars in Dobruja. As P.U. (Turkish) illustrates, "we will never differentiate between Turks and Tatars, we have the same culture, the same religion, there are only differences in the language, but not major ones". M.M. (Turkish) adds "the differences between us are historical and ontogenetical but we are 'brother' peoples which took different paths and suffered different influences."

b) Sense of frustration: I.I. (Tatar) told me that “Tatar identity is stronger because we have a stronger fear of losing it. We are more at risk of losing out identity to the assimilation to the turkish community and to the Romanian community also. We feel more the frustration than the assimilation”.

c) Dissolution of a community: M.M. (Turkish) says “this differentiation between us [Turks and Tatars, ed. note] rushes the death of our entire community” and continues to say “until 1928 we were all one, Ottomans, only after that they began differentiating us in Turks and Tatars”.

G) Preserving identity

a) As I.P. (Turk) explained to me what identity means to her “we must preserve our identity not in an aggressive manner, but in a flexible way. Identity is not pressure, it’s a message, it must be pleasant to the others, one must know it but not in order to reject others”, thus identity is seen as a relational process; and then again “transmitting identity is made by raising someone’s interior awareness about who he is and that one accepts, but it is never a dead weight.”

b) S.I. (Tatar) says she preserves identity by “keeping close ties with my family, with the persons of my ethnicity, but of course there is the religious element that ties us together, it unites us. I respect all festivities in my community, religious and cultural, I respect traditions. Then I continue to speak Tatar with my family”.

c) M.M. (Turk) says that “to protect our identity we need continuity...and this is obtained through education, the schooling system, traditions, culture, and language”. In another occasion M.M. Told me that “preserving our religious practices depends on the community, how united it is, how large it is...the larger the community, the more dispersion of religious practices we have; more united we are, more the area stays compact and the practices are preserved”.

1.2. COHABITATION

What does the Romanian concept of cohabitation mean?

N.H. (Turkish) explained it to me as follows: “we are speaking of an area of hybridization and interferences. And we are speaking of a way of acting traditions where all know their place and where there are numerous elements of exchange. We can truly speak of a tradition of cohabitation”.

S.6. (Turkish) gives his idea of cohabitation: “we are an example of cohabitation...I grew up on a street with Romanians, Turks, Tatars, Greeks, Macedonians...we borrow things from each other and we like it like that”.

M.M. (Turkish) explains that “the Turkic peoples melted into the Romanian people which they contributed to form”.

G.E. (Tatar): “there is a beautiful environment between all of us, it’s great to live here”.

N.H. (Turkish) adds “we are a model of peaceful cohabitation.”

A. Desire to transfer to Turkey

a) no desire at all

I was very interested to find out from my Turkish interviewees if among them there was a desire to move to Turkey. I found that not only none of my Turkish informants had the desire to leave Romania, but none of the Turkish citizens I encountered desired to leave Romania either. As E.I. Said to me, “nowadays there is no desire to leave Romania for Turkey”.

b) people who have been to Turkey and did not find what they were looking for

S.M. (Turkish) told me she went to Turkey to study (University level) and found herself discriminated for wearing the veil, since at the time in Turkey wearing the veil in public institutions was not permitted. She recalled being very upset and surprised that a Muslim country did not allow her to freely wear her veil, while a Christian country had no problems with it, so she returned to Romania to finish her studies. She said “I am happy here, I feel at home here more so than in Turkey”.

c) Turkish citizens transferred to Romania

The ad-interim president of the Yunus Emre Institut in Bucharest T.B. told me “I’m from Edirne and I feel at home here. If you go to a Turkish restaurant you feel like you’ve instantly traveled the entire distance to Turkey and entered an authentic Turkish oasis. People are very kind, I have never experienced any kind of problems, not even in the beginning or in University...very welcoming. Why should I want to go back to Turkey now?” (smiling).

B. Political representation

The Turkish community is well represented in local administrations and in the government. As E.I.(Turkish) told me, “we are happy with our representativity, we have mayors, councilors, members of parliament, local and provincial representatives, two sub-prefects and many more.”

C. Historical accounts

a) during the Ottomans when Turks were the majority

M.M. (Turkish) “From Anatolia came the Muslim element, and entered the area through the Ottoman victories and conquests and through the populations that accompanied these armies; these Turkic communities transformed Dobruja of those days into a mirror image of Anatolia. 80% of the villages created in that period had Turkish names and lived as Turkish until 1683 when the Vienna disaster occurred”.

b) during the period of transition from the Ottoman Empire to Romania

E.I.(Turkish) recounts old memories of his ancestors while telling me how “Dobrujan Romanians preferred keeping their animals with the Turks and not with the Romanians arrived from other places. The Romanians who arrived here were shocked as they had imagined themselves coming as liberators but they found that Romanians here lived very well during the Ottoman Empire”.

E.M. (Tatar) adds that “the transition was peaceful, I don’t recall ever hearing or reading about any kind of problems or conflicts”.

S.6. (Turkish) recalls that “in our area we could celebrate festivities and matrimonies in freedom, we had free access to education, to work places, to University, to leadership positions...these have never been restricted to us, we have always had the same rights as the majority of the population” and S.5 adds “we could speak freely in our language and we could preserve tra traditions of our forefathers. This has been crucial”.

D. Present

S.H. (Romanian, mixed marriage): “there are differences in mentality but that’s normal as both religions have different religious principles; everyone is raised in a different family and each takes from his family and from the things learned from his parents, his environment. But these are not in conflict”.

a) Romanian reality

There is a village in Dobruja that has a majority of Turkish inhabitants, that actually until not too long ago was the only village in Romania completely Turkish. Fantana Mare (Big Well or Baspanar in Tr.) witnessed the arrival of the first Romanian inhabitant in the 1935-1940s and it was accepted right away as he soon enough built a well in the village. Now there are only 2 or 3 Romanian girls who married Turkish men of the village. Fantana Mare was included in a project meant to make the village a UNESCO site as the houses and atmosphere is one of a Turkish village of the 1800s. M.M.2 (Turkish) tells me that “in our villages life is peaceful and we all live our lives. We are all Romanians, we are all people.” When asked about how he feels in Romania as Turkish, Muslim, and a minority, E.I. (Turkish) said to me “I went to Bucharest with my family and we went to dinner in a Turkish restaurant. As we entered I immediately felt the Oriental atmosphere, I really felt like I was in Turkey there, so how do you think I feel here? At home”.

- E.U. (Tatar) goes to say that “Romania is a very welcoming country, it is the only country that recognizes Tatar language and that proclaimed December 13th as Tatar Day, the only country that accepted the building of mosques, that kept the Ottoman names of some villages...there are many mixed marriages also.”

- P.U. (Turkish) “we recognize now and forever the tolerant spirit of the Romanian people”.

- S.5 (Romanian) “I started to study the Turkish language because it was so interesting to me, the language but also the culture, so for pure affinity” and continues “I have a great relationship with Turks and Tatars, I’ve never seen them as ‘Other’ or as different...they are like us, they are us, the only difference is that they’re Muslim and us not. Just that, but it’s all the same.”

- A.C. (Turk) “We’ve never had problems, we have the Turkish neighborhood, the Tatar neighborhood, the Romanian neighborhood, the Macedonian neighborhood...but it’s not like we’ve been forced to have neighborhoods or live apart, it’s just the way the village came to be in time”.

- S.4. (Turkish) recalls how as a child she would be so excited about receiving Easter or Christmas Christian sweets and other traditional dishes, as they would give their Christian neighbors traditional Turkish sweets in exchange”.

A.A. (Tatar) “This is the country we live in!”

b) European issues

When asked how it feels to be a minority within a Christian majority, in light of the issues in Europe related to Muslim minorities, E.I. (Turkish) said “well, we did not come here in the last 30-40 years, we ARE [emphasized verbally, ed. note] from here... it’s the Romanians who came. We have been here since 1265 when Christians represented only the 10% and they did not suffer, the concept of minority did not exist, it was the millet, the concept of nation with cultural authority”.

All interviewees denied ever experiencing or even ever hearing in their everyday life (or even in their memories or the memories transmitted to them by elderly family members of friends) about issues related to halal butcheries, shops, mosques, schools, wearing hijab (even though among Romanian Turks is not so common). E.I. (Turkish) told me “how could halal shops be a problem? Can’t someone open a Swiss shop or an Israeli shop?? Anyone can open anything...” , while S.H. (Romanian) told me about this issue “that’s impossible, there isn’t such a place where one cannot open the shop he fancies”. As S.M. (Turkish) told me “there is great variety in the Muslim world”

E.I. (Turkish) “in Europe there is a negative opinion about the Muslim community due to the mutual ignorance, cultural ignorance”. When asked what would the solution be to this problem, E.I. said “dialogue, they should start listening to each other and understand each other’s problems”.

c) Local problems

- E.I. (Turkish) “Our main problems are **social**, caused by Romania’s **difficult economic situation**” (my emphasis)

- E.M. (Turkish) “**Work**...like everywhere else...our problem is finding decent work places for our youth. Many of them are not happy with the opportunities given and they relocate abroad”.

- S.H. (Romanian, mixed marriage): “I think **economic problems**...there are many poor people among the Turkish community, especially in the villages...poor education, jobs with lower pay...”

- S.1 (Turkish): “**we don’t have specific problems for the Turkish community**, we have the same problems everyone else has, work, social issues, the same as for everyone else”.

1.3. CULTURAL INFLUENCES

As Ibram Nuredin explained, “Dobruja, land of wanderers, Tatars, Turks, Romanians, beyond what separates them s language, religion, traditions, they’ve always had the will and they’ve always found the force to live together, to work together to make life better”³⁹⁸

E.I. (Turkish) “given the peaceful cohabitation between the two communities both adopted some aspects of each other’s culture” E.I. Romanians and Turks helped each other

E.I. (Turkish) “Turks borrowed elements...Romanians borrowed too. Cultures borrow elements”. S.M (Turkish) says that “all influences are additions not replacements; there is no swiping of traditions, that wouldn’t be right because then there would be a loss, cultural elements would be lost. All additions are welcomed”. S.I. (Turkish) says “I think cultural influences are normal since we have been here for so long, it’s inevitable”.

All of my interviewees agreed that gastronomy must be on the first place as a Turkish influence on Romanian culinary culture. In second place language influences and then the matrimony and funeral traditions. And all of my interviewees agree also that traditions are getting lost and that the village is the microcosmos in which traditions are kept more accurately and where they go back to breathe the atmosphere of festivities and tradition. As N.H. (Turkish) said “we live in an area of interferences and hybridities”.

A) Culinary culture

The Turkish gastronomy has been around in Romania since for ever as they say; since, of course, in Dobruja it was the main culinary culture. This intense medley of spices and meats has deeply influenced the Romanian cuisine which I believe to be formed on a solid Turkish base. Dishes and plates that most Romanians would bet are “traditional Romanian” are actually of Turkish influence (most starters, soups, vegetables, meats, and a lot of deserts), while a handful of others are of Slavic and Austrian influence.

³⁹⁸ Nuredin, Ibram, *Comunitatea musulmană din Dobrogea, (Dobrujan Muslim Community)*, Ed. Ex Ponto, 1998, p. 178

E.I. (Turkish) says “Turkish cuisine is the 4th richest in the world, it utilizes elements from 3 continents, spices, meats...it’s very rich and very appreciated in Romania”.

B) Language

G.E. (Tatar): “many neologisms have passed from Romanian to Tatar. For example in the Crimean tatar the airplane is called *samar* as in Russian, Turks say *cuçak*, and we say *avion* as Romanians do”. S.I. (Turkish) “many words have passed from Turkish to Romanian, less the other way around, but there are some”.

C) Matrimony

Numerous elements seem to have passed both ways between Turks and Romanians.

Romanian Orthodox weddings require for the newlyweds to have a godfather and a godmother (a married couple usually of the same religion, but exceptions may exist). Although the Turkish weddings contemplate the presence of a godfather and a godmother, they had mainly the role that wedding witnesses have in the Catholic weddings. Romanian Turks have taken the Romanian concept of godfathers who, as in Orthodox matrimonyes, have extensive roles within the ceremony. In certain areas other minor traditions like stealing the bride, the song of the bride, serving alcohol, and others, are lost in the age of history as to which culture borrowed it from who. I found certain similarities impossible to differentiate between the two cultures, as people recall things in different ways and traditions change anyway from area to area.

E.I. (Turkish) “In the last decades the sense and place the godfather and godmother have in the Romanian ceremonies of matrimony has been adopted by Turks”.

As I.P. (Turkish) said “the important thing is not to exaggerate, not to go over the top and be equilibrated”.

D) Funerals

Some of the commemorations for the departed (every 40 days, 3 months, 6 months etc) that Romanians do have been taken - on my interviewees accounts - by the Turks living in

Dobruja. Other elements of the funeral such as the big lunch offered to the family and friends, the departed's clothes which are given to a member of the family, giving away food to the needy in the name of the departed, and others have been rather difficult to pin down to one culture as Romanians think they are their traditions, while among Turks some say they are Turkish, others say they are borrowed.

A significant but underlying area both for Romanian Christians as well as Romanian Turks and Tatars is the one of superstition surrounding evil spirits, the Devil, the bad energies and negative beings.

E) Clothing

Although nowadays the use of salwars and large silky shirts, as well as other Ottoman / Arabic clothing items is rather common and fashionable, the first to be influenced by the Occidental clothing were the Turks when Atatürk decided at the beginning of the 20th century to change the ottoman dressing code with an European one.

E.I. (Turkish) "Turks were influenced by Christian clothing habits...We rarely see in Turkey old clothing habits...there only are some elderly people in the villages"

1.4. RELIGION

"For us religion is important in order to help us preserve our traditions, in order to be able to say a prayer when someone departs" (R.2., Turkish)

Throughout my field research I have been interested in finding out the role of religion in the community of Romanian Turks and Tatars; the idea of finding out what type of religious modulation a community formed at the borderline between Islam and Christianity might have; the transformations (if any) that might have intervened in the Islamic or Christian practices in Dobruja following centuries of cohabitation and cultural exchange.

A) What is Islam?

“Belonging to Islam is a voluntary choice, one cannot control or impose it because if you force someone to become Muslim then you add an element of falsity since you cannot know if his/hers conversion is because of belief or because of constriction; and constriction is against the Quran. There is free will. Religion is in the heart, in the soul of each person and everyone is free to choose. Religion is identity” (I.P., Turkish).

- N.H. (Turkish) says that “Islam is lived by people, interpreted by people, and applied by each person in basis of how each has understood it” and continues “one of Islam’s key concepts is the ‘calling’, the ‘invitation’...Islam done not force, but invites, calls for prayer. The ezan (the muezzin calling) is an invitation, a calling. The Prophet invites to Islam”.

B) Cultural resilience or EuroIslam?

M.M. (Turkish) explains “almost all of our religious practices we have learned from our parents and grandfathers, then we have translated them to fit our historical perception and we have transformed them in basis of our necessities and social conditions. We have tried to keep them closer to their real meaning but they are nonetheless influences deeply by our historical context.”

In a different occasion M.M. continued to explain to me, while talking about concept like the Dobrujan Islam and EuroIslam, that “the concept or religious practice is very broad, one must understand what is meant by religious practice. If we are talking about prayers, then they are identical to the ones in Turkey or some other place, they cannot be different, cannot be modified, they are identical for all Muslims. If we talk about other traditions and practices, those can differentiate from one area to another, one community to another...but those do not change the essence of Islam. The essence of any religion is to not have double standards based on religion.”

C) Practicing religion

“God cares less about rules and more about you as a person. To survive you must adapt. God says to the man: ‘I love you well beyond my rules’” (I.P., Turkish)

- E.M. (Tatar) told me that “even if you’re not practicing religion, as we don’t, you recognize yourself within this culture, traditions, festivities, a certain way of thinking, of doing things. We don’t attend mass, we don’t follow all those things but it’s ok like this....some follow everything, some less, some not at all. It doesn’t mean a thing”.

- R.1. (Turkish) says “in the dogma there is written that for each drop of alcohol one must undertake 40 days of purification and prayer....but who does that?”....while M.1. Answers promptly “if I were to do that I would do nothing all day but pray” (followed by laughs).

- E.G. (Tatar) “We are not that kind or practicing people who see only that, we don’t want women with veils, we respect everyone. The most rigid of all are the converts who think they always have to demonstrate something.”

D) The veil

- S.M. (Turkish) says “if you made a promise of faith in which you strongly believe, then there concepts as being hot or being uncomfortable do not exist” and continues “in the Quran it’s written that a woman must cover her head, her hands, her feet; who does not cover either does not accept that it is so that the Quran says, or they do not know the Quran”.

- And an idea on the opposite side, M.M. Explains to me that “here we have never had the problem of the veil because it is not a religious precept, but an Arab habit related to the climatic conditions of the era. Here the question was not even posed. As for Muslim cemeteries...why should there be a problem? We have our and that’s that”.

- E.M. (Tatar): “Erdogan has ruined everything, since he’s been in power you see veiled girls everywhere in Turkey. He’s destroying Ataturk’s legacy”.

E) Organization

M.M. (Turkish) explains like this the religious organization of the Turkish community in Romania: “The Quran clearly says what is good and what is bad, and for us is the Synodal Council that decides what’s good and bad, theologically speaking. Here the Synodal Council and the Mufti can decide to expel an imam who behaved badly”.

1.5. MIXED MARRIAGES

M.M. (Turkish) discusses mixed marriage as one path towards losing identity: “they are inevitable of course, the elements more at risk for losing identity are the ones engaged in mixed marriages...which for years have been hard-fought by the community. But we have had mixed marriages since the times of the Ottoman Empire”.

a) Turkish/Tatar and Romanian (men and women)

E.I. (Turkish) says that “until the 1960’s - 1970’s there were restrictions from the Turkish side for what mixed marriages are concerned, but not it mostly disappeared”.

E.M. (Tatar) says that “in the past mixed matrimones were not accepted...now they are. And why not, I say? If two people love each other no religion or man can stand between them”.

S.H. (Romanian, woman, mixed marriage) “I think that marriages should remain within the same culture because it’s easier with religious practices and obligations, but it doesn’t mean that something bad happens if inter-marriages happen...nothing...it’s just easier”. When asked about her opinion about the percent of mixed marriages between Romanians and Turks she said “I wouldn’t know but my guess is no more than 2 or 3%”.

S.1. (Turkish) told me that “there are mixed marriages in my community but I know that my mother would prefer me to marry a man with my same religion, they wouldn’t agree to a mixed marriage. And honestly, I would prefer it too if I were to meet a boy of my same religion”. When I asked her why she thinks religion is important in choosing her boyfriend

or future husband she said “because things are easier, things like baptism and such, less problems to worry about”.

Within the discussion theme of ‘it would be easier to marry someone of my religion’, G.E. (Tatar) says “there are many mixed marriages but who changes religion for a marriage nowadays? No one...it rarely happens”. Another Turkish lady married with a Romanian man tells me she did not change her religion and neither did her husband “why? Each with his/her own, it’s better this way and we are happy like this. We celebrate Christmas, and Easter, and Nevruz, and the Ramadan...and I was the daughter of a hoge, you know what that means, don’t you?”

b) Turkish and Tatar

S.H. says that “Tatars prefer a marriage with a Turk just to have the same religion, rather than with a Romanian...but a Turk prefers a marriage with a Romanian than with a Tatar.” When asked why would she think that she answered “I guess this too is a heritage of the past...it’s like Romanians were dominated but Tatars used to be servants”.

A.C. (Turkish) says “there are mixed marriages, not many, but there are. I married a Tatar. But I wish my daughter would marry a Muslim. Of course, if she were to fall in love with a Christian, I would accept it because it’s her happiness at stake, but I try to give her advice as to choose a Muslim. Many problems would be avoided, like baptism and such...but if it happens and she’s happy...”

1.6. DISCRIMINATION / PREJUDICE

a) Religious discrimination

- S.M. (Turkish) “Romanians do not have any problems with my veil, they accept me as I am. Here the Turks and Tatars look funny at you if you have a veil, they don’t want it, children’s parents don’t want you wearing a veil in class. Romanians have no problem with it. I live in an amazing country!”

- E.U. (Tatar) “No problems at all with the people, we’ve been living together for far too long for any of that to happen...these lands are ours, of everyone living here, it is just as own as of anyone else living here”.

- S.H. (Romanian, mixed marriage): “there are no discrimination or prejudice. Everyone is his/her own person, we are all citizens of this country. Besides, where there’s common sense it’s impossible for prejudice to exist”.

- S.3. (Romanian): “there are no differences being made, the only difference is that they’re Muslim and us not..that’s all”.

b) Discrimination during the Communist period

For the Tatar community there has been the period 1942-1944 and up until the 1950s when the Tatar Sürgünlik (persecution of Tatars) occurred, and many Tatars escaped to Dobruja. The short-period Romanian pro-nazi government carried out actions of persecution and punishment followed by deportation towards all those who housed or helped in any way the Crimean refugees.

- E.U. continues to recall that “period during which tatars were persecuted by Legionaries (Romanian pro-nazi organizations, Ed. Note)..it was up until the 1950s I think when the Russian invasion of Crimea drove all tatars away from their homes and into Dobruja. All those who helped them would be arrested and deported to Siberia”.

- G.E. (Tatar): “the communists hunted us and those caught were sent to Siberia, Uzbekistan or in Romania at the channel building site” (Ed.Note, the construction site of the channel between the Danube and the Black Sea represents a dark page of Romanian history as it was used as an unofficial work lager where persona non-grata were sent to forever disappear).

The only period recognized by both Tatars and Turks as discriminatory but not only to them, also to Romanians, is the communist period when the attempts of including everyone in a blurred amorphic mass resulted in a devitalization of the Turkish and Tatar communities.

- E.U. (Tatar) “There have never been problems here...ever. This until the '70s when everything worsened, but not only for us, for Romanians and everyone else as well” and continues to say “we have always seen these lands as ours...everybody's lands... Turkish, Tatars, Romanians..of all those who have always lived here on these lands. And all these groups have never seen a problem in the other”.

c) Problems, conflicts

The overwhelming negative responses to situations or episodes of discrimination made me feel embarrassed at a certain point of following this type of questions. The reaction of my interviewees to this line of questions made me feel, in certain moments, like I was the one trying to suscite positive responses and examples of discrimination and prejudice. They started asking me why I was so interested in something that did not exist.

- E.M. (Tatar) “there are no discriminations between people. We're been together for far too long to have any of that” and continues to say that “we've never had problem at school, at work, it's also true that we've always wanted to be Romanians, and Tatars, and Muslims. One does not exclude the other”.

- The ad-interim president of the Yunus Emre Institute in Bucharest “Here life is beautiful unlike how it is in Bulgaria where Muslims suffered greatly, here no one was forced to change their religion or their name”.

- E.I. (Turkish): “Romanians here know us, know who we are, we are friends, the discussion on discrimination is out of the question. Everyone here can observe his/her own religious tradition, there are no discriminations”.

- N.H. (Turkish): “in all honesty, there are no episodes like that, we are truly speaking of an equal treatment for all”.

- A.A. (Tatar): “ethnic communities in Romania have representatives in the Parliament...this doesn't happen everywhere...we can initiate bills and our bills get voted and approved....we are an exception”. I asked A.A., since he lead a governmental organization for interethnic relations, if there have been cases of human rights violation,

report of discrimination and if they follow those cases too. He answered “we could follow up on those case but there are none”.

1.7. PREMISES

E.U. (Tatar): “surely the **historical conditions** of the Turkish and Tatar communities. We did not arrive here 5-10- 30 years ago, we are talking about hundreds of years. Then the way in which we came here, **brought by who was a majority** at the time. And thirdly, the way in which the Romanian population **welcomed us and managed our presence**. It is a beautifully unique situation” (bold font used by editor)

a) Historical

- E.U. (Tatar) “it’s history...the history that led us to this point..also the fact that the Ottoman Empire was tolerant, it did not force the others to change their religion, and neither did the Romanians to us later on”

- G.E. (Tatar) “the historical context is the one which created just the right conditions”.

- T.B. Yunus Emre Institute: “obviously the history between the two peoples, we have been here for 500 years and we have not changed the culture, the religion, anything... And after that, in recent times, the bilateral agreements between the two peoples.” When I asked him about the opinion Turkish in Turkey have about the Romanian Turkish community he said “very well...like our own..we sent them here hundreds of years ago and now we’re coming to visit” (laughing).

- G.E. (Tatar): “King Carol I made sure that nothing would ever happen to anyone of the population” and continues to say “the Ottoman Empire was a tolerant one... the only historical period when the Balkans have not been at war”.

- M.M. (Turkish): “when the Ottomans were Islamized they did not take the Sharia law...this is an important element to take into consideration”.

b) Geographical

- S.H. (Romanian, mixed marriage): “I think the area was important, the fact that it was a commercial area where economical interests were important: it didn’t matter if you were Turkish, Tatar, Romanian, Greek or something else”.

- N.H. (Turkish): “it’s a dynamic area always on the move, and this is why it has always been without conflicts within the population...what happened at an administrative or political level did not influence what happened between the people”.

c) Administrative / social

- S.H. (Romanian, mixed marriage) “it’s the fact that they could follow their religious tradition; the fact that the Romanian state created the conditions for this to happen: it built mosques, during the Ottoman Empire the Greek church was built. This contributed deeply in the construction of peace; everything starts here”

- N.H. (Turkish) “because they did not impose a language or religion to the peoples part of the Empire. The basis of the Ottoman Empire was the Islamic concept of tolerance.”

- G.E. (Tatar): “the Muslim community has always been loyal to the Romanian state. Many Muslims fought within the Romanian ranks during the I and II World War, in the Balkanic Wars...in the I World War 1400 Tatars were enlisted”.

d) Cultural

The ad-interim president of the Yunus Emre Institute in Bucharest “I believe that the Turkish people and the Romanian people are very similar, we have the same way of facing life, the same way of thinking.”

- Yunus Emre CT “we want to be a bridge between the two cultures”

- I.P. (Turkish): “in the Ottoman Empire there were many religious and ethnic communities, many Turkic peoples with similar languages. Our origin is these, we are a mirror image of that reality and we are still trying to keep certain elements”.

1.8. INTERETHNIC DOBRUJAN MODEL VS. EUROISLAM

Throughout the research I was interested in putting to the test the concept of EuroIslam and see if in a Muslim community that has been living within a Christian environment (talking of course of the last 200 years and not previously when it was a majority) the phenomenon of EuroIslam is present and, more specifically what kind of Islam is observed in a micro-environment like this, which would be just the situation in which EuroIslam would potentially be formed.

I asked E.I. (Turkish) about the type of Islam there is in Dobruja, or if there is a EuroIslam, and he said “there is a model of Islam...a model you don’t see in other places. Many see Romania as an example for the type of cohabitation we have here between Muslims and Christians”.

a) Dobruja

S.1. (Turkish) places the singularity of this territory on the existence of a wide variety of ethnicities: “Dobruja is the land with more ethnicities than any other in the area, more diversities than any other and this was built in time thanks to the tolerance of the Orthodox and the Ottoman traditions.”

b) Is there a model?

Can we speak about a Dobrujan model of intermixture diverse with respect to any other hybridization situations between Islamic and Christian communities?

- E.M. (Tatar): “absolutely, and we are happy to live here...and one can see it clearly. It’s the way Romanians have welcomed us and have managed our presence. It’s a unique and beautiful situation”.

- S.H. (Romanian): “There is certainly a Dobrujan interethnic model that combines Christian communities with a moderate and peaceful Islam. This type of Islam contributed deeply to the construction of peace”.

- N.H. (Turkish): “The Dobrujan model is due to those 500 years under the Ottoman Empire, which was one of the empires who survived for the longest period in time, more than 1000 years. The Dobrujan model has never ever known ethnic conflicts”.

1.9. EUROISLAM

N.H. (Turkish): “I can understand the Europeans who try to find different and new ways to understand Muslims, but I think that certain things should be said by Muslims and there should be more books and theories advanced by Muslims. It’s important for Europe to have a Muslim voice who can explain things from a different point of view.”

The reactions of my interviewees to this question raised interesting considerations:

- E.U. (Tatar): “it’s nonsense. It doesn’t exist...what does it even mean? Islam is Islam, even if it’s Turkish or Arabic or anything else, there are many kinds of Islam. We are Sunni Muslims...there are Shia Muslims...there is no European Islam. We have always been European; there are other European Muslims that have always been here, ever since the Ottoman Empire and even before that. What does this EuroIslam mean? Nothing... something invented by someone who clearly invented a name for something that has always been there...or that doesn’t even exist...what are we talking about??”

- E.U. (Tatar): “hmmm....smoke in the eyes”.

- R.1 (Turkish): “EuroIslam does not exist. Islam is one and cannot transform into something else, and it is impossible for a new branch of Islam to be born or something like that...it seems absurd to me to talk about things like these”.

- I.P. (Turkish): “I think it is an idea invented by non-Muslims who live in Europe and who want to approach the Muslim culture...like they don’t know the culture and they think that putting an ‘Euro’ in front of Islam then the word is less scary for Europeans. I don’t know..maybe it’s a good thing from their point of view and they need it in order to relate better to Islam”.

- R.2 (Turkish): “it seems so strange to me to talk about this because I don’t know what it’s all about...it makes no sense to me”

- S.H. (Romanian, mixed marriage): “EuroIslam...I don’t know...Young Muslims here are already part of a European Islam but they have not arrived yesterday or 5-10 years ago. They’re Romanian and so are their parents and grandparents”.

So is it EuroIslam?? Or just Islam forged in a borderline community placed at the confluence between Christianity and Islam, between Europe and Asia.

- G.E. (Tatar): “you know how they say, they’ve ‘reinvented the wheel’. I grew up in the city Ovidiu in a neighborhood where there were only two families of Tatars. I grew up with Romanians, I played with Romanian children, for Easter I would color the eggs with them, for the Bayram they would come to my house and we would eat baklava together, they would prepare food without using animal fat just for me...so... is now that they discovered what !?!!?”

- S.1. (Turkish) “There cannot be a new type of Islam as there cannot be a new type of Orthodoxy. The religious precept are fixed and will not change. Who invents notions like this one has nothing to do with their time. One’s own religion, may it be Islam or Orthodoxy, depends on the place of your birth, it depends on the family in which you come into the world, on traditions, on the environment”.

- S.2.(Turkish): “it’s stupid...I apologize for the outburst but it’s absurd”.

- A.A. (Tatar): “I think it is something meant for 2^o-3^o generation Muslims who arrive in Europe from abroad. It is not our case. We have been here for centuries..this is our land, our country.”

- M.M. (Turkish): “I think EuroIslam refers to the Islam’s ability to adapt to present conditions. The Quran remains fixed, what changes are the interpretations of certain

passages and sura that will allow for Islam to move with the times..maybe in this perspective there could be talk of a certain EuroIslam of which you talked”.

- M.M. (Turkish): “If there is or will be a EuroIslam I don’t know...I know that there already is something very similar, the bektasii sect in Anatolia who in Europe can be found in Dobruja”.

- N.H. (Turkish): “Islam is Islam. We are talking about a matter of form...the essence is one, Islam is one” and continues saying “I see EuroIslam as an invention of non-Muslims who invented this concept to get closer to the Muslim world. They try to understand Islam through European eyes and values. What they see as EuroIslam others call ‘soft Islam’. They thought of Islam in an attempt to understand Islam and build bridges of dialogue with a new and strange concept”.

2. Field research analysis

This second part of the fifth chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the interview data following the 9 key interview themes previously illustrated. In analyzing the findings of the field research I tried to put together the events at which I participated, the information received, and the behaviors observed, in order to bring to the light cultural patterns, to decode the messages observed wishing the various behaviors and reactions to my (or other) inputs. It was a challenge to fully apprehend the cultural system of meaning operating in the studied community, but more of a challenge to try to “translate” it into words and describe it to eyes and ears unfamiliar with the Romanian cultural system.

The difficulty in translating the field has been keeping the different levels of understanding in mind and juggling them in order to get a complete image out of a complex hybrid environment.

2.1. IDENTITY

The key elements within this key code are: the family, the differences between Dobruja and Bucharest, the differences between small villages and cities, Turkey and Crimea as political points of reference.

Identity is best kept within families in small rural villages, and through religion and language, while Dobruja remains the centre of the Romanian Muslim community; the Turkish and Tatar traditions expand in a radiant form from Dobruja and grow weaker as the range of influence grows further away from the Dobrujan centre which is not Constanta - being a relatively big city - but the provincial villages around Dobruja.

Being Turkish and being Tatar often overlap with being Muslim. There is an intentional overlapping of these three 'conditions' in basis of interests, subject at hand or discussed argument. A Tatar will declare himself a Turk (maybe because of years of Communist homogenization, maybe because they imagine is easier to be comprehended or identified as ethnicity, maybe because they can relate to a more significant community as it has an important country of reference since Tatars "do not have a country, a flag, a hymn"). As I have observed, all interviewees are proud to declare themselves Romanian and Turkish or Tatar and Muslim, as these identities do not come into conflict with each other and in basis of the situation at hand, one can recall one or the other.

One permanent feature within the identity discourse for both Turks and Tatars is the correlation with the 'mother country', Turkey or Crimea. Although difficult if not troubled connections during the communist between Tatars and Crimea, and virtually no connection between Turks and Turkey, the link remained at a spiritual level and grew stronger and more real after the 1990s. Often enough Turkey has been a de facto country for Tatars too, presenting itself as a protector for Tatars everywhere against the hardships endured during the Crimean wars.

Language and religion are the main elements of identity identification both from outside as from within the respective communities. Both language and religion become crucial layers of identity to which community members have cling on especially during the Communism in order to maintain their specificity silently and within the family, in a way that would not attract “undesired attention” from the Party.

2.2. COHABITATION

What does the Romanian concept of cohabitation mean?

All my interviewees are aware of living in an area of interference, of hybridization, but also in a singular uncommon area that welcomed throughout the millennia many different ethnicities, religions, and peoples, and thus created a peculiar environment of intermingling diversities.

The link to Turkey is palpable but not overwhelming, as I got the idea that in Turkey (asking this also while in Turkey) the Turkish community in Romania is sometimes invisible to their eyes or, at other times, seen as a small diaspora forgotten by history.

The historical premises, the geographical location, the social environment, and the political policies adopted (as we will see better in the dedicated part) have contributed at creating a peaceful climate of cohabitation among the people who did not let themselves be influenced by the sometimes political or international clashes. Important themes like equality without regard to religion or ethnicity, peaceful inter-ethnic relations, integration and multiculturalism, have been confronted long ago through the funny but witty poems of Nastratin Hogeia or through theatrical representations such as “Take, Ianke si Cadar” (Take, Ianke and Cadar). This comedy written during the period between the two world wars made its debut on March 25th 1932 and it is still on show in most Romanian theaters. The theme of this comedy is interethnic relations between a Romanian Christian (Take), a Romanian Hebrew (Ianke), and a Muslim Turk (Cadar), tackling issues like inter-religious marriage,

sharing the same space, being friends and facing inter-ethnic love, all in the same small provincial village. The three men are all traders and they divide their customers in basis of their ethnicity; but they all sell similar items, but also different items, so that they can also share the same clients without regards to ethnicity (for. e.g. Cadar - in good Turkish tradition - is the one selling the best sweets). The crux of the play comes when Ana, the Jewish daughter of Ianke, and Ionel, the Christian son of Take, fall in love and have to face their fathers' restraints towards a inter-ethnic marriage. The two fathers are absolutely inflexible about the possibility to marry someone from another religion; here enters Cadar who helps the two elope and get married. In a happy ending they are all reunited after facing the fact that following the marriage the universe is still intact and nothing bad has happened.

I believe that the fact that the elements that have led to the creation of a Dobrujan model are the following: the people who did not get influenced in their behavior towards one another by the international and political conflicts, the fact that there is a long history of multiculturalism that turned into elements of hybridization, the legacy of the multicultural Ottoman Empire and the fact that in Dobruja they left a positive memory, as well as the fact that themes as important as these were faced and publicized very early on in positive manner presenting solutions instead of unsurmountable problems.

Turks and Tatars also recognized their situation as being different from the Western Europe reality, especially with regard to issues such as wearing the veil, the halal butcheries, Islam in schools, Muslim cemeteries and so on. What I have noticed is that there is a line of demarcation between the new Muslim communities like the ones in France, UK, Italy, the relatively new or mid-range Turkish communities (like the one in Germany), the historical or long-established Turkish communities (like the one in Romania), and the Ottoman descent Muslim communities (like the ones in the Balkans). Origin, geographical location, and historical development have a great influence in analyzing the present day communities.

2.3. CULTURAL INFLUENCES

As many of my interviewees emphasized, after hundreds of years of living together, peoples influence each other, cultures get contaminated, and a multi-layer both in horizontal as well and in vertical gets shaped: multi-layered vertically as Romania has more than 20 ethnicities on its territory sharing the same space, environment; multi-layered horizontally as the layer of the people did not get behaviorally influenced by the political layer or the international layer even.

Romanian culture acted like a sponge absorbing influences, among which Turkish ones as language, cuisine, and funeral ceremonies; Turks and Tatars adopted Romanian funeral and matrimony traditions. All of my interviewees agreed that cuisine must be on the first place as a Turkish influence on Romanian culinary culture. In second place language influences and then the matrimony and funeral traditions. And all of my interviewees agree also that traditions are getting lost and that the village is the microcosmos in which traditions are kept more accurately and where they go back to breathe the atmosphere of festivities and tradition. As N.H. (Turkish) said “we live in an area of interferences and hybridities”.

2.4. RELIGION

“For us religion is important in order to help us preserve our traditions, in order to be able to say a prayer when someone departs” (R.2., Turkish)

Throughout my field research I have been interested in finding out the role of religion in the community of Romanian Turks and Tatars; the idea of finding out what type of religious modulation a community formed at the borderline between Islam and Christianity might have; the transformations (if any) that might have intervened in the Islamic or Christian practices in Dobruja following centuries of cohabitation and cultural exchange.

What I have found within the Muslim communities I have conducted my field research is a type of Islam derived from Ottoman Islam that embraces variety and diversity, influenced by millet system of religious autonomy and tolerance, that has allowed for modulations to appear without effort, restrictions or impositions. I have also observed a demarcation between religious practice and religious dogma. Practice can be interpreted and it suffers the changes of time and place, while dogma is the same and immutable for all Muslims. I found that most of my interviewees do not find any contradiction between a fixed dogma and a mutable practice, but actually they find it natural. When asked what they think about the Muslims who take dogma literally and who view their kind of practice as blasphemous, my interviewees said that the Muslim world is immense and as such, diverse, where anyone is entitled to an opinion. They place their type of approach on the legacy left by the Ottoman system of religious and ethnic tolerance.

I have found various levels of religious manifestation and practice: from the veiled woman who after a Muslim mass told me whispering that the Islam the other present women practice is not real Islam as they are not veiled, but instead it is Europeanized Islam that counts for nothing in the lines of the Quran, to the woman who when asked if I should cover my head when speaking to the Imam smiled and said “if you prefer, but it’s not an obligation”, from elders who do not attend mass very often because “exaggeration is not a good thing” to young people who view the attendance to the mass as a social obligation that makes them feel part of a community, a family.

2.5. MIXED MARRIAGES

The marriage between Romanian women and men from Turkey is an issue that was not part of my research and it would be interesting to consider for a different analysis. M.M. (Turkish) discusses mixed marriage as one path towards losing identity: “they are inevitable of course, the elements more at risk for losing identity are the ones engaged in mixed marriages...which for years have been hard-fought by the community. But we have had mixed marriages since the times of the Ottoman Empire”.

There are several perspectives from which analyzing the topic of mixed marriages: Turkish marrying Tatars (or vice-versa), Turkish or Tatar men marrying Romanian women, Turkish or Tatar women marrying Romanian men, Romanian women marrying Turkish men from Turkey and relocating to Turkey; the “rules of the game” vary depending on the combination. This topic is complex and instructed and it needs to be studied separating the analysis of Turkish and Tatar ideas on mixed marriage. As S.H. explains “we are united for the mixed marriages that exist, mixed parents, but separated as organizations”.

What I have found is that mixed marriages are not a problem, but they are a concern from the Turkish - Tatar side. They are not a problem as during the last years since the 1989 Revolution the number of mixed marriages has grown consistently; but they are a concern as they are viewed as a way of losing identity and culture. Bottom line is that they would all prefer to marry within their own religion, but if it happens to be outside, one could get accustomed to the idea.

2.6. DISCRIMINATION / PREJUDICE

One issue frequently underlined during the interviews when asked about episodes of discrimination was the positive image of the Romanian environment in comparison to other East-European countries such as Bulgaria (the most negative example given by the interviewees). The overwhelming negative responses to situations or episodes of discrimination made me feel embarrassed at a certain point of following this type of questions. The reaction of my interviewees to this line of questions made me feel, in certain moments, like I was the one trying to raise positive responses and examples of discrimination and prejudice. They started asking me why I was so interested in something that did not exist.

The period recognized by both communities as being the most intense from the point of view of discrimination is the communist era; numerous policies of soft assimilation (as all

citizens of the Socialist Republic were meant to be equal) are recalled by Turks and Tatars. The latter have also historic memories of the period during Stalin's rule that they call the "persecution of Tatars"(Tr. Sürgünlik) when Romanian Tatars offering shelter to Crimean refugees were targeted and exiled to Siberia.

The element that surprised me was the consistent contrast my interviewees underlined between the situation of the Turkish-Tatar community in Romania and the Turkish-Tatar community in Bulgaria; one constant element in the talks I had with my interviewees was the way in which Bulgaria dealt with the Turkish community present on its territory. The presentation of the cruel way in which Bulgarian state and people have treated Turkish ethnics - on my interviewees account - left me wondering about the importance of this point of concern for the community studied. Not having studied the Turkish community in Bulgaria I find myself in an impossibility to make assumptions about this issue; I can only observe its frequency and annotate its presence.

2.7. PREMISES

- The historical conditions

All my interviewees agreed that historical conditions are crucial for the existence and survival of a local Dobrujan model of cohabitation. The fact that the Ottoman Empire did not impose a religion and left the people follow their beliefs, build churches and live as before (a part of course the added taxes), set the frame for when the situation made a 180° turn and the Ottomans, now Turks, found themselves shifting their condition from majority to minority. As Prof. Ibram Nuredin said in an article, "minority culture is not minor by any means, it is not a culture of circumstance, it is instead a catalyst element of identity, it is a wall of protection and efficiency, it gives unity, meaning, stile, dignity. As an organism needs minerals and salts to live³⁹⁹", as such Romania needs its minorities and diversities.

- The geographical context

³⁹⁹ Nuredin, Ibram, *Turcii dobrogeni - interferențe culturale și civilizatorii*, (Dobrujan Turks - Cultural and Civilizational Interferences), <http://www.resurseculturale.ro/site/?q=node/107>

The fact that the Dobrujan coast has been inhabited by Greeks and Romans, has been a harbor open to vessels from the Orient and Asia, only became more important once the Ottoman empire sent its envoys and troops. The cultural mentality surrounding a harbor area is undeniably one of openness, of acceptance towards diversity and with an inclination towards commerce and profit, without wasting time for cultural divergences.

- Social and political policies

The fact that the Ottoman Empire did not make cultural impositions made it so the Romanian state, once Dobruja became Romanian territory, did not act any cultural or religious restrictions against the existent minorities. There are certain periods within the Communist period and before that during the period of the II World War, when the situation was made difficult for everyone, especially those diverse, as everyone was meant to be assimilated and standardized.

- Cultural

The cultural exchanges between the peoples made it possible for one to feel understood by the other and it also made it possible for everyone to relate to everyone else; the same effect had the Communist period when in spite of the political action for homogenization, the population grew even closer to one another.

2.8. INTERETHNIC DOBRUJAN MODEL VS. EUROISLAM

Throughout the research I was interested in putting to the test the concept of EuroIslam and see if in a Muslim community that has been living within a Christian environment (talking of course of the last 200 years and not previously when it was a majority) the phenomenon of EuroIslam is present and, more specifically what kind of Islam is observed in a micro-environment like this, which would be just the situation in which EuroIslam would potentially be formed.

I asked E.I. (Turkish) about the type of Islam there is in Dobruja, or if there is a EuroIslam, and he said “there is a model of Islam...a model you don’t see in other places”. The

singularity of this territory is placed by all my interviewees on the existence of a wide variety of ethnicities.

But can it be called a model, a pattern of cohabitation?

Romanian and Turkish Romanian scholars such as Tasin Gemil, Mustafa Ali Mehmet, and Ibram Nuredin among others, professors and participants to various seminars agree that there is indeed a model unique to this area. On September 22nd-24th 1994, in Constanta the symposia “Dobrujan intercultural model” was organized by the Ministry of Culture and it was in this occasion that the syntagm was born.

The following image illustrates the Dobrujan interethnic model in a glimpse: a fish, as we are talking about a Black Sea region, that carries on its body the elements of diversity that create the unity of this land (boats, churches and mosques). The image also takes us to the motto of the European Union, ‘unity in diversity’ and I believe that Dobruja could perfectly describe in a concrete way an abstract theoretical idea that the EU has chosen as its motto.



Drawing by Florin Petcu⁴⁰⁰

⁴⁰⁰ Petcu, Florin, drawing of Dobrujan multiculturalism, <http://www.resurseculturale.ro/site/?q=node/4>

To answer the first research question, what I understood about the Interethnic Dobrujan Model is that various factors such as history, geography, the human factor and the political one, converged over time to create an anthroposystem where ethnic and religious diversity made it possible to have cultural exchanges, hybrid elements and cultural mosaics difficult to grasp and even more difficult to translate into theories.

2.9. EUROISLAM

On this issue my interviewees were split between those who did not even consider giving an opinion on the subject at hand dismissing the discussion as pointless and not worth the time to address it; those who think that it is a theory invented by scholars who are not Muslims in an attempt to approach Muslim culture and make it more appealing to non-Muslims, and those who imagine it being part of a political agenda meant to distract from other more important issues. This answers the fourth question of my research about how Romanian Turks and Tatars view EuroIslam.

So is there a type of EuroIslam in Dobruja? Or just Islam forged in a borderline community placed at the confluence between Christianity and Islam, between Europe and Asia. My interviewees agree to a Dobrujan Interethnic Model and not in the existence of an EuroIslam, which is considered a void theory distant from the solid tangible Islam in Dobruja.

Looking from his perspective, EuroIslam - as a normative model - ceases to be a viable option as it reveals its core flaw: the fact that is perceived as something alien from the Muslim community and culture. Thus, in order to answer the second question of my research, in Dobruja there seems to be a pattern of cultural resilience, more so than EuroIslam as it is understood by its scholars, that allowed during centuries of cohabitation to create a pattern of intermixture and hybridization that acted as a shield of protection of

cultural identity, of preservation of cultural traits, and of resistance in face of assimilation and homogenization.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

The historical premises that have converged - together with other factors - to the creation of a resilient cultural system (locally called the Dobrujan interethnic model) are represented by the culturally and ethnically diverse substratum of dominance of Romania, and Dobruja in particular. The Ottoman influence, Dobruja's adhesion to Romania, the Balkan wars, the WWI, the WWII and its consequences on the Romanian borders, the Communist regime and the 1989 Revolution, the EU adhesion, have all strengthened the resilience power of an otherwise fragile country. The laws promoted and implemented after the 1878 adhesion of Dobruja facilitated the creation of a relaxed cultural environment without discrimination on ethnic or religious basis. Some other factors such as the demographic premises and the presence in the area of a multiple ethnic groups, or such as the geographical premises like the opening to the Black Sea and the shaping of the Romanian lands into a buffer - passage zone between great empires.

All the premises mentioned and analyzed in this dissertation have led to the creation of a resilient cultural system that nowadays includes 22 ethnicities (according to the 2011 census), from which I decided to focus on the two that form the Romanian Muslim community. The reasons behind this choice are multiple: the long-established historical presence of the Turkish-Tatar community in Romania, the shift between majority-minority positions between Romanians and Turks-Tatars, the resilience demonstrated by the Romanian environment, the cultural model created in time and currently visible in Romania in general and in Dobruja in particular, and the peculiar shape of the Romanian Muslim community.

During the preparatory stages of this research (the archival and bibliographic exploration), but especially in the course of the field research, one issue quickly revealed itself complex:

the structure of the Turkish-Tatar community formed by the two Muslim communities present in Romania, Turks and Tatars, two different but almost identical communities, linked by many features, separated by others. There are two divergent discourses on identity based on their origin - Crimean and Anatolian -, discourses that create distinct and diverse features, traditions, elements of self-identification (sometimes minor or imperceptible to the outside eye), and one element of convergence, that is the Turkic descent. This overlay of identities between the religious element and the ethnic one has been established during the Ottoman Empire (when numerous ethnicities were gathered under the same Ottoman “roof”), and consolidated during the Communist regime (when any distinction, especially ethnic or religious, was targeted as undesirable and suffocated). Nevertheless, from my field research it resulted that this overlay of identities does not bother neither the Turks nor the Tatars, as they see themselves as members of a bigger and more rooted family, that of the Turkic Muslim family, and both communities are aware that together, as a ‘Muslim’ community they have a different influence in the political system and in the policy making area.

One other observation that I point after concluding this research is that the Romanian areal, and in particular the Dobrujan one, exhibits all the cultural substratum accumulated throughout history visible to the bare eye both in vertical (historical substratum of eras and periods) as well as horizontal (in contemporary within the same geographical area various types of diversity - ethnic, religious - coexists). Within the Turkish-Tatar community, as well as within the Romanian community, there has been a suffocation of identity during the Communist era, but after the 1989 Revolution it came back to life, in public and in private.

Thus I decided to enter and observe and analyze the Romanian Muslim community as it does not represent an external element, but an intrinsic one to the Romanian culture, in order to assess the existence, validity, and structure of the model of coexistence in act in the Dobruja region and in Bucharest, the two areas chosen for the field research. I entered the field research with previous knowledge about the areas as native of Bucharest and a habitué of Dobruja region; being aware of the climate of peaceful coexistence of the area, I was

prepared to confirm the existence of EuroIslam in the region. But the more thorough my bibliographic research became, and the closer I got to the field research period, the more I started to perceive the existence of a different type of ethnic coexistence in the region, a model with its own characteristics that I would not call EuroIslam. Once inside the field I became more and more aware of the notion of 'Dobrujan interethnic model' that locally is known and supported by Turks, Tatars, and Romanians alike. What I discovered during the field research, by participant observation, interviews, documentation with local sources, is that there is a model of coexistence that is based on a deep cultural resilience born in and nourished by the Ottoman Empire. The basis of a multi-stratum and pluri-religious society were laid during this period, and have casted such deep roots that throughout the radical political changes, throughout wars, throughout internal and external disruptions, at the population level an environment of peaceful coexistence and collaboration was maintained; this gave space for hybrid realities, syncretic elements, and numerous cultural exchanges, from small elements of everyday life to elements of tradition and cultural ceremonies. The population - both Romanian and Turkish, as well as Tatar - continued to operate a distinction between the political level and the population level, and throughout heavy political and national conflicts and oppressive regimes, it united into a solidified element of resistance and cultural support and exchange. I observed during my field research some of the elements supported by the EuroIslam scholars as essential for the creation of a 'multicultural' environment in Europe, but on different basis (long-established community), in a different context (open to a plurality of cultural and human experiences). Nonetheless I conclude that in Dobruja in particular and in Romania in general there is a interethnic model that goes beyond the concept of EuroIslam as it overcomes its limits and its simplified view of the problems that the Muslim community has in its interior, and the solutions that the Muslim community itself imagines for the problems encountered.

One further observation I reached after concluding my research is that there are no positive or negative theories or concepts, what we can talk about are optimal conditions and the reactions of the population on one hand (influenced or not by media and other elements) and of the political level on the other hand, and the subsequent policies it implements.

What can be observed in Romania and especially Dobruja is a model of cultural equilibrium that has managed to make the best of the social, political, historical and geographical conditions it had.

On a different note, I noticed a considerable gap between the academic field interested in multiculturalism, pluriculturalism, and other similar theories, and the long-established pluricultural environments, especially those European (and further more, Eastern European) and those of Muslim-Christian composition. Even though some of premises are different and represent a differentiation between the phenomena of newly established Muslim communities in the Western Europe and the long-established Muslim communities in Eastern-Europe, I believe that analyzing long-established Muslim communities in Europe represents a unique opportunity to grasp new perspectives into the Muslim-Christian coexistence within united communities that have existed since the influence of the Ottoman Empire in Europe. New insights might be acquired as to how these communities have dealt with problems that now seem new and without solution in Western Europe, but that have been settled and long overcome in these long-established communities where the mere mention of such issues (like the veil, the education system, halal butcheries, Muslim cemeteries and so on) are promptly dismissed as null and void, baseless.

The questions that motivated this dissertation were the following:

1. What is the Interethnic Dobrujan model and does it really exist in Romania? If so, what are its characteristics?
2. Is the cultural resilience within the Romanian Turkish-Tatar community a form of EuroIslam? If so, what are its characteristics?
3. How do the Romanian Turks and Tatars view themselves from the perspective of their identity within the Romanian society?
4. How do the Romanian Turks and Tatars view Euroislam?

In an attempt to answer these research questions I reached to conclusion that the most visible phenomenon present in Dobruja - and Romania at large - is a cultural resilience that created early on, hundreds of years ago, an environment of cultural interference, metamorphosis and symbiosis of elements from all ethnicities concurrent or not throughout historical ages. What I could clearly notice is that there is not a theoretical model of integration exogenous to the society, but a paradigm of some sort that at a certain point developed from the bottom to become a model of coexistence more than integration. This is why I recognize a paradigm of cultural resilience and not a type of EuroIslam that the people themselves do not recognize and of which they feel distance and reject. This paradigm has come to life from within the people living together who in some cases exchanged cultural elements (of tradition, especially in matrimony or funerary ceremonials), in others they've nourished the coexistence of more than one tradition side by side. Part of this paradigm as fundamental factors have been the geostrategic position of Dobruja (and Romania) at the frontier between Europe and Asia; the historical demographic conquests (Greeks, Romans, Slavs, Ottomans, Austro-Hungarians, etc); the religious tolerance factor (especially between Christians and Muslims); the cultural adaptation to the times (embracing Ottoman vestments, then French language and style). The political administration, of course, regardless of the reasons for which it adopted certain measures, it settled early on a set of policies meant to create and encourage a climate of tolerance, coexistence, and support between the present ethnicities and religions; there have been attempts of assimilation and annihilation of cultural diversity (especially during the Communist period) but these have never come from the population and, as such, did not have a grip on the people.

As Boening asked in a 2007 article, "at the end of the day, is the process of EuroIslam just a fluffy utopia?"⁴⁰¹ In 2007 she saw it plausible that "EuroIslam and the ideational dimension of this discourse represent significant soft power in starting to affect behaviors, values, culture, policies, institutions and public diplomacy for a shared, peaceful future rather than

⁴⁰¹ Boening, B. Astrid, *Euro-Islam - A Constructivist Idea or a Concept of the English School?*, EUMA (European Union Miami Analysis), University of Florida, vol. 4, No 12, May 2007

a clashing future”⁴⁰² However I see a significant gap between the scholarship interested in Islam in the Western European countries and the reality of the Muslim communities established in the Western European countries, as well as a critical distance between the studies conducted in Western Europe in comparison to the ones conducted in European countries with significant long-established Muslim communities. I do not believe that the experience of the long-established communities could provide simple solutions to complex issues, but I do believe that it might offer useful insights and new perspectives into complex problems that seem to reappear in the public discourse with a recurring frequency. Between supporters of multiculturalism, supporters of EuroIslam, supporters of encased patterns of integration (see the French model, the German and the UK models, etc), and critics of multiculturalism on the grounds that it has failed, it creates ghettos from which extremist individuals can be left unsupervised to create networks of terror, to the more radical voices who claim that an Islamization of Europe is in course, I see missing a concrete effort from all involved of dialogue, of exchange of objectives and possible solutions, in order to at least be aware of the aspirations and possible directions of action of everyone involved: policy makers, administrators, scholars, cultural anthropologists and the most obvious voice missing, the one of the directly involved, the Muslim communities. There have been many studies observing these communities from a distance and attempts of creating policies that were then lowered upon these communities maintaining a distant approach as if these communities were external elements to be dealt with, part of the problem but not considered part of the solution. Hence why I believe that looking into the European realities where Muslim communities are internal parts of the European environment could offer new insights and new perspectives into issues that sometimes seem conquered (as in UK or France) only to be nullified and rethrown on the table of discussion as soon as something happens. Furthermore, I observed prior to my field research (and it became clear during the field) that the cultural element (with its religious or ethnic components) keep being promoted as the main problem in a dualistic “Us-Them”, “Christian vs. Muslim” discussion

⁴⁰² Nye, Joseph Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Public Affairs/Perseus Books 2004 qtd in Boening B. Astrid, *Euro-Islam - A Constructivist Idea or a Concept of the English School?*, EUMA (European Union Miami Analysis), University of Florida, vol. 4, No 12, May 2007

of incompatibilities. Therefore a serious analysis of the coexistence and of the solutions found for a peaceful cohabitation within long-established Muslim communities in Europe might elite the discussion on a different level from the simplistic and essentialistic “cultural incompatibility” where it sinks after every dramatic event that involves Muslims present in Europe.

In order to reach a post-multiculturalist view of the Muslim presence in Europe there needs to be a shift in the way of viewing this presence in Europe not as airtight compartments that forcefully need to be assimilated but as active intrinsic part of the cultural mosaic that is Europe. Observing how some European countries have dealt with long-established Muslim communities put the issue of multicultural societies onto a different level, furthering the discussion from monolithi-cultural models to pluri-cultural complex systems which affirm the inter-dependence of elements who create a system being linked by a common thread and working together in order to keep the complex system working, as opposed to isolated micro-environments that work independently and that could very well work one against the other. One critique I can address to the EuroIslam theory is that it takes into consideration only recent time Muslim communities in Europe (even though 2° or 3° generation as they are being called), without conceiving within the equation the existence of the long-established communities, hence the certain implications (such as some countries’ policy choices regarding the education system, the construction of mosques, the opening of ethnic shops, etc) are simply irrelevant in the long-time communities, especially if they are based on models which implicitly assume that Muslims are a foreign element to be accepted or tolerated. Another skeptical view on the applicability of the implications and suggestions made by the theories based exclusively on the Western Europe reality, which I think the EuroIslam theory is, is that the approach ignores the solutions/actions that the Eastern Europe and Balkan countries have taken long time ago to deal with their intrinsic diverse composition. The failure to recognize the insights offered by these long-established mosaic realities may lead to very misleading conclusions, to fragile patterns open to simplistic criticism that takes every discussion to the essentialistic level of “cultural clash”.

Over the three years that I dedicated to the study of the theories related to the presence of Muslims in Europe, to multiculturalism, to the relatively new Muslim migrants in Western Europe (as opposed to the long-established Muslim communities in Eastern Europe and the Balkans), after looking into the EuroIslam theory as a possible viable interpretation of the Muslim presence in the West, I can conclude that the EuroIslam theory remains just that, a theory with little or no support in the real life of Muslim communities in the West, a theory easily criticized with every negative event and which objectively seems very distant from reality when events such as the Paris terrorist attacks occur. The EuroIslam theory looks good on paper but it has not made the leap into the real world, and I believe this is mainly due to the fact that it remained confined into upper academic levels without taking into consideration the reality of Muslim communities in the West. The missing element from the EuroIslam theory, element which is present in the long-established Muslim communities, and which, consequently makes the difference in approach between these realities, is the sense of belonging of the Muslims living in European communities. I believe it is crucial to work on (after observing and absorbing the lessons learnt from the long-established Muslim communities) the sense of belonging that is lacking within so-called 2° and 3° generation of Muslim migrants into Western societies. The bottom line element that makes the difference between a potential radicalized subject (even if he/she is born in France or the UK or Belgium, brought up in Western education systems and values) and a subject who given the same context does not grow up to be radicalized. Furthermore, I believe the sense of belonging goes beyond religion or ethnicity, but is of course more visible in cases where these elements are involved.

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APPENDIX 1

Codes in MAXQDA software

MAXQDA 12 Coded segments (1)					
	A	B	C	D	E
1	Color	Comment	Document group	Document	Code
2	●			Intervista studentessa 1	discrimination
3	●			Intervista studentessa 1	cultural borrowings
4	●			Intervista studentessa 1	vocabulary
5	●			Intervista studentessa 1	cuisine
6	●			Intervista studentessa 1	religious or cultural festivities
7	●			Intervista studentessa 1	religious or cultural festivities
8	●			Intervista studentessa 1	marriage and funerals
9	●			Intervista studentessa 1	present problems
10	●			Intervista studentessa 1	keeping identity
11	●			Intervista studentessa 1	mixed marriages
12	●			Intervista studentessa 1	euroislam
13	●			Intervista studentessa 1	RO cohabitation
14	●			Intervista studentessa 2	vocabulary
15	●			Intervista studentessa 2	marriage and funerals
16	●			Intervista studentessa 2	marriage and funerals
17	●			Intervista studentessa 2	cuisine
18	●			Intervista studentessa 2	keeping identity
19	●			Intervista studentessa 2	discrimination
20	●			Intervista studentessa 2	euroislam
21	●			Intervista studentessa 3	vocabulary
22	●			Intervista studentessa 3	vocabulary

APPENDIX 2

Interview taken with a student and coded with AGNA software.

1	INTERVISTA STUDENTESSA 2
2	Età: 19 anni
3	A.M.: come ti descriveresti?
4	Studentessa: turca, la mia mamma e tatara e mio papà turco. Sono nata in Dobrogea ma da quando ero piccolissima i miei mi hanno portato a Istanbul e sono cresciuta lì. Poi sono tornata qui per il liceo e l'università perché magari con una scuola qui potrò avere più possibilità, più opzioni dopo.
5	A.M.: che liceo hai frequentato?
6	Studentessa: il seminario teologico di Medgidia...forse anche per questo mi piace tantissimo parlare di questi temi culturali, religiosi.
7	A.M.: ci sono elementi di prestito culturale tra la cultura rumena e quella turca?
8	Studentessa: il vocabolario...questa è la prima cosa che si nota e da entrambe le parti. Tantissime parole turche si ritrovano nel vocabolario rumeno. E la comunità turca ha acquisito alcune parole rumene. Poi magari per strada, in famiglia si parla anche metà e metà, si mischiano. Ad esempio alcuni turchi e tatari dicono "i-scoala" per la scuola ("scoala") perché in turco non pronunciamo 2 o 3 consonanti e allora mettono la "i" davanti e pronunciano la parola rumena.
9	Poi le tradizioni - ad esempio nei matrimoni il rituale della richiesta della mano della ragazza alla famiglia. Anche nei funerali ci sono alcune cose che sono state prese...più dai rumeni in questo caso: ad esempio si dà qualcosa di dolce al funerale e si fanno delle cerimonie a 7 giorni, 40 giorni. I tatari fanno la tavolata per mangiare dopo i funerali, come i rumeni, ma i turchi no.
10	Per non parlare della cucina...la cucina turca è la 3° cucina più ricca e più variegata al mondo e ha trasmesso tanto a quella rumena.
11	A.M.: in famiglia parli il turco?
12	Studentessa: sì...poi qui tanti bambini fino alle elementari parlano solo il turco...poi a scuola imparano il rumeno.
13	A.M.: cosa fai per mantenere la tua identità culturale?

1/2

keeping identity 

14

Studentessa: la religione è l'aspetto più importante della mia identità e questo che lega la comunità...quindi partecipare a messe, condividere le tradizioni, le feste.

discrimination 

15

A.M.: hai mai subito discriminazioni?

16

Studentessa: mai...solo quando mi metto il velo per andare in moschea - sai durante la messa la testa deve essere coperta - magari la gente ti guarda strano ma credo che capiti a tutti.

euroislam 

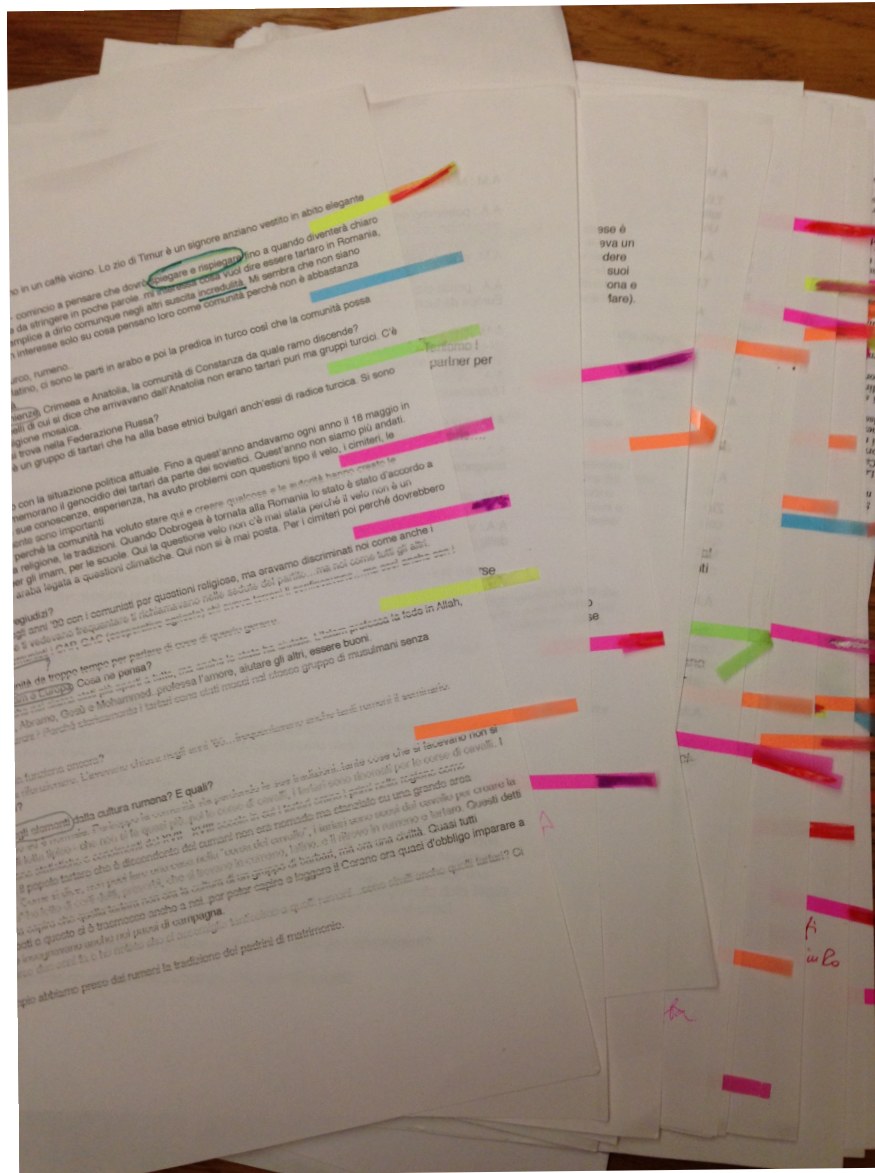
17

A.M.: cosa pensi del concetto di "euroislam"?

18

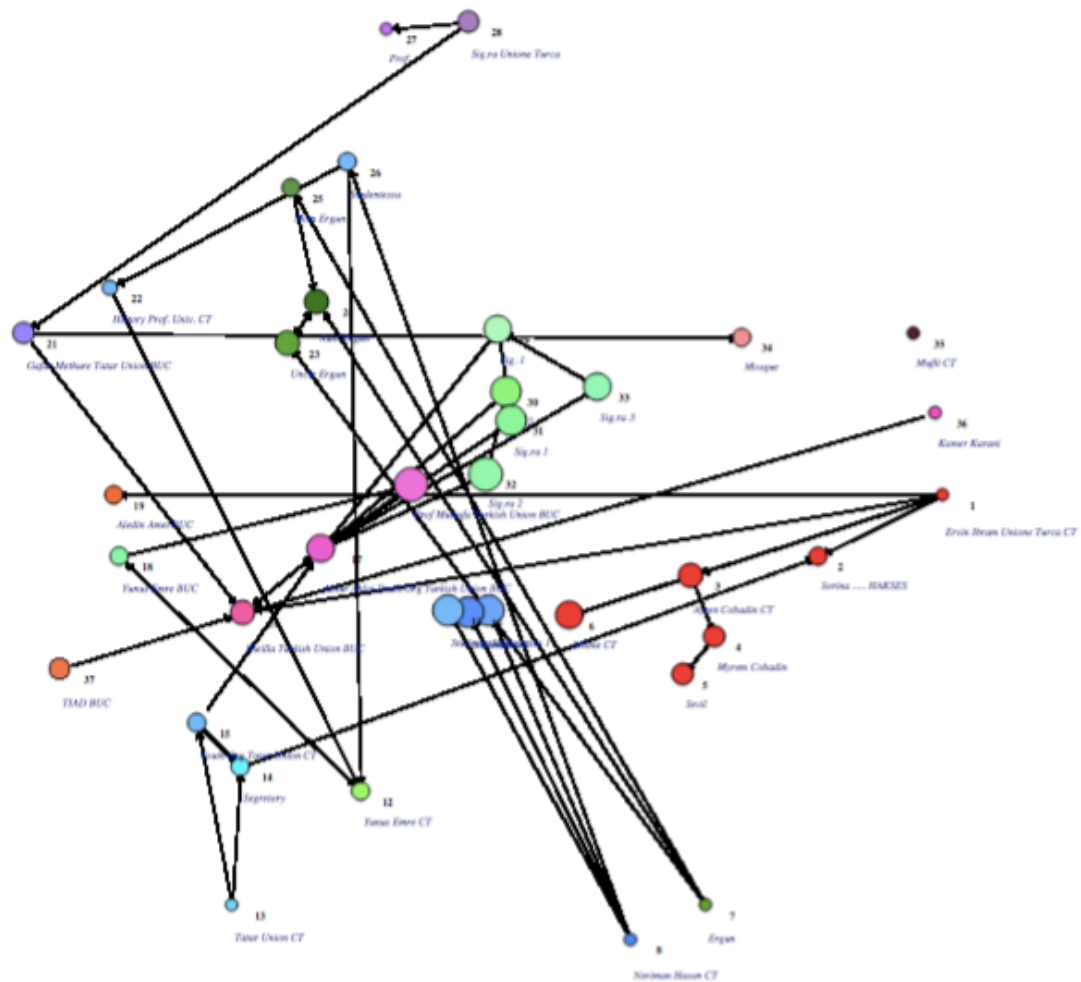
Studentessa: è una stupidata...mi scuso per il termine ma mi sembra un'assurdità. Non puoi cambiare la religione...non c'è un nuovo islam perché quello di sempre è e resterà. Cambiano le interpretazioni dei vari luoghi.

Interviews coded manually



APPENDIX 4

Turkish community network map; this is just one of the various attempts of network analysis I tried to apply to an ethnographic research. It would take more time on the field in order to explore the potential of the network analysis software in the ethnographic research.



PHOTOGRAPHIC APPENDIX

Photos taken during the intercultural festival in Company (Constanta) on May 24th 2014





Cumpana Festival of Interethnic Cohabitation “Dobruja’s Ethnic Groups” May 24th 2014 (the flags of Turkey, Romania, and the Crimean Tatar people). It is interesting to see the flags of two states (Turkey and Romania) near the flag of a people (the Crimean Tatars) who does not have a country of representation, nor an official flag (as the flag of Crimea is different).



Cooking competition between the various ethnic groups present in Dobruja (Cumpana May 24th 2014)



Turkish Union headquarters in Cobadin (Constanta). It is interesting to see the Turkish flag to represent the group, the Romanian flag for the nation they live in, and also Kemal Ataturk's portrait which I found everywhere I went to during my field research (private homes or public places of the Turkish community).



Tatar Union headquarters in Constanta. It is interesting to observe that even if it is the Tatar headquarters in Constanta (the most representative city for the Muslim long established minority), the visitors are

welcomed by an important statue of Ataturk and a Turkish flag.