

Petra Šťastná

Department of Ethnology
Faculty of Arts
Charles University in Prague

The question of identity among young people originating from selected countries of the former Yugoslavia in Denmark

Abstract

The main aim of this paper is to outline some specific phenomena in the problematic of immigrants and descendants of immigrants of Yugoslavian origin in Denmark. Due to its marginal importance on both sides (Denmark as well as the former Yugoslavian countries) the topic has been neglected academically.

The focus of this paper is mostly concentrated on the question of belonging and identity of younger generations. Therefore, it contains a summary of the historical, cultural and social background experienced by migrants in their communities. It will also contextualize the main characteristics of specific aspects of everyday life in detail. Further, topics regarding identity with its various aspects will be discussed.

A crucial part is based on the field research itself. The opinions of interviewed migrants open up a discussion about current topics and show unexpected results.

The stress is put on an overview of the relations between the majority Danish society and the young migrants. Danish society possesses certain cultural codes, which can be very difficult to recognize and internalize for foreign individuals.

Key words: belonging, identity, Denmark, former Yugoslavia, young generation, migration

1. Introduction

This paper consists of selected topics from a bachelor's thesis in an upgraded summarized and abridged form. The whole study was defended in September 2012 as a final thesis in the Department of South Slavonic and Balkan studies, Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague.

The main sources included in this study, were collected during an academic stay in Denmark during the year 2012,¹ these will be supplemented by materials from the Czech Republic and from southeast European countries. A lot of progress was made as a result of the consultations in the home and host universities, contacts with some Danish institutions and participation in several minority clubs and associations.

The field research was carried out over 6 months, in several Danish cities. The focus was put on migrants originating in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Kosovo. Questionnaires in Croatian, Serbian and Albanian were prepared, 57 samples were collected. In-depth interviews were applied as a qualitative method of the research in 13 cases. The aim of the research was to establish the structure and circumstances of the diaspora from the post-Yugoslav countries. Difficulties occurred in searching for precise data and identifying relevant literature as the declared ethnic origin in some of the sources was sometimes obscure.² Many of the studies were published in Danish.

Due to many the languages used in this paper, all the quotations are translated into English, the original version can always be found in the footnotes (some secondary thoughts of respondents are exceptions).

There are approximately 46 000 individuals from Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina in Denmark (SD). The “Yugoslavs” are the state’s second biggest minority.³ A great deal of shared experience connects immigrants from former Yugoslavia and people of Yugoslav origin with the other immigrant groups within Denmark – for example Turks, Pakistanis – nevertheless their attitude and attitudes towards them might differ strongly.

Leoš Šatava states that “the fact of emigration has far reaching impact; it does not only affect the migrants but also continues to play a role in the life of their children and in some ways also all the descendants born in the new environment⁴” (Šatava 1989: 27–28).

2. Contextual framework of the problematic

2.1. Denmark as a receiving country

Jana Chaloupková and Petra Šalamounová note in their reflection on the comparative analysis *European Social Survey 2002* that “different attitudes towards

¹ The Erasmus programme was the umbrella organization providing the stay at the University of Aarhus.

² For example Statistics Denmark (SD) register incomers by their declaration without ethnic attribute – the term “Yugoslav” does not specify if one is Macedonian, Serbian, Montenegrin, etc.

³ Those who have acquired Danish citizenship are not counted.

⁴ “Fakt emigrace má dalekosáhlejší dopad; nevztahuje se vlastně jen na emigranty samotné, ale v určitém smyslu v prodloužení i na jejich děti a v jistém ohledu na všechny potomky narozené dále v novém prostředí.”

immigration in European countries depend on many social, economic, political, cultural factors (...) it is supposed that they (the attitudes) might be affected also by the percentage and structure of the migrants coming to the country⁵” (Chaloupková, Salamounová 2006: 64). Public opinion about whether a particular immigration is beneficial is related to the openness of the society⁶ (Chaloupková, Salamounová 2006: 73).

Denmark was for long time a relatively homogeneous country with a minimum of minorities. The differing attitudes to immigration policy in Denmark, Sweden and Norway can be explained by historical experience.

Harald F. Moore argues that the cultivation of “Danishness” has been present since the period of the Danish empire. After the fall of the empire, an inward looking perspective caused internal affairs to become the only state priority (Moore 2010: 363). We can also observe distant relations with international institutions such as the EU. By July 2001 Swedes could hold dual citizenship (Gustafson 2002: 463) and the approach to minorities could be classified as multicultural, while Denmark rather leaned towards the concept of “self-sufficiency” with an assimilationist tendency (Hedetoft 2008: i). The Norwegian *Fremskrittsparti* (Progress parties) and the Danish *Dansk Folkeparti* (Danish people’s party – DFP) are examples of hard right wing anti-immigration parties.⁷

The first wave of migration to Denmark appeared during the 1950s and was known as guest workers’ migration⁸ (Pedersen, Smith 2001: 3). Until the late sixties, incomers could freely enter the country. The first guest workers to arrive were Yugoslavs, afterwards came Turks and Pakistani workers, most of whom were employed in the unskilled sectors. The “Danish freeze” came during 1973. This meant a total ban on newcomers, however guest workers had the right to remain in Denmark “after 1974 they had the option of family reunion that came to act as a new source of immigration” (Pedersen, Smith 2001: 8).

During the mid ’80s, immigration rose again, this time due to waves of refugees. The social atmosphere changed and official state spheres started to debate the issue.⁹ We can observe, that solidarity movements towards some refugee groups developed (Iranians, Albanians from Kosovo...). In the ’90s, the number of refugees from Yugoslavia and Somalia rose (Jensen, Pedersen 2007: 95). Danish

⁵ “Rozdílné postoje k přistěhovalectví v evropských zemích jsou podmíněny řadou sociálních, ekonomických, politických i kulturních faktorů ... lze ale předpokládat, že postojové klima k migrantům může být ovlivněno i podílem a strukturou přistěhovalců, kteří do země přicházejí”

⁶ *Otevřenost veřejnosti souvisí s jejím názorem, zda je migrace přínosem.*

⁷ Moore comments that “It is clear that economics, distrust in government, xenophobia, and the strong desire to protect Norwegian and Danish culture and heritage motivated the rise of the far right” (Moore 2010: 362–363).

⁸ In German *gastarbeitern*, Danish *gæstarbejderne*, Croatian, Bosnian, Serbian *gastarbajteri*.

⁹ Signs of a xenophobic climate in society arose. Eszter Körmendi suggests that the attitude towards refugees was more negative than towards immigrants in the year 1985 (Körmendi 1986: 140).

integration policy became much stricter from 1998.¹⁰ Discussions about identity and homogeneity of “little Denmark” (Ulf Hedetoft’s term) at the beginning of the new millennium followed. Political opposition took this to be “a serious threat to [Denmark’s] history, culture...” (Hedetoft 2003: 1)

In this phase, serious problems concerning the introduction of immigrants to the labour market and pressure on the welfare state arose.¹¹ OECD surveys repeatedly warned, that Denmark’s level of relative unemployment among immigrants was the highest and the most alarming (Nielsen et al. 2001: 1). This phenomenon is connected to the employment sector chosen by young immigrants and their low educational attainment.

Danish society was going through several transformation processes regarding the question of accepting foreign newcomers. Hedetoft states that the previous humanitarian feelings and need to help were replaced by the sceptical approach of the 90s. The main reservations were represented by the questions: “What’s the benefit for us?”, “Can Danishness survive the religious and civilisational challenge?”, “How can we deal with criminal immigrants and ethnic ghettos?”, “Can the universalist welfare model survive?” (Hedetoft 2003: 3).

Danish society is based on attributes of stability and security of the system. Danes do believe in their authorities very strongly. The Scandinavian welfare model, which was already mentioned, is an important part of an individual’s life, but recently has also been seen as a “welfare magnet.” Agreeing with the Borjas’s model, Pedersen and Smith declare that Denmark tends “to attract less qualified immigrants from the poor countries while the more qualified immigrants (and Danes) may prefer other countries with a lower tax pressure and less generous social welfare schemes” (Pedersen, Smith 2001: 22).

In light of this changing attitude it is logical, that the authorities focused on repatriation. However, about 70% of immigrants remain in the country even 10 years after their arrival (Jensen, Pedersen 2007: 107). Most of them come from less developed countries and that leads to an unintended consequence, that “Those immigrants who are most easily integrated into the labour market leave again, while those for whom integration is the largest challenge, stay in the country” (Jensen, Pedersen 2007: 10).

According to Pedersen and Smith’s study, “Danish immigrants do not assimilate completely but after 10 years of residence in Denmark the estimated difference between a Dane and an immigrant with the same characteristics, except for immigrant status, is rather small” (2001: 18).

Moore and Wren explain the stigmatization of immigrants due to their “othering” – non-natives are unconsciously understood as “the extraneous.” This

¹⁰ For example from 1992 the reunification rules were more severe, further restrictions came in 1998, 2000 (“24 rule” etc.) (Fenger-Grøndahl, Nissen 2006: 34).

¹¹ The age composition of migrants highlights the fact that in the coming decades the employment situation of the second generation will be crucial for the Danish economy (Pedersen, Smith 2001: 2).

perception can persist until third generation “immigrants” (!) who were born in Denmark (Wren in: Moore 2010: 361).

My conclusion from the analysis of the data and the field work regarding the attitude of Danes towards immigrants is as follows. The attempt to incorporate “ethnic non-Danes” to the Danish system (economically, politically, culturally, socially), and their integration without taking them out of the category “non-Dane,” leads to mutual incomprehension of the social status of each entity (ethnic Danes – ethnic “non-Danes”). These separate understandings are not transmitted between the two exclusive cultural frameworks.

2.2. Emigration from SFRY

Migrations from the former Yugoslavia have not had a consistent character, their participants were not from the same group and in the defined periods were motivated in different ways. These distinctions are valid for various ethnic groups and also vary within each migration wave. The sixties emigration from Yugoslavia originated in unemployment, agrarian overpopulation, low salaries, the question of housing and many others.

From the second half of the decade chain migration can be observed (Grečić 1975: 208). With time, the trend extended to the skilled and highly qualified workers, and affected the whole country. Some areas could be considered to have high emigration. Their final destinations offered job vacancies which were not satisfactory for the domestic population. The “Guest workforce” was accepted on a temporary basis for a certain period of time.¹²

At the end of the '60s, Denmark was beginning to attract spontaneous migrants because of the slowdown in economic activity in Western Germany, so the search for a new destination was one of the solutions (Pedersen 1999: 152).

For most “the promised land’ was the country that one had left and not Denmark or Sweden, which represented only a means to an end...” (Schierup, Alund 1986: 25). In the year 1986, the number of Yugoslavs in Denmark was estimated at 7 000 individuals with Yugoslav citizenship¹³ (including mainly Wallachians [specifically Serbs], then Macedonians, Montenegrins, “Muslims”,¹⁴ Croats,¹⁵

¹² “This guest-worker migration was (wrongly) assumed to be temporary and reversible” (Heath, Rothon, Kilpi 2008: 213).

¹³ It is unknown how many people already obtained Danish citizenship (Schierup, Alund 1986: 24).

¹⁴ According to the research of Jeppesen from 1989, 25% of respondents, who declare to be Muslims, are supposed to be ethnic Albanians, Macedonians, Bosnians (Jeppesen 1989: 172). They have a common rural background (Jeppesen 1990).

¹⁵ Croats are mentioned in Keld Buciek, J. Ole Bærenholdt and Kristine Juul’s article. “While the picture of the Yugoslavs (Serbs and Croats respectively) as sticking together in ethnic associations has some truth to it...” (Buciek, Bærenholdt, Juul 2006: 191).

other ethnicities are not mentioned in any of the sources used¹⁶). For instance, Wallachians migrated “to earn as much as possible for raising one’s material standard and status in the village of origin” (Schierup, Alund 1986:26). Wallachians migrated mainly from the Kladovo and Negotin region, Macedonians were usually from the southwest part of the country, Montenegrins came from the eastern part (Sandžak). Most of the Yugoslav guest workers moved to the Sjælland island (Copenhagen and its surroundings). Their labour productivity was well-known (it was even higher than the Danish standard – significant years 1981–1982) (Pedersen 1999: 178–179). The home country tried to keep contact with its exiles. These initiatives ran through the organizations and clubs founded in the final destinations. Migrants were being put in the position, where they needed to decide whether to stay or not. Baučić names the situation “continuing temporariness”¹⁷ when a long-term dream of a return becomes distant and unfeasible.¹⁸

During the 80s, Danish was frequently used within the communities and the majority Danish community viewed Yugoslavs as the most integrated minority, due to their similarities to Denmark in the cultural and religious spheres. During the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, Denmark helped in the Croatian and Bosnian camps *in situ* as well as accepting immigrants. Forced migrations were usually directed to the countries where previous migration waves had already arrived. This could influence the families’ decision about which destination to choose. Respondents from the former Yugoslavia indicated how they came to be in Denmark. 1) Due to chance, 2) because of someone else’s decision (for example after being rejected by another country), 3) specifically being rejected because the country of arrival was not accepting any more people, 4) they were given an opportunity to go to Denmark while residing in some other temporary destination, 5) at that time, they did not have any other choice (for example, when Sweden and Norway closed the borders). Some of them were transported directly by Danish institutions. Most of the Albanian refugees were transported from the Stenkovac refugee camp in Macedonia (Dansk Røde Kors 1999: 7).

Nevertheless, “[by] September 1995 Denmark [had] received nearly 18.000 refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina and approximately 4.000 from other parts of former Yugoslavia. This [was] the largest group of refugees Denmark [had] received since the Second World War...,” as J. Lidved Madsen and H. M. Fosseldorff note (Madsen, Fosseldorff 1995: 11). The number of Albanians from Kosovo rose to the final sum of 3 000 refugees in 1999. Most of the incomers were placed in asylum camps. The Danish authorities took a different stand in each situation

¹⁶ It is strongly connected to the topic of invisibility.

¹⁷ “Trajna privremenost.”

¹⁸ “Continuing temporariness.” Compare with Jasna Čapo-Žmegač, where respondent Kata tells the story “We came to Germany, you know how it was then. Five years, that was it at the most we said, five years and that’s it. Then, we shall go home to work in farming. Now those five years have become 36 years” (Čapo-Žmegač 2005: 39). Miri Song states, that not only parents keep the “myth of return,” sometimes it is transmitted to the third generation (Song 2003: 116).

(Bosnian refugee case, Albanian refugees). As a result, the amount of time for the legal processes as well as the integration strategies differed.

The effort to repatriate Bosnian refugees was not as successful as in the Albanian case.¹⁹ Contemporary trends show a growth in “brain gain” migration. Young and talented individuals leave their home countries (mainly from the EU member states due to its ease – Romania, Bulgaria) and participate in the Danish educational and employment spheres (Albanians, Serbs, Bosnians).

2.3. Social, cultural context (education, employment, language, housing)

As Vibeke Jakobsen and Nina Smith state, “young immigrants from Ex-Yugoslavia seem to prefer the vocational training system to theoretic education” (Jakobsen, Smith 2003: 14). We have to bear in mind the fact, that respondents in this study are from the second generation of working migrants.²⁰ In the former Yugoslavia, a lot of stress among scholars was put on research into the new generation of children abroad. The conclusion from various studies indicated sub-optimal development.²¹

The introduction of migrants to the workforce can also be a problematic issue. Another question in the problematic is a lack of social mobility (based on inter-generational transmission as stated in several studies, young generations tend to follow their parents in their occupation). Kristina Grünenberg says that the rate of social mobility among migrants is low. The problems of unemployment and employment undervaluation are present (Grünenberg 2006: 13). Another question related to this problematic is whether the “non-Dane” with his disadvantaged position can “climb up” the career ladder. Jeppesen states, that with a pragmatic approach it is possible. Examples are young people of Pakistani origin who “have succeeded in improving their opportunities in Danish society” (Jeppesen 1990: 8). An explanation might be found within Danish society itself. The Pakistani community maintains a strong cultural identity. As its members are immediately

¹⁹ The results are as follows: by DFH (*Dansk Flygtningehjælp* – Danish refugee aid institution) only 800 registered people returned by 1997 (Kjær 1998: 43). Besides the return to the home country, “fra sommeren 1994 til marts 1998 emigrerede desuden 1.070 bosniske flygtninge til tredjeland” (“from summer 1994 until March 1998, 1070 Bosnian refugees emigrated to third countries”) (Frederiksen 1995: 6).

²⁰ In Jakobsen and Smith’s research 22% of respondents were Muslims (Jakobsen, Smith 2003).

²¹ We name only a few authors discussing this problematic. Fulgosi et al. come to the conclusion, that children growing up in Germany do not receive enough patience regarding their cognitive functions, therefore it has an impact on their mental health (“djeca naših radnika u Njemačkoj ne rastu u okolini koja optimizira razvitak njihovih kognitivnih funkcija. To se osobito odražava na semantičko-simboličkim funkcijama. Ta okolina, osim toga, pogoduje razvoju njihova neuroticizma i emocionalne nestabilnosti, a zaustavlja ili ne podržava razvitak njihove društvenosti”) (Fulgosi et al. 1985: 12).

visibly different and there is no possibility for them to look like “Danes,” there is no reason (or practical benefit) for them to make an effort to “become Danes.” Descendants with refugee origin might come through this process faster.

The spoken language of a migrant may be recognizable by some particular accent or other variations from the norm. According to research in 1989, the second generation of “Yugoslav” guest workers had the best knowledge of the language (85% of interviewees spoke perfect Danish) (Jeppesen 1989).²² About 30% talked to their children in Danish (Jeppesen 1989). The first generation usually has troubles in comprehending the new linguistic environment while the second generation is well adapted to the linguistic conditions and may forget the native language or make grammar mistakes. This pattern can be applied to the descendants of refugees too. The brain gain generation struggles due to the wider knowledge of English in Denmark which makes the process of learning Danish as a common language harder.²³

There might also be differences in the housing opportunities of Wallachians and Ex-Yugoslavian refugees from the 90s. The intention of Wallachians was to build houses that did not differ in any way from the others.²⁴ Some refugees and their descendants are also successful in this endeavour, others live in state-supported housing with a high density of immigrants. However, residential segregation is not officially practised. They are unlikely to be found in well-known “ghettos” and “dangerous parts of the cities” such as Gellerup in Aarhus, Vollsmose in Odense or Nørrebro in Copenhagen. However, they may visit these localities to buy the products that are sold there (either from their shops or Turkish shops as the goods are similar).²⁵

The children lose a significant overview of the general and cultural facts of Yugoslavia, as the language and culture of the host country interferes (Jukić 1985: 15). Further, the mother tongue gets poorer, especially in the field of lexis, writing skills are also very poor (Pavlinić-Wolf, Anić, Ivezić 1985: 37). A dilemma of identity and “migration qualities” arises – children do not want to return but also do not accept the host country (Milojević 1985: 53).

²² Jakobsen and Smith argue, that “A very good language proficiency increases the probability of having completed or being enrolled at a qualifying education by about 31% for Turkish immigrants, 23% for Pakistani immigrants, and as much as 41% for Ex-Yugoslavian immigrants” (Jakobsen, Smith 2003: 28).

²³ It is very common and popular to use English in Denmark. All the generations use it, or when they find out that someone’s Danish is not perfect, they switch to it.

²⁴ Juul adds: “while the houses in the home town are built to impress, the Serbs’ houses in Denmark usually look like any other house on the road: indeed, the owners take pride in not having any sign of difference displayed on the facade” (Juul 2011: 245).

²⁵ It is worth mentioning the progress of these groceries. Four years ago the Aarhus oriental market contained *Bazar Vest* (<http://www.bazarvest.dk/>, accessed: 15.7.2012) a Bosnian shop. Today Bosnians visit Turkish or Arabic shops where many products are imported from Sweden (<http://www.plivit-trade.com/sv/default.aspx>, accessed: 20.4.2012).

3. Identity Choice

3.1. Constructions of collective and Individual Identity

3.1.1. *Strategies to adapt, integrate, identify*

Kjell Magnusson differentiates between young generations by their age of arrival in the new environment.²⁶ The ones who migrate, still maintain many common features with their counterparts in the homeland. However, they tend to lose touch with everyday reality in their country of origin. If the home country goes through some major changes, it can have a strong impact on the diaspora community abroad (e.g. Wallachians in Denmark changed their view towards the Yugoslav collective identity with the disintegration of Yugoslavia).

After migrants initial adaptation, comes acculturation (Šatava's term *sžívání vystěhovalců*²⁷). Each migrant who belongs to a particular ethnic (ethnic-social) group develops a certain strategy of integration. Some Ex-Yugoslav ethnic groups share similar attitudes towards how to present themselves and how to deal with Danish reality.²⁸ For example, Bosnian refugees constructed their identity on the discourse of "sameness." That might conflict with the view of the majority. The common trend of all the diaspora communities from Ex-Yugoslavia is latent expression of their identity.

Re-naming and the modification of surnames with an equivalent Danish form is very common. Many levels of belonging may appear (for instance Wallachian-Serbian-Yugoslavian-Danish). This dilemma is especially prevalent for descendants of immigrants from mixed marriages (one respondent found himself Albanian, Turkish and Yugoslavian as well as Danish). It is up to each individual to discover all the possibilities and take advantage of them.

²⁶ The so-called Duisburg group was analyzed as a model case. Children that moved to the host country from the age of 6–14 have a similar position to their parents. The second category (arrival when children are 1–5 years old) do not have a stable national consciousness and are given a difficult decision of choosing where to belong. The ones who arrived very young (less than 1 year old) or were born in the host country are bicultural, their identity belongs more to the host country and they are called "new Germans" (in our case "new Danes") (Magnusson 1981: 44).

²⁷ Could be described as "coliving of the migrants with the majority community."

²⁸ Macedonians tend to individually, Wallachians tend to approach opportunities collectively, but also more traditionally (Schierup, Alund 1986: 150). From my own experience the generalisation for Albanians is that they tend to keep some distance but do not isolate themselves, Bosnians have a tendency to assimilate. Schierup and Alund's study explains that "Yugoslavs' patterns of integration range from their almost complete assimilation into the economic, social and cultural systems of the immigration countries to the formation of relatively isolated ethnic enclaves" (Schierup, Alund 1986: 20).

3.1.2. *Collective ex-Yugoslav/post-Yugoslav identity?*

Contact within ethnic groups from the former Yugoslavia is mostly limited to larger cities and united post-Yugoslav communities do not almost exist. Nevertheless, the common denominator across all the communities is the perception that they are the best integrated minority group, which can cause a situation where individuals feel social pressure. One of Grünenberg's respondent said "In a way I envy the Somalis; they seem freer, more relaxed, they are not afraid of shouting across the street or looking different" (Grünenberg 2006: 196). Families originally from the Ex-Yugoslav countries do not keep close contact with other immigrant families (or at least it is not usual). Younger generations do often have non-Danish friends so in the future their situation might change.

The collective identity of "yugoslavism" is not very common, especially not among young people. It presents as some kind of "yugo-nostalgia," which might appear paradoxical (Svetlana Boym analyzes types of the nostalgia) and in some cases coheres with transnationalism. Young descendants from various Ex-Yugoslav diaspora communities do not meet in an organized manner, except in "Balkan parties".²⁹ Some individuals even refuse to meet with other compatriots, due to "their behaviour which is rather different from the behaviour of their counterparts in the home country" (as one respondent noted).

The trend of invisibility might arise for the immigrants and descendants who go through acculturation and integration. Juul suggests, that sometimes career success is connected to the condition of invisibility (Juul 2011: 239). This idea was supported by some of my respondents who said that they went through the dilemma "career" or "identity." A crucial complication might appear if the majority does not recognize this inner movement of a migrant even if he renounces the previous identity.

3.2. Potential identities

The identity of young immigrants and their descendants can be impacted by many factors. The identities of home and host country represent two potential courses as well as some flows that are known worldwide. Global trends such as cosmopolitanism, nationalism, transnationalism, nationalistic transnationalism, bilocality, multilocality, hybridity are added to identities to the home and host countries. They represent other potential options. Ethnic identity is just one of many options for the identity. As Jadranka Grbić claims, "multiple identity" is complex, and "each individual can possess it"³⁰ (Grbić 1994: 29).

²⁹ A Balkan party is a disco event where typical Balkan music is played.

³⁰ "Identitet je također kompleksan, te u skladu s time, svaki pojedinac može imati mnogostruki identitet."

This syncretic identity progresses in another way due to its position “in between.” One of the ways might be a model of hybridity. For the use of the complete study (final thesis), a model of hybridity strategies was constructed and contained 4 types. It corresponds with the attitudes of respondents. In the resistant period of one’s life,³¹ a rejection of one’s own ethnic background can emerge. Afterwards, a revision and even a very positive stance towards their ethnic heritage might be considered (Song 2003: 111).

4. Results from the field research

Respondents were divided by their age,³² sex, profession, birth country³³ (despite these divisions, the answers showed similar character).

People of ex-Yugoslav origin are in general very satisfied with the educational, economic, democratic and healthcare systems of Denmark. Older respondents do complain about their job situation. Some respondents use (sometimes misuse) the social benefit system. Some of them find the Danish nationalistic anti-immigration viewpoints concerning (especially between the years 2001–2011). In general, they feel that they are more open and they extol the availability of the opportunities in Danish society. Nevertheless, they very often mention their discontent without exact explaining what causes this feeling.³⁴ Many of them went through a dramatic identity crisis, trauma. Respondents often imagine how life would be if they had never left.

An individual’s immediate environment plays also an important role. It depends on the density of the migrant population in the neighbourhood, friends and the attitude of the family. Magnusson in her Swedish case remarks, that “those

³¹ Childhood is described by Song “as a time when they (second generation individuals) wanted to assimilate into the mainstream.” After reaching adulthood “they described a process involving the ‘deprogramming of the self’...” (Song 2003: 111–112). A danger may occur if a “reborn artificial” identity is reconstructed.

³² 4 groups (1. group up to 24/25 years old, 2. group 24/25–29/30 years old, 3. group 29/30–35 years old, 4. group up of 35 years old).

³³ The first group is represented by 24 persons, the second one by 14, the third by 8, and the fourth by 6 persons. The rest (5 persons) did not mention their age. Ethnic structure is as follows: 6 Serbs from Serbia, 4 Serbs from Bosnia-Herzegovina, 25 Bosnians from Bosnia-Herzegovina, 5 Albanians from Kosovo, 1 Albanian from Albania, 1 Croat from Croatia, 3 Croats from Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1 Albanian from Macedonia, 1 Albanian from the USA, 3 Montenegrins from Montenegro. These persons were born in Denmark (so-called *Nydanskere*): 1 Bosnian, 2 Serbs, 1 Montenegrin, 3 Albanians. In general it is: 26 Bosnians, 12 Serbs, 11 Albanians, 4 Croats and 4 Montenegrins. Interviews in-depth were accomplished with 13 persons, random and shorter discussions with 10 other persons.

³⁴ For example: “nisam zadovoljan, pa i ne još uvijek. Ali kako je bilo bolje je”, “šta je nekad bilo, i moglo biti, nikad se neće omogući. Znači samo ostaje alternativni izbor”, “naravno da nisam zadovoljan”, “mislim da je lepše živjeti među svojem naroda i u svojoj zemlji”, “I knaqur jam. Por cdo dite me merr malli per Atdheun.”

Yugoslav children, that socialize in homes where the Yugoslav influence is evident, that use their native language in communication with their siblings, parents, friends, that participate in the institutional and cultural life of the Yugoslav immigrants in Sweden... [are] the most likely to develop some kind of Yugoslav identity³⁵ (Magnusson 1981: 49).

Research showed, that among younger generations, “singles” are very common. More than half of the respondents did not have a partner. One quarter of them believed, that nationality of a partner is of great importance.³⁶ The observed group made friendships with Danes (26%), the same is reflected in friendships with Ex-Yugoslavs, 30% of them had mixed friendships (with Danes and with other foreigners). From the results we can see, that with time spent in the country, the number of friendships with Danes increases. One respondent replied: “Can you believe that I have been living here for 15 years and have no Danish friends outside of work or school?” ... “That doesn’t seem normal to me and I actually started to think that there may be something wrong with me until I realized that none of my immigrant friends have Danish friends either.”

Many of those, who maintain an awareness of their country of origin, participate in some clubs or associations. In their personal lives, they usually celebrate national holidays, listen to the music of the country of origin, they watch TV programmes, read the news on the Internet, or books by Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian/Albanian authors. A certain number of them go on holiday to their country of origin. As an illustration, a facebook group was created in May 2012. In a few weeks, it contained hundreds and hundreds of young individuals who were preparing for the summer holidays in their home countries and encouraging others to join in. The clubs and associations, however, lose members and therefore lose their sense of purpose. The younger generation, of around 20 years-old, does not have the will to continue with the projects.³⁷ Sometimes they are forced to “dumb-down” their values for “cheap *turbofolk*”, just to “drag the new blood in.” The factor of invisibility due to the well-integrated position also complicates the situation.

Code switching, as explained in Roger Ballard Song’s book *Choosing ethnic identity* claims, that “cultures, like languages, are *codes*, which actors use to express themselves in a given context; and as the context changes, so those with the requisite competence switch code” (Song 2003: 107). It changes not only with the

³⁵ “Ona jugoslavenska djeca koja su socializirana u pretežno jugoslavenskom domu, koja se služe vlastitim jezikom u odnosu s roditeljima, braćom i prijateljima, koja sudjeluju u institucionalnom i kulturnom životu jugoslavenskih doseljenika u Švedskoj, te ona koja se druže s prijateljima Jugoslavenima, bit će sklona razvijanju neke vrste jugoslavenskog identiteta.”

³⁶ One respondent said: “Ne želim da zaboravim odakle sam došla, a to bi se lahko moglo desiti jako mi partner nije iste nacionalnosti” (I do not want to forget where I have come from, that could easily happen if my partner is not the same nationality as me). The other claimed: “Partner? Naravno da bi bilo idealno da smo iz iste zemlje” (Partner? Of course it would be ideal if we were from the same country).

³⁷ From one leading participant of a Bosnian club I heard: “mladi nisu integrisani – integrisani su i previše” (Young ones are not integrated – they are too integrated).

language used but also “through ways of talking, styles of presentation, and the pursuit of particular activities” (1994: 31 in: 2003: 108). An individual “switches” in the interactions but also in his own thinking and approach. These elements were present in the field work. Sometimes respondents even admitted conscious “switching”.³⁸

According to the results, 25% of the participants would like to return to their country of origin. 58% express the opposite. A great deal of these answers, as respondents stated, are affected by the situation in their home countries. Many of them say, that they would return if some conditions were fulfilled. However, many of the conditions mentioned were in various aspects unrealizable. The ideal situation for many of them would be “keeping themselves in migration between the two countries.” As the age goes up and time spent in the home country falls, the will to return disappears. This tendency arises again at a later age, when migrants would like to return to spend their retirement in their homeland. The youth spend usually 1-4 weeks in their country of origin per year. Detachment is very common, especially within the young generation.

4.1. Contact between Individuals from the majority community and their counterparts from the minority community with background originally from the former Yugoslavian countries

To the question “do you feel good in Danish society?” I received mostly positive answers from my respondents. With some caveat, the comments followed. Criticism could be sorted into two categories. Firstly, the Danish egalitarianism that respondents experienced did not include the immigrants and their descendants, in fact it included only Danes. Danes behaved condescendingly towards them (although according to the respondents they lacked knowledge of the topic and relied on stereotypes and generalization³⁹). Secondly, the respondents mentioned, that cultural differences can be irritating (black humour is exaggerated, socialization and emotionality are not sufficient, alcohol is used by Danes as a “helpmate” to socialize). From these statements and the results of the survey we can conclude that although if a person with origins from the former Yugoslavia stays in Denmark for a short period (in the context of long-term residence), they can feel uncomfortable but it gets better with time. All the *nydanskere* (those who

³⁸ One respondent explained his experience of this topic: “since I’m fluent in American English, I’ve noticed that Danes talk completely differently with me depending on which language I approach them in. It seems that they are much more forthcoming when they see me through the lens of being American as opposed to Albanian but I’m the same guy.”

³⁹ Some respondents repeated that “Danes usually point out that you are not ‘a Dane’, even though you have lived in the country for your whole life.”

are born in Denmark but have origins in a post-Yugoslav country) feel comfortable in the majority Danish society. The question of whether it is possible to become a Dane remains.

Jasna Čapo-Žmegač discovered similar trends in Germany. If somebody does not have German parents, they are not considered to be German (Čapo-Žmegač 2005).

From the interviews with young Danes, I obtained various answers to this question. The main conclusion is that they perceive the immigrants in the way they present themselves and want to be perceived. My Danish respondents also confirmed that they personally know some immigrants and descendants from the Ex-Yugoslavian countries and almost all speak perfect Danish. When I asked whether they consider them to be Danes, approx. one half answered positively, one half negatively.

Conclusion

At the present time, it is difficult to trace all the tendencies of Danish society. A survey was carried out in 2011. It showed, that the thinking of Danes is very ambivalent. There are still distinctions between the “native Danes” and “Danes with other background” (*Danskere med anden etnisk baggrund*) or “new Danes” (*nydanskere*) despite their coexistence (Kvaale 2011: 231).

Individuals from the former Yugoslavia (or with roots in the former Yugoslavia) residing in Denmark are placed in a specific position and therefore differ from the ones who have not migrated. They are perceived in a particular way by Danes, by other migrants residing in Denmark and by individuals in the home country. Stigmatization may occur. Parallels with other young diaspora members (with roots in the area of the former Yugoslavia) in other European countries are noticeable.

Elements in this paper show some specific attributes that immigrants and descendants from the Ex-Yugoslavian countries possess. We can suggest “sameness,” “invisibility” and many others.

Denmark does not automatically require, that foreign newcomers give up their original norms, values etc. The migrants themselves have to realize and decide what this approach means to them and what it may offer. It is up to them and their descendants whether and how they will use it.

I am aware of the fact that other European countries that have similar immigration history including migrants from the former Yugoslavia (guest workers, refugees) – for example Sweden, Germany and many others – will provide similar examples of young generations with many similarities. Their communities are usually much bigger and their ethnic structure is more diverse. However, small

differences that arose due to the specifics of the Danish environment give a uniqueness to the diaspora communities from the countries originally from the former Yugoslavia.

Bibliography

- Baučić I. (ed.)
1970 *Porijeklo i struktura radnika iz Jugoslavije u SR Njemačkoj. Migracije radnika, Knjiga I*, Zagreb.
- Baučić I. et al.
1972 *Migracije radnika iz Jugoslavije na rad u Francusku. Knjiga III*, Zagreb.
- Boym S.
2001 *Introduction: Taboo on Nostalgia?*, "6: Nostalgia and Post-Communist Memory", [w:] *The Future of Nostalgia*, ed. Svetlana Boym, XIII–XIX, 57–71, New York.
- Buciek K., Bærenholdt J.O., Juul K.
2006 *Whose Heritage? Immigration and Place Narratives in Denmark*, "Geografiska Annaler", No. 88 (2), p. 185–197.
- Chaloupková J., Šalamounová P.
2006 *Postoje li imigrantům a dopadům migrace v evropských zemích*, "Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review", No. 42 (1), p. 57–80.
- Coleman D.
1999 *Immigration to Denmark, International and National Perspectives*, Aarhus.
- Čapo-Žmegač J.
2005 *Transnationalisation and Identification Among Youth of Croatian Origin in Germany*, "Narodna umjetnost", No. 42 (1).
- Dansk Røde Kors ed.
1999 *Nye Naboer fra Kosovo – om de Nyankomne Flygtninges Forhold hos Dansk Røde Kors*, København.
- Fenger-Grøndahl M., Nissen J.
2006 *Verden kom til Danmark*, København.
- Frederiksen B.
1995 *Bosniske Flygtninge. Baggrund, Historie, Kultur*, København.
- Fulgosi L., Knezović Z., Mesnjak R., Metzinger A., Zarevski P.
1985 *Istraživanja razvoja nekih kognitivnih funkcija i nekih karakteristika ličnosti djece naših radika na privremenom radu u inozemstvu*, [w:] *Migracijske teme 2, godina 2, broj 2*, Zagreb.
- Grbić J.
1994 *Identitet, jezik i razvoj. Istraživanje o povezanosti etniciteta i jezika na primjeru hrvatske nacionalne manjine u Mađarskoj*, "Narodna umjetnost", No. 31, p. 9–143.
- Grečić V.
1975 *Savremene migracije radne snage u Europi*, Beograd.
- Grünenberg K.
1997 *"Det tomme rum?": midlertidighed, flygtningelandsbyer og bosniske krigsflygtninge i Danmark*, København.
- Grünenberg K.
2006 *Is Home Where the Heart is, or Where I Hang my Hat?*, København.

Gustafson P.

2002 *Globalisation, Multiculturalism and Individualism: The Swedish Debate on Dual Citizenship*, "Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies", No. 28 (3), p. 463–481.

Heath F.A., Rothon C., Kilpi E.

2008 *The Second Generation in Western Europe: Education, Unemployment, and Occupational Attainment*, "Annual Review of Sociology", No. 34, p. 211–235.

Hedetoft U.

2003 "Cultural Transformation": How Denmark Faces Immigration, OpenDemocracy, http://www.opendemocracy.net/people-migrationeurope/article_1563.jsp (access: 13.8.2012).

2008 *Multiculturalism in Denmark and Sweden*, Copenhagen.

Hedetoft U., Hjort M.

2002 *The Postnational Self – Belonging and Identity*, Minneapolis.

Jakobsen V., Smith N.

2003 *The Educational Attainment of the Children of the Danish "Guest Worker" Immigrants*, Copenhagen.

Jensen P., Pedersen J.P.

2007 *To Stay or Not to Stay? Out-Migration of Immigrants from Denmark*, "International Migration", No. 45 (5).

Jeppesen Just K.

1989 *Unge indvandrere – En undersoegelse af andengeneration fra Jugoslavien, Tyrkiet og Pakistan*, København.

1990 *Young Second Generation Immigrants in Denmark*, Copenhagen, Booklet, No. 32.

Jukić Z.

1985 *Pokušaj ispitivanja učenika u jugoslovenskoj dopunskoj nastavi o poznavanju elemenata kulture naroda koji govore srpskohrvatskim, odnosno hrvatskosrpskim jezikom*, [in:] *Migracijske teme 2, godina 1, broj 2*, Zagreb.

Juul K.

2011 *From Danish Yugoslavs to Danish Serbs: National Affiliation Caught Between Visibility and Invisibility*, "Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies", No. 37 (2).

Kjær U.K.

1998 *The Legal Status of the Bosnian War Refugees in Denmark*, Copenhagen.

Körmendi E.

1986 *Os og de andre – Danskernes holdninger til indvandrere og flygninger*, København.

Kvaale K.

2011 *Something Begotten In the State of Denmark? Immigrants, Territorialized Culture, and the Danes as an Indigenous People*, "Anthropological Theory", No. 11, p. 223.

Madsen J.L., Fosseldorff H.M.

1995 *Bosnian Refugees in Denmark: Characteristics and Motivations of Persons who Have Applied for Assistance to Return to Bosnia-Herzegovina during 1994–1995*, Copenhagen.

Magnusson K.

1981 *Između dvije kulture, Istraživanje stajališta jugoslavenske omladine u Švedskoj*, [in:] *Rasprave o migracijama, Broj 71*, Zagreb: Centar za istraživanje migracija i narodnosti.

Milojević A.

1985 *Druga generacija migranata ili potreba izgradnje realne migracijske slike o sebi*, [in:] *Migracijske teme 2, godina 1, broj 2*, Zagreb.

Moore H.F.

2010 *Immigration in Denmark and Norway, Protecting Culture or Protecting Bigths?*, "Scandinavian Studies", No. 82.

Nielsen H.S., Rosholm M., Smith N., Husted L.

2001 *Intergenerational Transmissions and the School-to-work Transition of 2nd Generation Immigrants*, Aarhus.

Pavlinić-Wolf A., Anić J., Ivezić Z.

1985 *Jezik jugoslavenske djece koja žive u Švedskoj (preliminarni rezultati sociolingvističkog istraživanja)*, [in:] *Migracijske teme 2, godina 1, broj 2*, Zagreb.

Pedersen J.P., Smith N.

2001 *International Migration and Migration Policy in Denmark*, Aarhus.

Pedersen S.

1999 *Migration To and From Denmark During the Period 1960–97*, [in:] *Immigration to Denmark, International and National Perspectives*, eds. D. Coleman, Eskil Wadensjö, Aarhus.

Schierup C.U., Alund A.

1986 *Will They Still Be Dancing? Integration and Ethnic Transformation among Yugoslav Immigrants in Scandinavia*, Umeå.

Song M.

2003 *Choosing Ethnic Identity*, Cambridge.

Šatava L.

1989 *Migrační procesy a české vystěhovalectví 19. století do USA*, Praha.

Websites:⁴⁰

<http://www.dst.dk/da.aspx>.

<http://www.nyidanmark.dk/>.

<http://www.bazarvest.dk/>.

<http://www.plivit-trade.com/>.

Questionnaires available online:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dDkxd3BZYjRsR1ozc2VJTUVUwUjEwQXc6MQ#gid=0>.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dEY2UVY0SndjNDNsWkw2bWhqYlBoX1E6MQ#gid=0>.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?pli=1&formkey=dF96LWtGS0dqYzlqclhtZklqN0lRUEE6MQ#gid=0>.

Attachments

Data including immigration to Denmark (former Yugoslav countries) – data overtook from DS.

⁴⁰ All accessed: 27.3.2013.

Občan.	Země původu	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
DK	Bosnien-Hercegovina	46	77	483	1110	3301	4236	7236	8537	9094	9992	10402	10788	11045	11262
	Jugoslaviien (eks.)	3908	4472	5333	5616	6389	6562	7308	7547	8004	8342	8440	8573	8552	8586
	Jugoslaviien, Forb. Rep.	0	1	6	8	32	40	63	82	134	215	291	385	451	521
	Kosovo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	65	129	194	269
	Kroatien	102	123	167	208	286	316	383	386	397	403	413	429	439	449
	Makedonien	156	243	391	509	654	743	909	981	1055	1150	1295	1360	1457	1513
	Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	17	22	29	40
	Serbien	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	25	45	61	87	105
	Serbien og Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	4	8	17	78	96	111	133	150	162
Zahr.	Bosnien-Hercegovina	19434	19650	19504	19218	17317	16737	13639	12415	12012	11854	11691	11433	11293	11083
	Jugoslaviien (eks.)	13055	12704	12087	11986	11307	11186	10220	9868	9203	9030	8701	8386	8193	7963
	Jugoslaviien, Forb. Rep.	216	569	1071	1710	2065	2046	1931	1937	1882	1925	1858	1750	1699	1601
	Kosovo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	292	531	714	816
	Kroatien	535	564	552	541	461	445	404	403	409	427	438	442	468	466
	Makedonien	1076	1403	1550	1708	1800	1903	1958	2026	2103	2199	2267	2354	2438	2522
	Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	29	47	75	87	109
	Serbien	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71	243	352	455	562	663
	Serbien og Montenegro	0	0	0	0	0	206	682	922	1147	1204	1118	1050	1020	1004



1–2. Bazar Vest, Degblad Jufka (from the mark Plitvit Trade) bought in the market Bazar Vest – (author’s photos)



3. Bosnian gravestones in Aarhus – (author's photos)