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SUBJECT AND SCOPE OF RESEARCH, OBJECTIVES, ISSUES, TASKS AND HYPOTHESES

The subject and scope of the thesis are *migration and mobility in an urban context, city policies for managing diversity, as well as the specific activities of mobile citizens leading to transformation of city publicity.*

The objective of the phdstudy is to examine *if and what policies for managing diversity can be found in Sofia, as well as the activities of the new mobile citizens living in the city who are transforming its profile.*

In order to achieve the objective, I have formulated a research question, I have also set specific research tasks and at the beginning of the study, I have proposed several research hypotheses.

The **research question** I have formulated is: *can the new identities of mobile citizens be a factor in the transformation of the public environment in which they live.* The question will be expanded in three directions: firstly, what type of policies are being developed by cities for managing diversity; secondly, are cities turning into shared living locations of mobile citizens, who are however living not in-between here and there, but right now; and thirdly, in what way are public spaces in cities undergoing change through citizen participation of the city's new mobile residents.

For this purpose, I have set myself the following **research tasks:**

- To research the profile of migrants in Sofia;
- To research if and what policies are being developed in Sofia with regards to migrants;
- To research how citizenship participation of foreign residents in Sofia has taken shape;
- To research whether, and if affirmative, in what ways migrants are changing Sofia's profile.

My analysis has been based on several **working hypotheses**:

- Migrants in Sofia are creating supranational and transnational identities and citizenship;

- Migrants in Sofia are changing Sofia's profile not by building internal boundaries of segregation and isolation, but by creating new public spaces, thus enabling the sustainable development of the city.
- In the context of contemporary citizenship and mobility, the policies pursued by city authorities are not a prerequisite sine qua non for managing diversity and the creation of open cities, but are a structural factor giving further impetus to citizenship action and participation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In my analysis, I have applied both deductive and inductive research approaches. On the one hand, I have attempted to test specific theoretical assumptions in the context of Sofia. On the other hand, I have provided a theoretical summary of the fieldwork that I have carried out.

In my analysis, I have applied primarily qualitative research methods. The research instruments I have adopted are from the toolkit commonly used by political sciences. In view of the interdisciplinary nature of the study, other social sciences methods have also been used.

The methodology includes:

- A politicalsciences analysis of European, national and local political documents;
- A discourse analysis of interviews, blogs, Facebook profiles;
- Face to facein-depthinterviews with migrants;
- Simulation games;
- Participant observation.

Analysis of different types of political documents in the field of migration and integration comprise one of the main parts of the research. These include the principal programmes and strategies incorporated in the policies applied in the areas of research at European, national and local level.

In addition, the method of discourse analysis of interviews and articles devoted to migrants has also been used. Since the transformation of public spaces due to the proliferation of new technologies, represents one of the key elements of the analysis, the method of analysing blogs and Facebook statuses of mobile citizens has also been utilised.

Mapping the terrain has been one of the big challenges in my work, which reflects the multi-layered nature of my study. My fieldwork consists of several different elements. In the course of my work, I have conducted 35 in-depth interviews with migrants living in Sofia. My many years' experience of working with migrant communities has helped me considerably in this respect. The process of selecting respondents has also been facilitated by my personal contacts, as well as by the snowball effect or if using migration theory terminology – the network effect. The interviewees have very different profiles and they encompass the

diversity of the migration picture in Sofia both in terms of their origin as well as their varying social roles and positions.

The study has benefited enormously from the participant observations I have been able to do as a member of the Sofia Municipality working group and more specifically as a member of the team that developed, as part of the Open Cities Project, the "Plan for Integration and Internalisation: Sofia – A Dynamic European Capital". Whilst working on the plan, I had the opportunity to liaise directly with various stakeholder representatives and to collect ideas for the development of Sofia - its internalisation and integration policies - by implementing innovative approaches.

In the course of working on the plan, I organised 20 games "City of the Future" – a gaming method, based on the principle of soft democracy and direct involvement of citizens in the decision-taking process.

Even though there has been no voting on the plan and it is not actually in force, the Municipality has tried to maintain momentum through a follow-up project, implemented by the Sofia Development Association, titled "Sofia – a City of Diversity", within which I was also able to undertake participant observations.

Migration and mobility in an urban context are topics that have been widely researched. On the other hand, there have been very few similar studies with regards to Eastern European cities and Sofia in particular. Therefore, despite being part of a current trend, this study offers a new approach and it is focused on a town with a very different migration profile and history. And it is also for the same reasons that the study faces certain risks. Undoubtedly, another challenge is the context in which the topic is typically studied - the transition from closed to open society, as well as the inevitable dichotomies – communist/post-communist city/citizen and democratic transition/digital revolution.

Another one of the study's major challenges is its complexity. The topic, in and of itself, is multidisciplinary, and it can therefore be analysed from multiple research perspectives. That is why, even thoughthat the standpoint of the thesis is political science, other transdisciplinary methods have also been used. A number of Bulgarian researchers have been working in the field of ethnology, anthropology, sociology of the city. Their scientific contribution has been considerable and their works and studies have provided an excellent reference point and basis for the present analysis. These studies, however, do not address more specifically the subject of international migration in an urban context. For that reason, I have referred to a number of research studies by foreign authors. The risk with them,

however, is that they have been positioned in a rather different context, which does not take into account Sofia's individual aspects.

THESIS STRUCTURE

The study has been constructed as follows – an introduction; three main chapters, each one playing a specific part in the overall structure and progressively introducing the subject matter; and a conclusion.

At the outset, in the introduction itself, I propose three entries, which I consider to be of key importance in proving the relevance and significance of the topic. Sociology of the city and sociology of migration have been going hand in hand for a while now. The Chicago School is a typical case in point. I consider this entry as necessary in order to argue the case of the existence of a link between the city and diversity management. Migration in an urban context, as a prerequisite for otherness, as well as for establishing a particular type of behaviour and action, is the subject of this research, and a look back to classical theoretical postulates can provide the necessary basis for its further development. I called the second entry to the study civilizational. In 2007, mankind crossed over an important civilization threshold and became urban: today, more than half of the world's population lives in cities. This percentage is continually rising and according to UN forecasts, by 2050, two thirds of mankind will be living in city regions. Undoubtedly, discussing the latest trends in urbanisation cannot be done in isolation from the process of globalisation. They are to a great extent interconnected. Globalisation impacts above all the state of the economy, but it also has an effect on the social fabric. This civilizational entry to the study defines its scale and relevance. The world is not just urban, but also global and mobile. In this respect, the study on migration in an urban context and the change in the notions for citizenship and public spaces in the natural setting in which they have originated, is relevant and significant. The last, third entry to the study, is the local approach. I consider this entry to be of great importance, as it raises the question of a change in the notion for citizenship in the specific context of a society, which has transitioned almost simultaneously to both the post-communist and digital eras. This watershed dividing the before and after also proves to be definitive with regards to the migration situation.

The first part, entitled "Cities, Citizenship, Publicity" presents the theoretical framework for the thesis. Three definitions, crucial for the analysis, have been discussed here, and several theoretical assumptions associated with the tasks and objectives, have also been examined.

The term global city, coined by the famous sociologists SaskiaSassen (Sassen 2011) and Manuel Castells (Castells 2004), has been used throughout as a principal reference in relation to the contemporary understanding of the city. At the same time, in this part, the concept of city openness has also been introduced. The concepts defined in the works of Greg Clark (Clark 2010) have been presented, however, I have also put forward a new concept, which is fundamental to this study. Under *city* ***openness*** *I understand that state of the cities which is a result of specific citizen actions and which is also closely related to grassroot initiatives.* Citizens are reviewed not from the point of view of the legal relation between the individual and the state, but from the point of view of citizens' actions and participation.

The fact that we relate the processes under review to globalisation, explains why the first part of the thesis has been devoted to globalisation. The complex nature of the phenomenon determines the need for the use of a multidisciplinary approach in its analysis. In the thesis, my main interest is in the political and social consequences of globalisation – how societies are undergoing changes through increased speed and ease of communication, new technologies, changes in the mobile citizens' identity and their citizenship participation.

At the same time, I also introduce the term glocalisation as an alternative understanding of the process, which offers a different scrutiny of the realities of modern life. Of major importance are the relationship local – global and the changes in the notions for time and space, which allow contemporary citizens to think and act in a glocal context – I am present here, my thoughts are elsewhere, I respond to global issues.

Since the framework for the study is the city, I have outlined the changes in cities, which have been brought about by the complex processes, described above. The well-know sociologist Manuel Castells defines three circles of mutations – in relation to the function, the importance and the form of the city (Castells 2004). Although the classic notions for an international and global city narrow down the circle of this hierarchy, I support the argument that it is not possible even for cities, which appear to be lacking these characteristics, to remain isolated from the international processes. I have attempted to give examples from Sofia that prove and support this argument.

The rise in the movement of capital, goods and people is creating new realities that require the creation of new theoretical concepts and the modification of the classic concepts, such as national state and citizenship. Even when the latter is viewed in its legal context as the relationship between the individual and the political whole, it can nowadays be interpreted in more ways than one. In this study, I support the view that in the contemporary world, the meaning of the term citizenship is heavily weighed towards that of participation, of active

involvement of the individual in the decision-making process in the global public space. A contributing factor for this are modern technologies, which are changing the opportunities for organising and participation. A number of modern research solutions with regards to citizenship have been reviewed. In this thesis, I am above all interested in citizenship participation, which has made me review some concepts, such as social movements and civil society, which are fundamental to understanding contemporary society. At the same time, I consider that it is impossible to leave out such modern concepts as digital citizenship.

A separate part of the thesis has been devoted to the term public space, which has a dual meaning – as a pure space within the city boundaries, but also as the main location where citizenship action takes place. Besides the classic understanding by Jürgen Habermas (Habermas 1995) of the public sphere as the space for dialogue, I have set out the findings of other researchers who have been concerned with its restructuring in view of the introduction of new technologies, the internet, social networks. This restructuring has been analysed in three main directions:

1. The changes in territories as a result of the inner logic of decentralisation and globalisation;
2. The new technologies and communication practices;
3. The movement of people – international migration and mobility.

Cities, citizenship, publicity are closely related and they provide the necessary theoretical framework for this study.

The second part "Diversity Policies" focuses on the phenomenon, which is fundamental to the thesis – migration and mobility, as well as the policies for managing diversity, which has arisen out of them. Besides a detailed examination of the terms and theories with regards to international migration and mobility, I have presented a picture of the diversity in European cities, in connection with which I have also included examples of foreigners who have chosen to live in Sofia. In addition, I have made an analytical review of the policies for managing diversity at European, national and city level.

Migration and mobility are becoming new sources of diversity. As a complex and dynamic process, international migration requires the application of a multidisciplinary approach. Anna Krasteva summarises the reasons for the difficulty in capturing the migration phenomenon into four groups of factors, all of which have a claim in being able to define it: the complex nature of migration itself, the divergence between the large number of publications and the relatively small number of theorizations, as well as the multidisciplinary nature of the research (Krasteva 2013). To this, we can also add its wide politicization –

migration and diversity management are not only a public policies issue, but they also take a major part in the political discourse, visions, and orientations. It will not be an exaggeration to state that nowadays, elections in several European countries can be won or lost on the issue of migration.

At the same time, contemporary people view their existence through the prism of mobility: for one group it is a privilege, for a second– it is a freedom, and for a third– it is a burden. Both craved and detested, experienced and endured,mobility defines the existence of today's homo mobilis. Mobility has many dimensions – for work, tourism, leisure. It shapes identities, it even shapes communities.

Underlying the very concept of the European Union, mobility facilitates the creation of the European identity and the shaping of the European citizenship. Based on the research of Adrian Favell „Eurostars and Eurocities. Free Movement and Mobility in an Integrating Europe" (Favell 2008) and on the fieldwork, I also present the images of the modern mobile Europeans – the young people, who thanks to Erasmus and other education programmes, are able to find out what it means to be European; to discover love in different places on the continent; to settle down in one city or another; to start work, but also to go back home; to turn their own parents into mobile citizens. To these mobile Europeans, we can also add the so-called third-country nationals. In the last decades after the Second World War, European cities have been converted into homes for migrants arriving from different ends of the world.

In the existing literature, Anna Krasteva has counted 49 definitions of integration, and the number of the attempts to summarize the various approaches is even greater (Krasteva 2009). In the second chapter, I have reviewed in detail, perhaps not all of the 49, but a number of different attempts to provide definitions and models for migrants' inclusion by the host society. Of interest are not only the purely theoretical dimensions, but also the practical attempts to measure the success of public policies in this area.

Since integration affects the public space of a nation, it has often remained as a prerogative of the individual states. In spite of that, there have been attempts to establish common European policies in this area.

Cities, however, are the privileged location for integration. It is interesting that before any attempts to theorize policies at city level, the first people to realise the need for their development, are the city's rulers. Various networks, bringing together mayors, the local authority, scientists and researchers, begin to develop models for city policies as well as to create, debate and exchange good practices. Subsequently, various scientific works also

emerge, the first ones being just basic comparative studies and later on - studies proposing system models.

The third part "Sofia: Mobile Citizens and Openness" has been especially devoted to Sofia and is based on my fieldwork. It verifies the hypothesis that city policy is not a prerequisite sine qua non for the inclusion of mobile citizens into the community. Proof has been provided by way of specific examples of migrants, living in Sofia, who have demonstrated citizenship participation and have been involved in the creation of new public spaces. Naturally, before reaching this conclusion, I have at first presented a picture of the migration scene in Bulgaria, and then I have outlined the attempts to formulate municipal policy in respect of diversity.

At present, Bulgaria continues to be primarily an emigration country. Immigration is a new phenomenon. Under communism, there were a few exceptions, which had ideological intentions. Some of these immigrants and their descendants still live in Sofia. Following the democratic reforms, there have been new waves of immigration, which are gradually beginning to change the city profile.

It has taken immigration a long time to become part of the political agenda at national level. It was as late as 2008 that Bulgaria adopted its first strategy, which explicitly defined migration as a political issue, but then, only two years later, the strategy was radically changed. To some extent, this, as well as the relatively small number of immigrants, explain the fact that integration in the Bulgarian context is hardly ever aimed at foreigners who have chosen to live in the country. Both strategic documents are very brief with regards to policies for the inclusion of immigrants into Bulgarian society.

At city level, the situation is not that different. However, thanks to partnering with foreign organisation and European networks, Sofia became a partner to a project, as part of which, "*A Plan for Integration and Internationalisation: Sofia – a Dynamic European Capital*" was developed. Despite the fact that the plan was never adopted or enforced, Sofia Municipality has since managed to implement some of the actions, laid down therein, through a follow-up project. The application of Sofia and the Southwestern Region for European Capital of Culture in 2019 has become one of the main incentives for strengthening the cooperation with the civil sector and acknowledging the advantages of diversity. A wonderful example of such cooperation is the launch by Multi Kulti Collective of a multicultural map of Sofia. The map includes a range of "ethnic" restaurants, shops and establishments, whose owners' personal stories have been told by the artists from the studio Compote Collective. It is these new Sofia citizens that I have talked about in the last part of this thesis. The new

residents of Sofia have come from different ends of the world, but they have managed to change the city not just by their presence here, but by their active participation in public life. They have done this as representatives of the small and medium sized business, as active citizens who support and defend different good causes.

It is their stories, collected as part of my fieldwork, that have helped me most of all to verify my hypothesis that the mobile citizens are creating a new kind of citizenship participation, through which they are transforming the public spaces and communities where they have permanently or temporarily settled in. It is as a result of their citizens' engagement and that of other mobile citizens that a city becomes an open city.

SUMMARY OF MAIN CONCLUSIONS FROM THE RESEARCH

In this thesis, I have aimed to explore such phenomena as migration, mobility, citizen participation and the policies for managing diversity, based within an urban context, with a specific focus on Sofia. As a result of this research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Firstly, mobility frequently goes hand in hand with citizens' enthusiasm and verve. This finding has been substantially backed up by my fieldwork. Mobility does not stifle the flame of citizenship, but quite the opposite, it makes it more creative and innovative.

Traditionally, we think of the migrants' diaspora in terms of its solidarity with the community – the state, language, the family. *"Traditionally, 'diaspora' is conceived in terms of language and culture, and its ties to the homeland are woven by two central institutions, the family and the state. Social networks and protests are the demiurge of a new, digital diaspora whose ties are built by a trans-boundary, active and engaged citizenship. Solidarity is no longer with the state, it is with the citizens against the irresponsible and corrupt state"* (Krasteva 2013a: 10). Here, A. Krasteva refers to those mobile Bulgarians, who, having left the country, were supporting the protests of their compatriots back home. The phrase, which, at the start of Bulgaria's transition to democracy, was typically used to refer to Bulgarians "voting with their feet", is becoming less and less relevant. Leaving the country does not equate with avoiding citizenship involvement, and evidence for that can be found in the numerous demonstrations, organized in other parts of the world, to express solidarity with those protesting in Sofia. Further evidence can be found in the numerous demonstrations organized by Syrians, Iraqis and Ukrainians in support of their fellow citizens from their countries of origin. The actions of foreigners who have chosen to live in Sofia prove that there is solidarity between citizens regardless of their nationality. You can see this in a statement made by a Vietnamese woman, living here, that although she can never be a Bulgarian, this cannot prevent her from joining the fight against the establishment and the corruption of the Bulgarian authorities. Other examples are an Ethiopian taking active part in the protests and a German woman single-handedly organizing protests against neo-fascism and discrimination. Transborder identities, global public space, participation and engagement are the three prongs of the new mobile citizenship.

The secondconclusion is that nowadays, public policies can no longer be examined only as being the answers provided by the authorities and the elite. More and more they are a result from the effective cooperation between the authorities and civil society. This message

about the need for openness, dialoguing and accountability of the elite will increasingly affect the public space and policy-making.

Sofia's political elite and administration are failing to recognize that managing diversity should be one of their priorities. In fact, it is the citizens who are coming up with initiatives and actions to make diversity management part of the city plan. Citizenship initiatives ranging from competitions to art and cultural events are giving us the clear message that it is the citizens and not the elite that are setting the agenda for the city. In festivals such as "Iztok v Parka" ("The East in the Park"), the multicultural map of Sofia, the new public spaces created by the citizens, we can view the close collaboration between government institutions and organisations from the non-government sector. The transition from a closed to an open society was borne out of the revolution of the elite, but it is the era of digital change that gave birth to the citizens' revolution. The former created the status quo against which the latter rebelled. Out of all demands, it is the demand for openness of the elite and institutions to the ideas and proposals of the citizens, which really stands out. As yet, there are few and far between examples of this happening at national level, however, the number of examples at city level, especially with reference to diversity, is far greater.

The outlined conclusions and findings are consistent with the initial working hypotheses of the study. The large number of examples provides evidence that the majority of the new residents of Sofia are developing transnational identities and they are succeeding in being active citizens both as regards their new society, as well as their country of origin. In the context of mobile citizens from EU member countries, a large number of the respondents are also starting to develop a European identity, and they feel more like citizens of Sofia or Europe rather than identify with being English, German or any other nationality.

And this is regardless of whether the new residents of the city are changing its profile. Many new spaces in Sofia are appearing as a result of the presence of the city's new residents, thus changing completely the city publicity. In many European cities, this transformation is linked to the creation of spaces of isolation and segregation. For the time being, there is no question of this happening in Sofia. Even though there are certain regions with some degree of greater concentration of foreigners, they are still primarily characterised by openness and dialoguing. In the words of an Englishman "If you pull down the Women's market and build a Billa in its place, i'llmost probably leave"[1]. The fact that in this area, the owner of a small restaurant is a collector of foreign notes is evidence that this part of town is visited by citizens

[1]http://www.peika.bg/statia/Balgariya_prez_pogleda_na_chuzhdenetsa_Dzheyms_ot_Angliya_l.a_i.82510.html

from different parts of the world. At the same time, by building their own spaces, the new city residents themselves are aiming to change attitudes and stereotypes and to work towards city openness.

It is these actions, initiated by the citizens themselves that prove the hypothesis that the policies for managing diversity are not a prerequisite sine qua non, but rather act as a structural factor. City programmes which support various citizens' initiatives can be viewed precisely as such a factor.

Undoubtedly, these issues will be subject to further research. I do consider, however, that one of the major advantages of this thesis is that it makes inroads into raising these issues within the realm of Bulgarian political sciences research.

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE THESIS

- The first contribution is empirical: the thesis represents one of the first attempts to test in the context of Sofia the assumptions of a research study on migration and mobility;
- The second contribution refers to the application of theory to practice: the study verifies the degree of application and tests the areas of validity of classical theories for citizenship and public spaces as well as more recent theories aiming to restructure the old ones and for this purpose, I have used extensive empirical material;
- The third contribution is in relation to public policies in the areas of migration, integration and internalisation: I have introduced a new concept of city openness, based on *specific citizenship participation and grassroot initiatives*, focusing on cooperation between public authorities and citizens, whereby policies are a structural factor and not a prerequisite sine qua non for diversity management.

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I continue to believe that what makes the University are in fact the people whom you meet there. I learned that from my tutors and colleagues from the "Political Science" department. I would like to thank them for the knowledge and experience, the helping hands and shared opportunities.

I felt a sense of great honour and responsibility for being a laureate of the *CharlesMozer Scholarship* for excellence in the study of political science and civil courage. I hope I have been able to meet the expectations and that I have been a worthy recipient of this title.

I am so glad that years ago, at my University entrance exams, I met a lady, who since then has become a role model and an inspiration to me. To me, my supervisor has been the Teacher, the exceptional Human Being and may I say the Friend, who, on my path, has been right by my side.

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Now is the time to say that the most enjoyable part of my work has been meeting the respondents, many of whom have become my friends. I thank them from the bottom of my heart for telling me their stories and sharing their life journeys with me.

A doctoral degree can be just a phase from a person's life. For me, however, it has been much more. It has been a shared adventure with people on whom I have relied and with whom I have exchanged and discussed ideas. Thank you, friends!

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