

**THE IMPASSE OF URBAN TO RURAL MIGRATION: RE-ENCHANTMENT  
AND DISILLUSIONMENT IN ŐİRİNCE**

by  
Pınar Budan

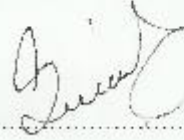
Submitted to the Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences  
in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

Sabancı University  
Spring 2014-2015

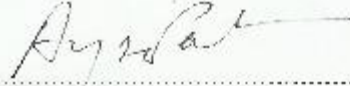
THE IMPASSE OF URBAN TO RURAL MIGRATION:  
RE-ENCHANTMENT AND DISILLUSIONMENT  
IN ŞİRİNCİ

APPROVED BY:

Prof. Dr. Sibel Irzak:  
(Thesis Supervisor)



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ayşe Parla:



Assl. Prof. Dr. Ozan Zeybek:



DATE APPROVED: 27.07.2015

© Pinar Budan 2015  
All Rights Reserved

## **ABSTRACT**

# **THE IMPASSE OF URBAN TO RURAL MIGRATION: RE-ENCHANTMENT AND DISILLUSIONMENT IN ŞİRİNCE**

Pınar Budan

Cultural Studies, MA Thesis, 2015

Supervisor: Proffesor Sibel Irzik

Keywords: re-enchantment, urban to rural migration, rural tourism, modernization

Şirince is a small touristic village situated on the hills of Selçuk province of İzmir. In the last 30 years, especially with the boom of tourism, a number of people from metropolitan cities migrated to the village. Through ethnographic fieldwork with ex-urbanites in Şirince, this thesis presents a critical exploration of the urban to rural migrants in Şirince from various angles. In order to understand the dynamics of relations among people in Şirince, I draw from the theoretical writings on place identity and locality and argue that Şirince is a place of non-identity. I then explore that the urbanites' purposes of re-enchanting with the world by migrating to village and their romantic imagination of the village life created an ambivalent situation when they faced the "reality." I claim that on the one hand the inevitable transformation that Şirince has undergone in the last 30 years contradicts with the purposes of the informants' coming to the village: running away from the materiality of the urban and filling the void of spirituality. On the other hand, their gaze on and approach to the village, imbued with Occidentalist imaginations, make them undertake an attempt to modernize Şirince in return for material gains from the tourism industry. Finally, I propose that the failure of top-to-down modernization of the village and the inability to re-enchant with the world has created an impasse; an impasse the ex-urbanites defined through the metaphors of imprisonment: not the city, not the village, but where?

## ÖZET

# KENTTEN KÖYE GÖÇ ÇIKMAZI: ŞİRİNCE'DE YENİDEN BÜYÜLENME VE HAYAL KIRIKLIĞI

Pınar Budan

Kültürel Çalışmalar, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2015

Tez Danışmanı: Profesör Doktor Sibel Irzık

Anahtar sözcükler: Yeniden büyülenme, kentten köye göç, kırsal turizm, modernleşme

Şirince, İzmir'in Selçuk ilçesinin tepelerinde yer alan ufak bir turistik köydür. Son 30 sene içinde, özellikle de turizm patlaması ile birlikte, belli bir sayıda insan metropolitan şehirlerden köye göç etti. Bu tez, eskiden şehirde yaşamış insanlar üzerinde etnografik saha çalışmaları vasıtasıyla Şirince'ye şehirden göç eden insanların kritik incelemelerini çeşitli açılardan sunmaktadır. İnsanlar arasındaki ilişkilerin dinamiklerini anlamak amacı ile kimlik ve yerellik üzerine teorik yazılardan yola çıkarak Şirince'de Şirincelilik kavramının bulunmadığı sonucuna varıyorum. Daha sonra şehirli kesimin köye göçerek yaşama tekrardan bağlanmaları ve köy hayatı ile ilgili romantik hayallerinin ardından "gerçeklik" ile yüzleşmelerinin yol açtığı çelişkili durumu inceliyorum.

Bir taraftan Şirince'nin son 30 senede geçirdiği kaçınılmaz değişimin mülakaatlara katılanların şehrin materyalizminden kaçarak ruhsal boşluğu doldurma şeklindeki amaçları ile çeliştiğini iddia ederken öte yandan, onların köye Batıcı hayaller ile süslenmiş olan bakışlarını ve yaklaşımlarının onları turizm endüstrisinin sağladığı maddi kazançlar karşılığında Şirince'yi modernleştirme çabalarına soktuğunu öne sürüyorum. Son olarak, köyü baştan aşağı modernleştirme çabalarının sonuç vermemesi ve yaşama tekrardan bağlanamamalarının eskiden şehirde yaşamış insanlar tarafından tutsaklığa benzetilen bir çıkmaza yol açtığını öne sürüyorum ve soruyorum: şehir değilse, köy değilse, oyleyse nere?

*To my mom and sis*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my great appreciation to many people who enabled the research and writing of this thesis. I would like first to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor Sibel Irzık. She was always very encouraging and supportive from the very beginning through the whole process of writing my thesis. Her academic and intellectual counselling, her excitement and enthusiasm about my thesis and her patient guidance at every stage of this work inspired me and gave strenght to complete this project. I would also like to extend my thanks to Ayşe Parla and Ozan Zeybek for their sincere support and insightful comments for my work.

This research would not be possible without all the people who opened their houses and their personal stories to me in Şirince I am truly thankful to them especially to Rahime and Cevahir as they accepted me as their friend and a researcher.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my dearest friends Forough, Şule, Ceren, Elif and Feyza for always being there for me, for their help and support from the very beginning till the final stage of my thesis. This thesis would be much more difficult without them. Last but not least, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my family who supported me and believed in me.

Finally, I would like to thank to Özgür, my betterhalf without whom my life and my thesis would not be complete.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Social and historical background of Şirince .....	2
1.2. Research Background and Significance.....	6
1.3. Research Methodology.....	9
<b>CHAPTER 2: WHO ARE OUTSIDERS? .....</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1. Introduction.....	11
2.2. Outsider, a little outsider, not quite outsider.....	12
2.3. First Encounter, First Confusion: Problematizing Geographic Identity.....	13
2.4. “Selçuk'ta bir daire istiyorum aksi takdirde seninle evlenmem” : On Place and Attachment.....	17
2.5. ““Gavurda Keramet, Müslümanda Kabahat Arama!”: On Demographic Engineering.....	24
2.6. “Bilmedikleri bir coğrafya. Sence mutlu olabilirler mi?”: On the Aftermath of the Population Exchange.....	28
2.7. “Ev hüzünlü. Ev üzgün. Ev mahvoluyor. Ev büyük bir kederde” Do places generate emotions or do people inscribe them?.....	32
2.8. “Şimdi ben kökümü arıyorum. ...Benim köküm ne?” Fluidity of Geographic Identities.....	39
<b>CHAPTER 3: TO WHAT END PEOPLE MOVE TO ŞİRİNCE?.....</b>	<b>43</b>
3.1. Introduction.....	43
3.2. “Kendine Göre Özel Bir Araştırma Yapıyorsun Bence”: Self-Reflexivity.....	45
3.3. The loop of enchantment and disenchantment.....	48
3.4. “Bizim de bir gelire ihtiyacımız var”: Economic Reasons.....	56
3.5. Narratives.....	61
3.5.1 Cavidan’s story: This village has changed my spiritual feelings and faith.....	62



3.5.2 Zerrin’s Story.....	63
3.5.3Irina’s Story.....	64
3.5.4 Hayri’s Story.....	64
3.5.5 Eren’s Story.....	65
3.5.6 Celine and Önder’s Story.....	65
3.6 Pinar Abıa: The Mystery of trhe Energy Melts into Air.....	69
3.7Voluntary Simplicity: “Ne demek o?”.....	71
<b>CHAPTER 4: NEVER-ENDING DISILLUSIONMENT OF MODERNIST IMAGINATION.....</b>	<b>74</b>
4.1. Introduction.....	74
4.2. Modernization as a Project in the Early Turkish Republican Era .....	76
4.3. How to Modernize the Rural Settings.....	78
4.4.Romanticized Perception of the Village.....	85
4.5. No more Romanticism... The Cruel Reality.....	91
4.6. Top to Down Modernizing Attempts of Ex-Urbanites.....	104
<b>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>113</b>

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In mid December of 2012, the newspapers in Turkey were making news about a village in İzmir. According to mainstream media, the 21st of December, also known as the end of the Mayan Calendar, was referring to the so-called a catastrophic end and Şirince Village would be one of the rare places on earth that would survive the doomsday. Şirince was supposed to be the modern Noah's ship, the start of a new world. By the date coming closer to December the 21<sup>st</sup>, not only we started watching news about people running to the village but also even people from my circle went to spend the night there with a question haunting them: "Okay, this is just bullshit, but what if?" Since that I can write these lines, the catastrophe did not happen, however it marked a new begging as it claimed. After the circulation of these news Şirince began to be world-wide known tourism spot. However, it would be wrong to associate the emergence of tourism with the end of the Mayan calendar. Thanks to its proximity to Ephesus and historical architecture it has been a tourism magnet for more than 30 years. What this event brought to the foreground is the interest of urban settlers to the village. I was one of them. Upon reading the interviews of tourism operators – all of whom I was about to discover that were ex-urbanites- I went to the village.

The more I spent time in the village the more complex the place seemed. In my trips to Şirince, I occasionally asked both to the tourists and the permanent residents the reason why they came here. Most of the answers were revolving around "authenticity," "simplicity," "natural beauty" etc. But one day, I came across with an American tourist who was drawing a figure in the hotel guest book. The figure was very interesting for it both resembled Hello Kitty, the modern icon of consumption, and at the same time it looked like Sufi whirling dervish with its fez and the gown. I later called this figure the Sufi-Kitty. The Sufi-Kitty, in a way reflects the contradictions and liminality of the

village for it is neither a “modern city” nor really a “conventional village”. The people who moved to Şirince were both benefiting from peace of the “Sufi” and the material comfort of the “Kitty.”

In this respect, this thesis presents a critical exploration of the urban to rural migrants in Şirince from various angles. In order to understand the dynamics of relations among people in Şirince, I draw from the theoretical writings on place identity and locality and argue that Şirince is a place of non-identity. I then explore that the urbanites’ purposes of re-enchanting with the world by migrating to village and their romantic imagination of the village life created an ambivalent situation when they faced the “reality.” I claim that on the one hand the inevitable transformation that Şirince has undergone in the last 30 years contradicts with the purposes of the informants’ coming to the village: running away from the materiality of the urban and filling the void of spirituality. On the other hand, their gaze on and approach to the village, imbued with Occidentalist imaginations, make them undertake an attempt to modernize Şirince in return for material gains from the tourism industry. Finally, I propose that the failure of top-to-down modernization of the village and the inability to re-enchant with the world has created an impasse; an impasse the ex-urbanites defined through the metaphors of imprisonment: not the city, not the village, but where?

## **1.1 Social and historical background of Şirince**

Even though there is not any sufficient written history on how old the settlement in the village is, the fact that it used to be referred as the “Ephesus on the Mountain” signals a clue about its rooted history. What is known on the other hand is that according to Edmund D. Chishull's book named “Türkiye Gezisi ve İngiltere’ye Dönüş” in 1780s Ottoman Empire placed Greeks to this village for they would harvest the soil and pay tax to the empire. The village soon turned into a highly developed place with a population of 5000 people and 1800 houses. Then named Çirkince, Şirince became prominent with its fig production and was said to be the second biggest fig exporter village in Ottoman Empire.

The existence of Greeks in Şirince has a substantial influence to Şirince's current state. As I have stated above the experience of an economic boom due to the export of figs and Turkish tobacco in the village was beyond question and this led to social well being of the village. Entrepreneurs from the village established fig-packing businesses in İzmir. The narrative of one of my informants, Sedat Bey, points to the richness on the village in the following way:

The Greek had lived here for like 800 years. Those times, the population of the village is 10 thousands, 11 thousands. There are 1800 houses here. 4 laundry centers, hot water, 11 bakery shops, 12 coffee houses. Of course, this place is within the borders of İzmir... The village is a very rich village. The trade and such is very good, because if olives were not enough, then there is fig. Especially during the weddings, the Greek or Jewish shop owners look forward to the arrival of the people of Şirince. For them to buy gold, this, that...<sup>1</sup>

Besides these public spaces, Greeks built an impressive school in the village - which is now used as a restaurant and as a museum. Nişanyan suggests that “it is the finest historic school building of any rural village in Turkey” (Nişanyan Hotel Booklet, 1996). Apart from the school, the most important contribution of Greeks to the village's current state was the construction of “Şirince houses”. These houses reflects traditional architecture.

Şirince today is a village of tourism with its 600 inhabitants in İzmir province today. The 600 inhabitants of Şirince are descendants of Turkish immigrants who left their homeland near Kavala, in Greek Macedonia, in 1923. The first generation of migrants are said to have experienced great difficulties in terms of accomodating to the this new setting. The new environment was different from their hometown for mostly they were not accustomed to Şirince's agricultural system. Previously livestock raising Balkan migrants did not know how to deal with grape, olive, tobacco fig production.

---

<sup>1</sup> Grek'ler burada 800 sene falan yaşıyorlar. O zaman köylü nüfusu 10bin 11bin. 1800 hane de ev oluyor burada. 4 tane çamaşırhane, sıcak su, 11 tane fırın, 12 tane de kahve oluyor. Tabi burası İzmir'e bağlı bir yer... Köy çok zengin bir köy. Ticareti falan gayet güzel çünkü zeytin yetmemiş, o zaman incir geliyor. Bilhassa düğün zamanları İzmir'deki Rum esnaf veya Yahudi esnaf Şirincelilerin gelmesini dört gözle bekliyor... Altın almaları, şunları bunları...

When hunger and disease added to these hardships, many of the early settlers in Şirince had to move to Selçuk or İzmir in order to seek better opportunities. The early years of migration, around 1924 to 1940s the beautiful houses in Şirince were abandoned and turned into ruins. One of my informants Sedat Bey, whose grand father was one of the first generation migrants narrates this picture basing his argument on conference paper held at Ege University:

Mister Şinasi then becomes a general. He says “I visited such a nice village at that time. There was this village of pine trees in the upper parts. I would like to visit that village once more.” In 1938, he once more mounts his horse and comes here. Once here, that heavenly village is revealed to lie in ruins. He rides to one of the coffee shops (of course, in his official uniform and with soldiers by his side). “What have you done?” he says “...to this village”. The Arabic coffee shop owner there replies “Commander, we haven’t done anything to this coffee shop. This pretty village was burned down by the Greek while they were vacating it, we are trying to turn it around”. This is the conversation that they have. This is an excerpt from a symposium held in Ege University by the way.<sup>2</sup>

The same story was narrated in Sabahattin Ali's short story named “Çirkince.” The story is about a young men's visit to Selçuk. In the meantime, protagonist of the story remembers his childhood memories where he had spent a summer in a nearby village, named “Çirkince” then, and he describes this village as an almost utopic place. The long and detailed descriptions, extended metaphors and the use of imagery makes Ali's story almost a piece of pastoral story:

Especially **Çirkince**... Especially this mountain vilage of seven, eight hundred houses... A little Greek village which, from a distance, the windows of white houses touched with light indigo shine behind pine and olive trees and whose centers are shaded by great sycamores. I am surprised ever since from my

---

<sup>2</sup> Şinasi Bey de o zaman general oluyor. Diyor ki “ben o zaman çok güzel bir köye gitmiştim. Bu çamlık köyü vardı yukarıda. “o köye bir daha gitmek isterim. 1938'de tekrar ata binerek buraya geliyor. Bir geliyor ki o cennet köy olmuş bir harabe. Orada bir kahvenin önüne geliyor, (tabi resmi elbiseli bir adam ve yanında askerler var.) “Ne yaptınız?” diyor “bu köye böyle”. Oradaki Arap kahveci de diyor ki “paşam biz bu kahveye hiç bir şey yapmadık. Bu güzel köyü giderken Yunanlılar yakmış zaten biz de toparlamaya çalışıyoruz”. Böyle bir sohbet geçiyor arasında. Bu Ege Üniversitesi sempozyumundan bir alıntı yani.

childhood how they could call such a beautiful place **Çirkince** (the ugly land). How we played with the daughters of the lieutenant that hosted us and the Greek kids in its clean streets with fine walkways, how we decorated the tumbrels we built from branches of oleaster and quince with spartiums, how we sailed the ships made up of pine bark on the troughs under the noisy fountains on every corner, how we fed the lambs with the leaves that we pulled from the elm trees that we climbed onto. (1974, p. 52)<sup>3</sup>

However, this flashback in the story where the protagonist recalls his childhood memories is juxtaposed with the current situation of the village. The story is set in early 1930s, that is period after the migration of Balkan Turks to the village. As the protagonist reaches to the village, he finds out that the village is not the heavenly place that once welcomed him but on the contrary, this new place is almost like a ghost town in which houses went wrack and ruin, olive and fig trees are cut and roads were covered with stones and herb. The protagonist can not hide his bewilderment and says, “Burası benim otuz sene önce gördüğüm, içinde en güzel günlerimi geçirdiğim yer değildi. Şu sağ tarafımda kapısız, penceresiz, çatısız yükselen dört duvar, bir zamanlar bahçesinde yüzlerce çocuğun oynadığı mektep olamazdı. Şu önümdeki ulu çınarın dibinde, böyle bataklık ortasında bir taş yığını değil, dört gözlü bir mermer çeşme olacaktı.” (1974, p.24)

Even though it is not clear exactly what happened and how it happened in the last seventy years, Şirince village today is a completely different place than these gloomy and depressive descriptions mentioned above. Tourism began to turn the tide of decline. Sevan Nişanyan, an Armenian intellectual who has been living and working as a tourism professional in the village since 1990s, writes in the booklet of his hotel, “Nişanyan Evleri” about the transition of the village. He states that “the village road was paved in 1986 (an automatic telephone exchange did not arrive until 1993). In the '90s, some tour operators serving the region of Kuşadası/Ephesus "discovered" Şirince as an *attractive, authentic* village. Tourist buses became a frequent sight in the village

---

<sup>3</sup> Hele **Çirkince**... Hele bu yedi, sekiz yüz hanelik dağ köyü... Daha uzaktan, çamların ve zeytinliklerin arkasından, hafif çivitli beyaz evlerinin camları parıldayan, meydanlarını iri çınarların gölgelediği küçük Rum kasabası... Bu kadar güzel bir yere nasıl olup da **Çirkince** adını verdiklerine çocukluğumdan beri şaşar dururdum. Muntazam kaldırımli tertemiz sokaklarında, bizi misafir eden yüzbaşının kızları ve mahallenin Rum çocukları ile nasıl koşuşmuş, iğde ve ayva dallarından yaptığımız kağnıları katır tırnaklarıyla nasıl süslemiş, çam kabuğundan kayıkları her köşe başında şarıl şarıl akan çeşmelerin yalaklarında nasıl yüzdürmüş, karaağaçlara tırmanıp kopardığımız yaprakları kuzulara nasıl yedirmiştik. (1974, p.52)

square”. From early in the morning till the sunset, life in Şirince moves very quickly. Tourist guides bring groups of tourists to pass a quiet and peaceful time. Şirince is a tourism village with 250 houses, 180 rooms for tourists, a museum of education, a library, a mathematics village, a number of wine and souvenir shops and sales booths from which one can buy presents. Local women sell their needlework to visitors. Homemade jam and olive oil brings in a small but steady income. Other people sell fruit wines, soaps, silver, leather bags, tile objects, evil eye items, magnets, homemade jams, spices, cotton bags etc. These are the kinds of items that one may find in any touristic place. Apart from wine they are all reflecting Turkish handcraft and Turkish customs even though most of them are imported from far east.

## 1.2 Research Background and Significance

“İstanbul’dan başka İstanbul yok.” I do not remember the first time I heard this phrase but following the mass migration from rural to big cities, it could be heard very frequently when someone spat on the street or a group of middle-aged women talked loudly in their neighborhoods. In general, it was immediately pronounced when someone performed an action which might be considered inappropriate according to the unwritten codes of the city life. Being *İstanbulllu* requires a set of performances that interpellates you as a part of İstanbul through appropriate etiquettes and certain codes of behaviors. Thus, it is not only a marker of your birthplace or an identity mark inherited through male lineage that makes you Istanbullu. Even though İstanbul is a very cosmopolitan city in terms of the hometowns<sup>4</sup> of people, it will not be very wrong to suggest that until recently, especially the members of the younger generations were not very proud about articulating the names of their hometowns. “A widely held belief about nostalgia is that since modernity could not fulfill its promises for a better and freer life, nations marginalized in the global order now look back at the past fondly. In other words, modernity finished with the end of hope for tomorrow, and since then people look top ast rather than future for their utopias (Huyssen qouted in Özyürek, 2007:7)

---

<sup>4</sup> Hometown in this context is a place where her/his bigger family is rooted. The Turkish counterpart of the word hometown -i.e. *memleket*- has the connotation of locality.

Thus, it is now a period in which people express boldly about their roots in Anatolia and unveil their rural pasts. Newspapers have started writing about businessmen who are investing in their villages, building factories, schools and hospitals in their hometowns. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's famous words "köylü milletin efendisidir" have been adopted into today's diction. İdris Naim Şahin, former Minister of Internal Affairs of the current Justice and Development Party (AKP) government, has given a speech in a meeting where he stated the following: "Köy bizim aslımızdır, kırsal dediğimiz bizim aslımızdır ve biz orada olmak zorundayız. Köy, şehrin, mahallenin düşmanı değil" (Retrieved from: <http://ensonhaber.com/>). All of a sudden, *yerlilik* (natavism) has occupied an important place in self-identification. It was this cultural setting in which Nurdan Gürbilek wrote the marvelous essay "Ben de İsterem" in which she pointed to the dimming boundaries of *şehirlilik* and *köylülük*:

"The change that began in Turkey in the second half of the 80's and that was still in effect by the end of the 90's included the meeting of many things that this society left out in order to be modern, that was pushed out of the modern cultural codes (especially the rurality and the sexuality) with the facilities of the big city, to express itself freely." (Gürbilek, 2001: p.25)<sup>5</sup>

The cultural setting in the urban life that to some extent allowed the expression of differences, thus blurring the distinction between rural and urban identities, has also opened up space for the urbanites who are disenchanted with modernity. All around the world, as well as in Turkey, an interest in rural life and inhabitants of rural geographies has aroused through citta slow movements, organic agriculture, rural tourism and urban to rural migration. One of the examples of the urban to rural migration today is the case of Şirince, a touristic village in İzmir. In the last 20 years, a number of urbanites have decided to move to Şirince. In this respect, this research is focused on the ex-urbanites in Şirince. I will analyze the experiences of ex-urbanites who voluntarily left the modern city life for a simple village life and their perceptions of the villagers. The focus of this research is that the migration to the rural is an utopic romanticization of the rural and it is a modernist construction. What differentiates the ex-urbanites from the rest of the settlers in the village can be vividly seen in the ways in which they operate tourism

---

<sup>5</sup> "Türkiye'de 80'lerin ikinci yarısından başlayan, 90lar biterken etkisini kısmen de olsa hala sürdüren bu değişim, bu toplumun modern olabilmek için o güne kadar dışarıda bıraktığı, modern kültürel kodların dışına ittiği birçok şeyin (en başta taşranın ve cinselliğin) büyük şehrin imkânlarıyla buluşmasını, kendisini daha özgürce ifade etmesini içeriyordu".



and their disenchantment with the modern city life. In this respect there are a number of the similarities and differences between the elitist perception of the rural life in the early Turkish Republican period and the ex-urbanites in Şirince. I suggest that even though the new settlers voluntarily moved to a rural geography, their experiences in the urban setting shape and affect their construction of rural life. Secondly, although many years have passed after the proclamation of Turkish Republic and there has been a number of changes in the social, political and economical spheres in Turkey, the traces of the past are alive to some extent in their daily lives. In doing so, I will be basing my arguments on the interviews I conducted and my fieldnotes in Şirince.

The first chapter came into being after a brief moment of hesitation I experienced in the thesis proposal defense meeting. I was asked a question about localness and outsidership in Şirince and I remember having a hard time giving an answer to the question. Later on, it became clear that following the question of “who is outsiders” is an important part of the research for the answer gives clues about the formation of Şirince as a tourist space since the tourism by definition is the arrival of “other” to a specific place.

The second chapter is about the motivations of reasons of moving to a village. What does the trend of migration from urban to rural say about the current meaning of Şirince as a “village”? How do the people construct Şirince? Is moving from the city to a village a realization of a dream, a kind of yearning for a nostalgic (past) life style, a running away from the fast-paced city life and the values attributed to the urban life or does it have a political agenda such as to create a “rural utopia” as suggested by Sevan Nişanyan -one of the earliest urban migrants to Şirince? In times when the definitions of urban and rural overlap or merge, how do people negotiate with these blurred definitions? The literature of urban to rural migration in Turkey is still weak. So, what I suggest here does not go very much beyond the current case of Şirince. In order to make a better sociological analysis of the urban to rural migration, there is still more to time. However, what I suggest is that the migration of urban to rural mainly stems from the weariness of the city life and a need for a better life both spiritually and economically. Şirince in this respect becomes the perfect destination for the ex urban dwellers. For, they not only construct the village by their urban habits but also they have certain projections about a “pure” rural setting and they face their prejudices in the village. It is

important to note that especially the re-enchantment I am referring to in the second chapter is an issue of class and it attributes to a certain group of people.

In the article named “Beyond Culture: Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference” Akhil Gupta and James Fergusson puts forward the importance of space studies in social sciences. According to them, the spaces that we live in, the cultures that occupy and at the same time create space are “based upon a seemingly unproblematic division of spaces.” That is to say that the ruptured, disjunctive images of space and its relationship with culture is naturalised and normalised. In this context what I am aiming at is to make these conflicts and contradictions become visible and to make understandable by applying them to theories of space and culture. The third chapter is about the reflections of modernization in the segregation and production of spaces. Starting back from the early-republican era, we can still see that the modernizing elites of that era is replaced by middle class ex-urbanites in Şirince.

### **1.3 Research Methodology**

From March 2012 to March 2014, I have frequently visited Şirince both as a tourist and as a worker. I worked at a local pension where I served the breakfast and participated in the field. At first it was difficult for me to live in the village both because of the economic reasons and also because I was an outsider. However soon I was accepted by the local community and felt a lot better. My participation in the field, unlike the permanent settlers, was based on performances. I had to define a positionality, set my boundaries and represent myself. There are things through which the villagers perceived and positioned me, that I could not change about; such as my age, my gender, my education. However, I could have chosen to be a distant researcher who is like an alien in a village, or I could have chosen to look like someone who was trying to adjust in this setting and who was open to communication. I chose the second path. I was making the same jokes with them, I was cooking and cleaning and working in the village bazaar but I was never one of them. When there was any kind of a political debate, I was the one to be consulted in the first place. I was not introduced to new people as “our guest from İstanbul” but as “our researcher”. I would like to comment on is my position as a both insider and outsider in the field. The fact that we spoke the same language with the people in the field was not enough to position me as an insider in the village. The village is welcoming both local and foreign tourists. I was

a local tourist for most of the people in the village. The fact that I was not coming from Aegean origin and that I was a researcher put me in an outsider position. However, my being an outsider has helped me a lot, for I had no preconceived notions about Şirince and that enabled us to build a mutually learning and sharing environment. When I decided to interview the ex-urbanites things got complicated. Now in a village where I was a latecomer, I was now insider because I spoke the same cultural language with them.

Participant observation is the primary method which I will use in my research. Secondly, in order to observe the dynamics of urban migration in Şirince and its effects in tourism, I plan to conduct semi-structured, open-ended, in-depth interviews with fifteen urban migrants working in tourism. Through intense fieldwork and participant observation in the village in April and June I hope to get more intimate with the inhabitants of the village. As urban migrants in the village are also labeled as “outsiders”, they might feel quite comfortable talking to me, another outsider. I will use discourse analysis to analyze field notes, interview transcripts and secondary sources such as hotel pamphlets. I conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with 19 people in Şirince. Two of them were the descendants of population exchange, two of them were the children of families who came to Şirince from Central Anatolia for seasonal farm work and the rest are people who have been living in Şirince for about 30 years to 6 months.

## CHAPTER 2: WHO ARE OUTSIDERS?

### 2.1 Introduction

When I first had the idea of conducting research about the outsiders who migrated to Şirince, I did not feel the need to address the question, “Whom should I consider as an outsider?” It was as clear as a sunny day (!) Outsiders are outsiders. One could easily identify them (!) They look like tourists, but no one tries to sell anything to them since everybody knows them. The rest should be the local people, you know... As a matter of fact, you don't know, neither do I. And if we don't know what it means to be local, who are outsiders? In order to follow the footsteps of outsiders, it is more than necessary to define an outsider in Şirince.

This part of the research is about the theoretical and practical discussions concerning geographic identity and belonging in Şirince. As it will be illustrated, in places where a variety of people from different cultural settings live together, localness and outsidersness become questionable entities. Actually, the opposite of this statement may also be true. Places in which localness is a debatable concept –meaning that the bonds between people and the place are weak- are more accessible from outside, and thus more diverse. In this respect, I regard Şirince as a cosmopolitan space since it agrees with the definition of cosmopolitanism, which proposes that the relations between the locals should be less binding, weak, abstract and focused on universal values in order to include “the Other” (Lasch, 1995; Habermas, 2001:56; Turner, 2002; Bauman, 2003; McDonald, 2004; Flikschuh, 2004).

The theories on being local, being a stranger, belonging and non-belonging, geographic identity and affective belongings will direct my path in defining and

presenting my interviewees. However, what I come up with at the end of this chapter is that, the fluidity of identities makes it impossible to locate and group people in fixed geographic identities. Especially in places where people flow in spatial and temporal ways, the geographic identities become a matter of positionality. People might assume different “identities” in different settings. In this context being 'Şirinceli' (“from Şirince”) is defined as the subject’s positioning of him/herself as Şirinceli.

## **2.2. Outsider, a little outsider, not quite outsider**

Şirince is a diverse space full of travellers from all around the world. Some of these travellers stay for just a brief period of time, such as the participants of the daily bus tours, while others stay for a day or two. And then, there are “permanent guests” who spent a considerable amount of their lives outside of Şirince before finally settling down in Şirince. Regardless of how long they have been living in Şirince, their position in the village is perceived as “outsiders.” In this context, I use the word “guest” intentionally because they are neither tourists nor locals in the village. All of them have been welcomed in Şirince; some moved to Şirince 30 years ago, some 6 months ago.

Almost a year ago, soon after I entered into the field, I had questions haunting me about the heterogeneity of Şirince. When the evening fell and the crowd of tourists disappeared, I could still feel the existence of a variety of sounds and colors. In order to understand and analyze the cosmopolitan structure of Şirince, I started by grouping the residents of Şirince. I have regarded the register of “locality” not as a solid entity, but as something that can be measured in degrees. The residents of the village show a great diversity in terms of the degree of being “local” or “outsider.” The question of “who is a local” and “who is an outsider” still is not clear to me. In my field trips to the village I have received different answers to this question. Still, I have been able to group people in the village into three main groups.

The most obvious outsiders are people who have come to settle down in Şirince from urban settings in the last thirty years. Among these are academicians, artists, retired teachers, middle scale business owners and former managers of big companies. Most of these people are between 40 to 60 years of age, and economically they belong

to middle and upper middle classes in the urban settings. They either do not have any children or their children have grown up. Though their motivation to move to a “village” varies, almost all of them started small-scale tourism businesses in Şirince by purchasing a historical Şirince House to turn it into a guesthouse or by opening cafes and restaurants.

The second group is more complicated in terms of their relationship to Şirince. This group consists of the families who were formerly placed in Şirince in the course of the population exchange. In time some of these families sold their properties in the village and moved to the nearby town, Selçuk, for economic purposes. As tourism emerged in the village, a number of these families came back to the village to work. Today, these families do not own property in the village. They come to the village in the morning, open up their rented sales counters and go back to Selçuk in the evening. Some informants today label these people as “Selçuklu” while others still identify them as “locals of Şirince” for they were originally placed in the village.

The third group in the village is made up of migrants from cities like Kayseri and Karaman in central Anatolia. Having moved to Şirince primarily for agricultural work, they gradually acquired property in the village. Today, while most of them work in the tourism industry, some continue to work in agriculture at the same time. Irrespective of their origins, as opposed to the first group of “outsiders”, immigrants from Central Anatolia may be regarded as “locals” in some contexts.

### **2.3 First Encounter, First Confusion: Problematizing Geographic Identity**

In the course of my fieldwork in Şirince, I would occasionally find myself surrounded by people asking me about my thesis and joking among each other: “gıız! Senin hayatından iyi tez çıkar ha” or “bizi tez mi yapcan, meşhur olcaz desene” (What they did not know on the other hand is that, let alone making someone “famous,” a graduate student would consider herself as the luckiest person if anybody besides herself and the jury members so much as read her masters thesis). “When will you

conduct an interview with me?” would generally follow these jokes. I, on the other hand, neither wanted to hurt their feelings nor had the time to conduct interviews with the “local people” of Şirince. I had a tight schedule and a number of ex-urbanites' stories were waiting for me to be discovered. Still, I promised to conduct an interview with Reyhan and I kept my promise.

I do not consider people who come here as strangers. Why? Because they are Turkish citizens as well. They have the right to live wherever they want. I'll go and live wherever I want. I have the right. They also have the right. It's their land. Nobody has the right to cast them out just because they came from elsewhere. For instance, our Turkish people are in all the European countries. My son is in Far East. If even they have those rights as humans, they can come here as well. Coming from somewhere else, whatever... I feel so angry. In fact, people from here says they came from elsewhere and then this happened, that happened... Like ‘strangers came “rant” increased’ and so on. Most of them talk this way. Oh stranger stranger... Those who you call strangers are also Turkish citizens. Sometimes I get angry, so I speak out. And they have the right to come and live any place in the country. You go ahead and buy properties from Selçuk, from Kuşadası; they have the right just the same way as you have the right. In that case, you shouldn't sell. You shouldn't rent expecting money in return, you should do it yourself if you that's your opinion. But nobody does. Afterwards, they go outsiders, outsiders... That's what makes me angry the most. They even treat the Turkish as strangers. Me, whomever they are, for me they are human beings. As long as they are honest...

Everybody has the right to live everywhere. I can go and live wherever. Who can say anything to me? (Reyhan)<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Buraya gelenlere ben yabancı gözüyle bakmam. Neden? Çünkü onlar da Türk vatandaşı. İstedikleri her yerde yaşamaya hakları var. Ben istediğim her yere gider yaşarım. Hakkım var. Onların da hakkı var. Onların toprakları. Dışarıdan geldiler diye kimsenin onları dışlamaya hakları yok. Mesela bizim türklerimiz bütün Avrupa ülkelerinde. Benim oğlum Uzakdoğu'da. Onlar bile orada hak sahibiyse insan olarak, onlar da buraya gelebilir. Dışarıdan gelmiştir bilmemne... Ben çok kızarım. Hatta buranın halkı söyler dışarıdan geldiler şöyle oldu, böyle oldu... İşte ‘yabancılar geldi rant arttı’ falan. Çoğu böyle söylüyor. E yabancı yabancı... Yabancı dedikleriniz de Türk vatandaşı. Ben bazen kızıyorum, söylüyorum yani. Ve ülkenin her yerinde gelip yaşamaya hakları var. Sen gidiyorsun Selçuk'tan Kuşadası'ndan ev alıp yaşıyorsun, senin nasıl hakkın varsa onun da var. O zaman satmıcaksın. Para karşılığı kiraya vermiceksin kendin yapacaksın böyle düşünüyorsun. Ama kimse yapmıyo. Ondan sonra da yabancılar yabancılar... En çok kızdığım şey budur. Türklere bile yabancı muamalesi yapıyorlar. Ben, kim olursa olsun, benim için insandır. Dürüst olduktan sonra...

Her yerde herkesin hakkı var yaşamaya. Ben burada gider her yerde yaşarım. Bana kim ne diyebilir ki?

My interview with Reyhan was one of the key interviews in this study. Despite my formal training about the difference between “hearing” and “listening” and my readiness to confront my prejudices, Reyhan changed the entire route of the written work. I was perplexed when I heard her story and her self-positioning in Şirince. She unfolded a whole new layer in self-identifications over space and presented me with an abundance of different questions about belonging, geographic identity and outsidersness.

As I mentioned earlier, Reyhan and her family hosted me during my field trips. In the mornings, I helped my host Reyhan with the regular chores, such as cleaning the kitchen, food preparation and other kitchen related tasks, serving breakfast and getting the rooms ready for the new guests. Upon completing my daily tasks, I generally took the rest of the day for my studies and came back to the place in the evenings. Every evening we got together with Reyhan’s mother and husband in the kitchen where we had our dinner, and most of the evenings we were accompanied by a random guest who happened to be lucky enough to benefit from Reyhan's generosity. Unlike an ordinary kitchen inside the residential homes where one could only enter through the main door, the kitchen in this pension was a separate structure; a single room building with a door opening to the inner court of the house. This kitchen was the commissure of public and private space. It was both the kitchen of touristic operation with a cash register at one corner, and at the same time, it was the kitchen of Reyhan’s family where they met every morning and evening. From the outside, it looked like a professional kitchen; there were two industrial type refrigerators and an oven, and a full set of plain white porcelain dinnerware, of the kind one would expect to see at a restaurant. However, upon close inspection, it would be easily noticed that this kitchen operated as if it were the kitchen of an ordinary middle class family. One of those big refrigerators was not running due to the high electricity costs and it was instead used as a storage area. Just as in my own family, there were two different sets of dinnerware, one for the guests and a second set of non-matching plates and glasses for everyday use. This kitchen was both the place where customers came to pay the bill and it was the place where we had our dinner together and gossiped about the village, talked about politics and sang songs, in other words, socialized. The kitchen is the central element in Reyhan’s life- the life of a mother, a wife and a manager. Reyhan is the central figure of this chapter. Just as it is not easy to identify the kitchen as a purely private or public space, Reyhan’s position in



the village is hard to identify as an outsider or an insider. The reason lies in the following question.

Reyhan's father and mother were seasonal farm workers from inland Anatolia. They relocated to İzmir, where Reyhan was born and where she spent her early childhood. When she was 7 years old, her family moved to Şirince. It was very difficult for Reyhan as she thought İzmir was their home. She characterizes her relationship to İzmir in two different narratives in the interview:

“... I was born there, I grew up there. I never forget that final moment when we were moving out. I cried while I was on the truck... tears... and the landlord (trilling in her voice)... I thought that apartment was ours. I called the landlord ‘grandfather.’ I said ‘Grandfather, why are you letting us go?’”<sup>7</sup>

“I don't know, I like İzmir ever since I was a child. Since I spent my childhood in a crowded place, I guess it is in my subconscious mind. To come here from a very lively place... I remember everything even though I was 7 years old. From time to time, I even imagine living in İzmir after retiring. I like it very much when I travel to İzmir. I enjoy being there.”<sup>8</sup>

Reyhan is 42 years old today. She has been living in Şirince for 35 years now and she is married to Remzi, whose parents are among the first generation of migrants who moved to Şirince from Greece. Seeing Reyhan's multi-local background made me wonder: Is Reyhan an outsider or a local in Şirince? Where is she *really* from?

---

<sup>7</sup> “...orada doğdum, orada büyüdüm. En son taşınırken hiç unutmuyorum o anı. Kamyonun üzerindeyken ağladığım... gözyaşları... ve ev sahibi (trilling in her voice)... Ben o evi bizim sanıyordum. Ev sahibine ‘dede’ diyordum. ‘Dede bizi niye çıkarıyorsun’ dedim.”

<sup>8</sup> “Bilmiyorum çocukluğumdan beri İzmir’i çok seviyorum. Çocukken kalabalık yerde çocukluğumu yaşadım ya, bilinçaltıma yerleşmiş herhalde. Çok hareketli bir yerden buraya gelmek... 7 Yaşında da olsam her şeyi hatırlıyorum. Hatta ben bir ara emekli olunca mutlaka İzmir’de yaşayacağım diye düşünüyorum. İzmir’e gittiğim zaman çok hoşuma gidiyor. Keyif alıyorum oraya gidince.”

#### **2.4. “Selçuk'ta bir daire istiyorum aksi takdirde seninle evlenmem” : On Place and Attachment**

When one asks Reyhan the question “where are you from?”, one is rarely interested in her birthplace. One wonders what her “hometown” is, where she feels at home, where she feels she belongs. Reyhan is one example among many others whose place identity is open to debate. Especially in places that witnessed migrations, the places that bid farewell and welcomed different cultural and ethnic groups, belonging becomes a contested terrain. Şirince is not an exception and in this regard, starting from the case of Reyhan, I will question the degree of being from Şirince through various lenses. My personal observations and the narratives of ex-urbanites suggest that this sense of belonging is not very strong in Şirince. Since this belonging does not manifest itself in the place, people do not attach themselves to the village. There is not much stress on the identity over geography. People who have been living in Şirince over 90 years by now are neither attached to Şirince nor have they built strong bonds with each other. At this point, I would like to clarify the fact that historically speaking, Şirince today is inhabited by 3<sup>rd</sup> generation migrants. Hence, when I suggest that the sense of belonging is low in Şirince, I do not intend to refer directly to the experiences of the first generation migrants in Şirince. Rather, despite the long stretch of time from 1923 up until today, there is a kind of incompatibility between people in Şirince and Şirince itself, and this incompatibility manifests itself in various ways and forms. Especially Daniel’s analysis of Şirince unfolds a number of layers of belonging and un-belonging in this village.

Daniel and his family bought their house in Şirince in 1995 and since then they have been using their beautiful and spacious house as a summerhouse. He told me that even for short holidays they come to Şirince. I conducted an interview with Daniel at the garden of the house, which is situated at the hills of the village. The interview was accompanied by the view of the village down below our feet and the warm spring breeze over our heads. Unlike the other interviews in which there were a number of narratives and stories to be analyzed, the dynamics of my relationship with Daniel, thus the interview, was different. No matter how much I tried to ask him personal questions and tried to include his own experiences, his own narratives, he avoided talking about

his feelings and his recollections. Being a social scientist and a faculty member at a reputable university in the UK, he was making his own analysis about the village. I remember feeling that I was listening to a lecture while I was listening to him. His eyes were fixed over the village extending below us, and he was telling me what I had just started see to in Şirince:

...Village like this, because of the göçmen traditions – tradition is not quite the right word - but the experience is something, which made these people feel very different about their sense of place from others. So... An example of that is, the reason that Şirince is preserved as it is and other places with Ottoman architecture are less so or not preserved is partly to do with the göçmen experience. These people came and occupied these houses, their grandparents. And **they did not have a very strong sense of place I feel, and so they did not bond with the village physically and for that reason they did not re-do their houses.** They did not improve them. They did not tear them down and modernize them. And that's why it's largely preserved from the architecture that they found in 1920s, which is largely the architecture from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And **you see very unusual attitude compared with other villagers in other parts of country where people were more interested in hoarding their money and spending in other things or buying an apartment in Selçuk for their children rather than renovating their own houses here,** and that's great in the sense that that's mechanism of preservation initially. (Daniel)

Daniel correlates the lack of sense of belonging in Şirince to the “göçmen experience” as he phrases. Although he cannot come up with a specific reason why people are not attached to Şirince, he suggests that there is a tendency among people in Şirince to do investment in Selçuk and move to Selçuk. From this observation, he comes to the conclusion that the sense of belonging in Şirince is different from other cities in Turkey. Especially the urge for leaving the village among young people is so powerful that I have met only a few young people during my visits. The lack of socialization venues for youngsters is a clear sign of the lack of young people in Şirince. I spent long days listening to the story of Reyhan's brother. These were stories about an enthusiastic, smart young boy who fled from home when he was only 12 and started a life in big cities. According to Reyhan, the village was very small when compared to the potential of his brother but he could not make use of that potential. Likewise, Reyhan's son pursues his uncle's path and today he is married with two children in Thailand.

Serdar, who has been living in Şirince for more than 10 years, reflects his observation about the young people in Şirince through a similar motif. His account of the people in Şirince derives from his disappointment about Şirince and the turmoil of his life. Once we eliminate the hatred and disappointment from the narrative, the analysis of Serdar looks similar to Daniel's narrative. Like Daniel, Serdar believes that people in Şirince are not attached to this village. Besides, an apartment in Selçuk is pre-marriage condition:

The villagers here have one goal in their lives: to tear down this village completely and to erect nice buildings. They have no other goals or dreams. More precisely, the actual dream of the villagers here is to get the fuck out of here. Here's what I know. The girls here always require "I want an apartment in Selçuk, otherwise I won't marry you", that's it.<sup>9</sup>

The research conducted by Turgut Var on sustainable tourism in Şirince in 2003 gives us the population of the village in the preceding years. The fall in the population of Şirince confirms the young people's urge to move out of the village:

One of the main problems of development of tourism in Sirince is the decreasing local population. In 1935 its population was 1288. In 1950 1019, in 1980 839 and finally in 2000 the population decreased to 640, almost 50 percent, in spite of the fact that various tourist amenities have been added...As a result of this decreasing population, many seasonal farm workers come to the village to assist in the harvesting of figs, olives, and especially peaches (Soykan, 2001). A preliminary research conducted by Ozzengi gives marriage as a one of the most important factors for moving out from the village (Ozzengi, 2000)

If marriage is regarded as a medium of moving out from the village, it can be perceived as a strategy or a desire to choose a new place where they will call "home." By moving away from the village, the newly married couple not only change their residential address but also they start a new family, thus a new life and after a period of time, they will start calling that town their hometown. Let us now go back to the initial

---

<sup>9</sup> Buradaki köylülerin hayatta tek bir hedefi vardır: bu köyü olduğu gibi yıkıp yerine güzel güzel apartmanlar yapmak. Bunun dışından en ufak bir vizyonu ve hayali yoktur. Daha doğrusu buradaki köylülerin gerçek hayali buradan siktirip gitmektir. Yani ben şeyi bilirim. Buranın kızları evlilik şartı olarak hep "Selçuk'ta bir daire istiyorum aksi takdirde senle evlenmem" budur.

question for a moment, the question of “Where are you from?” In an ordinary daily conversation, when you are introduced to someone else, “Where are you from?” would be the second question to be asked after exchanging names. The question is so familiar and “ordinary” that the answer comes without a pause. But, after a moment of hesitation it becomes very clear that the question carries deeper meanings in the social interaction. The question carries the presumption that you are from somewhere; that you belong to somewhere. Belonging to a place is a self-positioning deriving from belonging to ‘home’ (Blunt et al, 2003). But which one is the home? The one that you were born in, or the one that you have moved to?

A wide variety of sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists define the concept of home as "the place where one is known and trusted and where s/he knows and trusts others, where he is accepted, understood, indulged and forgiven, a place of rituals and routine interactions, of entirely predictable events and people, and of very few surprises, the place where one belongs and feels safe and where s/he can accordingly trust his/her instincts, relax, and be him/herself" (Storti, 2005); “a purified space of belonging in which the subject is too comfortable to question the limits or borders of her or his experience, indeed, where the subject is so at ease that she or he does not think” (Ahmed, 2009), the place “where there is ‘being but no longing’” (Persram:1996, cited in Ahmed). Being home might indicate “absence of desire, and the absence of an engagement with others through which desire engenders movement across boundaries.” (Ahmed, 2000:87)

When I think of the desires of Reyhan’s brother, when I listen to the story of the beautiful bride Selime, whose long blonde hair and moon-like face enchanted the village boys and who then married a guy in Selçuk, I sense a kind of yearning. Yearning for the unknown, what for sure is absent in Şirince. It might be suggested that the young people’s desire for adventure or changing places is not a very solid ground on the basis of which one can claim that people in Şirince are not attached to this place. One may as well say, being young by definition is being active and eager to be mobile. In this case, we should scratch around the question of geographic identity.

Belonging somewhere is being a member of a group of people living together. Belonging to a place is to be from a specific place. But, what does it really mean to be

from Şirince? How do you become a Şirinceli, or is it impossible to become one; that is to say, either you are already from Şirince or you will never be so?

In pursuance of the questions above, I would like to discuss the relationship between identity and place. There is a strong relationship between one's self-identification and geographic identification. Following Heidegger, who said "everywhere, wherever and however we are related to beings of every kind, identity makes its claim upon us," spaces that are filled with people also make claim upon us and our identities. (1969:26) Thus, individual self-identity is recorded in places (Brace, Bailey and Harvey, 2006), and to discover place is to discover the human self (Casey, 2001; Heidegger, 1962). When you tell someone that you are from Şirince, s/he has an idea about you. Şirince makes a claim on your identity. The geographic identification is so powerful that the person may immediately designate the proximity towards you in accordance with your place of origin. For your place of origin marks your identity, as there are preconceived social constructions and certain value judgments in relation to places and human personality traits. The reason is that humanity inscribes a collective history in the places they live. People who are from the same place, in time associate an additional meaning to living in the same place and sharing a common past. (Sack, 2001). For instance, in the Turkish cultural context, being from Kayseri is connoted with being talented in business, especially being good with the money. Sometimes people may develop prejudices towards a society only because they are from that specific place. Some of my interviewees believe that being from the Ege region implies laziness. "Ege köylüsü genelde bir iş yapmaz" (Serdar). "Kaç kadınla konuştuğumda burada "bizim erkekler tembeldir ve çapkındır derler" (İrem). The reason lies in the fact that "identity refers to a self-defined sense of who I am" and "who others think I am" (Zhu, 2011).

In this context, "who others think I am" is designated in time by the relationship between the place and the people. What about Şirince? Whom do I think of as Şirinceli?" What claims do Şirince make on people? I think of other examples in Turkey. For example, being from Eskişehir (*Eskişehirli olmak*) does not have a direct relationship with having slanting eyes, but you don't find it odd when one tells you "Eskişehirli çelik gözlü olurlar." Being from somewhere, belonging to somewhere is believed to have a direct relationship to that specific place. The geographic identification emerges after human beings' performances become equated with a

definite place (Pratt, 1998). It means “people are defined by a persistent sameness and unity of the place which differentiate us from others” (Relph 1976:X). I suppose in order to achieve this sameness and unity; there should be a dialectical relationship between place and the identity that is provided by the socialization of people living together. This social setup is quite common in Anatolian villages in Turkey. People define themselves and others in relation to geography. Not only do they define themselves through the place, but also there are certain types of relating to the places. Belonging to a place is related to owning the place, showing your existence in that place. Şirince on the other hand has not yet acquired the qualities to suggest a label of “Şirinceli.” During my fieldtrip in Şirince, I have frequently heard people talking about their migrant identities, like “biz göçmenler” or “biz Egeliler,” however I have not come across a single time when people defined their place identities as being from Şirince.

Another form of belonging to a place manifests itself in the form of solidarity. Hometownship (hemşehrlik) is so important in Turkey that the word “hemşehrim” may substitute the subject’s name in a casual salutation. Calling the subject by the name of his/her place identity is a small but an important demonstrator of how much value is given to belonging to the same place. According to the statistics of İçişleri Bakanlığı Dernekler Daire Başkanlığı, currently there are 107.029 active associations in Turkey and hometown associations make up 10% of this number.<sup>10</sup> In this respect, I have asked people whether they have attempted to found an association for Şirince. Almost all of them, especially those who came to the village before early 2000s, told me that they tried but could not succeed. Among them, very few of the interviewees mentioned the importance of local people in the founding of the association. This was either due to the lack of interest of local people in founding an association (which indeed implies their lack of attachment to Şirince) or outsiders’ archness of the local villagers. No matter whether these suppositions are correct or not, people in Şirince today are no longer interested in founding an association which would be beneficial for Şirince. Interestingly, some 3<sup>rd</sup> generation migrants in Şirince are members of The Foundation of Lausanne Treaty Emigrants, which is a manifestation of their emigrant identities.

It is crucial to pinpoint that “hemşehrlik” as a form of social solidarity unit becomes prevalent once the subject/subjects are outside of their hometown. The kind of

---

<sup>10</sup> The numerical data received from:

<http://www.dernekler.gov.tr/tr/DernekIslemleri/derbis.aspx> accessed on June 13, 2015.

solidarity among country people most of the time operates in places where they are regarded as outsiders. For instance, 53,9% of the hometown associations is founded in the Marmara region so that the rural migrants would socialize with and help each other (Source). Still though, in some of the Anatolian villages there are tactics and performances of hometownship operating within the village. What we call “imece” is one of these tactics.

Imece has been an organization of labour based on solidarity in villages and towns of Turkey for a very long time, agreed upon by everyone yet not written into law. When I go back to my childhood summer holidays, the first thing I remember about our village is our neighbors’ visits to my grandmother and their loud, cheerful laughter while gossiping about a random person and helping my grandma. Helping each other whenever one is in need constitutes the cornerstone of living in small places where everyone knows each other. I recognized in Şirince that, my expectations about this village were shaped by the definition of village life deriving from my own experiences. Thus, what was unexpected and surprising in Şirince for me was the excessive stress given to money. In Şirince, each act of “help” done for the neighbor is regarded as a form of business. For instance, when a person needs communal help from her neighbors for cooking or cleaning, the person is expected to pay them per hour.

One evening Reyhan asks Hacer’s help to pack the *tarhana*. Hacer asks 1kg of the tarhana in return of her help. Reyhan quips in a witty manner: “Ohooo! Her yardım edene bir kilo tarhana versem, kilosu şu kadardan bir dolu para eder. Satmam daha iyi.” Around the same days I witnessed a similar dialogue between Hacer and Erdem at the breakfast table. Erdem whines about the price of the bread in the village: “Şu ekmek 5 lira. Bize 4’e verse nolur sanki, komşuluk öldü mü?” “Burası sadece ve sadece gelenlerden para kazanmak amaçlı kimsenin kimseye yardım etme şeyi yok. Herkes çalışıyor. Kimseye gidemezsin akşam. Herkes çalışıyor, yoruluyor, akşam olunca da yatıyor” (Reyhan). Although these observations give us the clues of dimming boundaries of city and country life, as well as the difference of Şirince from other villages in Turkey due to its affiliation with tourism, the absence of neighborhood, the absence of unity among people, absence of solidarity-- all indicate the absence of a relationship with the place itself. There is not really a strong sense of belonging to Şirince; thus, a powerful and binding effect of geographic identity does not exist in Şirince.



## 2.5. “Gavurda Keramet, Müslümanda Kabahat Arama!”: On Demographic Engineering

I argue that the basic reason why people do not feel a strong sense of belonging in Şirince, is the adaptation problems people experienced when they were forced to relocate in Turkey. It is a recurring theme in the oral history narratives. These adaptation problems basically derive from the lack of proper and well-established demographic engineering plans. (What is your position on demographic engineering? Esra Özyürek The politics of Public Memory in Turkey introduction'dan bir alıntı ekle başına.) A report published by T.C. Başbakanlık Atatürk Kültür, Dil, Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, outlines the situation:

During the planning of settlement of migrants right before the population exchange, a lot of issues were not addressed properly, Instead of being categorized as city dwellers and peasants, migrants were categorized according to the production habits of their place origin and it was planned to relocate them according to this categorization. Grouping migrants as tobacco planters, farmers orchard workers and olive growers not only did not deal with any details about various phases in these sectors...<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Mübadelenin hemen öncesinde göçmenlerin iskânına yönelik yapılan planlamalarda, vaziyetin pek çok yönü eksik bırakılmıştı. Mübadiller kırsal ve kentsel kökenli olarak değil geldikleri bölgelerin ağırlıklı üretim faaliyetlerine göre kategorize edilmişlerdi ve bu şekilde yerleştirilmeleri düşünülmekteydi. Tütün, çiftçi, bağcı ve zeytinci şeklinde bir gruplandırma bu sektörlerin dahi çeşitli kademelerine ilişkin detaylar içermediği gibi, bunların yerleşim bölgeleri kent-kır ayrımı yapılmaksızın net olmayan sahalar şeklinde taksim edilmişti. Daha sürecin başında gruplandırmanın yanlış olduğu, sivil bir kuruluş olan İskân ve Teâvün Cemiyeti tarafından eleştirilmişti. Onlara göre yapılması gereken, muhacirler kentsel ve kırsal kökenleri dikkate alınarak iskân edilmeliydi. Cemiyet ayrıca tütüncü sayısının da öngörülenden fazla olduğunu iddia etmekteydi. (<http://www.atam.gov.tr/dergi/muba%20ADde%20ADle-su%20ADre%20ADcin%20ADde-ya%20ADsa%20ADnan-so%20ADrun%20ADlar-ve-mer%20ADkez%20ADden-mu%20ADda%20ADha%20ADle%20ADye-bir-or%20ADnek1927-ma%20ADni%20ADsa-tef%20ADt> accessed on June 13, 2015).

Seyfi, who is a second-generation migrant living in Selçuk today, narrates the story of the early settlement in Turkey. I should annotate an important detail here. Although oral narratives, different from the official historical records, do not carry the obligation to be impartial or true, historical narratives about the past rely on oral sources to a significant extent and their subjective nature does not mean that they do not have objective qualities. Especially Seyfi Bey, who is very much accustomed to giving interviews in the village, tries to base his arguments on written sources. What he says about migration to Şirince in this context is crucial:

Now they come to İzmir, our folks get off the ship. There's the Pulta station once off the ship, Alsancak. The Alsancak station used to be called Pulta. There, everyone's waiting for where to go with their beds and quilts on their backs. Our folks get assigned to Samsun. They say what do we do in Samsun, we are livestock producers, we grow olives, we do tobacco. There's tobacco in Samsun as well. The tobacco there and here are not the same. The tobacco there have huge leaves. They say no. Then they get assigned to Pınarbaşı in İzmir, near the BMC factories. They go there, it is all swamp. They say we can't make it here either. At that time, Captain Şinasi Bey comes to İzmir, he pays attention to them. He says, look, these are Atatürk's own villagers. Domatia, Somoko, Muştıya, Atatürk's own mother is from these villages. They sent a telegram message to Atatürk. They say 'Atam, I have been to Şirince, near Selçuk in 1915, 16 and 17, this village is good for Muştıya locals, almost a mirror image of the village, we should send them there'. From here 4 people. Clerk Osman, father of Nejat Atam, they get onto a Decauville, you know this train, there were small trains with engines. They get there, they climb up, they like the village. They say 'we should move our village here'. 6500 migrants from Thessaloniki get settled here.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> Şimdi bunlar İzmir'e geliyorlar, bizimkiler gemiden iniyor. Gemiden inildiği zaman Pulta istasyonu var, Alsancak. Alsancak istasyonunun eski ismi Pulta. Orada yatağını, yorganını, herkes gemiden inmiş orada bekliyor nereye gideceğini. Bizimkileri Samsun'a veriyorlar. Diyorlar ki biz Samsun'da ne yapacağız, biz hayvancıyız, biz zeytin bakarız, tütün yaparız. Tütün Samsun'da var. O tütünle bu tütün aynı değil. Oradaki tütünler çok büyük yapraklı tütünler. Olmaz diyorlar. O zaman Pınarbaşı'na veriyorlar İzmir'de BMC fabrikalarının olduğu yer. Oraya gidiyorlar bataklık her taraf. Biz burada da yapamayız diyorlar. O an da Yüzbaşı Şinasi Bey de İzmir'e geliyor, bunlarla ilgileniyor. Diyor ki; bakın, bunlar Atatürk'ün kendi köylüleri. Domatia, Somoko, Muştıya, Atatürk'ün kendi annesinin köyleri, bu üç köy. Atatürk'e telgraf çekiyorlar. Diyor ki; 'Atam, ben 1915'te, 16'da, 17'de Şelçuk'ta Şirince köye gittim, bu köy müştıyalara yakışır, aynı köyün ayinesi, bunları buraya gönderelim'. Buradan da 4 kişi. Katip Osman efendi, Nejat Atam'ın babası biniyorlar bir dekafile, bu tren var ya, motorlu trenler vardı eskiden küçük. Oraya geliyorlar, yukarı çıkıyorlar, köyü

The agricultural production of the village was not familiar to migrant Turks. Figs or cherries are not produced in the village any longer whereas the fruit trees were the primary source of income in Şirince in the old days. Dido Sotiriou, the famous social realist Greek author, wrote a novella about the old Şirince, when Greeks were living in the village. In the story she describes the fig trees in the following way:

“Actually, fig... it was fig that filled the basket of the villagers with gold! Not just in the city of Aydın, our figs were famous in all of the East, Europe and even America. The outer skin was so thin that you wouldn't even notice if it was there; they were sweetened by the dear sun of the Anatolia” (Sotiriou, 2014:19-20).<sup>13</sup>

This is what Seyfi utters when it comes to people living in Şirince in the old days:

During that period, people of this region did some tobacco planting, some fruit growing, some vegetable farming and lived a very poor life. I mean, in August, they would sell two loads of wood in Selçuk and buy bread with that money, I mean, they were so poor. ...All the rich people from the rich neighborhoods in the upper parts, those who are more interested in commerce moved to Selçuk. The number of houses here drops from 2500 to 256. Those who stay here are the poor. That is to say those who can't do anything stay here.<sup>14</sup>

These narratives are just the tip of the iceberg about poor demographic engineering during the population exchange. My cousins and I love to listen and sigh to my great grand mother's story of how many times they had to move from city to city and how they could not adapt to living in İstanbul and asked for land from the rural

---

beğeniyorlar. Diyorlar ki; 'köyümüzü buraya getirelim' 6500 Selanik göçmeni buraya adi iskan veriyor.

<sup>13</sup> “Asıl incir... köylünün kemerini altınla dolduran incirdi! Sadece Aydın ilinde değil, bütün Doğu'da, Avrupa ve Amerika'da bile ün salmıştı incirlerimiz. Kabuğu var mı, yok mu anlayamazdınız, öylesine inceydi; Anadolu'nun o canım güneşiyle ballanmışlardı”(Sotiriou, 2014:19-20).

<sup>14</sup> Buradaki insanlar o dönem içinde burada sadece tütüncülük, biraz meyvecilik, biraz sebzeçilikte çok fakir bir halde yaşıyorlar. Yani şöyle bir ağustos ayında tütün tarlasından iki yük odun Selçuk'a götürüp satıyor onun parasıyla ekmek alıp gelip onu yiyorlardı yani çok fakirdi. ...Yukarıdaki zengin mahallesindeki bütün zenginler, daha ticaret düşkününü insanlar Selçuk'a taşıyor. Buranın olan 2500 hane konut sayısı düşüyor 256'ya. Burada kalan garibanlar. Yani bir şey yapamayanlar burada kalıyor.

areas. But, I think it is Sabahattin Ali who criticizes the politics of the period under the guise of fiction:

“How much has this place changed over time! But there is a reason. In the past, everybody who lived here owned some property. From olives to figs, whatever they’ve earned, they would have spent it here. The wealth of all these mountains and plains that you see would stay here. Now, whatever the gentlemen who owns these lands earn, they take somewhere else. They erect buildings, they buy houses. They spend it on cars, women. What they spend here on labor does not even make up for a thousandth of what they take away. The rest of the people can only do this much. Thus the Çirkince you know becomes this... **Do not put the blame on the Muslim and look for miracle of the infidel, just because what used to be a heaven has turned into ruins!.. The owners of this land used live here, work here. You should go after those who left the land without owners...** And don’t talk the way you do... Why should every place that we acquire be like this? Did we really acquire this place? Don’t worry, the people acquired nothing; the plains, the mountains, a few opportunist got a hold of them... That’s it...”<sup>15</sup>

Even today, after almost 95 years of the population exchange, the incompatibility between Şirince and the migrants reveals itself in various ways. Müge moved from İstanbul to Şirince some 30 years ago. She told me a funny story about the people in the village in those years:

“...concrete buildings... they loved it a lot. That was what disappointed me. **I thought these were people who know their traditions.** There is no such thing. Zero. I asked for an open ceiling, I don’t want ceiling. They took it literally and we came to see the stars above us, that much open... I could see the stars when it was night. Can you imagine what that means? Nothing to stop the rain. But

---

<sup>15</sup> “Burası eskiden ne idi, şimdi ne oldu!.. Ama sebebi var. Eskiden burada oturan herkesin kendine göre malı vardı. İncirden, zeytinden ne alırsa burda yer, burda bırakırdı. Bütün bu gördüğün dağların, ovaların nimeti hep burda kalırdı. Şimdi buraların sahibi olan beyler, ne alıyorsa başka yere götürüyorlar. Apartman diyorlar, köşk alıyorlar. Otomobillere, karılara yatırıyorlar. İşçilik diye burada bıraktıkları, aldıklarının binde birini tutmaz. Kalanlar da bununla işte bu kadar geçenebilir... O senin bildiğin Çirkince de işte bu hale gelir... **Cennet gibi yerler virane oldu diye gavurda keramet, Müslümanda kabahat arama!.. Eskiden buraların sahipleri burada yaşar, burada işlerdi. Sen sahipli memleketi sahipsiz eden beylerin yakasına yapış...** Bir daha da öyle demin konuştuğun gibi konuşma... Bizim elimize geçen her yer neden böyle olsun? Burası bizim elimize geçti mi ki? Merak etme, milletin eline bir şey geçmedi; ovalar, dağlar üç beş fırsat düşkününün elinde toplandı... İşte o kadar...”

you asked for an open ceiling Ms. Müge? We've been through such things. Sweet jokes.” (Müge)<sup>16</sup>

The story itself is amusing but what is more interesting than seeing the stars from inside the house is Müge's assumption about the people. “Geleneklerini hala çok iyi tanıyan insanlar sanıyorum.” This sentence points to a basic misrecognition about these people, while the descendants of Cretans and hence the population exchange, are themselves uprooted. Thus, to project the ‘tradition’ on them is a mismatch and suppresses the particularities of the villagers' pasts.

## **2.6. “Bilmedikleri bir coğrafya. Sence mutlu olabilirler mi?”: On the Aftermath of the Population Exchange**

The second reason why there is not a strong sense of belonging in Şirince is because people in Şirince have not spent enough time to build a specific relationship with the place. From a historical point of view, Şirince can be regarded as a considerably new setting for the Turkish. The settlement of Turks in the village goes back to 1923. After the Lausanne Treaty, as has been the case with many other places in Turkey, there was a population exchange between Muslims in Greece and Orthodox Christians in Turkey. The Muslims in Şirince originated from mainland Greece and the island of Crete. Among the oldest settlers of Şirince today are the families who have been living in Şirince for three generations. The new settlers in Şirince have not spent enough time in the village to regard it as their hometown. In fact, even spending “enough” time is not enough to call a place one's hometown. I use the concept of “time” here merely as a medium, - a medium through which memories and references to the place will be constructed. As I have explicated in the example of Reyhan, regardless of the time spent in one place, some places have greater importance in our lives.

---

<sup>16</sup> “...beton dökmek.. onu çok seviyorlardı. Ben orada hayal kırıklığına uğradım. **Geleneklerini hala çok iyi tanıyan insanlar falan sanıyorum.** Böyle bir şey yok. Sıfır. Üstte dedim açık tavan olsun, tavan istemiyorum. Onlar hakkaten açık tavan anladılar ve geldik ki yıldızları seyrediyorduk yukarıda, o kadar açık.. Gece baktım yıldızları görüyorum. Bunun ne anlama geldiğini düşünabiliyor musun? Yağmur içeride. E açık tavan istediniz Müge hanım? Oralardan geldik. Tatlı fıkralar.” (Müge).

When people migrate between places, they build different kinds of relationships with each place. A person's hometown is not necessarily her/his birthplace, but he/she might also feel that the birthplace is her/his hometown no matter how long she/he has lived there. According to Pascual-de-Sans, the reason why people regard places differently is that

“there are places that leave deeper marks than others and some places are more deeply marked than others by people staying there or passing through. Places have a hierarchical nature among them, which can certainly be modified but is remarkably persistent within one's personal history. There are places that stand out from others as basic reference points: they are places of preference. Some of them can be considered our 'own', and this in the sense of 'closeness' rather than in the sense of 'possession' (2004:350).

In order to establish closeness between a place and a human being, time and reference points/making memories are crucial. The settlement of Turks in Şirince on the other hand is still quite tentative. People in Şirince still bring their migrant identities that are their past experiences in Crete or Greece to the foreground:

In 1955, 60's and 70's, they danced the tango during the Republic Day of Turkey. So they were dancing. Can you now imagine the Greek migrants of 1955, 60's dancing the tango during a national holiday? Now, I don't observe the tango performed in any wedding ceremonies. This means culturally they were a little bit Greek migrants, they were from Europe, it seems to me that they were brought in 1923. Last he had a pair of sunglasses, original Italian Rayban. I bought it for 250 liras in an auction. My uncle's glasses. The villagers, Şirince locals were wearing Rayban glasses, can you imagine? (Seyfi)<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Cumhuriyet bayramında 1955, 60, 70'lerde tango yaparlardı. Dans yaparlardı yani. Şimdi düşünebiliyor musun 1955, 60'lardaki Rumeli göçmenlerinin bir bayramda tango yaptığını? Şu anda hiçbir düğünde ben tangoyu görmüyorum. Demek ki kültürde biraz Rumeli göçmenleri, Avrupa'dan gelen insanlar, 1923'te getirdiler gibime geliyor bana. En son bir gözlüğü vardı İtalyan Rayban, orijinal. Ben aldım parayla 250 liraya mezattan. Dayımın gözlüğünü. Köylü, Şirinceli, Rayban gözlük takıyordu düşünebiliyor musun? (Seyfi)

Emrah is one of the few 3<sup>rd</sup> generation migrants that I interviewed. His analysis of the mutual population exchange between Greece and Turkey is very interesting. His narrative unfolds the relationship between the people and the place with respect to historicity. To put it in another way, Emrah makes a differentiation between first generation migrants and the following generations. He tells us no matter how the first generation migrants tried to hold on to the life and survived, there was something absent and this absence made them unhappy in their new environment. The lack in the relationship between the migrants and Şirince is the lack of reference points/lack of memories:

Let me put it this way, my mother is from Crete. They were 5 siblings. One of them goes to Gemlik. For instance, they lived their entire lives missing that sibling. The families were scattered. Then for instance, some of my grandmother's siblings speak no Turkish at all. All of a sudden, they come here. A land that they have no familiarity. Do you think they can be happy? I don't believe that they were happy. So maybe they got married, had kids, maybe they tried to forget but I don't think neither the Greek who went from here nor the Turkish that came from there found happiness. Me lately there was a movie called "My Grandfather's People (Dedemin İnsanları)", I don't know if you have seen it, for instance I couldn't watch it. I could watch it until the ship scene because what is it to me? But we have it on our genes. I can feel their suffering. The excitement and sadness on the face of the Greek mothers, fathers and grandfathers while they were looking for their houses. It is possible that **the new generation is happy but I don't think that they (the former generation) are happy.**<sup>18</sup>

Emrah, the son of the second-generation migrant in Şirince, thinks that the sorrows and non-belonging to Şirince were inscribed into the history of the former generations. The

---

<sup>18</sup> Şöyle söyleyeyim, benim anneannem Girit'ten gelme. 5 kardeşlerdi. Bir tanesi Gemlik'e gidiyor. Mesela hep onun hasretiyle yıllarca yaşamışlar. Aileler dağılmış. Sonra mesela anneannemin kardeşlerinden bazıları hiç Türkçe konuşamazlar. Birden buraya geliyorlar. Bilmedikleri bir coğrafya. Sence mutlu olabilirler mi? **Ben mutlu olduklarına inanmıyorum.** Belki hani evlendiler, çocuk yaptılar, belki unutmaya çalıştılar ama ben ne buradan giden Yunanlıların ne de oradan gelen Türklerin buralarda mutlu olduklarına inanmıyorum. Ben geçenlerde "Dedemin İnsanları" diye bir film var seyrettin mi bilmiyorum, mesela seyredemedim ben. Gemi sahnesine kadar seyrettim çünkü bana ne oluyor? Ama işte genlerimizde var. Onların acılarını ben hissedebiliyorum. Buraya gelen Yunanlıların analarının, babalarının, dedelerinin evlerini ararken yüzlerindeki heyecanı, hüznü falan anlayabiliyorum yani. **Belki yeni nesil mutludur ama onların (former generation) mutlu olduğuna inanmıyorum.**

places that they had left behind left deeper marks on them than the marks Şirince will ever have. Emrah equates Greek migrants with Turkish migrants. If he can still see the sorrow in the faces of Greeks who were forced to leave their hometown, the same is valid for the former generation of migrants who were forced to settle down in Şirince. However, “belki yeni nesil mutludur.” For, the new generation has most probably started creating new memories, and formed and will continue forming new bonds with the place they live in.

Around the days that I was writing and analyzing Emrah's narrative, I heard of the death of a woman whom I did not know. Her name was Yaya Dimitrula Kostaloglou (99). Selçuk Efes Kent Belleği conducted an oral history interview with her and they aired a piece of that interview on June 7th. She was very young when she had to migrate from Şirince to Greece. However, it was obvious from her words how deep the relationship she had with Şirince was. I am sharing an excerpt from this interview both to honor her memory and to juxtapose it with Emrah's narrative:

**Çemberim dalda kaldı, gözlerim yolda kaldı, sağolun varolun, a papa gördüm mü sizi demek ki Çirkince'nin içinde sanıyom kendimi, göynüm gözüm açıldı bugün.** Öyle yaptılar biz nasi, bak şimdi gardeş gibiyiz, evveli de manamlar, bubalarımız gardeş gibilermiş, gardeş gibilermiş müslümanlarla urumlar. Gardeş gibiydik, Türklerden hiç korku yoktu. Ben istiyom hepiniz eyi olun, birbirinizi öldürmeyin, birbirinizi sevin, demek ki ben öyle olursanız ferahım bi o benim, ferahım sevgi, ağapi, bu kadar kale nasıl sevgim var **o Çirkince'ye, gelsem de beni oraya gömseniz. Orada gider de ölürsem, papumun yanına gömün. Gitmicen mi gayri bir mum yakmaya?**

Obviously, on the other side of the Aegean Sea, the same uneasiness has been experienced. The songs are the best ways to transfer the memories together with affects to the following generations. The interviewer asks Yaya Dimitrula Kostaloglou to sing a song about Şirince. Yaya sings the song :

“Amanın amanın hallarım yaman / İzmir yanırken gördüm bir zaman”. Rembetika müziğin dışarılıklı olmakla ilişkisine bağlı. Oradaki mübadiller de “longing for a homeland” “wherever they went they would be considered as outsiders” (Aslı Iğsız, 2007:179) Aslında bu kısım çok gerekli değil. Tamamen çıkarsam mı? Sadece öte yakayı da anmış olmak için ekledim.



Emrah's question "sence mutlu olabilirler mi?" was obviously a rhetorical question, to which we knew the answer very well. Would anyone be happy wearing the kerchief that Yaya Dimitrula had left on the branch of a tree when she was forced to leave Şirince?

## **2.7. "Ev hüzünlü. Ev üzgün. Ev mahvoluyor. Ev büyük bir kederde" Do places generate emotions or do people inscribe them?**

Pascual-de-Sans's article about sense of place and place identity has provided important support to my arguments on the sense of belonging in Şirince. Especially correlating the concept of hometown to the feelings that the places leave on people explains the situation in Şirince today. However, his article falls short for two basic reasons. First of all, choosing a hometown is not a conscious preference as he suggests but more important than that, Pascual-de-Sans emphasizes that his conceptualization of the sense of belonging should be understood at a personal level. "...it falls within a conceptual field that is different from that of socio-cultural or political identity. Idiotope is much more personal, even if it is constructed through social relations, and it is freer" (2004:351). However, what we are dealing with in Şirince is not disjointed, separate dispositions but a kind of more collective non-bonding and lack of commitment in relation to the place. Pascal-du-Sans' theory does not speak to the collective production of a place.

Until now, I have explained the reasons why people in Şirince do not feel a strong commitment to Şirince and how this situation manifests itself in the place. Daniel, for example, has noticed especially the relationship between physical items such as the houses and the people in the village. Daniel suggested that because of the "göçmen experiences" they did not rebuild the houses, they did not improve them and thus, Şirince today is preserved as it is. Indeed both in Daniel's narrative and Pascal du-Sans' article, the affective relationship between the place and the people comes to the foreground. The subjective experiences of migrants are not enough in understanding

their relationship with the place itself. In this context, I find Yael-Navaro-Yashin's application of affect theory, where she considers the concept as a form of collectively structured emotions, useful and meaningful.

Navaro-Yashin in her article, "Affective Spaces, Melancholic Objects: Ruination and the Production of Anthropological Knowledge," tells a similar story of migration, settlement and attachment to place. She analyses the relationship between a place and the people inhabiting that place through subjectivity and non-human agency, the "emotive energies discharged by properties and objects". She conducts mediation between spatiality and objects as well as between subjectivity and human consciousness. Her epistemological position stands in opposition to psychoanalysis as well as object-centered theories that might easily fall into the trap of laying aside the human. Her concern is to answer, "how are subjective feeling and environmentally produced affect intertwined? More specifically, what is the intersection between subjectivity and affect?" (2009:4)

In answering these questions, Navaro-Yashin takes the case of the 1974 partition of Cyprus after the invasion by the Turkish army. When Turkish-Cypriots were relocated in Northern Cyprus, they had to live with the objects that the former residents left behind. Navaro-Yashin suggests that the new residents of the place are in contact with the former community through their abandoned objects, belonging and spaces. The energies discharged from these objects have an effect on the Turkish-Cypriots. She believes that the melancholy reflected by the Turkish-Cypriots during her research in 2001 and 2002 "is not only as an expression of the inner worlds of my informants, but also as the mark of the energy (the affect, as I will call it) discharged upon them by the dwellings and environments they have now lived in for decades" (2009:4)

There are a number of similarities between the Turkish-Cypriots who were forced to migrate to the north to start their lives by means of whatever the former residents, the Greeks, had left, and the Turks who were forced to move to Şirince, the former home of Greeks. When comparing the two cases it is crucial to remember that Navaro-Yashin conducted her research with the first-hand subjects of the migration, whereas in Şirince 90 years have passed after the migration. This is important because even after intense Turcification practices in order to erase the Greek existence in Şirince, (for instance, the famous Greek houses are not named as "Rum evleri" but

“Şirince evleri; turist guides rarely mention the existence of the Greeks in the village; the famous Greek school of the period is turned into a museum in which one can not see any clue about the history of the building), the space itself reverberates with the voices of the past.

The neglect of houses as I have stated before is an important issue in Şirince. Daniel and Serdar and a couple of other people I randomly met in Şirince related this to the fact that people in Şirince do not love or care for the village. Indeed, the repudiation of the new setting is a similar theme in Navaro-Yashin’s study. I sense the same kind of uneasiness between people and place both in Şirince and Cyprus, which Navaro-Yashin describes as a “field of prickly bushes, thorns, and thistles growing over and an appropriated and unkempt plain” (2009:13).

Eren is an ex-urbanite living in Şirince for 4 years. He believes in the energy of objects and places more than anything else. In my first field trip to Şirince, when I did not know much about the past and present situation of the village , we talked about the population exchange. In his narrative Eren relates the sorrows of the two communities through the houses. In his story houses gain an agency, almost as vivid and important as human agency:

The place is alive. The place says, who’s alive Georgia is alive, who’s alive Virginia is alive, who’s alive Yorgo is alive. The place then notices that all of a sudden they gather together. Announcements are made this is happening, that is happening, who knows what’s happening. Vacate your houses, do this, do that, I don’t know what, uh oh... Bursting into tears, people put down their meals. They leave behind whatever they can, they take whatever they can and they leave. The house is sad. The house is upset. The house is ruined. The house is in great sorrow. Because its owners are leaving. Its owners who looked after it, who applied stucco to it, who painted it, who showed tender loving care to it are leaving. Here a great sorrow is felt in the house and those people leave, the house is all alone. It is an oh no situation. Up to here, up to this point of the move it is a great tragedy. The second day, just the following morning new people arrive in the house; Ayşe, Fatma, Ahmet, Mehments are arriving but they are already sad. Their sadness are also on their faces. They move into this house with tears in their eyes.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Mekan canlı. Mekan diyor ki, kim yaşıyor Georgia yaşıyor, kim yaşıyor Virginia yaşıyor, kim yaşıyor Yorgo yaşıyor. Mekan bir bakıyor ki bunlar birden toplanıyorlar. Anonslar geliyor şunlar oluyor bunlar oluyor, bilmem neler oluyor. Evlerinizi boşaltın şu olsun, bu olsun bilmem ne, hadiiii... Hüngür hüngür ağlaya ağlaya insanlar

Eren's unsettling depiction of the houses indeed represents clearly that the sadness released by the abandoned objects had an important effect on people who are later settled down in Şirince. Since the relation with the village is set up on uneasy basis, the bonding with the village has never occurred in a healthy and powerful way. Serdar's observation of the village illustrates the continuation of this relation since the first settlement of the first emigrants to today:

No! Ruins. They are all ruins. Wasteyard! The crust that formed on the top was so thick, the layer of filth that accumulated was so thick... Outbuilding. Concrete block. Wall. Loo. So much filth has accumulated all around. And the original, old and beautiful element has grown so old, weak and has been so much modified that... so much that... ah... under-caring is a form of violence. All the houses here are under-cared. It hasn't occurred to anybody in the last 90 years that these windows need to be painted. Okay? Hasn't occurred, isn't occurring now and these buildings took so much abuse there. Have you ever examined the horses of the village closely? They are all freaks that have long ceased to be horses. Their hair has not been trimmed, their heads, backs are full of scars and you see the violence there. You see the hate on every single horse. You see the abuse. You see the same thing on houses. You see a cruelty that hurts the soul. They have all been messed up so bad. But you're living in it you bone head! These houses are taking a beating. They have been taking a beating for 90 years straight.<sup>20</sup>

These narratives reflect how people might construct affective attachments to objects. It does not necessarily mean that the objects relay affective sensations. That is

---

yemeklerini bırakıyorlar. Bırakabildiklerini bırakıyorlar, alabildiklerini alıyorlar ve gidiyorlar. Ev hüzünlü. Ev üzgün. Ev mahvoluyor. Ev büyük bir kederde. Çünkü sahipleri gidiyor. Ona bakan, onu sıvayan, onu boyayan, ona gözü gibi bakan sahipleri gidiyor. Burada müthiş bir keder yaşanıyor evde ve o insanlar gidiyorlar ev hep yalnız kalıyor. Eyvah bir durum. Buraya kadar, filmin bu noktasına kadar müthiş bir dram. İkinci gün, hemen bir ertesi sabah eve yeni insanlar geliyor; Ayşe, Fatma, Ahmet, Mehmetler geliyor ama onlar da zaten üzgün. Onların yüzünden de düşen bin parça. onlar da ağlaya ağlaya bu eve yerleşiyorlar.

<sup>20</sup> Hayır! Yıkıntı. Hepsini de yıkıntı. Çöplük! O kadar çok üstü kabuk bağlamış ki, pislik bağlamış ki... Müştemilat. Biriket. Duvar. Helâ. O kadar çok pislik bağlamış ki etrafı. Ve orjinal, eski ve güzel olan unsur da o kadar eskimiş, çürümüş, yama görmüş ki o kadar böyle yaa bakımsızlık bir şiddet biçimidir. Bakımsız buradaki bütün evler. 90 senedir kimsenin aklına gelmiyor şu pencereleri bir kere boyayayım bari diye. Tamam mı? Gelmemiş gelmiyor böyle bir şey akıllarına ve orada o kadar kötü muamele görmüş ki bu binalar. Köyün atlarını hiç alıcı gözyle izledin mi? Yani at cinsinden dışarı çıkmış ucubelerdir hepsi de. Tüyleri uzamış, başları sırtları tepeden tırnağa yarayla dolu ve şiddeti görüyorsun orada. Nefreti görüyorsun her bir atın üstünde. Kötü muameleyi görüyorsun. Evlerde de aynı şeyi görüyorsun. İnsanın ruhunu acıtan bir hoyratlığı görüyorsun. Sıçılmış içine hepsinin de bütün evlerin. E içinde yaşıyorsun bre hayvan!! Dayak yiyor bu evler. 90 senedir durmadan dayak yiyorlar.

the point Navaro-Yashin makes. But these people, these emigres know that they are already forced to live in somebody else's house. These houses, fields, etc do not belong them and they carry the melancholia of immigration with them so it is to some extent inevitable for them to ascribe or see such sensations in the objects. Navaro I think can't quite state this point.

First of all, all kinds of knowledge production that is based on qualitative research methods –unlike quantitative research analysis- should be distant from the generalized and all-encompassing notions and judgments. In order to clarify my point I will give an example from my field. For instance, the neglect of the houses and the environment as I have stated over and over, might derive from the lack of attachment between the village and the people due to the crying houses, that is the negative energies discharged from the houses. Although this analysis is appropriate for most of the people, a more simple and straightforward reason should not be disregarded in this knowledge production process. The land and the properties in Şirince are protected by the law 2/B. Construction, renovation and even small maintenance like reparation of the windows are controlled and monitored. If anyone wants to do anything about the houses, first they have to be granted permission from the Council of Monuments and pay a considerable amount of money for the drawing of the project and start waiting until the permission is granted. On the one hand, these precautions are vital for the preservation of Şirince but at the same time the laws inhibit people's urge for making their environment better. Secondly, as it has been reported by a great number of the interviewees, there are inheritance problems among family members and this poses as a hindrance against the renovation of the houses. Funda points to this problem:

For instance, one of them lives in a shared house. You tell them to fix the front of the door, you get a mindset that goes “this is common property, why should we spend any money”. Are you spending on your enemy? You are sharing it with your brother. This, I mean, this village is falling apart because of this diseased mindset.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> Mesela ortak evleri içinde onlardan biri oturuyor. Şu kapının önünü düzelt diyorsun “e burası ortak mülk niye bi para harcayalım” diyen bir zihniyet. Kime düşmana mı harcıyorsun? Kardeşinle ortak yani. Böyle yani saçma sapan zihniyetlerden dolayı dökülüyor bu köy anladın mı?

In mediating between the object and the subject oriented knowledge production, Navaro-Yashin takes the energies of the objects as unchanging and same. I have already mentioned the subjective nature of social sciences. A specific object does not generate the same affect in a timeless manner but even if it did, not all the communities would be affected from that energy in the same way. What I am trying to say indeed is that there is a lack of temporality (historicity?) in Navaro-Yashin's analysis. When do the energies of the object change? If the same research on Cyprus were conducted today, would we come up with the same analysis? In the course of history communities have always been migrating between places, leaving their marks on the trees, the soil, the structures. Which one of these marks is more important than others? Which one of these marks will generate affects on the new comers? When Emrah told me "belki yeni nesil mutludur ama onların (former generation) mutlu olduğuna inanmıyorum," he marked a significant change of mood in Şirince. Thus, affect theory remains weak when change in time is considered.

Apart from the change in time, the subject's state of mind determines the ways s/he will be affected by the object's energy. No matter how the tears, the sorrows, and the melancholy that was left by the old inhabitants of Şirince had a negative impact on the new settlers, there are optimistic people in Şirince as well who regard these objects as a means of bonding with the past and present.

When I purchased the olive garden, I felt so alone; I had nowhere to go. I go and **talk to the trees**, I talk to the olive trees. **While talking to them, while hugging them, I started thinking all by myself. Well, who planted this tree first? When did they harvest the product? Did they laugh, have fun? Did they sing songs, or did they cry?** Especially when it was time to leave, how did they let go, that stuff... So I formed this philosophy. It is a romantic thing, I leave, I come back, all the time they... By the way, I come and go to Germany. And then, the... I started searching. (Mine)<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Ben zeytinliği aldığım zaman kendimi çok yalnız hissetim gidecek hiçbir yerim yok. Gidiyorum **ağaçlarla konuşuyorum**, zeytin ağaçlarıyla konuşuyorum. **Onlarla konuşurken, onlara sarılırken kendi kendime düşündüm. Yaa bu ağacı kim ilk önce dikti? Ürünü ne zaman topladılar, nasıl topladılar? Acaba güldüler mi eğlendiler mi? Şarkılar türküler mi söylediler, yoksa ağladılar mı?** Hele giderken nasıl bıraktılar falan... Böyle kendi kendime bir felsefe geliştirdim. Romantik bir şey, gidiyorum geliyorum, sürekli onları... Bu arada Almanya'ya da gidip geliyorum. Derken şey... Başladım aramaya.

Obviously the trees generated a positive affect on Mine. Mine's narrative can be regarded as an attempt to connect to a place, to make a place one's own, all the while acknowledging one's outsider or newcomer status. This narrative is followed by Mine's journey to Greece to find the first owner of her house. After a long and adventurous journey, Mine meets her former Greek neighbors. She later told me out of the blue an interesting anecdote. The first owner of Mine's house was a tailor. The tailor was a well-known and amiable person and her house was full of people all the time. "Evimden hiç insan eksik olmaz, her zaman şenşakrak misafirlerim olur burada. Bunda terzinin etkisi olduğuna inanıyorum. Ben buna inanıyorum. Evin ilk sahibesinin dikiş makinası sesini duyduğum bile olur" (Mine).

I have tried to bring out the constructive quality of the concept we call affect or emotions. Affects are subject to change in relation to time and people. Objects might generate different affects in different positions. When Navaro-Yashin was searching the roots of melancholy among the bushes, under the rocks, over the plateau, she overlooked the fact that even these feelings are to some extent constructions, and that they change their meanings when they are circulated in culture. The story of my thimble tells how:

One day I was passing by Seyfi's jewelry store at the corner of the village center. I said 'hi' to him and he immediately offered me a glass of tea. Our routine five-minute chats by the door of his shop were about anything and everything. I enjoyed his self-confidence. After we drank the tea, I was about to say goodbye when he entered into his store and came back with a weird object in his hand. It was a thimble, it was an old thimble and he told me, "this used to belong to the Greeks living here before, now it is yours". I can't tell how excited I was. As a person who is always in dialogue with the past and who loved nostalgia, I immediately started writing a fictional story of the owner of this little silver thimble. What I was holding was not just an object, but it was history in my hands. I felt as if I found a way to relate to the old dwellers of the village. I continued walking back to my house with feelings and ideas wandering in my mind. I saw Cevahir sitting in front of her house and in an over excited manner I approached her. I wanted to show her what Sedat had just given to me. She grabbed my thimble, gave a quick look on it and gave it back to me. She said: don't you trust whatever he says easily. I am sure this is just an ordinary thimble and a story he is making up. I looked at the thimble again. What I could only see now was just a small, superannuated, silver thimble.

## 2.8. “Şimdi ben kökümü arıyorum. ...Benim köküm ne?” Fluidity of Geographic Identities

I have started this chapter by trying to categorize people living in Şirince in terms of locality and outsidership. It was my expectation to clearly define the outsiders so as to base my research on their experiences in Şirince. However, the more I got to know the village and people in the village, the more impossible it became to make a clear definition of either Şirinceli, or outsider. In Şirince, because belonging is not very powerful, I cannot construct an image or a concept of local Şirinceli. It became clear that geographic identities are profoundly unstable and fluid. Being from Şirince may adopt different meanings and form in time and it is very subjective. In a different context Judith Butler defined sense of belonging as an ongoing process of reconstruction (Butler, 1990). As a result, the geographic identity or place-based identity in places where locality and outsidership merges into each other becomes a matter of positioning yourself in relation to various registers.

Reyhan’s situation illustrates how locality changes in relation to context. I have already drawn a general frame of Reyhan’s place identity. Apart from Reyhan’s already complex layers of geographic identity, her narrative is full of different self-positioning towards Şirince. In some contexts, she posits herself as a local, and in another context she differentiates herself from the village:

The people here are not the kind that judges the outsiders. In fact, when the outsiders are wealthy, they give up their property, they sell it. For the people here, money comes first. They don’t care much about the values in short. This is the way it is. Different. I find it very different.<sup>23</sup>

By the emphasis on the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, “buranın halkın,” and Reyhan differentiates herself from the village and makes it clear that she is not from them.

---

<sup>23</sup> Buranın halkı yabancıları yadırgayan tipler değiller. Hatta paralı oldu mu mallarını veriyorlar, satıyorlar. Buranın halkı için önce para geliyor. Çok fazla değerlere önem vermiyorlar yani. Böyle yani. Farklı. Bana çok farklı geliyor.



Şimdi onlar(people coming from the urban) paraları olduğu için evleri yıkıp yapıyorlar dipten. Her şeyin daha iyisini alıyorlar. Paralı geliyorlar buraya gelirken. İzin alman gerekiyor bir sürü şey. Mesela benim babamın çok fazla geliri yoktu. O yüzden de bir restorasyon falan geçirmede bu ev. Bir banyosunu yapmış babam, bir de 81'de 82'de o arka duvarı sıva yaptırmış bu. Başka bir şey yapmadık. Böyle kullanıyoruz. Bir de içinde olduğun için göçmüyor, bakılıyor ev. Ama hani, yan tarafta hani şimdi yapıyorlar.. Yeni yapılıyor hep. Param olsa da bu evi nasıl yıkarım tekrar yaparım onu düşünüyorm çünkü çok üzülüyorum. Çünkü ben biliyorum ki onu ben yaptım.

In this narrative over the economic situation she differentiates the ex-urbanite's position from her own. It is can be understood from Reyhan's case that the concept of locality is complicated in Şirince. Likewise Seyfi undergoes a similar process of questioning his geographic identity. In the first narrative below Seyfi asserts his Şirinceli identity over the property possessions:

I am from Şirince. My property is here, my investments are here, they are all here. After 1930, there is this freeway built to join Selçuk to İzmir. When that freeway was built, the road was paved. In 1960's, Adnan Menderes, may he rest in peace, widens the road, the train comes, once a week the train comes in 6 hours. It used to be once every 15 days. People need to be close to the road in order to trade. Anyone who tears down their house here builds a new one in Selçuk. At that time, here there is no construction supplies in Selçuk. They take the windows off the houses here, take the plywood, take the shingles, goes and builds a house in Selçuk. All the rich people from the rich neighborhood in the upper parts, those that are more interested in trading move to Selçuk. The number of houses here, which used to be 2500, drop down to 256. Those who stay here are the poor. In other words those who can't achieve anything else stay here. In reality, those who move away from here are all in Selçuk. We are the sons of this land. We come back.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> Ben Şirinceli'yim. Malım da burada, mülküm de burada, hepsi burada. Şirince1930'dan sonra Selçuk'tan İzmir'e yapılan bir ana yol var. O anayol yapılıncı, asfalt yapılıyor. 1960'larda Adnan Menderes, Allah rahmet eylesin yolu genişletiyor, tren geliyor, haftada bir tren 6 saate geliyor. Eskiden 15 günde 1 miş. İnsanlar ticaret yapabilmek için yola yakın olması lazım. Burada evini yıkan Selçuk'a yeni ev yapıyor. O zaman burada inşaat malzemesi satan yok Selçuk'ta. Burada evinin penceresini söküyor, tahtasını alıyor, kiremidini alıyor, gidiyor Selçuk'ta ev yapıyor. Yukarıdaki zengin mahallesindeki bütün zenginler, daha

In another interview, Seyfi explicitly signals to the constructionism of identities and leaves us with a difficult question:

My mother's side of the family had moved here from Thessaloniki. My father's side were nomads. I find myself thinking, am I a nomad, am I from Thessaloniki? I am looking at the nomads, I am looking at the Karakeçeliler clan, there is a book titled "Sarı Paşam", a book written by a lieutenant general. A book that belongs to Atatürk. I look at one side, the Karamanids. My grandfather's last name is Karaman. His higher name is Ali Bey of Hotan. Where is Hotan? In Turkmenistan. That's where we came from, our roots can be traced to Karaman. In Karaman, Mehmed the Conqueror disbanded the Karamanids because they were so great. Because he formed an empire. From there, my father's side migrates to Çandarlı, from Karakeçeliler, and my mother's side migrates to Thessaloniki. Looking at the past, with whom did we come? It is all explained in the book. We came with Suleyman Shah. While crossing the Great Zab, Suleyman Shah dies, they build a tomb for him there, together with his son. They move to Konya. Now, I am looking for my roots. I observe that the youth does not look for their roots. Roots are important. Roots are important, in that one must ask "What are my roots?"<sup>25</sup>

Now there is one question left. If Şirince as a space is devoid of locality as we know it, whom do I address as "outsiders" in the title of the research? With whom have I conducted the interviews? The 19 people I have interviewed for this research are both

---

ticaret düşkününü insanlar Selçuk'a taşınıyor. Buranın olan 2500 hane konut sayısı düşüyor 256'ya. Burada kalan garibanlar. Yani bir şey yapamayanlar burada kalıyor. Esas buradan göç eden hep Selçuk'ta. Biz buranın çocuklarıyız. Geri dönüyoruz buraya.

<sup>25</sup> Ben Selanik göçmeniyim annemden. Babamdan yürüğüm. Ben kendi kendime düşünüyorum, ben yürük müyüm, Selanik göçmeni miyim? Yörüğe bakıyorum, Karakeçeliler'e bakıyorum, Sarı Paşam diye bir kitap var, bir korgeneralin yazdığı kitap. Atatürk'e ait bir kitap. Bu tarafa bakıyorum Karamanoğlu beyliği. Dedemin soy ismi Karaman. Dedemin büyük ismi Hotanlı Ali bey. Hotan nerede? Türkmenistan'da. Biz oradan gelmişiz, kökümüz Karaman'a gelmiş. Karaman'da Fatih Sultan Mehmet çok büyük bir beylik olduğu için Karaman beyliğini dağıtmış. Çünkü imparator devlet kurmuş. Oradan baba tarafım Çandarlı'ya gelmişler, Karakeçelilerden, anne tarafım da Selanik'e geçmişler. Şöyle bir geriye dönüyorsun kimle gelmişiz? Kitapta hepsi yazıyor. Şah Süleyman ile beraber gelmişiz. Zapsuyu'nu geçerken Süleyman Şah ölmüş orada oğluyla beraber mezarını oraya koymuşlar. Konya'ya gelmişler. Şimdi ben kökümü arıyorum. Gençlere bakıyorum köklerini aramıyorlar. Kökler çok önemli. Kök önemli yani, Benim köküm ne?

locals and outsiders of Şirince. Hüseyin is an outsider because he was born and raised in Istanbul but he took his permanent residency in Şirince and he considers this act as a sign of becoming Şirinceli. İrina is an outsider because she is from Yozgat by family, born and raised in İstanbul and has been living in Şirince for six months. She tells me that “ben artık buranın kızı oldum.” Her uttering these words does not make her less Şirinceli than Reyhan. Eren has always stressed the importance of Şirince in his life as a place of self-realization. Mine tells me in between lines, “zamanla artık onlardan biriydim”. Serdar, who is regarded as the ultimate outsider in Şirince because of his ethnic identity, has been the most important figure in making Şirince a well-known tourism spot.

As a result, the place-based identity is the sum of the marks people leave on places and places leave on people. In this respect my interviewees are outsiders or locals of Şirince. But they are 19 people who have lived in big cities all their lives before finally deciding to move to Şirince and start a life in the village.

## CHAPTER 3: TO WHAT END PEOPLE MOVE TO ŞİRİNCE?

*“It appears to me that the answer to the question of why people come to Şirince is because it appears so pretty from a distance. Still so pretty. I mean, it is so rare in Turkey. In the Aegean region, it is extraordinarily rare. A village that appears as the village from the dreams is so rare. The surrounding area is so pretty. The valley that it sits inside is such a pretty valley. When you look at it from a distance, you start dreaming. Thinking that it is so pretty there. You get the feeling that this is the place from my dreams. When you get inside, this village is garbage, it is nothing else, but you fool yourself...” Serdar<sup>26</sup>*

### 3.1.Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have attempted to highlight the idea that place-identity, which is a specific way of relating to a place, is not a fixed identity. In the relationship one establishes with the place, neither the historical roots nor the places of origin are as much important as one’s desire and efforts to bond with the place. In other words, name

---

<sup>26</sup> *“İnsanlar Şirince'ye neden gelir sorusunun cevabı bana öyle geliyor ki, köyün uzaktan görünüşü çok güzel. Hâlâ çok güzel. Yani Türkiye'de çok ender. Ege Bölgesi'nde olağanüstü ender. Hayallerindeki köy gibi gözüken bir köy çok enderdir. Çevresi çok güzel. İçinde bulunduğu çanak çok güzel bir çanak. Uzaktan baktığın zaman böyle bir hayale kapılıyorsun. Burası çok güzel bir şey diye. Hayallerimdeki yer burası duygusuna kapılıyorsun. İçine girdiğin zaman çöplük bu köy başka hiçbir şey değil ama kendini kandırıyorsun...”*

it rootedness or hometown, place-identities can be constructed through one's aspirations and dreams about a particular place, in this case about Şirince. I have already explained that there is a wide range of ways and positions that enable a person to call herself or himself "Şirinceli," meaning "from Şirince." In the current chapter, I will be looking at how the ex-urbanites in Şirince have taken positions with regard to the construction of place-identity; through what kinds of place-production processes they have undergone; to what extent they have been able to adapt to a rural setting, and to what extent they have wanted to transform that particular setting. Yet, before embarking on such a demanding endeavor, it seems necessary to commence with these people's motivation(s) to migrate from the city to Şirince. In this respect, the chapter will concern the motivations and reasons for such migration, which designates the opposite direction of the common-sensical understanding or widespread trend of migrating from rural to urban.

Unlike rural-to-urban migration, which is fundamentally a result of social and economic changes in the urban setting and the industrialization of agricultural activities after 1950s, urban-to-rural migration is relatively a new phenomenon in Turkey. The literature focusing on the sociological aspects of this type of migration trend is very limited. Nevertheless, through observations and changes in population numbers, certain deductions about the idea of migration can be drawn. First of all, the population change between 1995 and 2000 shows us that 20,06% of the total population in this period migrated from urban to rural areas. This number is reported to be two times higher than the previous periods (Güreşçi, 2010:80). What caused 1.342.518<sup>27</sup> people to leave the urban life and move to the rural? For the time being, we are not able to bring a enlightening explanation to this question; however, certain guestimates have been made analyzing the social and economical backgrounds of the migrants. Mahmut Tezcan's research conducted in 2009 suggests that a considerable portion of the migration is constituted by people who are migrating back, that is, those who were originally rooted in the rural. Tezcan puts forward five different reasons for the urbanites' permanent migration to rural areas. These reasons are: 1-The excessive growth of the city, 2-Suburban migration, 3-Old age and retirement, 4-Economic hardships in the city, 4-New business opportunities outside of cities (Tezcan, 2009).

---

<sup>27</sup> The number is from Güreşçi, Ertuğrul

In the case of Şirince, the current population consists of 600 people and approximately 50 of these are the ex-urbanites, making up almost 10% of the total population. As a transition to the following chapter in which I will be developing my main argument about the production of ruralities, I find it useful to investigate what this quite dramatic ratio might be telling us. I plan to address significant issues regarding the dichotomy between city life and village life through the answers to the following question: “Why and how did you come to Şirince?”

I propose that people's motivation of changing their places and life styles elucidates their relationships with the city and the country. The question “why and how did you come to Şirince” not only addresses a certain time period in the past (i.e. the time of moving), but it also addresses the conditions and situations which paved the way for migrating to Şirince, as well as referring to the future by raising the issue of whether or not the “purpose” for the move has been fulfilled. In that regard, such a simple question does not only allow one to dig into the motivations for counter migration, but it also unveils the current affective or sentimental bonds with the dreams, desires, motivations, aspirations concerning people's abandonment of city for village and finally with the place by way of disclosing what is at the surface or in the depth of the narratives. The narratives provided as answers to the question above open up a number of discussions about the modernist imagination of the rural life, which is justified through various dreamy attachments to the village, as well as about what comes after this imagination; namely, what they have found in the village.

Starting with my personal story of going to a village in the first place, I will try to analyze the ex-urbanites' aspirations for moving to Şirince.

### **3.2. “Kendine Göre Özel Bir Araştırma Yapıyorsun Bence”: Self-Reflexivity**

Before discussing the reasons and purposes that brought urban dwellers to Şirince, as an urbanite doing research in this popular village, I would like to tell my reasons for choosing Şirince as the field of my research. I have to admit that carrying out research

in an Aegean village was not the plan when I started graduate school. Let alone doing my research in and on a village, I had no intention of doing ethnography. So, the question is: How did I end up here? On a scale from *techne* to *tuche*, the answer lies on the side of the pure chance: Tuche! I have left myself to the hands of destiny and/or chance. *I have followed the signs*<sup>28</sup>.

During the course of writing this thesis, I have repeatedly asked myself the question, “Why do I write this thesis?” I had not been able to come up with an answer until I read the following quotation from the interview with Funda:

Of course they like it. They like it but nobody goes “let’s stay here for days”. Everybody leaves that day. They leave on the same day. Oh it is such a nice place... There is no sea, there is nothing... *You’ll probably end up moving here, I think you’re investigating it for your own personal interests...* (Funda)<sup>29</sup>

The question I asked Funda was whether her friends come and visit her in Şirince. I knew that Funda was not eager to give an interview. Throughout the whole interview, her narratives were either left unfinished or very short. In the quotation above, Funda explicitly uncloaks her discomfort about the interview and/or me. Looking back to that day when I conducted the said interview, I can honestly state that my reply to Funda’s words was more surprising than her judgment about me. I fell into the denialist’s trap and panic laid hold of me, which left its influence on the way my voice sounded at that moment. I immediately started listing the things I loved about the city life and how this village could not sufficiently fulfill the requirements for my career or the career path that I dreamed to follow. I cannot tell whether Funda believed me or not, but analyzing myself today, I have to admit that I was simply trying to fool myself. My hidden drive to live in small places came to light after I read my blog posts where I stated this desire and my relationship with the village in a repeating and implicit fashion:

---

<sup>28</sup> Following the signs is an upcoming important theme in this chapter

<sup>29</sup> Seviyorlar tabii. Beğeniyorlar da yani günlerce ‘aman burada kalalım’ diyen yok. Herkes hemen o gün kaçıyor. Aynı gün gidiyorlar. Aman ne güzel yermiş... Deniz yok falan bir şey yok ya... *Sen buraya yerleşcen herhalde kendine göre özel bir araştırma yapıyorsun bence.*

Even though I will never experience those first feelings again, Şirince will always be a story of “solditude” and “being alone” for me. Great trees and nice stone paved roads will always greet me as a stranger, as a traveler in their shades. When Cavidan sees me, she will say “I told you, you are destined to this place”. Eren will tell me about the mysterious energies of the village. Me, on the other hand, will be running after articles and interviews during the day and whispering a Mohsen Namjoo song all alone while gazing at the great shadowless line of darkness during the night. I used to both fear and strangely enjoy being alone while I was in elementary school. Once, when I went out all alone on one of the breaks between the lectures, I felt a peculiar shuddering. So I tightly held onto my jumper and fled the school’s backyard with quick steps. Now this is the only place that gives me that feeling of becoming a stranger that I missed so bad. Without a single hole that I can run off from myself, too. To be trapped, be left hanging, not to be scared and fleeing and to love madly...<sup>30</sup>

All my life I have been struggling with a feeling of uneasiness towards Istanbul. I construct this city with metaphors of chaos, negativity, and struggle, as most of Istanbulites may do. I have been longing for a *fernweh*. The urge to find another hometown became clear in my field trips to Şirince when I questioned how I could manage to live here: “Bugünlerde epey sever oldum buraları. Az önce pansiyona gelirken burada hayat kurmak zor mu kolay mı diye düşünüyordum. Burada nasıl yaşanır kalem kalem saydım” (Fieldblog). Gradually getting used to the “village life,” I begin convincing myself to escape the “urban life” that I personally associated with all the inimical or unfriendly feelings, thoughts, or say, attachments. To some extent, I was

---

<sup>30</sup> Her ne kadar o ilk hisleri tekrar yaşayamayacak olsam da, Şirince benim için hep "yalnızlık" ve "tek olma" hikayesi olarak kalacak. Kocaman ağaçlar ve güzel taş yollar beni bir yabancı, bir yolcu gibi taşıyacak gölgelerinde. Cavidan beni gördüğünde "sana söylemişim, senin kaderinde burası var" diyecek. Eren, köyün gizemli enerjisinden bahsedecek. Bense gündüzleri makaleler ve mülakatlar arasında koşarken, geceleri tek başıma karşımda kocaman ve gölgesiz bir çizgi halinde uzanan siyahlığa bakarken bir Mohsen Namjoo şarkısı fısıldıyor olacağım. İlkokuldayken yalnızlıktan hem korkar hem de tuhaf bir zevk alırdım. Tek başıma tenefüse çıktığımda garip bir ürperti sarmıştı bir defasında. Ben de hırkama sıkıca sarılarak okul bahçesinden hızla yürüyüp okuldan kaçmıştım. İşte o özlediğim yabancılaşma ürpertisini bana verebilen tek yer burası. Kendimden kaçabileceğim tek delik olmadan hem de. Bir yerde sıkışıp kalmak, asılı kalmak, korkup kaçamamak ve delicesine sevmek...



“constructing” my own motivations to abandon a metropolitan to live in a village and to design Şirince as an ethnographic field for the purposes of my academic ambitions.

I have recognized that doing this research is closely related to my romantic sympathy or rather imagination that I have been nurturing for the rural and to the *disenchantment* with the city, which is why I came to Şirince in the first place. Funda was right; under the guise of doing research, I was rehearsing my future life. As I begin to discover my own reasons for coming to a village, Şirince, for graduate research, I begin to contemplate on the others'. What about the others? Why do they leave the city with abundant opportunities and move to Şirince? As I attempt to make a self-analysis vis-à-vis my motivations for coming to Şirince both in personal and academic terms, I realize more clearly that the disenchantment that shapes my distorted relationship with the city also serves for justifying my explanations or motivations for coming to Şirince and my intentions about what I am going to do there. That is to say, the feeling I have grown for a metropolitan life or let us say the disenchantment on my side with the demanding city help me understand how I disguise or justify my intentions towards Şirince. This line of thinking has shed light on my approach to the narratives of the interviewees when I asked them why and how they move to this village. However, at this point, it is vitally important for me as an ethnographer-to-be to strongly articulate that I have no intention to project my own intentions or motivations for coming to Şirince onto those of the ex-urbanites I have worked with during this entire research; in effect, it is the very situation that I will try to avoid. As a matter of fact, my attempts to perceive the reasons and motivations of these ex-urbanites, who are mostly disenchanted with the city life as I am, tremendously help me understand my own reasons for picking Şirince as a get-away place as well as a research field. In that regard, I will undertake an attempt to approach the narratives framing alleged reasons and motivations for coming to Şirince with a perspective on the reality of disenchantment with a urban life as well as on the re-enchantment initiatives mostly encompassing the activities the ex-urbanites carry out in Şirince to lead their lives in this small village, hence “abandoning” the disillusionment the city life has created for them.

### **3.3 The loop of enchantment and disenchantment**

With the purpose of making my point about disenchantment and how it is related to the ex-urbanites of Şirince clear, it is inevitably necessary to refer to the original utterer of the term “disenchantment” and to discuss the ever-evolving loop of enchantment-disenchantment-re-enchantment. Since Max Weber’s conceptualization, the phenomenon of disenchantment has long been regarded as a process related to the ideas of rationalization, enlightenment and modernity. It was 1917 when Max Weber wrote, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, where he portrays the “spirit” of the modern time:

The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization, and, above all, by the ‘disenchantment of the world.’ Precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have retreated from public life either into the transcendental realm of mystic life or into the brotherliness of direct and personal human relations. (Weber, 1946)

The context of the “disenchantment of the world” here is the rising sovereignty of secularism against religious faith. Disenchantment placed religion up onto the shelf of the irrational and hence, the unifying power of religion has been delegitimized and replaced with science and technology, the realm of the rational. Weber suggests that the world during Middle Ages had been enchanted; everything had a meaning, everything had a sacred value in the big picture. Joshua Landy and Michael Saler give a very compact account of the duality of religion and modernity in the introduction of their book *The Re-Enchantment of The World*:

While religious faith continued to exert its hold over the vast majority of industrialized souls, its claims had become considerably more modest. It now allowed secular law courts to adjudicate matters of morality; it permitted scientists to explain away the miracles of nature; it dismissed as frauds those whom it had formerly persecuted as heretics; and most of the time at least, it delegated cases of possession to psychologists and psychiatrists. Stone by stone, the more baroque buttresses on the cathedral of traditional belief were being carted away to the museum of cultural history (Landy and Saler, 2009:1)

In brief, the process of disenchantment is moving away from religion and concepts related to religion and coming closer to rationalism. It “implies a direct access

to reality, a stripping away of myth, magic, and the sacred” (Asad, 2003:13). In accordance with the Weber’s definition as well as with Landy and Saler’s interpretation of the term disenchantment and in order to think the disenchanted world in concrete terms, one might say that the disenchanted world in its original context designates the modern city life that we are experiencing every day, from which the sacred or the mythic is ripped off and where the rationalization of practices has thriven.

Social scientists, however, especially after the emergence of the neo-liberal era, brought new insights into Weber’s idea of “disenchanted world.” They maintain that Weber’s analysis is not complete because with the disappearance of religion from public life, new secular strategies of re-enchantment have been introduced (Landy, 2003; Saler, 2003; Paige, 2003; Umbach, 2003). “The progressive disenchantment of the World was thus accompanied, from the start and continually, by its progressive re-enchantment” (Landy and Saler, 2009:2). The prefix “re” does not signify a repetition of the enchantment of religion; rather, it is a set of strategies that fills the void created by the withdrawal of religion (Paige, 2003:159). In other words, it embodies a series of practices that strives to give the world its “enchantment” it once lost again. While modernity gives human beings material satisfaction, it never promises a spiritually comfort zone, thus the modern human has started finding his/her own creed in the opposite direction of modernity’s tools like reason, science, modern medicine etc. Recently people have grown interested in practices known as eastern medicine such as acupuncture, tui na (massage), quigong (exercise), against modern medicine; reiki against psychological therapies; prayers against yoga and praying against “sending message to the universe.” The rising interest towards spirituality has been explained and experienced by media appealing to feelings rather than to the mind. Experts on sociology of religion such as Cloud and Warner suggest that mysticism has intruded into our daily lives; the elements of popular culture like rock music or TV shows that divert people into a mode of trance are the terrains of rising spirituality (Cloud:2011, Warner:2010). Although the shapes and the names of the practices have changed, the teachings of a systematic religion and the teachings of spirituality and/or mysticism both promise the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the modern human. As a result, it is possible to observe that these new tactics of re-enchantment have replaced the old school enchantment of collective religion.

In this context, I propose that the intense emphasis on energy in Şirince is a re-enchantment strategy to fill the gap emanating from the lack of spirituality that was lacking in their former lives. I do not have any intention to suggest that people who believe in energy do not believe in religion, or to say that believing in energy or mystic things replaces religion. However, it is possible to observe that the re-enchantment through the prefix “re” reminds people the memory of believing: What was it like to believe? What were its comforts? As I already reflected, these are all different practices aiming at taking people to a meaningful and peaceful life. “Şehir insanı tüketiyor” [The city consumes you/people] told Funda once. The city life for an ordinary middle class family demands the person’s energy and strength in return for material gains. People always whine about not finding time for themselves. What they long for is not only quality time for themselves but high quality and meaningful relationships with people, as well. Such responses to the city life may lead people to seek an alternative form of living that could compensate for their disenchanted world and provide them with the re-enchanting strategies. These strategies might include a migration movement escaping from the city, as seen in the case of Şirince. Bearing these points in mind and in light of the various narratives concentrating on the “energy” that surrounds Şirince – a topic which will be investigated below – it is possible to consider Şirince as a place “constructed” with the strategies of re-enchantment, at least with such intentions; a place where the spirituality has been tried to be gained again.

The appraisal of Şirince is usually described over the analogies or metaphors of “heaven.” Heaven is the ultimate destination of religious faith, it is the ultimate promised reward; almost a promised land. In modern city life, there is no place for heaven as we know it. Heaven both in popular culture and in literature has always connoted the opposite of the values of modernity: it is the place to enjoy, to pass time, to not think but feel. Heaven is an abstract space where people ascribe meanings into this word through their imagination; it is an illusion; however, it seems that the idea of heaven has tried to be actualized as a “real physical space” in Şirince. Comparing Şirince to heaven, to a physically non-existent place, displays clearly how people are mesmerized, charmed, and re-enchanted with this particular place:

I am telling it from my point of view. It turns out that my life is heaven on earth as well. That is what I really believe, may God make such a thing possible for everybody. Because I feel unbelievably peaceful here. In the

morning, you wake up to birds singing. It is unbelievably beautiful. Look, even now there is the singing of the birds outside. Do you hear that? How can one not relax and be happy here? (Hayri)<sup>31</sup>

Hayri's statement explicitly epitomizes the attempt to create a new place where enchantment with the world seems possible again; he "constructs" his own version of heaven in Şirince. This construction implies a practice that includes recharging what has been lost – the gap emerging through the lack of an immaterial connection to the world. In Hayri's case, a particular village transforms into a space of spirituality – heaven – where he finds peace, thus re-enchanted with the world again.

I have already mentioned in the introduction part that I frequently read and gathered hotel pamphlets and hotel memoir books where tourists write their feelings and experiences about their holiday in the village. Most of the visitors describe the village and the hotel by words like, "a beautiful escape from the real world." Especially one visitor points to the dichotomy of reality and unreality over the metaphor of heaven or a magical place or a Biblical place that has no material signifier in the world – the garden of Eden – in the same way Sotiriou does:

Today really the first day of a new book? My entry, the first. A new book in my life as well. I am on my honeymoon. A week wed, yesterday. June 9th will forever be our anniversary and this place, Nişanyan Hotel, our garden of Eden. This place is magic. Places where daydreams go wild. Keeper of quietly whispered secrets and laughter...

There are two more important points to make about re-enchantment strategies of ex-urbanites. First of all, when I suggested that moving to Şirince for spiritual enrichment is a re-enchantment strategy and this strategy is a modernist production, I did not overlook the fact that in Anatolian culture, there are lots of pre-modern mystical and spiritual elements that have nothing to do with religion as well. Most of them are either

---

<sup>31</sup> Ben kendi açımdan söylüyorum. Demek ki ben de dünyada bir cenneti yaşıyorum. Ona inanıyorum gerçekten çünkü Allah herkese böyle bir şey nasip etsin. Çünkü inanılmaz huzur buluyorum burada. Sabahleyin kalkıyorsunuz kuş sesleriyle. İnanılmaz güzel. Bakın şimdi dışarıda kuş sesleri var. Duyuyor musunuz? Yani insan nasıl relaks, mutlu olmasın burada.

reminiscent of the Shaman culture or superstitious interpretations of Islam. Evil-eye, kurşun dökme, fortune-telling, casting spell, summoning a genie etc. are some of the activities coming from the past and that are still practiced and believed. So, the following questions can be asked: Why is re-enchantment a modernist production? These activities are as much non-scientific and irrational as the activities of the ex-urbanites in Şirince. They also fulfill certain affective or spiritual gaps constituted by a loss that comes with the modernist disenchantment because for something to be re-enchantment, it first has to be dis-enchanted. The long rooted Anatolian culture does not experience a rupture in terms of following their traditions. Ex-urbanites, on the other hand, mostly come from middle-class families who do not have organic ties with Anatolian village life. I asked whether they had their own village and if they went there when they were children, and most of them replied “no”:

Pınar: Then, do you have your own village?

Hayri: Good question. This could be one of the reasons why I came here. I think about it myself from time to time. Back in my youth, in my childhood, whenever it was vacation time, on the days when we were to rest, our friends would always say “we are going to our village”. We would be either “taking a vacation” or going to a holiday resort, or to a hotel. We would take a map and go to vacations where we would spend a day at each place. Maybe now I say of course it is my village. Maybe that’s what attracted us to here. Why don’t we have a village? The idea could be that let this place be our village.

\*\*\*

Pınar: So your family doesn’t have a village, an Anatolian village?

Funda: Yeah, well, we had a village in Istanbul... It ceased to be a village now.

\*\*\*

Pınar: Do you have your own village? From family?

Zerrin: Both my mother and my father were born in İstanbul. My maternal grandmother is Çerkez. Her husband is from İzmir. Since my father’s side of the family is in the air force, they have lived a nomadic life, he has migrated from Vidin. After that, my paternal grandmother is also from İstanbul.

Pınar: In your childhood, there is no such thing as going to your homeland during the summers.

Zerrin: No such thing. My homeland is İstanbul. I didn't have any ties to any villages in my childhood. Maybe that is why I'm so curious, who knows...<sup>32</sup>

As it is clear, the profile of the ex-urbanites are mostly people who did not have the village experience, who did not experience the enchantment with the mystical, spiritual, superstitious practices thoroughly.

The second point about re-enchantment is related with the ex-urbanites' perception of the place. In the introduction of this chapter, I have told that the village status of Şirince is open to debate. When I was in the village I sometimes felt as if I was in a small province and sometimes felt as if I was in my grandmother's village for several reasons. I will go deeper into the discussion on place perception in the following

---

<sup>32</sup> Pınar: Peki sizin kendi köyünüz var mı?

Hayri: Güzel bir soru. Benim buraya gelmemin nedenlerinden biri de bu olabilir aslında. Bunu zaman zaman ben de kendim muhakeme ediyorum. Gençliğimden çocukluğumdan beri tatil olduğunda dinlenme icap eden günlerde, arkadaşlarımız çocukluğumuzdan beri "biz köyümüze gidiyoruz" derlerdi. Biz de işte "tatile gidiyoruz" ya bir tatil köyüne, ya da bir otele. Elimize haritayı alarak günübirlik bir yerlerde kalarak tatiller yapıyorduk. Belki de şimdi ben tabii ki köyüm diyorum buraya. Belki de bizi buraya çeken o oldu. Niye bizim bir köyümüz yok. Bizim köyümüz de burası olsun mantığı olabilir yani.

\*\*\*

Pınar: Yani aileden bir köyünüz, Anadolu köyünüz yok muydu?

Funda: Ya işte İstanbul'da vardı bir köyümüz de... Köylükten çıktı artık.

\*\*\*

Pınar: Senin kendi köyün var mı? Aileden?

Zerrin: Benim annem de, babam da İstanbul doğumlu. Anneannem Çerkez. Onun kocası İzmirli. Baba tarafım da havacı asker olduğu için hep göçer hayat yaşamışlar, o Vidin göçmeni. Ondan sonra babannem de İstabullu.

Pınar: Çocukluğunda sizin yazın memlekete gitmek diye bir şey yok.

Zerrin: Yok. Benim memleketim İstanbul. Çocukken köy ilişkim de yoktu. O yüzden de belki merak ediyordum kim bilir.

chapter. However, for the time being, I only would like to mention one last aspect of the re-enchantment strategies so as to prove why it is a modern production.

The following quotation from Landy and Saler's article does not only explain re-enchantment further, but it also enlightens some of the questions about place perception in Şirince: "If the world is to be re-enanted, it must accordingly be reimbued not only with *mystery* and *wonder*, but also with *order*, perhaps even with a *purpose*; there must be a hierarchy of *significance* attaching to objects and events encountered" (Landy and Saler, 2003:2).<sup>33</sup> So, what I am trying to arrive at is that the migration of ex-urbanites to Şirince for re-enchantment with the world does not always have to be solely about mysticism or withdrawal. Re-enchantment does not ask for a secluded, rural life. It is not contradictory to look for peace in Şirince while at the same time engaging in the tourism business. In other words, the fact that these ex-urbanites are engaged in some sort of business practices that earn them good money is not contradictory to their search for re-enchantment; their desire to escape the hole intense modern urban life created. Landy and Saler's argument illuminates the modernist idea of re-enchantment that is not independent of a purposeful and orderly structure. What one observes in Şirince is not the pure concentration of spiritual activities that reaffirms ex-urbanite's bond with the space. However, the re-enchantment strategies bring along most of the urban habits of these ex-urbanites; they do not abandon a business-driven activity, instead they build an economic industry – tourism – in the village. Their engagement in the economic activities bring a new "order" to Şirince; a new social and economic order that re-defines the structure of the village as well as the relations of production, particularly between ex-urbanites and "local" villagers. Moreover, the non-spiritual or material activities of ex-urbanites embody a very simple purpose: the purpose of economic survival. Yet, it is necessary to be careful not to reduce their worldly activities such as running businesses to the need to survive economically. The purpose within the context of re-enchantment attempts might vary; it might be the attempt to continue some of the characteristics belonging to their former lifestyle or might be the need to lead a meaningful and purposeful life that accommodates miscellaneous order-conserving activities. These people have lived all their lives in the urban setting, they are used to a certain type of life style with a certain world-view. The modern human has been trained

---

<sup>33</sup> Italics by the authors



to live with certain value judgments and purposes in his/her mechanical high-tech life; it would not hurt if s/he is asking a little bit of that life as well, together with serenity and peace, would it?

To sum up, I have suggested that the ex-urbanites have moved to Şirince mostly for economic reasons and because of their disenchantment with modern city life. Although they do not say it frankly, they came with certain aspirations and dreams. I am aware of the fact that in terms of ethnographic material, these aspirations and dreams are not clearly defined. Moreover, it seems as if it is hard to make this analysis with the insufficient ethnographic material regarding the interviewees' comparisons of the city and the village. However, the fact that the ex-urbanites have not told explicitly either their dreams or the differences between the city and the village do not confute my thesis but it suggests that people in Şirince for certain reasons that I will delve into detail in the following chapter could not re-enchant their world. The neither-village-nor-city position of Şirince is what opened the doors to the modern urbanites but at the same time it is what made them disappointed to the extent that they can no longer openly tell about their dreams in the first place. The production of Şirince by a modernist imagination has created both an impasse and disillusionment for people, which constitutes the topic of the following chapter.

### **3.4. “Bizim de bir gelire ihtiyacımız var”: Economic Reasons**

In this section, I will try to suggest that economic reasons and motivations play a part in explaining why ex-urbanites have come to Şirince. Looking at and analyzing the economic activities these ex-urbanites undertake, it becomes clearer that the motive to re-enchant their lives is so intricately related with their ongoing economic operations that it is hard to tell whether they have come here purely for economic reasons disguised through discourses on re-enchantment strategies or these economic activities are only a result of their need or attempt to partly continue some of their urban habitat or habits.

Most of the ex-urbanites in Şirince today engage in tourism activities. There are only a handful of people who do not benefit from the tourism industry. The rest either own or rent old Greek houses that they have turned into bed and breakfast facilities. The

influence of ex-urbanites in the production of Şirince as a site of tourism is so great that Turgut Var, in his analysis of Şirince as a touristic place, puts forward the disagreement between the early settlers and ex-urbanites as a cause of rudimentary business practices. “The first factor relates to the conflicts between residents and outsiders in developing tourist facilities. Restoration of existing houses for bed and breakfast business by outside investors causes considerable irritation between local groups and investors” (Var, 2003:26) Var’s analysis discloses another side of the complicated relationship between the re-enchantment practices and economic activities. As discussed above, the foundation of tourism establishments by ex-urbanites who migrated to this village with the hope of finding peace and re-enchanting their world organizes a new economic setting in the village. It is indubitable that this new economic structure constitutes some kinds of clash and conflict between the “locals” and “ex-urbanites” – as might be described as “outsiders,” and thus re-shaping the social relations of production on a class. I will not further get into discussion of the class background of the actors in Şirince. In the first chapter, the fact that these ex-urbanites mostly come from an educated middle class background as opposed to villagers has been already discussed. At this point, it is crucial to add to Var’s analysis that the tension between the outside investors and locals is both based on class and it also re-structures the class relations. Therefore, what does this class-based economic tension leave the ex-urbanites with? Is it really too far from the tension they escaped from or is it another version of the disenchantment they hope to have abandoned in the city? I will attempt to answer these questions in the following chapter.

Moreover, as opposed to voluntary simplicity movement, which is a poetic alternative to consumerism and which might be considered in relation to a re-enchantment strategy in contrast to urban life-style demands, the consumption level of the sources in the process of touristic operations is not even close to ideals of rural tourism. Food and dairy products are obtained from big supermarkets and local production is replaced by imported mass-produced items; on an ordinary weekend one may easily smell the exhaust of the cars in the village etc. Rural tourism on the other hand, is the country experience that encompasses a wide range of attractions and activities that take place in agricultural or non-urban areas. Its essential characteristics include wide-open spaces, low levels of tourism development, and opportunities for visitors to directly experience agricultural and/or natural environments (Lane, 1994).

Unlike the definition of rural tourism, the idiom “make it up as you go along” would describe best the tourism operations in Şirince. Since there was neither any control over these new touristic operations nor a planned transformation, Şirince has quickly become a heaven not just for those who fall in love with the beauty of the village, but also for people who are expecting to get their shares from the recent change. Ex-urbanites who came before 1990s have adapted themselves to this tide of profiting from the tourism industry. Mine’s narrative on the transformation of Şirince as a touristic sight:

Şirince is undergoing a gradual change. People from the city started showing up. Travel shows on the television encouraged this. Our villagers, to their surprise, handled this change very well. They started carrying everything to the village square, from stuffed grape leaves to whatever they had in their linen closet. First stands started to form. But in such a small time after, these goods were sold out. All the hand made laces and embroideries were sold out. Little by little, goods from Denizli and Buldan appeared in the market. Then, goods from Taiwan and China that looked like hand made but were actually fake started to show up. Wine is still home made, sold in plastic bottles or rakı bottles. That’s how it was in the early 90’s. We need some income as well. (Mine)<sup>34</sup>

As people began to integrate into the new demands of the village as a site of tourism, more and more people came to Şirince for economic purposes. No matter how much they earn from tourism, the ex-urbanites are not very enthusiastic about highlighting their investor or business manager identities. In other words, they do not frankly say that they moved to Şirince to earn a living or that they continue to stay here for economic reasons. Among them, only Eren and Cavidan told very bluntly how and why they moved to Şirince:

It used to be a cycle of come and go, come and go. Then, I became aware that

---

<sup>34</sup> Şirince’de yavaş yavaş bir değişim yaşıyor. Şehirliler gelmeye başladı. *Gezelim Görelim* programları bunu teşvik etti. Köylümüz şaşkınlıkla bu olayı çok iyi bir şekilde yakaladı. Evlerinden zeytinyağı, sabuk sandıklarında ne varsa taşımaya başladılar köy meydanına. İlk tezgahlar olmaya başladı. Ama çok kısa bir süre sonra tükendi bu mallar. Çeyiz sandıklarındaki danteller, iğne oyları tükendi. Yavaş yavaş Denizli’den, Buldan’dan mallar gelmeye başladı. Daha sonra Tayvan işi, Çin işi el oyası gibi olan ama feyk mallar piyasaya gelmeye başladı. Şarap halen ev şarabı, plastik şişede, rakı şişesinde satılıyor. O dönemlerdeyiz 90 başları. Bizim de bir gelire ihtiyacımız var.

tourism started to develop here. After learning that there was action, an action in terms of tourism, I started coming and going very frequently. I began to stay in the first bed and breakfast places that opened up in the village. In the following years, with what we call the energy groups such as this quantum, blue energy, energy of quantum, energy of light, I again had friends from those energy groups. Some of them began coming and going a lot. Because of its closeness to us, because of the stressful environment that I was working in, this was the best place where I could relieve the stress upon me. I had lived in Gökçeada. I left Gökçeada and moved to İzmir. After I moved to İzmir, after I realized once more that I didn't want to stay and live in İzmir, I started an investigation. An investigation about what I could do where. While I was inclined to exercise my right and my choice towards the general Southeastern area, a friend here, who asked "Why are you going there? You like the greenery very much, I know very well that you have been coming and going for years. Come to Şirince, let's do something together in Şirince" caused me to come here. And thus I came. I started running this guest house. I didn't know it was so easy. (Eren)

\*\*\*

Your uncle Mustafa is in İzmir. We didn't move out from that apartment completely. And from that day on, we have been here Pınar. But what I had imagined was... That dream is becoming a reality. We'll go to Şirince. I mean, for this place. We'll live there and make friends and work there at the same time. So we won't get bored, we'll make a living at the same time. That dream is coming to life. We became acquainted with nice people, we don't get bored. Did we go through tough times? Yes we did. When I first came here, I used to cry so hard. I cried so loud.

-And how did you come up with Şirince?

-I came up with it. What could you do after that age? I want to work. And what I know the best is cooking. I come and go since I was 5. My sister Pervin is married and living here. I know this village, I am accustomed to it. I thought we could make a living here. I hardly convinced your uncle Mustafa and brought him here. (Cavidan)<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> Gel git, gel git oluyordu. Ondan sonra burada turizm başladığını öğrendim ben. Artık burada bir hareketin, turizm anlamında bir hareketin olduğunu öğrendikten sonra çok sık gidip gelmeye başladım. Köyün ilk açılan pansiyonlarında kalmaya başladım. Ondan sonraki senelerde enerji grupları dediğimiz bu kuantum, mavi enerji, kuantum enerjisi, ışık enerjisi gruplarının enerjisiyle beraber benim yine o arkadaşlarım vardı o enerji gruplarından. Onların bazısı çok fazla gelmeye gitmeye başladı. Bizimle olan yakınlığından dolayı çalıştığım ortamın stresinden dolayı benim stresimi atabildiğim en iyi yeri burası. Gökçeada'da yaşamıştım. Ayrıldım Gökçeada'dan, İzmir'e geldim. İzmir'de geldikten sonra yine İzmir'de durmak istemediğimi ve yaşamak istemediğimi

These two narrative pieces by Cavidan and Eren explicitly demonstrates the economic motivations for people's moving to Şirince. What is more interesting is that in addition to economic gains, these people strikingly emphasize the change in their spiritual world after moving to the village. It is interesting to note that the motivation to

---

anlayınca, bir araştırmaya girdim. Nerede ne yapabilirim diye. Ben genelde hakkımı ve tercihim Güneydoğu'dan yana kullanacakken, burada bir arkadaşım vasıta oldu, "Eren neden oraya gidiyorsun? Yeşilliği sen çok seviyorsun, yıllar yılı da gidip geliyorsun ben çok iyi biliyorum. Gel Şirince'ye, Şirince'de beraber bir şeyler yapalım" dedi. Öylelikle geldim. Bu evi işletmeye başladım. Ben bu kadar kolay olduğunu bilmiyordum.

\*\*\*

Mustafa abin İzmir'de. Oradaki evi kapatmamıştık. İşte o günden beri de buradayız Pınar. Ama şey hayal etmişim. O hayalim de gerçekleşiyor. Şirince'ye gideriz. Yani burası için. Hem otururuz, hem güzel dostluklar kurarız, çalışırız. Yani sıkılmayız, hem paramızı da kazanırız. O hayalimiz gerçekleşiyor. Güzel insanlar tanıyoz, sıkılmıyoz. Sıkıntılı dönemler geçirmedik mi, geçirdik. İlk geldiğim dönem avazım çıktığı kadar ağlıyordum. Bağıra bağıra bağıra ağlıyordum.

-Peki Şirince nereden aklınıza geldi?

-Benim aklıma geldi. O saatten sonra yapabileceğin ne iş olabilir? Ben çalışmak istiyorum. En iyi bildiğim şey de yemek. 5 Yaşından beri gidip geliyorum. Pervin ablam burada evli ya. Bu köyü biliyorum, tanıyorum. Burada bir iş yapabileceğimizi düşündüm ben. Mustafa abini de zorla ikna ettim, getirdim. (Cavidan)Gel git, gel git oluyordu. Ondan sonra burada turizm başladığını öğrendim ben. Artık burada bir hareketin, turizm anlamında bir hareketin olduğunu öğrendikten sonra çok sık gidip gelmeye başladım. Köyün ilk açılan pansiyonlarında kalmaya başladım. Ondan sonraki senelerde enerji grupları dediğimiz bu kuantum, mavi enerji, kuantum enerjisi, ışık enerjisi gruplarının enerjisiyle beraber benim yine o arkadaşlarım vardı o enerji gruplarından. Onların bazısı çok fazla gelmeye gitmeye başladı. Bizimle olan yakınlığından dolayı çalıştığım ortamın stresinden dolayı benim stresimi atabildiğim en iyi yerdin burası. Gökçeada'da yaşamışım. Ayrıldım Gökçeada'dan, İzmir'e geldim. İzmir'de geldikten sonra yine İzmir'de durmak istemediğimi ve yaşamak istemediğimi anlayınca, bir araştırmaya girdim. Nerede ne yapabilirim diye. Ben genelde hakkımı ve tercihim Güneydoğu'dan yana kullanacakken, burada bir arkadaşım vasıta oldu, "Eren neden oraya gidiyorsun? Yeşilliği sen çok seviyorsun, yıllar yılı da gidip geliyorsun ben çok iyi biliyorum. Gel Şirince'ye, Şirince'de beraber bir şeyler yapalım" dedi. Öylelikle geldim. Bu evi işletmeye başladım. Ben bu kadar kolay olduğunu bilmiyordum.

\*\*\*

Mustafa abin İzmir'de. Oradaki evi kapatmamıştık. İşte o günden beri de buradayız Pınar. Ama şey hayal etmişim. O hayalim de gerçekleşiyor. Şirince'ye gideriz. Yani burası için. Hem otururuz, hem güzel dostluklar kurarız, çalışırız. Yani sıkılmayız, hem paramızı da kazanırız. O hayalimiz gerçekleşiyor. Güzel insanlar tanıyoz, sıkılmıyoz. Sıkıntılı dönemler geçirmedik mi, geçirdik. İlk geldiğim dönem avazım çıktığı kadar ağlıyordum. Bağıra bağıra bağıra ağlıyordum.

-Peki Şirince nereden aklınıza geldi?

-Benim aklıma geldi. O saatten sonra yapabileceğin ne iş olabilir? Ben çalışmak istiyorum. En iyi bildiğim şey de yemek. 5 Yaşından beri gidip geliyorum. Pervin ablam burada evli ya. Bu köyü biliyorum, tanıyorum. Burada bir iş yapabileceğimizi düşündüm ben. Mustafa abini de zorla ikna ettim, getirdim.

find spiritual peace in a village full of economic opportunities explains how the discourse of re-enchantment does not only concern achieving one's immaterial goals. Moreover, the emphasis on more non-purposeful conditions leading people to Şirince is also visible in most of the narratives. People claim that it is not their will or desire that cause their migration; but coincidences and electricity or vibration of the village, which indicates almost a superior-power above their personal willpower. The narratives below might provide a better understanding of this argument.

### 3.5. Narratives

At this point it must have become obvious that this thesis is not only about the ex-urbanites of Şirince, but also about myself; my prejudices, my misunderstanding, my self-discovery. The reason why I shared my self-reflexive experience about coming to Şirince is that my story as an urbanite has similarities with those of ex-urbanites in Şirince. The role of *signs* and *destiny* is very important in deciding to move to Şirince. When I said, "I have followed the signs," I was indeed referring to Müge's words:

Köklülük çok güzel bir şey. Ben bi taraftan da Haymatlozluyum. Yani Bursalıyım. İsviçre'de büyümüşüm, İzmir'de üniversiteye gitmişim. Yani bir yere kök salcaksam (şimdi geriye baktığımda böyle değerlendiriyorum) güzel ve özel bir yer olması lazım diye hissettim demek ki. *O hep işaretler... Ben bunu oturup düşünmedim. İşaretler öyle yönlendirdi* (emphasis added).

Besides the *signs*, there were other elements that caused people move to Şirince: *mystery, chance, luck, energy, power, destiny* etc. I will share similar narratives that do not fit into the frame of logic and rationale especially when we are talking about such a big and influential decision about life –changing your address, your life style, and your habits:

### 3.5.1 Cavidan's story: This village has changed my spiritual feelings and faith

Once more I felt stressed. I went crazy. Our financial difficulties are too much. I share with Eren. Eren says –He is such a spritual person. He gets fixated on it- “Cavidan” he said, “when I feel stressed and when I want things to change, I burn oriental sweetgum, it helps me so much. Would you like to try?”. I don't know if you know about oriental sweetgum tree. They burn it during occasions such as ceremonial prayers after the dead, it smells so nice. Have you ever been to a ceremonial prayer? In fact, they used to burn that. I don't know if they still have that tradition. “Why don't you try that” he said. “Okay” I said, “let's try”. He brought it. He instructed me on how to burn it. Lay some hot charcoal on a scoop, lay these over them, move it around the house like incense, and it smells so nice. Keep the rest in front of the door, let that scent get inside the house. I did. The same night, a lady and a gentleman, husband and wife, came to me for dinner in half past midnight. Again thanks to Eren. Me and Reyhan are hanging out during a summer night. Eren calls me. “Cavidan, there is this such and such couple, they want to eat. They want to eat at your place and nowhere else, could you prepare something?” he says. “Of course” I replied. I opened up at half past midnight. We sat down and talked till 3 am. So those people have opened up a path for me. There is no such thing as a coincidence, the fact that everything happens for a purpose... The woman tells me if I came here, I have a reason to come here. If you are here, you have a reason as well, you have a purpose, that is why you are here. Maybe I came for you. I came all the way from Germany to Şirince, that was my purpose, she said.

Cavidan: This village changed both my spiritual feelings and beliefs. I started seeing visions on stones and such. Very strange things started to happen. For instance, there was no such thing until 3-4 months ago. A figure of Virgin Mary appeared in my bathroom. Let me show it to you in the morning. A Virgin Mary figure appeared. I showed it to both your uncle Mustafa and Eren. For instance, I see a figure on this stone. Sometimes it is a female, sometimes a male. One evening I had a glass of wine. It was a time of great stress. I prayed: “Please God! Take away, away, away these troubles”, and I realized a women looking at me there. That night, somehow, everything was digged into and my sufferings were gone. Next day, I saw that it became male.

Pınar: Cavidan, so it seems the troubles were all woman's! (laughters)

Cavidan: For instance now, it is a male figure and it looks very much like your uncle Mustafa...<sup>36</sup>

### 3.5.2. Zerrin's story: Not will and desire, but driven by coincidences

So it is something I would especially like to mention, it is concerned with the title of your thesis. Transitioning to the life of village from İstanbul, or

---

<sup>36</sup> Gene böyle çok bunaldım. Delirdim gene. Maddi sıkıntılarımız da çok fazla. Eren'le paylaşıyorum. Eren dedi ki, *-O ruhani şeylere çok fazla inanıyor. Çok takıyor-* "Cavidan abla" dedi, "ben çok bunaldığımda bir şeylerin değişmesini istediğimde günlük yakıyorum bana çok iyi geliyor. Denemek ister misin?" dedi. Günlük ağacı bilir misin bilmem. Mevlütlerde falan yakarlar, o güzel güzel kokar. Hiç gittin mi mevlüde? Aslında yakarlardı. Şimdi kalktıysa o adet bilmiyorum. "Bir denesene" dedi. "Olur" dedim deneyelim. Getirdi. Nasıl yakacağını söyledi. Şöyle küreğin içine birkaç tane köz koy üstüne de bunları at, şöyle evin içinde gezdir tütsü gibi, çok da güzel kokulu bir şey. Kalanı da dedi kapının önüne koy, evin içine girsin o koku. Yaptım. Aynı gece bir bayanla bir bey, karı koca, gece yarımında bana yemeğe geldiler. Yine Eren sayesinde. Ben de Reyhan'da oturuyorum yaz günü. Eren bana telefon açtı. "Cavidan abla böyle böyle bir çift var, yemek yemek istiyorlar. Hani illa sende yemek istiyorlar, bir şeyler hazırlar mısın" dedi. "Tabii" dedim. Gece yarımında açtım. Oturduk gece saat 3'e kadar onlarla konuştuk. İşte o insanlar bir yol açtılar bana. Hiçbir şeyin tesadüf değil, her şeyin bir nedeninin olduğu... Kadın diyor ki *ben buraya geldiysem, benim gelmek için bir nedenim vardır. Sen buradaysan senin de bir nedenin var, amacın var onun için buradasın. Belki ben senin için geldim.* Almanya'dan kalktım, senin için geldim Şirince'ye amacım oydu dedi.

Cavidan: *Bu köy ruhani duygularımı da inançlarımı da değiştirdi. Artık taşlarda falan hayaller görmeye başladım. Çok ilginç şeyler olmaya başladı. Mesela 3-4 ay öncesine kadar yoktu. Banyomda bir Meryem Ana figürü ortaya çıktı. Yarın sabahleyin göstereyim. Bir Meryem Ana figürü çıktı ortaya. Mustafa abime, Eren'e de gösterdim. Mesela şu taşa bir figür görüyorum. Bazen kadın oluyor, bazen erkek. Bir akşam bir kadeh şarap içtim. Çok sıkıntılı bir zamanımdı. Dua ettim: "N'olur Allahım! Şu sıkıntılarımı al al al" diye, diye bir baktım orada bir bayan bana bakıyor. O gece bir şekilde her şey deşildi, deşildi ve acılarım bitti. Ertesi gün baktım o erkek oldu.*

Pınar: Cavidan abla yani dert kadına has mıymış? (laughters)

Cavidan: Şu an mesela bir erkek figürü ve Mustafa abime çok benziyor...



actually from the big city was not something that happened with *my own will and desire, it was somehow coincidental* (emphasis added) but if I came on my own will, perhaps I would go back sooner but as I lived, I witnessed that this coincidence was one that touched me.<sup>37</sup>

### 3.5.3. İrina's story: Not thinking business but...

This year, something actually happened. I actually wanted to get a break from İstanbul and possibly because of the busy schedule of the projects, such a thing came up just as I was looking to get away from İstanbul. My friend who is the owner of the property here asks why are you going to Amasya? I wanted to go to Amasya to be in my own homeland, to build a house and live there. "Move to Şirince instead", "nope" I said, "I don't want anything in terms of business". At the point where I told I really wanted to shut myself down and rest, this place was offered. At first, I declined a lot. I wasn't thinking about it at all. At that time, I found myself in Şirince. Even when I was in Şirince, I wasn't thinking about it, I made up my mind when I finally said "okay, I'm doing it". That day, I settled down. My friends sent my things later.<sup>38</sup>

### 3.5.4 Hayri's Story: People with positive energy can stay here

I had never heard of this village before. I never became curious enough to come. When I came here, I liked it a lot. We walked around. I bought this land. I don't know, maybe there was something that attracted me to here. My

---

<sup>37</sup> Yani özellikle söylemek istediğim bir şey sonuçta senin tezinin başlığını ilgilendirecek İstanbul'dan daha doğrusu büyük şehirden kasaba yaşantısına geçmek *kendi irademle ve arzumla değil, biraz tesadüflerle oluşmuş* ama kendi irademle gelseydim belki daha erken dönerdim ama bu tesadüfün bana değen bir tesadüf olduğunu yaşadıkça gördüm.

<sup>38</sup> Bu sene aslında bir şey oldu. Ben aslında İstanbul'dan kurtulmak istiyordum ve herhalde projelerin de yoğunluğundan olsa gerek tam İstanbul'dan gitmek istediğimde böyle bir şey çıktı. Buranın mülk sahibi arkadaşım neden Amasya'ya gidiyorsun. Ben Amasya'ya kendi memleketime gidip orada bir ev yapıp orada yaşamak istiyordum. "Onun yerine Şirince'ye taşın", "yok" dedim, "ben iş olarak bir şey düşünmüyorum". Gerçek anlamda kendimi kapatıp biraz dinlenmek istediğimi söylediğim noktada buranın teklifi geldi. Önceleri çok reddettim. Hiç düşünmüyordum. O arada yolum Şirince'ye düştü. Şirince'ye yolum düştüğünde dahi düşünmüyordum artık son gün "tamam artık tutuyorum" dediğim noktada karar verdim. O gün yerleştim. Eşyalarımı arkadaşlarım arkamdan gönderdi.

wife didn't like it at all. Me, I loved it. I'm trying to make her love it as well, at the same time I'm trying to bring her here but I don't know how much I will succeed. Let me put it this way. Lots of things are said here. It is about the magnetic energies. I –of course, it is something about one's point of view– I believe that there is positive energy here. I believe that people who have positive energy can live here. I believe that people with negative energy cannot live here. Anyway, what I feel and observe here is that people with negative energy run away from here, they can't do it here, they get sick and leave. People with positive energy succeed to live here. This is my impression. I don't know whether others made such observations or not. I never heard such a thing from others. But this is the impression I got. Now... This is my thing about this place.<sup>39</sup>

### 3.5.5. Eren's Story: This is the place I can get rid of my stress

In the following years, with what we call the energy groups such as this quantum, blue energy, energy of quantum, energy of light, I again had friends from those energy groups. Some of them began coming and going a lot. Because of its closeness to us, because of the stressful environment that I was working in, this was the best place where I could relieve the stress upon me.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Bu köyü ben daha önceden hiç duymamıştım. Merak edip de gelmemiştim. Geldiğimde çok beğendim. Gezip dolaştık. Bu araziyi satınaldım. Bilmiyorum belki de beni çeken bir şey vardı buraya. Eşim hiç sevmedi. Bense çok sevdim. Ona sevdirmeye çalışıyorum bir taraftan onu da buraya getirmeye çalışıyorum ama ne kadar başarılı olacağım bilemiyorum. Şöyle söyleyeyim. Burada söylenen bir sürü şeyler var. Bu manyetik enerjiyle alakalı. Ben -tabii ki buna ne açıdan baktığına bağlı olan bir şey ama- ben burada *pozitif enerji* olduğuna inanıyorum. Burada pozitif enerjisi olan insanların burada yaşayabileceğine inanıyorum. Negatif enerjisi olan insanların burada yaşayamayacağına inanıyorum. Zaten burada benim algıladığım ve izlediğim şeylerle negative enerjiye sahip insanlar buradan kaçıyor, yapamıyor, hasta olup gidiyor. *Pozitif enerjiye sahip insanlar burada yaşayabiliyor*. Bu benim izlenimim. Bilmiyorum başkaları böyle bir tespitite bulundu mu bulunmadı mı. Başkalarından böyle bir şey duymadım. Fakat benim izlenimim böyle. Şimdi... Benim burayla ilgili şeyim bu.

<sup>40</sup> Ondan sonraki senelerde enerji grupları dediğimiz bu kuantum, mavi enerji, kuantum enerjisi, ışık enerjisi gruplarının enerjisiyle beraber benim yine o arkadaşlarım vardı o enerji gruplarından. Onların bazısı çok fazla gelmeye gitmeye başladı. Bizimle olan yakınlığından dolayı çalıştığım ortamın stresinden dolayı benim stresimi atabildiğim en iyi yerdi burası yıllar yılı.

### 3.5.6. Celine and Önder's story: There is something magical in this village

Celine: He was sheperding (The owner of the house). So he wasn't there. (laughter) I don't know, I mean the strangers perhaps, came from İstanbul, from the city, decided to sell the house, some girl wanted to get married, that girl did not want to live here. Definitely wanted to sell and leave, then he would sell and that's how it happened, we bought this house that summer. So that's the story, we decided overnight.

Pınar: So you made the decision while you were on vaction.

Önder: We both liked it a lot and since we both grew up by the sea, we were slowly running away from it, I mean the pollution caused by the people by the sea and I wasn't seeing any future, I mean when we came about this place, when such an alternative presented itself, there wasn't a goal, I mean, but it was such a beautiful place, at that time before we gave a lot of thought to what we were to do...

Celine: Önder usually says no, usually I get excited and he says no, he says no, this time we were both excited, he said yes and I was surprised altogether.

Önder: We saw it as buying a rural house, we didn't know the inside and outside of the village, the people of the village but as we got to know, it turned out to be a place to live, I mean at first, we started from the end, we didn't make any research or anything, first we bought the place and then we looked around to see what was happening.

Yes, we thought it was... beautiful. There is something here, something magical, I mean, we think that way, I think that way and later, this, the kind of, there is a certain electricity.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Celine: Çobanlık yapıyodu (Evin sahibi). Yani yoktu yani. (güler) Bilmiyorum yani yabancılar belki, İstanbul'dan şehirden geldi, evi satıyorum dedi, bi kız evlenmek istedi, o kız burda oturmak istemedi. Kesinlikle satıp gitmek istedi, o zaman satıcaktı ve öyle oldu o yaz aldık bu ev. Yani hikâye bu, bi geceden karar verdik.

Pınar: Yani kararınızı verdiniz öyle tatile gelmişken.

Önder: İkimiz de çok beğendik ve hani zaten deniz kenarında büyüdüğümüz için biraz denizden kaçmaya başlamıştık, yani deniz kenarlarındaki insan kirliliği ve ben pek istikbal görmüyodum yani artık burası böyle bi alternatif bi yer çıkınca karşımıza çok da bi hedef yoktu yani ama çok güzel bi yerdi o sırada ne yapıcamızı fazla düşünmeden bi...

One of the recurring themes in the above narratives is the excessive importance given to the mysticism, magical qualities, spirituality and energy. There are a number of other narratives, which I have not quoted, showing parallelism with the stories above. Therefore, one cannot help but wonder what this discourse loaded with mysticism, spiritual relations, energy, magic, and electricity implies. Why do they put so much emphasis on these terms? One might very well observe that these immaterial substances turn into a very valuable material gain for these people. But is this discourse their way of justifying the continuing presence in Şirince in order to avoid confrontation with their current attachment to the village that might encompass another version of disillusionment they formerly had with the city? I do not mean any intention-reading from the lines of these narratives; yet, such stress on immaterial qualities of the village while intensely engaging in economic activities and running businesses draws one's attention.

In the first chapter I already shared the affective relationship between the physical place and the people. However, in Şirince this affective relationship is more important than one might expect to encounter in everyday life. Şirince is one of the rare places where people have a distinct idea of the affects generated by the place and call it "the energy." From the first day I set foot in the village to the last day, I kept hearing about the energy of Şirince. I still do not know what it means but almost everybody in Şirince believes in a metaphysical power that extends beyond human reasoning. Sometimes that energy makes people see various shapes on the walls as can be clearly seen in Cavidan's narrative above; sometimes it inflicts creativity on you; sometimes it

---

Celine: Genellikle Önder her zaman hayır diyo, genellikle ben heyecanlanıyorum o hayır diyo, hayır diyo bu sefer heyecanlandık, evet dedi iyice şaşırdım.

Önder: Bi taşra evi ediniyoruz şeyiyle baktık çok köyün içini dışını yani insanları falan da tanımıyoruz ama tanıdıkça yaşanabilir olduğu ortaya çıktı yani ilk önce biz de tersten başladık bi araştırma falan yapmadık önce evi alıp sonra noluyo etrafta diye başladık...

Evet, şey geldi yani güzel. Bi şey var burda *büyülü bi şey var* yani biz öyle düşünüyoruz, ben öyle düşünüyorum daha sonra bunu bu tür bi şey *bi elektrik* var.

is a healer, it makes you feel better etc. Funda tries to bring an explanation to the “energy” in comparison with Bodrum:

There is something wrong with the energy of it (Bodrum). The energy of the place. Do you get it? It is not the old Bodrum. I know Bodrum from my youth. I am a big fan of that place. But neither Gümüşlük is the old Gümüşlük, nor Bodrum is the old Bodrum. The energy is gone. It is still beautiful though. Not that Bodrum is a bad place. It’s gone. Here, the cultural level is not high but the energy is still like the day I arrived. This is how it is. I don’t know how you can describe that energy but it is not something that you can see it with your eyes... In Bodrum, you go to a bank, the manager’s face is all upset. The energy is broken in Bodrum. Here, it is fine I mean. Wherever you go, you feel that. People are indeed ignorant but the energy is fine. The energy of this place is fine. (Funda)<sup>42</sup>

I have stated in the introduction of this chapter that the question “why did you come to Şirince” does not only specifically address issues relating to Şirince but it is also about the life people led before moving to Şirince. When I asked people, “why did you move to Şirince?” I expected them to give answers regarding their lives in the city. The question epistemologically implies a chain of causality; an event causing another event; in this context, I was planning this relationship to be about the city and village dichotomy. In other words, by asking people, “why did you move to Şirince?” I also meant to ask, “what did you not like about the city so that you moved to Şirince?” or “what was lacking in your life in the city so you came to Şirince?” At a first glance the answers above do not seem to be related to urban life. However, it is impossible to overlook the intensity of the energy theme in the narratives. Hence, I changed my perspective. I stopped trying to understand what energy is and instead I concentrated more on what it substitutes because even those people cannot bring a clear-cut explanation when talking about the energy of Şirince. Therefore, I decided that I may

---

<sup>42</sup> Enerjisinde bir bozukluk var (Bodrum’un). Yerin enerjisinde. Anladın mı? Eski Bodrum değil. Ben gençliğimden biliyorum Bodrum’u. Oranın hayranıyım zaten. Ama ne Gümüşlük eski Gümüşlük, ne Bodrum eski Bodrum. Enerji gitti. Gene de güzel tabii. Bodrum kötü bir yer değil de. Gitti. Burada kültür seviyesi düşük ama enerji geldiğim günkü gibi. Şey yani. O *enerjiyi nasıl tarif edersin bilmiyorum ama gözle görülebilir bir şey değil yani*.... Bodrum’da bir bankaya girersin, müdürün surat beş karış. Enerji bozuk Bodrum’da. Burada düzgün yani. Nereye gitsen hissediyorsun. Cahilliğine yine cahiller de enerji düzgün. Buranın enerjisi düzgün.

attempt to understand for what this energy serves or what kind of agency it assumes. What these people do not tell but heavily emphasize might imply something about what was lacking and what triggered the migration. If this energy of Şirince has become an important contribution ex-urbanites' movement to this village, then it is possible to ask whether they were looking for some sort of energy that could spiritually charge them, which they lost or did not have in their modern urban life?

### **3.6. Pınar Abla: The Mystery of the Energy Melts into Air**

Meet Pınar abla! A participant in the research who did not let me record her voice. During our breakfast at a café, she told me a number of stories about her life. I did my best to jot down all I could. Even such a short correspondence with her enlightened me to a great extent. What you will read now is an excerpt from my field-blog where I wrote down my interview notes about her:

Aunt Pınar is 85 years old, she is loved by everyone in the village. She has been living in this village for 25 years, originally from İstanbul, she run fashion workshops and made large scale exports in all her youth. She grew tired of the selfishness of the city people, she wanted to be away from her husband, she came here. She kept bugging the village headman, together they looked for her dream house. When found, she said “that’s it!” and bought it without even asking for its price.

There are lots of gaps in her story, lots of shifts of time. There are lots of things that she forgot while telling the story, and things that I forgot while writing it. But the truth of the matter is she falls in love with the wind, water, nature of this village and she starts a life here. She does not like the people. She complains about their ignorance. All of a sudden, she stops. The silence is broken by this sentence: “why am I telling all these to you, I don’t know you. I don’t want to tell anything.” I am shocked.

In the last two interviews, I came across people who expressed similar thoughts: “When I came here, I was in such a bad state”, “it was this village that made me myself”. Aunt Pınar said similar things as well. Then, as if she was revealing a huge secret, she whispered to my ear: “there is an energy here” (emphasis added) She got healthy here. If she were to go to a hospital,

she would get at least 3 operations, talk about getting healthy. Her blood pressure is on 240's. This is a woman who, after getting into arguments with the doctors, pulls the cables away from her arms. She is not healthy but she feels healthy here. Despite the cataracts, she drives her car that is almost the same age as herself like crazy. As I tell her to get an operation, she tells me "I can't let my brain go numb".<sup>43</sup>

It was a fascinating experience for me to listen to this amazing woman. There are still times when I have difficulty in believing her resistance to doctors and medicine. Although I could not convince Pinar abla to give an interview, her narrative made me recognize the place of good/spiritual/magnetic/whatever energy in Şirince. Energy was something that makes people happy. The lack and existence of "energy" was the causality I was looking for. The lack in their previous lives in the urban setting was filled by this "energy" in the village. So, the differentiation of the city from the country, which corresponds to the distinction between the modern urban life and the village life, is defined by non-rational, mystical, romantic, intangible things. The lack and loss in the

---

<sup>43</sup> Pinar abla 85 yaşında, köyde herkesin sevdiği bir kadın. 25 Senedir bu köyde yaşıyor, aslen Istanbulu, gençliği boyunca moda atölyeleri işletmiş ve büyük ihracatlar yapmış. Şehir insanın egoistliğinden bunalmış, kocasından uzaklaşmak istemiş, buraya gelmiş. Muhtarın başının etini yemiş, hayalini kurduğu evi aramışlar birlikte. Bulunca da "işte bu!" demiş, *fiyatını bile sormadan evi almış*.

Hikayesinde bir sürü boşluk var, zaman kaymaları var. Onun anlatırken unuttuğu, benim yazarken unuttuğum çok şey var. Ama işin özü bu köyün havasına, suyuna, doğasına aşık oluyor ve burada bir hayat kuruyor kendisine. İnsanlarını sevmiyor. Cehaletlerinden yakınıyor. Derken duruyor. Sessizliği şu cümle deliyor: "sana bunları neden anlatıyorum ki, tanımıyorum seni. Anlatmak istemiyorum." Neye uğradığımı şaşırıyorum.

Daha önceki iki mülakatımda da benzer ifadeleri kullanan insanlarla karşılaştım: "*buraya geldiğimde çok kötü bir haldeydim*", "*beni ben yapan bu köy oldu*". Pinar abla da benzer şeyleri söyledi. Sonra büyük bir sırımsı gibi kulağıma eğilip "*burada bir enerji var*" (emphasis added) diye ekledi. Sağlığına burada kavuşmuş. Sağlığına kavuşmuş derken, hastaneye gitse en az 3 ameliyat bekliyor onu. Tansiyonu 24'lerde. Doktorlarla kavga edip kabloları kolundan çekip çıkararak bir kadın bu. Sağlıklı değil ama burada sağlıklı hissediyor kendini. Kataraktlı gözlerine rağmen neredeyse kendisiyle yaşıt olan arabasını delice kullanıyor. Ben ona ameliyat ol, dedikçe "*uyuşturamam beynimi*" diyor bana.

city in this context signifies the disenchantment of the people with the modern life style. Thus, I claim that moving to Şirince has been a strategy for re-enchanting the world.

Moreover, energy does not only constitute a reason or a motivation for this migration by ex-urbanites, but it shapes their relationship with and attachment to the village, as well. As I discussed in the first chapter, most of the people migrating to Şirince establishes a relationship with the village over immaterial bonding, the energy. This emphasis on energy indicates that people believe in the sensations the place generates. This affective attachment articulated as energy contributes to and forms what kind of belonging or relationship they have with the place; that is to say, it also demonstrates their geographic-identity. This immaterial bond with the place is concretized with the word “energy.” It provides a ground or a basis for these ex-urbanites to continue living in the village and stay attached to this place, giving them a new geographic-identity. Consequently, in addition to the above analysis about the energy, it would not be totally wrong to say that the energy represents another form of affectively attaching to a particular place, to Şirince.

### **3.7 Voluntary Simplicity: “Ne demek o?”**

In the US and Europe, the movement of urbanites into rural areas is described as the “voluntary simplicity movement” and it is trending in the last 20 years. The term is borrowed from Richard Gregg, who described in 1936 a way of life marked by a balance between inner and outer growth. The essence of voluntary simplicity is living in a simple and spiritually rich way. This kind of living is explained by “the desire to return to living and working environments which are of a more human scale” (Elgin and Mitchell, 1977). The idea of “human scale” signifies a reduction of working and living environments, more appropriate for human size that does not accommodate chaos, incomprehensibility and anonymity (ibid:6). This decentralization of working and living environments into manageable scales makes people aware of their contribution to the whole and it is a tool for getting back to basics by way of re-organizing life. Moreover, voluntary simplicity embraces a spiritual realization of the human potential in association with others.



Considering the various aspects of this movement particularly the desire to live in a way that spiritually fulfills human potential, Şirince might be considered a perfect destination for participants in the voluntary simplicity movement. The village is 53 miles away from İzmir, the city center. There are agricultural lands, fruit gardens; the level of industrialization is very low. However, calling Şirince a part of voluntary simplicity movement and suggesting that the ex-urbanites settled in Şirince to live a simple life would not be very appropriate. The reason is that voluntary simplicity is a unique life style with a systematic agenda. The followers of this movement choose spiritual enrichment with material sufficiency as opposed to financial growth, conscious self-motivation as opposed to competitive self-motivation, and human life as a part of nature as opposed to merciless individuality (Özgen 2012). Among the people I interviewed in Şirince, people who might fall into the category are very rare. It is only Nazlı and her family who do organic farming and live a comparably simple life. Nazlı's family is one of a few families who do not make a living in Şirince:

We got schooled, we worked. We directed our kids. They got educated as well. They are standing on their own two feet now. And my husband and I decided, our retired ages should be spent in peace, watching the roses grow out of the trees we planted. That is why we came here. Quiet, peaceful. We eat whatever we grow, every once in a while, I can't handle things and I take a walk in the wilderness for hours. Yes, if we can live long enough, if God grants it, we want to accomplish our dream (Nazlı).<sup>44</sup>

Although Şirince's landscape and setting might have made it an ideal rural space for voluntary simplicity, the way tourism operates in the village is reminiscent of the excessive commodification of urban life. Let alone sustainable rural tourism, people make use of tourism at the risk of diminishing the qualities which make Şirince a center of attraction. I asked my interviewees who own at least a college degree, "does anyone or you do anything for sustainable tourism in Şirince?" Their answers were quite

---

<sup>44</sup> Okuduk, çalıştık. Çocuklarımızı yönettik. Onlar da okudu. Kendi ayaklarının üzerinde şu an. Ve biz de eşimle karar verdik, emekli yaşlarımızı biraz huzur içinde, şöyle çalıştığımız, ektiğimizin fidanların da biraz daha güllerini seyredelim keyifli keyifli. Bu yüzden geldik buraya. Sakin, sessiz. Kendi ekip biçtiğimizi yiyoruz, arada benim kafam atar dağa bayıra yürürüm saatlerce. Evet, ömrümüz yeterse Allah nasip ederse bu dileğimizi yerine getirebilmek istiyoruz (Nazlı).

depressing so, I started digging deeper about their motivation for moving to a small village and their way of managing their activities in Şirince:

“Honestly, in such situations, if the project comes from the government, you can’t get anywhere” (Müge)

-“Is there anything done in Şirince for sustainable tourism?

-What is that?” (Zerrin)<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> “Valla bu tip olaylarda projelendirme devlet tarafından gelirse zaten hiçbir yere varamazsın” (Müge)

-“Şirince’de sürdürülebilir turizm için yapılan bir şey var mı?

-Ne demek o?” (Zerrin)

## **CHAPTER 4: THE NEVER-ENDING DISILLUSIONMENT OF MODERNIST IMAGINATION**

### **4.1.Introduction**

In the previous chapter, the purposes and reasons for moving to Şirince have been analyzed and two basic reasons, namely economical reasons and spiritual purposes has come to the foreground. That is to say, some people came to Şirince to earn money and some came to find what they lost spiritually in the city and some came for both. However, I have stressed the fact that it has been difficult to make such analysis due to the lack of clear statements in their narratives that made me unable to get direct answers to my questions. As it has been stated already, they did not tell about their anxieties, their hopes, and their aspirations about moving to a village. On the contrary they narrated their stories as if it happened on a spur of the moment, just like that! I regard these hopes and aspirations not as non-existent feelings but as unnarrated, silenced moments. In this chapter, the main line of analysis will be about the silences and the interpretations of the silences.

In the oral history interviews not only what has been uttered but also what has not been told and what has been silenced carries importance. However, there is a thin line between being prejudiced or judgmental and analyzing such silences in the interviews. It is not my intention to make a grand claim such as migrating from urban to rural has to be a tough decision and by that virtue people should have had dreams and aspirations about it. Changing your permanent address might not be a huge change in a person's life and it is quite understandable. However, if people trivialize their moments of such big decisions and this trivialization becomes prevalent their narratives while narrating

their stories in a similar manner; it is important to pursue the conditions that make moving to a village almost an ordinary, normal and natural movement. The fact that most people choose not to directly tell does not mean that they do not imply these expectations between lines or when they utter their stories.

In this case, I argue that silencing the aspirations stems from people's unfulfilled expectations and dreams regarding the village life during the time they have been spending in Şirince. Listening to their everyday life stories and their experiences in Şirince reveals their disappointments. Narratives of and about "today" reserve important details about the past as well. Their expectations from a village and their dreams on Şirince before they settle down are hidden in their disillusionment. In other words, their complaints most of the time concern the things they had imagined that would have been different.

Indeed, the fieldwork and the interviews have given adequate data to perceive or understand these disillusionments, however an obvious ambiguity shows up when the sources of the disillusionment is looked for.

I have already explained in detail the fact that in order to re-enchant with the world, ex-urbanites choose to migrate to a village. However, they do not choose to live in an ordinary village. They choose a village that welcomes people from different cultural and ethnic groups for this village is very much used to accommodating people coming and going since tourism operates extensively. Because Şirince does not comply with the conventional village definition, the practices and everyday life in the village in some cases might be close to the urban experiences; at least an urbanite would feel "home" in Şirince. This fact signifies the reduction or vagueness of the differences between urban and rural life; furthermore, it reflects itself through a number of facets of the daily life, for which I will give examples later. As a result modernity has already created an in-between or liminal place in Şirince; it is a neither-village-nor-city place. Thus, ex-urbanites' romantic desire to live in a spiritually rich and "innocent" village does not seem to have been satisfied. This is the first side of the ambiguity.

What is more, it is an undeniable fact that the ex-urbanites have a significant effect in the transformation of Şirince as the Şirince we know it today. Their desire to live in a rural village contradicts with their efforts to modernize the village. Müge's narrative unravels clearly the tension and the disappointment arising from the in-betweenness of

the space:

Urbanites usually come to the village. They see what they think of shortcomings etc. etc. They come up with a plan to change their whole worlds. They show themselves everywhere: buying property, building roads, planting trees, pouring concrete, riding in their huge cars etc. One year later they realize that it is not so easy to change this system. Their disappointment then are deep. Since the villagers appear “naive” and “stupid” to them at first... I utter these words in quotes. It seems so easy to change them. You know the stubbornness the Turkish villagers have for 900 years, then the urbanites are accepting defeat over that (Müge)<sup>46</sup>

Thus, there is a two-way disillusionment experienced by the new inhabitants of Şirince. Whether their disappointment is related to the already modernized village or it is about their failure in modernizing Şirince is not clear and people live with the tension emanating from this non-clarity today. The purpose of this chapter in this context is to analyze the ambiguous relationship of the ex-urbanites' with the villagers and the village, which narrates a great deal about the ex-urbanites current attachment to the city and the success of their re-enchantment strategies.

So as to grasp the position of ex-urbanites in the village and their efforts to modernize there, it is crucial to look at what is modernization as a project as well as the discussions around the “developed urban” versus “underdeveloped rural” since the early republican period in Turkey.

#### **4.2. Modernization as a Project in the Early Turkish Republican Era**

---

<sup>46</sup> Şehirliler genelde köye geliyorlar. Kendilerince çok eksiklikler görüyorlar vs. vs. Burada bütün dünyaları değiştirmek üzere bir yol haritası çiziyorlar kendilerine. Her yerde varlıklarını gösteriyorlar: yer alarak, yol yaparak, ağaç dikerek, betonlayarak, kocaman arabalarıyla gelerek vs. Bir sene sonra fark ediyorlar ki o kadar kolay değil bu sistemi değiştirmek. Çok derin hüsrancı oluyor. Baştan onlara göre köylü “saf” ve “salak” ya... Bunu tırnak içine alıyorum. Onları değiştirmek çok kolaymış gibi görünüyor. Türk köylüsünün 900 yıldır sahip olduğu inat var ya, ondan sonra şehirli birden buna mağlup geliyor.

The modernization/westernization process in Turkey gains speed with the nation-state formation. “Nationalism has facilitated the introduction of the political culture of European modernity to those outside of the West” (Zeydanoğlu, 2008:2). Pursuing an agenda to construct a homogeneous state built on ethnic nationalism, early Turkish modernizers e modernization as a project. As Çağlar Keyder states,

“modernization was a total project: one of embracing and internalizing all the cultural dimensions that made Europe modern. They were not satisfied simply with increasing rationality, bureaucratization, and organizational efficiency; they also professed a need for social transformation in order to achieve secularization, autonomy for the individual, and the equality of men and women (1997:37).

The government of the period was very ambitious about creating the modern nation-state and implemented projects in every stage of social and political life. The main goal of uniting people in Turkey under the umbrella of a Turkish ethnicity did not accept anything that might pose a threat to the homogeneity, except for the rural and urban dichotomy:

The pro-development approach that lies in the heart of modernization movement considers certain factors that heterogenizes Turkish people as politically dangerous since the first years of the Republic, only accepting the village/city distinction as a legitimate factor that makes a difference... the rural area was only a slow follower of the developments that happen in the dynamical urban centers (Sirman, 2001:252).<sup>47</sup>

Thus, the new Turkish state aimed to construct a new nation that is devoid of any kind of religious, ethnic, or class differences except the idea of rural and urban geographies. (Zeybek, 2011). The idea that acknowledges and promotes the dichotomous relationship between urban and rural is so much embedded in the modernist perspective. The

---

<sup>47</sup> Çağdaşlaşma söyleminin temelinde yatan gelişmeci yaklaşım, Cumhuriyet’in ilk yıllarından beri Türk toplumunu heterojen hale getiren çeşitli faktörleri siyasi olarak tehlikeli saymış, bunlardan yalnızca köy/kent ayrımını farklılık yaratan meşru etmen olarak kabul etmiştir... kırsal alan daha dinamik olan kent merkezlerindeki gelişmelerin ancak yavaş bir takipçisiydi.

separation of the urban and rural according to Anthony Giddens is an outcome of modernity (1990). Giddens in his book titled *Consequences of Modernity* suggests that “the dynamism of modernity derives from the separation of time and space and their recombination in forms which permit the precise time-space "zoning" of social life; the disembedding of social systems” (1990:16-17). Although this might be accepted to a certain degree, some scholars also suggest that it is the modernization theory that expands the segregation between modern and traditional. Aslı Yazıcı Yakın, after giving a list of so-called “positive” approaches of the media and political figures towards the rural, argues that “it seems that all those travel notes about Anatolia and the sagas about the Anatolian warmth or Anatolian tigers are part of the efforts to obscure the history of Anatolia” (2007:198) and create an illusion of reality with the overly emphasized and romanticized adjectives attributed to the village life. Moreover, Raymond Williams in his book, *The Country and the City*, illustrates the fact that the “real history” of the country is varied through generalizations and idealizations, and as a result the complexity and the multiplicity of the rural life has been overlooked. Secondly, even though the polarization of the city and the country by labeling each of them opposite adjectives might be correct, it should not be forgotten that in the course of history the variety of different rural and urban experiences have proven the fact that our attributions for urban settings, might as well be valid for the rural ones (1975). There is always risk in both romanticizing the village and demonizing the city.

Finally, the modernization period and the projects that are conducted in the years between 1930s and 1940s should be examined under the light of these discussions.

### **4.3 How to modernize the rural settings?**

Modernization of the inhabitants of the rural geographies in Turkey was given significant attention in the early Turkish Republican period. The reason lies in the fact that the vast majority of the nation was constituted of villagers. As Eric Hobsbawm points out, “Avrupa’da ve Orta Doğu’da köylülüğün baskın olduğu tek ülke kalmıştı: Türkiye” (cited in Karaömeroğlu, 2001:163). Basing his argument on statistical data, Karaömeroğlu also affirms this statement and he emphasizes the importance of

“köylülük” – which translates into English as “peasantry” in Turkey both in social and cultural life. The “Republican elite” in Turkey cared for arts and culture as long as it could be used for general political purposes and for compensating the ideological gaps. In her article on the relationship between the politics and cultural-aesthetics production in Turkey during the single party era, Duygu Köksal compares and contrasts the modernization in Turkey vis-à-vis the countries in Europe. According to Köksal, modernization in Turkey was different from Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy for it was regarded as a medium of westernization and industrialization (Köksal, 2004). The main aim was to create a modern country and at the same time add unique cultural elements to this national culture. It can be best summarized as “utilize(ing) fine arts in order to transform and discipline ordinary people in line with the revolutionary principles” (Necip Ali, cited in Köksal, 2004:104). Hence, a number of social and cultural modernization projects were implemented in the early Turkish Republican period especially from 1930s to late 1940s. Among these projects village institutes, country trips of the artists, *halkevleri* (*people’s house*) and writings on villages can be shown.

All of these projects were prepared and initiated by the Kemalist “Republican elites.” The target of the modernization was not only the villagers but also the intellectuals and educated elites of the country. Through these projects, it was thought that the gap between intellectuals and the local folk would be decreased. The official discourse asked the elites to lower down themselves to the level of the people, to talk “their” language, and build a bridge between the urban and the rural. However, this strategy ontologically presupposed the Anatolian folk as an ignorant and uneducated group of people; and instead of closing the gap, it further expanded the distance between the center and the periphery. There seems to be a contradiction in this conceptualization of modernization. On the one side developmentalist ideology aimed at rising the society to the “level of contemporary civilization,” and on the other side modernization looked for ways of uniting with the local folk and finding the unique elements of the authentic Turkish culture. For instance, in establishing *halkevleri* the aim was to make people familiar with the high arts (Öztürkmen, 1998). Hence, unlike the official discourse, the regime indeed was forcing a top-down modernization and did not very much care about the ones at the bottom.

The painting tours of the artists, who were sent to the villages of Anatolia by the order of the Republican People’s Party, have a similar tension. When artists who spent



their lives in big cities faced the rural life, they were surprised with the poor living conditions of the local folk. Memoirs of Avni Arbaş in Siirt not only depict the local life in Siirt but also his tone and style unfolds how he otherizes the local people:

One day I went to a coffe shop. There are no chairs or anything. I think it was the son of the shop owner, a kid was sitting on the only wicker chair in the coffe shop. So I got angry and yelled “Move away”. He asked “Why?”. “I will sit down” I replied. I had to write a letter. The kid stood up. I saw a man taking off his clothes in a corner. “What is he doing?” I asked. “He is cleaning himself” they replied. Later I understood that this was a cleaning for fleas. Fortunately these fleas never liked *me* and I was able to leave Siirt without getting fleas” (Ural & Arbaş, 1998, 9.21-22).<sup>48</sup>

The positioning of these artists as “strangers” in the rural setting and otherizing the local people are predominantly obvious in the writings on the villages. The turn to the rural brought a new genre into the literature in the Turkish contexts. It is significant to note that even though novels are different from memoirs for they do not have the claim of representing reality, the genre, the tone, the canons, and readers of these books and the similarities among these novels unravel important particularities about the perception towards the villages in this period.

The village novels of the period underlined the need to go to the villages in order to change Turkey. Levent Cantek’s article “Köy Manzaraları: Romantizm ve Gerçekliğin Düalizmleri” summarizes the attitude of three important authors as the following: “Köye gidilmedikçe Türkiye değişmeyecektir.” Even the usage of passive voice in the formation of the sentence signals for the distance that the authors put themselves vis-à-vis the villagers. In order to analyze such a positioning that embodies a spatial construction, one might very well make use of the literature on the discourse of Orientalism and Occidentalism.

---

<sup>48</sup> Birgün bir kahvehaneye gittim. İskemle filan yok tabii. Kahvecinin oğluydu galiba, bir çocuk kahvehanenin tek hasır koltuğuna oturmuştu. Ben de ‘Kalk oradan’ diye kızdım. ‘Niye’ diye sordu. ‘Ben oturacağım’ dedim. Mektup yazmam lazımdı. Çocuk kalktı. Baktım köşede bir adam elbiselerini çıkarıyor. Sordum ‘Ne yapıyor’ diye. ‘Temizleniyor’ dediler. Sonradan anladım ki bu bit temizliğıydi. Neyse bu bitler *beni* hiç sevmədiler ve o koşullarda bitlenmeden Siirt’ten ayrılabilirdim”

The novels about villages written between 1930s and 1940s carry a number of resemblances with the Orientalist writings. The sameness of the places, timelessness and the description of backwardness can be observed in the popular novels of the period. In this context, Meltem Ahıska's conceptualization of Occidentalism is very helpful and relevant. Ahıska uses the term Occidentalism to figure out and understand how Turkish national identity deals with the concept of the "West." She does not merely use it as a tool of reverse Orientalism or internalized Orientalism but she seeks to analyze the complicated relationship of Turkey to the "West" through this term. This complication has multiple layers. The first one is about a "lack," similar to the Orientalist gaze, encapsulating the "non-West" into certain adjectival constructed characteristics; Occidentalism uses the same tools as Orientalism. The narrators of the novels in this period tell their stories as if they are talking about a far away country. Ömer Türkeş claims that the writings on the villages decipher the Occidentalist gaze of the intellectuals of the period in his article named "Orada Bir Taşra Var Uzakta":

The eye that views Anatolia as a rural place but always as an outsider in the Turkish novels is the eye of this intellectual. This eye is such a thing that it will reveal itself for what it really is even as it is starting the journey; just like the travellers from the east that are not distinguishing, not willing to be distinguishing the "black race", "red" or "yellows" from each other, it will regard all the cities, towns and villages of the rural, all the peoples and all the lives as one and the same (Türkeş, 200:162-163).<sup>49</sup>

Even though the stories, authors, styles, geographies and years change; certain aspects are still the same in village novels:

If this was Kurşunlu, was Bayramören and Çardakköy anything different? (Baysal cited in Türkeş, 2005:166)<sup>50</sup>

The unattractive entrance of all the cities, towns has begun (Kavukçu cited in Türkeş, 2005:166)<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> Türk romanında Anadolu'ya taşra olarak bakan ama hep bir dışarıdanlıkla bakan göz, işte bu entelektüelin gözüdür. Bu öyle bir gözdür ki kendisini daha yola koyulduğunda ele verecek; "zencileri", "kırmızı" ya da "sarıları" birbirinden ayırt etmeyen, etmek istemeyen oryantalist seyyahlar gibi, taşranın bütün kent, kasaba ve köylerini, bütün insanların ve bütün hayatlarını aynılaştıracaktır.

<sup>50</sup> Kurşunlu buysa Bayramören ve Çardakköy başka mıydı?

For a person visiting from elsewhere, it was nearly impossible to distinguish the towns of Kavala and Sarıbakan, Kavala was almost like an exact copy of Sarıbakan, settled in thirty four kilometers west of it (Çakıroğlu cited in Türkeş, 2005:166)<sup>52</sup>

Apart from the congruencies in the descriptions, another important feature of the village novels is that, especially before 1930s, there is a romantic idealization of the village image. Romanticization by definition is “to think about or describe something as better or more attractive or interesting than it really is” (retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com>). Thus, it emphasizes a divergence from the reality. This definition of the romanticization provides a ground to better grasp the writings of the republican period elites and intellectuals on the village. Readings such novels and memoirs, it becomes difficult to tell whether they describe the reality of those villages or not; in fact, the discussion should not concern reflecting the reality. Rather, it should regard what such descriptions create or constructs and with what kinds of purposes they are written:

After crossing the river on an old stone bridge, the poor neighborhood revealed itself and the poverty started with all its horror and ugliness. The crooked streets where half naked kids and dogs covered with mud play in the nasty waters running in the middle... Windowless huts made of dried dung and mud, buried halfway into the ground... Stinky smoke is rising from the cracked doors of most of them. Women with patchy clothes wrapped around their heads, naked under the knees... Old people resembling skeletons that are sunbathing on old wicker carpets. Kids with bloated bellies, crooked, skinny bodies that look like shrunken old people with the flies attacking the scars on their faces...” (Güntekin 1945: 42)<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Bütün kentlerin, kasabaların sevimsiz girişi başlamıştı

<sup>52</sup> Dışarıdan gelen bir insan için Kavala ile Sarıbakan kasabasını ayırmak neredeyse imkansızdı, Kavala, Sarıbakan’ın otuz dört kilometre batısına kurulmuş bir kopyası gibiydi.

<sup>53</sup> Eski bir taş köprü ile dere geçildikten sonra fakir mahallelere giriliyor ve sefalet bütün dehşeti ve çirkinliğiyle başlıyordu. Ortalarında akan çirkef sularında yarı çıplak çocuklarla çamurlu köpekler oynayan eğri büğrü sokaklar...Tezekle çamurdan yapılmış yarı yarıya toprağa gömülü penceresiz kulübeler... Bir çoğunun aralık kapılarından pis kokulu dumanlar tütüyor. Başları yamalı peştemallarla sarılı, dizlerinden aşağısı çıplak kadınlar... Eski hasır

“-Look at the lamp of this green tomb, Rasim. What the Islamic school calls science and radiance looks like this mysty light... It always enlightens these fields, the things that cause gloom and despair... It changes the form and the color of the things it reaches, turns everything into scary delusions and images... Such a light that except for the surround area of nine ten steps, night is still there. For centuries, we took have been taking this green night as divine radiance. What I think deserves to be called light should flood everywhere, every corner in bright light of jewels, just like the sun that will rise in five six hours... What will end this green night will rise from us, from this evil, dark poorhouse that we call the new school.” (Güntekin 1945: 58)<sup>54</sup>

The above long quotations are taken from Reşat Nuri Güntekin’s novel *Yeşil Gece* (*The Green Night*). Güntekin is one of the prominent and proficient Turkish authors of the republican period whose writings mainly focus on social and cultural life of newly born regime. The figure of the teacher who goes to an Anatolian village to enlighten there is very common in his writings and quotations above exemplify such a figure. In the first quoted paragraph, it is hard to tell whether the landscape of the village is written through a romanticized approach. However, even the underdeveloped nature or backward qualities of the village is depicted with a very romantic imagination. The descriptions are loaded with similes as, “Eski hasır parçaları üstünde güneşliyen iskelet gibi ihtiyarlar. Küçülmüş ihtiyarlara benzeyen yüzlerindeki yaralara sinekler üşümüş, şiş karınlı, çarpık, sıska vücutlu çocuklar...” Without doubt, it would be a meaningless stance to criticize such descriptions on the grounds that they lack the touch of reality, which is not the concern here. However, the way they are depicted and how they

---

parçaları üstünde güneşliyen iskelet gibi ihtiyarlar. Küçülmüş ihtiyarlara benzeyen yüzlerindeki yaralara sinekler üşümüş, şiş karınlı, çarpık, sıska vücutlu çocuklar...

<sup>54</sup> “-Bak şu yeşil türbe kandiline Rasim. Medresenin ilim ve nur dediği şey bu sisli ışığa benzer... Hep böyle mezarları, insana kasvet ve ümitsizlik veren şeyleri aydınlatır... Erişebildiği yerlerdeki eşyanın şeklini, rengini değiştirir, her şeyi korkulu vehimler ve hayaller şekline sokar... Bir ışık ki sekiz on adımlık çevresi haricinde gene gece vardır. Asırlardan beri nur diye hep bu yeşil gecenin içinde yaşadık. Ben aydınlık diye ona derim ki, beş altı saat sonra doğacak gün gibi her yeri, her köşeyi berrak bir mücevher ışığına boğar... Bu yeşil geceye nihayet verecek gün bizden, yeni mektep dediğimiz bu kötü, karanlık viraneden doğacak.” (Güntekin 1945: 58)

accommodate or welcome a very romanticized description of backwardness says quite a deal about the intricate link between the romanticization and modernization of the rural, particularly in the context of early republican Turkey.

The second quotation also reveals the obvious imagination of the narrator. “Bak şu yeşil türbe kandiline Rasim. Medresenin ilim ve nur dediği şey bu sisli ışığa benzer... Hep böyle mezarları, insana kasvet ve ümitsizlik veren şeyleri aydınlatır... Erişebildiği yerlerdeki eşyanın şeklini, rengini değiştirir, her şeyi korkulu vehimler ve hayaller şekline sokar.” Again, the reader sees the description of the green tomb through the imagination of the character who voluntarily goes to an Anatolian village to teach. In light of these paragraphs, it becomes clear that the rural and people who live in the rural are depicted in an unrealistic way. The reason might be the fact that the rural was seen as the source of creating a new and modern society from scratch. According to Zeybek,

The village was an object used to shuttle between the “spiritual” domain of the nation and the “material” technologies of Western modernity. Control over the spiritual domain was essential to assert difference from Western modernity in a time when technologies from the West were being imported en masse. Therefore, villages were frequently romanticised by the Turkish intelligentsia, who wished to sublimate the rural into a “state of nature” (Yakın cited in Zeybek, 2011:25)

In the construction of Şirince today as a site of tourism where people come and go in masses, it is crucial to understand the transformation that the village has undergone and still continues. The ex-urbanites’ position in the village and their agency in this transformation is quite influential. The reason why I have started to analyze this transformation through the early Turkish Republican Era is the fact that the up-to-down modernization project of the rural and the elitist perception of urbanites’ towards villagers carries a number of similarities with the ex-urbanites’ relationship with the village as well as with the people in Şirince. In short, this relationship is a double-sided band telling two different stories existing together in tension: “on the one hand, the peasants were seen as “the masters of the nation” representing purity and honesty; on the other hand, the country was seen as an exotic, mysterious, culturally different and backward place that was to be enlightened by the intelligentsia” (Aykut, 2007:70)

To put in another way, the experiences of the ex-urbanites in Şirince, who already spent most of their lives in modern big cities, and their attitudes towards the villagers have resemblances with the Kemalist or leftist modernizers of the early Republican period. While the urban elites romanticize the rural as a source of purity and nobility, they regard themselves as if they are inherently adorned with the qualities to make the rural a better place and they assign themselves to the position of pioneers, teachers in the rural, as can be seen in the novels and various writings as well. Even though more than a half century has passed, the perception of the rural and a rural identity stays intact and this situation creates an ambivalence which results in despair in the ex-urbanites of Şirince. In the following parts, firstly I will look at how the rural is sublimated into a “state of nature,” which implies a purely good, inherently natural imagination of the village that is untouched by the modernity and secondly, I will try to analyze their modernizing attempts.

#### **4.4 Romanticized Perception of the Village**

According to almost all informants, the most prominent feature of Şirince is that it is beautiful. The beauty of the village has been told by everyone as a reason to move to a village. The intense emphasis on the appearance of the village evokes the question whether, as suggested by Ozan Zeybek, the stress put on the natural beauty of the rural is another way of encapsulating the rural into certain images? Not considering the change, the time and regarding the village as an unchanging frozen natural beauty creates ambivalent situations. For instance, in Reyhan’s interview, she told me about how this village was different from today in terms of its physical appearance. Reyhan told me that in the past Şirince was not as green as it is today. It was still beautiful according to her but there were not this many trees back then. She gave a detailed description of this physical change; how the river changed, the trees changed, the roads changed etc. Thus, we know that most of the trees have been planted in the last 40

years, when Reyhan was a child. Hayri on the other hand praises the naturalness and originality of the village and he regards the trees as an inherent part of the village:

Hayri: I live in İstanbul, in Florya.

Pınar: That is not a bad place either. Every house has a garden full of greenery.

Hayri: It doesn't seem to be a good place for me because the greenery is not the matter. I mean the beauty of the people together with the greenery. The beauty of the nature together with the greenery. **You can artificially produce greenery in some place and I think Florya is such a place now,** but this place and that are not comparable.<sup>55</sup>

As reported by Hayri, the nature of Florya<sup>56</sup> is not comparable to Şirince since the former has been artificially greened. By the word *artificial* Hayri does not point to the literal meaning of the word, but he implies a planned and organized gated community construction unlike Şirince's unplanned, unorganized "natural" green areas. Hayri's romantic projection of Şirince contradicts with the reality. Just like Orientalist imagery of the "east," Hayri fantasizes a rural setting; he has preconceived notions about the rural and tries to realize them in Şirince. Especially his unfamiliarity with village life further proves my point. As I have quoted in the previous chapter, he stated that he did not have a village from his family. Şirince is his first village experience. He further narrated that the fact that they did not experience the village life might explain his deep love with Şirince today. In other words, he might associate Şirince with a never-changing and beautiful village that he long before constructed in his mind.

The Önder and Celine family who arrived to the village long before Hayri told me the story of how they bought a barn but later turned it into a house and operated as a guest house. In their narrative what it is striking is the fact that they do not have a real

---

<sup>55</sup> Hayri: İstanbul'da Florya'da yaşıyorum.

Pınar: Orası da kötü bir yer değil. Her evin yemyeşil bahçesi var.

Hayri: Bana göre güzel bir yer değil çünkü önemli olan yeşil değil. Yani yeşille birlikte insanların güzelliği. Yeşille birlikte doğanın güzelliği. **Suni olarak da yeşillendirebilirsiniz bir yeri ki bana göre Florya öyle bir yer** şu an ama burasıyla orası kıyas kabul etmez.

<sup>56</sup> Florya is a province in İstanbul where high middle class people live.

bonding or relation with the village or a sound judgment about the concept of village. According to their oral accounts, they came to Şirince and immediately started acting with their assumptions of the village life:

Önder: Buying the barn and turning it into a house takes place in 2004-2005. In 2006, we repair the last house there that we call the olive yard. From 2007 on, we get closer to the place where we so far tried handle remotely and eventually becomes an operation that we settle in.

Pınar: What is your reason for buying that barn then:

Önder: To put a horse in it.

Pınar: Did you really think we have a house in the village, we should have a barn so that we can have a horse in it?

Önder: Yes, I mean yes. The horse and such, I don't ride horses **but in a village, we should do something that is done in a village; what do villagers do in the rural areas? Donkeys are bought, horses are bought and indeed we bought a donkey.** We couldn't buy a horse but we had a donkey.<sup>57</sup>

The fact that Önder correlates the village life with a barn and a horse and his too prompt adaptation to the "village" point to the basic dichotomous relationship between the rural and the urban. Since Önder defines the rural as what urban is/has not, even though he does not know how to ride a horse, he feels obliged to own a horse, or at least a donkey. Their quick adaptation practices to the village might be called "mimicry." It seems that this mimicking stems from the fact that they have preconceived ideas about a village

---

<sup>57</sup> Önder: Ahırını alıp ev yapmak 2004-2005 sürüyo. 2006'da ordaki zeytinli ev dediğimiz son evi tamir ediyoruz 2006'da. 2007'den itibaren de bizim bi süre uzaktan derken daha yakından ve en sonunda tamamen içine girdiğimiz bi işletme oluyo.

Pınar: Peki o ahırını alma sebebiniz ne?

Önder: Bi at koymak.

Pınar: Gerçekten bi evimiz var köyde, bi de ahırımız olsun at koyalım içine mi dediniz?

Önder: Evet yani evet. At falan ya ben ata falan binmem **ama bi köyde köye ait bişiler yapalım yani köyde, köylü kırsalda napılır, eşek alınır at alınır falan nitekim aldık da bi eşek.** At alamadık ama bi eşeğimiz olmuştu.



life and the just purchasing a property in the village means to acquire what the village life is supposed to have according to them. Therefore, as can be seen, these practices are not independent from the over-idealization of village life without having real and concrete knowledge about the life in a village.

Examples of praising and romanticizing the beauty of the village can be increased. The over-idealization and romanticization of the rural as a beautiful, magical, peaceful is one of the outstanding issues in the research. Not only people lacking the experience of rural life romanticize Şirince, but also there is a certain idealization of the village in relation to the change in years. People express their discomfort about the transformation the village has been undergoing. Şirince has experienced a tremendous transformation in the last thirty years according to the interviewees. Especially when people reflected their feelings and impressions about the village before tourism emerged, it becomes obvious that Şirince has been reduced to a simple physicality; that is the beauty of the village is the mere quality it has.

Tourism is thought to be the major generator of this change. Müge perceives the change in the village as a change in life styles as well as growing needs in technological advancements. She is definitely not happy about the way tourism operates in the village and throughout the interview she stresses the fact that how hard she tried not to be a part of bad business practices. The change implies a motion, a movement; Müge told me how beautiful the village was when it was economically underdeveloped:

It was great, I mean it was a complete rubble where we had to deal with goat paths. Here where we live are two goats, one donkey. Those were great times. **The lazy taste of Şirince was great** those times. When I came to the village, there was only one tractor, our Gözlük Memed. He served everyone. Now, almost every single house has a tractor. There were no washers, no color televisions and 3-4 private cars (Müge).<sup>58</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup> Harikaydı yani, keçi patikalarıyla ulaştığımız tamamen döküntü. Şurada oturduğumuz yerde iki keçi, bir eşek. Çok güzeldi o zamanlar. Şirince'nin **o miskin tadı muhteşemdi** o zamanlar. Köye geldiğimde tek bir tane traktör vardı, Gözlük Memed'imiz. Herkese hizmet verirdi. Şimdi hemen hemen her hanenin traktörü var. Çamaşır makinası hiç yoktu, renkli televizyon hiç yoktu ve 3-4 tane özel araba vardı.

In Müge's narrative the way she describes her feelings about the village 30 years ago cannot escape one's attention. What does she mean by saying "Şirince's lazy taste was wonderful"? Do places have tastes? Müge, similar to republican period artists, regards the village as an object to be enjoyed, to be tasted and a place that is supposed to remain stable and same. She romanticizes the underdeveloped quality of the village just as the authors of the early republican period. She alienates herself from the village and from a distance she sees the village as sluggish or lazy, similar to the orientalist gaze. The informants in various contexts have expressed the objectification of the village, no matter in an idealized romantic tone or as an object of hatred. I will specifically scrutinize the romantic imagination of Şirince and disillusionments deriving from the incompatibility between the imagined and the real, that is "the innocent, romantic village" versus Şirince as the tainted tourism site.

Indeed, Serdar told me directly that "köyü sevenler şehirlilerdir. Köy romantizmi şehirlilere özgü bir davranış biçimidir." In order to despise the villagers, Serdar claims that only the urbanites love the village, however in doing so, he uses the phrase "village romanticism." It is interesting because he did not refer to the content of the concept of romanticism. In other words, although he knows very well that the romanticism refers to a divergence from the reality, he takes romancization of the rural as if it is a sine qua non situation for their moving to village and running businesses there. In one way, by accepting the existence of village romanticism, he normalizes their practices and activities that caused a tremendous transformation of the village, which the very term village romanticism disguises. Later it became clear to me that his taken for granted approach toward the difference between villagers and the village as opposed to urban and the urbanites was echoing in many other narratives. Zerrin told me that it was very natural to imitate what we do not have:

It is always the case that the villagers long for the towns and the town people long for the village. Those who were born and raised in the city desires to experience an alternative form of life, just like the one we are experiencing. Human psychology. I can't blame them. They think of modernization as a good thing for the village. I think not. The store owners think of taking down the historical Greek gate and building a steel door instead, tearing down the natural stones and replacing them with industrial tiles will lead to making more money. Instead, we try to find ways of taking that historic door and

mounting it on the houses here so that it gives more of that historic geeling. That is why the people who appreciate this village are people like Müjde, Candan, Zeynep, a little like Oya Narin who came from outside. We appreciate it because we didn't have it. But they have no idea because they were born and raised in it. They got this blindness.<sup>59</sup>

In saying so, Zerrin was making inherent distinctions with her “group of people” among the others. Zerrin is very well aware of the fact that ex-urbanites’ desire to create an alternative life for them. She does not explicitly say, but by mentioning “human psychology,” she acknowledges the desire or need of the urbanites to re-enchant with the world. However, her narrative so much intertwines with justifying narrative of an ex-urbanite coming to Şirince with an idealized and romanticized view on the village. When she says that the local peasants are blind since they are born and live there and they cannot see the “value” of the village, she falls into the same trap with the ex-urbanites who have preconceived assumptions regarding village life and believe that they can do something to revive the village. However, she does not see the stable and prejudged ideas of the ex-urbanites are so similar to a colonizer’s constructed and prepossessed opinions that justify the colonial ruling and exploitation of an exotic, magical, romantic and innocent place. Yet, it might be unfair to totally equate the ex-urbanites with a colonial ruling. As discussed in the previous chapter, one of the important reasons or motivations for the migration of ex-urbanites is the dream to enchant their life again, to abandon their disenchanting life in the city. As I write these lines at this very moment, it becomes more and more interesting to think about the motivations of the colonial ruling: the white man’s burden to civilize the uncivilized world. This line of thinking does not

---

<sup>59</sup> Her zaman için köyde olan kasabaya, kasabada olan köye öykünür. Oraya gitmek ister. Şehirde doğup büyüyen de bizim gibi gelip alternatif bir yaşamı tecrübe etmek ister. İnsan psikolojisi. Onları suçlayamıyorum ben. Modernleşmenin köy için iyi olduğunu düşünüyorlar. Bence değil. Eski tarihi Rum kapıyı söküp onun yerine çelik kapı yapmayı efendim kayrakları söküp, kalebodur yapmayı çok para kazanabileceği bir hale çevirmek zannediyor esnaf. Halbuki biz gidip eskiden o tarihi kapıyı alıp buradaki evlere o tarihi dokuya benzesin diye takmaya bakarız. O yüzden bu köyün daha çok kıymetini bilen Müjde gibi, Candan gibi, Zeynep gibi biraz Oya Narin gibi dışarıdan gelen insanlar. Olmadığı için kıymetini biliyoruz biz. Ama onlar içinde doğup yaşadıkları için görmüyorlar. Körlük oluşmuş.

completely imply that the motivations of ex-urbanites' migration to Şirince, to find peace in a heavenly place like this village, ended up running profit-driven businesses and transforming the village, which obviously turned out to their benefit, just as the colonizers who went to far away to civilize the people of those lands but harshly exploit them in every possible way. This thesis only aims to raise certain questions in order to dig deeper into the surface.

#### **4.5 No more romanticism... The Cruel Reality**

In the previous part, the romanticized imagination of ex-urbanites has been displayed. Some people compare the village between the present and the past; especially people who came to the village in the last 30 years long for the old Şirince in a romanticized tone. While others, who has not experienced the “old” Şirince compare the village experience with the urban experience. In both narratives the romantic and desired tone is audible. Purposefully, I have not shared how they continue their narratives because as opposed to the phrases “innocent village people,” “unchanging beautiful village,” “the lazy taste of village,” “the village with one tractor,” we come across with a different village life experience. The differences are reflected in the narratives either in the form of disappointments, such as the unfulfilled intimacy among neighbors or in some other cases, these differences are told in the form of comfort in life styles. The reason of such disappointments as I have just expressed is the mismatch of the imagined Şirince vis-à-vis the reality, in other words, the romanticized rural versus the “real” rural experience, which is “novelty in these people’s lives.

When I say the “real” rural experience, I do not refer to the conceptual discussions of authenticity as opposed to performance, or “original” as opposed to “false” rural experiences. The “real” in this context is the totality of lived experiences as opposed to the imagined, romanticized village life. Thus, such a confrontation with the “reality” -which soon I will attempt to show how- creates disappointments.

Before moving on to the disruption of reality and imagination, it is important to share the experiences of the ex-urbanites in the village. In the previous section, we witnessed Önder and Celine’s primary purpose to buy a barn. Now, I would like to share

the rest of that narrative, in which they tell how they transform the barn into a guesthouse:

Önder: It turned out that the place that we bought as a barn was actually a house, we never made such a plan. The place where we were planning to put a horse inside turned out to be a house, so it was proven to be a house and the court granted the permission to do construction there.

Celine: It took long years.

Önder: So we went to the court and proved that thing, that barn was a house, we got the papers from the court and got permission for a house, for instance, that's how we were able to build a house. Once that house was built, we furnished it, we buy a lot of oldu stuff, I mean from antique stores and such, we needed a place to store them. We filled that place with old things, you know, beds, blankets and then, while building it, a woman from İstanbul (pause) gets fed up with the procedure here and decides the sell the ongoing project half way through.

Celine: But the innocence has ended in this village, there is nothing innocent about it anymore.

Önder: That is what I'm saying, that's it...

Celine: Nope, zero I mean, they were like welcome, everybody saw that, I mean normal, I mean no difference from İstanbul.

Önder: I mean the development of tourism, I mean this, even at the level of old women, um... that old innocence was gone, I mean... but it is this anyway, the marketplace is full of store owners like the ones in Kuşadası, since we never go to those places, I get surprised when I go there every once in a while... I still get surprised, I mean, it changed a lot, when we first came here, there was Zeki the Antique Dealer, the guy who showed us this house, all a coincidence. We made such close friends, we still see each other. He was an outgoing merchant but established himself and now there is this trend of aggressive marketing in downtown and this... when your neighbor does that, you start doing the same but I think when the places that are worth three are rented out for twenty three, that money is, I don't know...

Celine: They think of Indian goods as local products, Chinese goods, they did it here, I mean I don't like it but I am not saying anything, I am not saying anything, trying not to see it (laughter) that's how I do it, I mean in school, I didn't behave exactly like that, I would engage all the way, I would speak out but why I don't do that here, I mean, I feel a form of respect, I

mean that's it... In this village, let them do whatever they want, I mean, I came as an outsider, so I don't speak out. <sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> Önder: Yani şöyle evler biz bi ahır diye aldığımız yerin ev olduğu ortaya çıktı biz hiçbi zaman böyle bi plan yapmadık. Bi at alırsın koyarsın dediğimiz yer eski bi ev çıktı yani ev olduğunu ispat edip mahkemeden buraya inşaat yapabilirsiniz dediler.

Celine: Baya da sene sürdü.

Önder: Onun üzerine gittik mahkemeye o şeyin ahırın ev olduğunu ispat ettik mahkemeden bi kağıt aldık gittik ev izni aldık mesela öyle bi ev yaptık o ev yapınca bi içini döşedik biz eski püskü şey çok satın alırız yani eskicilerden şurdan burdan devamlı onları da koyacak bi yer lazımdı orayı doldurduk eski eşyalarla işte yataklar yorganlar ondan sonra derken onu yaparken önümüzde bir İstanbullu hanım buranın (duraklama) prosedüründen bıkmış satmaya karar veriyordu yarı yolda yapmakta olduğu işi.

Celine: Ama masum bitti bu köyde yok artık yani innocent bi durum yok.

Önder: İşte diyorum ya o evet yani...

Celine: Yok sıfır yani onlar hadi hoş geldin herkes gördüler yani normal yani İstanbul'dan fark yok.

Önder: Yani turizmin ilerlemesi yani hani şey teyzeler seviyesinde bile şeyi ee... o eski innocent şeyi bozdu yani ee... ama böyle bu zaten bi kere şey çarşı tamamen Kuşadası esnafı tipi insanlarla doldu ki biz hiç oralarda bulunmadığımız için yani ara sıra gittiğimizde şaşır... hâlâ şaşıyorum yani çok değişti bizim geldiğimiz zaman Antikacı Zeki vardı işte bize bu evi tesadüf gösteren çok ahbap da olduk hâlâ da burda görüşüyoruz o dışarıklı bi tüccardı ama kabul ettirmişti kendini ve öyle bi şimdi böyle bi agresif bi pazarlama şeyi var aşağıda yani bu da bi onu... komşun öyle yapınca sen de öyle yapmaya başlıyorsun ama zannediyorum tabi üç liralık yerler yirmi üç liraya kiraya verilince o bilmem ne o para şey...

Celine: Hintli mal yerli mal sayıyorlar Çinli mal burda yaptılar yani bundan hoşlanmıyorum ama hiçbi şey demiyorum hiçbi şey demiyorum yani görmüyüm çalışıyorum (güler) ben öyle yapıyorum yani ben okulda tam böyle davranamazdım tam girebilirdim o zaman söylerdim ama niye ben bunu yapmam burda yani saygı hissediyorum yani bu... bu köyün ne yapıyolar yapınlar yani ben yabancı olarak geldim o zaman hiçbi şey demiyorum.

The narrative unveils a number of important details not only about Önder and Celine's perception of the village but also their Eureka moment. How do they realize the fact that the innocent has left Şirince? What do they mean by this heavy word "innocence?" Again, the word innocence might refer to their predisposed opinions about how a village life should be: an untainted, innocent, stable, and true village life as opposed to what they have seen in the city. Moreover, the key expression that I want to stress on the other hand is their realization of the fact that this place is not much different than İstanbul. What might it mean for an urbanite to move to a rural setting with a number of dreams and aspirations but in the end face the fact that this place is not much different than İstanbul?

I propose that this encounter, the transformed the village, with the arrival of urbanites, whether as tourists or permanent settlers, creates uneasiness on the side of these people because this transformation is an urbanite/modernist one. With the arrival of each and every tourist to the village, the village is transformed into an in-between space where urbanites can continue their habits and urban life styles in a rural setting. Even Müge, who nostalgically retells the lazy beautiful village, is cautious about the way of tourism she operates as opposed villagers:

...in our guest houses, whatever way we live in this house, whatever music we listen to, we transferred the same there. In most of them you observe that, they build some places, it contradicts their own way of life, that becomes so obvious. You understand? They eat on tables covered with cheap plastic, for the customer they try to do something. They try to play different music, they try to do different designs and the cheapness of it spills all over. We said, whatever way we live, whatever makes us happy, let us present our guests with this and to this day we did not compromise (Müge).<sup>61</sup>

She not only differentiates herself from the villagers but also proudly expresses that she brings her urban music taste to the village and she makes sure that her guests would feel

---

<sup>61</sup> ...konuk evlerimizde, bu evde nasıl yaşıyorsak, hangi müziği dinliyorsak, aynısını oraya aktardık. Çoğunda onu görüyorsun, bir yerler yapıyorlar kendi yaşam modelleriyle çelişkili bu her şeyiyle seyirtiyor. Anladın? Naylon muşambalı masada yiyor, müşteri için bişeyler bişeyler yapmaya çalışıyor. Farklı müzikler, farklı dizaynlar yapmaya çalışıyor ve her yerinden bu sefilce akıyor. Biz dedik, biz nasıl yaşıyorsak, nasıl mutluyusak bunu konuklarımıza sunalım ve bugüne kadar bu ilkedden vazgeçmedik.

both at home and not at home. In a similar manner, İrina stresses that her way of operating tourism business is different than that of the villagers for she claimed that she knew what urbanites need. One last example would be Daniel's story in which he told me about how he first thought of opening his house for tourism and made a deal with a local tourism operator and how Daniel and his family took the guy to Istanbul to teach him how people deal with tourism in the metropolitan cities. All of these examples confirm Reyhan's point where she puts forward the influence of urbanites in the transformation of Şirince:

Şimdi onlar paraları olduğu için evleri yıkıp yapıyorlar dipten. Her şeyin daha iyisini alıyorlar. Paralı geliyorlar buraya gelirken. Köy halkı öyle değil. İzin alman gerekiyor bir sürü şey. Mesela benim babamın çok fazla geliri yoktu. O yüzden de bir restorasyon filan geçirmedim bu ev. Bir banyosunu yapmış babam, bir de 81'de 82'de o arka duvarı sıva yaptırmış bu. Başka bir şey yapmadık. Böyle kullanıyoruz. Bir de içinde olduğun için göçmüyor, bakılıyor ev. Ama hani, yan tarafta hani şimdi yapıyorlar.. Yeni yapılıyor hep. Param olsa da bu evi nasıl yıkarım tekrar yaparım onu düşünüyorum çünkü çok üzülüyorum. Çünkü ben biliyorum ki onu ben yaptım. Eskiden kalmadı o. Eski tarihi yok. Tarihi eser değil o diye düşünüyorum (Reyhan).

Reyhan's judgment about the ex-urbanites signifies how influential these people have been in the transformation of Şirince. The economic situation of urbanites together with the development of tourism changed the village a lot. Eren justifies the change and the transformation in his own words:

So what was the things that they were doing previously, the flatbread garden, exhibitions and such. The really beautiful stores were always opened up by outsiders, people from Selçuk. Otherwise, the villagers got nothing. It is because they have too much on their hands, the fields, the gardens. What else could you expect from women? Only this much. Also, the rental income, the nice money they get from the rent is more than enough for them. To bed and breakfast place and stores alike, they rent it out. First you rent it out to outsiders and then you complain, you shouldn't. The villagers express this from time to time but they are wrong. If it weren't for the outsiders, there would be no shopkeeping (Eren).<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> E daha önce yaptıkları neydi, gözleme bahçesi sergiler şunlar bunlar. Çok güzel dükkanları hep yabancılar, Selçuk'tan gelenler açtı. Öbür türlü köylüde bir şey yok. Çünkü işleri çok fazla bağ bahçe. Kadınların yapacağı iş ne



Let me be clear about one point. I have tried to demonstrate the effect of ex-urbanites in constructing Şirince as an in-between space which is neither village nor urban. However in this part of argument I do not mean to suggest that ex-urbanites consciously and intentionally transformed the village they found in the first place. Rather, my point is that, such transformation that is the dissolving of the boundaries between the city and country is the natural result of a place inhabited by both urbanites and villagers. The ground of this discussion is to draw attention to an ambivalent situation. While ex-urbanites dreamed about living in a romantic pastoral setting with hopes and aspirations of re-enchanting with the world and decided to move to Şirince, after their step on the soil of Şirince their bubble burst. What made Şirince accessible for them and its openness to differences is the same thing that broke their dreams. The amenability of the village to change made possible this transformation. In the last section of the previous chapter, I have explained how this village might have been a perfect destination for voluntary simplicity movement but the type of the consumption and the way businesses run ruled out that possibility. One cannot help but wonders if they followed the rule “when in Rome, do as the Romans do” would it change the current face of Şirince as well as how ex-urbanites “feel” today about Şirince?

There are opposite cases as well in which the disappointment still arises from similar romanticized projections but the reason does not derive from the closeness of city and the country but from the contradictory practices of the village and urban experiences. İrina’s story will hopefully exemplify the failure of re-enchantment because of her unfulfilled aspirations. In this respect it is crucial to mention my impression about the interview with İrina. İrina as I expressed in the introduction part is a magician. The reason why she came to Şirince, as I already told in the previous chapter, is to get away from İstanbul. At first she told me about how safe the village is as opposed to İstanbul and how freely she could wander around the village regardless of the time of the day and night. She continuously referred the Şirince’s peaceful and liberating air. However, at one point she started telling me about her dog’s experiences.

---

kadar olur? İşte bu kadar. Bir de kira geliri, güzel kiralara verdikleri için onlara yetiyor artıyor bile. Pansiyon olsun dükkan olsun veriyorlar kiraya. Hem veriyorsun yabancılara hem ondan sonra laf ediyorsun etmeyeceksin. Bunu zaman zaman köylü söylüyor ama haksızlar yani. Yabancılar da olmasa esnaflık yapamaz.

Her dog somehow hurt a little kid. Nothing happened neither to the kid nor to the dog but after that day, her relationship with the neighbors have changed completely. I could still feel how traumatized she was; while telling me about this story Irina was lowering her voice so that no one would hear her. From that day onwards, the neighbors started threatening Irina; if she did not keep the dog under control or if she unleashed the dog around the village they would poison the dog. Irina was so frightened that she even asked for a special training for her dog so that the animal would protect himself. The peaceful and liberating village turned into a prison for İrina and her dog. İrina finalizes her narrative by saying: “Eğer bir gün köyden gidersem, bu köpeğim yüzünden ve onun için olur. Köyde tüm köpekler özgürce dolaşırken benimkisi tasmaşız çıkamıyor. Ne demek bu”? What does it mean? It means that, the animal domestication is predominantly an urban practice. No matter how happy was Irina, when she had dreamed of going to a natural place, it would be good for her dog; yet, she faced the reality in a harsh way. In the rural the animals are parts of nature, not a part of the household. The village animals do not have an “agency” as the pets in the city might have. The treatment towards animals in the village is not the same as the treatment towards “owned” animals in the city because in the village animals serve a purpose that could benefit the household. But other than giving a pleasure time, providing companionship or friendship, what purpose do pets in the city serve? Do they contribute to the overall household production? The village animals do not.

In the last stance, Şirince today is by no means close to this romantic, utopian pastoral setting. In terms of life style, they are not deprived of the possibilities of the city life. One day, I was in a casual talk with a young university graduate who was working and living in the village. When I asked him “don’t you get bored when the evening falls,” he replied, “Kuşadası and İzmir is one hour drive from Şirince. We have cinema and nightclubs or whatever we ask for in either of them. How long does it take for you to go the closest cinema in İstanbul?” His rhetorical question gained me a new perspective. Later I also became aware of the fact that whatever I needed in this village, I would find in less than an hour. It was almost the same duration in the city. After this dialogue, I add another question to my informants. I asked them directly “is Şirince a village?” and “if not, what is it? I received a number of replies ranging from the academic definition of the concept of village vis-à-vis Şirince, to simple one-word answers like “of course it is, what else would it be,” or answers eliminating the culture

and regarding the word “village” only as a segregated administrative unit of a specific place. Among these replies, Yasin’s narrative approaches to the issue from a number of perspectives. As I have written in the introduction part, Yasin is the Imam of the village. He has been living in Şirince for 6 months. He is originally from a conventional “village” in Trabzon and he has been living in İstanbul since he was a teenager. Thus, while reading his analysis, it should be kept in mind that thanks to his wide range place experience and his distance from the tourism business in Şirince, Yasin has the privilege to speak more comfortably about the current position of Şirince due to the fact that nothing bonds him to the village. He has come to the village for a specific time period and he will leave when his duty is over:

You know that the Aegean region is a hot place. Here, it is 1-2 degrees cooler. But we ended up heating ourselves with the air conditioners. We resume our city lives here. We say how nice is the city life. We are, for instance, a conservative family, aren’t we... Our wives may not enter every sort of place. In the city for instance, one goes out to travel. One does not always go out. But here, it is like the city. You can’t always go out. Oh one can go out for instance, have a nice time and go back home. You know, you can’t be sitting in front of your door or anything.

No, I don’t view this place as a village. If I were to view it as a village, I would have to think in terms of the village. This place, you know, just recently got accepted as a neighborhood of the municipality. I will ask you for instance. They talk about a village budget, I don’t know exactly but they talk about trillions. The budget of a village cannot be that much. Or, today go to any village you like, you can expect what to pay for a 2 acre land. But the price here is so high for a 300-500 m<sup>2</sup> of land. That gives the impression that this place is not a village anymore. Here, we have everything right by us. That is why we don’t think of this place as a regular village.

-What is your definition of the village, what do you think of when you say village?

-You know, what could it be?

-You know, you say a village, you talk about village elders, the village has two coffee houses. You make your living out of farming, fruits, hazelnuts and such. I talk according to the land that I grew up in. This is how it is, but when you look at this place, there is a huge amount of trading taking place here. It is not like a village here. The form of trade in a village is nowhere close to the trade here. Here is the typical city trade.

-What distinguishes this place from the city then?

-Let me put it this way... Maybe in the large cities... Actually, we can talk about the difference between the regular small cities and large cities. For instance, you can find everything in the center of say İstanbul or İzmir, but you can't find everything in Bilecik. But at the end, that is also a city. The big cities of course give you... Just the same as İstanbul and Bilecik are not the same, Balaban village of Trabzon is not the same as Şirince.

-Do you then consider this place as a small city?

-Exactly. It is because which village is visited by 50-60 busses every weekend? Then, there is a foundation here. It is a village but it has developed, it has evolved. It rose to such a level, let's say it is a small city whose title remained a village. You know that we have cities that have one main avenue, but it is still a city. Now, let's compare the number of tourists that visit Gümüşhane with the number of tourists that visit Şirince.<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> Biliyorsun Ege sıcak bir memleketidir. Burası 1-2 derece daha serindir. Ama sonuçta klimayla ısındık. Şehirdeki hayatımızı burada daim ediyoruz. Oh şehir hayatı diyoruz. Biz mesela muhafazakar bir aileyiz öyle ya... Bizim eşimiz her ortama giremeyebilir. Mesela şehirde bir yere gezmeye gidilirse dışarı çıkılır. Her zaman dışarıya çıkılmaz. Ama burası şehir gibi. Her zaman dışarı çıkamıyorsun. Ha çıkar mesela gezer dolaşır tekrardan evine girer. Hani kapının önünde oturayım falan zor olur.

Hayır burayı ben köy gibi görmüyorum. Köy gibi görmüş olsam, köy gibi düşünmem gerekir. Burası biliyorsunuz, daha yeni belediyeye mahalle olarak bağlandı. Mesela ben size sorarım. Bir köyün bütçesi duymuşluğum var netini de bilmiyorum ama trilyonlardan bahsediliyor. Bir köyün bütçesi bu kadar olamaz zaten. Veya bugün herhangi bir köye gitseniz 10 dönüm bir arazi için sizden istenecek meblağ bellidir. Ama buradaki meblağ 300-500 m<sup>2</sup>lik bir yer çok değerlidir. Bu da artık köy olmaktan çıkmış bir hava sezdiriyor. Burada elimizin altında her şey var. O yüzden normal köy gibi biz burayı düşünmüyoruz.

-Sizin köy tanımınız nedir, bir köy deyince neler geliyor aklınıza?

-Hani neler olabilir?

-Hani bir köy dersiniz, emmisi dersin, dedesi dersin; köyün iki tane kahvesi vardır. Oturur işte ne bileyim geçimini daha çok çiftçilikle, meyvesi sebzesi, fındığı vardır. Benim yöreme göre konuşuyorum. Bu türdür ama buraya baktığınız zaman ticaretin babası var burada. Buralar köy gibi değil. Köydeki ticaret yapısıyla buradaki ticaret asla bir değil. Tam bir şehir ticareti var burada.

At first, Yasin approached to the topic from an administrative point of view and tells us about the position of Şirince. Then, he takes the economy of the village as the main distinctive quality from other villages. The impact of tourism operating in the village is so high that it affects the rural identity of the village. In his narrative, he compares Şirince both to urban setting, as a place where he can reach anything he needs and to his own village, where people earn their lives through agriculture. In short, Yasin analyzes and describes Şirince's neither-village-nor-city position in a very detailed manner. What does this blurriness about Şirince tell us at this point?

First of all it is necessary to analyze the narratives in which people share their feelings about this liminality of the space. They do not always express it openly. Nevertheless, in their disappointments and bewilderment, one can see the “un-desired” urban practices in Şirince, which they do not like but endure. The most prominent city-village distinction comes to the foreground in the form of human relations. You remember how Celine, with a smattering knowledge of Turkish, claims “there is no more innocence in Şirince.” By the disappearing of the innocence she referred to the villagers' ambition of earning money and becoming rich, as if this ambitious is idiosyncratic to villagers. In the same line of thinking, Nazlı observes the same change:

---

-Şehirle arasındaki fark ne o zaman?

-Şöyle söylim... Belki büyük şehirlerde... Aslında normal küçük şehirlerle büyük şehirler arasındaki farktan konuşabiliriz. Mesela bir İstanbul veya bir İzmir'in merkezinde her şeyi bulabilirsiniz ama Bilecik'te her şeyi bulamazsınız. Ama sonuçta o da il. Büyük şehirlerin vermiş olduğu tabii şey var. Bir İstanbulla bir Bilecik bir olamadığı gibi tabii, Trabzon'un Balaban köyü ile Şirince de bir olamaz.

-O zaman daha çok burası size küçük bir şehir gibi mi geliyor?

-Aynen öyle. Çünkü hangi köye baktığınız zaman haftasonu olduğu zaman 50-60 otobüs geliyor. Demek ki bunun bir altyapısı var. Köy ama kendini aşmış, geliştirmiş. Belli bir seviyeye gelmiş, sadece ismi köy olarak kalmış küçük şehir diyelim. Sizler de bilirsiniz öyle illerimiz var ki, bir tane caddesi vardır ama ildir. Şimdi Gümüşhane'ye gelen turist sayısıyla sadece Şirince'ye gelen turist sayısına bakalım.

No happy person tries to rip off anybody... But now, since I look like an outsider... When people look at my face, they see euros and dollars and nothing else, nobody is interested in my personality. Because of that, spiritually, the people of this place has weakend. They weren't like this before.<sup>64</sup>

It is true that money has changed a number of dynamics in the village, as it would change in anywhere. The change in the human relations shows itself in the form of diminishing neighborhood relations. It would not be wrong to say that the lack of sincere neighborhood might be one of the qualities of urban life, where people do not establish strong neighborhood relationships based on solidarity and friendship due to a number of changes that emerged with the modernity. The efforts for material gains leave neither energy nor time for socialization with neighbors in the city. However, this does not mean that the "regular" village or rural life is the exemplary environment where people form quality neighborhood relations, which would be another form of romanticization of the rural life. The point here is the following: the odds of observing loose neighborhood relations might be higher in an urban setting. At this point I would like to highlight an important detail here. The below quotation is from Müge's narrative where she tells about her first years in the village. While reading her narrative it should be kept in mind that she is the first urbanite to move to Şirince. Thus, she experienced all the phases of the village:

Now, it is very interesting for the villagers. No city person has been here before. A young woman from the city, what is more, trying to find shelter here. And on one side, you get such a story. I am alone, the whole day I have workers here and we are working with 15-20 of them here. Oh, and I don't know the thing either. The workers usually bring their food with them. Since I was not aware of that, everyday I cook cauldrons full of food for them at that age. I am thinking that the employer provides the food. I don't know, I buy watermelons and such. About 10 people work here. By 7, the workers leave and I open my book, take my wine, I say God, now is the best time of the day and the women of the village stop by for a visit with embroideries in their hands... So that I won't feel lonely. Oh good, great. While I am so tired from working the whole day... And you know, we make tea, we make coffee,

---

<sup>64</sup> Güteryüzlü hiçkimse kimseden bir şey koparmak beklemek.. Fakat şimdik, ben zaten yabancı kılıklıyım ya... Yüzüme bakan yani euro dolar başka bir şey görmüyorlar, kişiliğime kimsenin ilgisi yok. O yönden yani manevi yönden buranın insanı zayıfladı. Önceden böyle değildiler.

I offer them whatever I can under the conditions of the house. The following evening, it is the same ceremony... I said oh my, what will I do now? But of course, **since we city people are coded in a different way**, for us it is that... Privacy, personal space, the time that we spent all by ourselves are precious as well... In addition, I will read, I will spend time daydreaming all by myself and such. It went this way for a while, I ended up using nothing but candles for light. Because if they see light, **which they call "gleam"**, they said they visited only if they saw the gleam. The terms also change over the time, none of the young people now use the word "gleam". (Müge)<sup>65</sup>

Müge has always been nostalgic about the village. She used to make comparisons on how this place used to be once. However, in this context in which she complains about how the villagers used to come and visit her every evening because they knew that she was alone, she in fact whines about one of those things which she is asking for today. The longing for neighborhood relations resonates in almost every interview. Two quotes below are from Mine and Reyhan respectively:

It is like this, our neighborly relations were also very good. The old woman, aunt Hüdaverdi, Sabiř, her friends and all... All of us line up and sit down in the garden of one of us. Summers, winters, we eat our lunches together. Let's say fish is available, move on... Go and buy 5 kilograms of fish. They cook

---

<sup>65</sup> řimdi köylü için ilginç bir řey. Daha önce hiç řehirli gelmemiř. řehirli genç bir kadın, üstüne üstelik burada barınmaya çalıřıyor. Ve o bir yandan řöyle bir hikaye oluyor. Ben yalnızım, gündüz boyunca ustalarım var ve bir 15-20 tane usta burada çalıřıyoruz. Ha, řeyi de bilmiyorum. Ustalar mesela yiyeceklerini yanlarında getirirlermiř. Ben bunu bilmediğim için her gün o yařımda kazanlarla yemek piřiriyorum. Ben iřveren yemek verir zannediyordum. Ne bileyim karpuz alıyorum. 10 kiři falan çalıřıyor burada. 7'de gidiyor ustalarım ondan sonra ben böyle iřte kitabı almıř řarabımı koymuřum, Allah diyorum řimdi en keyifli an ve köylü teyzelerim geliyor ziyarete ellerinde oyaları... Yalnız kalmiyim diye. E iyi, muhteřem. Günün yorgunluęuyla... E bilirsin çay yaparız, kahve yaparız evde o řartlarda ne varsa onu vermeye çalıřırım. Ertesi akřam yine aynı seramoni... Ayy dedim řimdi n'apcam? Ama tabii biz **řehirli olarak daha farklı kodlandığımız için** hani bizim için o.. Privacy, özel alan, kıymetli kendimizle de geçirdiğimiz vakitler... Ondan sonracığma, kitap okuyacağım, kendimce hayaller kuracağım falan... Bu böyle hep gidiyordu Sonunda mum falan yakıyordum. Bakıyorlar çünkü iřın varsa ki **onlar "řavk" diyorlardı**, řavkın varsa o zaman geliyoruz diyorlardı. Terimler de deęiřiyor zaman içerisinde, řavk lafını artık kimse kullanmıyor gençlerde.

it, prepare tomatoes, cucumbers, onions and such on the side, we sit down on a huge circle and eat, drink and laugh. No such thing for such a long time. **That is why I left that place anyway.** The old neighborly relations are no more. While I was there, I knew that each one of them would offer help if I had any troubles. That sincerity is no more. In the old times, there was a lot of cooperation. I had no worries about how to harvest my olives. We did it together. But then, I realized that I am having lots of difficulties. Someone to pick olives for me is nowhere to be found (Mine).<sup>66</sup>

Well, at least there are neighbors to rely on. No such thing now. In the past, for instance, say you had some surplus product. Everybody distributed that amongst each other. For instance, my mother used to give to everyone. People here have huge fields, they won't give anything to anyone. Even if there are just two eggplants, they weight it and sell. They don't give it to their neighbors. For instance you see, does anyone go to anyone as guests? **Well, me too... I am working though, you see** but everyone is acting weird.<sup>67</sup>

These three passages clearly demonstrate two major points. First of all, it is the effect of ex-urbanites in changing the space even unconsciously, which later causes their disenchantment and disillusionment. For instance, Mine left the village because of this transformation or fading away of the spirit of solidarity based on neighborhood

---

<sup>66</sup> Şöyle şimdi bizim komşuluklarımız da çok iyiydi. Yaşlı teyze, Hüdaverdi teyze, Sabiş, onun arkadaşları falan... Böyle biz bir sıra, her gün birinin bahçesinde otururuz. Yaz, kış, öğlen yemeklerini beraber yeriz. Diyelim ki balık mı gelmiş, haydiiii... Git 5 kilo balık al. Pişirirler, yanına domates, salatalık, soğan bilmem ne, otururuz kocaman bir sofraya onun içinde yer içer, güleriz. Uzun zamandır yok. **Zaten ben o nedenle oradan ayrıldım.** Eski komşuluk yok. Ben oradayken de hepsinin biliyorum başım dertte olsun yardımına koşarlar. Artık o samimiyet yok. Eskiden dayanışma çok daha fazlaydı. Zeytinlerimi kim toplayacak diye bir derdim yok. Birlikte toplardık. Ama ondan sonra baktım ki baya zorlanıyorum. Zeytin toplayacak insan bulamıyorsun.

<sup>67</sup> Ya hiç değilse komşuluk var. Şimdilik hiç öyle bir şey yok. Eskiden mesela bahçende bir şey çıkarsa fazla. Herkes birbirine verirdi. Mesela benim annem herkese verirdi. Buradakilerin hepsinin koskoca tarlaları var, hiçbir şey vermezler kimseye. 2 tane patlıcan olsa teraziye götürür satar. Komşusuna vermez. Mesela görüyorsun, kimse kimseye gidip geliyor mu? **Ya ben de... Ben çalışıyorum mesela görüyorsun** ama bi acayip herkes.



relationships. I suggest that one of the triggering reasons of tourist boom in the village is the construction of certain elements in the village, to make the tourists feel at home, such as the “taste of music” Müge was playing in her hotels. Thus people started working harder than ever in the village to compete with one another and to gain more profit just as they do in the city, so they could no more spare time for their neighbors.

“There is a universal agreement here that, while concepts of “urban” and “rural” still have meaning in certain contexts, we should go beyond simple dichotomous classifications, since in the contemporary world many people live and work in a much more differentiated settlement system (Champion and Hugo, 2004:372)”

“The approach that considers the ruralism as local captivity just like it was expressed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century is weird in my opinion, moreover, it is funny. In my opinion, the notion of rurality cannot be solidly understood without defining and classifying different variations of mentalities that are not limited to place.” (Varlık, 2015:25)<sup>68</sup>

As can be seen in these discussions by Varlık as well as by Champion and Hugo on the differentiation of the province or rural from the urban are no longer relevant in most of the contexts. Şirince provides sufficient data to consider it as one of the contexts where it is no longer possible to make a clear-cut distinction between the rural and the urban. As discussed above, the profound transformation of the village that has brought about many urban habits, particularly the diminished neighborhood relations, lack of solidarity, and the consumption habits proves Şirince’s liminal position as a village, which makes it a neither-village-nor-city place.

#### **4.6 Top to Down Modernizing Attempts of Ex-urbanites**

In the part where I have discussed the how republican intelligentsia perceives the village, I attempted to make it clear that not every author approaches the rural in the same way. It is misleading to suggest that all the elites and intellectuals in the early Republican period demonized or despised the villagers, or all of them romanticized the

---

<sup>68</sup> “Taşra olgusunu 19. yy’ın başlarında ortaya konmuş yerel kısıtlanmışlık mahiyetiyle ele alan yaklaşım, günümüzde bence tuhaf duruyor, dahası komik kaçıyor. Kanımca taşra kavramı, mekanla sınırlanamayacak bir zihinsel algı biçiminin farklı varyasyonlarını tanımlayıp sınıflandırmadan somut olarak teşhis edilemez.”

rural life. Even from my own experiences, as an urbanite who spent only a couple of months in the village, I can say that my perception of the village was not stable. Thus, in analyzing the narratives of my research participants I have always kept in mind my different position holdings and I tried to avoid generalizing their narratives as the voice of the totality. Let alone speaking on behalf of the totality, sometimes the same person would utter contradictory sentences about his/her approach to Şirince. Keeping this exemplary in mind, in this section I will try to demonstrate how ex-urbanites in Şirince tried to modernize the village and what has been the consequences of these efforts. I figured out that their narratives reflect their current constructions about the village. As I have tried to outline in the previous chapter and in this chapter, these constructions regarding Şirince frame the village as a liminal space, meaning that it is neither a village in the common sense of the term nor a city as we know today. Moreover, I have attempted to show how these constructions and liminality of the village are intricately related to the disillusionment or the disenchantment with the village experiences by the ex-urbanites. Müge's, Önder's and Celine's narratives concretely show how they are to some extent disappointed by the current situation of the village, to which without they they have contributed.

In the course of the field work, I have witnessed and heard a number of stories about how ex-urbanites tried to be beneficial for the village. Some of these efforts were following a developmentalist agenda, that is they were planning projects through copying examples from other village tourism destinations in the Europe. When an ex-urbanite was complaining about Şirince, the reference would generally be either villages in Cyprus or Italy. Some other projects were idealist "naïve" attempts of educating people and children in the village. I can count a few of them here: Pınar abla who is a former fashion designer, offered women sewing classes but nobody was interested. Müge offered to give patchwork workshop in order to present value-added items to the tourists. This is how Müge told the result of the two days workshop:

The next day, after a workshop of two days, I said let's pus the button. And I myself have no gains of any kind in this. It is not that I want to employ people and earn money either. Let me open up a door for you. Ask this to Reyhan, she will remember those days. Two days later, some girl has embroidered a star on top of a linen bag and written Şirince underneath. She prepared two in three hours and sold both of them and this was the only thing I had to show out of my operation. Our villagers are very interesting. They

all listen and nod. (Müge)<sup>69</sup>

The daughters of a Turkish-English couple who came to the village only in summer holidays, opened up a free English course for the children in the village. The children gathered in the village mosque and learnt as much English as they could in a couple of hours. In short, the contribution of ex-urbanites' in the production of contemporary Şirince is quite important especially in daily life practices and the ways the tourism is operated. However when it comes to planned and programmed projects that is the consciously run modernization activities the ex-urbanites fail. The failure according to a number of the informants is the rooted in the villagers. "Ah bizim köylümüz" kind of approach to the villagers unveils their hidden or sometimes explicit despising gaze on the villagers. The main problem I suggest is the lack of villagers' agency in these projects. The foundation of village association constitutes as the perfect example of this point. I have asked almost all of the informants whether now or in the past they tried to found a "Şirince'yi Koruma ve Güzelleştirme Derneği." The answer is affirmative but the attempts end in despair even after a couple of meetings. First of all the urbanites did not include the villagers in such an organization. Hayri blames the villagers for being lack of vision and other blame each for trying to use the association for their own benefits. It was the first moment that I started doubting about a sincere motivation of protecting and beautifying the village as opposed to use it for their material gains. However though, it was Zerrin, the first person to have ever implied the importance of organic intellectuals if one wants to accomplish such an endeavor:

If this place was educated not by outsiders but by people from this place, they will be more accepting to learn. They may have prejudices towards me. They might say you came from the city, are you trying to teach me? They might think the same about my boss as well. But if their own villagers, their own locals, I don't know, someone who also has some culture about the world tries

---

<sup>69</sup> Ertesi gün 2 günlük kurstan sonra hadi düğmeye basalım dedim. Ve benim kendim için hiç bir çıkarım yok bunda. İşçi çalıştırıp para kazanmak da istemiyorum. Size bir kapı açayım. Reyhan'a bunu sor, hatırlar o günleri. İki gün sonra bir hatun bez torbanın üzerine bir yıldız, altına Şirince nakışla yazdı. İki tane hazırlamış üç saat içinde ikisini de satmış ve bütün benim operasyonumdan tek verim buydu. Köylümüz çok ilginçtir. Ahali, dinler, baş sallar.

to show them the path, it will be more acceptable. (Zerrin).<sup>70</sup>

Firstly, Mine's perception and construction of village is very important. She frequently makes it clear that she did not do anything that might be interpreted by the local people as an offense to the village life. However, at the same time she did not keep herself from positioning in a superior position:

One day I told someone whose name is not important. "Well" I said. Look, these villagers I said, are so thirsty that, they need educated intellectuals. Let's chat. Why don't you also come to the coffee shop, I said. "Mine" he said, "what business do I have there" he said. "They are animals, animals... There is no use talking to them." I was shocked. Am I making myself clear? It is all about the point of view... (Mine)<sup>71</sup>

They have to be subjects that are of interest to the village. One day, I never forget. Sabiř told me "oh sister, what are you doing, sitting down at the coffee shop all the time". "My dear" I said, "come, let me take you with me", "oh my" she said, "no we are not used to any such thing". So one day I said "I will close down one of those coffee shops, it will be just the women and I will invite you as well". "Ohh" she said, "will you do it?" Look, now she can go and sit down at the coffee shop herself. But such a thing those days, it was impossible, they didn't even think about it... For sure they gossiped about me but I didn't hear anything. I heard them say things such as "like a man", "an Ottoman woman" about me. "Strong woman, she know what she wants and what she doesn't." <sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>70</sup> Dıřarıdan deęil de burayı buranın eęitimli yerlisi eęitirse onlar aısından da onu kabul edip alırken daha az kompleksli olur. Bana önyargılı bakabilir. Sen gelmişsin şehirden bana bir şey mi öğretmeye çalışıyorsun diyebilir. Benim patronuma da diyebilir. Ama kendi köylüyü, kendi yerlisi, ne bileyim biraz dünya kültürü de görmüş biri ona doğru yolu göstermeye çalışırsa daha doğru olur.

<sup>71</sup> Bir güne ismi lazım deęil birine söyledim. "Ya" dedim. Bak köylü dedim o kadar susamış ki, okumuş aydın kişilere ihtiyacı var. Sohbet edelim. Siz de gelsenize kahveye dedim. "Mine" dedi, "ben ne gelcem oraya" dedi. "Onlar hayvan hayvan... Onlarla konuşulmaz." Ben böyle şaşırdım kaldım. Anlatabiliyor muyum? Bakış açısı...

<sup>72</sup> Köyün konuşacağı konular olması gerekir. Bir gün hiç unutmuyorum. Sabiř bana dedi ki "ya abla dedi senin ne işin var, ikide bir gidip kahvede oturuyorsun." "Canım" dedim, "sen de gel seni de götürüyüm", "aa dedi yok

They were all males alright, the women never went to the coffee shops at all. In fact, in 94 or so... I took the wife of one of the workers. Poor woman started to cry while sitting there. "I" she said, "have never been to the coffee shop before" she said. "Do you see what I got myself into". She felt as if she was not a decent person anymore. But 5-6 men from the village came and thanked me and the woman. "Good thing we have you, good thing you came, you will at the least set out an example for our wives. We want them to come and sit together with us" they said. (Mine)<sup>73</sup>

The fact that thirty years ago, women could not sit in the coffee houses and Mine could tells us something important. Mine as a foreigner in Şirince is aware of her effect in the transformation of contemporary Şirince. She believes that she did important things for this place. Interestingly enough, even though she tries not to differentiate herself from the villagers, implicitly she otherizes herself from the rural context. "Köyün konuşacağı konular olması gerekir" is statement, which exemplifies generalized notions on the village life.

Tavır ve davranış çok önemli, hiçbir zaman örneğin benim evime bir baskın yapma şeyi olmadı gençler tarafından. Ben onlara hep **ablalık yaptım**. Onları örgütlemeye çalıştım. Şirince'yi koruma derneği kurduk. Tüzüğünü falan ben hazırladım. Ama onlara hep **destek** oldum. Dedim ki **sizin eseriniz, siz ancak şey yapabilirsiniz** (Mine).

---

biz alışkın değiliz". Ben bir gün dedim "o kahvelerden birini kapatıcam sadece kadınlar matinası olacak sizi de çağıracam". "Yaa" dedi, "yapar mısın?" Bak şimdi kendisi gidiyor kahvede de oturabiliyor. Ama bunu o zamanlar mümkün değil düşünemelerdi bile. Mutlaka benim hakkımda da dedikodular olmuştur ama ben duymadım. "Erkek gibi", "Osmanlı kadın" şeylerini duydum. "Güçlü bir kadın, ne istediğini ve istemediğini biliyor".

<sup>73</sup> Hepsi erkekti tamam, kadınlar gelmiyordu kahveye falan hiç. Hatta 94 senesinde miydi... Ustalardan birinin karısını ben götürdüm. Kadıncağız oraya otururken başladı ağlamaya. 'Ben' dedi 'hiç dedi hayatımda kahveye gelip de oturmuş değilim' dedi. 'Bak görüyor musun ne hallere düştüm.' Sanki kendisini böyle kötü yola düşmüş gibi hissetti. Ama köyden 5-6 erkek geldiler ve teşekkür ettiler Kadına da bana da. 'İyi ki varsınız, iyi ki geldiniz en azından bizim eşlerimize örnek olacaksınız. Onların da gelip bizimle birlikte oturmasını istiyoruz dediler' (Mine).

...ben bu kitaplık olan bölümde kadınlarla birlikte otururdum, onlara kitap okurdum, onlara anlatırdım. Bilhassa doğayı şey yapmak için falan. Beni dinlerlerdi ama demek ki hiç bir şey almamışlar. Onun için hiç bir ilerleme yok ne yazık ki (Mine).

Among my research participants Mine is the person who frequently stresses how she loved this village, how she could get accustomed to live in this village and her desperation about the city life. Even though she decided to move here for a quieter life, her urbanist approach does not leave her in the village. She, like other participants, has a drive to modernize the village. Her biggest contribution in Şirince though, is the construction of an Atatürk bust in the school yard with the money she donated. However she indeed gave the money for something else:

Bir tane dersane daha yapın, bir oda daha ekleyin. Para toplayın, para ekleyin. Ondan sonra işte 1 sene sonraydı, 1000 kadar da kitap aldım İstanbul'dan onları gönderdim. O zamanın parasıyla belki 1500 Euro bir para getirdim onlara verdim. Bir derslik 1000tl'ye çıkıyordu. Yeni sıralar yapılması için para falan verdim. Tamam dediler, çok mutlu oldular. Ben bir sene sonra gittim. Tabii herkes beni tanıyor. Şöyle tanıyorlar tabii “ay Allah razı olsun sen para gönderdin de biz Atatürk büstü koyabildik okulun bahçesine” “Neee!” O anda ay nasıl hata yaptığımı anladım. Ben onun için göndermemiştim. Herkes tabii benim ismimi duyuyor. O gönderdi onun yardımıyla.. İyi neyse sesimi çıkarmadım. Gittim peki kitaplar nerede? Sınıfa giriyorum, kitaplar yok! Kitaplar nerede! Müdür bey beni götürdü kendi odasına “burada” dedi. Çelik dolaplar almışlar, çelik dolaplara hapsetmişler. “Hocam” dedim, “siz ne yaptınız, ben bu kitapların okuyacağı yerlerde olmasını istiyorum. Raflar yaptıracaktınız, raflara koyacaktınız” “Ama çalarlar, yırtarlar...” “Ama yani, bu kitaplar onun için zaten, kitaplar okunacak, kitapların içinde büyüyecek çocuk” Ondan sonra o da büyük bir hayal kırıklığı... (Mine).

Her tone of voice when she was narrating this story was full of excitement. It was as if she was living that day again. Her tone was almost as if she was performing in a movie, full of emotions and very didactic. Her each attempt to develop the village ends in a disappointment. The reason of these disappointments can be found in the failure of village institutes as well. Any attempt to modernize a place will not be possible before solving the urgent problems of that place and then solving the infrastructural problems.

In a similar way Müge experienced disappointments not only towards about the village but also toward the villagers. However, although I asked her a number times whether she felt any disappointments, she always replied carefully that people do not

upset her and that she never feel disappointed and that she could be able to accept people as they are. However, in her narratives, the way she tells her stories, distances herself from the villagers. She believes that there is an essential difference between villagers and urbanites. The occidentalist gaze is very clear in Müge's narratives.

Ömer Türkeş argues that the elitist gaze towards the rural is always evaluated over the judgements of modernism which has its reference in the West:

Bu yabancı bakışların ardında gelişmiş, düzgün, haklı, doğru, tartışılmaz ve başkalarına da öğretilmesi zorunlu olan modernitenin standartlarına bağlılık var; taşranın tartıldığı terazinin referansı Türk modernleşmesidir. Taşraya kentten, dolayısıyla bir biçimde tanımlanmış modernlikten hareketle yönelen yazar için taşrayı keşfetmek, aslında modern olmayanı göstermektir. Böyle bir bakışla geri kalmışlığın, yoksulluğun, cahilliğin nedeni de modernleşmemişliktir elbette (Türkeş, 2005, 9.172).

In line with the arguments of Ömer Türkeş, for Müge village was associated with backwardness. Just like she already told in the beginning of this chapter, she feel obliged to develop the village:

Köyün içine biz hasbel kader geldik. Eski Rum evleri, birbirinde güzel onarılmış, patikalar yollar, çiçek tarlaları, bir English pub falan, öyle.. Allah Allah, burada ne oluyor dedik. **Yani bizim vatandaşımız böyle bir şey ortaya çıkaramaz** ve şunu anlattılar. Tabi **İngilizler Kıbrıs'la çok inilti olduğu için** ve Kuzey Kıbrıs onlara ulaşım açısından çok zor olmasına rağmen zamanında burada devlet ev satmamış onlara. 49 Yılığına kiralyor. Onları restore ediyorlar. Bir konsey kurmuşlar. Herkes bir para aktarıyor. Evlerin restorasyonunu kendileri yapıyorlar ama ortak alanlarda yollar, patikalar, çiçekler şunlar bunlar falan konsey işte... İşte 15 günde bir toplanıyor ve yanı sıra kendileri mal sahipleri orada olmadığına bu evleri yine kasabanın içinde bir mini lokal bir acente aracılığıyla bir guest house olarak pazarlıyorlar. Muhteşem bir örnek. Bir işliyor tıklar tıklar. Bir Rum köyündesin. **Anadolu tarafında ama** temizliği, düzeni, görüntü temizliği, haaaarika, büyülenmiştik. **Böyle bir modeli biz Şirince'de oluşturamadık.** (Müge)

Most of the ex-urbanites in Şirince have the urge to do something for this village. They talk about their projects. They sadly narrate their disappointments. Including Müge, no one them clearly explains why they want to implement these projects. They feel as if they are obliged to do something to develop this village, as if it is their legacy engendered in modernization process since the early Turkish Republican

period. In this context, I would like to end this part with the narrative of Müge. I hope that the mood changes – from enthusiasm to despair- in her tone echoes in ears of the reader of these lines:

Ha benim bunda çok amartörce naçizane çok tatlı çabalarım olmuştur. Anladım ellerindeki malzeme gelen kitleyi doyurmayacağını ve bir gün bütün köy hanımlarını topladım. Ya dedim biz Şirince'ye özgü (madem yok, bir halıcı köyü değiliz, bilmem ne değiliz, bir özel bir üretimimiz, bir el sanatımızın olduğu bir köy değiliz) Gelin böyle bir şey içi düğmeye basalım. Ben size kırkyama denilen batıda "patchwork" "quilt" adı altında pazarlanan muhteşem bir sanat vardır. Gel biz Türkiye'de bunun öncüsü köyü olalım. Hem toptan hem perakende mal satalım çünkü dantel demode. Danteli kim sevmiyor. Ben çok severim ama alıcısı çok az. Hele hele **çağdaş mimari** döşemedeki dekorasyonda. Zaten hep köşe başlarında oturuyorsunuz, dantel yapmaktansa işte kumaşlarımızdan, şalvarlarımızdan kalan parçaları dikerek, birleştirerek yastıkları yapalım. Heybeler, yatak örtüleri yapalım. **Bu konuda ben size öncü olayım.** Almanya'dan bir sürü kataloglar getirttim. Uyumlu renklerle neler yapabiliriz. Gelin 2-3 tane makina alalım, falan filan. 2 Gün boyunca kurs verdim köy kahvesinde. Hanımlar ilgiyle izledi, dinledi, dinledi, dinledi... Çünkü kırkyama bizim geleneğimizde de olan bir şey. Anneannemin namazlığı kırkyamaydı. Adı da güzeldir, kırkyama. Ondan sonracağıma, ertesi gün 2 günlük kurstan sonra hadi düğmeye basalım dedim. Ve benim kendim için hiç bir çıkarım yok bunda. İşçi çalıştırıp para kazanmak da istemiyorum. Size bir kapı açayım. Rahime'ye bunu sor, hatırlar o günleri. 2 Gün sonra bir hatun bez torbanın üzerine bir yıldız, altına Şirince nakışla yazdı. İki tane hazırlamış 3 saat içinde 2sini de satmış ve bütün benim operasyonumdan tek verim buydu. Köylümüz çok ilginçtir ahali, dinler, baş sallar, Sinan çok dalga geçmişti benimle. Çünkü ben diyordum: "Köyümüz! Bütün dünyada tanınacak! Hem toptancılar kışın gelecek, hanımlar harıl harıl makinalarının başında elle çalışacaklar, çok paralar kazanacaklar, yaz boyunca perakende satacaklar.. Her yerde ışıl ışıl güzel zevkli malzemeler olacak. Doğru değil mi? Hele bu aptal ucuz, Tayvan malları olmayacak falan.. Sıfır başarı... Ancak bunu nasıl yapabildim. Ben büyük bir atölye tutardım ve askeri ücretler 10 kadın çalıştırdıktan kendim için yapabildim ama köylüye böyle bir teşvik vermek çok zor (Müge).



## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

I neither argue that the construction of Şirince as a site of tourism or cultural transformation of the village by the arrival of ex-urbanites underlies a planned and programmed agenda of developing or modernizing the village by these newcomers to the village. Nor, I suggest that any attempt to change the village is an arbitrary action that must be evaluated and analyzed on its own. What I suggest on the other hand is that the commonalities of the narratives of the ex-urbanites in Şirince is an demonstrator of the fact the their presence in the village has an important impact on the construction of Şirince today. Secondly, unlike the modernizer elites of the early Turkish Republican period, who were sent to the rural areas with a mission, the ex-urbanites in Şirince choose to live in the rural on their voluntary choices. However, their positioning themselves as the “dışarılıklılı” encapsulates them into the Occidentalist dilemma. They are caught between the urge to live a simple life and complicating the simplicity at the same time.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahiska, Meltem. "Occidentalism: The historical fantasy of the modern." *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 102.2 (2003): 351-379.

Ali, Sabahattin. *Son hikâyeler: esirler*. Vol. 9. Varlık Yayınevi, 1966

Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gürbilek, Nurdan. *Kötü Çocuk Türk*. Metis, 2001

Karaömerlioğlu, Asım. "Tek Parti Döneminde Halkevleri ve Halkçılık." *Toplum ve Bilim* 88 (2001): 163-187.

Keyder, Çağlar. "Whither the project of modernity?: Turkey in the 1990s". *Rethinking modernity and national identity in Turkey*. Ed. Bozdoğan, Sibel and Kasaba, Reşat. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press (1997): 37-52.

Köksal, D. "Art and power in Turkey. Culture, aesthetics and nationalism during the single party era." *New perspectives on Turkey* 31 (2004).

Öztürkmen, Arzu. *Türkiye'de folklor ve milliyetçilik*. Vol. 69. İletişim Yayınları, 1998.

Seker, Nesim. "Vision of Modernity in the Early Turkish Republic: An Overview." *Historia Actual Online* 14 (2009): 49-56.

Sirman, N. (2001). "Sosyal Bilimlerde Gelişmecilik ve Köy Çalışmaları." *Toplum ve Bilim* Spring(88): 251-254.

Türkeş, A. Ömer. "Orda Bir Taşra Var Uzakta." *Taşraya Bakmak* (2005): 158-211.

Ural, Murat & Arbaş, Avni. (İstanbul: Milli Reasürans Sanat Galerisi Yayını, *Kemalism and the Kurds in Turkey*." *Neo-colonial mentalities in contemporary Europe* (2008): 155-174.

Zürcher, Erik J., *Turkey: A Modern History*. London & New York, I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd Publishers, 1993.

1998), Aktaran: Turan Erol, *Yurt Gezileri ve Yurt Resimleri 1938-1940*, (İstanbul: Milli Reasürans Sanat Galerisi Yayını, 1998s. 21-23).

Williams, Raymond. *The country and the city*. Vol. 423. Oxford University Press, 1975.

Yakın, A. Y. (2007). "Proust Redux: "There is a village somewhere out there": Representations of Anatolia as Terra Incognita". *Journal of Historical Sociology* (1/2 March/June): 182-199.

Zeybek, Sezai Ozan. *Silencing Provincial Geographies*. Diss. Open University., 2011.

Zeydanlıoğlu, Welat. "'The White Turkish Man's Burden': Orientalism,