

Gülcan Eraktan, Selahettin Eraktan, Janusz Gudowski

## THE WESTERN AND EASTERN ROUTES 60 YEARS AFTER LESZCZYCKI'S INVESTIGATION

There are many differences between the Western and Eastern parts of the area of our research. The former is easily accessible from the North and West even though the landscape includes Taurus peaks reaching an altitude of 2000 m a.s.l. and the hills separating particular depressions. But the villages lie near the main roads and even the network of medium size towns is relatively dense. On the contrary, the Eastern Route differs a lot. It is linked from the south-west and south-east with Antalya and Adana by the dangerous coastal cliff roads. The Route goes along the Göksu river valley in the South before it enters Anatolian Plateau and over a long stretch it is surrounded by steep slopes which pushed the settlements often far off the main road.

The most striking differences between the present day rural Southern Anatolia and the one of 60 years ago, linked with our research interest, concern rural population, the mode of production and the spatial layout of the settlements, as well as the selected cultural topics, like rural architecture and construction. In this paper we will focus on the first three elements since the last one is described with care in the separate report.

The late 1930s represented the advanced period of perhaps the greatest of the Atatürk's tasks, i.e. building of the modern Turkish society. Southern Anatolia was then witnessing the settlement processes of the minority seminomadic population: Yürüks, Turkmen, Circassians and Kurds. There were some settlements inhabited by these minorities during the Leszczycki's visit. This kind of social differentiation is rather invisible today though no doubt it still exists to some extent. For example, we visited the Bozova village on the Western Route, called Zivint in Leszczycki's times, which used to include Circassian settlement. Today there are 30–35 Circassians who — even though maintaining their language — intermarry with their neighbours. The pure Circassian village is, however, Gökçe on the Eastern Route. Furthermore, we have met no Kurdish settlers whom Leszczycki mentioned. Also the settlement of *alevi* or *kızılbaş* religious minority met by Leszczycki in the Eber (Kaplanlı) village does not exist and — what is interesting — nobody heard of any *alevi* village in that district!

The effects of the nation building process were *implicitly* commented upon in an interesting manner by one of the inhabitants of the Kargıcak village. He was an offspring of Yürüks, the minority group, which immigrated to Anatolia from the Caucasus region in 19th century. Since he does not deal with animals pasturing any more he called himself *çiftçi*. But *Yürük* (or rather *yürük*) was in his opinion his brother who worked in animal breeding and even stayed with sheep during our visit on the *mera* pastureland in the Taurus mountains far off from his village of birth.



Fig. 1. Bozova. The house where Leszczycki lived in 1939.

Another point linked with the population issue is the seasonal and permanent migration and the resulting changes in the mode of production and in the spatial layout of the villages. The demographic and economic transformations within the period of 60 years are visibly reflected in the change of both phenomena. Some villages withdrew to a high extent from having the *mera* pastureland and even from cultivating cereals (for example Kargıcak village, the Eastern Route). This resulted from the irrigation development and *bahçe* (gardens) extension as well as from permanent settling of Yürüks and the massive migration from the rural areas, visible in the whole rural Turkey. Then, if only the physical conditions were favourable, the family houses dispersed and extended from the original village centres to the outskirts and new lands.

Irrigation development played an especially important role in intensifying agricultural production. There were many local irrigation projects completed at the village level, which enabled irrigated farming. And within a couple of coming years the dam on Göksu is to be finished. It will force the resettlement of some villages on the Eastern Route.

Dry farming extends over the vast plains of Anatolia. We have observed an interesting phenomenon within the southern strips of Anatolia while going along the Eastern Route. It was cultivation of cereals in local depressions, sometimes even of small size, covered with fertile soils due to accumulation. These depressions were visibly much more wet than surrounding areas, thus allowing cultivation. Some of them were far from any permanent settlement and, as we were informed, the shepherds moving with the animals used them.

It is interesting that the division into *yayla* (the summer settlements used by shepherds) and *kışlak* (the winter settlements) is being changed today. According to Leszczycki the following villages were *yayla*: Sartavul and Akgedik, both on the Eastern Route, while *kışlak* were: Elbeyli, Yaptinti, Dongrul and Kesikköprü on the Eastern Route and Yalınlı on the Western Route. Today Sartavul and Akgedik have still the *yayla* character to some extent and are seasonally inhabited by the shepherds coming from the Silifke region. However some shepherds' families have regular houses constructed of stones over there, they also cultivate gardens as well as live of a restaurant and a meat shop. Perhaps now the only *yayla* (i.e. seasonally inhabited though not necessarily in tents) on Leszczycki's Routes is Akgedik (called Ak Punar in Leszczycki's book). When Turkish team arrived there in November 1997 the dwellers had already left, having moved to their native village for winter time.

There is much less seasonal movement of population today compared to the situation in the late 1930s. Even the shepherds move to the summer pastures sometimes very far from their native villages, but they represent a lesser portion of the society than 60 years ago. For example, Kesikköprü village — classified by Leszczycki as *kışlak* — is today inhabited by 1130 people living in 180 houses, but only about 50% of the dwellers leave village in summer to go to their seasonal *yayla* settlements where they live in tents. Furthermore, there are at present nearly no tents along Leszczycki's Routes, which were so frequent during his study tour. Even though we observed single shepherds' tents both on the Western and Eastern Routes, there was in fact only one tent-village which, however, can neither be called summer nor winter settlement. There was a single real tent-settlement in the former Keklicek village, destroyed in the early 1990s by the earthquake. In 1997 only one family has been living there all the year round. It was a landless family which owned, though, 100 goats, 30 sheep and 4 cows, and a tractor which they use to render services to the farmers from the neighbouring village, who were the real landowners in Keklicek.

Another type of settlement described by Leszczycki is constituted by the

cave settlements, the traces of which we have met on both Routes. Today the cave settlements are only history in the full meaning of the word. Thus, in Gökce, the northernmost village on the Eastern Route, we visited the fascinating ruins of an early Christian monastery, grooved in the natural cave and accompanied by the neighbouring caves used in ancient times as granaries, houses etc. In other places the former cave houses are sometimes used for storage.

The transformation of the *yayla* settlements and the disappearance of the cave settlements are not the only change on the map of the research area within the last 60 years. Some villages were incorporated by the neighbouring towns or even were granted the municipal status. The former is the case of Kışla, which became the quarter of the Burdur city, but even today it still maintains its specific mixed character. Also Elbeyli on the Eastern Route has become a suburb of the Mut town. Then, Kiliç, Bozova and Çeltikçi on the Western Route grew during the last 60 years so much that they are today the towns though preserving the peculiarities of the villages.

It should be also mentioned that some village names have been changed in the course of time. Thus on the Western Route the Eber village is called today Kaplanlı, Çercin-Gökçebag, Kurna-Yakaköy and Zivint-Bozova, while on the Eastern Route the name of the Gedik village has been changed into Çağlayangedik, and Akpınar is called Akgedik. Also on the Eastern Route the Eksiler village consisted of many dispersed quarters which in the course of time became separate villages. Today the centre of the old village Eksiler is a quarter of another village Karhaclar.

It should be emphasised that locations of many villages as shown on the map of Leszczycki's, on the German map of 1940 and on the Turkish topographic maps differ very much indeed. It was why we have faced difficulties when looking for some villages.

The differences concerning infrastructure, the social structure, the mode of production and the prevailing activities in the investigated villages enabled us to classify the villages into some categories, given below:

**(1) The villages which became municipalities or towns or are in close contacts with urban areas.**

This category includes Kışla and Elbeyli, which have become the suburban quarters of the Burdur city and Mut town, and Kiliç, Bozova and Çeltikçi, which were granted the status of town but in fact they are just big villages today. Two other villages, namely: Askeriye and Gökçebag are today located very close to Burdur city.

**(2) The villages facing migration problems.**

Migration from the rural areas is the phenomenon occurring across the whole of Turkey for many years. In some villages belonging to the research area, though it has a specific character. For instance, Elbeyli youngsters spend time in Mut town although they do not work there. Gökçe is the

village where the retired people or employees come during the summer. Many families still live in other places during the winter. Akgedik is the village where people arrive only in summer to cultivate their land, to feed animals or to escape from the heat of the southern coast and to spend their holidays. In the past, more than 100 families were coming to this village with their tents, but now the number of such families has dropped sharply and only those who possess houses come here to spend summer.

**(3) The villages where people carry out intensive farming.**

Farmers in almost all villages use inputs proportionally to their financial capacity and they are involved in intensive farming which includes orchards and gardening. Especially, growing of fruits and vegetables is an important branch of economy since it gives job opportunities throughout the year. Intensive horticultural activities increase water consumption and irrigation still remains a restrictive factor for productive agriculture. On the Western Route Askeriye, Gökçebag, Kışla, Garipçe and Kaplanlı, and on the Eastern Route Karğıcak are the villages of intensive agriculture.

**(4) The villages which totally or partially disappeared or are about to disappear.**

This phenomenon reflects another striking aspect of the continuing changes. Thus the village of Keklicek was like a neighbourhood rather than a village even during Prof. Leszczycki's stay there. The area of Keklicek used to belong to one landlord but as the number of Yürüks decreased, as the families who collectively cultivated the farmland left the village, as the landlord distributed the land amongst his sharecroppers, and finally as the existing houses collapsed due to the earthquake, there remains now only a historical cistern and a Yürük tent in which a family of seven people live all the year round. Today the area of Keklicek is a part of the area of Yalınlıgedidi village next to Keklicek.

Another village which was subject similar fate is Ekşiler. Once eight or nine villages were under one headman (*muhtar*) and Ekşiler used to be the centre of the joint village. With time, as the population increased, a dozen or so new villages have been formed in the same area. In order to be autonomous they divided the original village continuously claiming each one to be under a separate *muhtar*. The centre of the old Ekşiler has now become a neighbourhood of the village of Karhaclar. Most of the land in the village has been recently nationalised due to the fact that a dam will be built on the Göksu river not far away. As a result, all young people have migrated. At present only the old people and widowed ones live in 7 houses over there.

Medreselik is in a flooded area. Many houses are left today. Officials have been considering to shift the village somewhere else and to move the inhabitants to the council houses in the Karaman town, with the result that no investments in the village have been made even to provide water to the existing houses. As it is a mountain village, land is scarce and people are

poor. Some inhabitants receive annual income of less than \$ US 250. On the other hand, water is abundant in the village as the land is limited and agriculture is not intensive. The villagers are mostly old people. It is planned that after the dwellers are provided with accommodation in Karaman they will come back to the village in summer to cultivate their land.



The changes that the villages have undergone throughout the years can be categorised as follows:

- » One of the most important changes deals with demography. The number of population in some of investigated villages dropped visibly (Kaplanlı, Yakaköy, Garipçe, Çağlayangedik, Keklice, Hocalı), while in the other ones it increased or remained stable. It is, however, difficult to estimate exact demographic changes basing on the census data due to several administrative changes over time. Only for 1990–95 we may calculate that excluding Kesikköprü, Hocalı, Keklice, Kışla and Çağlayangedik the population of the remaining settlements decreased from 13567 to 10173 (including Ekşiler).
- » People have settled in their native villages. The number of Yürüks living in tents has decreased. But for those who maintained the semi-nomadic style of life, settling down in one place is still not an alternative.
- » As the horticulture became widespread, the number of animals pastured decreased. People benefit from the increase of crop production as the result of proper irrigation. The latter is a big problem due to the shortage of irrigation water.
- » Division of the land due to inheritance and existence of farms with many inheritors make that vast areas are left without being cultivated.
- » If the villages are not a part of the city, the population living there consists mostly of the elderly. Many villages are merely the places where people who go to cultivate their land during the summer and where the retired villagers live.
- » Although its still unknown when the new dam on Göksu river will be built, the reservoir will certainly cover some parts of the villages located between Mut and Silifke. Even this fact irritates the villagers, they expect better irrigation for their land.
- » Inadequate infrastructure is another problem faced by the rural sector. As the number of population increases and the agricultural area increases, water supply is more and more insufficient for meeting human needs.
- » It is obvious that the living standard is much better in all the villages compared to the past and that most of the services available in the cities are available in the villages as well. It is also predicted that as the incomes in the villages rise, the quality of the houses improves and the villages will have a much better aspect.