Visualising Transnationalism:
Photography in Analyses of Migrants' Belonging[1]

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Employing visual methods of sociology, this article discusses the aspects of transnational space with which migrants and their descendants engage. It looks upon transnationality as being localised and material, rather than abstract and suspended between national territories, arguing that migrants and their descendants are located rather than dislocated, even if engaging in transnational relationships. I demonstrate that the involvement of photography as a research tool facilitates identifying local (a new homeland society) traces on ethnic places, showing that what is considered 'immigrant' and 'foreign' is always influenced by the circumstances of the dominant society within which they operate. The article discusses ethnic facilities in new homelands and traces of the influences of new homelands in migrants' ancestral villages. What is more, it demonstrates how visual methods can enhance new theoretical angles of analyses of the complex situation of migrant minorities.
Key words: transnationalism, international migration, Norwegian Turks, visual sociology, ethnic neighbourhoods.

Introduction

I collected the data presented in this article among Norwegian Turks who settled in the Norwegian city of Drammen. Although they do feel at home in Norway, they simultaneously express their belonging to the local areas of their ancestral origin in Turkey. Even though many of them were born in Norway and their contact with Turkish villages is limited to the sentiments of their parents and annual visits, they consider these local places in Turkey as home, and the practices and discourses common there constitute what they consider Turkish. Some Norwegian Turks travel back to the villages with their children to show them 'from where their blood originates' and to teach them 'what it means to be a Turk'.[2] Such attempts to put down roots in Turkey are strengthened by the growing significance of the discourses of autochthony in Europe, understood as 'being born from the soil' (Geschiere 2009: ix). This has consequences in that Norwegian Turks' belonging to Norway is questioned both by fellow members of minorities and ethnic Norwegians. On the other hand, the lives of Drammen's Norwegian Turks are entangled with Norwegian reality, ordered by Norwegian laws and influenced by Norwegian lifestyles and the Norwegian education system. Many of them, even if articulating strong Turkish identity, cannot imagine returning to Turkey, as Norwegian-born offspring of Turkish immigrants refer to possible migration to their ancestors' country of origin.

This article discusses visually reflected transnational ties between Norwegian Turks settled in the city of Drammen and their ancestral villages in Turkey. It is based on data collected in a study that employed visual ethnography and was conducted between 2013 and 2016 in Drammen's vernacular space, as well as in several villages in Konya province in Turkey, where a significant number of Drammen's Norwegian Turks declared having their roots. The aim of the article is twofold: to visualise the transnational boundaries between the

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[1] I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers and the journal's editors for their valuable comments on earlier versions of this paper.

[2] Quotes from interviews with second and third generation Norwegian Turks. All names of respondents were changed to preserve their anonymity.

local in Turkey and the vernacular in Norway, stressing a back-and-forth character of human mobility that affects not only those who left but also the originating communities; and to investigate researcher-generated photography as a research tool in analysing migrants' belonging and engagement with space. In doing so, the article aims to contribute to the discussion on the urban presence of migrant minorities (Çağlar 2001; Blommaert et.al. 2005; Krase 2012a, 2012b; Krase and Shortell 2011, 2017; Pardo 2020; Prato 2020; Armstrong et.al. 2020).

Photography has proven to be a powerful tool in shaping images of migrants and refugees in the common discourse as either vulnerable or dangerous, the latter contributing to current anti-immigration sentiments in many countries (Szörényi 2006). Even if recognising the limits of participatory visual methods (Cabañes 2017), a number of scholars have employed them to challenge the aforementioned imposed narrations about migrants and refugees that are reproduced in media coverage, aiming to give a voice to actors themselves so as to depict their complex situation by presenting it 'through their eyes' (Oliveira 2016, Mannik 2012, Robertson et al. 2016). While this approach has proven to be valuable, here I raise a question of whether non-participatory visual methods can also contribute to presenting the complexity of migrants' situation, showing their familiarity and rootedness in new homelands and challenging common discourses of the vulnerability, strangeness and threat that migrants supposedly bring.

Gold (2004: 1554) points out that photography as a research tool requires coming into contact with people and the social life with which they engage, drawing attention to the local settings of analysed processes. This article aims to develop this argument, examining how researcher-generated photography helps in grasping the broad context of social life and how it further supports important theoretical statements; here, specifically, the *localised* side of transnationalism. I will demonstrate the ways in which photography has contributed to presenting migrants as located rather than dislocated, uncovering traces of new homeland influences on vernacular facilities and enabling presentation of the complex and shifting identities of people and places, but without determining them as typical of either a minority or dominant group's *culture.*[3]

Transnationality is understood here as 'referring to various kinds of global or cross-border connections' (Vertovec 2001: 573) and an 'analytic optic which makes visible the increasing intensity and scope of circular flows of persons, goods, information and symbols triggered by international labour migration' (Çağlar 2001: 607). While the limits of the notion have been articulated by a number of scholars (see the overview by Vertovec 2001: 576-577), it is still recognised as relevant for the analysis of processes that occur beyond the borders of nation states that are, among other things, related to migration. With the help of photography, I demonstrate that transnationality is not suspended between cultures or physical settings, but is localised and dependant on the circumstances present in its *local* surroundings, a fact that is too often omitted both in academia and in the public discourse on migration. I also demonstrate that transnational influences are mutual, affecting not only localities in new homelands, but also

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[3] I recognise the analytical problems of the concept of culture, interpreting it here as a process rather than a fixed set of values. I continue with non-italicised typing of the notion.

those situated in places of ancestral origin. I present analyses of transnational spaces as they are exercised by people of Turkish origin settled in Norway, showing how macro processes around transnationality are reflected on the micro and mezzo levels of individuals and small communities. Thus, the focus is on how transnational spaces are created by these local actors in the circumstances of new homelands and vice versa, how they influence the landscape and attitudes in ancestral villages of migrants.

The discussion starts with a theoretical framework of analyses that links Massey's (1994, 2005) theory of places as moments in space and the concept of vernacular landscape developed by Krase (2012a) and Krase and Shortell (2011, 2017). I then explain the methodology of the research presented here that is situated within the tradition of qualitative research and visual sociology, namely the photographic survey (Krase 2012a, 2012b). Finally, I discuss the visual aspects of the transnational space with which Norwegian Turks engage, as it is materialised in Drammen, distinguishing five dimensions of this space: commercial, emotional, symbolic, cultural and political.

From Production of Space to Shifting Identities of Places: Theoretical Assumptions.

Massey (1994) claims that space is multiple and complex and that it occurs in social relationships. Thus, it is not a bounded entity — a flat landscape one passes through. Rather, it comprises an abstract dimension beyond a mere location, namely social relationships ordered by economic, political and cultural influences. Massey brings to the discussion on space the feminist angle of positionality, arguing that individual experiences of space depend on an individual's position in the social structure and hierarchies linked to this space. Among others, these comprise gender, race and class. Consequently, a particular space is experienced differently and may have various meanings for different people.

Modernity divided space from place: space, which comprises broad social relations, no longer needs to be local. Regarding space and place, Massey proposes the following:

> 'I began to develop an argument for thinking of social space in terms of the articulation of social relations which necessarily have a spatial form in their interactions with one another. If this notion is accepted, then one way of thinking about place is as particular moments in such intersecting social relations, nets of which have over time been constructed, laid down, interacted with one another, decayed, and renewed. Some of these relations will be, as it were, contained within the place; others will stretch beyond it, tying any particular locality into wider relations and processes in which other places are implicated too' (1994: 120).

As such, space represents broader and more abstract processes than a place. Space is a 'concrete abstraction' (Lefebvre 1991: 86) which materialises in the social relationships leading to its creation. Place, in turn, is a moment in space 'formed out of the particular set of social relations that interact at a particular location' (Massey 1994: 168).

Places are products of social interactions. They are multiple, changeable and processual, have various identities composed of a specific social structure, political influences and local culture (Massey 1994: 120). Places are thus not bounded; they are 'unfixed' and dynamic and

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they do not require that boundaries be defined (122-152). Massey contends that in the common discourse, places are often assumed to be connected to the particular identities of people and setting boundaries for places equates to setting boundaries for group identities. This is the case with nationalism, which seeks to place national identity and define its 'edges' through territorial boundaries. However, as the identities of places are multiple, processual and unfixed, the actual boundaries of places are blurred and changeable.

Places undergo processes of globalisation. However, this does not mean that they lose their unique character. In contrast, globalisation works within local circumstances, creating new qualities that bring together the global and local. 'There is the fact that this very mixture together in one place may produce effects which would not have happened otherwise' (Massey 2005: 156). Therefore, globalisation occurs locally and has local forms. Drawing on this, the article argues that what is known in immigration countries as ethnic, immigrant, or foreign, occurs in fact in local forms, being influenced by the circumstances of the receiving society.

Thus, space is regarded here as produced in social relationships and influenced by economic, cultural and political factors. Place, in turn, is a moment in space capturing concrete interactions (still ordered by the same influences as space) at a specific moment in time and at a particular location. Places have multiple identities depending on who participates in them and on which occasion. In other words, a place comprises a location, a physical area, as well as the social relations occurring within it, including discourses and cultural, structural and economic influences beyond this mere locality. The character of interactions determines the meaning of the place, transforming it into what it really is at a particular moment for particular people.

Having conceptualised space and place, in the next section I link Masseys' theory to the concept of vernacular, explaining its potential to recognise the influences from both the minority and dominant culture on the creation of places.

Vernacular vs Local

Krase and Shortell (2011: 372) argue that '[v]ernacular landscapes are the interpretive context of the signs of collective identity […]. Signs have meanings related to the patterns and places of urban life'. Considering Massey's (1994) argument of places as moments in space, vernacular places are not regarded as landscapes here, but involve a spectrum of possible spatially located relationships. Vernacular places bear meaningful signs of ethnic identity which are expressed either in public or in private, or in an expressive or phatic way, following the interpretation of Krase and Shortell (2017) of Jakobson's (1960) typology of signs. Expressive signs of belonging involve intended signs of ethnic identification such as flags and foreign writing. Phatic signs of belonging are unintended markers of ethnicity that stem from everyday practices. Examples include the clothing and language used by people who frequent a place.

Vernacular literally refers to the local and indigenous. It recalls the autochthonic understanding of origin. Thus, vernacular may be interpreted as representing the folklore of both minority and majority groups. I suggest benefiting from the possible dual interpretations of vernacular, understood as the habitus of immigrants and ethnic minorities as well as the local and specific of mainstream society. Consequently, while my understanding of vernacular refers

to ethnic facilities and districts, it combines both the traits of the new homeland's society and influences from the ethnic minorities in them. As such, vernacular comprises the ethnic or foreign, but also involves the local, emphasising that the current shape of immigrant or ethnic facilities always depends on the circumstances of the local of new homelands, previous meanings and functions of the space and the broad discourses and relationships between individuals and groups within the new homeland's society. At the same time, vernacular may also constitute a part of ancestral homeland's landscapes when influences from the new homeland's society (that may by analogy be called ethnic or foreign) are reflected spatially in the local (to the ancestral homelands). This second dimension of vernacular is rarely discussed in the literature as it is neither visually obvious nor very common, but as I will demonstrate in this article, it exists.

Drawing the boundary between the vernacular and non-vernacular as well as between the vernacular and global is difficult — sometimes impossible. Blommaert at al. (2005: 217), in line with the aforementioned argument of Massey (1994), note that a mono functional space rarely exists, while the multi-functionality of facilities and public space is common. Sometimes the non-vernacular can become vernacular upon the occurrence of particular interactions and the presence of particular people; for example, when a city square hosts an ethnic market. Furthermore, an ethnic vernacular may in some circumstances become global, depending on who visits and for what reason. The Turkish-run kebab shop may be assumed to be a globalised dining place for ethnic Norwegians, but in ethnic or religious terms it is viewed differently by some Norwegians of Turkish origin due to the halal meat served there. Thus, the boundary between the vernacular and non-vernacular as well as between the vernacular and globalised is situational.

Considering this, I reject drawing the boundaries of vernacular and acknowledge the multiple and shifting identities (Massey 1994) of vernacular facilities which are defined by the circumstances occurring at a particular time. In addition, I argue that vernacular spaces are influenced by the dominant society as well as by minority and global culture. The vernacular, understood as ethnic or minor, is thus always 'host-vernacular', being embedded in the architecture and spatial conditions of the receiving society. Meanwhile, the non-vernacular is often regarded as neutral, while it is in fact marked by the design, rules and discourses of the mainstream society.

This article, employing photography, looks more closely into the vernacular facilities of Drammen that are the moments of transnational space with which Norwegian Turks engage. It seeks to visualise transnational relationships that stand behind the creation of these places, analysing their meaning, design and functions, and exemplifying how immigrant minorities change urban landscapes (Krase 2012, Prato 2020). Since transnational relationships are *per se* mutual, the article refers also to the ancestral villages of Drammenian Turks. It thus seeks to grasp the elements of transnational space that are materialised in vernacular places in Drammen and in Norwegian Turks' ancestral villages, showing how transnationality is *localised*, instead of being suspended in an abstract space of in-betweenness. By doing this, it reflects on the role of researcher-generated photography in advancing theoretical angles of analyses of the complex

situation of migrant minorities. Following Massey's (1994) argument, the article acknowledges multiple identities of vernacular places that shift according to the presence of particular people and circumstances occurring at a given moment in time. These identities may well go beyond transnationality, referring to discourses and relationships different from those characterised by ethnic belonging. Therefore, the transnational character of analysed places is regarded as a dimension that comes to the fore when particular relationships that have transnational character occur within them. Consequently, while the main focus of this article is on visualising transnationality as it is displayed in analysed places and landscapes, it also recognises the links of these units to the dominant society and traces the local influences on them.

Methodology and Sampling

The article employs the methods of visual sociology to analyse transnational places and spaces with which people engage. The data was obtained as a part of a bigger project[4] by using a method of a photo survey developed by Krase (2012a, 2012b) that aims to document systematically the *walked* area through photographs, including all possible elements of the landscape, even though they appear unimportant at first. Initial data collection was supported by guided photo-walks with the members of Norwegian-Turkish communities in Drammen and with the inhabitants of Turkish villages respectively. The collected visual materials comprised a wide range of information from which that of interest was selected in the analysis. Employing visual data in the study was in accordance with the main assumptions of visual sociology (Harper 2012); specifically, that visual data should be treated as a source of knowledge and not as an illustration of findings.

The collected data was interpreted and analysed using MAX QDA software. I distinguished and categorised multiple threads stemming from the visual data. Thus, the categories were not preconceived, but based on the information emerging from the data. The findings revealed five dimensions of Drammen's transnational space the Norwegian Turks engage with, which are discussed in the section on visualising transnationality.

The data was collected in Drammen, Norway and in three chosen ancestral villages of Drammenian Turks in the Turkish province of Konya. Drammen is a mid-sized city situated in the Eastern region of Norway, around 40 km south of the capital city of Oslo. 29% of its population (SSB 2016) is of immigrant background, making it the second most diverse city in Norway. The majority (13.5%; 2,200 people) of inhabitants with immigrant backgrounds are of Turkish origin. They are relatively well settled: 62% of Drammenian Turks have lived in Norway for more than 21 years (Høydahl 2014). The first Turks arrived in Drammen in the late 1960s and early 1970s as so-called guest workers. Today, the Turkish minority in the city

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[4] The project focused on belonging, translocational positionality and cultural heritage of people of Turkish origin settled in Drammen, Norway and comprised a collection of in-depth, semi-structured and unstructured interviews, ethnographic observation in and visual documentation of Drammen and ancestral villages of Drammenian Turks in Turkey. It employed qualitative methodology inspired by Clarke's Situational Analyses (2005). The data was collected between 2013 and 2016 (Nikielska-Sekula 2016a, 2016b, 2018, 2019).

constitutes a heterogeneous group representing different religious backgrounds of Sunni Muslims and Alevis,[5] and various places of origin, among which rural villages situated in Konya province, and more specifically around the city of Beysehir, prevail.

Konya, considered one of the most conservative areas in Turkey, has more than 1 million inhabitants, many of whom are devoted followers of Islam. Beysehir is a smaller city, inhabited by over 40,000 people according to the 2000 census. While Konya, as the capital of the province, shapes the character of the region, Beysehir constitutes the main urban reference point for the inhabitants of the visited villages. The streets in both Konya and Beysehir are dominated by people with references to Islam inscribed in their clothing: most women wear Islamic veils and a significant number of men wear a Muslim cap.

The ancestral villages of Drammenian Turks are much poorer than the neighbouring cities. In the Sunni villages, men dominate public areas; women are much less visible on the streets than they are in Konya or Beysehir. This is not the case in the Alevi village, where elderly women are active in making contact with newcomers on the streets. While the Sunni villages are relatively young and vibrant, mostly elderly people inhabit the Alevi village, the smallest of the three.

Visualising Transnationality

Based on the findings obtained from analyses of visual data collected in Drammen and in the ancestral villages of Norwegian Turks, I distinguished five dimensions of transnational space the actors engage with which will serve further as analytical categories that bear the characteristics of Weber's ideal types. These dimensions are (1) commercial, referring to economic dependency and exchange of products driven by transnational belonging; (2) emotional, which comprises relationships with people and places structured by ancestral origin; (3) cultural, comprising recreation of traditionally foreign tangible and intangible cultural patterns; (4) symbolic, which refers to phatic and expressive signs of minority ethnic and religious identity, traditionally foreign to a dominant society; and (5) political, covering activism in diaspora organisations and the politics of ancestral homelands. In further sections, I demonstrate how these dimensions materialise in transnational places, making the abstract transnational space visible and localised.

Commercial

The commercial dimension of transnational space refers to the exchange of goods, whose aesthetics, character and form are not popular among the local dominant population, being rather specific to minority group(s). In Drammen, this dimension is well reflected by Turkish-run shops. One of them is the Nisa boutique,[6] established to fill the niche for Islamic women's clothes and provide outfits consistent with the requirements of Islam that are suitable for various occasions, ranging from everyday clothes to wedding dresses. Similar boutiques are very

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[5] Sunni Muslims constitute the biggest religious group in Turkey, while Alevi Muslims are the biggest religious minority.

[6] At the time of writing this paper, Nisa had already disappeared from the landscape of Drammen.

common and popular in Turkey. The shop targets people with a Muslim background and others who 'like to cover themselves slightly' (owner, interview). The person who runs the shop is a female first-generation Norwegian of Turkish origin. The shop is mostly supplied by a popular Turkish Islamic fashion brand, Armine (Figure 1); most products are imported from Turkey and, as such, generally reflect the aesthetics of Muslim fashion popular in that country. For those familiar with the trends there, this makes a clear but phatic reference to Turkey. Among other objects, the shop also sells rings with tulips, which, according to the owner, strongly refer to Turkish Islam.

Figure 1. Nisa boutique with Armine's products, Drammen (left). Armine shop, Istanbul (right). Credit: the author.

The walls are decorated with pictures of Istanbul, materialising another dimension of transnational space that I refer to as emotional and which comprises a longing for ancestral origin. This will subsequently be discussed in more detail; however, as observed in Drammen, this longing usually related to villages of ancestral origin, especially when a facility was run by first-generation immigrants from Turkey. However, at the Nisa boutique, a reference was made to urban areas of Istanbul, mirroring the urban shift in identity formation described in the German–Turkish context by Çağlar (2001).

The owner created the interior design of the shop based on her taste and without declared references to any known patterns. However, the presence of the phatic references to Turkish Islam, along with pictures of Istanbul, materialised the transnational space of Drammenian Turks within this place, making it vernacular, even if it lacked expressive signs of Turkish ethnicity, such as flags or descriptions in Turkish.

Another place that reflected well the commercial dimension of Drammenian Turks' transnational space is Merinos Tepper, a shop which sells furniture and carpets imported from Turkey. It has a more modern interior design than other examples of vernacular Turkish facilities. However, most products on offer here are unlikely to be found in shops selling home equipment in Norway, which target the dominant population. The appearance of the products reflects the tastes and patterns popular in Turkey, which are more decorative than the simpler Scandinavian style. Seemingly, the shop lacks references to Turkish ethnicity. However, among the products sold are pictures of Istanbul and a child's bed shaped like a car with Turkish plates. In addition, kitchen products popular in Turkey such as specialised teapots and tulip glasses are sold (Figure 2). These products enabled habits that are popular in Turkey to be maintained, such

as drinking Turkish tea in tulip glasses and preparing specific meals that are popular there. Both Nisa and Merinos therefore reveal a strong commercial interdependency with Turkey that comprises not only the import of goods, but also relies on the tastes and habits popular back there and recreated in Drammen, bringing together commercial and cultural dimensions of transnational space, as is discussed later. This interdependency between people's tastes in Turkey and a demand for specific products addressing these tastes in Drammen reflects macro-processes of transnational trade relationships driven by the global expansion of tastes in particular localities, as are described in the literature (Bestor 2003), on a mezzo level of a local entrepreneurship.

Figure 2. Kitchen equipment comprising teapots and tulip glasses popular in Turkey are available at Merinos Tepper. Credit: the author.

Pécoud (2004: 12) claims that '[g]enerally speaking, business is business: shop owners are understandably concerned with their economic fate and are not obsessed with cultural or identity matters'. Turkish-run commercial facilities in Drammen are primarily concerned with making money, targeting as big a group as possible. The signs of Turkish identity inscribed in them are not exclusive and rather kept neutral. Their identities differ according to the social relations occurring within them at particular time, becoming transnational only on specific occasions. However, as demonstrated, these places are moments in the transnational space of Drammenian Turks, relying on and helping recreate in Drammen tastes and products which are popular in Turkey.

Exercising transnational belonging by Norwegian Turks is reflected in commercial activity in Drammen through import of goods and recreation of tastes popular in Turkey, but it also affects the economy of local entrepreneurs in rural areas in Turkey, presenting another side of the commercial dimension of the transnational space of Norwegian Turks. The activity of local shops in ancestral villages of Drammenian Turks' is dependent on their yearly visits, which contribute significantly to shops' profits. The expectation of profit is reflected in broadening of the assortment for the summer months, when villages are filled with visitors from Norway. Exercising transnational belonging has therefore mutual consequences for particular localities in both ancestral and new homelands.

Emotional

The emotional dimension of transnational space relates to relationships with people and places that go beyond the borders of nation states. This going beyond may be directly reflected by links between people and places situated in different national territories, but also by contacts between people within one national territory that are structured by transnational belonging and oriented on celebration of things that are linked to issues and origins from outside the borders of the nation states they are currently exercised within.

An excellent example of places that materialise the emotional aspect of transnational space are ethnic clubs, also known as teahouses (*çayhane*). These small businesses originally sold tea and provided a space for men to meet, watch TV and play board games. In Drammen, places with similar functions and meanings are mostly co-founded by members whose ancestral origin was usually a similar area in Turkey and the references to this origin are inscribed in their space (Figure 3). Members refer to these places as associations. I suggest that the issue of funding requires they be regarded as private places, an extension of a living room, where access is limited to invited guests and insiders. This further indicates that ancestral origin has a real impact on the access to particular sites of transnational space in Drammen.

Figure 3. Ethnic club in Drammen. A picture of the members' ancestral village is displayed on the wall along with a Turkish flag and a map of Turkey. Credit: the author.

The social relationship structured by the membership in ethnic clubs has resulted in some cases in the creation of different associations, such as sports clubs. In one of the ancestral villages of Norwegian Turks, I spotted a banner of such a club founded by the descendants of immigrants from this village. This shows an interesting circle of impact that involves transnational belonging. Shared local ancestral origin in Turkey has encouraged social relationships between people settled in Drammen, leading to them creating a transnational social space for the activity of ethnic and sports clubs, membership of which was conditioned by this particular ancestral origin. They designed the symbols of this social space, such as the aforementioned banner, and displayed it in the ancestral village of origin, regardless of the fact that the current inhabitants of this village have little, if anything, to do with the new social spaces established in Norway on the basis of ancestral origin of those who left the village more

than a half century ago. The village thus appeared as a landscape with parallel spaces: local and transnational. The transnational space comes to the fore on some occasions, especially upon the presence of Norwegian Turks originating from there. This duality of space is well reflected in the village's architecture, which comprises small stone houses inhabited by the locals and huge dwellings built by Norwegian Turks, with aesthetics that are foreign to the village (Figure 4). The practice of marking the landscape of ancestral homelands with new prominent houses is not unique for migrants from Turkey. As Boccagni (2014) suggested in an Ecuadorian context, the absence of migrants in their villages of origin is contradicted by the *feeling* of their presence through the existence of their newly built houses.

Figure 4. The landscape of the village in Konya province is influenced by the newly built houses of Norwegian Turks, which contrast with the local small dwellings made of stone. The houses serve as holiday residences during yearly visits of Norwegian Turks to the villages of their ancestors. Credit: the author.

Besides ethnic clubs, facilities where membership depends to some extent on ancestral origin are places of worship that address the Turkish population in Drammen: Sunni mosques and the Alevi *cemevi.* While the congregations in mosques are more open and not limited to any particular village of origin, the *cemevi* gathers people of Alevi background from a particular village in Konya province. Both ethnic clubs and places of worship hold celebrations of particular Turkish traditions that are not common in Norway, including Turkish national days, etc. These places are, therefore, one of the most *explicit* moments of the transnational space of Drammenian Turks, where transnational relationships and ancestral origin come to the fore and are strikingly visible. In the following sections, I discuss in detail the cultural and symbolic aspects of transnational space that these places materialise.

Cultural

The cultural aspects of Turkish transnational space in Drammen, as they are understood here, are linked to the habits, behavioural patterns, space decoration, and so on that are traditional to ancestral origin of Drammenian Turks, but recreated in the new settings of the Norwegian city. These influences, however, are sometimes reversed, when cultural patterns and aesthetics typical of Norway are recreated in the ancestral villages of Norwegian Turks, as in the case of houses built by migrants (Figure 4).

In Drammen, while ethnic clubs and places of worship are located in ordinary buildings that do not stand out from the architecture of the neighbourhood, their interior design is kept in accordance with aesthetics similar to the facilities of the same kind in contemporary Turkey: mosques (Figure 5), teahouses (Figure 6) and *cemevis.*

Figure 5. Interior of a mosque in Konya province (left) and in Drammen (right). Credit: the author.

All ethnic clubs in Drammen have square tables covered with colourful tablecloths that enable people to play cards and board games as they are served tea in traditional Turkish tulip glasses from a traditional tea machine. The same elements are typical of teahouses in Turkey, where, similarly to the ethnic clubs, men gather to drink tea, chat, and play board games (Figure 6). Drinking traditional Turkish tea is a common and important practice in Turkey that constitutes an obligatory part of any deeper social relationships. Tea is a sign of hospitality and is served to visitors at private houses, work places, during short meetings and in the shops upon longer transactions. Recreation of this tradition abroad requires, however, specific equipment in the form of a pot and glasses; the export of these goods by local shops in Drammen is therefore crucial here. This confirms the aforementioned interdependency between the commercial and cultural aspects of transnational space of Drammenian Turks: imported commodities are necessary to fulfil cultural patterns of behaviour, and, vice versa, tastes and cultural habits typical of Turkey and reproduced in Drammen drive demand for particular products and trade relationships between Turkey and Norway (see also Çağlar 1997, Savaş 2014).

Figure 6. Interior design of Turkish association in Drammen (left) that is a faithful copy of its Turkish prototype in the members' village of origin (right). Men are playing *tavla*.
Cultural Centre, Konya Province (right). Credit: the author.

All ethnic clubs are equipped with satellite TV that enables exchange of pop culture between Norway and Turkey, such as music and TV channels. The practice of watching Turkish TV — often channels broadcasting for diaspora Turks — is very common among the Norwegian-Turkish population, thus deepening the cultural influences from Turkey. This practice is reflected visually in Drammen by the presence of satellite dishes in immigrant-populated districts. Broadcasting of Turkish TV, however, reflects not only a cultural dimension of transnational space, but also a political one. As argued by some scholars (Gupta 2003: 331), there is a dependency between the creation of national identities and the mass media. Exposure to Turkish TV channels helps people maintain their diasporic identity, thus strengthening their transnational belonging to Turkey.

Besides ethnic clubs, aesthetics typical of similar places in Turkey are recreated by mosques and *cemevi* in Drammen. Sunni mosques are characterised by wooden decorations on the walls, soft carpets adorned with ornaments, and a *mimbar*, a pulpit from which sermons are delivered (Figure 5). The interior space of places of worship thus bear obvious traces of Turkish sacral aesthetics, while the exteriors retain clear traces of the previous use of the space. One of the mosques is located in a former Adventist church, which from outside is therefore reminiscent of a Christian centre in the local Norwegian form (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Turkish mosque in Drammen is located in a former Adventist Church. Credit: the author.

Religious discourse and practices are inscribed in the space of all Turkish-run mosques in Drammen. The Turkish-style design of the interiors creates an opportunity for particular practices such as prayer and reading the Quran, in the way they are done in Turkey. Soft carpets completely covering the floor encourage the practice of removing shoes before entering the mosque and enable prayers without the use of praying carpets. The discourses inscribed in the space recall a particular hierarchy and gender segregation not present in most contexts in Norway. For example, the Imams' position as leaders of the mosques has been replaced by their vulnerable position in Norwegian society, due to their limited skills in Norwegian or English.

The separate space between men and women has recreated the traditional division in Turkey between males and females, which is not acceptable in most public places in Norway. An attempt to provide such a division is also taken seriously by ethnic clubs, which exclusively address men, thereby reflecting the rule common in teahouses in Turkey. Although this traditional gender division is not maintained in Turkish-run businesses in Drammen, where the rule that business is business (Pécoud 2004) enforces inclusiveness, it is inscribed in the spaces of non-commercial places targeting mainly people of Turkish origin, such as mosques and ethnic clubs. However, it should be emphasised here that, being a woman, I was allowed into the ethnic clubs several times, which proves that even these clearly vernacular places, which are strictly oriented on materialising transnational belonging and values, have shifting identities according to who visits them (Massey 1994). Therefore, even if the design of these vernacular spaces enforces or enables particular cultural patterns of behaviour and hierarchies that are not common in Norway, their meaning may change upon the occurrence of particular social relationships that do not relate to transnational belonging.

Symbolic

Symbolic references to transnational space of Drammenian Turks, whether phatic or expressive, are present in all Turkish vernacular facilities in Drammen. Although they are less visible and overwhelming in a commercial context, they are well exposed in private and semi-private facilities such as mosques and ethnic clubs.

One of the most common symbols refers to the heritage of the Ottoman Empire, with the Ottoman coat of arms being a common sign that materialises these sentiments. Another example relates to the foundation of the Turkish republic and was personified in a figure of Atatürk. Both the heritage of the Ottoman Empire and the idea of a Turkish Republic constitute two core pillars of contemporary Turkish national identity. While the latter elicits a more modern and secular vision of the nation state, reference to the Ottoman Empire involves a religious connotation to Sunni Islam as an important part of this identity. These symbols are acknowledged by many all over Turkey and are present in many teahouses there. They are also reflected in Drammen, but they are often adjusted to the local circumstances, conveying the dual belonging of Norwegian Turks (to Turkey and to Norway), as in the case of one ethnic club, which displays a picture of Atatürk alongside a picture of the Norwegian King Olav (Figure 8). In this Turkish vernacular place, such dual belonging was also quite strongly articulated via other symbols inscribed in the space. For example, its front windows feature a logo with a Norwegian and a Turkish flag, and the associations' name is a combination of Turkish and Norwegian words. The presence of Turkish flags is quite popular both in Drammen and in Turkey; however, in Drammen there is a tendency to neutralise the Turkish flag with two Norwegian flags in public places. One Drammenian Turk, when asked about the meaning of this combination, replied, 'In Norway, Norwegian rules are important, and in Turkey, Turkish rules count' (Defne, interview). This statement elicits similar interpretations of integration popular among Norwegian Turks, who share the idea that one should obey the principles of Norwegian society while living in the country and that there are differences

between acceptable behaviour in Turkey and Norway to which one should adjust while acting in different social spaces.

Figure 8. A portrait of Atatürk is displayed alongside a portrait of the Norwegian King Olav in the Turkish ethic club in Drammen. Credit: the author.

The examples of the mixing of Turkish and Norwegian symbols visually proves that transnational belonging, habits, and values are not separated from the local Norwegian reality; therefore, vernacular places always bear traces of the local they act within, being rather what could be tentatively called 'host-vernacular'.

Political

The transnational activism of members of Drammenian-Turkish communities is a fact. There are several diaspora organisations of Turks active in the city, among them Sūlaymanites and Gülenists, the latter accused of being behind the 2016 military coup in Turkey. The Alevi community works under the umbrella organisation of Bektashism. While this activism is not visually present in the city as much as other aspects of the transnational space of Drammenian Turks, there are some signs of it in the city's landscape. For example, the Gülen movement organises a yearly festival that aims to promote minority cultures and, by doing so, it makes itself very visible in the public space of the city. Moreover, some references in graffiti spotted across the city reveal engagement in Turkey's politics and confirms that events there are echoed in Drammen (Figure 9). Therefore, transnational engagement in politics in Turkey, although it does not constitute a core part of everyday life of Drammenian Turks, is present and reflected visually in the city. The interpretation of these signs, however, requires deeper knowledge about the arrangement of political forces and influences in Turkey, and is therefore possible to decode only by insiders.

Figure 9. Graffiti spotted in Drammen that refers to the far-right Turkish Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), which is popular in Konya province. Credit: the author.

Conclusions

This article shows various aspects of engagement with transnationality by migrants and their descendants in new and ancestral homelands, proving that these relationships are mutual and localised rather than being suspended in an abstract space of in-betweenness. I have presented five dimensions of a transnational space that the Norwegian Turks settled in Drammen engaged with. Through the study of the transnational relations of the members of the Norwegian-Turkish communities I have aimed to add to the 'understanding [of] social, cultural, political and economic changes worldwide' (Prato and Pardo 2013: 87). The findings have been enhanced by the employment of visual data collection methods that allowed analysis of transnationality as something that is visible and rooted. Transnationality has therefore been presented as a local element, thereby showing that what is foreign, global, or ethnic gains characteristics typical of social, cultural and geographical circumstances of new surroundings when recreated within particular settings. It has emerged that dimensions of the transnational space merged within vernacular facilities, and a boundary between them cannot be drawn as the same elements fall into several categories and are characterised by strong interdependencies between them.

One may argue that the vernacular places discussed here have little to do with the territories of the nations where they are located in the sense that they reflect processes, symbols and economies that go beyond national borders. They not only contain references to Turkey, but they also address needs of the city's minority population that go beyond dominant Norwegian society. On the other hand, these places are regulated by Norwegian legislature and embedded in the landscape of a Norwegian city. Thus, the transnational practices which these facilities enable or address 'do not take place […] "in-between" national territories' (Guarnizo and Smith 1998: 11), but 'are built within the confines of specific social, economic, and political relations which are bound together by perceived shared interests and meanings' (Guarnizo and Smith 1998: 13), produced within particular localities and with relation to the dominant society. Transnational practices are localised and are not free from the influences of the local circumstances in which they operate, being therefore not fully independent from the nation

states in which they are situated. Thus, the argument that this article attempts to make is that scholars should pay more attention to local traces inscribed in what is considered transnational, foreign or ethnic, as only in this way can a more comprehensive picture of reality be obtained.

I have demonstrated that researcher-generated photography may be successfully employed to analyse the issues around migration and diversity, especially when there is an interest in thorough examination of micro and mezzo processes within their local surroundings. Visual methods enhance the localised perspective, which enables migrants and their practices to be approached in the context of the settings in which they are exercised, challenging the traditional image of migrants as dislocated and stuck between cultures and places. However, the interpretation of visual elements captured in the pictures should not be separated from the meaning given to them by migrants. Therefore, analyses of researcher-generated photographs have to be supported by active engagement with the field that is allowed by more traditional methods, such as interviews (Gold 2004, Martiniello and Boucher 2017, Oliveira 2016). In other words, photography needs a context and this context has to be provided by and consulted with the participants of the research, so as to reach a nuanced picture of their situation.

A big advantage of photography is that it captures not only objects of primary interest, but also a broader context that is sometimes overlooked by researchers at first glance. Analysing photographs therefore allows not only taking a step back and re-interpreting the meaning of a documented reality, but also coming back to the field to explore details that went unnoticed, but were later identified as important when the photographs were analysed. This would not be possible with traditional ethnography, in which field notes contain information recorded as a researcher works, or on the basis of his or her memory. Moreover, photographs help communicate findings in a powerful way that is able to balance media coverage of migrants. On the other hand, researcher-generated photography bears problems similar to traditional qualitative methods. It is a carrier of information that is exposed to the same interpretation dangers as interviews, field notes, etc. After all, the story that is told is always the researcher's interpretation of the actors' situation, even if the necessary steps of consulting research findings with participants and distancing oneself from the field are taken. Given the similarities in the limitations between the visual and traditional methods, photography may be therefore assumed to be a tool that is not only complementary to, but also equal to traditional methods; however, it works best in triangulation.

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