Interview 9

00.00.00

= Look at the blue light, Sister Munire

\* OK, I’ll look at the blue light, let’s go

- Only one person talks, OK?

\* I’ll talk first, then Ayse, then Fatma. Let’s go from the oldest to the youngest.

- We’re ready.

\* OK, then… My dad…

- Hold on, your name and surname first.

\* My name is Münire and my surname is [...]. I live here, I am from here, I was born and raised here, in this Street and this house. This is our house. I went to Izmir by marriage, OK?

00.00.42

\* My dad immigrated in here from Midilli at the age of 14, with the settlement right given by Atatürk. My dad, my aunt, my mom and my grandma. My grandad died there. My dad had a bakery there, every Ramadan he delivered free bread to people.

When my dad arrived at this place, all houses were empty. All Foca was empty.

-Why?

\* Why, because the Greeks left here. When the Turks came, only the townspeople were here. The townspeople lived together with the Greek for some time, here.

- Why did they leave?

00.01.40

\* Why did they leave? Because when Ataturk came, they were not here so they found the place empty and settled. Some went to Ayvalık, some came here, some went to Cesme, some Altinova… They got on boats or ferries from Midilli and came here. After my dad arrives, at the age of 14, he gets married here. I and my four siblings were born and raised in this house. Ataturk gave the right to settle to the people emigrated from there. According to your property there -you know that you leave your posessions back at where you emigrated from- they give you new property here. Was it called settlement right, what was it called? They gave him that.

00.02.42

\* We grew up here. There was a factory here, its owner had left. They were all Greek people. They left their jugs here. Behind one of those jugs, my mom found a dozen of bracelets. While escaping, they left them here. They were all very thick bracelets. I was a small child, though I remember them. I wonder if there are still some, I don’t know. So they found them and that is how my dad got here.

00.03.18

\* My father had 3 siblings. One was dead, two were… during the Greek raids here, they escaped into the farms around and the Greeks found them and cut… My dad’s brothers and uncle were killed there. All during the war. Only my dad hid in a pear tree hollow and they all searched for him. They were looking around the tree and not here, they had said, in Greek. My dad used to tell us he heard them say “Not here, not here, not here…”. There were two other, two brothers and they were killed while escaping there, too.

00.04.11 (…)

\* Come, come, get in… They are from Greece, they are making interviews with the people emigrated from Midilli.

00.04.43

\* This is how it happened. We were born and raised here. Still, the Greeks come here. This factory’s owner used to own everything here. You know the hotel over there, and all these houses… once they came here with a crowded group, maybe twenty or thirty people… they came here from Greece by boats and found their houses and their places. They used to cry and cry and cry… as they saw their houses and places.

00.05.21

\* We used to have houses and lands there but no chance, we could not visit them. My brothers went there, both of them went to Midilli.

- Why didn’t you ?

\* I could not. My husband did not let me do so but if my lifespan lets me, I want to visit those places. Now there is a boat from Ayvalık to there.

- Which city or village in Midilli?

\* Well, you can check them all… My grandchildren check them and finds out all the places and the addresses. My grandmas and grandpas are all registered to Midilli in those records. This new thing here, what is it called; the roots tree? You can visit and find the places at once. They are all on records in a computer. Yes, really, yes. My uncles, you can find all of them. My grandchildren sometimes check and “Grandma, look, your roots and all are here” they say. So it is.

00.07.01

\* This is all I know. These are what my dad told me.

- Before the Exchange of Populations…

\* Yes, yes of course

- …do you know what happened?

\* I don’t know them. I don’t know what happened before the Exchange. How could I know, even my dad was 14 when he arrived. Here, they gave him properties accordingly. He came from Midilli… Ataturk accordingly… My dad did his military service and got married, that one, I do not know. What I remember, depending on what he told me are these. My dad, may he rest in peace, used to tell how they lived, how they came, how they made all… They came by a ferry: himself, my aunt and their grandma, those three. My grandma was not allowed at the same ferry. Thus, she went to Ayvalık with the next ferry. Some went to New Foca, some to Ayvalık. Thus, she got the settlement right at Ayvalık. My dad used to commute between his mom and grandma. My dad’s mom, she stayed there.

00.08.20

- Do you know Ra Midilli?

\* Ra Midilli was our relative; his wife, Sister Necla [...]. Yes, of course I know them very well. I have been to their houses many times and have dined with them. They were our relatives.

- His dad, Cemal Bey…Cemil Bey, came to Foca in 1915, before the Exchange.

\* Yes, he came earlier than my dad… At the same time… Before the Exchange.

- When did they come?

\* The date, I don’t know. Here there is Süheda’s dad, Neşe’s grandma… They all came with my dads and with those Cemil Bey from Midilli.

00.09.31

- Because the Greek in Foca emigrated for two times. One is in 1914, before the Exchange.

\* 1914 is a date I remember, I think. But it could be at the second time, too. When is the second? When is the second time the Greeks emigrated here?

- The second is in 1923.

00.10.15

\* After 7 years. Here, for some time the Turkish, the townspeople and the Greeks lived together. Here, the townspeople usually speak Greek. They used to speak Greek but they no longer live. Some married here.

- My grandma used to speak Turkish. She used to tell me “Hadi bakalım kızım”. I understand it now but then, I did not. What is she saying, what, what, what…

- OK

\* Did you like it?

- I liked it very much, thank you so much.

\* And I thank you. Now Ayse can tell you. She knows well, too.