

THE DIVERSITY WITHIN THE SPACE OF A CITY

KEY QUESTION: When is nobody cross with anyone else in a city?

Doc. 1. The population of Plovdiv in the 1860s

The population of this city amounts to 30 000, half of whom are Muslims. The Bulgarians, Orthodox and Catholic Christians are second in number; then come the Greek-Romanians, the Armenian, the Jews and the Gypsies. In Plovdiv, there are two important mosques already: *Djumaya* and *Imaret*. As far as the Armenians are concerned, there are only 180 families but they have a splendid church and a school in which they have been taught in their mother tongue for 15 years now. The Jewish families are 250; the Bulgarian Catholics are 400; they also have a beautiful church and a school whose boys' section is governed by French priests and whose girls' section is governed by some nuns.

The Christian neighbourhoods are 8 in number [...] In *Karshiaka*, there is one church and one school [...] On the other bank of the river, right across, lies the *Marash* neighbourhood; it consists of Bulgarian families only. To the south is *St Petka's* neighbourhood [...], to the southwest – *St Marina's* [...] to the southeast – *St Nedelya's* parish.

Hr. G. Danov, *Letostruy*, 186.

Doc. 2. Local elections in Plovdiv after the Russian-Turkish War

The other day, on the 14th this month, on Thursday, the elections for the new members of the town council took place. Voters, one in every fifty houses, 63 people altogether, represented the relative number of the different ethnic groups living in the city in the following way: 37 Orthodox Bulgarians, 4 Catholic Bulgarians, 5 Turks, 13 Greeks, 2 Armenians and 2 Jews. They gathered together in the hall of the Bulgarian school and secretly voted for 39 candidates whom they had chosen themselves. They elected, by majority, the following people [...]

Plovdiv, December 19th, 1878
Election committee announcement

Task 1:

- Characterise the population of Plovdiv from the two periods which **Doc. 1** and **Doc. 2** refer to.
- Calculate the number of the houses of each of the ethnic groups according to **Doc. 1**.
- Compare and contrast the information from the two documents and explain the reasons which have led to this change in the ethnic „face“ of the city.
- In **Doc. 2**, underline three key expressions which characterise the mechanism of the elections.

Doc. 3. The neighbourhoods in Plovdiv

The first plan of the city, designed by the engineer Joseph Schnitter in 1892, included 32 squares, 399 streets and about 400 neighbourhoods, most of which had Turkish names, while others were represented by digits [...] The Armenian neighbourhood started at „The 4th of January“ street and past the „Surp Kevork“ Church, it went down to „Chifte Banya“* [...] „Ortamezar“ lay near the City Gardens and to the northwest of the Armenian neighbourhood [...] This part of the city had been populated by Jews for a long time; even then, at the beginning of the 20th century, they were the basic ethnic element in this neighbourhood [...]

The Turkish neighbourhood was situated at the upper end of „Bunardjik“ Street [...] The houses there were small, made of **clay and adobe, dyed in blue or light pink, with irregular yards...** The outside fences were taller than a human being... the windows overlooking the street had dense wooden frames on [...]The „Marash“ neighbourhood started north from the „Muselle“ square. Chronicle writers **say that there, as well as in „Karshiaka“, only the Bulgarian language could be heard before the Liberation.** Most of the houses in „Marash“ were rickety, **dyed in distemper**, with spacious yards. On the outside, they looked unappealing, but they were cozy inside. The **chardaks** and sheds made them look welcoming [...]**

To the south of „Bai Medjid“ megdan***, lay the „Gypsy Kingdom“. It curved like a rainbow to

the East. These, crammed to one another houses, all made of **clay and adobe**, were most often the home to about 10 people [...] Almost all buildings were dyed in dark blue [...]

* "Chifte" Bath

** Balconies on the second or third floor of old Bulgarian houses, usually open to the outside, e.g. to the garden, the street, etc., covered on the sides **and having a roof**

*** Turkish for *square*

Doc. 4. Holidays in Plovdiv

Another place which attracted the citizens of Plovdiv was the „Pepiniera“ – a lush green meadow surrounded by upright poplars. **It had been created in 1891 by the gardener Lucien Schevalas** [...] The picture during a holiday there was the same as on the island – an orchestra of tambourines, flutes, mandolins, street-organs. Things to eat, drinks, songs, crowds [...] The fights between the wrestles began in the afternoon [...] There were various spectators at these fights: Bulgarians, Turks, Armenians; there were seldom any Jews but the Gypsies were the most numerous group. There were dressed-up rich women and women with head cloths on their heads, men with bowler hats, hard collars and shirt fronts on; there were spoilt wealthy old women with black umbrellas to protect their heads from the sun. There were also peasants from the nearby villagers.

The holidays of *Kurban* and *Ramadan* took a whole month. The Turkish people bore the Lent in these hot day with the utmost patience [...]. At 2 o'clock after midnight, the person from the mosque started around the town with his *dyumbelek** and woke the true Mohammedans to get up and eat because Lent began at 4 o'clock. The noise of the *dyumbelek* woke not only the Turks but the Bulgarians and everybody else, but no one was angry [...].

*Turkish for *drum*

Alvadjev, N. Plovdiv Chronicles, Plovdiv, 1984

Doc. 5. Market day in Plovdiv, painted by I. Markvichka, 1888



Task 2:

- A) Copy the table below in your notebooks. Use **Doc. 3-5** to complete the table.
B) Write your conclusion about the way the different ethnic groups in Plovdiv communicated in the bottom grid of the table.

Ethnic group	Spaces typical of the ethnic group	Shared spaces	Occasions to gather together

SUMMARY QUESTION: Which are the basic constituents of durable and tolerant relationships in a cosmopolitan city?