

“INHERITED GENTRIFICATION”: CHANGING PROFILES OF GENTRIFIERS VIA INHERITANCE, THE CASE OF BOZCAADA, TURKEY

*Duygu OKUMUŞ**

ABSTRACT

The gentrification phenomenon has been largely debated in Anglo-Saxon urban studies and inherently taken as an urban concept. However, this complex urban phenomenon emerges in the countryside with similar principal indicators: a change in the socio-economic composition of its citizens; an emphasis on cultural or national heritage and aesthetics; the emergence of new institutions leading to the closure of older ones; diversification of products and services; changes in properties' value.

This paper presents a qualitative case study examining the changes on the socio-spatial structure of a small Turkish island, Bozcaada, through these principal indicators of gentrification in the countryside. During the last two decades, Bozcaada has been displaying both the core elements and indicators of gentrification through the process of rural social change and structural local economic changes. In the early phase of Bozcaada's gentrification, the newcomers were mainly middle-aged and middle-class urbanites who moved to the island with rural idyll motivations. However, in the current phase, the characteristics of the newcomers have become diversified in terms of both motivations and socio-economic class.

The most significant finding of this paper is the identification of the second-generation gentrifiers of Bozcaada who are the direct descendants of the first gentrifiers. This particular section of current newcomers on Bozcaada is not as wealthy as the other newcomers or their parents. In fact, they may not be able to move into the local community if they have not inherited their parents'/grandparents' properties due to a highly inflated housing market. Although they do not hold any economic capital, they are still part of the gentrifying population of Bozcaada due to their cultural capital, which differentiates them from the other sections of the local community.

This paper argues that the second-generation newcomers naturally took part in the process of gentrification when they inherited their properties,

* Dr., Bursa Technical University, Faculty of Architecture and Design, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Bursa, Turkey.

since they play an important role in the significant socio-economic and cultural changes that are still taking place on the island. However, they created a different kind of gentrification from their parents, which is passed on to the next generation via the ownership of assets. This paper calls this new concept "inherited gentrification".

Keywords: gentrification, tourism development, rural transformation, counterurbanisation, gentrifiers

The full version of this paper is selected to be published in the special issue of International Journal of Architecture and Planning (ICONARP) after the peer review process.