BOĞAZKESEN CADDESİ VE YENİ SAKİNLERİNİN UYUM SÜRECİ

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ÖZET

İstanbul'un merkezinde eski bir yerleşim bölgesi olan Boğazkesen Caddesi, bir süredir tartışmalı bir dönüşüm süreci geçirmektedir. Cadde sadece mekânsal konumu itibariyle değil, aynı zamanda geçirdiği zor dönüşüm süreci sebebiyle de kritik bir öneme sahiptir. Bahsedilen süreç bölgenin eski ve yeni sakinleri arasında kurulan ilişki ve özellikle yeni sakinlerin koşullara uyum sürecine dair eleştirileri de beraberinde getirmiştir. Medya organlarına da yansıyan ve eleştirilere konu olan sakinler arasındaki gerginlik, Boğazkesen'in soylulaştırma sürecinin derin bir analiz gerektiren sosyal bir husus olduğunu düşündürmektedir.

Bu çalışmada, yeni sakinlerin adaptasyon sürecinin nasıl işlediği ve adaptasyon stratejilerinin neler olduğu incelenmiştir. Araştırma, belirli bir bölge (Boğazkesen Caddesi-Tophane) ve belirli bir topluluk (caddenin yeni sakinleri) olmak üzere iki odak noktasına sahipken, aranan izler bu topluluğun yerel halk ve mevcut yaşam biçimiyle olan ilişkilerine dayanmaktadır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, araştırma Boğazkesen'in soylulaştırma sürecini incelemekte ve yeni sakinlerin adaptasyon sürecine odaklanmaktadır. "Soylulaştırma", "uyum" ve "kültürel uyum" kavramları teorik çerçevede tartışılmıştır. Buna ek olarak bölgenin soylulaştırma süreci önce yazılı basından, sonrasında ise soylulaştırma sürecini yaşayan yeni sakinler ile yapılan röportajlar yoluyla gözlemlenerek aktarılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uyum, Kültürel uyum, Soylulaştırma, Boğazkesen, İstanbul.

ADAPTATION PROCESS OF BOĞAZKESEN' NEWCOMERS

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ABSTRACT

Boğazkesen Street, an old settlement in Istanbul, has been through a controversial transformation process for a while. The street has a critical importance as a gentrification area not only because of its spatial location but also the difficult period of transformation. As a result of the tension between newcomers and the old-existing habitants and along with the process, which is also reflected in the media organs; the gentrification process of Boğazkesen is thought to be a social case, which requires a deep analysis. Additionally, the association that is concerned with social environment, which is the interest of architecture all along, has brought about a number of critiques, as well. These critiques are primarily based on the constituted relationship between the both sides of the habitants, local residents and newcomers, and their adaptation process to new conditions.

In this study, how the newcomers' adaptation proceeds and what their adaptation strategies are examined. While the research has two focal points –a specific place (Boğazkesen Street-Tophane) and a specific group of people (newcomers of the street)-, the traces will be based on their relationship with the existing habitants and the existing lifestyle. In this respect, this research studies the gentrification process of Boğazkesen, and focuses on the adaptation process of newcomers. 'Gentrification', 'adaptation' and 'acculturation', are theoretically discussed, relations between newcomers and existing habitants are disclosed. Secondly, the gentrification process of the area is observed. It is attempted to narrate the process first from the press and secondly through the interviews with gentrifies.

Keywords: *Adaptation, Acculturation, Gentrification, Boğazkesen, Istanbul.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Cities are in a state of large-scale transformation because of the close relationship between architectural/urban life and the global social, cultural, economic, and political changes. Within this transformation period; the city develops through the center and the historical places-especially next to the core of the city-become more precious. As 'city develops' people from the other parts of the city want to be a part of the transformation and they settle down in these historical areas. Within this period, newcomers and the existing habitants league together as the two opposite groups of different social environment.

The case of Boğazkesen Street, as a gentrification process, is evaluated on a case-by-case basis in this study. The area, which is still in a transformation period, has had a controversial gentrification process. In terms of this study, it is vital to examine the adaptation process of newcomers, how they overcome this tough psychological situation. A set of acculturation and adaptation theories which attempt to produce knowledge for an organic gentrification is researched. Besides, the data collected from the reflections of media organs and from the interviews within the framework of this methodology throughout the study, is interpreted as a summary at the end of this article.

1. GENTRIFICATION

The term gentrification, the immigration of middle-class people into a run-down or recently renewed city area (Merriam-Webster 1989), has first been used in 1963 to notify the process of London's middle-upper inhabiting the proletariate neighborhoods, and the transformation of these places. In most cases, gentrification process is problematic in terms of the experience of dwellers. People from different parts of city and with different lifestyles experience the "them and us" situation. Under these circumstances all habitants

from both sides, local residents and newcomers, try to adapt to a new population with different values and new urban conditions. This process may be appraised as the restoring and smarting the retrograde neighborhoods to make it suitable for middle-class residents (Cowie 1989), while it can be seen as the loss of an existing social environment. In this context, this situation may be perceived differently by people from every walk of life (Dent, 1989).Thus, in terms of this study it is important to examine the acculturation situation while the newcomers face the gentrification process and how they tackle the adaptation course.

2. ACCULTURATION AND ADAPTATION

Acculturation and adaptation explain how individuals that *have developed in one cultural context, manage to adapt to new contexts impinge on them* as forms of intercultural encounters (Berry, 1980a). Berry identifies *acculturation* as it is employed to refer to the 'cultural changes' resulting from these encounters. And he defines *adaptation and psychological acculturation* as 'psychological changes' and 'eventual outcomes' that occur as a result of individuals experiencing acculturation (Berry, 1980a).Looking from this perspective, adaptation can be understood and examined as a result and the next process of acculturation.

2.1. Acculturation and Acculturation Strategies

Acculturation may be defined as a continuing process of cultural change and an outcome of contact of two and more cultures. It refers to an adaptive process or a complete adaptation as the end stage of acculturation (Adler and Gielen, 2003).These changing cultural situations and values, which transfer from one culture to another may be compatible or incompatible to the cultural group's cognitive schemata and life style. All the perceptions are the cultural filters which create *them and us* norms (Ünlü, 1998). Also, in the case of the adaptation process of Boğazkesen' newcomers,

the acculturation phenomenon creates them and us situation due to the coexistence ofmore than one culture.

Berry and Sam (1996) distinguish the results of acculturation in four main conditions as assimilation, separation, integration and marginalization. *Assimilation* appears when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures. *Separation* appears in contrast to assimilation, when the non-dominant group places a value holding onto their original culture, and wishes to avoid interaction with others. *Integration* appears when there is an interest in both maintaining one's original culture while in daily interactions with other groups. Finally, *marginalization,* appears when there is little possibility or interest in having relations (often for reasons of unacceptance, and discrimination) (Berry and Sam, 1996).

2.2. Adaptation and Psychological Acculturation

Adaptation, the process which usually comes as the result of acculturation phenomenon, is imported to psychology from biology, where it is used in a broad, general sense as *adjustment to the conditions under which species must live in order to survive* (Helson, 1964). Adaptation is a yearning situation or a point which constitutes the conceptual distance between the mentioned situation and the new one, changing percentage, perceived control level and choice (Ünlü, 1998).

Berry and Sam (1996) propose that some form of adaptation to the new cultural conditions usually takes place after a time for most acculturating individuals. They propound that these adaptations can take many forms depending on a variety of factors. And they methodologically divide the adaptation types in two main situation based on the notion of 'fitting' (Berry and Sam, 1996). In some cases the acculturating individuals fit to the new context and conditions, especially during assimilation or integration. However,

in other cases fit is not achieved between them, especially if separation and marginalization occur.

In literature adaptation is handled through two main approaches. These approaches are psychological adaptation and sociocultural adaptation and there is a distinction between them. Psychological adaptation refers to a set of internal psychological outcomes including a clear sense of personal and cultural identity, good mental health etc. Sciocultural adaptation, on the other hand is a set of external psychological outcomes that link individuals to their new context and their new condition, including their ability to deal with daily problems (Berry and Sam, 1996).

As a matter of fact adaptation is a behavior which can be observed. Lawton and Nahemow (1973) express that these adaptation behaviors appear as the pleasure from environment/other individuals, fulfilling the responsibilities, performance in complicated situations, social norms and value system. What is vital for reaching the adaptation and compatibility, is the type of the reactions against the change phenomenon. These reactions can show up in three ways: Adaptation through adjustment, adaptation through reaction and adaptation through withdrawal.

Adaptation through adjustment happens when the behaviors change and become compatible with the environment. The contradiction between environment and behavior varies. Generally this change is called as adaptation and it is the general form of adaptation. When there is a reaction, the behaviors appear as opponent manner to environment. This mediate to change of environment and increases the harmony between environment and the behavior. But this does not happen by correction of behaviors. In the withdrawal condition; the behavior is in the direction of degressing the social pressure. This kind of adaptation means leaving the area. This can be the migration from difficult or harmful environment, the isolation from a part of the area or leaving it completely. These three kind of

adaptations are just like the separations in psychological literature: Moving together or towards-opposite movement-moving far away from stimulant (Berry, 1980b).

In research area of psychological acculturation, which refers to 'psychological changes' that occur as a result of individuals experiencing acculturation, there are three main points of views. The one which is called *behavioral shift or cultural learning or social skills* approves that psychological changes are rather easy to accomplish. This situation occurs when the learning new behavioral repertoire that is appropriate for the new cultural context takes place. In some cases the compatibility cannot be reached easily. It is thought that individuals may experience *stress* or *culture shock* in this situation where they cannot easily change their repertoire. The last, when major difficulties are experienced, changes in cultural context exceed individual's capacity to cope. These cases where conflict exists are called *culture shock or acculturative stress.* Clinical depression or anxiety appears in these situations (Berry and Sam, 1996).Some frameworks which take part in literature to systematize the process of acculturation and to illustrate the main factors that affect an individual's adaptation are shown below.
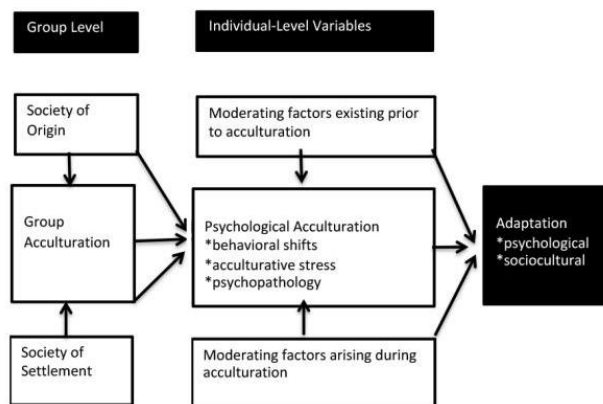

Figure 1. A framework for Acculturation and Adaptation (Berry, 1992)

Table 1. Specific features of psychological acculturation and adaptation (Berry and Sam, 1996)

Variable	Specific Features
Behavioral Shifts	Culture learning (e.g. language, food, dress, social norms) Culture shedding (e.g. changing social norms, gender attitudes) Culture conflict (e.g. incompatibility, intergroup difficulties)
Acculturative stress	Problem appraisal Stressors Stress phenomena (e.g. psychological, psychomatic, anxiety)
Psychopathology	Problems Crises Pathological phenomena (e.g. depression, schizophrenia)
Psychological adaptation	Self-esteem Identity consolidation Well-being/satisfaction
Sociocultural adaptation	Cultural knowledge, social skills Interpersonal and intergroup relations Family and community relations

3. BOĞAZKESEN NEWCOMERS AND THEIR ADAPTATION PROCESS

Boğazkesen Street is a dynamic neighborhood that has been in a transformation process since 2000s. It is located in a strategic spatial point and in the main axe of the city –in Beyoğlu, next to Bosphorus and Golden Horn, close to historical places, touristic areas, the harbor, cultural hotpots and the other areas which had already gone through the gentrification process.

Figure 2. Location of Boğazkesen Street and its relation with Beyoğlu, Bosphorus and Golden Horn.

Figure 3. Masterplan of Boğazkesen Street

3.1. Current Situation and the Tension in Boğazkesen

Based on all the dynamics related to the Boğazkesen's spatial qualification, the area recently come to the fore again and is still in an ongoing gentrification process. Many new habitants start to work in the neighborhood. Within this period, newcomers and the existing habitants league together as the two opposite groups of different life styles. The relationship between the both sides of habitants and their adaptation process to new conditions has occurred as a torrid process and had a repercussion in press. In this process many contradictive dialogs and incidents between them

could be followed from the TV, news, journals and especially from social media. Tense relation between newcomers and the old-existing habitants which is reflected in the press is narrated below.

*Pressure to art galleries about alcohol! (21.09.2010,NTV)

A group attacked to guests of an art gallery during the exhibition opening. Drinking alcohol was the reason of the attack.

*Attack to art gallery in Tophane! (10.05.2014, hürriyet)

In Tophane, the argument between the exhibition guests who were drinking alcohol on the pavement of art gallery and the locals ended unpleasantly.

*'Attack to art gallery' in Tophane Again! (23.02.2015, Radikal)

During the exhibition opening of art gallery in Tophane, the neighborhoods youth created a tension. This time problem is not alcohol, kissing!

*Attack After the Gay Pride (29.06.2015, Bianet)

Attenders of 13. İstanbul Gay Pride were mugged by unknown attackers after the police intervention at İstiklal Street.

*Attack to Chinese restaurant in Istanbul! Uighur-Turkish cook was beaten. (01.07.2015, Cumhuriyet)

Happy China, a restaurant opened 6 months ago in Tophane, had an attack in noon hours by a group who executed the pressure against China-East Turkistan Turkish people.

3.2. Boğazkesen Newcomers and Their Adaptation Process

The aforementioned tense relationship between newcomers and existing habitants during the gentrification process of Boğazkesen, is thought to pose a problem in the neighborhood. In terms of this study, it is vital to examine how both sides of habitants overcome this problematic situation by making an appraisal through depth-analysis with newcomers.

The new inhabitants of Boğazkesen are composed of a group of people who have mostly moved here in a few years and worked in other parts of the city previously. The newcomers are mostly high-educated people who are used to city life but foreign to Boğazkesen's lifestyle. They use the first floors of Boğazkesen street apartments for design, art, and leisure time activities-focus shops. Most of the newcomers use the street only for the purpose of work, they go back to other parts of city at the evening time. During the in-depth analysis and interviews made with the newcomers some questions are asked to have a general idea about their adaptation dynamics. First of all, information about their *personal givens* (name-age, educational status-profession…) and their story at Boğazkesen is delivered. Then they are interviewed about their *view on local residents* and their relationship with them. Lastly conversations on their *view about boğazkesen,* their pleasure level regarding the social structure, plans for future (staying or leaving), opinions about the gentrification process and future visions about Boğazkesen are derived. Data collected from these interviews is narrated as a summary under two subtitles; *views about local residents* and *views about Boğazkesen* which especially focus on the process and relationships.

Views about local residents

All new inhabitants of Boğazkesen are aware of leaguing together with locals as the two groups of contradictory life styles and think that they are from completely different social backgrounds and milieu from the locals. According to newcomers, there is a congregation culture in the neighborhood and locals, between each other, all have property in here and therefore a strong sense of belonging. Before the face to face communication they all had prejudice against locals about being conservative, lack of tolerance, dismissive, aggressive....The relation between locals and newcomers comprise of daily living practice. They have the

common feeling that all have a relation in line with the requirements. Some of them think that the financial benefit helped to move away the hard process of gentrification. The locals and the newcomers chat in the street during the day, –especially locals- help each other. Even though they have good relations and communication after a short adaptation process they still don't have any conversation about politics with locals. Their dialogs are usually based on daily life and routine. They are all comfortable about the security issue and locals always help them in solving minor problems. Locals are not interested in using the shops as customers or visit the art galleries. But all newcomers think that locals observe what happens in the shops and the exhibitions. They are mostly in well-tempered if they understand what is going on in. They don't like nude or politic art and yet they want to have an idea about the selling items.

Most newcomers think that hardest period of adaptation process has passed. They all have an observation and idea about the attacks and tense dialogs. They find the young man of the population more aggressive and offensive and the older ones as more understanding. They observe that the locals don't like the galleries crowd and they don't like people drinking alcohol at the street-the pavement. The newcomers find the crowd and pavement issue reasonable butalso all feel the pressure about alcohol. Especially galleries are obligated to find a solution like not serving alcohol during the openings for a while, by making the opening hours earlier.

Figure 4-5. Views from the street.

Figure 6-7. Views from the street, old and new shops together.

Views about Boğazkesen

All new inhabitants like the variety of lifestyles in the street and the present situation is a desired level of togetherness for them. They are pleased with the life in here except for the problems encountered and antagonistic dialogs, obligatory behaviors and the self-censor. All choose the *adjustment* behavior in this process; they don't want to be extreme, they change their out of the common behaviors and try to be compatible with the social environment. They are mostly aware of the gentrification process they are in. They think that it can be a process which might have benefits for both sides if it happens in an organic and humanitarian way -just like the one they are involved-. They mostly think that gentrification for areas just like Boğazkesen seems unavoidable but they do not want neighborhood' interbedded structure get lost and

local people will feel as foreigners. They have an observe that the axe (¿) started to transform something else and they are aware that it will not always stay at the desired level. They appreciate that the gentrification process will be a growing issue for them just like the locals.

4. EPILOGUE

It is fair to state that from the interviews and remarks of newcomers explicated during this study; the newcomers contact with the local inhabitants in daily routine and their reactions are in a positive way except for their contradictory lifestyle. Newcomers are wishful to adapt to the place, they choose the adjustment way as an adaptation strategy and they aim at maintaining to work at the street. In other words, they mostly put a self-censor and try not to have maladaptive behavior with the locals. In addition, they are all aware that they are a part of the gentrification process. They do not want it to become an artificial environment for the locals and fear that the neighborhood's interbedded structure may get lost. Also they are aware of the fact that gentrification may not stay at the desired level and they can also have problems about displacement.

It can be deduced from this study that places do not have stable/frozen contexts and users. It is necessary to consider places as dynamic phenomena. It is accepted that the gentrification for areas like Boğazkesen which are close to historical places, touristic areas, the harbour, cultural hotpots seem unavoidable; and in this sense, it is important to predict the transformation and plan for a smooth adjustment process by protecting local habitants rights and without any displacement. In other words, if this process can be managed under the control of the citizens, in a safe and beneficial way for both sides, an organic gentrification process can be achieved. Only through this way, this process prioritizes human adaptation organically to a place and the appropriate urbanization can be achieved, an urbanization beneficial for all habitants and

city, as desired by all citizens-. As a last word, gentrification is a situation which must be regarded not only as an urbanization process but also as a social phenomena; and in this sense, it may well be asserted that this study, by focusing social issues, may be useful for possible organic gentrification strategies in the future.

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