Rural Gentrification: Middle Class’ Migration from Urban to Rural Areas

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Background information

The phenomena of gentrification and rural gentrification

Objective

Transformation and gentrification of rural areas which are under the pressure of the urban sprawl.

Case study

Ankara Metropolis, capital city of Turkey

Concluding remarks
Glass (1964), a sociologist, pioneered the concept of gentrification. The idea of gentrification is encapsulated as the transformation of an urban neighbourhood through the gradual arrival of middle-class or well-to-do residents who eventually replace poorer or working-class residents.

Gentrification is “the movement of middle and upper income households into areas that were previously inhabited by low-income people”, it is a class transformation rooted in long-term changes in the distribution of wealth, income, and educational opportunity” (Adams, et al.1991; Wyly and Hammel, 1999).
Gentrification

Reasons behind the gentrification:

• The lifestyle and consumption practices of the new middle-class
• Its impacts on the residential and commercial urban landscape.
• Major changes in terms of housing, businesses and the social composition of households

Gentrification of metropolises has been analyzed from a variety of perspectives.
• Between 1970-1980s: The discussions was mostly about the urban areas, especially city center.
• After the 1990s: The discussions are focused on periphery and rural areas.
Rural Gentrification

The phenomenon of *rural gentrification* is less well known than its urban counterpart.

Various aspects of the *socio-demographic reconstitution* of the countryside, especially resulting from the *arrival of urban migrants*, have been documented.

Studies on *newcomers*, sometimes described as new rural populations, attracted by the promise of a better *quality of life* in the countryside.

According to researchers re-population of the countryside is related to rural gentrification (Phillips, 2005; Solana, 2010; Sönmez, 2014; Gkartzios and Scott, 2013).
Rural gentrification is linked in particular to the migration and permanent settlement in the countryside of middle-class or affluent urbanites (Guimond and Simard, 2010).

The dynamics behind the rural gentrification:

• Urban sprawl,
• Amenity-driven migration,
• Retirement-driven migration
Rural Gentrification Drivers: Urban Sprawl

Urban Sprawl

Urban sprawl is commonly used to describe physically expanding urban areas with leaps and bounds.

Sprawl has been described as:
The physical pattern of low-density expansion of large urban areas, under market conditions, mainly into the surrounding agricultural/rural areas.

Urban Sprawl in Turkish Metropolises

In the 80s many radical changes have occurred in Turkey.
- Changes in the socio-economic politics
- Changes in the planning and legislative system
  were the most efficient changes on the spatial development.

In 1984, metropolitan city administrations were established in Turkey.
- Significant increase in the population of the metropolitan cities in Turkey.
- The cities expanded towards the fringe/rural areas, new settlement areas arose.
- Expansion caused pressure on rural areas close to cities and surrounding areas.
- Transformation of rural areas with the metropolitan cities.
- Social, economical and physical changes occurred in the rural areas.
- As a way of life the rural character changed into urban character.
Case Study: Ankara Metropolitan Area

This research examines rural gentrification as a result of urban sprawl drivers in the south west region of Ankara metropolitan area.

The area have all faced the ironic condition of increasing housing production paired with decreasing affordability.

In addition, the area have also lost long-held traditions and elements of local culture in exchange for a homogenous, suburbanized new comers.

South west region of Ankara metropolitan area, transforming from rural to urban character due to urban sprawl. The area is attractive for high income, white collar employee.

Fig. 1. Map of Ankara metropolitan area
Case Study: Ankara Metropolitan Area

What is the main character of this corridor (South-west region) in metropolitan area:

In planning process of Ankara in 80s, the area was the first region planned with decentralization decision.

• Universities, public institutes, housing estates mostly settled in this region
• At the end of the 80s uncontrolled urban expansion has affected the rural settlements nearby planned region. These settlements have transformed according to the short and long term needs of metropolitan areas. Deterioration of rural characteristics goes parallel with the urban development process.

Physical, social and economical dimensions of transformation process that have influenced by urban sprawl in the rural areas is assessed in this study.

• 3 villages (İncek, Çayyolu, Beytepe) results are shared in this presentation
Case Study: Ankara Metropolitan Area

Methodology
The following variables are taken into consideration in the analysis:

- In-depth interviews with real estate agencies
- Questionnaires with local people, new comers, public institutions

Demographic transformation

Population growth rates between the years of 1980-2007 are analyzed,

While population increase rate of central city of Ankara is \( \% \)29, these settlements indicate much higher rates after 80s: Çayyolu (\( \% \)69), İncek (\( \% \)67), Beytepe (\( \% \)-2) cases.
Case Study: Ankara Metropolitan Area

Economic Transformation

The agricultural sector in the assessed settlements shows a decreasing trend although it was basic employment sector in the rural area all through the previous years.

Interaction of these settlements with the main city has resulted transformation from agriculture to urban service sector in employment structure, due to new job and higher income opportunities sourced from the main city.

The new comers economical structure is different than the rural population: High income, white collar employee.
Case Study: Ankara Metropolitan Area

Social transformation

The people from different cultural and social background prefer these settlements therefore the social and economic structure of them show cosmopolite characteristics. Huge differences in education level have been observed between the populations. High education level is observed in new comers.

As the life style, the rural community members are changing, they try to adapt themselves to the urban life style.
Case Study: Ankara Metropolitan Area

Spatial transformation

Dynamics of metropolitan urban development at the fringe areas have been effective in changing the spatial structure of rural settlements. This influence has begun with the change in legal, administrative and planning system. Decentralization started on the west side of the city then the development scattered to south and south west direction by leaping.

Commonly preferred by the high income households
Increasing housing production paired with decreasing affordability.
Rural Gentrification Drivers: Urban Sprawl

Views from İncek
Rural Gentrification Drivers: Urban Sprawl

Views from Çayıyolu
Rural Gentrification Drivers: Urban Sprawl

Views from Beytepe
Concluding Remarks

- Changes in the socio-economic politics, the structure of societies and cities are changing.
- Due to these changes the literature, academicians and politicians are discussing the reasons and the results of these changes.
- Some of the issues like gentrification, segregation etc. are discussing due to these socio-economic changes.
- The new economic aspect treat to the urban areas as a consumption goods, in this sense urban projects became popular.
- These projects: housing, business, commercial areas are establishing for high income users.
- These projects need, big, empty areas which are available in the rural areas surrounding the city.
- During the last 10 years period the construction of these kinds of facilities are increasing in Ankara Metropolitan Area.
- The south–west region of the Ankara Metropolitan is hosting these projects, which are attractive for mostly the high income residents.
Concluding Remarks

As a result of this research:

- Gentrification and decreasing housing affordability are likely to be continued trends in these areas.
- The trends in the middle-class lifestyle, urban residents will continue to move into rural areas.
- Increased accessibility opportunities and high housing quality, attract population to near rural settlements.
- These settlements experience high population increase rates. They lose their rural character and transform into urban or semi-urban character. Their administrative, demographic and economic structure transforms in time.
- This transformation also leads to changes in the social and spatial structures. Some of them completes the urban transformation process and become totally urban even consisting a more attractive living environment, but some of them are still in between, not rural nor urban.


The real master of the country is the villager

K. Atatürk

Thanks for your attention