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Seasonality and Out-migration of Residents: The Case of Bozcaada, Turkey

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This paper explores the socio-economic and cultural transitions of Bozcaada, a small Turkish island in northern Aegean Sea, with a focus on seasonal changes. The local economy of the island has shifted from small-scale viniculture to domestic tourism over the last three decades. Currently, the local economy became dominated by domestic tourism businesses. Alongside this major change, the socio-cultural structure of the island has started to change with in-migration of middle-class urbanites. Although tourism enabled the local population to remain in the location in the light of the downfall of small-scale agricultural practices, it also brought about an unusual pattern of seasonal migration: temporary out migration of the static residents. Almost three quarter of the registered population on Bozcaada move to city centres in winter which is off-season for the local tourism. This not on only interrupts the socio-economic and socio-cultural life of the island but also put the local services in danger.

Keywords: migration, socio-economic change, seasonality, population change

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Introduction

During the 20th and early 21st century, rural areas have been going through substantial economic and social structural transformations around the world, due to the decline in production-based activities as employment opportunities for rural populations (Woods, 2005). The globalization of capital restructuring, internationalization of trade, increased international residential mobility and geopolitical reorganizations have been identified as the main components of socio-economic transformation of rural areas (Ilbery, 1998). Most governments in the developed world responded to these rural changes by predominantly adopting reforms to agricultural policies that 'encourage a transition away from productivism' (Woods, 2005, p.301).

As the significance of agricultural production diminished in rural economies, tourism was perceived as a natural route to diversification and to promote a more service-based economy in the countryside (Jenkins et al., 1998). Although tourism seemed to be a response to changes occurring in rural areas, it became an actor of the change itself with varying implications for the local economy, the social and cultural structures of the local communities, and the environment in rural areas. Bozcaada is a small Turkish island located in the north Aegean Sea. This small island presents excellent examples of socio-economic and cultural changes that are seen in contemporary rural areas. The local economy of the island has shifted from small-scale viniculture to domestic tourism over the last three decades. The rise of tourism in the local economy enabled the local population to remain in the location in the light of the downfall of small-scale agricultural practices. However, it also brought about an unusual pattern of seasonal migration: temporary out migration of the static residents. Almost three quarter of the registered population on Bozcaada move to city centres in winter which is off-season for the local tourism.

The aim of this paper is to explore this recent movement by investigating the underlying reasons of this seasonal migration pattern of the local community and to contribute the existing literature on tourism in rural areas and the impact of seasonality by providing empirical evidence from Bozcaada, Turkey. Following this introduction, the second section of the paper explores the existing literature on the impact of tourism in rural areas as a route to diversification with particular focus on issue of seasonality. The third section explains the methodological approach and the data collection process. The fourth section of the paper, first introduces the case study area including its socio-economic transitions, and then investigates the seasonal migration of the local community with emphasis on their motivations. The fifth section discusses the seasonal migration dilemma on the island

Tourism in Rural Areas as a Route to Diversification

The most acclaimed feature of rural tourism, or tourism in rural areas, is its economic benefits for local populations in rural areas under circumstances of economic decline, through the diversification of the local economy, creation of new employment opportunities and establishment of a more stable economic base for development (Gannon, 1994; Iorio & Corsale, 2010; Jenkins et al., 1998; Lane, 1994; Oppermann, 1996). Additionally, social and environmental positive outcomes of tourism in rural areas in relation to rural change and development have been pointed out several times in the literature (Gannon, 1994; Hall et al., 2003; Lane, 2005; Roberts & Hall, 2001; Sharpley, 2002; Smith & Krannich, 1998). These benefits include the maintenance of local rural services such as schools and public transportation, the opportunity to increase social contact and cultural exchange in remote rural

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areas, mitigating out-migration, repopulation of declining or ageing local communities, and a stimulus for the preservation and improvement of the natural and cultural heritage.

Ribeiro and Marques (2002) questioned the validity of the common argument that rural tourism is an effective tool to overcome the problems of declining rural areas via an empirical research study carried out in less favoured rural areas of northern Portugal. Their research pointed out that the actual benefits of rural tourism for the local community and the local economy in the studied areas conflicted with what the political and academic discourses suggested. They found that the employment opportunities created by rural tourism development did not meet local employment needs and that most of the created jobs were seasonal and low in quality with minimum pay. They also claimed that rural tourism did not bring sufficient benefit for the local economy due to the “inability and incapacity” of the local community to induce tourists to spend more money in the local economy (Ribeiro & Marques, 2002). However, they also highlighted that although tourism does not have a direct and immediate effect on income and employment as such, it can play an important role in the dynamics of development in remote rural areas as the ‘catalysis of ideas, initiatives and energies’ (ibid, p.218).

Other implications of tourism in rural areas that have been indicated in the literature include the replacement of local services with tourism-oriented facilities; displacement of less wealthy groups of local residents as prices increase; overuse and misuse of natural resources and cultural heritage; crowding, which hinders the daily life and privacy of local residents; alteration of cultural and traditional values; and conflict between different groups of local actors (Brandth & Haugen, 2011; Cánoves et al., 2004; Godfrey, 2012; Iorio & Corsale, 2010).

Issue of Seasonality

Another implication of tourism in rural areas is the seasonal fluctuation of the local economy in rural areas in relation to the seasonality of the tourism sector (Nadal et al., 2004). The temporal imbalances in visitor numbers, expenditures and employment opportunities for the local population are the most common determinants of seasonality in the local economy of the host community (Cannas, 2012). Although the seasonality of the tourism sector is widely considered to be a problem that needs to be tackled with comprehensive planning and policies (Baum & Lundtorp, 2001), Flognfeldt (2001) argued that seasonality means opportunity, especially in rural locations, where the local economy still sustains other economic activities such as agricultural production.

Alongside its economic impacts, the socio-cultural impacts on the host communities in remote and peripheral areas such as islands have been investigated by tourism researchers (Andriotis, 2005; Cuccia & Rizzo, 2011; Lundtorp et al., 1999; Ruggieri, 2015; Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2014). These studies identified that the most common problems that local people suffer during peak season are traffic congestion, access to commercial and public services, and an increase in the costs of services and goods (Baum & Lundtorp, 2001; Cannas, 2012). However, so far, the socio-cultural implications of seasonality on the host community during the off-season have been largely neglected in the literature on tourism in rural and remote areas. This paper aims to look at the other side of the coin by focusing on tourism off-season realities of the local community on a small island.

Methodology

This paper has been written based on an empirical research carried out by the author which explores socio-economic and cultural transitions of a small Turkish island, Bozcaada over the last three

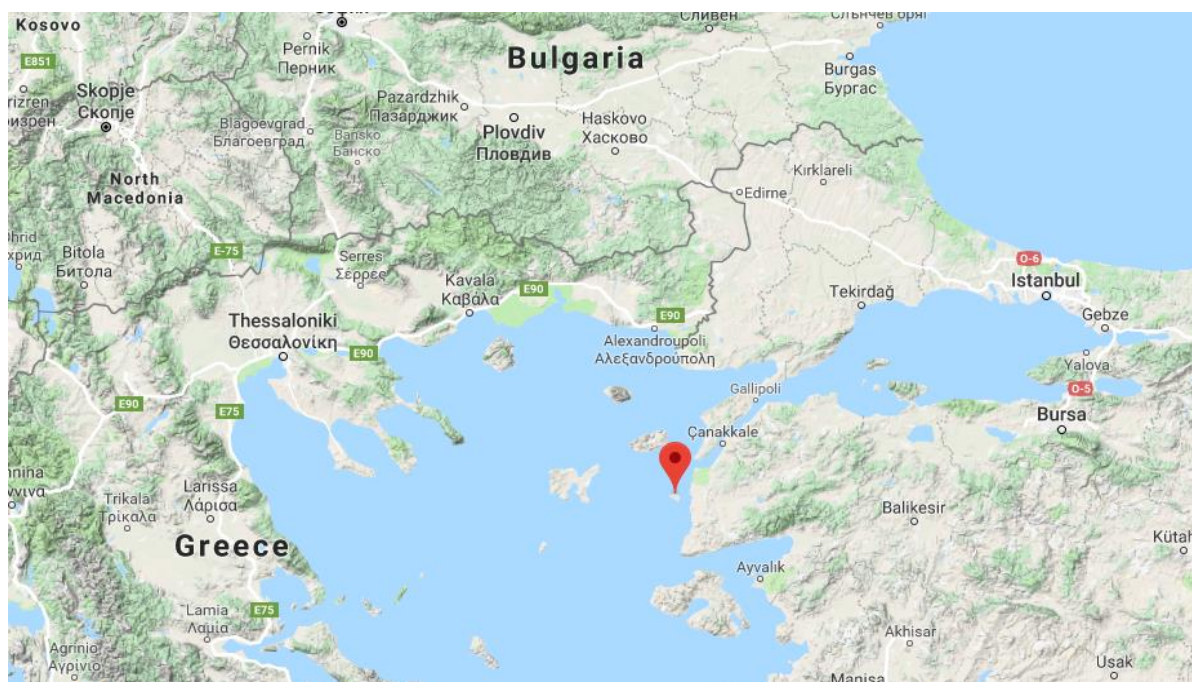
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decades. The data is collected through in-depth interviews with the residents of Bozcaada during multi-phase case study in May-June 2015 and March-April 2016. In total thirty-nine participants took part in the study, thirty of which are current inhabitants of the island, including both newcomers and islanders. The general outline of the interviews covered the participant's reflections on the island's recent transitions and how they perceive these changes. Participants were voice-recorded during interview with their consent. The interviews were then transcribed in full. To analyse the transcripts some tools of the grounded theory, such as open and focused coding, theoretical sampling and constant comparison were used.

Throughout the paper identifiers are used for the interviewees. These are "ISL" which stands for the islanders who had lived on the island for many generations, "LX" which stands for the locals who moved to the island from neighbouring rural settlements in the 80s and 90s. "NC1" and "NC2" stand for the newcomers who moved to the island in the last two decades. The former is used for the ones who came in the late 90s and early 2000s and the latter is used for who moved in the late 2000s and 2010s. "OFF" stands for civil servants such as teachers who are appointed to work on the island.

The Case of Bozcaada

Bozcaada is a small Turkish island located in the north of Aegean Sea, four miles away from mainland Turkey and connected to it via a regular ferry service. The North Aegean coast of Turkey has recently become one of the most popular areas amongst ex-urbanites who decide to leave cities and set up a life in the countryside (Başaran Uysal & Sakarya, 2018). Bozcaada, as being one of the first settlement in the region that have been experiencing this increasing popularity, presents excellent examples of socio-economic and cultural changes that are seen in contemporary rural areas.



Figures 1. Location map of Bozcaada. Source: Google Maps.

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From viniculture to tourism

The local economy of Bozcaada was based on viniculture for centuries. During the last decade it became one of the most prominent domestic tourism destinations for Turkish holidaymakers. Even though viniculture continues to be one of the most important characteristics of the island, it does not constitute the largest part of the local economy anymore. While viniculture is only carried out by a few boutique wineries on the island, the local economy is now predominantly based on tourism with almost every household directly or indirectly involved with the local tourism.

The change occurred in the local social composition in addition the local economic change in Bozcaada. The proportion of the local population who were born in Canakkale¹⁸, the city where the island is a district of, has continuously decreased from 69% in 1990 to 58% in 2014 (TUIK, 2015). Meanwhile the percentage of local population who were born in Istanbul increased from 3% in 1990 to 11% in 2014¹⁹ (ibid). This represents a clear indication of in-migration of Istanbulians which enabled gentrification process on Bozcaada with dramatic increase and inflation in the local housing market and noticeable cultural and aesthetic changes on the island (Okumus, 2018).

At the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s these two main pillars of transitions on Bozcaada interlaced and supported each other and challenged the traditional socio-economic and cultural on the island. On the one hand, the newcomers who were mainly middle-class, well-educated urbanites with knowledge of and experience in the service sector, as opposed to long-term residents, triggered professionalization in the local tourism businesses and helped the marketing of the island. They also initiated the renovation of the local architectural heritage and raised awareness of the local cultural heritage and environmental qualities of the island. This certainly helped to create a prominent domestic tourism destination on an economically declining island due to common struggles of small-scale farmer (Keyder & Yenal, 2011) at that time. This intertwined socio-economic and cultural transitions of the island created a complex structure with unforeseen implications. One of the implications that this paper focuses is seasonal out-migration of the local residents on the island.

Seasonality of the local tourism

Since tourism started to take up larger space in the local economy, the life on the island became dominated by tourism. In parallel with domestic tourism trends in Turkey, the highest tourism season for domestic tourism on Bozcaada is a three-months period between mid-June and mid-September, that covers the formal school holiday period. Apart from the main tourist season, the period from April to November constitutes the shoulder season in domestic tourism for Bozcaada, with visits usually limited to weekend breaks and bank holidays. The period from December to March is the tourism off-season for the island's tourism (see Figure 2).

¹⁸ This assumption would certainly benefit from detailed statistics in and out migration of the island. However, this data was not available to the researcher in district level. It is only available in regional and provincial level. Therefore to be able to present proportional change in the local population, birthplace of the residents were used.

¹⁹ The proportion of the local population who were born in other cities remained below 3% during this period.

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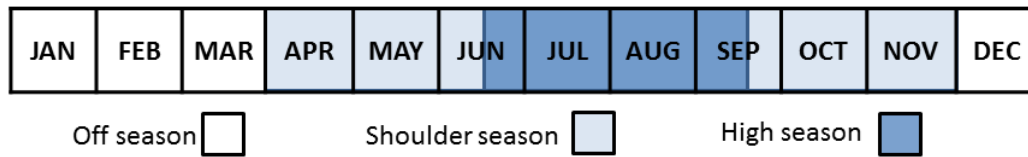


Figure 2. Tourism seasons on Bozcaada. Source: (Okumuş, 2018).

The dramatic changes between high season and off-season are observed in the island’s socio-cultural life as well as in the local economy. Due to absence of data, exact numbers of visitors are not known. Nevertheless, Graph 1 shows the number of ferry tickets issued from 2011 to October 2016 between Geyikli and Bozcaada. As this ferry service is the only way of reaching the island from the mainland, this graph is only material available to present how the number of visitors fluctuates seasonally. However, it should be noted that the data used to produce Figure 3 shows the number of tickets issued for pedestrians and vehicles. Passengers traveling inside in a vehicle are not ticketed. Therefore, it would be only right to interpret it proportionately.

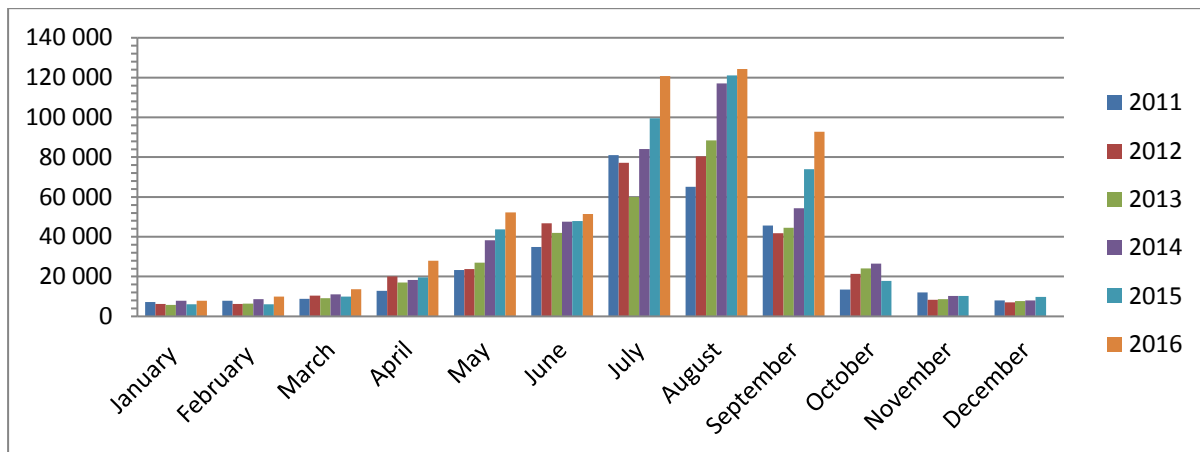


Figure 3. Number of ferry tickets issued to the island between 2011 and 2016. Source: produced with data from Bozcaada Municipality, 2017).

The most significant change between high season and off-season occurs in the size of the local population. The number of people staying overnight goes up to approximately 10,000 people in summer. The crowds, traffic congestion, pollution are the most important issues deriving from this dramatic population increase in summer. Below quotes of the interviewees illustrate and summarize the general frustration felt among the local community during the high season.

‘We live on an island but cannot enjoy the beach or local coffee shop in summer. There is no table in the restaurant we usually eat at. People are everywhere. You see people sleeping in their cars if they cannot find a place. It is too much. Sometimes we cannot even find bread in the bakery.’ (OFF-A)

‘We put up with summer since we make money; otherwise it is unbearable for us.’ (ISL-A)

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There are different issues starting to emerge in winter in recent years during the quietest months of the island. According to the interviewees the most prominent issues on the island is accessibility. The only means of transportation between the island and the mainland are the ferries run by a semi-private company. Due to the numbers of passengers differing greatly in winter and summer, the number of return journeys decreases to three times per day in winter from the eight to ten in summer. Besides, due to its geographical location, Bozcaada is open to strong winds from the north and the northeast in winter. In the event of these strong winds, ferry journeys are often disrupted or cancelled. These climatic conditions and the decreased number of journeys on the ferry schedule create an inconvenience for the local residents, who are dependent on the ferry to reach to the mainland and to receive supplies from the mainland.

'I have an appointment in the hospital, or in the courthouse. If the ferry isn't running that day at that time, you have no option but to cancel everything. Or if you are there [on the mainland], you aren't able to come home. It is fine if you can find a place to get through the night. Otherwise, you sleep on a bench.' (LX-F)

The implications of seasonality such as decline in population, withdrawal or temporary suspension of services, and underutilization of economic resources that are documented in the tourism literature are also in presence on the island during off-season. However, the seasonal out-migration of the residents as it is seen on Bozcaada has currently not been documented in the literature.

Seasonal migration of the local population

The usual off-season on Bozcaada is the period from December to March. The dramatic changes between high season and off-season can be observed not only in the island's economic life but also its socio-cultural life. Even though the registered population of the island approximately 2,600 people, the number of people who spend the winter on Bozcaada is gradually decreasing over the last five years. Although there is no official data provided, the winter population of the island is assumed to be between 500 and 700 people as in 2016. The majority of those who migrates in winter go to the city centre of Çanakkale (the province the island is located), while a few families go to Istanbul or other cities.

'The population here used to be 2000 and something but [now] 600–700 people stay here in winter. Every year there are 10–20 families leaving the island for winter. This winter there will be even fewer [people remaining], maybe 400 people.' (LX-B)

The seasonal out-migration of the static population on the island starts as the tourism high season ends. It also causes a disruption to family life for some of the migrating families as the mother and the children move to the city centre and the father stays on the island. The family usually reunites on the island during school holidays and weekends. However, this pattern also started to change in the recent years as the families prefer to reunite in the city centre instead.

The profiles and the motivations of those who move to the city centre in winter is a topic of discussion among the local community. However, access to private/specific education for families with children and health concerns for elderly due to limited accessibility are the most common motivations. The cost of living and lack of social and cultural life on the island in winter are the other reasons that lead the residents move to the city centre.

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Education

As perceived by the interviewees, the first and the most important reason for seasonal out-migration is the insufficiency of education provided on the island. Currently, there are three state-run schools on the island that provide all three stages of compulsory education for the local children; the primary school, the middle school and the high school. In 2016, the primary school provided education for 55 local students aged from six to ten, while the middle school had 47 local students aged between 10 and 14, and the high school had 18 students aged between 14 and 18.

According to many interviewees, the quality of education provided at the local schools seemed to be problematic. Although they agreed that there was insufficient education, they differed on the underlying reasons behind this situation. The quotes below present examples of such differences. The first quote from ISL-B believes that education is better in the city, and he shared his intentions of moving to the city “eventually” for his daughter’s education. The second quote from LX-F drew attention to a very vital point that connects the quality of education with the living standards of teachers on Bozcaada. He suggested that due to the cost of living and the lack of affordable housing on the island²⁰, the local teachers are not “happy”. He claimed that this situation affects the quality of education they provided for the children.

‘We are here all year round now as our daughter is still young but will move to the city eventually when she starts primary school. Education is better there.’ (ISL-B)

‘The schools are not good ... teaching is not sufficient ... also teachers are not happy, they try to get by here with a limited budget. Everything is expensive for them. First of all they cannot find a place to live. So how can this person teach properly if she is not happy?’ (LX-F)

However, some interviewees believe that people use education as an illegitimate excuse and that public education on the island is even better as the local children receive almost private, one-to-one education due to low number of students registered in the local schools. Additionally, the recent regional and national awards that are received by the students in the local primary and middle schools supports their claims (Bozcaadahaber, 2015, 2016).

‘There are many people who became doctors and lawyers from here. How did they make it then if the education is so bad here?’ (ISL-A)

Health concerns

Inadequate health facilities on Bozcaada were another reason expressed by the interviewees for the seasonal out-migration. Although there is a community health clinic on the island, this clinic is only able to meet the basic medical needs of the local community. For more particular or life-threatening emergencies, patients are transferred to the nearest general hospital on the mainland by ambulance via the ferry or a helicopter. However, harsh weather conditions in winter do not always allow the ferry to operate or a helicopter to land.

²⁰ With the boom of tourism the housing demand on the island exceeds the supply, the prices and rents of the existing houses increase enormously. This has an immense effect particularly on the people who came to work. The civil servants who are appointed to work on the island such as doctors and teachers have difficulty finding affordable places to live all year around. The local landlords prefer to rent out their houses in summer to holidaymakers for a short period.

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'We still don't have a proper hospital. Last year my father had a heart attack. We took him to the general hospital in 20 minutes thanks to the helicopter. But this was in summer. Imagine if it had been winter and the helicopter couldn't operate because of storms. Then he would have died. This has happened to many people here. People died because they couldn't take them to the hospital. So especially the elderly are afraid of staying here in winter.' (ISL-D)

'Elderly people are afraid to be here in winter. And they are absolutely right. Sometimes even I feel that fear at the times when the ferry can't operate because of storms. So if they can, they spend the winter in Canakkale instead.' (LX-B)

Cost of living

Since only means of transportation to the island are the ferries, suppliers use the same ferry service to deliver goods to the island. Depending on products, the local costumers are charged more to cover the cost of transportation by the suppliers. This is reflected on the cost of heating at most. Many people on Bozcaada still use wood burners for heating, with only a few houses fitted with gas central heating, as the running costs are very high. The gas for those houses is carried by tankers on a separate ferry, which increases the cost for the buyer even further and prevents many families from using central gas heating. On the other hand, the houses in the city centre with central heating provide a comfortable option with lower running costs. Therefore, comfort of living in an apartment in the city centre at relatively lower cost appeal to people in winter.

'For example, she got tired of lighting the stove. She went to Canakkale [the city centre], and pays 500 lira rent including gas and water. It is very comfortable and convenient. Because she has money now, she doesn't want to put up with this [the tough conditions on the island] anymore.' (ISL-A)

'For the first time my mum rented a flat in Canakkale this winter and stayed there four or five months. It has central heating. They can go out whenever they want. They went to the cinema for the first time.' (LX-A)

"New trend"

Although health concerns, education and the cost of living are claimed to be the reasons why people move to the city for winter, many interviewees believed that those are acceptable excuses and that spending the winter in the city is just a "new trend" among the local community. It was suggested that spending the winter in the city centre is seen as an indication of social status and a way to ostentatiously display their increased wealth to others. During the interviews, this phenomenon within the island was emphasised by the mayor as well as the community members.

'This is a new trend. Living in Çanakkale in winter has become a symbol of social status on Bozcaada.' (Mayor)

'People move to Çanakkale in winter just to show off. They come here at weekends and say how comfortable they are there.' (LX-F)

'They don't want to be outdone. 'Her kid goes to that school in the city, I will take mine there too,' they say. Just not to look beaten.' (ISL-A)

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In addition to such ostentation, many of the interviewees attributed the winter migration to the increase of the local population's economic power through the development of local tourism on the island in the last two decades. The standards of living in cities may seem much higher than on the island for many people in the local community, especially the ones who have never previously experienced living in a city. Such city life may be highly desirable for those who have suffered from the difficult conditions of living on the island. As an interviewee below pointed out, such an experience of "life in the city" was not previously affordable for many people in the local community. Since the purchasing power of the residents has been increasing with the local tourism sector, they became able to afford another house in the city centre.

'Not everybody could afford to go to and live in Çanakkale [the city centre] before. Since people started to make money, they got a chance to live in another place in winter.' (LX-A)

'Tourism finances this [winter migration]. The purchasing power of the people increased with tourism. Everybody has a business [in tourism] here. They work in summer, make money and spend it in Çanakkale in winter. So, tourism finances this migration.' (ISL-D)

The islander quoted above suggested that the local tourism development on the island was used as a tool to fulfil a dream that a part of the local population had had previously. Therefore, it can be seen as one of the outcomes of tourism development in the case of Bozcaada.

Inevitably, this dramatic decrease in population has an impact on local socio-economic life. Many B&Bs and hotels are closed during the winter. Only two restaurants continue in service according to the interviewees. The very crowded and lively streets of Bozcaada turn into a deserted village in winter. During the interviews, one of the interviewees, LX-A, stated, 'It became a camping site', using 'camping site' as a metaphor to emphasise how the island became a place where people live seasonally.²¹ Another interviewee, ISL-B, stated 'now, life is part-time here', referring to the change in the island's social and economic life in winter.

Since the number of residents spending the winter on the island decreases year by year, public services provided by the state or private companies started to be withdrawn from the island, as there is not enough demand for the service. One of them, the most talked about, is Bozcaada Adliyesi (the courthouse). The courthouse was relocated to the mainland in 2014, to Ezine, which is the nearest district. Other public services relocated from the island due to diminished workload were a pay office of the regional electricity supplier and a district branch of the Weather Office. Although the relocation of these services does not seem to have a direct effect on the public services provided for the residents, it has caused a further decrease to the number of year-round residents in Bozcaada, as the personnel employed move off the island together with the services.

A Vicious Circle of Out-migration

The remarkable difference of population in the summer and winter seasons severely disturbs the social and economic dynamics of the island. Unlike the other examples of seasonal migration in the literature, this seasonal population difference is not only caused by

²¹ In Turkey, camping sites are mostly used in summer. In winter, these areas turn into ghost towns, with facilities left unattended.

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holidaymakers who own second homes on the island, or seasonal tourism workers, but also long-term residents of the island who migrate to the city centre to spend winter and return at the beginning of the tourist season.

On Bozcaada, this issue of the seasonal migration of the local population has created a vicious circle in the local social and economic life of the island. The prevailing causes of this seasonal migration, as perceived by the local community, are the lack of social life, shortage of services and insufficient economic activity on the island during the winter months. Nonetheless, these presumed causes are indeed an outcome of the decrease in the residual population due to the seasonal migration of the locals.

In addition, the issues of accessibility and cost of living are also seen as drivers of the seasonal migration. It is important to note that this seasonal migration of the local population is a recent occurrence on the island. Seasonal out-migration from Bozcaada did not previously take place, despite the presumably more severe conditions and poor living standards of the previous decades, which supports the claims of some interviewees that these are 'just excuses'. However, it shouldn't be overlooked that the lifestyle and expectation of the residents might have been change alongside the evident socio-economic transition of the island last three decades.

Efforts to avert the seasonality issue of the island by local administrative bodies focus on two different objectives. The first is the reinvigoration of the local economy in winter by extending the tourist high season; the second is the rejuvenation of local social life by organising cultural activities for the local population during winter. Nonetheless, the issue of seasonality on Bozcaada is neglected by higher-level administrative bodies that have power in terms of being able to impact the issue comprehensively, such as the regional development agency. Also, it is very likely that the efforts of the local bodies will remain ineffective in addressing the issue as long as they keep looking at it from the same perspective and agreeing with the reasons for this migration pattern that has created a vicious circle.

What tend to go unnoticed behind the shadow of this vicious circle of seasonal migration from Bozcaada are the transitions in the community alongside those in the local economy and the social structure of the island. The changes that tourism brought to the local community are not limited to their socio-economic status. The expectations and desires of the local people have altered, as well as their purchasing power. Besides, it is inevitable that social and cultural exchange and interactions with a wider spectrum of the public due both to tourism and gentrification on the island would result in changes in their lifestyle desires.

Additionally, although this form of seasonal migration can be linked with lifestyle migration as a conceptual framework, since the main motivation of migration is a quest for a "better way of life", it contradicts the lifestyle migration literature, which usually highlights a pattern of migration from urban or non-urban areas to rural or remoter areas (Åkerlund & Sandberg, 2015; Oliver, 2011; O'Reilly & Benson, 2009). In contrast, the seasonal migration of Bozcaada's local community is towards the city centre, which is usually associated with economic motivations. This presents a reverse migration pattern in terms of motivations and destinations.

Another topic of discussion can be raised on whether this new phenomena on the island should be described as a case of "migration" or "mobility" since the move of the residents is only temporary. As Barcus and Halfacree (2017, p. 93) explained migration as "a move seen as signifying an intention to reside at the destination" by removing the issue of time (or duration

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of the movement) on separating migration from mobility, but also added that it is a complex and multidimensional concept that needed to be seen in very individual terms.

Moreover, as noted in Barcus and Halfacree (2017), the most understanding of migration within everyday life is based on sedentarism. How we define “home” or “usual address” and whether the relocation is “permanent” are examples of sedentarist understanding of migration. However, in the ‘era of mobilities’, this sedentarism is being challenged and it is becoming even more complicated to announce a single such location and to predict the residential future of the migrant. In the case of Bozcaada, this enhanced mobility might be seen as an example for this. Nevertheless, more research, that is specifically focusing the motivations and perception of the movers, has to be undertaken to understand and predict a future trend.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is a common rhetoric that an increase in employment opportunities and social and physical infrastructures in declining rural areas will reduce out-migration of local populations. However, as seen in the case of Bozcaada, employment and social development may not be sufficient to retain a local population that has been going through such pronounced transitions. Although the permanent migration of the local community might have been avoided, another form of migration has been created: seasonal migration, which has resulted in the disruption of the annual cycle of Bozcaada. This cycle has already been upset previously, with a substantial sectoral shift in the local economy from viniculture to tourism. The viniculture-oriented, conventional rural life of the island first became tourism-oriented, based on peak seasons of tourism such as the summer, long weekends and bank holidays, with the intensification of the tourism sector on the island that began at the end of the 2000s. Then, in line with the seasonality of local tourism on the island, this annual cycle started to break down with the out-migration of the residents in winter, which had an immense effect on the economic and socio-cultural life of the island. If the remaining winter population continues to decrease every year, it is highly likely that the island will become a “campsite”; a temporary settlement, usually set up in summer, with a vibrant environment and full of people, but turning into a ghost town in winter.

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