

## **The Role of Tourism in Sustainability of the Rural Settlementfabrics: Cumalıkızık Example\***

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**ABSTRACT:** *The aim of this research is to examine the role of tourism activities on the sustainability of original rural settlement fabrics in the particular example of Cumalıkızık destination. In this research qualitative method has been used and research data were collected using interviews with local directors and observations. In this frame firstly the original fabric of Cumalıkızık destination within the boundaries of Bursa was examined. Then the effects of economic, social and cultural interactions which result from tourism activities on Cumalıkızık destination were considered both with positive and negative aspects. Finally, the effects of tourism activities to the destination on the preservation process of the original fabric were investigated. The data collected were analysed using descriptive analysis technique. From the analysis it was concluded that tourism activities had a significant effect on the sustainability of the original rural settlement fabrics.*

**Keywords:** *Tourism, rural settlement fabric, sustainability, Cumalıkızık*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Today there are increasing evaluations that living spaces are distancing away from originality to become identical and standardised (Neto, 2003; Şenol & Akan, 2011). On the other hand, in recent years there has been a steady increase in the projects aiming to preserve living spaces with original fabric and traditional civil architecture. The preservation of these values which have the quality of being cultural heritage also with historical, artistic, documentary and functional qualities is also very significant to establish a link between past and present (Çelik & Yazgan, 2009). The reason is that these visions are witnesses to their times and sources of information narrating the qualities of those times to us (Guy and Farmer, 2001). With this regard, rural settlement fabrics that are a part of their geographical locations include a holistic and original fabric with traditional buildings, gardens, courts, squares and streets. These fabrics, at the same time, have qualities worth preserving with their forest areas and plant and animal populations (Erbey, et al., 2012). Koçan (2012) expresses that these values are a part of the common identity made up of mirrors to mankind's social development, creativity and spiritual richness. Nowadays people in urban life have an increasing interest in historical places and a tendency to view these places as historical-recreational areas (Kurtar & Somuncu, 2013). The increase in this interest necessitates remembering the place-human relation lost in the urban identity and modern urban fabrics as well as rethinking of these places in terms of sustainability. That is because people come to these areas in order to see, learn and feel what belongs to past (Kurtar & Somuncu, 2013). The higher the number of old buildings in cities, the stronger its historical structure and the more the attractiveness of its geographical appearance (Rapoport, 1989; Özgüç, 2003:155). Positive aspects such as the preservation of historical and cultural heritage establish the main attractiveness of cultural tourism(Özdemir, 2009:81).

Therefore, the loss of these values of the past leads to the loss of attractiveness for these areas. Koçan (2012) argues that these areas with natural, cultural and historical qualities have seen great interest in recent years however this interest in turn necessitates preservation and renewal of these areas. The basis for people's visits to destinations with alternative tourism values is getting informed about natural, cultural and traditional lifestyle with an awareness to preserve nature, getting in communication with the local people to understand their lives and spending holiday in these places by taking part in activities(Kızılırmak, 2006).Therefore, in our day the most widespread policy in the preservation of original life spaces with historical and cultural heritage is to open them to use through tourism (Okuyucu, 2011:16). According to Çetin (2010) cultural tourism relies heavily on local identity and originality it is an important means to preserve cultural diversity and originality in a destination. With tourism activities environmental qualityand value of a destination increases, infrastructure develops and local people's environmental awareness forms (Koçan, 2012).

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\*This paper was presented orally in the (ICBIT 2016) International Conference on Business, Information, and Tourism in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Within this frame the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage which entered into force in 1975 is still valid with constant updates and it is aimed to have participation from more countries (Öcal, 2016). On the other hand, among international attempts aiming to protect original life spaces together with values they bear, Citta Slow practices have widened in recent years (Şenol & Akan, 2011). In this direction there have been works for preservation of cultural heritage in urban sit areas in Turkey including Ankara, Antalya, Bursa, Istanbul, Mardin, Safranbolu and Beypazarı have been carried out and these works are expanding to the rest of the country (Kurtar & Somuncu, 2013). However, contribution of tourism to the sustainability of these fabrics is only possible with careful planning on tourism (Okuyucu, 2011:16). In the tourism planning to be made if the people living here can have financial gain through the touristic values here and if an original brand value is gained the preservation of the original fabrics will be a natural reflex.

The application area of this research study is Cumalıkızık destination. Cumalıkızık draws attention of many researchers due to the original fabric it has. With this regard there are some research studies on this destination. Gürer (2003) evaluates the attitudes of people towards tourism and the compatibility of the residence's physical structure to tourism in the context of rural tourism. Akıncıtürk (2002) studies the physical qualities and structural difficulties of Cumalıkızık village in his research. Eren and Aypek (2012), in their research, study the residents' attitudes towards development of tourism. Çetin (2010) on the other hand examines the perception of Cumalıkızık residents towards cultural heritage and tourism sector. The aim of this research study is to study role of tourism in sustainability of rural settlement fabrics within the particular example of Cumalıkızık. Within this frame first the rural settlement fabric specific to Cumalıkızık and the development of tourism activities in Cumalıkızık are studied. In the methodology part of the research data collection and analysis methods are discussed. Finally the results of the research are given and some recommendations on the sustainability of the rural settlement fabric in this destination are made.

## II. CUMALIKIZIK AND ITS SPECIFIC RURAL SETTLEMENT FABRIC

10 km east of Bursa at the northern skirts of Mount Uludağ one of the first settlement of Ottomans in Bursa, Cumalıkızık Village was established to provide logistical support before the conquest of Bursa. However, the church remains in the village show that the history of the village dates long back. Currently there are 61 registered monuments in the village including 57 civil architectural structures, 2 monumental structures (a mosque and a bath) and 2 monumental plane trees (Çetin, 2010). The village is made up of 270 houses, 180 in current use and some under protection or currently under renovation.<sup>1</sup>

Cumalıkızık village which transfers the traditional Ottoman rural settlement to our current time is an important unspoilt cultural heritage example with natural and historical richness, social and cultural structure and 300-year-old unique wooden houses (Akıncıtürk, 2002). Within this frame Cumalıkızık village was taken under protection and declared a protected zone following the decision of Higher Council of Immovable Antiquities and Monuments in 1980. Famous Cumalıkızık houses bearing traces of Ottoman architecture and usually on three floors are made up of rubble stone, wood and mud-bricks (Cerasi, 1998). Windows upstairs are either caged or oriel-type. Handles and knockers on the main entrance doors are made of forged iron. The houses may be yellow, white, blue or purple in colour. Between houses there are very narrow streets cobbled but without pavement.<sup>2</sup> Cumalıkızık houses transferring Ottoman period civil architecture to today were enlisted by UNESCO World Heritage with the title "Bursa and Cumalıkızık: the Birth of the Ottoman Empire". Cumalıkızık is a good example of early period Ottoman lifestyle and vision.<sup>3</sup> In Picture 1 and Picture 2 there are examples of rural settlement fabrics specific to Cumalıkızık.



**Picture 1.** Example of Rural Settlement Fabric Specific to Cumalıkızık

<sup>1</sup><http://www.bursakulturturizm.gov.tr/TR,70245/cumalikizik-evleri.html>

<sup>2</sup><https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cumal%C4%B1k%C4%B1z%C4%B1k>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.kulturvarliklari.gov.tr/TR,100414/bursa-ve-cumalikizik-osmanli-imparatorlugunun-dogusu-bu-.html>



**Picture 2.** Example of Rural Settlement Fabric Specific to Cumalıkızık

### III. DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN CUMALIKIZIK

Cumalıkızık, which conveys the most splendid rural settlement from Ottoman civil architecture to our current times, has become more well-known in recent years and has drawn more interest both from Turkey and internationally.<sup>4</sup> It is difficult to give an exact date for the beginning of the tourism activities in the destination however the effect of the films and series shot here is significant. With this in mind it can be said that the visible tourism activities in the destination started with the shooting of the series “Kınalı Kar” broadcast in 2002.<sup>5</sup> In fact there were other original films shot in this destination before this series in the 90’s such as *Uzakta Bir Köy Var*, *Osmancık*, *Yeniden Doğmak*, *Ateşten Günler*, *Nasrettin Hoca ve Kurtuluş*. However widespread fame of the destination has been significantly affected by *Kınalı Kar* series. Currently the destination acts as a natural film studio for many series and films including *Yeşeren Düşler* and *Sen Benimsin* (Tümer, 2008).

In mid-2000s the historical importance of the settlement was understood by the residents and an awareness of the possible use of these values for tourism purposes and consequential economic development formed. With this regard the renovation of the historical structures has increased and financially able families started renovating their houses. Renovation works started by Bursa Metropolitan Municipality acted as ignition especially for the tourism sector and with the “Local Agenda 21” project the promotion of Cumalıkızık has accelerated (Gürer, 2003:83). Although there is no solid source on the number of tourists visiting the destination the increasing number of tourists has brought with itself lodging as a business to provide accommodation for these people. In the settlement there are two lodging houses currently. One of these was repaired by the Metropolitan Municipality and left to the manager to run and the other was turned by a local entrepreneur into lodging house. With interest from both domestic and foreign tourists to Cumalıkızık both of these lodging houses reach an occupancy rate of 100% especially at the weekends (Gürer, 2003:84). In addition, stalls have been established by the villagers in the entrance of the settlement and local foods and local handcraft is being sold here. Moreover, the Raspberry Festival which has been organised at a local and national level since 1998 gained an international quality with participation of groups from Bulgaria, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Romania, Montenegro and Macedonia in 2015.<sup>6</sup> Today there is an increasing number of visitors due to the efforts of including and promoting Cumalıkızık in the cultural tours to Bursa destination.

### IV. METHODOLOGY

In this study which is carried out to examine the role of tourism activities in the original rural settlement fabrics within the example of Cumalıkızık destination qualitative method was used. The data were collected through interviews with the local directors (the head and a member of village council) and observations regarding the destination. Interview technique is a data collection technique where the researcher uses spoken communication to collect data from the specialists on a specific subject (Karasar, 1999:165). Observation technique makes it possible for new ideas and explanation to develop in the light of the participant’s opinions and comments on a particular subject (Altunışık et al., 2012:96). In this study it was aimed to collect information from people who witness the tourism activities and the effects of these activities on the destination, hence interview technique was preferred as a data collection tool. Observation technique, on the

<sup>4</sup><http://www.tanitma.gov.tr/TR,22596/cumalikizik.html>

<sup>5</sup><http://wowturkey.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=107851>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.haber7.com/kultur/haber/1411946-1-uluslararasi-cumalikizik-ahududu-festivali>

other hand, is defined as the process of systematically examining an object, an event or a person with a particular aim. This process can be under natural conditions as the event appears by itself or under conscious and planned experiment conditions (Özgül, 2002). In this study using observation technique has had an important contribution on tracing the differences in the destination and evaluating the effects of tourism activities on the destination.

#### **4.1. Data Collection**

The data of this research is composed of interviews with local directors and observations about the destination. Data from the interviews with local directors have been gathered during an interview for about an hour on 28.02.2016 with the head and a member of the village council. Prior to the interview the interviewees were contacted to arrange a meeting and the researcher was present at the given time. The interviews were conducted in the village's café which is the natural living space of the interviewees. The local directors were asked two questions in the interviews. The first of these was whether there were projects aiming to preserve rural settlement fabric specific to Cumalıkızık and the context of these. The second was whether tourism activities had an influence on the preservation of the rural settlement fabric specific to Cumalıkızık. The responses of the interviewees were recorded using a voice recorder with consent. The observation data were collected during 8 observations of the destination in 2014 and 2015 each with a minimum duration of one and a half hours. In the observations remarkable changes in the original fabric of the destination, changes in the attitudes of the local residents towards tourists, the effects of the tourism activities on the destination and the behaviour of the tourists visiting the area were observed. The observations were recorded using notes and photos.

#### **4.2. Data Analysis**

In the analysis of the interview and observation data in this research study descriptive analysis technique was used. Descriptive analysis technique is an analysis technique where the researcher can use frequent quotes to reflect the data from interviews and observations in a striking way (Ozdemir, 2010). In this frame the data were transcribed using Microsoft Word and analysed under the themes coded in line with the aim of the study.

## **V. FINDINGS**

In this study which examines the role of tourism in sustainability of rural settlement fabrics within the particular example of Cumalıkızık the findings are presented under the titles actions to preserve rural settlement fabric particular to Cumalıkızık and the role of tourism in the preservation of rural settlement fabric particular to Cumalıkızık.

### **5.1. Actions to Preserve Rural Settlement Fabric Particular to Cumalıkızık**

The first of the findings on sustainability of rural settlement fabric particular to Cumalıkızık destination is the actions to preserve the specific fabric the destination has. With this regard the actions were usually taken by official bodies. First in 1993 a settlement plan for preservation purposes was made by Yıldız Technical University (Akıncı, 2002). However, the most significant project to preserve the original fabric particular to Cumalıkızık is "Bursa Local Agenda 21- to preserve and sustain Cumalıkızık" project. In this project local government, central government, civil society organisations, academicians and villagers entered into a collaborative work to preserve Cumalıkızık in a physical way. With this project the values of the destination in the current Preservation Settlement Plan were revised, detailed analyses were made and Preservation Plan Revision works were carried out. With the works it was found out that physical structures particular to Cumalıkızık started to deteriorate due to water, fire, sanitation, physical aging and functional changes. With this project, solutions were developed for the determined problems.

In the interviews with the local directors it was found that the fundamental reason to preserve the destinations original fabric is the decision to make it a district under Bursa Yıldırım Municipality and to declare it a protection zone. In this frame the chief of village council said Bursa Metropolitan Municipality was very discreet in the checks and did not disregard attempts to disfigure the fabric. The directors expressed there were new structures in the village in the name of modernisation before the preservation work commenced, the villagers started renewing their buildings and people with financial means knocked down old buildings to build cement ones. The member of the village council said:

"Well, before this was declared a protected zone many houses were knocked down. Those who had money rebuilt new ones. At least 25 houses went like that. There were still attempts after the Municipality declared it a protection zone but they were not allowed. Now you can only do renovation but it is under the supervision of the Municipality and the Chamber of Architects, I mean you can't do it as before. There you

have another problem. For example, the house has a kitchen and they say “This will be the living room”. You ask “Such a small kitchen!” but you can’t do anything.

Another matter the chief and member of the village council brought up was that since the decision to declare it a protected zone the plans are not always made in line with the original fabric of the village but just on paper and sometimes to the detriment of this fabric.

The observations made in this study found out that the local residents had diligence to own and sustain the original fabric. In this regard the local people were observed to use old tools for decoration purposes in order to highlight the connection of buildings they own with history. In picture 3 an example of this observation is presented.



**Picture 3.** An Attempt by Local Residents to Identify their Buildings with History

## **5.2. The Role of Tourism in the Preservation of the Rural Settlement Fabric Particular to Cumalıkızık**

After the discussion of the activities carried out to preserve the original fabric particular to Cumalıkızık destination the role of tourism activities in the sustainability of this fabric were studied. In the interviews with the local directors it was mentioned that with the increase of tourism activities to this destination, agricultural activities which used to be the main source of income for local residents were slowly replaced by hospitality services towards tourists. Research by Gürer (2003:98) found that 64 % of the families in Cumalıkızık made a living through farming. However local directors expressed that today 90 % of all families make a living through tourism or have surplus income through tourism in addition to farming activities. The chief of the village council on this topic said:

“Before tourists came here in the 2000 every summer there was a harvest of 30 tonnes of raspberry. These festivals started back then. We still grow it but 6 tonnes maximum, not even one fifth. Everyone put up stalls in front of houses... Baklava, village bread, breakfast, pancakes, that’s what they started making money from.”

The findings of the observations carried out at different times in Cumalıkızık supported the opinions of the director. In the visits in 2015 it was observed that the majority of houses under renovation in 2014 started serving for touristic purposes after renovation. In picture 4 the court of one of these houses can be seen currently used as a restaurant.



**Picture 4. An Example of a House whose Courtyard is Used as a Restaurant**

Tourism activities to this destination have also brought along many advancements related to tourism in this destination. In this regard there were training courses on house lodging, social behaviour as well as an English language course. (Çetin, 2010). On the other hand, within another project “Cumalıkızık: Ottoman Village Living in the Third Millenium” by the Municipality, Governorship and Chamber of Architects the women selling local produce in the stalls in front of the houses were dressed in local clothes which both increased the rate of women working in tourism sector and also served in the promotion of local clothes. In this regard a village house was designed to display Ottoman civil attire for the tourists and the sustainability of this value with use for touristic purposes was attempted. In picture 5 a house displaying Ottoman civil attire can be seen.



**Picture 5. The Village House where Ottoman Civil Attire is Displayed**

On the other hand, in the observations it was seen that many families sold local foods and handcraft products to tourists on the stalls on the ground floor of their houses or in front of their houses on the street. In this frame it can be said that tourism activities in the destination have an active role in the sustainability of the traditional foods and handcrafts. The study carried out in the destination support this finding. As an example, in a joint project between the Municipality of Yıldırım and municipality and city directorates of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Husbandry 50 women from Cumalıkızık received training on “food preservation and jam-making” which included topics of hygiene applications in the kitchen, balanced dieting and practical food production.<sup>7</sup> In picture 6 a stall displaying local foods and handcrafts to tourists can be seen.



**Picture 6. A Stall Displaying Local Foods and Handcrafts to Tourists**

Finally, the stalls of the sellers in Cumalıkızık have been replaced by wooden stalls compatible with the historical fabric, all metal signs have been replaced by wooden ones. The local directors have explained that tourism activities have played a significant role in branding the destination, that the villagers own every historical idea which can be used for tourism and many people donated their properties to the Cumalıkızık Museum of Ethnography. The directors have also explained that the most major problem they had with the

<sup>7</sup><http://www.milliyet.com.tr/cumalikizik-turizm-mevsimine-hazirlaniyor-bursa-yerelhaber-1212308/>

tourism activities is that the destination has only cultural structure and the desired financial gain from the tourists cannot be made. The comments of the directors on this topic is as follows:

“If we estimate three hundred thousand visitors a year we would be overestimating. But the problem is the village is small. Tourists want to have fun, there’s nowhere here for that. They want accommodation there’s nowhere to stay. The opinion of the families here is obvious “We cannot host them in our homes, privacy after all...” There’s no hotel so they come, do sightseeing for 2-3 hours and they leave. It’s whatever they buy in the meanwhile. Breakfast is the most popular. Other shopping depends on the tour guide. Wherever he tells them they buy from there, whatever he recommends they buy it.”

To conclude the directors said they expected aid from Bursa Metropolitan Municipality regarding transport and easier transport will increase the number of visitors to the destination as well as the income of the village residents from tourism activities.

## VI. RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The tourism sector provides economic development with opportunities it offers as well as being an important means to preserve and transfer to the future natural, cultural and historical values using correct development strategies. The increasing ratio of environment friendly alternative tourism types which consider ecological balance within the tourism sector clearly demonstrates people’s tendency towards historical and original values. Touristic activities towards a destination play a role complementing economic activities, supporting use of local products, providing participation in local activities, supporting agricultural production and production of handcrafts in the settlement. Therefore, tourism activities can be an important means of preservation and development preferable to preserve rural areas willing to continue traditional structures as well as to economically improve them.

This research study was carried out to study the role of tourism activities in the example of Cumalıkızık which is a destination with original rural settlement fabric on the sustainability of the historical and touristic values in this destination. During the interviews with the local directors it was found that they had the opinion that tourists and touristic businesses do not harm the environment but do not contribute to the increase in public services either. This result conforms with the findings of the research study by Eren and Aypek (2012). On the other hand the local directors expressed they expected aid from the municipality especially on transport. In addition to this it was found that the village residents could not make expected amount of profit from the tourists. This result greatly coincides with the findings of the research study by Çetin (2010). In the research study by Çetin (2010) it was found that about three fourths of Cumalıkızık village residents thought that they didn’t receive a sufficient share from tourism income.

As a result of this research study carried out using interviews with the local directors and observations of the destination it was found that tourism activities had a positive effect on the sustainability of the original rural settlementfabric. The most effective factor in this result produced by tourism activities in Cumalıkızık destination is the financial gain tourism activities make to the local residents. In the observations it was seen that village residents had an effective tendency to use the places they own for commercial purposes. On the other hand the gradual distancing of local residents from agricultural activities evidently show that tourism activities lead to a change in local people’s social and economic life. However it should not be forgotten that as local people’s dependency on tourism sector increases, so willtheir willingness to preserve the original fabric in the destination. Because tourism activities which are people’s source of income will continue with the existence of original values in the destination.

In this frame it can be said that it is necessary for residents of the destination should not only see tourism activities as a means of financial gain but to act consciously in sustaining the original fabric with historical awareness and not compromising on traditional life conditions. In addition to this for more effective marketing of the destination it would be useful to form package tours with Cumalıkızık in the centre and to market the destination with other touristic products in Bursa. Finally, it would be useful to select qualified residents in the village to be trained as tour guides both to increase the quality of information given to tourists and to provide employment opportunities to these people.

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