

Alesya Krit

University College London, UK

Rebel from the neo-liberal economic models rationale: escapist strategies of rebuilding economic and family values of the British in Spain

The proposed paper will look at the new emerging phenomenon of lifestyle migration - northern Europeans moving to the southern countries, reestablishing their home. Examining the built environment of the British in Spain through material culture perspective allowed deeper understanding of the phenomenon which is a telling example of the latest modernity. Being born into a neo-liberal environment of property consumption in the UK a lot of people were introduced into the property ladder rationale. The routine of daily activities was usually abruptly disturbed by some sort of a traumatic event (losing a job, divorce, or death of a close family member). Such traumatic conditions prompted rethinking of their current position. At some stage they became disappointed and disillusioned about the multiple aims that were set for them by their parents, families and friends and the promised reward of owning property did not bring the anticipated satisfaction. The observed mismatch between aspirations and the current situation brought a certain unease, solution to which became a move to Spain.

This phenomenon is an excellent example of the economic rationale and family values of the current changing times. The idea to leave a family and move to a new country buying a house that would allow for immediate social upgrade is worth deeper examination. Liberalisation of the market forces brought more responsibility to people to become in charge of their personal success. At the same time people became hostages of the flexible economic models which imposed greater employment flexibility and decreasing social security. The character of this movement, however, shows that people sometimes are not willing to obey the suggested economic models and realising their absoluteness and unattainability create their own rebel strategies of moving to different countries.