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EMERGING EFFECTS OF PLANNED AND UNPLANNED DEVELOPMENTS IN CENTRAL KADIKÖY, ISTANBUL

Abstract: Kadıköy is a central district of Istanbul and a public transportation hub located on the shores of the Marmara Sea. It has been highly affected by recent developments in Istanbul. The triggers of change in Kadıköy are both planned (developments in transportation facilities and redevelopment of old buildings) and unplanned (*i.e.* proliferating cafes, bars, and cultural facilities). It is also affected by metropolitan scale dynamics (changes in Beyoğlu, the culture and entertainment center of Istanbul). These changes in Kadıköy have inevitable effects on the inhabitants and users. This article discusses the positive and negative aspects of both planned and unplanned development on public life and spaces in Kadıköy. Vitality of public spaces seems increased. The main changes are increasing population and building densities, changes in public space usage, and a proliferation of cultural facilities led by recently opened theatre halls.

Keywords: Istanbul, Kadıköy, parcel based redevelopment, public space, urban planning.

Introduction

Metropolitan cities are economically in transition, which has inevitable social and spatial effects. The main facilitators of the transition process in cities depend on the accumulation of capital with concomitant population growth, investments in urban land for development and redevelopment, and developments in transportation facilities. As Harvey [2012] pointed out, changes in production and accumulation of capital rise importance of cities for capital investments, which inevitably has dramatic social effects on cities and their inhabitants. The rise of urban rents attracts more investments and the real estate industry gains importance in the economic sector. In many cases, new legislative frameworks are issued and governments are the facilitators for real estate investments [Swyngedow *et al.* 2005]. The real estate industry in Turkey is a growing economic sector with government support [Balaban 2013]. Istanbul is the focus of real estate development because the urban rent is high. Although changes in cities are expected to be led by

a planning process, most planning decisions have some unplanned and unexpected consequences on the spatial and/or social character of urban areas. Istanbul has always been in transition at varying rates throughout its history because it is an attractive city for the accumulation of capital and hence people. Today, the city attracts a large amount of real estate investment both in the central and peripheral districts, such that the cityscape has been dramatically changing. This change is dependent on public transportation facilities, highway construction, as well as a new legislation framework supporting redevelopment and reconstruction. There are two prominent laws that reinvigorated real estate development. One is Law No. 5366 issued in 2005, known as the Urban Renewal Law, which aims to encourage revitalization of registered historic sites in cities via reconstruction of buildings. The Law got negative reactions from expert groups including architects and city planners because registered buildings can be demolished according to the Law. The other is Law No. 6306 issued in 2012, called briefly the Urban Transformation Law, which promotes reconstruction and redevelopment of older buildings against a possible earthquake disaster, particularly in the central city and older neighborhoods.

Kadıköy is a central district highly affected by metropolitan dynamics in recent years. It became an attractive place for cultural and recreational facilities with increasing accessibility *via* public transportation. As one of the oldest settlements in the Istanbul metropolitan area, Kadıköy has a unique character with its urban environment settled along the Marmara shore on the Asian side with cultural and recreational facilities. Urban rent in the district has always been high because of these qualities of Kadıköy together with its central location at seaside. Parcel based reconstruction of older buildings in central districts according to the market dynamics promoted by law No. 6306 is the main motivator of the real estate industry where the urban rent is very high compared with the outer parts of the city. Developers demolish or reconstruct older buildings to sell extra flats. The new buildings are shared with the property owners and the extra flats are sold, which in turn increases the building ratio. In addition, public transportation expanded and connected with peripheral districts in recent years, which eased accessibility and the mobility of citizens.

The aim of this article is to identify the planned and unplanned dynamics that affect the central part of Kadıköy, which stems mostly from its location and its identity as a coastal settlement. This is a descriptive study to understand the evidence of rapid change in a coastal district of Istanbul. Diverse dynamics affecting Kadıköy emerged in recent years and it is not possible to make precise assumptions. Hence, the aim of the study is to describe the dynamics that created these diverse effects. Upper scale planned interventions, street scale observations, and statistical data were used to understand effects on the built environment and social character of Kadıköy. The general characteristics of Kadıköy are identified in following part. Then, planned developments that have impacts on Kadıköy are discussed under two sub-headings: public transportation and reconstruction of older buildings. Next, unplanned developments are discussed. The final part is conclusion.

1. A Framework for Kadıköy

Istanbul is the biggest city in Turkey. The population of the metropolitan area in 2016 was 14,804,116 according to the census statistics [TUIK 2017]. The metropolitan area of Istanbul is divided into 39 district municipalities, and the Istanbul Greater Municipality is responsible for the metropolitan area. The Istanbul Greater Municipality is responsible for the management of public transportation, design and maintenance of main arterial roads, infrastructure of the metropolitan area, recreational and public spaces on the coasts of the city, and upper scale planning both for the metropolitan area and for master plans for each district. Each district municipality implements plans according to the master plans made by the Istanbul Greater Municipality, provides urban and socio-cultural services and facilities, and maintains and designs public spaces within their borders. Kadıköy is a central district on the Asian side of Istanbul located on the Marmara shores (Photo 1).

Although the history of Kadıköy dates back to the Neolithic era, little evidence exists from the site. The first settlement in ancient period, Khalkedon, was built before Byzantium (the name of Istanbul at that period) on the opposite side of Bosphorus. The city of Byzantium was conquered by the Romans and renamed Constantinople. During the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine Empire) times, Kadıköy was a small village, separated from Constantinople by the sea. During the Ottoman Empire era after the 15th century, Kadıköy was still a small village under the shade of magnificent Istanbul [Akbulut 1994]. The population of Kadıköy consisted of three communities of mostly Armenians, Greeks (Rum), and Turks during that period [Akbulut 1994]. The development of Kadıköy started in the mid-1800s with scheduled ferry transportation, and increased with the construction of a train line along the coast. Regular ferry transportation between business district of Istanbul (namely Eminönü and Galata)



Photo 1. Location of Kadıköy in Istanbul

Source: [generated from google.earth map, accessed, 24.11.2017].

became accessible and the population of Kadıköy started to increase. At that time, Levantines and elite Ottomans started to settle in central Kadıköy [Akbulut 1994; Giz 1998; Ekdal 2004]. Ottoman elites and wealthy Levantines adopted a more open and secular life style [Martin 2010; Öndeş 2012]. These wealthy elites constructed wooden or stone mansions and summer houses, each with a distinctive character, along Kadıköy shores. Some are conserved today as cultural and architectural heritage. Since then, the image of Kadıköy was as an elite settlement with a Western lifestyle and a distinctive urban environment consisting of well-kept and stylistic houses and buildings with a nice panorama of the Marmara Sea. After the mid-1900s, most of the wooden houses were torn down because the property owners had the right to construct new buildings with a higher building ratio. Construction of the 1st Bosphorus Bridge¹ in 1973 increased the accessibility of and demand for Kadıköy. This changed and relatively decreased the share of the European side in residential settlements in Istanbul. The bridge also spurred the first redevelopment and reconstruction phase of Istanbul and Kadıköy according to demand for housing in central districts, increasing population density, and rising urban rents. Most of the mansions and summer houses were reconstructed during the 1960s. Although the environmental character of Kadıköy changed during this period, new buildings were their own modernist characters. In the 1980s, there was a second wave of reconstruction. This did not change the image of Kadıköy, first because the new environment had a distinctive character, and second, the social structure of Kadıköy that consisted mostly of middle and upper class, educated people did not change. Residents of Kadıköy more or less retained the same qualities. Today, Kadıköy is undergoing its third redevelopment and reconstruction phase according to new legislation, which is discussed in the next section.

Kadıköy, today, attracts people for three main reasons. First, the location of Kadıköy makes it one of the two central hubs for public transportation on the Asian side of Istanbul, particularly for the connection of several modes of public transportation with ferry lines. The other district is Üsküdar, which is very close to Kadıköy and located at the entrance of Bosphorus. Kadıköy is a hub for several modes of public transportation: ferry lines, bus and minibus lines, metro, the Marmaray train line crossing Bosphorus underground, and the Metrobus line crossing Bosphorus above the 1st Bosphorus Bridge. The metro line opened in 2007 as the M4 line, the Kadıköy station Metrobus line opened in 2009, and the Marmaray train line opened in 2013. The center of Kadıköy experiences overcrowding during rush hours. Kadıköy not only serves as a central hub for transportation, it is also a vibrant center with street cafes, bars, restaurants, and commercial functions. Second, the shores of Kadıköy host recreational facilities, such as parks, along the Moda, Mühürdar, and Caddebostan coasts and a beach at Caddebostan. The parks along the Marmara Sea are identical

¹ The official name of the bridge was changed to “The Bridge of Martyrs’ of 15th of July” last year as a memorial for the coup-d’état attempt on the 15th of July 2016. Since it is too long to mention in the text, the name 1st Bosphorus Bridge is used, as most people refer to it.

for both Istanbul and Kadıköy, since the city is a coastal one historically. Istanbul expanded towards the northern parts of the metropolitan area, and most of these relatively new districts do not have adequate open public spaces and recreational facilities. Most were constructed as *gecekondu* neighborhoods during the 1950s and 1970s or developed as constellations of gated communities from the 1990s onwards. People desire to use coastal recreational facilities for fresh air, to meet with friends, or spend time with their families, especially on weekends. Kadıköy is an attractive district for recreational purposes.

Third, Kadıköy attracted new leisure time activities and cultural facilities over the last five years, according to the changing dynamics of Istanbul. New bars, pubs, restaurants, live music halls, and theatre halls were opened. There are 25 theatre companies located in central Kadıköy. This is mostly a result of the changing nature of the Beyoğlu district, which was the conventional location for cultural facilities, such as cinema, exhibition and theatre halls, and leisure activities. When the Municipality of Beyoğlu decided to redevelop the district as a tourism and commercial area, most of the halls closed and a majority moved to Kadıköy. All of these dynamics affected the uses and users of the central area of the Kadıköy district.

2. Planned developments in Kadıköy

As explained above, recent developments that triggered rapid changes in Kadıköy depend on two main issues, reconstruction of old buildings, and development in public transportation facilities. This section briefly outlines the effects of these two major determinants on Kadıköy.

2.1. The effects of reconstruction and redevelopment

Kadıköy witnessed a vast amount of building reconstruction over the last five years. There are 21 neighborhoods in Kadıköy (Fig. 1). The population of Kadıköy is decreasing; according to the 2016 census the population was 452,302 whereas in 2012 it was 521,005 [TUIK 2017]. The main explanation for the population decrease is widely accepted as a consequence of the reconstruction of old buildings close to coastal areas and a redevelopment project in the Fikirtepe and Dumlupınar neighborhoods. Reconstruction of buildings and the Fikirtepe redevelopment project are conducted according to Law 6306. The Law was enacted on 31 of May 2012 with the aim of upgrading older and risky buildings to protect against earthquakes. The Law has two main tools to achieve this goal: first, proclamation of certain areas or neighborhoods as risky areas by a council of ministers decree, and second, parcel based application by property owners to municipalities with a risk assessment report and an agreement with a developer for reconstruction. The second process is prominent in



Figure 1. Location of 21 Neighborhoods in Kadıköy

Source: Kadıköy Municipality Web site, [<http://www.kadikoy.bel.tr/Kadikoy/Cografı-Konum> accessed, 19.11.2017].

coastal and wealthy neighborhoods of the district. Either way, the process depends on the dynamics of the real estate industry. Developers undertake reconstruction only if it is profitable. The agreements between property owners and developers depend on the number of and expected market price for extra flats. Some property owners agree to smaller flats than they had before, because there are not enough development rights to share with the developer, and some gain extra flats. Consequently, both property owners and developers win by the rising urban rents for new buildings. Nevertheless,

Table 1

Number of parcel based demolished buildings according to Law 6306

Year	Number of demolished buildings
2012	51
2013	856
2014	909
2015	1,044
2016	486
2017 (until 15.11.2017)	338
Total	3,684

Source: Information Technologies Directory of Kadıköy Municipality, 15.11.2017.

Table 2

The change in population at the neighborhood level in Kadıköy

Neighborhood	2012	2016
19 Mayıs	34,161	30,119
Acıbadem	32,064	30,443
Bostancı	36,587	31,399
Caddebostan	21,561	18,399
Caferağa	24,913	24,424
Dumlupınar	19,750	11,328
Eğitim	14,855	13,660
Erenköy	37,051	30,824
Fenerbahçe	20,898	17,604
Feneryolu	27,113	24,798
Fikirtepe	16,286	9,705
Göztepe	41,206	34,576
Hasanpaşa	15,581	15,808
Koşuyolu	8,388	8,027
Kozyatağı	38,926	33,939
Merdivenköy	39,815	33,557
Osmanağa	8,120	8,490
Rasimpaşa	14,174	14,198
Sahrayıcedit	33,519	30,929
Suadiye	27,699	21,909
Zühtüpaşa	8,338	8,166
Total	521,005	452,302

Source: TUIK, Annual Census Data, [www.tuik.gov.tr accessed, 15.11.2017].

the at-risk buildings that do not have extra development rights are not reconstructed, unless the property owners agree to pay the expenses for the developer.

The only risky area in the Kadıköy district proclaimed by the council of the ministries is an area in the Fikirtepe and Dumlupınar neighborhoods known as the Fikirtepe Project. The population of Fikirtepe was 9,705 and Dumlupınar was 11,328, according to the 2016 census, while it was 16,286 and 19,750 in the 2012 census, respectively. These two neighborhoods were built in the late 1950s as the first *gecekondu* settlements of Kadıköy adjacent to the D-100 highway and industrial areas, which have the same story of other *gecekondu* settlements in Istanbul [Tekeli 1994: 158]. The neighborhoods are designated as Risky Area for earthquakes according to Law No. 6306. Consequently, buildings were torn down and new high-rise luxury residential buildings are still under construction. It is expected that when the projects are completed, the population will increase dramatically, as Bostancı, Caddebostan, Erenköy, Suadiye, Fenerbahçe, Feneryolu, and along Bağdat Street, which is a pre-

stigious area housing upper-middle and upper classes and is historically a place of bourgeois families in Kadıköy [Tekeli 1994]. Consequently, the apartment buildings were mostly designed by famous architects from the 1960s onwards and had a high aesthetic quality [Görgülü 2016]. However, they are now being torn down. Bağdat Street is an attractive shopping street in Istanbul with luxury stores, cafes, and restaurants. It not only serves the inhabitants in close vicinity, but also attracts people from outer districts. Urban rents are relatively high in the neighborhoods along Bağdat Street when compared with other districts of Istanbul. According to the statistics from the Information Technologies Directory of Kadıköy Municipality, there were 3684 buildings demolished between 2012 and 2017, not including the ones demolished for the Fikirtepe Project (Table 1). When we compared the annual census statistics data in 2012 and 2016, the loss of population is higher in these neighborhoods than other neighborhoods in Kadıköy (Table 2).

The effects of reconstruction are diverse. First, inhabitants of these buildings had to move, and it was not possible for most of them find places in Kadıköy, which



Photo 2. View of Fenerbahçe neighborhood from Moda Cape
Source: Personal Archive, 06.09.2017.



Photo 3. An old building waiting to be demolished in the Caferağa (Moda) Neighborhood
Source: Personal Archive, 23.09.2017.

explains the population loss. However, it is unknown if previous inhabitants will return or if others will settle in the extra flats when the construction phase is completed. Either outcome will have social impacts, which are difficult to foresee. Thus, the social structure of Kadıköy in the near future remains a question mark. Second, the urban environment is constantly changing. The mass number of buildings is increasing (Photo 2) and characteristic buildings are disappearing (Photo 3). The new buildings are constructed with a standardized floor plan and an ordinary elevation view with standard construction materials because developers want to reduce costs and finish the project in the shortest time. Consequently, the emerging environment does not reflect a high quality urban character.

2.2. The effects of transportation facilities

New lines were added to public transportation facilities in Istanbul recently, and Kadıköy became a hub where several lines meet including ferries, buses, minibuses, metro, Metrobus, and trains (Fig. 2). Ferries from Kadıköy and Üsküdar on the Asian side to the European side connect the city by sea transportation. Sea transportation at Kadıköy is connected with main bus and minibus stations and metro lines from further districts on the Asian side. In addition, Kadıköy has the main Metrobus sta-



tion, which connects it to further districts on the European side of the main arterial road via 1st Bosphorus Bridge. Another metropolitan scale transportation facility is the Marmaray line that starts at Kadıköy and passes Bosphorus underground to Yenikapı on the European side. This line serves Kadıköy and Yenikapı, is connected with the metro and tram lines, and will be connected to the suburban train line and intercity lines. The rest of the train line is expected to open in 2019. There are bus, minibuses, and dolmuş (an eight person vehicle, which is more expensive but faster than buses and minibuses, but cheaper than taxis) lines that connect Kadıköy with rest of the city. These public transportation facilities make Kadıköy a very busy hub, specifically during rush hours. Apart from public transportation networks, Kadıköy is connected with the main arteries and highways of the city, which causes traffic congestion during rush hours and weekends.

The main station for buses and minibuses is located close to ferry lines on coastal Kadıköy. In addition, the metro line exits take place along the coast close to the district's center. This brings thousands of people to the center of Kadıköy every day. The metro line (M4) between Kadıköy and Pendik carried an average of 8 million people monthly during the first eight month of 2017 according to the statistics of Metro Lines and Light Rail Systems Directory of Greater Municipality of Istanbul [*Istanbul Greater Municipality* 2017]. The Metrobus lines carried a maximum 933,430 travels a day in 2016, and the total number of travels by bus, Metrobus, and tram lines in the same year was 481 billion, according to the Annual Report of IETT, Bus and Tramlines Directory of Istanbul Greater Municipality [*Istanbul Greater Municipality* 2017: 82]. Although it is not possible to trace the share of Kadıköy in these statistics, the travel amount on a daily basis is high.

3. Unplanned developments in Kadıköy

Besides the reconstruction and redevelopment affecting the built environment and developments in public transportation facilities, the other dynamic that has dramatic effects on central Kadıköy is related to the changing nature of the Beyoğlu district. The Beyoğlu district served as the hub for recreational, entertainment, and cultural activities since the 1850s [Akın 1998: 237]. Although the area experienced some changes over the last 150 years, it now witnesses a declining period as a cultural center. The district is becoming a commercial and tourism area according to the policies of the district municipality. Most cinema and theatre halls closed, although a few stayed in Beyoğlu. Theatre companies searched for new places to settle, and some moved to Kadıköy. There are several reasons accompanying the site selection. First, Kadıköy's atmosphere is vivid and serves as another historical place where theatre halls first opened at the beginning of the last century. Hence, there are some well-known theatre companies in Kadıköy. Kadıköy has the oldest opera house in Istanbul, Süreyya Opera House, constructed in

1927. Although the building served as a cinema hall for many years, it was renovated and returned to its original function as an opera house by the Kadıköy municipality in 2007 and became an attraction for theatre and opera audiences. Second, urban rents are relatively lower than in the Beyoğlu district. Third, most of the players declared they were inhabitants of Kadıköy, and they defined themselves as ‘from Kadıköy’ [Bengü 2017]. Most of the theatre companies formed a dialogue platform called Theatres of Kadıköy, in January 2016, and 48 theatre companies are members [http://www.kadikoytiyatrolari.com/tiyatrolar/, accessed, 19.11.2017]. Because only 25 theatre halls exist, some theater companies do not have a hall to use without forming an agreement with the owning company [Bengü 2017]. The platform organized a theatre festival and an event called “My Neighbor is a Theatre” between March and August 2017 with the support of the Kadıköy Municipality. The aim of the event was to make close connections, share knowledge, and discuss common problems between the residents of streets where the halls are located. Theatres increased the vitality and use of streets, and attracted their own audiences.

The other development altering central Kadıköy is the proliferation of cafes and pubs. Developments in public transportation facilities reinforced Kadıköy’s accessibility from both sides of the metropolitan area as explained above. As the amount of daily visitors increased, the center of Kadıköy witnessed a proliferation of cafes, pubs, and restaurants. This affected the coastal neighborhoods of Kadıköy. One example is a central neighborhood named Caferağa, known as Moda, which is the “aristocrat” area of Kadıköy [Kütükçü 2014: 77]. The neighborhood is very close to the heart of Kadıköy and consists of middle and upper class residents. The shops serving the neighborhood’s residential needs are being closed and turned to cafes or pubs (Photos 4, 5).

Traditionally, inhabitants of Moda are people who inherited their houses or prefer to live in Moda because of its residential character. The atmosphere of Moda was a quiet and calm residential neighborhood, where people knew and welcomed each



Photos 4 and 5. A well-known delicatessen (Milka) and a boutique on Moda Street (left) both turned to pubs (Fil and Draft) (right)

Source: Personal Archive, 22.03.2014 (left), 30.11.2017 (right).



Photo 6. Protesting words on an emptied shop's window

Source: Personal Archive, 13.08.2015.

other. Inhabitants and shopkeepers were familiar with each other [Martin, 2010]. People expressed that they like this character of Moda [Firdin Özgür *et. al.* 2017]. As Jacobs [1993] pointed out, street level shops and the vitality they created are essential for a safe neighborhood. The replacement of local shops with cafes and pubs damages the relationships within the neighborhood. Inhabitants are dissatisfied with this transformation, regarding both the shops they know are closing and the cafes and pubs that are opening instead, which attract many people that they do not know. The writing on an emptied pvc window-maker shop's window illustrates the dissatisfaction. It says, "We know that there will be a cafe too" (Photo 6).

Conclusions and findings

The aim of this descriptive study is to understand diverse dynamics at metropolitan and local scales and their effects on Kadıköy's built environment and urban character. Reconstruction and redevelopment projects have the most dramatic effects on urban character. While the aim of Law No. 6306 is the reconstruction of buildings against a possible earthquake, the results are increasing building and population density and the loss of some historic buildings and the urban environment. Because the whole process is driven by the demands of the real estate market, some of the buildings not profitable for developers are not included. Moreover, there is no urban planning decision or direction except for building ratios. The emerging built environment is denser and buildings are higher than before. However, without guiding planning and urban design, decisions on what the future environment might be are left to the capacity, budget, and aesthetic sense of the developer. The extreme danger of this process is the loss of the urban character of Kadıköy, which was partially damaged already over the last fifty years. The population of Kadıköy is decreasing because of the demolished buildings, and the new residents are unknown. The character of Kadıköy not only stems from its urban environment, but also from its inhabitants, who reflect an educated, secular, and urban personality, which most people cannot find in more

conservative districts. Hence, Kadıköy reflects an identity of an open minded and civilized place. This is a reason why many people use the street cafes, parks, and open public spaces to socialize and spend time with friends and family. People feel comfortable in the district parks.

As explained above, open public spaces and parks along the coast of Kadıköy attract many people. Proliferation of cafes increased the demand. Although street cafes and people in public spaces increase the urban vitality and safety because people are on the streets at late hours, not all residents are pleased with this environment. First, shops serving residential needs, such as butchers, pharmacies, or bookstores were closed and replaced with cafes and pubs, although most inhabitants used these facilities. Second, this not only undermines a self-sufficient neighborhood, but also attracts many unfamiliar people and causes crowding on the streets and in parks. This may decrease the popularity of Kadıköy in the future.

The proliferation of theatre halls is another dynamic affecting Kadıköy. It contributes to public life of the district, and revitalizes the public life as it was in the past. The Kadıköy Municipality sees the proliferation of theatre halls as an opportunity to make the district a cultural center; however, there is not a clear policy declared by the municipality. Even though the theatre halls reinforce the potential of Kadıköy to become a cultural center, theatres alone are not enough to realize this vision.

Finally, both reconstruction of buildings and street level proliferation of cafes and theatres have some positive and negative effects on Kadıköy. Thus, this development should be directed by planning decisions. The decisions should be made using a participatory planning process to understand the expectations and problems of inhabitants, shopkeepers, users, and theatre companies. All of these actors should be a part of the process to achieve a common vision for Kadıköy. Otherwise, market forces and personal profits will direct the process, which may in turn have unforeseen undesirable effects.

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