The Effects of the Changing of Urban Identity on Historic Towns

Burcin Kutsal

(Burcin Kutsal, Zirve University, Gaziantep,Turkey, burcin.yasar@zirve.edu.tr)

1 ABSTRACT

Urban identity is one of the important factors, which affects the formation of the city. It also plays important role in shaping and changing the form of city. Each city has its own identity that is shaped by its characteristics. The concept of identity is felt much more in historic towns, but historic towns are being oppressed by new functions with a danger of losing their identity.

In this study, the city identity is briefly explained; and several factors will be studied to make up the identity of the city. Physical, socio-economic, socio-cultural structures and historical factors will be listed. The effects of topography, climatic factors and the effects of identity will be discussed. The effects of socio-cultural and historical structures on urban identity will be discussed in relations with the way of living and historical evolutions. The study will also present the effects of the economic changes on the urban identity in historical towns.

Furthermore, this study will examine the effects of urban identity changes in Istanbul historical towns, and it will also describe and explain, with examples, the changing urban identity as changing form and function in historic towns.

Finally, the changing of lifestyle with changing in urban identity, the changing meaning of the historic towns, and changes in the perception and meaning of the city (understand by citizens) will be studied in historical Yedikule district of Istanbul.

In the conclusion part, the results of this study are explained and the concepts, which are discussed during the study period, are evaluated in their entirety.

2 URBAN IDENTITY AND FORMING FACTORS

Urban identity is set of meanings, that depend on the history is formed in a city by urban dweller. Physical changes in the city cause social changes on the other hand social changes, and in contrary cause physical changes in urban society.Thus, such changing process affects the urban identity.

Identity of cities are acquired with their original characters. But with passing the time, some cities lose their original architectural and urban characters, thus the settlement fall into a confusion of identity.

When the historical development process is examined, especially in well-preserved cities, urban identity is protected. In such of cities, economic structure, urban culture, reflection of climate factors to physical structure and lifestyle, construction techniques, socio-economic structure and lifestyle of urban dweller can be easily read. Historical cities are an archieve reflect the memories of urban dwellers. Whereas the historical and cultural heritage of the create the core value of urban identity. Therefore the city's cultural and historical backround will be the memory of the city, that evokes the state of belonging to the city.

Cultural heritage is the most important part of urban identity. Historic towns often stay in developing part of the city and lose their original character. When historic town is well-preserved and articulated to the city's development process, the city can protect the urban memory and urban identity.

As a result, urban identity consists of physical enviroment, socio-economic conditions, cultural and historical characteristics.

2.1 Physical Structure of The City

Physical Structure of cities are one of the most important factors for the city established or being established in gaining identity. Topography of the city, climate and geographical features affect development of the city. Physical structure is very effective on creating the layout plan of the city. For example; Due to the mountainous nature of the city of Artvin, generally residental buildings are dispersed and on mountains slopes topography of Artvin, and by the ways, provide diffent identity to the city (Fig 1).

Whereas houses in Gaziantep houses were built on flat plain land. This city is by hot climate which characterized, had direct effect on it's urban housing design; the streets are very narrow and house-courtyard walls remains in shade behind high walls (Fig.2).

Fig 1. :Artvin House

Fig 2. : A street from Gaziantep   Fig 3. : Kabaltı

Figure 3 show a shaded area by over street house (called Kabaltı) in the streets. The Kabaltı creates wind coridor to cool streets in summer hot days.

But when the physical structure is largely shaping the city's economy; for example; the city of mountinous physical structure, generally develops in the field of agriculture and livestock production. Therefore houses in the city are designed according to this feature. Thus, the ground floors of the houses are used as barn especially in a city in dealing with livestock.

Urban culture is also linked to the physical structure. As long as cities communicate with diffirent cities. They are affected by different cultures and different structures, and they can develop, upon these differences the cities which have cultural interaction, are usually similar to each other. Bodrum is one of the best examples in this subject. This town is surrounded by mountains so it didn't have cultural interaction with surrounding cities and developed differently. The construction method of cities around Bodrum were similar, but construction type of traditional Bodrum houses are similar to the Greek Island's construction method (Fig 4 and 5). Becouse Bodrum is a coastal town and has cultural exchange with Greek Islands.

Fig 4. : Traditional Bodrum House   Fig 5. : Santorini Island

Cross- cultural interaction provides a new structure of enviroment by imitating the other cultures. The less developed societies and cultures are affected by developed societies and cultures (Tarde,1903). Thus, the cultural interaction caused changes in the social structure changes and urban identity.

2.2 The Socio-cultural and Historical Structure of The City

Socio-cultural structure is the infrastructure of urban identity whereas the historical structure, population structures and cultural characteristics are the factors which formed the socio-cultural structure of the city.

Historical structure is very effective in the development of cities and buildings. In cities, mentioned above history is contributed in the development of buildings in the next period and soon. For example; the typology of tower houses of Bodrum were occured as a result of courses taken from the past. Stairs were not

constructed outside of the house and window were very small to prevent of pirate attacks, only two beam were constructed for portable stairs (Fig 6). In this town, urban dwellers shaped their structures on which they had learned throughout the history.

Fig 6: Tower house in Bodrum   Fig 7.:A courtyard from Gaziantep House

The population structure is another factor affecting socio-cultural structure of the ciy. According to literacy rate and distrubition of age, city can be formed; for example; if geriatric population is more, social spaces in the city should be suitable for this age goup.

Cultural features play a major role in formation of the urban identity. Generally each city is shaped according to the lifestyle of it's urban dwellers, Thus this lifestyle also provides the formation of urban identity.

When Gaziantep traditional houses are examined, it can be seen that these houses were formed according to the lifestyle of this region. Privacy realm is embedded in the foreground of Gaziantep culture. This lifestyle has certainly led to build high walled courtyard in houses of Gaziantep, where the courtyard is called "Hayat" which mean life(Fig 7). Hayat was designed for women who stay at home all day, so women can establish secluded lifestyle and can communicate with external space in the open sky courtyard. On the otherhand, the bay was built to control the house enrty to provide security.

However, traditional Aegean houses provide less privacy which is not that much important for this region. High-walled courtyard are seen in Aegean region, on the contrary, doors open directly to the street. In this region, the bay was built to expand the room towards outside to be involved in the landscape.

Generally speaking, urban culture is the most effective factor in urban design. However; the culture changes from one generation to next generation, but new generation adds different/new things on the cultural heritage and transforms it to new generations. As a result of this transformation, new cultures and new places are created, and it leads to change the urban identity as well.

2.3 Socio- Economic Structure of The City

Economic structure is another factor to sustain the formation of urban identity. The image of the city is affected by agricultural or industrial income of the city. Income of the city generates new meanings to the city; such as, industrial city or agricultural city. In the past, the cities developed around the agricultural activities, but after the industrial revolution, cities began to be developed around the factories. Generally, workers in factories were set up outside of the city, left their native region; thus the structure of the city changed.

The economic structure of the city causes changes in the physical entity of spaces. Therefore changes in economic structure influences social structure, and consequently social structure changes physical spaces. As a result this changing process are effective in changing the urban identity.

As a result of economic changes in the city, some region is transformed a way of earning money which is called "economic rent" and faced with the danger of losing authenticity and feature of uniqueness. For example; in İstanbul Sulukule, Neslişah and Hatice Sultan distrinct (Fig 8), urban transformation project was started.

This project was set out to improve the ruins in the region of the city. However, the project asked people living in these district, for additional people who didn't pay this fee, left the region or settled the region was chosen by the municipaltiy where is miles and miles away from the original settlement. Traditional building in the   distrinct was ruined generally; and then after the identity of the region was lost, the region was

Fig 8.: Old Sulukule District   Fig 9.: New Sulukule District

transformed into unquailified area where new villas were built. (Fig 9).

Consequently, the economic changes have negatively affected the urban identity in the region. Unfortunately today, this process continues in the same way.

After the industrial revolution, production of housing was industrialized and the cities were faced with the danger of losing locality. To make rapid production, the modal projects started the implementation without consideration of local elements in the city so that all cities have fallen into the danger of losing their identities in the process of similarization.

The income level of the city is an other economic factor affecting the identity. Income level of the city changes the level of expectation; this also leads to physical changes. The region lives and needs change in this direction manner.

The economic of the city structure is the most effective elements for city's development and change. The important thing is to preserve and develop the existing values with developing the city's economic level

3   THE FACTORS CHANGING URBAN IDENTITY

3.1 Globalization

Anatolia has been in a change since two hundred years. This change was called as westernization in Ottoman period, named modernization in republican era. Today, the name of change period is globalization within this period, and it was as transformation was blended with cultural change and this situation caused a physical transformation process in cities.

The processes of globalization, today, affecting all developing countries are exerted to direct influence of globalization, Thus this led to effects on social and cultural lives. The globalization process, leads the cities

to be in a uniformed type; eventually, influences the living spaces, architecture and urban identity. The economic changes take place as a result of development process of the cities, where urban image differs and changes. When the city center of Bursa is studied as an example, (Fig 11) the impact of economy on the urban identity can be easily read. Meanwhile, business center and high residential blocks took over historical buildings that are the symbol of the city.

Globalization process overcames successfully the city and it's identity and values. Urban dwellers that are living in such city, have embraced natural, cultural, architectural values of the city and have worked on these values to be common values. As an example of Bursa-Cumalıkızık, (Fig 10) locality in the village, traditionalism and conservation values were transformed to economic values as tourism, therefore all traditional houses were conserved and people continued to live in their village, then after the region became attractive for tourism activities. Thus, Cumalıkızık overcomes the effects of globalization without losing its identity. Consequently the region preserved its identity against the globalization process far from the city center and industrial areas.

Fig 10.: Bursa-Cumalıkızık

Fig 11.: City Center of Bursa

Municipalities of the cities have become an annuity gate by globalisation. These authorities were imposed in recent years as competing business with each other in terms of land rent. Buildings were constructed to generate income without attention to features, eliminate the identity that reflects different characters of each region, away of being similar.

As in case of Gaziantep and Bursa, the cities have two different climates but similar type of project implementation (Fig 12 & 13) that these projects are not appropriate to the characters of the cities.

Fig 12.: A group of building from Bursa

Fig 13.: A group of building from Gaziantep

The process of globalization threatens the urban identity and forcing all cities to be similar. In the past, each city was constructed according to characteristics and features, and had its own identity. However, today, in every city the same types of projects are applied, and they cannot be distinguished from each others. If the current type of building production continues in the future, a city the concept of identity will eradicate.

The phenomenon of globalization is an evitable process that affects our country. As a result of technological developments, political and economic transformation is seen in all elements. Therefore the diversity of cultural identity must be protected while dragging the cities to change on the basis of globalization.

3.2 Socio-Cultural Factors

The Ottoman classical period showed good examples of traditional urban culture in which cities displayed high privacy and innocence of family style in this period. The houses were the basic elements of architecture

in ottoman the cities. The houses were arranged in certain order to form the districts; in which family values affected the formation of districts.

The change in Ottoman period began as an impact of westernization; especially during the republic period, which was called modernization. Modernization took place in Turkish society, as transformation, from agricultural society to industrial society. After the proclamation of the republic, as a result there changes in the country, the lifestyle of the people changed, and began to prefer apartments rather than traditional houses. Apartments emerged with the ideas of mass housing production and rapid construction. Previously, the houses had been constructed horizontally, and later on were designed vertically due to increasing inpopulation. Therefore the families had to live together, thus diffirent type of culture occurred due to the residential development. Lifestyle, neighbourliness, identiy, and the terms of belonging were provided to sharing, participation and consensus were adopted. Generally, the lifestyle of the people who live in apartments changed, and this changing process provided to changing in the urban identity.

Apartments have, also, led to weakening the concept of social relations in the city. The people, who are not able to establish a relationship with their environment, lose their sense of belonging and become insensitive to environment. Today, one of the most important factors of losing the identity of the city is that the elimination of cultural icons; as a consequence people lost the sense of belongings.

The history of urbanization is studied in, the changing of socio cultural structure and, plays important role in changing the form of the city. The people who change the lifestyle, shaped the city for a new lifestyle. However, it is clearly seen that; industrialized urban area shas lost it's original values and character. Whereas, the traditional historical towns and urban identity became under the pressure from high rised buildings.

3.3 Trends and Fashion

As a result of increasing the social welfare of the people, urbanization started to be effective. The people who have more income than their needs, had to be mobilized to upward levels in the society and looked for prestige lifestyle. These changes resulted in new trends and fashion. Thus the urban identity is formed by these trends and fashion.

However, when the rates of consumption were increased, today the fashions change rapidly. This changing accelerated the process of changing the urban identity. For example; in the republican period, living in an apartment was understood as prestige and the family who had more income, wanted to live in apartments buildings. Living in an apartment became a new trend that comes from the west. In this process people left from their traditional houses and started to live in apartment buildings. Whereas the historical towns were left to ruin or to lowincome migratints to cities. They preferred these places as a living space. This process changed the social structure of the people who live in historical towns; and new urban identity was occurred.

However, meanwhile the apartments, buildings are considered as a living areas for lowincome people, as income people prefer individual houses to live. From the republican period to today, The changing of trends new fashion.

Therefore, these trends and fashion are very effective in forming the city's structures and the urban identity. However, the terms of fashion influenced the city, and start to take shape around the city.

4 THE EFFECTS OF THE CHANGING URBAN IDENTIY ON HISTORIC TOWNS

4.1 The Changing of Form and Function

Historical towns are cultural, architectural, and aesthetics, values which were considered as the source of the past. However, in the center of the historical town, the lifestyle changed by globalization, socio-cultural factors, trends and fashion. The historical town lost it's the meaning places to meet the needs for the changing life style, (Fig. 14). The occupants change, they are shaped according to needs of the the new occupants in historical town.

Fig 14.: Tarlabaşı-İstabul   Fig 15.: Arap Şükrü Street İn Bursa

Some historical residental region of the past were transformed to commercial region. Unconscious changing in the historical region to resulted by, demolision of the buildings to meet new needs. For example; In the past Arap Şükrü Street in Bursa was a residental area where jewish people used to live in. However, all houses transformed into restaurants, in the ground floors of the buildings (Fig 15). As result of these interventions, the historical houses lost their original caharacter. Attaching the signs and baconies on the façade, the building became ambigious.

Changing and transforming of the cities affect the historical towns and monuments negatively by introducing new functions to the region. Thus, historical buildings lost their origin and cannot reflect the feature of their period. Moreover the historical towns now cannot meet the requirements of the new functions, and later on lead to new problems such as lack of infrastructure.

4.2 Changing the Lifestyle in Historic Towns.

The new functions, which are introduced in the historic towns, lead totally to change in the lifestyle of city dwellers. For example; some historical towns, which were used as residential area, transformed tourism areas, thus historical regions were preserved.

This transformation can be seen in Antalya Kale içi,.(Fig. 16) Historical towns located in the borders of city, and were transformed to tourism area. In the past, this area was used as residential area but during the restoration work was planned as house+hotel, but now has became an area used for cafes and pensions. Thus the lifestyle in the region changed, and the people who live in here began to live with tourism activities.

Fig 16.: Kale İçi District in Antalya

The new functions which introduced in to the historical towns, affect the lifestyle of city-dwellers. Even, the people don't seek to change, sometimes they forced to change their lifestyle. The changing the lifestyle are forced the people to leave the historical area. Therefore replacig the original owners of the historical area led to the disappearing of the the original characters of the historical towns. If the historical and social texture preserve together, the origin of the city can be reflected.

4.3 Changing the meaning of historical town

In the past, historical towns were known as residential or cemmrcial area. But as a result of economic, social and cultural changes, they were transformed in to different functions, which led to change the perception of the city. For example; row houses Beşiktaş, Akaretler (in İstanbul) were designed as Dolmabahçe Palace dwellings (Fig. 17). Although the row houses in Akaretler preserved the function of residence, city dwellers changed totally the perception of this region changed.

Fig 17.: Old Akaretler District in İstanbul   Fig 18.:New Akaretler District in İstanbul

Nowadays this area gained the highest economc values in terms of rent. After the restoration of these row houses, the functions of hotel, business center, café and restaurant were loaded. Akaretler has become one of

Istanbul's most popular shopping areas. Now, when Akaretler is mentioned, people remember this area as a commercial area, which includes hotel function and shops. (Fig.18). The perception of the historic town was totally changed. Thus, urban identity gained new meaning.

5 YEDIKULE, AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE EFFECTS OF THE CHANGING URBAN IDENTITY ON HISTORIC TOWNS

Yedikule district was studied as an example of the effects of the changing urban identity.

5.1 İstanbul-Fatih Yedikule District as an Example of Historic Towns.

Yedikule District takes place in the southwest edge of the historical peninsula, bounded by Marmara Sea, Golden Horn, and the city walls. The traditional houses were built by the end of the 19th century and the begining of 20th century; Yedikule Dungeons and Monumet of İmrahor were particially preserved.

Fig 18&19.: Entrance of Yedikule Houses

When the district is studied in terms of physical structure, the houses were built up vertically against the slope. This planning type is located on the sloping the streets are slopping facing the sea. The stairs were used for the entrance of the house and laid on the slope. (Fig 18&19). Topography was not important so much to form the Yedikule District. The only effect of the topography is the slopy streets.

When the socio cultural and historical structure of the district is studied in the period, after the conquest of İstanbul, the Greek people started to live in this district. There are some churchs in Yedikule from that time. Yedikule's urban identity was shaped by the lifestyle of Greek people. Later, The Greeks were disturbuted to the specific areas of the city. According to Historician R. Mantran, in the second period of 17th century, Yedikule consisted of Turkish people.

In some periods after the big fires occurred in İstanbul, the wooden architecture was replaced by masonry architecture with the law in 1957. The number of masonry building were increased instead of wooden houses. (Fig 20). Thus, the district started to change in this period, the existance of train station and gas factory were effective figures in the changing of urban identity.

Fig 20.: Masonry building in Yedikule

Fig 21.: İmrahor İlyas Bey Avenue

The socio-economic structure in Yedikule was changed by the facility of the port and railways, which were constructed in 19th century. The construction of railroad, connected İstanbul to Europe brought the contruction of supporting facilities in Yedikule; such as; road, services, maintenance workshop and the national railway system houses. Yedikule Gas Factory in the city is one of the infrastructure facilities in the city. This Gas Factory is one of the first industrial buildings in the city produced gas between 1880-1993. When workers of this factory started to live in this region, the social structure and the identity of the region changed. The railroad connecting İstanbul with Europe was one of the means to sustain globalization. Then after, Yedikule district was directly affected by the globalization process. In addition to İmrahor İlyas Bey district was also affected by globalization due to its location on the railroad (Fig 21). Today, ground floor of buildings in these district facing the main road are used as commercial place. These commercial places transform to car repair shop, especially in the areas of Yedikule city wall.

Houses were/are always on the edge of the axes, transforming the traditional residential area to commercial area gain the chance to construct apartment buildings for housing activity in addition to commercial area in the ground floor whereas the other places in Yedikule district continues on residential function (Fig 22).
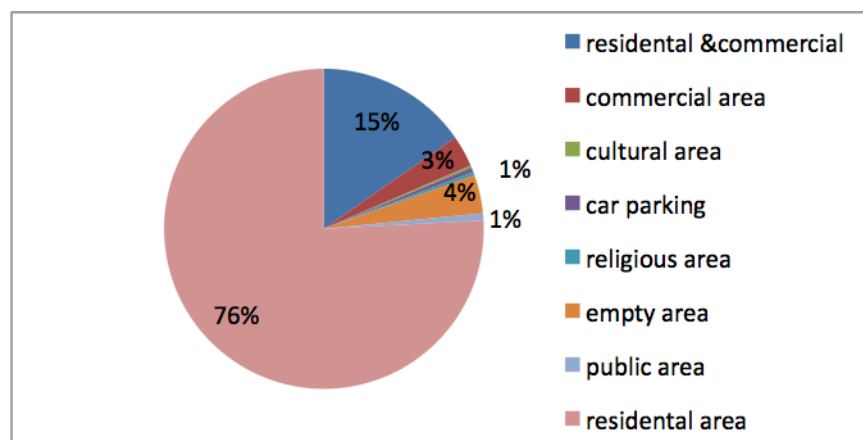

Fig 21.: Function Analysis of Yedikule District

The biggest problem occurred in the interior street of the multi-storey apartments. The apartments built in narrow Street created a stifling effect and overwhelmed the historical buildings. Thus, changing in the building system led to change in the social structure. The people who start to live in apartments had lesscontact with the environment than people who live in traditional houses. This situation caused lead people to live an inward lifestyle.

However, the perception of Yedikule, as wooden, and masonry traditional houses in people's mind was changed. Becouse today, Yedikule has become a region, dominated by apartment of low-income and people extensive commercial activities on the main street. With the changing time, the meanings of the district started to change and Yedikule district is about to lose it's urban identity.

6   CONCLUSION

The urban identity is the term reflects the history, physical and social structure of the city. In this changing process, the cities changes and they cannot preserve their identity.

In this study; the factors, which form the urban identity, the factors that cause the changing of urban identity, the effects of changing urban identity on historic towns were studied with concept on İstanbul-Fatih Yedikule distrinct.

After studying the physical structure, socio cultural structure and socio-economic as factors, that form the urban identity. The following deserve mentioning;

- Topography, climates, geographical features of the city affect cultural relations and consequently affect the formation of urban identitiy.
- The cities, which has cultural interrelation, has similar urban identity
- The history of the city affects the lifestyle of citizens, however construction is affected by lifestyle and this situation, which reflects to the urban identity.
- The population of the city, age distrubition and the rate of literacy have major influences in shaping urban identity.
- Cultural structures play important role in shaping urbanization.

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- Incomes of the cities determine the social structure, and shapes societal needs.

Globalization, socio-cultural factors, trends and fashion were determined as factors affect the changing of urban identity as follows:

- Globalism is an inevitable process and most of the cities can't overcome from this process.
- In the globalization process, the historical towns are demolished and lost their identity.
- As a result of globalization, the cities are faced with similarization, but other cities realized the urban identity, and unharmed their forms.
- The citizens who changed the lifestyle, reform the physical environment changed urban identity
- Trends and fashion, affected the society, and was reflect on the buildings.

The changing of form and function, the changing of lifestyle, The changing meaning of the city were determined as the effects of changing urban identity in historic towns. İn the folloeing manners:

- Socio-cultural factors, globalization, trends and fashion, traditional houses are modified by new owners in historical sites in a residential area,
- The changing of the form that occurred as a result of changing urban identity, negatively affected the texture of the origin of the historical towns
- The historical pattern with social lifestyle was affected by the new functions brought to cities. Thus the city dwellers who adapted the new lifestyle had to leave the region.
- With the changing urban identity, the perception of the city is changed, and led to change the meaning of the city.

Last but not the least, the changing urban identity was studied on Yedikule example as follows;

- Socio-cultural and historical structure, and socio economical structure were more effective than physical structure on forming Yedikule district.
- Globalization affected this district very much; so that some parts of the city were modified as commercial area.
- In the historical district, traditional houses were smashed by apartments; so the region are faced with losing its urban identity.

This analysis is an attempt to understand the potentialities of traditional built up enviroment for future a health peaceful living.

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