

## Article

# The effect of socio-cultural changes on urban areas Kadikoy Historical District Bazaar

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## Abstract

*The 1980's was the period when socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political balances of Turkey started to change and transform. Many factors such as the entry of international capital, the acceleration of rural-urban migration and the diversification of consumption patterns have brought about major changes in the social fabric. Nowadays, Turkey is faced with many problems. For instance: the majority of the people who migrate to cities remain in the informal economy; formal production has decreased; the public is led to consumption; the diversity of consumption has increased; social segregation has occurred and city newcomers have a tough time adapting to the urban culture.*

*Sociological and economic changes are occurring in the social structure, such as the introduction of new consumption items to the society (which has been the target of the international capital), lack of time, changes in the supply-demand balance due to the new socio-economic structure, the increase of mass media is directly reflected in the urban fabric and the culture; continuing with increasing speed with the globalization phenomenon of the 2000s. During the process of the rural-urban flow, an unbalanced demographic structuring has taken form and cities have grown from the centers to the outskirts in a crooked, structureless fashion. Nowadays cities are packed with buildings that are constructed without a plan and the city centers are rapidly changing their character with the construction of rather large and tall buildings.*

*Social interaction places such as bazaars, squares and market places carry a city from the past to the present, and from the present to the future. They represent a city's social, cultural and economic structure.*

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*They are the places where the unique cultural identity of a city is distinctively embodied and activities such as entertainment, leisure and shopping take place. Due to these qualities, they are the places where social and economic changes are first experienced. However, in rapidly changing cities, such places have lost their identity and transformed into something else.*

**Keywords: Kadıköy, Traditional, Bazaar, Culture, Economy**

## **Introduction**

Istanbul as being the biggest city of Turkey and one of the leading metropolises in the world, is rapidly changing its identity due to demographic, cultural and economic changes in its structure. Traditional district bazaars (which are usually structured in a square and in the streets that lead to that square) are one of the most important elements of the urban identity and they are quite essential to urban life, however they are also changing quite rapidly.

Kadikoy District Market is as old as the history of Kadıköy (which is İstanbul's oldest settlement) and it is one of the most important urban areas of the city. Aside from its commercial identity which is carried from the far past to the present, it is a settlement where residential and commercial buildings are structured together (as seen in most Western countries). Kadıköy's settlement density started to increase from the beginning of the 19th century, the district bazaar and its surrounding area owe their physical diversity to the heterogeneous structure of the past population. Kadıköy Bazaar with its commercial population increasing with each passing day, has become a central shopping district, especially with the introduction of the ferry service in 1857. Settlement density in the 1920's concentrated around Surp Takavor Church, Saint Euphemia squares and Muvakkithane Street. The construction of concrete structures started in the 1930's and due to the domestic migration in the 1950's, the first physical changes occurred in the structure of the bazaar. The process which started with these changes has been affecting the physical and the urban structure to the present day. It especially accelerated within the last thirty years and caused major changes within the social and cultural structures. Nowadays, the Bazaar and its surrounding area have become a place where residential areas are rapidly disappearing, houses are turning into business establishments and transportation networks are densifying, thus setting an important example of how socio-cultural and socio-economical changes can affect a city's structure. In the present day, the historical district bazaar has become a commercial district which extends from Osmanağa Quarter to Caferaga Quarter and onto Moda.

It is observed that there is a commercial structure planning that was formed by itself at the Kadıköy District Bazaar. While preserving its cultural diversity, the Kadıköy Bazaar is transforming into a commercial district and the residential population is moving away from

the centrum. Many houses change ownership and are used for commercial purposes. Unprofessional modifications on the front or inside of the buildings disrupt the traditional housing texture, and the residential building identity rapidly changes form. Overpopulation is not supervised and due to heavy pedestrian flow, some areas have been closed to traffic which has resulted in transportation problems. Due to their commercial advantages, there are more and more eating and drinking places opening over other types of businesses, causing a loss of identity in the Kadıköy District Bazaar.

In this study, we will discuss the above-mentioned alterations and transformations that take place in Kadıköy District Bazaar with examples, as to make recommendations to carry over the soon to be lost values into the future. This study aims to contribute towards a rescue of the deteriorating historic fabric of Istanbul (which has thousands of years of history) and of our entire country.

## 1. ECONOMIC AND SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGE PROCESS IN TURKEY

Turkey was an agricultural country based on a mixed economy until the 1980s, but from then on, it made a transition towards a liberal economy. In the 1950s, the agriculture-based economical structure changed due to industrialization objectives. An economic policy was followed in order to strengthen the private capital by backing it up by government funding.

*... "In the 1980's, the government's strength in the economy was reduced by special incentives given to domestic industrialists. Like in many countries, Turkey also adopted a protectionist nation-state structure that has a defined political and economical background. With the introduction of the new liberalism policies in the 1980's under the pressure of an economic and political order which was defined by the massive international capital, a quick dissolution process took place<sup>1</sup>"* The population structure (which was mostly rural until the 1950 's), became mostly urban and the people started migrating to industrialised regions with an ever increasing speed. Starting in the 1980's with the introduction of international capital (which was supported by liberal administrations) changed the social fabric completely, the majority of of the country's population shifted to big cities.

Turkey was mostly a producing country up until the 1980's, however after that, it turned into a consuming society and this structure brought about a post-modern society. The establishment process of international capital in our country radically destroyed the social structure and the countries social norms. The *new* structuring shows itself in the forms of our cities and it continues to do so. The markets search for capital has turned the urban centers of developing countries into consumption centers.

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### 1.1. The Effect of Socio-Economical and Socio-Cultural Changes On Cities

Acceleration in the flow of global capital to Turkey has created significant changes in the cultural fabric and it is rapidly transforming the physical structure of our cities. In particular, developments such as the ability of information to quickly navigate, the regulatory role of finance capital, diversification of labor in the production process and the commodification of public and private spaces. This led to the expansion of the service sector and to the transformation of our social way of life, developing into a more complex structure. These economic and social changes have increased and promoted migration to urban areas and became a part of mechanisms which lead to crooked urbanization.

Migrants moving from the traditional and agricultural structure towards the more modern and rational organizations of the urban industries and the service sector, tried to improve the practice of protecting their old relationships and identities while adapting to their new relationships and identities. At this stage, with cultural, social and financial differences between the upper level and the lower level, the fragmented nature of our society has become more apparent.

The migration phenomenon which increased significantly after the 1950's, led to the development of cities in an irregular and distorted fashion. The fact that urbanization has surpassed industrialization (instead of following it) has started an urbanization process that depends on a uneven geographical structure.

**Table 1 Rural-urban migration trend in Turkey (Tekeli, 2008)<sup>2</sup>**

Years	People	
1945-1950		
1950-1955		4 times
1955-1960		
1960-1965		
1965-1985	in fluctuations	
1985-1990		

*“When we reached 2000's, it was estimated that three out of four people lived in the cities. When the rural-urban migration started in Turkey after the WWI, the urban population was 20% whereas it reached 80% by the 2000's. (Tekeli, 2008)<sup>3</sup>*

Fractured urbanization (due to migrants who moved to cities after the 1950's and needed to solve their sheltering problem with their own means) spreaded out even more between 1980 and 2000. Due to the impact of globalization and economic liberalisation, unlicensed and illegal construction has increased and residential areas have been relocated to the outskirts.

For example, the structuring in Maslak clearly shows how İstanbul's urban structure has transformed within the the last 10 – 20 years.



*Fig 1 An old view of Maslak*



*Fig 2 Maslak (2011)*

The socio-cultural aspects, the social structure has evolved into multi-layers that are separated from each other, they are also increasingly differentiated.

For example, with this new İstanbul-centered structuring, the attractiveness of high-income urban localities such as Bağdat and Nispetiye has increased and sitting at a café in one of these places has become ... *“possible to sip at an urban place torn from the context which*

*is the projection of global homogeneity” (Keyder, 2000) <sup>4</sup>*

Nowadays, starting with the largest, all our cities and their vicinities are filled with high buildings, multiple-star hotels and shopping malls that cater to both commercial and residential needs. In accordance with the needs of a consumption-oriented society, all urban centers have gone through a physical transformation based on locational and functional necessities.

## **1.2. The Effect of Socio-Cultural Changes on Bazaars**

Social changes are usually felt in bazaars which are the areas of social interaction. The major socio-cultural changes that took place in Turkey after the 1980's, has also effected the shopping habits of the society. Nowadays, while the traditional bazaars still continue to exist, the socio-cultural and economical changes have created new shopping areas. In order to understand the consumers' shopping habits and the consequent structural changes, we need to examine the traditional bazaars of the past.

Traditional Turkish Bazaars are literally a place of purchase and sale. Bazaars are not only a place of social interaction, but also a place where artisans or shoopkeepers can maintain their craftsmanship and salesmanship qualities where mass production is not available. Another important issue that should be addressed here is that bazaars are not just a formation of stores or store groups, but they are also academies of craftsmanship. The district bazaars that reflect the lifestyles, consumption habits and social structure of the cities that they are in, have gone through major changes in order to cater to the needs of the current society. Even with the effects caused by globalized trade, a consumption-driven society (and changing consumer needs), the architectural structures have not been effected significantly. Sold goods, production processes and display options have greatly changed.

Historically, a master teaching his craft to an apprentice and thus conveying his art to the new generations was an important part of our bazaars. Though these bazaars in one aspect are vocational schools, now they have become merely a place of sales and consequently went through functional changes. For instance, stores that did carpet weaving or quilting in our traditional bazaars like Kapalıçarşı or Mısır Çarşısı, have now turned into cafes.

Changes and transformations occurring in our traditional bazaars are parallel to the country's economical and cultural changes. In Kadıköy District Bazaar where changes and transformations are felt the most intensely is a concrete example in this study.

## 2. THE EFFECT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGES ON KADIKÖY DISTRICT BAZAAR

Kadıköy District Bazaar with its ever-expanding boundaries (from the 19th century onwards) has become a commercial hub since the ferry service was introduced in 1857. In the 1800s, the municipal building, known as Safety of the City, was not yet built. Its place is the Kadıköy sandy place and extends all the way to the houses on Yasa Street, located between the sea, the Post Office building and the Alkim bookstore. The settlement arrangement that is common within Western countries (using ground floors for commercial and upper floors for residential purposes) is one of the characteristics of the Kadikoy Distirct Bazaar. Some researchers also emphasized how the diversity of the population in Kadıköy and its vicinity has effected the formation of the physical and cultural structure of the Bazaar.

*...From the second half of the 19th century, in comparison to the Turkish population, more Muslims and Levantines started to settle in the Bazaar area, primarily in Moda, and that has brought about the formation of a different physical structure. This class of people with medium or high income levels shaped the environment in which they live according to their culture and philosophy of life using their economical power and social rights. This environment inevitably brought about the formation of a unique trade.<sup>5</sup>*

The settlement arrangment in the 19th century usually included 2 to 3 masonry floors and it reached 4 to 5 floors in some areas. In the 1930's, the construction of reinforced concrete buildings started and in the 1950s, internal migration changed the historical, social, cultural and physical structure.



Fig 3 An old view from the Kadıköy District Bazaar (1940)



**Fig 4 An Old View of Muvakkithane Street**



**Fig 5. Current View of Muvakkithane Street**

Today Kadıköy Bazaar, with its fish stores, antique dealers, bookstores, small shops, cafes, restaurants, churches and mosques, is a fundamental part of Istanbul's colorful fabric. With its commercial and touristic identity, the Bazaar grew locationally in line with the increasing population and the altered supply-demand relation (it still continues to do so). In Kadıköy Bazaar, it is noted that spontaneous physical planning has occurred based on business data. The bazaar is always active any time of the day and in terms of user profile, it is a social interaction area (?) where people from all walks of life spend their time.

With these aspects, The Bazaar, unlike neighborhoods that kept pace with changes, established a bridge from the past to the future with its traditional tastes, historical buildings, along with the new eating and drinking establishments. Growth toward a demographic increase, transportation and the needs that they have brought, further accelerates the commercial expansion of the Bazaar. The search for new places of consumption has led to significant structural changes in the Bazaar. For instance, many

buildings that were used for housing were turned into places like warehouses, cafés, bars and offices.

Streets that intersect the Bazaar which nowadays offers commercial integrity enables many actions such as leisure, entertainment, eating and drinking, it is an urban center visited by people from every class of the society. Within the last thirty years, the most significant commercial increase in the bazaar was observed in the food and beverage places.

The historical Kadikoy District Bazaar (extending from Osmanaga to Caferağa and all the way to Moda), has become a trade center. With Söğütlüçeşme Street on the north, Güneşli Bahçe Sokak on the south, Yasa Street on the west, Sakız Street on the east, the Bazaar has been declared a protected area.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Preserving a city's places that resemble symbols of the natural and structural fabric has become a necessity in today's urbanization process. For example, the preservation of the Historical Kadikoy District Bazaar, is an important element in future development. The most important change that stands out across the neighborhood is how it is slowly losing its residential quality.

Globalization, communication and new economic arrangements doesn't literally mean the transformation of the world into one and the same model. They also produce localized transformational effects in the new consumption centered economy. The new locational organization of national and international capital and its global and local relationship is observed in the physical and socio-cultural structure of Kadıköy Bazaar that has shaped over the last thirty years

Locational and functional changes that started after 1980 in the original structure of the Historical Bazaar because of the socio-cultural and socio-economic impacts have been listed as follows;

- Reduced use of residential buildings due to the increase of commercial activities.
- Overpopulation
- Ownership changes of properties.
- Diversification of sold products.
- Closing roads to traffic due to heavy pedestrian flow.
- Unprofessional modifications on the front or in the inside of the buildings
- Since the 1990s, there has been an increase of stores that sell convenience foods and beverages.
- Bringing residential areas back to the neighborhood will make quite a colorful social life. For example, the unused upper floors of buildings can be converted into guesthouses for foreign students or faculty members.

- Plates, signs and billboards of different size, color and light on the buildings cause visual pollution and should be adapted for the arrangement of the Bazaar.
- In order to reflect the past in the present, new methods and conditions can be determined for Muvakkithane and Yağlıkçı İsmail Streets (which are pilot streets selected in this study and are the core of the Bazaar), these new methods and conditions can set an example for other streets as well. Sales locations located particularly in these streets can be re-arranged depending on the urban texture of the Bazaar. For example, front-sides, interior equipment, functional and transformational formats can be revised.
- Human safety should be planned according to the density of population. Especially the fire load awnings, manufacturing and textile production centers and streets with tanks should be surrounded with fire precautions. Damaged building stock should be reviewed and necessary measures should be taken. Also, abandoned buildings constitute a safety hazard and they should be used for public benefit with the support of the local government and non-government organizations. This will contribute to the development of the bazaar greatly. For example, the abandoned and derelict buildings can be converted into cultural centers or exhibition halls.
- With the cooperation of the local government, non-government organizations and universities, we can raise awareness with the shopkeepers of the Bazaar. This way, we can take measures to prevent further deterioration of the current structure.

## End Notes

<sup>2</sup> İlhan Tekeli, *Migration and Beyond*, İstanbul, History Foundation Publication, September 2008, N:50

<sup>3</sup> İlhan Tekeli, *Migration and Beyond*, İstanbul, History Foundation Publication, September 2008, N:50

<sup>4</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *İstanbul Between Global and Local*, İstanbul, Metis Publishing House, Nov 2000(I. Print), . N: 23,24

<sup>5</sup> Banu Gür, *Settlements and Urban Protected Areas Applications - Kadıköy Historical Bazaar Protected Area Example*, MSGSÜ, Institute of Science, Master of Science Thesis, İstanbul, May 2006 N: 93

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