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Use Of Public Spaces In Private Space-Led Urbanization: The Cases Of Kadiköy and Ataşehir In Istanbul

March 2017 · A|Z ITU Journal of Faculty of Architecture 14(1):43-56
DOI:10.5505/itujfa.2017.38258

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Abstract and Figures

Public spaces have been in interrogation in last decades. The focus of the discussions is privatization of public spaces, regarding the way of urbanization. The approaches to the publicness of public spaces developed via diverse considerations such as the ambiguous meanings of the concepts of public and private, the role of public institutions, and control on public spaces. These approaches basically depend on the experiences of advanced capitalist societies. In this research, the aim is to understand the basic characteristics of public spaces in terms of user profiles and user habits in Istanbul in two distinctive districts in Asian side. The public space literature on İstanbul suffers from the lack of the research depending on field survey. Hence, one of the areas is Kadıköy which is located in central part, and urbanized in a conventional fashion. The other one is West Ataşehir developed in the last decade, and built up as a constellation of gated communities, which is called private space-led urbanization in this research. Also, West Ataşehir is announced as a new CBD, the so called "Finance Centre of Istanbul". The findings of field research are interesting in terms of similar profiles of users, and quite different with regard to user habits in both cases. The article has for main parts, introduction clarifies the problem, the second part summarizes the debates on public space and publicness, the third part shows the results of the field research, and the last part includes results and conclusions. © 2017, Istanbul Teknik Universitesi, Faculty of Architecture. All rights reserved.

Bahariye Street. Cumhuriyet Park.

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ITU A|Z • Vol 14 No 1 • March 2017 • 43-56

Use of public spaces in private space-led urbanization: The cases of Kadıköy and Ataşehir in İstanbul

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Received: March 2016 • Final Acceptance: February 2017

Abstract

Public spaces have been in interrogation in last decades. The focus of the discussions is privatization of public spaces, regarding the way of urbanization. The approaches to the publicness of public spaces developed via diverse considerations such as the ambiguous meanings of the concepts of public and private, the role of public institutions, and control on public spaces. These approaches basically depend on the experiences of advanced capitalist societies. In this research, the aim is to understand the basic characteristics of public spaces in terms of user profiles and user habits in Istanbul in two distinctive districts in Asian side. The public space literature on İstanbul suffers from the lack of the research depending on field survey. Hence, one of the areas is Kadıköy which is located in central part, and urbanized in a conventional fashion. The other one is West Ataşehir developed in the last decade, and built up as a constellation of gated communities, which is called private space-led urbanization in this research. Also, West Ataşehir is announced as a new CBD, the so called "Finance Centre of Istanbul". The findings of field research are interesting in terms of similar profiles of users, and quite different with regard to user habits in both cases. The article has for main parts, introduction clarifies the problem, the second part summarizes the debates on public space and publicness, the third part shows the results of the field research, and the last part includes results and conclusions.

doi: 10.5505/itujfa.2017.38258

Keywords
Public space, Publicness, Private space-led urbanization, Kadıköy, Ataşehir.

1. Introduction

In the last 30 years, the state has extricated itself from fundamental public responsibilities and, parallel to this, the rate and scope of neoliberal urbanization has increased. Accordingly, the scope of private investment to urban space has increased, which dramatically affected the urban landscape as whole and the uses and users of public spaces as part. Hence, the profit-driven transformation of public spaces has recently led to some critical debates on the subject from different perspectives. Development areas in metropolises of both early and late capitalist countries are being built with shopping malls and gated communities that glorify private life. This form of urban growth, which ceases to generate publicness in urban spaces, is defined in this study as "private space-led urbanization". Private capitalist metropolises. These studies mention how there is therefore a need to increase the case studies in late capitalist countries and understand the characteristics of public spaces in peripheral areas (Van Melik et al, 2007) to have a comparative understanding. Within this framework, this article aims to draw a closer look to understand the characteristics of a public space situated in an area developed as private space-led urbanization which has been predominant in Istanbul in recent years, and a public space that was formed by more conventional planning and urbanization processes. It mainly focuses on the users and addresses the differences and commonalities between these two public places in terms of user profiles, purposes for use, and users' opinions on the concept of public spaces.

space-led urbanization, which occurs with the "closing off" of spaces as a consequence of private investment, has become the leading form of redevelopment via large-scale projects, not only in the development of the city towards the periphery, but in inner city areas as well.

This is a form of urbanization that promotes a privileged way of life for people from middle and upper classes who share similar cultural capital. In this prevailing discourse, public life, which is positioned opposite the individualistic way of life, becomes equated with chaos and a hazardous urban environment. In addition to the increasing urge to live in segregated luxury sites, the common spaces used intensively by city dwellers are increasingly surrounded by security measures. This tendency to control via new technologies is also considered as part of the transformation of public spaces: Universities, hospitals, municipalities, schools, shopping malls, movie theaters, and even cafés and restaurants, the main avenues and squares of the city are under the surveillance of the discourse of security.

Within this framework of diminishing sense of publicness in urban life, the academic interest in public space studies is also growing. However, these are generally dominated by research on central public spaces in advanced

2. Theoretical approaches to public space and private space-led urbanization

The fundamental characteristics of the current form of urbanization (within the context of residential areas, public services, areas of investment, and employment strategies) have been changing over the last thirty years and urbanization has gradually become a process in which neoliberal urban policies play the determining role. Planning, which conventionally was a means of redistributing public resources and services, has become an instrument for meeting the needs of the private sector. The private space-led development of cities has gradually led to the conceptualization of the metropolis as a socio-spatial plane on which divisions, segregations, and polarizations grow deeper, which in turn affect the nature of public spaces.

2.1. Private space-led urbanization and public spaces

Sennett (2010) emphasizes the rise of private communities which ends up with the decline of publicness of urban life. The imagination of private life has two sides in the advertisements of real estate industry; fantasy is on the one hand and the fear is on the other (Van Melik, et al., 2007). Public spaces of the cities are projected as chaot-

ic environments which are not sterile and even threatening, for the upper classes. On the contrary, private formations like luxury housing complexes that appeal to people from similar class and cultural positions and that involve types of socialization activities within the complex are marketed as secure islands. These advertisements do not only address to the upper classes but transcends through society (Öncü, 2013). Thereby, the image of ideal life style offers the residents a world free from fears and troubles, and gives a sense of security behind the gates and guards on the one hand, and a key of a privileged life customized for personal needs on the other.

'Privatism in urban policies' (MacLeod, 2011) changes the nature of urban development. Urban policies conducted by neoliberal economic policies foster the role of private sector in investments which, in turn, blurred the difference between public and private. Private sector's leading role in determining the production of urban space urges investment flows to the city to attract more tourists, investors, and higher-end white-collar workers. Therefore projects are developed in a private space-led manner, and this has become the general trend in the spatial restructuring of metropolises. Conventional urban development recedes to enclosed, secure and prestigious developments which changes the direct relation between public and private spaces. This, in turn, undermines the public character of the city. This is the development of urban areas canonizing private, personalized spaces that is called here as private space-led urbanization which is, in short, a consequence of private development in resonance with the necessities of emerging middle and upper classes. Here, it is important to reflect how the literature responds to the changing relationship between public and private spaces of the cities.

2.2. Theoretical approaches to public spaces

Idealized not just as places providing urban facilities where people can get some fresh air and which satisfy the need for green spaces, but also as collective spaces where different class, status, age, and gender groups mix and express themselves, public spaces and the transformation they underwent are being discussed with growing interest in the literature on urban studies (Langstraat and Van Melik, 2013; Nemeth and Schmidt, 2011; Nemeth, 2009; Pugalis, 2009). Despite the increase in the design quality of public spaces that are renewed and made more attractive, whether by public or private initiatives, these studies question their public qualities because they lead to urban segregation (Madanipour, 1999, 2004; Atkinson, 2003; Garcia-Ramon, et. al, 2004; Berney, 2010).

The majority of the studies on public space are "topographical" (Iveson, 1997) in the sense that they idealize the physical open spaces owned by the state as "true" public spaces and criticize the contemporary urban life as failing to keep its publicness. These studies take on the notion of the public / private dichotomy. Weintraub (1997) notes that the "public" and the "private" are not unitary and invariable, but have multilayered meanings and can describe different relationships according to their contexts. Accordingly, the distinction between public and private is made around two basic criteria: visibility and collectivity (Weintraub, 1997: 5). The distinction made in terms of "visibility" maintains that what is open, accessible, and visible belongs to the public realm, while what is hidden or withdrawn belongs to the private realm. The distinction made within the framework of "collectivity" maintains that the "individual" is private, while what "affects the interests of a collectivity of individuals" is public (Weintraub, 1997: 5). According to the topographical approach, by becoming themselves "public" within public spaces, by physically "being there," social groups gain legitimacy (Mitchell, 1995: 115). By increasing "visibility," public space is the strongest way for social groups to show themselves to larger audiences and to be recognized as part of society. Therefore, public spaces take on importance as places that increase the visibility of equal citizenship, freedom of expression, and the rights, demands, and expressions that are considered to be democratic rights. Sennett (2010)

treats of public spaces as an essential part of public life.

The main argument of these studies is based on the notion of privatization of the urban lands. There are discussions as to how the reproduction of public spaces through their commodification based on exchange value will aggravate the processes of social exclusion and segregation, increase unequal access to these spaces, and that this will lead to the end of public space, and even of the phenomenon of publicness and the ideal of democracy (Mitchell, 2003).

These studies have the tendency to regard ownership as the basic criteria distinguishing the public from the private space, but recent studies have contributed to the notion of privatization by extending its meaning. Kohn (2004: 4) conceptualizes the process of privatization of space not only on the basis of ownership but also its conceptual "substance" and includes in this process both the commodification of spaces and the desire to regulate and control them as well. According to this trend, which is conceptualized as 'fear' and 'fantasy' by Van Melik et al. (2007: 39), users are reminded that they are under surveillance through regulations on physical design and management and technological equipment such as cameras. Another trend is the invasion of public spaces by consumption-based private activities and places such as shops and cafés (Banerjee, 2001). With the increase in spaces of consumption, public spaces are purged of the reality of urban living, which is normally enriched by all its tensions, risks, and unexpected behaviors; while excluding a certain group of people, it becomes safer and more comfortable for another group (Van Melik et al., 2007: 40). These tendencies are argued in the framework of the loss of public space, the privatization of public space, or the emergence of pseudo-public spaces (Madanipour, 2010; Atkinson, 2003; Mitchell, 2003, Banerjee, 2001; Loukaitou-Sideris, 1993).

Recent studies are critical of this above mentioned literature that argues that public spaces have become privatized; they indicate that rather than considering it as being good or evil, we need to see the process experienced within the relationship between the public and the private as a new, hybrid period, and to understand the characteristics of this period through further research (De Magalheos, 2010; Akkar Ercan, 2010; Varna and Tiesdell, 2010). According to Iveson (2007), these studies, which argue that the privatization of public spaces has led to the erosion of publicness, are problematic in two respects: The first is the observation that public spaces of the past are idealized through a debate based on narratives of loss; the second is the observation that the complex and dynamic structure of publicness is ignored.

According to Sheller and Urry (2003), rather than seeing this process as "a straightforward 'colonization' of the public sphere by private interests" we should treat it in a much more complex manner, as a process of "de-territorialization of publics and privates". This new development is a much more complex form of organization in which all roles, rights, and responsibilities, from the design of spaces to their management, are shared between the state

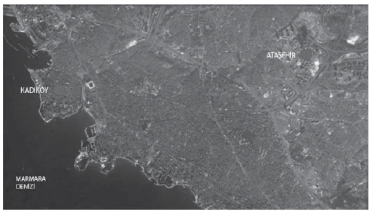

Figure 1. *Location of sites of study in Kadıköy and Ataşehir, Source: Generated from google.earth.*

Figure 2. *Urban fabric containing Bahariye Avenue and Mehmet Ayvalıtaş Square in Kadıköy Source: Generated from base map.*

and other actors (De Magalhaes, 2010: 560).

Arguing that space is not static but dynamic, that it constantly changes through mutual interaction, and that the public/private distinction is becoming increasingly complex, these studies aim to understand the characteristics that give space its publicness; they call into question the meaning of publicness. They stress on the need to approach public spaces as a multi-layered and hybrid concept in order to grasp its complex organization, and propose necessary elements for a "working" public space (Benn and Gauss, 1983; Madanipour,1999; Kohn, 2004; Melik v.d., 2007; Nemeth ve Schmidth, 2011; Varna ve Tiesdell, 2010; Langstraat ve Van Melik, 2013). In one of the early examples of these studies, Ben and Gauss (1983) have proposed that we should examine the dimensions of access (both to the place itself but also to the activities), agency (the role of users in decisions in relation to place) and interest (whose benefit) to understand the publicness of a place. While Kohn (2004) puts an emphasis on the elements of ownership, access and intersubjectivity, Nemeth and Schmidth (2011) put forward ownership, management, use and users. Varna and Tiesdell (2010) develop a model of publicness based on the characteristics of space triggering a private space-led urbanization. Yet, instead of assuming the diminishing sense of publicness, this paper aims to capture the characteristics of contemporary public spaces examining the above mentioned criteria through the methods of survey and interviews.

3. Field research: The examples of Kadıköy and Ataşehir in Istanbul

In light of these evaluations, considering differences in the use of places that developed as conventional and private space-led urbanization in Istanbul come to forefront. In order to leave out the debates on privatization of public spaces in the literature, two places are studied whose design and maintenance is entirely under the responsibility of the municipality. We thus concentrated on three characteristics of public spaces that are discussed in the literature: The diversity of users that is assumed to exist in public spaces and their patterns of use; and finally, the perception of publicness.

To accomplish this, two areas were selected on Istanbul's Anatolian side: Central Kadıköy, which we observed has lively public spaces, and the public spaces located in West Ataşehir's center in the district of Ataşehir, which is exemplary of private space-led urbanization and has developed with the con-ownership, physical configuration, animation, control and civility. Although the approaches differ from each other, access, the agency of the users, and the questions of how these places are managed and used and by whom seem to be the main dimensions to assess the publicness of a public space. Hence, diversity of users, patterns of use and perception of publicness are the key criteria here to understand the nature of a public space.

This paper considers public spaces as an essential stage where people from different backgrounds become visible to each other and have a chance to connect and create collective action. Furthermore, it behaves public space as an inseparable dimension of a democratic society. It is undeniable that as the interests of local governments and private sector affiliate more, exchange value of urban lands takes over the production stellation of gated communities and shopping malls (Figure 1).

Bahariye Avenue and Mehmet Ayvalıtaş Square, where the avenue ends, have chosen in Kadıköy (Figure 2). Bahariye Avenue and the square are places that observed as being heavily used on weekdays, during the weekend, and at different times of the day. The fact that Bahariye Avenue is a mixed-use avenue, offering the different and various uses in its surroundings (movie houses, theaters, cultural centers, food and drink venues, and shops on the street level) attract people to this area (Figure 3, 4). Furthermore it is easily accessible and public transportation is readily available.

In West Ataşehir, Ataşehir Avenue, which appears to be lively, and the Cumhuriyet Square and Park adjacent to it have chosen to study (Figure 5, 6, 7). The places are located in the centre

of West Ataşehir. While this area forms one of the main avenues connecting West Ataşehir to its surroundings, it is also flanked by food and drink venues. It is not an area that is easily accessible by public transportation. The area is very close to proposed new financial centre of Istanbul, which will possibly necessitate more public uses in the future.

Three methods were used in the fieldwork. The first consisted of surveys conducted with everyday users in both sites at different times of the day and week. The survey aimed to measure two main characteristics, the first being the profiles of users, which were identified essentially according to age, level of education, occupation, and place of residence and work. The second was to measure purpose and diversity of use. To accomplish this it came to forefront to obtain the community's views on the purpose and reason for use of the places under study, features they liked or disliked, how they accessed and reached these places, what needs they satisfied, users or features that disturbed them, their views on security, and finally their general views on public spaces.

170 questionnaires in Kadıköy and 130 in Ataşehir were conducted between September 9 – October 18, 2013 at various times between 11:00 in the morning and 20:45 in the evening. Since there were not much users in our research site in Ataşehir and most of them declined to answer, only a limited number of questionnaires could be conducted in Ataşehir. But a large portion of those using the Park and Square consisted of those who utilize this space instead of passing through Ataşehir Avenue; and, as can be seen in the results of the survey, the function of "passing through" is one of the functions identified for the latter.

The second step in the fieldwork was to conduct semi-structured interviews with people reached using the snowball sampling method, in order to comprehend the meaning of their surroundings for the ones living close to these fields in terms of their free time habits and to be able to touch on issues that could not be identified in the survey. In both sites, people were selected from

Figure 3. *Bahariye Street.*

Figure 4. *Mehmet Ayvalıtaş Square.*

Figure 5. *Cumhuriyet Park.*

Figure 6. *Ataşehir Avenue and cafes.*

working population, who had been living there for a relatively long period of time in proportion to the area's past. During the interviews, they were asked questions about their habits related to spending their free time, views about their neighborhoods, and patterns of using public space. 5 people were interviewed in Ataşehir in April 2014 and 4 people in Kadıköy in June 2014.

The third step in the field research was to conduct interviews with the Kadıköy and Ataşehir municipalities. The Kadıköy Municipality referred us to the Directorate of Planning and Projects and on February 26, 2014, we conducted an interview with the then Director of Planning and Projects and an employee. At the Ataşehir Municipality we were referred to the Director of Parks and Gardens and on March 19, 2014, we conducted an interview with the project officer of the site of study. During both interviews the officials were asked questions about the municipality and directorates' vision on and approach to public spaces, their criteria for project planning, and the targeted user segments.

4.1. Research findings

4.1.1. Profile and diversity of users

Though Kadıköy attracts people from different places and for different purposes due to its central functions, the functions offered by Bahariye Avenue are of a kind that mostly attracts younger people, whereas areas that have the characteristics of a park, such as Ataşehir, attract users from a broader age range. In terms of the level of education, in both sites the percent-

Figure 7. *Urban fabric containing of Cumhuriyet Square and park in Ataşehir. Source: Generated from base map.*

Table 1. *Main indicators of social structure.*

Item	Indicator	Kadıköy (%)	Ataşehir (%)
Age Group	< 29	50	38
	30-40	27	35
	> 40	23	27
Education	Primary school	17	26
	High school	49	44
	Higher education	34	30
Employment	Student	41	33
	Non-working (retiree/housewife/unemployed)	28	37
	Working	31	30
Social class in which they define themselves	Lower	9	2
	Middle	87	92
	Upper	4	6

age of those with higher education is well above Turkey and Istanbul's average (Turkey's average being 13%). From this perspective, we can say that segments who do not have access to higher education have a low representation in these spaces. In terms of employment, no significant difference emerged between users of the spaces in Kadıköy and Ataşehir. The segment of the working population whose absence was most notable was the managerial class. Because the survey was mostly conducted during daylight hours, the percentage of the non-working segment (retirees, housewives, students) was high in both sites. Yet, analyzing the range within the working population (taking out the non working population), it can be estimated that upper-middle and upper classes who occupy managerial positions are not present in these spaces. Respondents described themselves mostly as middle class (Table 1). According to these results, there appears to be no major difference between users of the two sites in terms of social status and the class to which they feel they belong.

During the interviews, residents of Kadıköy and West Ataşehir were asked whether they used these spaces or not. While Kadıköy residents generally stated that they did, Ataşehir residents indicated that they didn't use the park and the square for various reasons.

Survey participants were also direct-

ed questions measuring their thoughts on the role and characteristics of the ideal public spaces. They shared the view that everybody could use these spaces. On the survey scale, "everybody" was accepted as all socioeconomic segments and all age groups, and it was generally accepted that in these spaces everybody had the right to express themselves and their ideas, the right to exercise their constitutional rights, and that these spaces should be open to everybody.

4.1.2. Purpose and reason for use

While in Kadıköy the most prominent purposes for preferring Bahariye Street and the square were stated as meeting with friends and food and drink, in Ataşehir the main purpose of use was stated as watching around. The reason for use that ranked first in Kadıköy was that it is pleasant and well maintained; in Ataşehir that it is close to home/work. In Kadıköy users listed characteristics they disliked as follows: The site is noisy and crowded, there is not enough place to sit, and it is not well maintained. They listed the improvements they desired as follows: reduction of traffic, design and maintenance, and tree planting. In Ataşehir, disliked characteristics were listed as follows: The site is noisy, nothing to do/it is boring, and it is desolate. Improvements they desired were as follows: tree planting, new areas of use, and reduction of traffic intensity (Table 2).

The fact that there is nothing to do in the place and that therefore it is boring and desolate was described as another drawback of Ataşehir. In this context, although they are criticized as a form of privatization (Banerjee, 2001), adding other functions (such as shopping, food and drink, or cultural functions) to spaces increases the rate of their use. It can be said that while the axes in Kadıköy happens to be an arena for socialization, the one in Ataşehir lays as a temporary place not utilized fully. In this respect, despite being small, Mehmet Ayvalıtaş Square emerges as a place that is used more often and in different ways. Based on our observations, apart from being used simply as an area for sitting and relaxing, it is also used as a temporary play area for children despite there being no special arrangement, and, from time to time, as an open-air cinema or a meeting area, gathering place, and forum. While in the daytime it is used mostly by people above middle age, it is used by younger people especially in the evening hours and on weekends.

Among reasons for use by Ataşehir users, proximity emerges as an important factor. Means of transportation in Kadıköy differ from Ataşehir due to

Table 2. *Purpose of use, reason for use, and user assessments.*

Item	Kadıköy (first three answers)	Ataşehir (first three answers)
Purpose of use	To meet with friends	Resting/watching around
	Food and drink	Exercise, walking
	Resting/watching around	Meeting with friends
Reason for use	Pleasant/high-quality/I like it	Close to home/work
	Shopping	Pleasant/high-quality/I like it
	I'm a regular of the place	I'm a regular of the place
Dislikes	Noisy	Noisy
	Crowded	There's nothing to do
	There's no place to sit	Desolate
Likes	The place is nice	Sitting on the benches
	Seeing different people	The place is nice
	Being able to do different things	Clean and well kept

Table 3. *Means of accessing the spaces, frequency of use, time spent there, and preferences for spending leisure time*

Item	Indicator	Kadıköy (%)	Ataşehir (%)
Transportation/access	Pedestrian	44	88
	Bus	19	12
	Private vehicle	8	14
	Ferryboat	9	-
Frequency of use	Every day	30	13
	1-2 times a week	44	53
	1-2 times a month	18	21
	Rarely	10	13
Time spent there	Half an hour at most	9	54
	1-2 hours	31	34
	3-4 hours	36	9
	More than 4 hours	19	1
	All day	5	2
Places where they spend leisure time	Home	40	51
	Shopping mall	10	21
	I come here	21	1
	Within the gated community	1	11

the former's central location and functions. While in Ataşehir walking and private vehicles are the most prominent means of transportation, in Kadıköy the most prominent means are walking and public transportation. Frequency of use emerges as the greatest difference for both sites. The percentage of those who use spaces in Kadıköy daily is significantly higher than in Ataşehir. In terms of time spent there, we observed that users in Kadıköy utilized these spaces for longer hours while the time spent in Ataşehir was very limited. Furthermore, users of the two sites also differed in terms of the places where they spend leisure time. While shopping malls are a strong option for people in Ataşehir, the park and square closest to them is their least preferred place, whereas in Kadıköy we see the exact opposite picture (Table 3). However, the reviewers from Ataşehir mentioned that they prefer to go places which have strong identity such as Bağdat Street, Bosphorus, Kadıköy and Taksim when they have free time.

When evaluating the space's frequency of use and preferences for spending leisure time, together with place and relationships with neighbors, we observed that the form of urbanization and its functions are determining factors. The interviews also revealed two other important results pertaining to the diversity of users and relationships established with place. The first is that the urban fabric and functions offered by Kadıköy create a more favorable environment in terms of establishing relationships among residents. In terms of encountering people and striking up acquaintances in public spaces, as well as building relationships with neighbors, the mixed-use character of Kadıköy, the fabric of its streets, and its neighborly environment offer a more fruitful urban life: Individuals are both more open to building relationships with neighbors and making acquaintances with local shop owners. The fact that all it takes to go shopping is to go out on the street, prompts people to use the streets. By contrast, when the character of Ataşehir, which was shaped through introverted, private space-led residential and shopping spaces, merged with the cultural and class preferences of the population living here, establishing relationships, even with neighbors, emerges mostly as a matter of personal choice. The comments of Ataşehir residents about their neighbors are quite obvious:

"We don't know our neighbors. I don't even know if I have a neighbor or not." (Ali Rıza, 44)

"Of course we don't know. Sometimes you see them at the pool but you don't say hi even if you cross paths because you don't normally have conversations with them. Because generally people here don't even greet each other on the elevator" (Serhat, 44)

"There are a couple or three in our building. Wives have coffee together or go to the gym and all. We do come across each other." (Yavuz Selim, 44)

Determining factors that emerge in building relationships with neighbors and making acquaintances are variables such as age (being young or above middle age, having children of similar ages), employment (knowing each other from work or being housewives), and personal preferences (perceiving renters as temporary and not seeing them as neighbors, using shared spaces individualistically).

By contrast, the relationship of Kadıköy residents with place is stronger:

"I like to shop at local places like the neighborhood grocery store, small supermarket, and street market. I don't enjoy going to shopping malls much, I only go if there's something that I want to buy on sale. It gives me a sense of belonging and I really like that. I mean, having a friend at every corner. (...) If I ever found myself on the street, there are many homes I could go to, so I really like it here. When I come to the neighborhood it feels like I've come home." (Handan, 47)

"Kadıköy is still a good neighborhood. It hasn't degenerated much, both structure and content-wise. Well, actually it's rapidly degenerating. But there is the fact that it's close to everywhere. It still gives you the feeling that you're living in a small town. It's not very isolated, at least from its surroundings. When you walk in the street you can run into many people you know, you can greet many shopkeepers and ask

how they're doing. These things are still around today." (Ilhan, 57)

In terms of patterns of use of public spaces, the most undesirable practices for both sites are patterns of use that are considered to be disruptive or dangerous for those around, such as drinking alcoholic beverages and skateboarding, while both sites put thinner-sniffers and beggars at the top of the list of undesirable populations. These segments of the population generally emerge as segments who are marginalized and regarded as being outside the norm. It is important to note that in Kadıköy, where there is a higher concentration of thinner-sniffers and beggars, the Municipality suggests recourse to private security arrangements to keep these groups out of public spaces (interview with Kadıköy Municipality). In this respect, the populations regarded as "undesirables" by the municipality and by residents coincide; driving these groups out of public spaces and resorting to security measures to do this are seen as a solution. This shows us how the concepts of urbanism, citizenship, and public order can take a position opposite to equality and freedom of access. Therefore, as stated by Kohn (2004) and Mitchell (2003), the regulation of public spaces to address the needs and tastes of certain users and certain uses can lead to the exclusion of some segments of society. Such being the case, even though keeping unaccepted/undesired uses and users out of these places through the discourse of security may confer legitimacy upon policy makers in the eyes of the public, contradictory situations will erode this legitimacy. For example, for an area which users mostly described as being safe, municipalities are saying that security needs to be increased through the additional involvement of private security companies. Thus, users perceive security as a problem even though they state that they do not experience any problems related to security (Table 4).

Table 4. *Perception of security.*

Item	Indicator	Kadıköy (%)	Ataşehir (%)
Sense of security	Safe	86	82
	Not safe	14	18
Security measures	Adequate	59	65
	Need to be enhanced	41	35

4.1.3. The dimensions of management and participation

Another dimension that addresses public spaces is the management. Ownership and maintenance responsibilities belong to the public. Entrance and exit are not controlled and there are no restrictive design elements such as fences. There are no private or publicly employed security staff and they are open to everyone. With these qualities they meet the definition of public space in the literature. In terms of the management of these spaces and the roles of users or the public, both municipalities have similar approaches. Both have adopted a discourse against the privatization of public spaces and stated that they gave importance to and took into consideration the views of users and residents and that their priority objective in planning and designing public spaces was that all segments of the population would be able to use them. They also stressed that they especially aimed to conduct work that would facilitate their use by disadvantaged groups such as disabled people, the elderly, and children. Despite these, the results of the survey conducted with users indicate that they see the disabled as being the only social segment who cannot utilize these spaces.

On the subject of participation, we observed that the conditions for participation have not yet reached a certain level of maturity. The Kadıköy Municipality stated that apart from surveys, they conduct participatory meetings with residents and shop owners. Furthermore, they collaborate with non-governmental organizations. It is a fact that active participation is not defined in the planning system in Tur-

With the public sector downsizing, public security is handed over to the private sector, which raises questions about what may happen in the future. This issue needs to be explored in greater depth and in all its dimensions.

key. Though it is possible to reach users through numerous channels and there are many different levels and forms of participation, we cannot speak of a participatory process other than promoting projects, conducting polls,

holding meetings, and answering petitions. Nevertheless, in the interviews with officials, they expressed that the people show their reactions openly and that these are taken into consideration by the municipalities.

In the context of participation and governance, rather than sustained communication between residents and administrations, there is a form of relationship that is based on positive or negative reactions according to whether or not the people like or dislike municipal implementations. In Ataşehir, it is observed that residents of gated communities do not associate the municipality with public spaces; on the contrary, they only associate the municipality with infrastructure (sewerage and roads). And this is a consequence of the fact that for residents, common spaces within gated communities stand in for public spaces and the management of the gated community stands in for the municipality. Furthermore, while on the one hand, officials of the Ataşehir Municipality speak of creating public spaces and parks that are open to everyone and can be used by all segments of the population, on the other hand, they state that West Ataşehir is more prestigious than the rest of the district, and that they want to transform the open areas in this part into more prestigious places. However, they believe that in neighborhoods inhabited by the poorer segments it would be sufficient to build ordinary parks. In this context, we can say that the municipality's concern is to design according to the class status of its residents.

Users in both Ataşehir and Kadıköy who are aware of the importance of the public character of public spaces stated that these spaces should be publicly managed. In this respect, we can say that there is awareness against the privatization of public spaces.

4. Conclusion

This study reveals that the use of public spaces has direct relationship with the form of urbanization and changing living preferences of citizens that form social classes. On the conceptual level, the basic role and functions of public spaces in the city can be considered on two layers. The first is the dimension that constitutes an important part of the everyday lives of individuals; that is, in addition to the recreational function that public spaces provide city dwellers (resting, watching around, meeting with friends, and relaxation), their function of enabling us to be together with and getting to know people who are different from us. This was one of the most prominent functions noted by both the survey participants and the individuals we interviewed. The functions of eating and drinking, strolling, and shopping –which are other gathering and leisure activities related to the above functions–, emerged as main purposes for the use of public space.

The second function of public spaces emerges within the context of democratic rights; indeed, in the constitution of the public sphere, the only means that directly ensures the visibility of the people are public spaces, which are places where assembly and demonstration rights are exercised. In this respect, the survey participants and interviewees, as well as the officials interviewed at the municipalities stated that public spaces should be seen as areas that ensure the exercise of democratic rights within the context of the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals. Yet, it is perceived that local governments treat public spaces as the property of the state but not the public. This tendency conceptualized as the "property rights" approach by Kohn (2004) is also a step towards the privatization of public spaces. At the same time, a predominating opinion expressed in the survey results is that these spaces are seen as spaces that "belong to everyone" –as they are described in the literature–, and that they should remain so. Considered in terms of these two functions, the research conducted in two different areas of Istanbul, shows us that individuals have similar attitudes in assessing public spaces. It can be concluded that the perceived quality of public spaces is in favor of full publicness. Yet concentrating on the practice, this study opens up some questions about the publicness of these places.

In this respect, the marked difference between users in Ataşehir and

in Kadıköy is that while Kadıköy residents generally have a tendency to use public spaces that are accessible within the immediate surroundings, in Ataşehir, residents especially of gated communities, prefer places that are identified with Istanbul's urban identity (the Bosphorus shores, the city center, or historical areas). This result might be an expected one since the strong identity of Kadıköy on the one hand, and lack of identity of public spaces in West Ataşehir on the other since they are located in between gated communities where the connection between public and private spaces are unidentifiable. Accordingly, white collar workers living in gated communities prefer to use secure and prestigious places that meet their expectations. Apart from this, users of the public spaces in Ataşehir are mostly people who live in the vicinity and come to these places for a short time. Therefore, it can be regarded that residents of Ataşehir, especially those of gated communities, are people who do not withdraw from public spaces per se, but rather use places that suit their expectations and preferences. However, most of the users of the both places mostly access the parks by walking, which show that accessibility is an important factor for the use of public

portunities available around them. Kadıköy residents expressed that they find many opportunities, including socialization within Kadıköy, and even add that they do not leave Kadıköy unless necessary. Within this framework, while shopping malls do not emerge as an option for Kadıköy residents, for Ataşehir residents, shopping malls are the second option for spending leisure time, home being the first. In this respect, we can say that private space-led urbanization is not limited to gated communities and directs residents toward privately-owned, secure spaces.

We observed that an urban environment like Kadıköy –which was conceived in a mixed-use way, is at walking distance, and where private and public spaces have a direct relationship–, is important in terms of the sense of belonging, of neighborhood life, and of establishing relationships with acquaintances and neighbors. Kadıköy residents are eager to strike up acquaintances with people living in their neighborhood and with shop owners, and feel pleased about this. By contrast, in Ataşehir, despite the fact that there is a private management body within the gated communities, their residents state that they do not attend meetings and that they have delegated duties to spaces.

In terms of diversity of users, the public spaces under study do not match the description of the ideal public space in the literature. The examples of Kadıköy and Ataşehir demonstrate that neither of these places, are public spaces where "everybody" can be together, yet users view them as places where everyone can go. Contrary to the vivid image and its potential, it is surprising that Kadıköy is less diverse than it would be expected. Though we cannot speak of exclusion in this respect, we can say that the identities, functions, and design features of these places cause them to be preferred by certain segments. Accordingly, the growing white collar population in Ataşehir may necessitate a new socializing space in the future.

Furthermore, the preferences of individuals, ranging from exercising to shopping and spending leisure time, are also shaped according to the op-

the management of the gated community. Private space-led organization of the city attracts people searching for pleasant, fancy and secure places to live and socialize.

Due to the fact that the city has developed without identity, shopping malls have become an option instead of public spaces that are in the vicinity of ¬residences. In this context, it seems like the primary threat to public spaces in Istanbul is the private space-led urbanization, which discourages the flourishing of neighborhood relations and regular use of local public spaces. Yet, these questions also deserve a deeper investigation on the publicness of urban life.

This study reveals that the use of public spaces has direct relationship with the form of urbanization and changing living preferences of citizens that form social classes. In terms of the users of the public spaces, it opens up a question regarding the manage-

rial class. It seems like it is essential to assess and interpret their habits in the city, whether they retrieve from the public spaces or not. Likewise, lower classes almost do not appear in both cases. Even though West Ataşehir seems like an upper class district, there are lower-middle and lower class neighborhoods also. This opens up the question of social segregation in terms of the habits of different classes regarding the use of public space. Although the case areas are both open to public and not privatized, these ordinary spaces of the city show that there is not a social mix covering all segments of the society.

Acknowledgements

The Research Project (no: 2013/11) that this article based on was supported by MSGSU Scientific Research Projects Fund between April 2013-September 2014. The authors also would like to thank to the anonymous reviewers for their contribution and constructive criticism.

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