



RE-THINKING ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF İZMİR HARBOUR DISTRICT

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Abstract: İzmir harbour which provides the changes in the urban history and identity was also being affected in the progression of the back-of-harbour. In this region, some important factory buildings and some structures were built like storages, sheds, hoppers for meeting the needs within the process in which the industrial structuring increased.

In this study, the building stock existed at the harbour region was analyzed from the viewpoint of their location at the city, their interaction with each other's by examining how they can be re-adapted by suited up into today's conditions and it was also analyzed to develop strategies on how these structures can serve to the needs of the city with proper different functions. Besides, it was examined how the urban identity can also be "re-adapted" like the buildings and how the structures can contribute to the urban identity with the proposed new ideas.

Key Words: İzmir Harbour District, urban identity, Darağaç, commercial structures, transformation.

1. Introduction

İzmir Harbour District which was initiated a critical development process with the orientation of the east-west caravan trading towards İzmir Harbour at 19th century became a commercial zone shaped with a cosmopolite socio-economic structure composed of Muslim and Non-Muslim European merchants. Social, political and technological changes at the historical period attendant caused İzmir Harbour District also to transform and this district was turned out into a crucial center which fulfill the new needs of the city. Within

this context, some proposals should be brought forward to provide the acceleration of the improvement of İzmir and the functions which will come up the potentials of this district should be decided.

2. History of İzmir Harbour District

With the construction of Alsancak Train Station and the provision of the connection with the harbour, Punto was zoned to construction as being the farthest district of Kordon at the north and subsequently offices, storage areas and housing units were constructed. With the

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construction of Alsancak Train Station and the provision of the connection with the harbour, Punto was zoned to construction as being the farthest district of Kordon at the north and subsequently offices, storage areas and housing units were constructed.

İzmir's first industry zone was established in the district of Darağacı through the development of trading which was composed of storage areas, ateliers and factories by the virtue of Alsancak-Halkapınar tramway rail.

Starting from the 20th century, in addition to the function of storing; some new functioned factories were also started to be emerged like soap, oil, tobacco, fig treatment and cement. Water Gas Factory, Tile Factory and Floor factory can be listed as the examples which are still standing. After the proclamation of the republic, the harbor district still continued to develop as industrial area and Electricity Factory (1928) and Orient Factory (1924) were established. With the establishment of the harbor at 1959, multistory buildings were started to be constructed for storing tobacco, cotton and fig. Sümerbank and Tariş Factories were also operationalized at that time.

Using this district as central working area idea which developed as industry

zone till 1990's was emerged and became a current issue with the 1989 Revision Construction Plan.

Some historical storages and factories were changed their functions by transformation besides the newly constructed management and service buildings.

3. "New City Center Construction Plan"

İzmir Harbour District is one of the three main districts which were included in the New City Center Construction Plan approved in 2003 (ÇIKIŞ, 2009). This district has some one of kind characteristics. Primarily, this district is located next to the central neighborhoods which continue its intensity. There are a great number of structures in that district which are important in terms of urban memory.

In the "New City Center Construction Plan" which was made for İzmir Harbour District, by considering İzmir Harbour would be transported from this region; it was aimed to use the area limited by Şehitler Avenue, Liman Avenue and Meles River was proposed to be functionalized as "Tourism and Trading", registered old commercial structures to be reclaimed as special project areas and transformed into utilizations which include "Culture and Trading".

4. Case Study

Referring to “New City Center Construction Plan” prepared in 2003, İzmir Harbour District is formed of a restricted triangle area with Alsancak Harbour at the north, Alsancak Train Station and its related buildings at the west and Meles River and Mürselpaşa Avenue at the southeast.

In this study, Ege Neighborhood was analyzed under the scope of this case in addition to the some important commercial structures existing in this restricted triangle belongs to the period which are registered like Old Water Gas Factory, Old Electricity Factory, Old Orient Factory, Old Tile Factory, Old Sümerbank Chintz Industry, Old Tariş Alcohol Factory and Old Floor Factory. In this study, analysis was made through two-dimensional situation sheets and three-dimensional maps and the location of İzmir Harbour District’s location in the whole city was analyzed.

5. Situation Analysis and Problems and Needs that Makes Transformation Essential

The differentiation of the commercial pattern from the urban pattern which put in an appearance at the parcels that were proposed as tourism and trading functions for İzmir Harbour District was provided through the parameters of 0.30 floor space and 3.00 floor area existing in the plan notes. By means of these permissive

construction provisions which covers nearly one third of the whole land, wide public spaces and different architectural approaches were enabled.

Protecting the buildings which have historical value as “Special Planning Spaces” and thinking them as public space / recreation space / cultural facility are also positive approaches. With this respect, Old Water Gas Factory’s protection was applied as Cultural Center. Through the same approach, it was aimed to transform Sümerbank Facilities into Education Campus but with the applications, nearly all the existing structures were demolished and architectural solutions with “monotony”, disconnected from its immediate surrounding and the whole was constructed.

The studies of transforming an Old Floor Factory which was rendered service to Ege Newspaper (1980s – 1996) and Yaşar University (1996 – 2013) into a museum were also started on behalf of Yaşar Holding.

Counter to all those above attempts, İzmir Harbour District still exists as an area which has complicated and multi-layered problems in the whole city. Being many small scaled registered structures in the district and disregarding the existing parcels and the roads at the proposal are some of

the important problems of this area.

6. Proposals

With the case study conducted and situation analysis, the potentials of İzmir Harbour District were detected. Via the proposals that composed, it was aimed to reanimate İzmir Harbour District and provide a relation with city center by keeping this district's historical, physical, cultural and social values alive. The aim of these proposals is not only a spatial change and transformation but an attempt to improve the district's socio-economic and cultural structure at the same time. With a totalitarian approach, it was aimed to make positive contributions both to the identity of İzmir Harbour District and the whole city of İzmir.

Referring to above, the proposals that brought forward can be listed as:

1) Different functions like education, trading, culture, accommodation and housing (Ege Neighborhood) like functions can be defined by dividing İzmir Harbour District into 5.

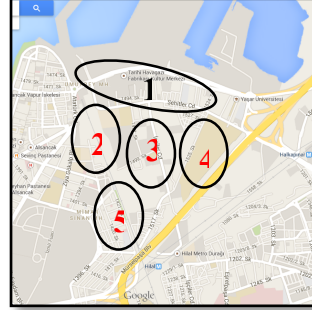


Image 1. İzmir Harbour District

2) By strengthening the route of Kadifekale – Agora – Basmane – Fuar – Ege Neighborhood – Halkapınar and taking it into the city, İzmir Harbour District can be turned out into a frequent destination.

3) In which different functions will come together at the district, some public centers and recreation areas can be designed through the new green areas as assembly units in which community dwellers and visitors can take breath.

4) By pedestrianizing İzmir Harbour District in specific days, it can be provided to make people go through more easily and smoothly through the pedestrian ways in between these 5 regions.

5) It can be provided that the district to be a part of the whole city and being in interaction with another neighborhoods in addition to the transformation of this area only in itself by taking the rail road that reaches Alsancak Train Station into underground or constructing an overpass

both for pedestrians and automobiles for providing an access to İzmir International Fair.

6) A tour bus which can take visitors and tourists from one point of İzmir Harbour District and taking them into another point by showing them around can be organized. Passengers can be transported from one bus-stop to another by referring to the constituted time-schedule.

7) For keeping the district 24 hours alive, the existing structures can be functionalized as boutique hotel, restaurants or museums. Besides, a contribution to districts' intellectual improvement can be supplied by re-adapting some big storage buildings as student dormitories or youth centers.

8) With the organized open air cinemas, various exhibitions, fairs, shows, theatres or ateliers, the attention of İzmir community can be distracted to İzmir Harbour District which make this area to emerge as new social and cultural city center.

9) Some recreation areas can also be constituted in which important structures special to Aegean was downsized in scale can be exhibited like Miniaturk in İstanbul and Madurodam in Netherlands.

10) As being against to globalization and also

contributing to urban identity of İzmir, opening of the restaurants keeping back the local cuisine culture and organizing some informative activities about the history of İzmir also help İzmir Harbour District to improve by protecting the local culture.

7. Results

At the outset of to be developed enhancement / improvement / reanimation studies, whole information about the district like the situation analysis of the social, cultural and physical infrastructure and ownership, questionnaire, situation analysis and the documentation of the structures should be obtained.

İzmir Harbour District should be thought as the prolongation of İzmir city center, the integration of the green area located in the direction of Fuar and Kadifekale / Agora should be provided with the above proposed transportation planning which will take place in the planned transformation project.

A staging study should be conducted for the application of the strategy plan that will be prepared for the 5 different zones as proposed above and studies should be started for solving the ownership problems at this process. Using types should be decided in accordance with the structures and the parcels in each zone.

Such an approach which will meet the social and cultural requirements of the people living in Ege Neighborhood should be developed for the enhancement project and it should be encouraged to make people keep living in Ege Neighborhood.

By protecting the areas' social structure, İzmir Harbour District can be turned out into cities' new attraction point through enhancement in conjunction with community residents.

The requirement of a holistic approach by depending on the functions used in the District rather than personal ones for the solutions improved for problematic areas like Alsancak Stadium should be represented to the local authorities and relevant governmental establishments.

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