

Urban Localities under Glocal Dynamics: The Case of Yeldeğirmeni ¹

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Abstract

As the population in world cities grow and urban transformation processes (gentrification, vitalization etc.) gain speed, it seems that both local and global dynamics intermingle. The term “glocal” has been used as the simultaneous occurrence of both universalizing and particularizing trends in contemporary socio-political, and socio-economic systems. Since 1990, many scholars argued that the welfare policies of urbanism are superseded by the “neo-urban politics”. This process ended up with a new focus on local economy and competitiveness that is empowered by the process of glocalisation. As far the as urban transformation/renewal/revitalization is concerned it seems impossible to isolate the process from the global market, city branding and the rising new middle class. In this article the term glocalization will be utilized in the context of İstanbul and it will be employed for having a better understanding the two general problematics: Firstly, how does local politics and competitive processes work under the pressure of globalization (i.e special attractions, branding, organizing international events); secondly how urban politics and local actors get influenced by it. The specific focus in this research will be the case of Yeldeğirmeni in Kadıköy which seems to be known as a positive and participatory model for revitalization in Asian side of İstanbul. However according to the findings of this study %90 percent of the people who reside here about 35- 40 years neighborhood have negative responses to it. The results of this study will be discussed in the context of new urban politics and its glocal consequences.

Keywords: Urban Politics, Yeldeğirmeni, Glocalization, Branding, Urban Revitalization

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Küyerel Dinamiklerin Etkisi Altında Kentsel Bölgeler: Yeldeğirmeni Örneği

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Öz

Şehirlerdeki nüfus arttıkça kentsel dönüşüm süreçleri (soylulaştırma, yenileme vb) hız kazanmakta, buna paralel olarak küresel ve yerel dinamikler iç içe geçmektedir. Türkçe “küyerel” olarak çevrilen terim, evrenselleştirme ve yerelleşme eğilimlerinin eş zamanlı vuku bulması ve bu süreçlerin güncel sosyopolitik ve sosyoekonomik sistemleri etkilemesiyle ortaya çıkmıştır. 1990’lardan gibi araştırmacıların öne sürdüğü gibi kentsel politikalar refah merkezli olmaktan çıkıp yeni kentsel politikalara dönüşmüştür. Bu süreç yerel ekonomilerin yeni roller edinmesi ve küyerelleşmenin getirdiği yeni rekabetçi modelin tarifidir. Kentsel dönüşüm/soylulaştırma/yenileme/canlandırma söz konusu olduğunda, meselenin global emlak piyasasından, şehirlerin markalaşmasından ve yeni orta sınıfların ortaya çıkışından bağımsız ele alınması imkansızdır. Bu yazıda küyerelleşme İstanbul bağlamında ele alınacak ve iki sorunsalın açıklanmasında kullanılacaktır: Birincisi yerel politikaların ve rekabet süreçlerinin küresel baskı altında nasıl çalıştığı (örn. Yereli cazip kılma, markalaşma, uluslararası organizasyonlar düzenleme), ikinci olarak kentsel yerel siyasetin ve yerel aktörlerin bu süreçlerden nasıl etkilendiği. Örnek vaka olarak İstanbul’un Asya kısmında, Kadıköy semtindeki canlandırma projesiyle katılımcı ve olumlu bir örnek olarak gündeme gelen Yeldeğirmeni mahallesi seçilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın saha araştırmasında açığa çıkan bulgular 35-40 sene boyunca bu mahallenin sakini olmuş kişilerin %90’ının süreci olumlu algılamadığı yönündedir. Bu yazıda canlandırma projesiyle yaşanan dönüşümde mahalle sakinlerinin verdiği tepkiler ve deneyimler küyerel dinamikler altında kalan yerel kentsel politikalar açısından tartışılacaktır

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kentsel Politikalar, Yeldeğirmeni, Küyerelleşme, Markalaşma, Kentsel Canlandırma

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Introduction

According to United Nations report world's population could grow to around 8.5 billion in 2030, 9.7 billion in 2050, and 10.9 billion in 2100. Urban zones are anticipated to absorb virtually all the future growth of the world's population (United Nations, [UN] 2019). Rapid urban growth presents an important prospect, but it also raises some challenges to the application of an ambitious urban development agenda that seeks to make cities and human settlements all-encompassing, secure, robust and sustainable.

With the socio-economic dynamics triggered by the 21st century urban politics and cities assumed more socio-political roles than before. In order to observe the simultaneous advance of globalization and localization, the initial use of the term, *glocal* should be contemplated. This term, first used in 1980s and as described in *Harvard Business Review* and later used by the sociologist Roland Robertson (1997), who emphasized on synchronicity of the processes which are globalizing and decomposing the world. Robertson at the conference (entitled as Globalization and Indigenous Culture) stated that glocalization means the simultaneity – the co-presence – of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies. Similarly the prominent sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (2013) argued that in the age glocalization, hybrid combinations that blend locality by universality are gaining significance with the opportunities offered by technology. As physical distance is losing its significance, we bear witness to the combination of gradually increasing and synchronously bonded localities. In this context, studies on neighborhood and locality will become more significant. It can be observed that local communities respond or react to global (economical, sociological, cultural, political) fluctuations more specifically (i.e. “Greta effect” on climate change-school activism) and that we live in a multi-centered global world rather than a world composed of nation states. New actors independent of national or regional context are emerging and playing their parts in micro-/meso/macro levels.

Istanbul and New Urban Politics

At the turn of the twentieth century a paradigm shift in the world's city planning and urban politics occurred; this is due to the decline of the Fordist manufacturing industries and re-arrangement of Keynesian understanding into the neoliberal model (Brenner, 2003, p.197- 198). Hence planning was considered as a new managerial tool of urban politics that aims at overcoming the difficulties triggered by the uncontrolled growth of cities as a result of industrialization in Western countries (Akpınar, 2014, p. 62). In Turkey, Western professional had a significant impact on urban planning processes, with foreign experts playing important roles in shaping the town planning. Following the path of western countries (Hall & Hubbard, 1996), Turkey has rebuilt both of its national and local politics in order to attract global capital investment (Keyder, 2005).

It is argued that the urban transformations appeared in four different types. First one is the renewal of squatters at the periphery of the cities, the second one is upgrading of the apartments built in 1960-70s in the city centers, third one is the development of the rural areas at the periphery of the cities to provide housing complexes for upper income groups and the last one gentrification of the historical housing areas in the old city centers (Ataöv & Osmay, 2007, p.719)

However, it must be admitted that the overall discussion on urban policies for Turkey and İstanbul would exceed the limits of this article. For our purposes here we can briefly categorize the historical span of urban politics into three periods:

1. Republican Modernist Urban Politics: 1923-1950
2. Populist -Developmentalist Urban Politics :1950-1990
3. Neoliberal & Entrepreneurial Urban Politics: 1990 and the post 2000 period.

The third period indicated that local-politics will gain more dominance as a form of urban management; hence municipal administrations would take an entrepreneurial role, alone or in partnership with private-sector actors (Miraftab, 2004). Therefore, one can argue that in Turkey during the 1990's there was a gradual shift from populist developmentalism towards a neoliberal logic of urban politics in order to meet the demands of the market (Kuyucu & Ünsal, 2010). This shift could be seen under the light of glocalization that has an impact on marketing strategies (global property market, city branding process, micro-management tools).

In the context of Turkey during the first period (1923-1950) described above, the basic principle that dominated urban politics is modernism, as it was perceived by the Republican authorities as an effective instrument to re-organize urban space in accordance with 'scientific' criteria while building the infrastructure that would sustain economic development and providing the equipment that a modern society required" (Akpınar, 2014, p.62). This period also corresponds to de-Ottomanization of Istanbul (Bozdoğan, 2001) which means the emergence the new identifications for a new nation in the political imagination by the Republican elite. This modernist project is to be accomplished via new social institutions, re- arrangement of urban environment. The Republican spatial politics also involved the re- arrangement of Ottoman spaces such as the neighborhoods once populated by the ex-Ottoman and the non-Muslim religious communities (Houston 2018, p.346). During the first half of the second period (1950-1990) one can refer to large constructions and projects, which President Adnan Menderes called as the "beautification of İstanbul"; this "beautification" had irreversible outcomes that turned the city to an enormous site of construction between 1956 and 1960 (Akpınar, 2015, pp. 56-58). Menderes was building new avenues and modern roads, it was planned that the wide boulevards would ease traffic jam and facilitate circulation, even as they cut new lines of division between /within neighborhoods. However, Menderes' operation was highly dominated by quick fix solutions, existing opportunities and influences; the plan had been revised several times during the operations because it was not based on scientific calculations. Hence, this massive re-building process resulted in a large-scale expropriation and demolition. During the years of operations 7.289 buildings expropriated by municipality and numerous of historical buildings removed or displaced and some of the historical buildings which were announced to be displaced like Karaköy Mescidi, got lost because of lack of planning. (Tekeli, 1994). Moreover, the further operations carried by the mayors of İstanbul namely Bedrettin Dalan and Nurettin Sözen increased the populist developmental policies that had irreversible effects in the urban space. By the year 1970 İstanbul's population increased by internal migration and doubled from about 1 million in 1950 to 2.2 million and then grew to 2.9 million in 1980. The population of the metropolitan area grew from 1.1 million in 1950, to 3 million in 1970 and 4.7 million in 1980. Obviously, these transformations had a huge impact on the geo-economy and demography of İstanbul (Enlil, 2011, pp.6-8).

The third period starts from 1990 where the President Erdoğan served as mayor of İstanbul, this period represents the abovementioned shift in the understanding of urban politics moving towards the neoliberal and entrepreneurial networks. As it is mentioned above, the beginning of 21st century marked a significant step for glocalization that becomes a marketing strategy embedded in branding cities as "trademarks" in the global property market. This article argues that city branding is ties glocalization with urban politics since it aims at attracting global investment and tourists by utilizing local features. Hence in order to shine out, cities and municipalities construct distinctive brands; highlighting their local features, these brands generally emphasize 'eccentric' 'attractive' and 'idiosyncratic features of cities (Grodach, 2009; Hospers, 2009). It is expected that when these characteristics are highlighted in branding process, the market value of a city is increasing and therefore its competitiveness rise. City branding processes usually involve logo-construction and captivating mottos. These qualities refer to the city's history, socio-cultural features, architecture and geographical location in order to influence people's perceptions of the city (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). Moreover there are other branding strategies such as hosting worldwide events, congresses and so-called mega-events /mega-projects. Throughout the world particularly mega-events such as the Olympic Games, World Trade Fairs, festivals and

cultural titles like European Capital of Culture are considered as a key to global recognition and consequently tourist attraction (Burton, 2003). Furthermore, it seems branding through architecture has worked out well for some cities. For example, several cities such as Barcelona, Dubai have become examples showing how a city can turn to a place of touristic attraction by following urban regeneration strategies and creating new landmarks or iconic buildings. Furthermore, the manufactured environment (e.g., landmarks, districts, spectacular architecture) and renowned personalities (e.g., Kafka and Prague) can make cities distinguishable (Anholt, 2002). In the context of İstanbul one may also think of the Canal İstanbul mega-project as an example which was initiated by Prime Minister (PM) Erdoğan during elections in April 2011; Erdoğan declared that with this project the Ottoman's dream will come true. This is a project for the artificial sea-level waterway, which is on East Thrace, connecting the Black Sea to the Marmara, and thus to the Aegean and Mediterranean seas. İstanbul Canal would divide the current European side of İstanbul and thus form an island between Asia and Europe (the island would have a shoreline with the Black Sea, Sea of Marmara, the new canal and the Bosphorus). In Erdoğan's presentation of the project, the significance is especially put in reference to Ottoman past, since that there were seven attempts by seven emperors for 400 years, the last being done in 1863 (Yılmaz, 2010). Mr. Erdoğan referred directly to the previous attempt from the last attempt. This was made by Sultan Abdülmecit at 1856 (Kundak & Baypınar, 2011). According to Environment and Urbanization Minister "Canal İstanbul is a project that will make Turkey a leading country in the world and add value to İstanbul's brand" (Hürriyet Daily News, 2021). Apparently, the "brand new İstanbul" is promoted with its local eccentricities and multicultural history and as an attraction for both Western and non-western global capital. When the urban tourism discourse is examined one can see that the evolution of promotional practices from unsystematic and volatile marketing strategies to a coherent city branding (Uysal, 2017). Therefore, with the global marketing strategy İstanbul is assumed to be a "global city" and began to gain ground as an attraction center for foreign investment (Sassen, 1991; Öktem, 2005). One can argue that this city branding represents İstanbul with self-orientalist discourse, utilizing the market value of Ottoman past as the of multi-faith historical urban space. However, this process has its own drawbacks, especially during the 2000s, the urban politics under the pressure of global trends created unequal results for different segments of the society in İstanbul. The property and labor markets has changed much to the disadvantage of low-income classes. The core city center has become very expensive as the demand of national and foreign capital has increased. As a result, low-income people residing in these areas were pushed to the outer districts of the city. This enhanced the existing social polarization and exclusion, rather than decreasing it.

Also following the years of the 2000 there appeared a public discontent about the "brand new İstanbul" since its silhouette has been shadowed by skyscrapers. As one of the popular newspaper reports: "Despite the President's professed preference for horizontal buildings, tall buildings projects in İstanbul and across have surged under the ruling of Justice and Development Party's (JPD), including in the government's much-vaunted urban transformation policy (Hürriyet Daily News, 2014).

As in other global cities, gentrification of İstanbul has been accelerated during the 1990s in the city center and in many historical neighborhoods, and this process is still continuously and increasingly taking place. To various types of gentrification/urban transformation/revitalization occurred in İstanbul through the modernization of old houses in the city center that are below the standards and mostly accommodated by the poor, and middle class and new cultural groups. Such gentrified areas are in by the Bosphorus line (i.e. Arnavutköy, Ortaköy and Kuzguncuk) Beyoğlu, Fatih and in Kadıköy districts. (Çeker & Belge, 2015, p. 78). From 1990 onwards, this transformation continued in Cihangir, Galata, Tarlabaşı and Asmalımeşcit neighborhoods in Beyoğlu.

The above mentioned transformations paved the way for the formation of a new middle class as a result of growth in service industry, flexibility in business hours and removal of home-office distinction by the improvements in technological opportunities. This new middle class is differentiated from classical middle class

in many respects, one of this differentiation points is their housing and investment preferences. The new middle class, not only in Istanbul but also in other urban areas in the world has created its own lifestyle with the resident preferences in old neighborhoods, which partly considered as depression areas that preserve their historical texture. There are various studies on how the new middle class and their housing and investment demand functions as a driver of urban gentrification (Butler 1999, Hamnett 1994). The discussion here revolves around whether the dynamics in capitalist urban society produce only economic polarization between capital and labor or are they in practice associated with more socio-cultural divisions (Perkin, 1989).

Glocal Urban Politics and the Case of Yeldeğirmeni

As this article focuses on Asian side (Kadıköy-Yeldeğirmeni) it will also briefly give the context of urban transformation in this neighborhood. Yeldeğirmeni is one of the 21 neighborhoods of Kadıköy. It is located along the seaside in an area surrounded by Kadıköy Bazaar, the historical Haydarpaşa Railway Station, Ayrılık Çeşmesi Ottoman Cemetery. Its population is currently 13.898 (Turkish Statistical Institute [TUIK], 2018).

Yeldeğirmeni is named after the four windmills built during the first Abdulhamid period towards the end of the 18th century. While the Turkish, Greek, Jewish and Armenian communities were residing in the region; the population of Muslim has increased with the building of the Iskele Mosque in the 18th century. On the other hand, in the 19th century, non-Muslim communities migrated to Yeldeğirmeni due to the large fires at other districts such as Kuzguncuk (Atılğan 2017).

Thus, Yeldeğirmeni turned out to be multi-cultural urban space accommodating Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities, who practice their own religion in Notre Dame Du Rosarie Church, Hemdat Israel Synagogue and Aya Yorgi Church. All these buildings are alive today and some of them transformed and gained new functions i.e. Notre Dame Du Rosarie Church became Yeldeğirmeni Art Center. The historical schools founded in this area were pioneers for the creation of current educational structures that still exist today: The German School, which was built for the children of working families working in the construction of Haydar Paşa station, St. Louis Primary School (today's use, Yeldeğirmeni Homeless Children and Youth Center), St. Euphémie French Girls Secondary School (Kemal Atatürk Anatolian High School) and Ecole Communale Israeli (Haydar Paşa) Jewish School (Atılğan, 2017).

To put it briefly Yeldeğirmeni increased its settlement capacity as a space for a multi-cultural community with its demographic structure that changed over time. During the Republican period under the impact of modern urban politics (as described above in the categorization of urban politics in Istanbul) along with the Turkification policies, the multi-cultural neighborhoods such as Yeldeğirmeni experienced a significant socio-cultural and demographic change. Most of the Greek community left as a result of the population exchange made with Greece in 1923. This was the beginning of the decline of the multi-religious districts in İstanbul where co-existence was no longer desired (Doumanis, 2013, p.99). During the 1950s and further on, under the impact of developmental populist urban politics, Yeldeğirmeni had a flow of migration from Anatolian cities, its population increased along with the political turmoil that took place. The increasing attacks to the non-Muslim populations which showed itself most demonstrably on 6-7 September 1954 all over İstanbul.” (Türkmen, 2015, pp. 37).

Moreover, there were other political developments like the Turkish military operation in Cyprus that was launched on 20 July 1974, following the Cypriot coup d'état on 15 July 1974 which had a serious impact on Turkish Greek relations (Stavrou, 2011, p.130). Also there happened three terrorist attacks on Jewish community in İstanbul, i.e., Neve Shalom Synagogue in 1986, 1992 and 2003. That is an important point that these attacks and political turmoil make people insecure and distant from each other in the neighborhoods where they used to live side by side. After the decline of non-Muslim communities Yeldeğirmeni turned out to be back quarter of Kadıköy, a depression area until the 2000's. The rate of unemployment also gave rise sense

of insecurity and crime rate was high (Arısoy, 2014). In 2010, Yeldeğirmeni gained a central role, in the middle of many mega projects. Moreover, Yeldeğirmeni also effected by transportation projects like Marmaray which has a transit subway station on the area, Haydarpaşa Port Harbor Project, Kadıköy Square Moda Filling Area and Fikirtepe Urban Transformation projects. On the other hand, the aftermath of Haydarpaşa Station, who has gained very important symbolic and functional roles in the city, also effects the identity of the neighborhood.

Although the urban texture of Yeldeğirmeni, complies with the gentrified area features (Ottoman history, formerly a depression area, renewed by the housing interest of the new middle class) and it differs from other gentrified neighborhoods since it had an ongoing process of revitalization, which started in 2010 with the partnership of the Foundation for the Protection and Promotion of the Environment and Cultural Heritage [CEKÜL] and Kadıköy Municipality. The area is preserved since it has significant remains of Ottoman heritage, and it is officially under the urban protection. According to the academic studies when “revitalization” projects run by private sectors, it is common to observe a change in the social structure of the neighborhood, in most cases local people with low income end up migrating to lower class neighborhoods as a result of change of value (Şahin, 2013). Academic studies suggest that the example of Yeldeğirmeni stands out among other renewal projects that are run by private sectors (Şahin, 2013). In the case of Yeldeğirmeni, revitalization is carried out by the Kadıköy Municipality and NGO based initiatives named as (ÇEKUL) worked together and they both aimed at creating a measured but solid change in the neighborhood. The project in Yeldeğirmeni describes revitalization in the following way “generating a more healthy and human urban space in a social, economic, physical sense; in every step it will be developed with the participation of people of Yeldeğirmeni since it targets a sustainable regeneration” (ÇEKÜL, 2011). The revitalization project also hosted an international event called Mural festival (2012) festival where the artists from all over the globe painted the facades and walls in the streets of Yeldeğirmeni (i.e., Italian artist Pixel Pancho at Nüşet Efendi Street, French artist Amose at Karakolhane street German artists Dome and Brazilian artist Cladio Ethos at Misakı Milli Street). The Mural art project/festival had a decorative imprint on the neighborhood’s walls, and these painted walls attracted more artists, students and international tourists and it also triggered the rise in the number of art-galleries, atelier and concept cafes. Mural festival and its long-term impacts constitute a good example in detecting how global works can be represented locally in this neighborhood (Mimarizm, 2018).

Methodology & Research Question

However, as municipal policies, organization of international events such Mural festival have their own impact on the urban outlook of Yeldeğirmeni. As frequently stated in the glocalisation and urban politics literature (Butler, 1999; Hamnett 1994) the new middle class and their housing investments/preferences seem to function in Yeldeğirmeni as a further motive for urban revitalization. In addition to this the urban politics here is shaped by both local and global dynamics (Municipality’s revitalization policy, cooperation with CEKUL, organizing international events i.e Mural festival, rise of real estate market/value). The question here is that how the local people interpret this change and one can further discuss the local process under glocal dynamics.

Field work Method & Sample

As this article focuses on how the locals react to this revitalization and how they perceive the transformation a field work is carried out. The field work in 2018 lasted for 6 months, 40 interviews for this study are conducted in 2018-2019, July - January; and it focused on reactions by the local people mainly the traditional shopkeepers (Total 40 people, 30 male 10 female) who lived here more than 35-40 years (See Table 1. For the profile of the Interviewees. The sample discourses quoted here will be coded to keep confidentiality (i.e., Interviewee A). The occupational profile of the interviewees, date of the interviews is presented in detail at the Table 1. The basic responses by the locals will be presented in original quotations below and it will be presented under the headings titled according to the most highlighted points during the interviews.

Table 1.
The Profile of the Interviewees Whose Expressions are Quoted in the Article

Code of Interviewee	Occupation	Duration of Residency	Date of Interview
Interviewee A	Electronic repair store owner	Resident for 30 years	20.07.2018
Interviewee B	Stationary store Owner	Resident for 35 years	13.01.2019
Interviewee C	Baking Shop Owner	Resident for 35 years	5. 08.2018
Interviewee D	Grocery Store owner	Resident for 41 years	9.09.2018
Interviewee E	Photography-Store Owner	Resident for 38 years	16.09.2018
Interviewee F	Tailor	Resident for 30 years	28.12.2018
Interviewee G	Teahouse owner	Resident for 31 years	24.11.2019
Interviewee H	Community House Manager	Resident for 35 years	08.06.2019

Ottoman Heritage and Its Uses as A Nostalgic Element for the Characterization Yeldeğirmeni

During the field work and interviews with the locals, there were certain topics that came forward and highlighted by the locals. For instance, when they recall the childhood memories before 35-40 years ago, the first topic that comes forward is the presence of the non-Muslim communities. The expression quoted below reflect the ways the interviewees interact with their non-Muslim neighbors:

- "We played in the garden of the Synagogue; its garden was well trimmed; I saw aquarium fish for the first time in their garden." (Interviewee A)

The Synagogue that Interviewee (A) mentions above is closed today. It is called as the Hemdat Israel Synagogue, it was built in 1899 during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid the Second. It is behind a high concrete wall and hooked wire fence with security cameras. To visit the synagogue, one must contact the Chief Rabbinate of Istanbul.

- Another Interviewee (B) recalls the following memory to show that how their Jewish neighbors were public spirited and philanthropic: "Our Jewish neighbor had a fridge. I used to sell water down in Kadıköy, and they were providing ice cubes for me so that I can keep the water cold."

Two Interviewees (C and D) are remembering how different religious communities connecting through exchanges of traditional food and how they used to learn from each other: "The doors were always open; our neighbor would bring *gavurdağı* salad and my mom would send them *gözleme*. "They celebrated Easter, New Year and gave us painted eggs".

- “We had Armenian neighbors, everyone was saluting each other; some afternoons they bake *çatal* pie and my mom bake special pastry (*puf böreği*) then they together drink tea on the doorsteps.” (Interviewee D)

These memories by the Interviewees (A, B, C, D) above characterize the intercommunal relations in the Ottoman cosmopolitan social atmosphere. Nowadays this cosmopolitan past is only traceable with respect to structure of the buildings, old apartments and places of religious worship. Today these perceptible signs of the cosmopolitanism became a nostalgic element used for the promotion of this area. It is utilized by both for the real estate market actors who would like to attract more culture and history loving international investors and the new middle class.

The Local Responses to Disappearance of the Old Mahalle

“What happens to our mahalle when families go away? If ten students are living in one flat, then there is no social life with the neighbors. No *komsu* (neighbor) no mahalle. No more family visits to each other.”

As the interviewee (G) says: "In the 1970s non-Muslims were the majority here, they were so polite. They would say thank you even when they give you money. They were orderly and tidy; even the laundry was dried in back balconies not in the front. The cultural mosaic has shattered, spiritual richness has gone; People used to know each other, now no one will be aware if you have a funeral, no one will send them traditional food. Half of the neighborhood used to go for the prayers, but not anymore".

The selected discourses above reflect that the renewal process rises a negative sentiment that seems to be rising among old residents. Thereby, lifestyle differences between the locals and the newcomers constitute problems such as who should adapt to whom? As it can be traced from the expressions by the interviewees “they adapted with us, not vice versa” or “we won’t be a mahalle anymore if no one knows each other” indicate that the local people feel that their mahalle life is at stake.

It is apparent that the revitalization triggered a significant change in the demography and the real estate/property index, when the TUIK and other Real Estate Company statistics is examined in this area the total population is approximately 14.016; the younger population is %22,91 and elderly population is %16.05, and women constitute %52 of the population. % 34 of the population is married and the %48 is single. The numbers regarding the education level of the neighborhood is %39.7 University, %29.2 high school (Zingat, 2021). According to the regional report generated by real estate agents (Zingat, 2021), in 2013 the price per square meter was 2.026.05 TL/m² and in 2017 it increased to 5.368.26 TL. The socio-economic level is rated as A+ that is defined by the following criteria: 1) Inhabitability (Demography, health status, transportation, criminality, standard satisfaction), 2) Economic level (Rent rates and property sales), 3) Cultural level (education level and cultural activities).

The changes in the demography (increase of single young and educated population) are perceived as an important transformation of mahalle as the locals used to have. Art events, festivals, new middle-class recreational areas attract more internationalization that may pave the way for the possible estrangement of the locals.

When MURAL Comes to Town: Local Walls Host Global Art

Mural festival at Yeldeğirmeni was a good example in observing how global trends and courses were represented locally. The MURAL Festival is an annual international street art festival held since 2013. It was founded by André Bathalon, Yan Cordeau, Alexis Froissart, Nicolas Munn Rico. The first event took place in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The aim is to enjoy the democratic rights of urban art/artists in the city. Artists from the globe can participate in the event and perform with their personal view of the art. It is important to note that,

all murals when they enter the public domain is considered as free content or open source, they are not part of copyright laws. The first event in Montreal had a lot of popularity and success and has won the Grand Prix of Québécois in the Montréal region (for the \$300,000 to \$1,000,000 budget category). Hence the MURAL festival is a very attractive topic on social media platforms such as Instagram (Bruemmer, 2015).

Mural İstanbul Festival organized with the support of Kadıköy Municipality, hosted 25 foreign artists and 7 artists from Turkey/Istanbul since 2012. Approximately 30 external facades have been painted during the festival. The global street art from all around the world exhibited in the streets of Kadıköy and Yeldeğirmeni (Kadıköy Municipality 2016). Yeldeğirmeni and Mural İstanbul accounts are also very popular on social media (i.e. Instagram with 11,2 B followers). The Instagram account called as “yeldegirmenimahallesi” has 26.6B followers and it seems to be increasing its popularity in the international sense.

In the in-depth interviews for our research on the local responses to global impacts, it can be clearly seen that 90% of the interviewees was anxious about the new face of the neighborhood, however there are also examples who take it optimistically. Those who take it positively are in the opinion that their “mahalle” is changing in a good way. It becomes a place for global encounters, and it is good for exchange, trade and hospitality. An interviewee (H) explains how he perceives the Mural festival: “If a Peruvian and a Danish visitor meet and get acquainted in my store; and if a Brazilian artist painting mural on a facade of an old building in this district; and if many Erasmus students learning Turkish and becoming friends with shopkeepers here, it is good for us for us, also for Turkey.

According to the positive picture that the interviewee (H) draws above, there is a clear indication that “mahalle” culture will be assuming new roles. One can argue that within this setting, it is possible for the neighborhood to be a liminal cultural space in-between family and urban community but also by means of being between the old and the new, a place in limbo, a stage for new socio-cultural hybridizations. From the negative perspective which represents the 90% of the interviewees the recent transformations will erase the old ways, manners and values. Hence the traditional family lifestyle and communitarian ethics is decreasing. Instead, global mobility and human flow is growing, global property market value is rising.

It can be clearly seen in the expressions of the interviewees that Yeldeğirmeni would resemble famous areas of gentrification such as Beyoğlu and Cihangir. Beyoğlu and Cihangir represent the examples of formerly revitalized regions that were mostly populated by cosmopolitan upper middle-class intellectuals, high income visitors from Gulf countries and artists today. It could be the case in Yeldeğirmeni that while groceries and repair shops transform into cafés, hostels, and art studios, where young, studenty profile will populate the mahalle, hence a new urban culture is to be born. That was also the concern of the local people who think that these changes have negative impact on issues like security, decay of cultural heritage and family life.

Conclusion

This article aimed at to understanding how the urban politics and global dynamics work in Yeldeğirmeni (revitalizing process initiated by Kadıköy Municipality). Moreover the specific aim was to see how it was perceived by the local people. Yeldeğirmeni and its revitalization process is to be analyzed under the urban politics that corresponds to 3rd period as described above: The neoliberal-entrepreneurial period where the renewal mechanisms can be coordinated with municipalities, private companies or civil society organizations. In the case of Yeldeğirmeni both Municipality and Çekül (NGO) were the initiators of this revitalization. The urban politics in this context was considered as entrepreneurial since the neighborhood experience a process like that of city branding since this location becoming a host to global events such as the international Mural festival.

As frequently stated in the glocalisation processes such events attract the new middle class and their housing investments/preferences may function as a driver of urban gentrification (Butler, 1999 and Hamnett, 1994). According to the real estate price statistics there has been an increase between the years 2013-2021 from 2.026.TL /m2 to 5.551.TL /m2 (Zingat, 2021). The change also suggest that the new middle class will be more dominant in defining the demographic characteristics of the neighborhood in the future (i.e hipster area). Therefore, this study involved problematic how the local people interpret this change and how they respond to it. According to the findings %90 of the participants expressed negative opinion about the transformation happening in their locality. This signifies the point that that revitalization does not only produce economic polarization between residents and new middle class but also underlines the socio-cultural gap between them. It is remarkable to find out that though the locals recall the cosmopolitan past with a longing of old mahalle, they approach the current internationalization with suspicion. Hence it is another topic of further research how the internationalization of urban locality transforms into glocalized spaces while it consumes the locality as a market value and creates a trademark/brand out of it. As a result of this research, it can be argued that though Yeldeğirmeni is officially presented as the positive participatory model for revitalization process in İstanbul, however from the eyes of the locals it seems to have some negative consequences regarding the decay of mahalle culture.

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Amaç

Bu makalenin genel amacı küyerel dinamiklerin basıncı altında şehir politikaları ve bu politikaların yerel ölçekteki yansımalarını araştırmaktır. Küyerellik kavramı ışığında birincil olarak yerel politikaların ve rekabet süreçlerinin küresel baskı altında nasıl çalıştığı (örn. Standartlaşan uluslararası piyasada yereli cazip kılma, markalaşma, uluslararası organizasyonlar düzenleme), ikincil olarak da kentsel yerel siyasetin ve yerel aktörlerin bu süreçlerden nasıl etkilendiği sorgulanacaktır. Çalışma spesifik olarak İstanbul'un mahallerinde yaşanan dönüşüme odaklanmış ve Kadıköy Yeldeğirmeni mahallesi örnek mekan olarak seçilmiştir. Yeldeğirmeni mahallesinde yaşanan dönüşüm bir saha çalışması ile açığa çıkarılmıştır. Bu nedenle makalenin ana amacı küyerelleşme koşulları altında İstanbul bağlamına bakmak ve Kadıköy kapsamındaki yerel etkilerini mahalle ölçeğinde ele almaktır. Bu semtin seçilmesindeki temel neden 2012 yılından beri belediye ve sivil toplum (CEKUL) iş birliği ile bir canlandırma sürecinin yaşanması, Osmanlı'nın son dönem kentsel dokusunu barındırması nedeniyle korunma altında olması ve olumlu bir dönüştürme öyküsünün olmasıdır.

Tasarım ve Yöntem

Birleşmiş Milletler'in geleceğe dönük 2018-2019 projeksiyonunda dünya nüfusunun 2100 yılında 10,9 milyar olacağı ve kentlerin bu nüfusun çoğunluğunu absorbe edeceği ifade edilmektedir. Dolayısıyla çalışmanın ana varsayımı dünyada giderek artan şehir nüfusunun kentsel alanlarda neoliberal kent siyasetinin güç kazanmasına neden olacağı ve yaşanan rekabet sürecinde markalaşma adımlarının hız kazanacağı yönündedir. Küresel ve yerel alanın etkileşiminden doğan ve küyerelleşme adı verilen süreç, kentsel alanlara dönük yeni politikaların oluşmasında ve bu politikaların yerel ölçekteki dönüştürücü gücünün hızlanmasında etkilidir. Bu çerçevede çalışmanın araştırma sorusu yerel politikanın ve yerel aktörlerin (mahalle sakinleri) söz konusu süreçten nasıl etkilendiğidir. Makaleye konu olan saha çalışması 35-40 senedir bu semtte yaşayan mahalle sakinleri ile 40 adet derinlemesine görüşme olarak kurgulanmış, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerde mahallenin geçmişi, bugünü ve geleceğine dair mahalle sakinlerinin deneyim ve görüşleri sorulmuştur. Derinlemesine görüşmelerde Yeldeğirmeni mahallesinde değişen demografi, emlak piyasasındaki artış, geleneksel yaşam pratiklerinin dönüşümü, belediye tarafından desteklenen uluslararası festivaller ve organizasyonlar mahalleyi markalaştıran süreçler olarak gündeme gelmiştir. Saha çalışmasını tasarlarırken seçilen örneklem kartopu tekniği ile büyütülmüştür ve mahalleyi uzun zamandır tanıyan ve eski mahalle kültürünü anımsayan ve halen mahallede ekonomik ve sosyal olarak aktif olan bireylerden oluşmaktadır. Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun son döneminden Cumhuriyet dönemine uzanan Yeldeğirmeni mahalle mirası derinlemesine görüşme yapılan kişilerin çocukluk anılarında hala geniş yer tutarken bugün Osmanlı geçmişi mahallenin uluslararası markalaşma sürecinde (emlak piyasalarda ve kültürel değer) bir değer olarak yer almaktadır. Bu durum eski mahalle sakinlerinde endişe ile karşılanmakta ve olumsuz tepkilere neden olmaktadır. Dolayısıyla derinlemesine görüşmelerde görüşmecilere mahallenin geçmişi, bugünü, geleceğine dair fikirleri sabit bir soru olarak sorulmuş, görüşmelerin geri kalan kısmı yarı yapılandırılmış şekilde gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Bulgular

Yapılan görüşmelerden ve gözlemlerden elde edilen bulgular mahalle sakinlerinin belediye ve ÇEKÜL tarafından olumlu olarak lanse edilen bu canlandırma sürecinden olumsuz etkilendiği olumsuzlukların en başta “eski mahalle kültürünün” yok olması ve emlak piyasasındaki artış (2013-2021 arası 2. 026.Tl /m2 birim fiyat 5. 551.TL /m2'e ulaşmıştır) olmuştur. Ayrıca mahallenin uluslararası sakinlerinin yarattığı yeni kozmopolit yaşam mahallenin eski sakinleri tarafından güvenliksiz bulunmaktadır. Sonuçta mahalle küresel ve yerelin buluştuğu melez bir alana dönüşürken (Mural festivali, tarihi binaların uluslararası sanat merkezlerine dönüşmesi vb.) eski Osmanlı “kozmpolitliğini” nostalji ile anan eski mahalleli için yeni mahalle artık kendilerini ait hissettikleri bir yer olamamaktadır. Bu araştırmada şaşırtıcı olan, görüşmecilerin mahallede 1960'lerden 1980'lere doğru giden süreçte Osmanlı dönemindeki gayrimüslim cemaatlerin varlığına tanık olmaları ve onlarla geçirdikleri komşuluk deneyimini idealize ediyor olmalarıdır. Gayrimüslim komşuların yokluğu üzerinden nostalji ile anılan mahalle kültürü bugün küyerelleşmeye verilen bir tepkinin dayanağı olabilmektedir. Bir bakıma eski “kozmpolit” yapı yeni oluşan küyerel yapıya kıyasla tercih edilebilir görülmektedir. Bu örnekte de görüldüğü üzere küresel, ulusal ve uluslararası dinamikler (yerel ölçekte rekabet, belediyeler arası rekabet, emlak ve inşaat sektörü üzerinden gelişen kent politikaları) yerel ölçekte birtakım muhafazakâr tepkiler doğurmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın odağında yer alan Yel değirmeni örneğinde markalaşma ve neoliberal kentleşme süreci mahalleyi ulus-ötesi bir alan haline getirmekte ve mahalleli bu sürece mahalle kültürünü ve “aile yapısını” muhafaza etme üzerinden tepki vermektedir. Görüşmecilerin kendi ifadeleriyle “kıymetini bilemedikleri gayrimüslim aileler” bugün özlemle aradıkları ve tamamen yitirdiklerini düşündükleri mahalle kültürünün vazgeçilmez öğeleri olarak anılmaktadır. Sonuç olarak İstanbul'daki kentsel yenileme sürecinde Yeldeğirmeni gibi bölgeler yeni kültürel orta sınıf olarak adlandırılabilir olan sınıfın tarihsel dokuyu koruyan, otantik görünümünü kaybetmemiş ve makul fiyatlara barınmayı ve sosyalleşmeyi tercih ettiği bölgelerdir ve yeni orta sınıfın yaptığı bu tercihler ve neoliberal kentsel politikalar söz konusu mahallelerin demografik profilini oldukça değiştirmekte ve gelecekte yerel ölçekteki kentsel değişimlere yön vermektedir.

Sınırlılıklar

Araştırmanın temel sınırlılıkları zaman ve imkansızlıklar ile ilgilidir. Mahalledeki gayrimüslim nüfusa ait herhangi bir kimse ile görüşme olanağı bulunamamıştır. Mahallede nostalji ile anılan komşuluk ilişkilerinin bir de gayrimüslim komşular tarafından anlatılması bu konuda daha dengeli bir anlatı oluşmasına katkı vermiş olacaktır. Yeni orta sınıf olarak adlandırdığımız kesim ile derinlemesine görüşmeler sağlanamamıştır. Bu görüşmeler yeni mahalle algısı ve gelecekteki kentsel ortak yaşam tasarımı açısından araştırmaya vizyon katabilirdi.

Yerel markalaşma sürecinde belediye ve sivil toplum örgüt temsilcileri ile görüşmeler sağlanamamıştır, bu görüşmeler küyerelleşmeye yerel idareci ve sivil kuruluşların da bakışını aktaran perspektifler sunmuş olacaktır.

Öneriler

21. yüzyılda kentsel yenileme, neoliberal politikalar ve küyerelleşme süreçleri iç içe geçen süreçler olduğundan bu konuda yapılacak araştırmalar genellikle makro perspektiften analiz edilmektedir. Ama bu analizler bölgesel dinamiklerdeki değişime (tarihi yapı, demografi, kültürel değerler) yerel aktörlerin gözünden bakan açılar da geliştirmelidir. Böylelikle kentsel yenileme ve canlandırma projeleri sadece bir bölgeyi markalaştırarak öne çıkarmak yerine bu yerdeki olası gerilimleri, reaksiyonları, kültürel mirasın korunma şekillerini tartışarak yol almalıdır. Sağlıklı ve dengeli kentsel dönüşüm anlayışı kentlilerle müzakere edilerek yapıldığında daha olumlu sonuçlar verecektir.

Özgün Değer

Araştırmanın özgün yönü küyerelleşme kavramını kentsel politikalar bağlamında kullanarak bir saha kurgusu sunmasıdır. Araştırma kendi verisini oluşturan bir saha araştırmasına dayanmakta ve yerel ölçekte derinlemesine görüşmeler sonucu makro- mezo -mikro analiz seviyelerin iç içe geçtiği kentsel yenileme örneğine mahalle sakinleri üzerinden bir perspektif getirmektedir.

Araştırmacı Katkısı: Sezgi DURGUN (%100).