Mural as A Revolt to The Uniform Development of Cities: The Case of Istanbul

Kentlerin Tekdüze Gelişimine Bir Başkaldırı Olarak Mural: İstanbul Örneği

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ÖZET

Günümüzde, özellikle ülkemizdeki kentlerde bulunan yapılar ve kamusal açık alanlar kimlikten yoksun bir gelişim göstermektedir. Kapitalizmin etkisiyle yapıların daha ucuza mal edilmeye çalışılması, kamusal alanların tasarımı ve bakımı için yeterli bütçenin ayrılmaması gibi nedenlerle idareten kullandığımız yaşam alanları gittikçe tekdüze ve sıradan bir forma dönüşmektedir. Farklılıkların yok olduğu, mekan tanımlarının tektipleştiği, ucuz malzemelerle yapılmış yapıların, azalan, kimliksizleşen ve küçülen yeşil alanların çoğaldığı bir ortamda bu sıkıcı homojenliği yok edecek en yaratıcı girişimlerden biri "murallar" olmuştur. Kentin muhtelif yerlerindeki yapıların kör duvarlarına devasa ölçeklerde çizilen bu resimlerin zamanla bir nirengi noktasına dönüşmesi muhtemeldir. İstanbul'un tarihi kimliği ile uygunluğu tartışılsa da modern kent peyzajında mekansal farkındalığı arttırdığı tartışılmaz olan murallar için İstanbul'da festivaller bile düzenlenmeye başlanmıştır. Çalışma kapsamında, İstanbul'un muralları incelenmiş, konumları haritada işaretlenerek kentin hangi bölgelerinde yoğunlaştığı araştırılmış ve kent kimliğine katkıları irdelenmiştir.

ABSTRACT

Today, structures and public open spaces, especially in the cities of our country, show a lack of identity. The living spaces that we use on a day-to-day basis are becoming increasingly monotonous and ordinary as a result of trying to be less costly due to capitalism and not allocating sufficient budget for the design and maintenance of public spaces. One of the most creative initiatives to destroy this boring homogeneity has been shaped in murals, in the absence of differences, the unification of space definitions, the construction of cheap materials, the diminishing, unidentified and shrinking green spaces. It is possible that these paintings, which are drawn on huge scale on the blind walls of various structures of the city, gradually turn into a landmark. Festivals have even begun to be organized in Istanbul for murals that have indisputably increased spatial awareness in the modern urban landscape, although the appropriateness of Istanbul's identity is discussed. In the scope of the study, Istanbul's murals were investigated, their locations were marked on the map, and the areas where they are concentrated were researched and their contributions to the city identity were examined.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mural, İstanbul, Mekansal farkındalık, Kent peyzajı, Sokak sanatı.

Keywords: Mural, Istanbul, Spatial awareness, Urban landscape, Street art.

1. INTRODUCTION

The urban phenomenon created by the mankind who started to settled down is a model of settlement that accommodates many urban spaces and functions that are still in use today. Scientists who are interested in this issue say that even in the prehistoric period, people have lived together and have developed common life models against the difficult conditions of nature. The first findings and information that arrive from the early ages concerning the city are belong to the Mesopotamia region. In his book "Egypt, Greece and Rome", Charles Freeman claimed that the first cities belonged to the Sumerian civilizations, in the fifth century AC, appeared on the plains of Mesopotamia (Freeman, 1999). Goldhorpe said "City is as old as civilization", by saying that he emphasized the city was essentially an age of civilization and even an integral part of each other (Sezal, 1992). Based on this approach, it would not be wrong to define city as the place where the civilization emerged or the place craeted by civilaziton.

Cities that have been the subject of a continuous process of management and organization since they were established carry the characteristic of being an administrative structure as old as historical aspects. Although it was established with military, commercial, and religious priorities, there was always an administrative structure and assignment in the city due to the general governing rules of the time. It is an inevitable reality that this administrative structure is based on a legal system of values and that it is operating within the framework of a legislation. It is even possible to encounter theses that the character of the city is constituted by its legal status (Sarıbay, 1996).

The city whose roots are in the depths of history is where sociality, culture and identity of the city are formed. In the contexts of the city, people are in communion with each other and with

the city itself, with the values of the city and with those who produce them. All of this can be shortly called the sociality of the city. Cities, in other words, fulfill this sociality through their own unique methods and communication channels. Nur Vergin describes this as "the city allows the individuals, who are disconnected and unaware of each other, enter into the interaction process by creating their own communication channels" (Vergin, 1977).

According to Park, the city is more of a state of thought, a tradition, and a combination of organized attitudes and feelings that are related to or transmitted from them. In this respect, the city is not only a material mechanism and an artificial structure, but also a product of nature, especially human nature. According to Park, "as a result of the decentralization of the population in terms of personal harmony, professional and economic interest, the city gets organized into an unstructured and uncontrolled organization" (Park, 1915).

Cities are settlements where they cannot be separated from the history of the political, economic and social systems they are part of, emerging in the centers where the wealth of society produced or seized and the associations that created them are organized and inspected, according to the forms of organization of societies (Doğru, 1995).

One of the most obvious items in the city and its other recipes is the culture. Even when it is conceptually taken into account, culture and the city are two human values that cannot be separated from one another. The relationship between these two is mutual and formative, just like the relationship between man and urban space. Mumford (2007) qualifies city in his one of the city's definitions "the most precious collective discovery of civilizations, which comes immediately after the language in terms of culture transfer". The difference between culture and civilization İzzetbegoviç (2010) noted that "Culture is the skill of being a human being, and civilization is the ability to manipulate, produce, manage, make things more perfect, culture is constantly creating itself and civilization is constantly changing the world".

Taking urban cultures apart from the concept of "culture" in general is more directive and it is an approach that explains the functions of urban space. Because, rather than culture is a concept belonging to the city, cities are still forming at the level of cultures (Braduel, 2006). Can (2003) has come to define the urban culture as "the compound of the city and its relation with citizen is city culture", by handling city culture as form + core. The form and core are concepts that exist separately for space and man; on the same basis, they are perceived and lived in an ontological unity.

Giedion defines space as an ideological domain containing the traces and signs of the dominant ideology. Heidegger claims that space is a place of interaction and experience. Former definition is one-way influence, latter one is bidirectional interaction (Hisarlıgil, 2008). Urban space is the main integration tool of a city. Urban spaces are places where users share, transmit and learn their cultural background. At the same time, thanks to these places, the users get the experience of being a citizen in the context of defining the city and creating an image of that city (İnceoğlu, 2009).

Today's space organization presents a new urban life and a new life style that accompanies it, with the emergence of new living spaces in a multi-centered, low-density and fragmented structure, instead of hierarchical and intensive urban centers, where traditional urban concepts have been resolved, depending on the possibilities provided by new technologies (Yırtıcı, 2005). One of the most important features of the space is that it has gotten away from nature and has gained social characteristics to a great extent (Tümertekin, 1997). With the impact of globalism, interacts amongst everyone with everyone, everyone with everything, and everything with everything set the cities unfree, and this situation resulted in that monochrome urban spaces have sprawled around the city (Ellul, 2003).

Public spaces are where societies are formed, where people associate with society, where common culture and identity are formed. While personal characteristics of the individual develop in the private domain of the city, social relations develop in the public domain. The public domain is a place that is planned for the society, organized or transformed spontaneously and open to the use of every part of society (Tokcan, 2001). Public spaces reflect the local culture and the time of the day, giving the clues about the social and economic situation of the local people. The most basic feature of the urban public space is the collector, inviting and inclusionary, as opposed to the exclusive character of the private space. No matter how different they are, it includes everything and everyone in the city. Public space is the main

integration tool of the city. There may not be any other common characteristics of residents or those who use the place, but they always share public space in common.

In particular, the public spaces in the metropolises are like a business card. These areas are a tool used by the authorities to provide a city-friendly image in a visual urban marketing. One of the most effective elements of urban identity is the physical environment. The administrations offered by the city assume an imperative part in characterizing the personality of the physical condition of the city.

In the formation of urban identity, human being is another active element after the space and culture. It is possible that the urban space has to acquire a definition, meaning and a unique cultural identity, but that the inhabitants of the city should have an intellectual capacity to reflect the urban culture and have reached a level of urbanization consciousness. The way to create healthy urban environments in the process of mutual interaction is through creating urban culture by conscious citizens. By improving the urban environment and keeping it at a good level all the time, conscious citizens and urban culture can be created (Bilsel, 2002).

Concepts such as "getting identitylessness / losing identity" need to be considered together along with the concept of identity. Identity also changes over time like culture. Contact with other identities and new ideas emerging as a result of natural changes in society and new lifestyle affect city identity. If these changes are consistent with the current identity of the city, there will be some changes, provided the identity remains constant. However, in case of contradiction, the election of the society becomes active and rejects the changes (Taşçı, 2014).

Concerning to clarify and beef up a city identity, public art can be very helpful. Generally, the idea of public art suggested that the work is requested and paid for by the legislature and turns into the property of the city. Regardless, this definition never again reflects how society presently deciphers the notion of public art. Today, the idea of public art alludes to works that are available to people in general regardless of whether they are appointed by public or private elements.

According to Lefebvre (1992) and Habermas (1991), "public space ought not to be considered "public" because of the space itself, but rather because of the activity that takes place in it." For a similar reason, the notion of public art can't just be utilized to recognize outside landmarks, models, statues or fine arts situated in an open space. Public art must be important and in an indispensable exchange with the place and the people. The artist Jochen Gerz argues that "Public art is about stories, narratives, the self-presentation of people through acts of memory, and it does not work within the designated spaces of art institutions, but through them and around them, creating discursive spaces within which conceptions and expectations are talked through in everyday language"(Gerz, 2004).

Public art can include an assortment of public domains like parks, libraries, doctor's facilities, roads, lodging bequests, public structures, malls and so forth; so that is to state anyplace where individuals live, work or take their relaxation. Public art can take such a significant number of various structures and shapes.

Public art has distinctive capacities like to commemorate, to enhance the visual landscape, to assist monetary recovery through tourism and venture, to assist imaginative and social recovery, with identifying a group, to enable individuals to oversee public space, to reply to a broader approach on personal satisfaction, and so on.

1.1.   What is mural art?

Mural painting is one of the most seasoned types of imaginative articulation, incorporates all fine art painted specifically on a wall or level surface. To comprehend just the marvel of mural paintings, it is essential and fascinating to be comfortable with the recorded development of mural that has influenced an assortment of periods, from ancient times to the present day. All through history and even ancient times, man has communicated himself graphically in a wide range of ways. Like in music, verse, and expressions of the human experience, likewise painting has utilized a dialect that develops as per certain standards throughout the hundreds of years. Not just the conventional subjects are seen and spoken to in various ways, yet in addition, there have been distinctive options of the subjects to speak to. So through years, the central importance of the message passed on by the craftsman winds up in a frame as well as in content. For quite a long time the wall adornments and frescos were an extremely well

known artistic expression yet just a little piece of the works is absolutely number, the majority of them are harmed or part.

Not every one of the paintings of today has an indistinguishable capacity from the old ones yet are made with a specific end goal to draw in individuals' consideration and as it were, enliven the space as it was before. There is a high contrast in the fields in which it is connected and also the methods utilized and the styles, with a level of public interest pretty much raised.

Prior to the 1960s, wall paintings were to a great extent discovered inside, fundamentally in light of the fact that they were shielded from the harm of time. Around this time, outdoor murals likewise started to show up in vast urban areas, done by singular craftsmen or in bunch ventures. Today, because of the wealth of specialists, some of them have great quality and different beginners, murals can be found outwardly of numerous substantial structures.

There are a few kinds of wall paintings, for instance; unconstrained, aggressors, governmental issues, aesthetic or publicizing. These wall paintings are made in various periods, from ancient times to show day, changing its utilization from communicating beliefs, sentiments, genuine minutes, dream, and political influence to likewise ornamenting and enlivening spaces. They can be valued or abhorred, appointed or free articulation and legitimate or illicit.

In this study, murals of Istanbul are pinned on a map, and districts they concentrated are examined. That common features of districts they are concentrated and their related topics along with their landmark value are discussed.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

Material of the research consist of murals in Istanbul, news about festivals and articles related the topic. That increasing number of mural artworks in Istanbul, and even festivals organized about it gave the idea of carrying out a research about this situation. Murals of Istanbul have been photographed and pinned on a map since 2012 spontaneously, and consciously according to information gathered through related blogs on internet, and this has become the methodology for examining features of districts they are concentrated and their related topics along with landmark value.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Istanbul, verifiably known as Constantinople and Byzantium, is the most crowded city in Turkey and the nation's monetary, social, and notable focus. Istanbul is a cross-country city in Eurasia, straddling the Bosphorus strait (which isolates Europe and Asia) between the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea. Its business and verifiable focus lies on the European side and about 33% of its populace lives on the Asian side. The city is the authoritative focus of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (coterminous with Istanbul Province), both facilitating a populace of around 16 million inhabitants. Istanbul is one of the world's most crowded urban areas and positions as the world's seventh biggest city appropriate and the biggest European city. Roughly 12.56 million remote guests touched base in Istanbul in 2015; five years after it was named a European Capital of Culture, making the city the world's fifth most famous visitor goal (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2017).

Istanbul is a city that has been dominated by many civilizations throughout history and carries traces of each. Therefore, urban identity can slightly change even in the central districts. But despite all these contradictions, Istanbul has a distinctive soul itself that affects artists in any field. However, especially in recent times, Istanbul multiplied itself and sprawled all around the Bosphorus, and towards east and west. That brings uncontrolled settlements and, the worst, loss of identity. Nonetheless, Istanbul has many exhibition halls for modern art, like Istanbul Modern, SALT (Beyoglu and Galata), Arter, Borusan, etc. The Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts has been sorting out the Istanbul Biennial since 1987. The biennial expects to make a gathering point in Istanbul in the field of visual arts between specialists from differing societies and the group of onlookers. The fourteen biennials İKSV has sorted out up to now have empowered the arrangement of a global social system amongst nearby and universal craftsmanship circles, specialists, custodians and workmanship commentators by uniting new patterns in a contemporary workmanship like clockwork. The most far-reaching universal workmanship display sorted out both in Turkey and all through the land circle we are in, the Istanbul Biennial assumes a critical part in the advancement of contemporary specialists from Turkey as well as from various diverse nations in the global field (IKSV,2017). So, after

all those civilizations, Istanbul is getting used to present era via modern art, and Mural Istanbul festival is one way of it.

Mural Istanbul Turkey's first mural festival and every year there are various artists from around the world are welcomed. Organized through the support of the Kadıköy Municipality, Mural Istanbul is one of the city's most prominent street art festivals. Bringing in amazing street artists from abroad to painted building-sized murals, the Yeldeğirmeni neighborhood has been turned into an open-air museum since the festival's inception in 2012. Mural festivals are getting greater consistently throughout the previous 5 years. From covering the entire old processing plant to 8 story tall building wall paintings in the city are certainly worth going adjacent. But before that, there were some successful murals have appeared around the Istanbul, and this situation trigger the idea of organizing a festival about it. Photographing and pinning on a map of those murals were the origin of this study.

According to the related blogs, Pinterest and Instagram, the most famous murals in Istanbul are mostly located in Kadıköy and Beyoğlu districts, and most of them began to appear on 2014 (Figure 1).
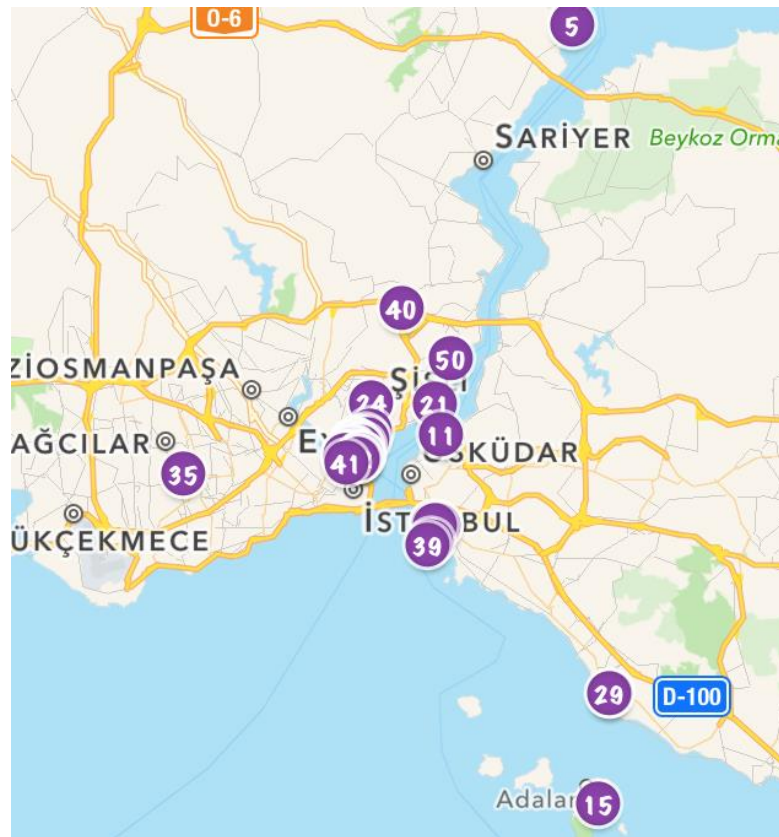

Figure 1. Murals of Istanbul around the city.

According to the map above, it is clear that murals are concentrated around the highlights of the city like Istiklal street, Galata, Kadıköy. Common characteristics of these districts are that they all have high-ranking pubs, concert and exhibition halls, theatres, cinemas, etc.; so, kind of a social and cultural centers of Istanbul. Besides Istanbul, many cities have its mural art in such highlighted areas. Videlicet, Bahçelievler 7th street, Tunalı Hilmi street, Gaziosmanpaşa district would be the most suitable areas for mural applications for Ankara. Though, Alsancak, Karşıyaka, and Bornova would be good choices for mural applications for Izmir.

According to picture-shared and location-based social media apps like Instagram and Pinterest, the most shared and liked murals are located in Beyoğlu in 2014; but with the effect of the mural festival, the focus has shifted from Beyoğlu towards Kadıköy. Some of the most shared murals of Beyoğlu (Figure 2) and Kadıköy (Figure 3 and 4) are given.

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Figure 2. Some of the most shared murals of Beyoğlu district.

Figure 3. Some of the most shared murals of Kadıköy district.

As seen in pictures, big, gray, blank walls of different structures, mostly buildings, are a kind of canvas for mural artists. For that sort of festival, firstly it must be marked on the map that which structures have huge, annoying, gray walls, and let artists paint them. A guide map was prepared for Kadıköy before Muralistanbul fest; then every work was marked (Figure 4).

Another significant detail is that murals and graffities are about mostly political issues, unlike in Turkey. In mural festivals, artworks that will applicate on the walls are controlled before, if they have an annoying political or religious theme. But freelance muralists, who does not attend festivals, also have not painted something about politics before in Istanbul. Mural works of Istanbul are mostly abstract expression of the society.

Figure 4. Mural map of Kadıköy, including works of 2012 and 2013 along with their artists and years.

4. CONCLUSION

Public murals offer tasteful joy set up of, or possibly among, scourge, unites individuals from groups and adds to the one of a kind social character of different neighborhoods. Art and other social attractions have been utilized all over the world to revive urban groups by exploiting minimal effort, unused property and drawing in positive consideration from outcasts. The presence of such works enables imaginative articulation to leave the limits of the customary exhibition or gallery and wind up available to everybody. The commission of public art is additionally an incredible method to help and animate neighborhood masterful groups by giving an outlet and gathering of people to specialists. Public gems fill in as points of interest and images of groups and furthermore fill in as an indication of challenges once looked amid the interest forward. At the point when these masterpieces wind up incorporated into neighborhoods, the facilitating groups build up a solid enthusiasm for saving them.

Murals are portrayed as of now by being a democratized craftsmanship because of its representative connection with society and on the grounds that regularly its area is public spaces; so it is a sort of art available to people yet as far as thankfulness and not all that frequently as far as proprietorship since its multifaceted nature and business esteem. It is a sort of art with a nearer connection with open since it frequently has been utilized to communicates sentiments, mistreatment and belief systems from craftsman as well as from society. Different characteristics, for example, its extensive size and its connection with design and spaces provide for the wall painting an exceptional energy to pull in consideration faster than numerous different sorts of articulations.

Murals are undoubtly increase the spatial awareness. Since, murals are expected to add to and progress: streetscape feel; engineering highlights or character of a building or other human-influenced structures; to make a one of a kind personality; feeling of place; city pride; empower group connection; the conservation of nearby history as well as culture; and impediments to trespass, vandalism, spray painting (so-called graffiti) and other unlawful acts against open or private property on which a mural is found.

According to the mural map of Istanbul, it is obvious that murals are concentrated around the highlights of the city like Istiklal street, Galata, Kadıköy. Common characteristics of these districts are that they all have high-ranking pubs, concert and exhibition halls, theatres, cinemas, etc.; so, kind of a social and cultural centers of Istanbul. Videlicet, Bahçelievler 7th street, Tunalı Hilmi street, Gaziosmanpaşa district would be the most suitable areas for mural applications for Ankara. Though, Alsancak, Karşıyaka, and Bornova would be good choices for mural applications for Izmir.

Mural is a kind of postmodern touch to the ordinary cityscapes. It can break the monotonomy down and leave a remarkable trace in people's mind. They have a very strong landmark value, that is why people appreciate them and do not harm with vandal behavior or graffities. On the contrary, people take their pictures and share in social media frequently, which depicts their acceptance, approval, and value. Every year along with the mural festivals, for those who want to visit them, public art of the related districts' map has to be renewed in order to find them easily.

If a mural festival is organized in Ankara and Izmir, the historical places and the areas that need to be protected of these cities should be excluded from this festival. Mural matches best with the monotonous, middle-income neighborhood, and highlights of the city. They can increase the city's attractiveness and reduce its boredom.

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