



PRESENT NARRATIVES THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN CASE OF 1ST OF MAY NEIGHBOURHOOD

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Abstract

1st of May neighborhood is a crucial example of a participatory process of a squatter settlement. The tie between the inhabitants and place is dependent on mostly the political aura of the time. Place attachment and belonging can be read from the space. Left-sided organizations unite people and that reflects as a creative participation model against the unjust processes of migration and squatter housing process in its times. Today the same attachment does not exist, the participatory aura has changed by the decentralization of the political atmosphere in the 80s. However, the narratives of the past still exist, and it unites the neighborhood.

1. INTRODUCTION

“As we collectively produce our cities, so we collectively produce ourselves.” [1]

The cities are being produced since the Neolithic period. Significant problems arose during and after the industrialization period. The informal concept started to rise in the cities as an alternative way that immigrants choose because of the lack of housing services that the government was unable to solve. Thus, the habitants tried to find ways to solve their housing problems. Paper aims to trace the methods and responses, also creative ways that can stand with or against informality of the cities.

It is not easy to understand the process of informal settlements; each area has its unique system and variables that are shaping today's conditions. Every squatter area should be interpreted on government and systematic international levels as much as their socio-cultural codes and narratives. Thus, the paper aims also to trace the cultural codes and narratives of 1st of May neighborhood, which has an essential value on the participation process. It is the first example in Turkey, a neighborhood that has been constructed together with students, local people in an illegal but participatory way. It is obvious to notice the concepts of; belonging, place attachment, participation, and the political aura as the principal codes of this process, which has started in 1977 and ended in 1980 with the military strike. The military strike affected the main binding elements -political aura- and a different process started followingly. However, the people kept on preserving the narratives of the past. It can be read from the physical structure of the neighborhood, also from the economic space and local conditions of the area.

Discussion of the theory, including informality, participation, participatory models, housing problem, takes place as an introduction and structure for the case study area. As a methodology, documentaries and two books on the participatory process of the case study area have been interpreted with present time conditions. In the area, interviews have also been done by analyzing aerial maps to express the narratives of the neighborhood and to conclude which ones are still alive as a tie binding the habitants to each other. Even though the political and economic condition of the time has been changed, still some same people living

at the area, maybe with new cultural and political codes and reflections of the time, but they are still living with the narratives of the past, blending them with present codes and also standing against to the massive urban transformation process in the area that is going on.

Paper will trace with a diagram, the responses of government and locals to the informal housing process that have been experienced until now, which is expected to clarify the relations between government and local participation processes. Creative participation models and theories will be examined for the response of what can be done more to stand against unjust processes in our present time? What can we learn from the narratives of the past? How can we preserve narratives in our daily life?

2. INTERPRETATIONS OF URBANIZATION

Cities have been interpreted with different variables throughout history. Since it is impossible to see the homogeneity in a city, thus it is not affected only by one variable. Cities are on the constant flux, and this circumstance brings new explanations and interpretations for the cities. Mainly, non-agricultural economies are seen in the cities, crucial informal sector development and population incensement are noticed throughout this constant flux.

In this paper urbanization process and industrialization periods will be focused on; thus, definitions of the cities and urbanization will be interpreted on this axis. Industrialization and urbanization theories will be mentioned parallel with these issues. Gordon Childe expresses the transformation process of the Indus valley in 3000 B.C. as an “urban revolution.” [2] Because of more than production and agricultural activities, the most important ones are the division of labor and governmental organization. Moreover, urbanization happens through these activities.

In Marxist texts and theory, urban problems are related to a system concept. Engels [3] points out the housing problem as capitalism’s reveal, it affects not only the working class but also other parts of the society and mentions that the best solution for this problem is to finish the ownership system and follow the equal distribution thought. This paper analyses the 1st of May neighborhood’s participatory urbanization process, including the Marxist thoughts quite a lot. The Marxist theory takes the urban problem mostly in the context of ownership order. This view has influenced especially from mid of the 19th century until the end of the 20th century by encouraging many people to struggle against the capitalist system. In the Marxist scheme, the urban problem is a system problem; thus, the urban contradictions are the system’s contradictions. In the 20th century, new approaches rose. As for French Marxist Lefebvre [4] the exchange value of the space comes to the surface. He argues the usage value of the space, against the exchange value. For the worker group, usage value is essential to maintain the daily necessities of their everyday life.

Nevertheless, as we see from the urban transformation processes, exchange value is crucial in today’s world, as many informal settlements are on the way of significant transformation projects. Therefore, this reflects directly to the ones that require housing units as usage value, but the units are being taken through unjust processes for the exchange values. The production and ownership relation and its reflection on the spatial environment create a production style. People who do not have any housing unit, build their own shelter in various -usually informal- ways, and they conflict with the central system in order to obtain this basic need of shelter. Thus, landless ones cannot afford the exchange value of the places; because of this, they try to solve this with informal solutions by risking to conflict with the system. Between 1950 to 1980, the examples of this process can be seen in Turkey. After the 80s, different economic groups created their environment, and spaces became stratified through these different varieties of groups. Before ethnicity and citizenship were main conditions that were defining neighborhoods, but after the 80s with the economic polarization, people started to be decomposed through their economic levels, middle and upper-income groups started to move away from city centers to the suburbs.

As another modernist approach, David Harvey interprets the spaces through justice. He analyses space, value, and social justice concerning each other, as a complex and dynamic system. Harvey takes the urban problem together with the social justice problem; for him, justice is the way to solve the different parts of society. By solving these inequalities, he proposes a set consisting of three concepts: necessity, contribution to the common good, and competence. Food, house, education and health services, transportation, etc. are

included by the necessities. Furthermore, if a process is not parallel by social justice, there will be social conflicts. [5]

Also, John Turner's approach to the usage and exchange values of housing, with social values, is another important concept that will theoretically help this paper during the case study area. For Turner [6], the real value of a housing unit is dependent on its use. Instead of materials that have been used or its materialistic value. The real value is the unmeasurable value. Moreover, the housing unit's value should be measured through its usefulness. If a shelter is a human necessity, then it should matter before material values. Parallel with these thoughts, he expresses that in socialist and not authoritarian societies, there is no conflict between planning and the necessities of the people. Especially in developing and undeveloped countries, governments should create and invest in infrastructures that support local's housing activities instead of constructing modern standards. Thus, this way of politics encourages people to build their own houses. [6]

Turner declares that housing needs tools, materials, technology, and finances. Thus, he suggests that the central government should take care of infrastructure projects, but not the housing process. It should be directly decided and applied by the locals. Until now, Turner states that the central government is not efficient to build housing units for low-income groups. Because, in any case, the cost of the housing units is very high for the lower-income groups. That is why the central government should find ways to support people financially and distribute the land instead of building for the people. For him, mass housing projects are not suitable alternatives to enhance the life qualities of low-income groups. In this type of housing, users are forced to mass housing standards, which do not suggest solutions to their problems. There is another way "informal sector" that helps people to reach the resources. When we think about the usage value, locals step in. Even the housing projects that have been done for low-income groups can not satisfy their needs and cannot suggest a solution for their real problems. That is why Turner insists on fundamental issues such as the government should focus on infrastructure and public services and open space for the people to build their units with their necessities. That will be healthier and more economical for the lower-income groups. There are many participation models instead of the central government and its interventionist style. Users of the place should take a role in each part of the process. Thus, the main point is to apply a real participatory model: Users should gather around their necessities, media and foundations should support this, they should first plan and apply the process, they should use their labor and power. Therefore, this process decreases the costs, and solve their financial problems by solidarity. Because users know the best about what kind of space they need, every user has their priority and budget. The system and the theories that Turner states, overlap with the 1st of May neighborhood's case study area and its characteristics.

Lefebvre, Harvey, Turner, Castells, and Giddens have some overlapping thoughts about urban settlements; their theories help us to understand the housing problem in structured and systematic ways. Following their thoughts, in order to understand the urban settlements, the system that the city is involved, should be understood.

2.1. MIGRATION PROCESS IN TURKEY

Migration is a group movement, more than a geographic change; it has social, physical, cultural, and economic dimensions inside. This demographic change affects the structure of society. Environmental and socio-economic conditions can trigger this change. People migrate to have better living conditions. Because of whatever reason the migration happened, it has a direct tie with urbanization and squatter housing. Migration can have many reasons; this paper would like to focus on the ones that have happened not because of natural conditions nor disasters but the ones to have a better life condition due to economic reasons. As it is mentioned in the previous parts, urban environments have been affected by migration, especially after and during the industrialization period.

In Turkey, before the 50s, the government had a protecting role. The public sector was compelling; cooperation through the society was robust too. It is challenging to notice neither development planning nor housing politics during this period. **Figure 1** expresses the migration and housing relationship as a diagram.

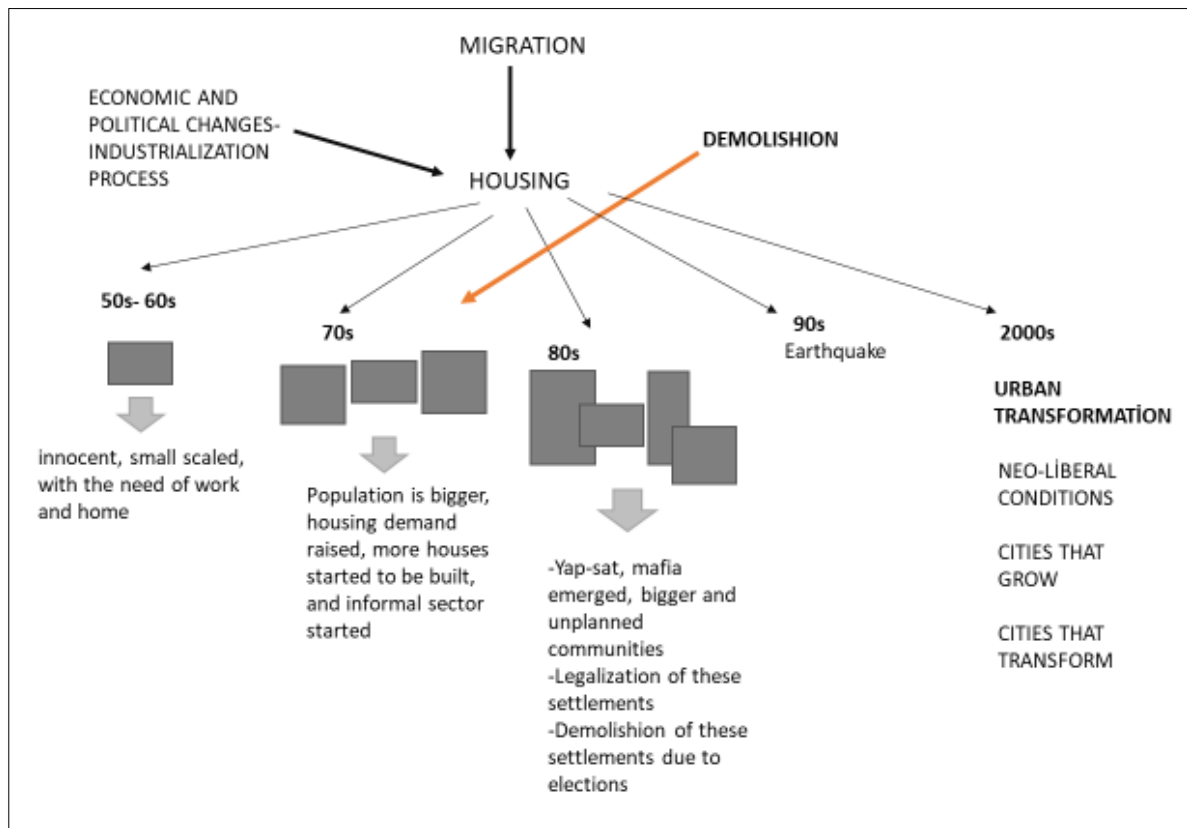


Figure 1. Migration and housing relation process in Turkey. Source: Author

In the '50s, due to Turkey's changing economic and sectoral preferences, a crucial process has been started. With Marshall helps and changing the agricultural process to a tractor dependent type, agriculture met with the new development, which made the decrease of the demand of workers population in this sector. At the same time, industrial developments started, and the industrial sector needed a significant labor force in the cities. The migration process started by this threshold with these crucial changes in the economic and political preferences of the country. Thus, urban fringes started to be filled with the first squatter houses during this period.

In the 60s multi-party system raised and the migration from rural to the cities have raised. The housing sector has been affected by this population movement, and many informal settlements have risen. As it is mentioned in the previous part, many sociologists have focused on the housing and urbanization problem since the 19th century.

The marginal population, rate of urbanization, and diversity in population have increased. This increase can be interpreted as a mandatory and voluntary migration style. The liberal period was active in those times; the unearned income concept started to rise. Also, social housing projects have started to help lower-income groups. In the 60s and 70s, we notice the government has realized the major social housing projects.

70s characteristic of squatter housing started to change. In this period, it is not as innocent as in the 50s. Mafia took a role in the distribution of the land, which belongs to the government. Participation word was banned in these times. In the 80s, the *yap-sat* sector started to increase, contractors and owners started to build more than one floor -as it used to be- to rent their upper floors and get an income from their housing units. Thus, the meaning and necessity of the housing and shelter concept change dramatically in this period. With neo-liberalism, the power of the government decreased, the local economy started to decrease. On another side, mass housing laws, mass housing foundations, and urban cooperatives started to rise. In the 90s, amnesties and legalization periods started for some of the illegal housing areas due to elections and political conditions. Another critical issue is the earthquake that affected cities at a fundamental level. After the 2000s, urban transformation processes take over after the earthquake and related laws. TOKİ became the major actor in mass housing and transformation projects.

Focusing on the reactions of the governments and immigrants to informalities can be summed up in such a way: Governments prefer to reply to informality by; ignoring, demolishing, relocating, legalizing, and upgrading actions. Instead; immigrants who require housing and job, after migrating to the cities, they reply to informality and government's reactions by; occupation, networking, reproducing, physical consolidation, and urban maturity. In many informal settlements, it is obvious to see one or more phases of these reflections. In the case study area, we see almost all the phases in 1st of May district. **Figure 2** expresses the process of relationships in this manner.

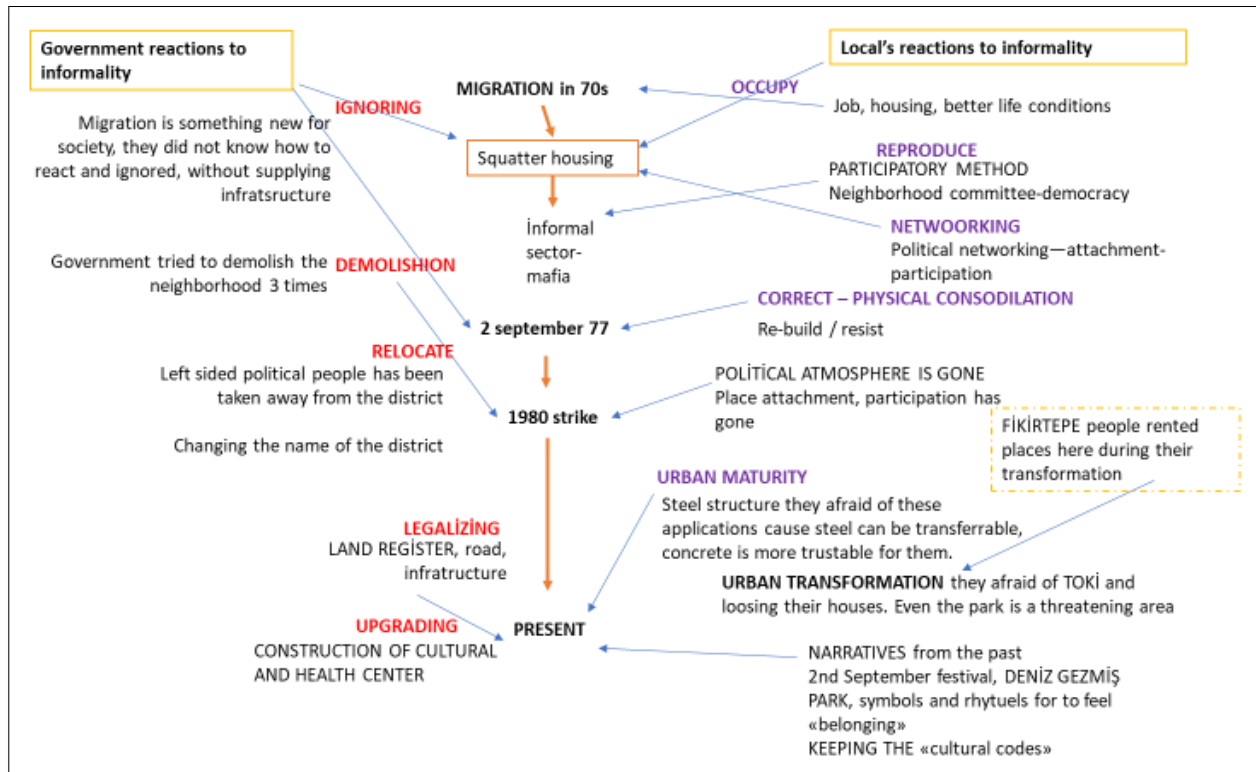


Figure 2. Migration and housing relation process in Turkey. Source: Author

3. DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION

While this informal sector and informal settlement typology started to rise in the cities, two different reactions happened: First, to accept and plan the cities related to these informal changes, second, refuse these informal settlements and the slum people and create borders with them. The effect of the migration started to be seen from the pattern of the districts. Governments could not find proper solutions and action plans; thus, they act with the expectation of the elections, power to get unearned incomes. Thus, unjust and undemocratic processes reflected in the city's characteristics more.

Participation and democracy raise as crucial and emerging concepts throughout these happenings. Turkey has met these concepts in the mid of 70s. [7] As Bumin [8] mentions, participation in especially the architecture field raised in the 60s all over the World. Architects and planners started to listen to people's processes instead of deciding for them. Bologna and Porto Allegre examples are the unique ones that we can notice the essential participation models. In Turkey, Fatsa and 1st of May neighborhood examples are the unique ones concentrating on participation. However, the 1st of May is different because there is an inspirational and illegal participation model.

In the 60s, architects and planners started to argue that they cannot be enough for to reply to all necessities to the society, there can be another participatory solution, architects cannot suggest ideal solutions for everyone. Cities are an expression of the habitant' cultures; thus, different people should have different settlements. Architects cannot build for millions because they do not know them in a particular way, the

only thing that architects can do is to design structures that give flexibility to users to organize how they prefer the space through their necessities.

Paul Davidoff [9] expresses in his article called Advocacy Planning about democratization and participation, and this article affected many architects and planners. Davidoff expressed that a city to realize the democratic administration, inhabitants need to join to the planning process. [8] This movement started to supply technical knowledge to the lower-income neighborhoods. In 1968, a group of architects designed a system called “developable house,” suggesting habitants to organize the unit through their necessities.

Like John Turner, Leonard Duhl was also suggesting a participatory model for slum areas. He stated that slum and squatter areas have an essential value about suggesting to the people what they need, also have a positive impact on social networking. [8] As P. H. Chombar states, cities exist not to fill up their selves with people, but to inhabit people, thus different people from different cultures should live in different conditions, and they need to have the right to decide how they will live. [8]

3.1. Participatory Process of Bologna - Italy

Many cities would like to attract industry at any price; Bologna is a crucial example standing against this tendency of rapidly growing cities. It chooses the zero-growth pace consciously as its dynamic. The management model of Bologna on one side supports the capitalist system and its actors, analyzing them and distributing the roles objectively, on another side for the profit of the people, supporting and encouraging them to participate directly in the management process. Left-sided political views manage Bologna, and this political thought also shapes the strategies of its urban planning models. Renewal and renovation projects and strategies of the city center is not dependent on strict rules, instead of integrated with the habitant's necessities and constructed on urban politics that the people would support and claim. The experience of Bologna aims collective life in a balanced way; social aims are on the upper level of the processes.

Like every European city, Bologna wanted to grow at the beginning of the 60s. The population was double projected, mass housing projects were being planned, historic center was planned as a double-sized commercial center. Even Kenzo Tange was suggesting a plan; thus, the central belief was, if there were not urban growth, the system would not be working. However, by this time, a unique process has been started. Bologna stabilized a balance between rural and the city. The rural agricultural areas that organized around cooperatives supported and developed equally, thus they were aiming to decrease the migration to cities from rural.

In the master plans, they took the population of 1970 as a stable population and restricted the growth of the cities. Also, they decided to plan the historical center and to organize it equally. Instead of Tange's plan, they applied a plan that supports the ingrowth of the city and participation of the habitants in each level and each type of settlement. To apply this plan, they needed to form democratic urban management and an alternative urban planning system for sustainable financial models as well.

In Italy, it was the first time that a law was focusing on rehabilitation and restoration of the houses apart from building the new houses. Also, in the center, they applied social housing projects by rehabilitating the existing buildings in districts such as San Leonardo, Santa Caterina, San Carlo. [10]

Bologna is separated into 18 neighborhoods that are being managed by a 20-person committee. These committees are open to all public attendance in every process of management. The Bologna master plan can be interpreted as a communicative tool, as well. It is a unique experience, a crucial model. For instance, if there will be a new school project, the location is decided by the participatory process with public attendance. The project is developed with student families, architects, students. In this paper's case study area, many participatory processes of the Bologna example can be seen. However, in that case, there is a significant difference that 1st of May neighborhood is an illegal participatory model.

3.2. Participatory Process of Fatsa - Turkey

Fatsa is another crucial example from Turkey that needs to be stated. In the local government elections, socialist Sönmez won the elections in Fatsa in 1979. As a first step after winning the elections, he formed the neighborhood committees where the program of the head is directly shared with the public committee. In these meetings with the public and neighborhood committees, not only problems are discussed, but also suggestions and solutions are formed as well. He creates a powerful tie between public and municipal levels. Thus, the municipality becomes a place where the public decisions are transformed into a legal statute. By the military strike, this participatory model ends, and many members of the committee end in the jail as a result of the strike, which was against socialist and left side political views. During this period, Sönmez dies, and the process that has taken almost one year leaves its effect behind. Today Fatsa's example is still a crucial example of the participatory, democratic, and legal model in Turkey.

3.3. Participatory Process of İzmit - Turkey

In 1974 İzmit Municipality planned a project called Innovative Housing Projects that was aiming to create housing units for lower-income groups, a total of 30.000 people that were working in the manufacturing industry in İzmit. The planning process took three years; in the participatory design period of this project, researchers focused on the needs and necessities of the users, economic conditions, environmental necessities, spatial habits, and other problems related to space. Also, meetings were organized during this period to discuss in a democratic and participatory way. Thus, the prospective users were involved in the designing and decision process directly. In the first year, 1500 units have been realized, and that showed that instead of top-down strategies, also bottom-up strategies and democratic processes can work for the profit of users. Bologna and İzmit projects are dating to the same times.

4. 1st OF MAY NEIGHBOURHOOD: PROCESS AND DEVELOPMENT

The 1st of May or Mustafa Kemal Neighborhood was created illegally in 1977 as a squatter settlement against the capitalist system. It is a typical and crucial example of the 70s, because of its patterns consisting of participatory phases, political and social attachments, educative process. It is a very creative example of immigrants and left-sided part solving their problems on their own. It will be analyzed from many different perspectives.

In mid of the 70s there were few houses and vegetable gardens in the area, the district was called Kaplanağlı, and it was a trash area as many parts of the Anatolian side, municipalities were bringing their trash to these lands. Later with the migration due to the stone quarry industry in the area, people started to move here into the area of government. Then the population formed; they were mostly coming from different parts of İstanbul or other cities, not directly from the villages. When the first squatter activities started, there were mafia communities that were selling and distributing the areas to the people. They were selling the government lands. At these times left-sided groups started to gather against this mafia activities, they called their political group colleagues from different parts of İstanbul many young people gather and fight against the mafia for the people and equal rights. After mafia leaving the area, these political groups formed a committee as the first example of the participatory model in Turkey.

4.1. 1st of May Neighbourhood Public Committee

The neighborhood was formed in 1977, took its name from a participatory and politic process, happened in Taksim Square on 1st of May 1977. Inhabitants decided its name. The committee of the neighborhood was formed of different groups from the left-sided political parties. They took the distribution of houses from the mafia and developed a democratic model.

They divided the neighborhood into five parts as A, B, C, D, E and started to work in their borders freely, but for the police demolition, they were gathering as a whole group. The groups in the neighborhood started

to distribute lands to people in equal size, mostly between 150-200 square meters, also they dreamed of a planned community; many houses were single houses facing with green areas and located for to ease the public services. The people that they choose were the ones that they really in need of housing. This way, they stopped the unearned sector and distributed the lands equally to the ones who need. [11]



Figure 3. Layers of housing activities. 70s building that was planned and shared equally, with garden voids, and behind 80s building. Photo by the author.

On the 2nd of September 1977, the government demolished almost every house in the neighborhood. 1 Mayıs Belgeseli (1st of May documentary) by Isaac Isıtan [12] shows the civil resistance to this event in such a way. Before the development of this settlement, it was declared as a squatter prevention area by the government. Thus, this supported the government in taking demolition actions.

In the following twenty days, the district has been built by taking help from committee, locals, engineers, TMMOB, architects, and students. With this characteristic and process, it is the first planned illegal settlement. The neighborhood is the first planned squatter area, it looks like a paradox, but it is real and applied. The committee was also giving education to the locals in the area. After the 1980 strike, the neighborhood becomes apolitical, and the name of the settlement has been changed to the Mustafa Kemal neighborhood. The strike and the atmosphere were very dominant that people chose to stay away from politics. The politically active part of the community mostly left the area. Thus, a significant transformation happened with these changes. Until 1989, the neighborhood was inside Üsküdar borders, then changed to Ümraniye and then in 2009 swapped to Ataşehir Municipality.

4.2. Legalization Process

Senior Citizen's Committee has been formed at the end of 1978, and they started to get in contact with the municipalities. Their first success is to bring public services to the neighborhood. Then the first school opens in the district; this is the second sign of the legalization process. As a third sign, healthcare service opened in 1980. The last and the most critical legalization phase is the headmen's legal condition. At the end of 1980, the senior citizen's committee took crucial steps on the legalization process of the district; they had many meetings and success. As a last step government changes the name of the neighborhood from 1st of May to Mustafa Kemal, and the place becomes legal after this event.

5. CONCLUSION: TODAY'S CONDITIONS, CHANGING DYNAMICS AND NARRATIVES

1st of May neighborhood is an essential example of a participatory process of a squatter settlement in İstanbul. It is obvious to see the place attachment and belonging. The tie between the inhabitants and place is dependent on mostly the political aura of the time. Left side organizations unite people around the place, and that reflects as a creative participation model against the unjust processes of migration and squatter housing process. Today it is hard to see the same attachment in the area, but it is still noticed an unseen barrier between the district and its environment. The place has a significant public park called Deniz Gezmiş, which signifies the character of a left-sided memory of the past, and we see an economic barrier to the neo-liberal economy. Local markets and small economies against big brands are noticed. Thus, it is easy to see that participation had transformed into another thing by decentralization of the political atmosphere in the 80s. Narratives of the past still exist, and it unites the neighborhood.

This paper traces with a flow diagram, responses of government, and locals to the informal housing process -that have been experienced until now. Moreover, it tries to clarify the relations between government and local participation processes. Creative participation models and theories are being examined for the response of what can be done more to stand against unjust processes in our present time? What can we learn from the narratives of the past? How can we preserve narratives in our daily life?

Today many codes and narratives are still alive in the neighborhood. There is the 2nd of September Festival that has been happening for fifteen years and reminding the people these days. Many people are joining this event outside of the neighborhood. Selling books, organizing talks, panels about urban transformation and urban concepts, architects, planners are joining, as a non-formal education atmosphere, and interaction space to keep the neighborhood's soul alive.

The pattern of the neighborhood does not look like it was a planned as squatter settlement. In the 1990s, the municipality of the neighborhood did not put any restrictions on the housing activities, and people started to build as they would like to. [13,14] This process was a breaking point for the area and inclined to lose many codes from the past. The character of the area had developed from the inspiration from equality and democracy. The left-sided political view of the area inspired them to keep the neighborhood planned, and they survived without the unearned sector of the times. The disappearance of political ties reflected in a negative way to the participatory and democratic character of the place. After the 1980s and 1990s, with the neo-liberal tendencies and disappearance of the politic character of the settlement, the political atmosphere and equal rights have left the area. Thus, people choose to build to adapt themselves to the present conditions and expectations of the day.

During the legalization process, change of the name also has an impact on demolishing the boundary codes of the area. Deniz Gezmiş Park, with his statue inside, is the significant narrative of the area; it reminds people of the past, older people meet there, and festivals happen to keep some narratives and codes alive. Neo-liberal economics could not enter the district; in the main street, local markets and shops exist, the commercial space does not allow big nor franchise brands to enter the neighborhood.

The participatory process of the 1st of May neighborhood shows that the habitants can solve their necessities and problems better and more economical and organized way. [15] The case study area studied and researched by various researchers. This paper focuses on the tie between the present moment and the past. It deconstructs the pieces of the process, to see the creative participatory solutions of the area that has been done many years ago by the users. Also, for to underline the narratives of that time, in order to make that process more visible before its possible urban transformation and before it loses all the physical figures of its narratives such as Deniz Gezmiş park, yearly festival, and social structures in the district.

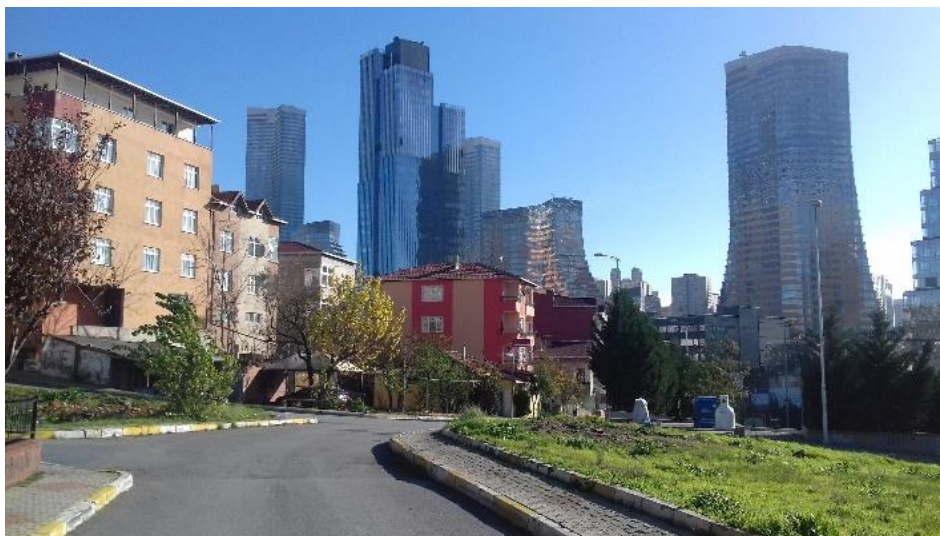


Figure 4. Borders and differentiation of the district. Photo by the author.



Figure 5. Political aura of the place as a continuing narrative. Photo by the author.





Figure 6 and 7. Steel structure of new social centre and health centre, make habitants feel like it can be moved easily, in case there will be urban transformation, they can be moved as well. Photo by the author.

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