“Neighborhood” Concept And The Analysis Of Differentiating Sociological Structure With The Change Of Dwelling Typology

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Abstract

“Neighborhood” concept – which is seen in all cultures even in different shapes and under different definitions – is a sub-public area where the most concrete and original form of neighborliness take place and social cooperation and organization are possible. The neighborhood fabric – shaped in decisiveness of geographical structure and culture in every society – exhibits a respectful and conservative structure shaped with privacy fact in Anatolia’s traditional structure. The neighborliness relations in this fabric depend on ownership, belonging, tolerance and respect. The separation of neighborhood concept from its traditional meaning began with the change of the physical fabric forming the neighborhood; the effect of belonging sense on neighborhood citizens became argumentative. The physical and sociological analysis of the change in neighborhood fabric having a certain identity by the means of studio housing in Konya (Turkey) form the subject of this study. The housing preferences and the variations in housing options started to show differences in especially the last 10 years in Konya (Turkey). Studio houses among the different housing options started to be built in succession in the areas close to the university settlements. Building studio houses with the aim of investment and making profit, especially in detached housing areas which are given one or two floors within a garden in the development plan and make us read the neighborhood concept in a certain identity, increases the user density in square meter and the number of morphologically and contextually inconsistent examples in the fabric. The spatial characteristics of houses, their relationships with neighbor houses and parcels disrupt usual order and number of negative examples rapidly increases. This change in physical structure changes the resident profile in the neighborhood and diversifies it. The lived/will be lived change with new formation begins to change the sociological structure in existing fabric. In this study, the physical change in sociological structure will be analyzed with different user profile scenarios. While the residents of studio houses have individual life, traditional house residents have nuclear family or wide family structure. The sociological structure exposed by this major difference is tried to be given with the focus of physical structure in this study.

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1. Introduction

Environments where communities live can be grouped as natural environment, artificial environment and social environment. Artificial environment refers to physical environment, which is created by human being for his requirements and changes by time. Social environment, on the other hand, can be defined as places in which people interact with each other. Artificial environment is an interactive place, which allows or does not allow communication as well. According to Ilgin and Hacihasanoglu (2007), people are influenced by and influence cities, buildings, roads and settlement styles; namely, artificial environment. Personal and social identities can determine structural identities or identity of the physical structure can be preferred for sheltering or living. One of the major factors of urban identity is the identity of settlements (neighborhoods) (Wiberg, 1993). Neighborhoods have different or same features/identities as lower segments of cities. The mix of geographic content, cultural level, architecture, local traditions and lifestyle of neighborhoods defines urban identity. Reading neighborhoods, which represent different time and place relationships, provide significant clues to understand the whole city. According to Alemdar (2010) reading a city with a holistic approach, it can be seen that each period protects its own values and has a relationship with another period and makes other periods more apparent. Physical environment reflects the aura of each period, which completes another one, and it gives a new meaning to the whole. Settlements have a chaining structural relationship and they refer to style and content of architectural environment, cultural, social, perceptiveal and intellectual codes of the environment.

Berk (2005) defined the term neighborhood is often used to describe the sub-divisions of urban or rural locations such as cities, villages, and towns. In its purest definition, a neighborhood is the vicinity in which people live. People live next to or near one another in sections of an area and form communities. Those sections have some particular physical or social characteristics that distinguish them from the rest of the settlements.

The concept of neighborhood contains two fundamental components being physical and psychosocial (Keller, 1968). More specifically, the basic elements of a neighborhood are: people, place, interaction system, shared identification, and public symbols. Putting the elements together, neighbourhoods as a population residing in an identifiable section of a city whose members are organized into a general interaction network of formal and informal ties and express their common identification with the area in public symbols (Schwiran, 1983).

Neighborhoods contain various service categories (classes) and facilities. These facilities; health (hospital, clinic, pharmacy), recreation (sport, green lands), clubs, commercial, cultural and religious facilities are within talking distance for most of residents. In psychosocial terms, neighborliness is a zone, which allows social relationships of users (Kellekci and Berköz, 2006). According to Kısar and Türkoğlu (2010), social relationships such as neighborliness and familial relationships are regarded as social networks at micro level and these relationships meet the requirements of safety and support in community at basic level. Neighborliness is a relationship through which residents can communicate and share common things. Moreover, neighborliness is a different definition of the fact that human being cannot live alone, he is a part of community and acquires his real identity within community (Şensoy and Karadağ, 2012).

Although neighborhood relations in Anatolian cities and rural still maintain based on social control and solidarity, it is clear that social and spatial transitions have changed these relationships. Neighborhoods and urban texture, which form these neighbourhoods, are the physical equivalent of neighborhood relationships. According to Aru (1996) neighborhood, being a settlement unit in old Turkish cities protected its order principles until the
beginning of 20th century and became the basis of social order data of Ottoman. In Ottoman cities, neighborhood was a place consisting of people who were family members praying in the same mosque, knew each other in person, were in a social solidarity and responsible for each other's behaviors. Due to the importance of neighborhoods as a social unit, cities of Middle East and Islam culture are defined as a composition of neighborhoods (Ergenç, 1981; Ergenç, 1984; Çakır, 2012). Neighborhood in traditional Ottoman cities is defined as a physical place, which has not been shaped by class and status differences (Ortaylı, 2000). Social stratification started to separate living areas of people with similar income and social status. Being homogenous within them, safe sites multiplex buildings that contain a large population like in neighborhoods started to have different features than traditional buildings and the urban characteristics. Today, whether these environments influence social activities and personal communication opportunities is discussed. Therefore, neighborhood relationships exist within traditional settlements at street, blocks in neighborhoods having boundaries according to the population. However, recent social transitions started to tarnish social meaning of neighborhood and neighborhood relations and some changes occur in neighborhood concept. To protect neighborhood relations is important in terms of social control and solidarity. In contemporary life, modern human lives in cities, crowded settlement areas contrary to traditional societies for which neighborhood relations used to have a great meaning and importance. These areas are apartments, safe sites, residences, rented rooms, neighborhoods etc. in which people are physically close but stranger to each other. (Bulut, 2012) physical entities create a limited or almost nonexistent neighborhood relation. However, recognition of and responsibility for each other, social solidarity in traditional settlements are components of social control. Traditional neighborhood residents are not just a useless crowd, yet they are united with each other, share the common life, have common rights and responsibilities (Özcan, 2001). Neighborhoods refer to a human environment in which people have face-to-face relationships, meet and visit each other, take part in mutual social relationships and undertake the responsibilities of these relationships (Erten, 2005).

To summarize, traditional neighborhoods have following characteristics in physical and social terms:

1. Neighborhood (immediate surroundings with street, houses in neighborhood) is an urban part in which residents can control although limitedly their environments.
2. Neighborhood is a preferable environment for residents.
   It is known.
   It is safe - offers a trust environment.
   It is adopted - embraced (ownership).
   It is a sharing environment.
   It is a collaboration environment.
   It is a privacy and sovereignty environment.
   It is a protected environment.
3. Neighborhood is an expression environment of residents with other places within neighborhood (houses-commercial areas-education places-health facilities-temples etc.). These characteristics define the identity as well.

The separation of neighborhood concept from traditional context started with the transition of physical texture and the effect of ownership on neighborhood residents started to be discussed. This study is a physical and sociologic analysis of the change in neighborhood textures, which have an identity with recent studio houses in specific to Konya (Turkey). The study was restricted with the interpretation and analysis on physical and sociologic structure of the texture and possible users of studio houses, which became a part of neighborhood texture in Meram district in Konya province. Meram region has less physical differences than other central districts due to lack of building density, high land values, presence of the green thanks to detached building texture.
2. Characteristics of the Neighbourhood-Dwelling Texture in Meram Region

Developments in education, organization, design and practice areas started in 1950s for Konya. The use of tractor in Konya resulted in economic recovery and 41.3% growth in population between 1950-1955 (Gökçe and Çukurçayır, 1999). The establishment of Sugar Factory in 1954 and of meat combine in 1856 gave a pace to population growth and this growth reached 87.5% until 1960 (Commission, 1964). Being located in the western side of the city, Meram region started to be defined with new dwelling areas. "New Road" ensured access to Meram yards in 1938 and became a determiner in dwellings areas. Although the region was a pasture area in 1946 construction plan, afterwards dwelling areas intensified in this area. The construction of Faculty of Education on Meram New Road in 1962 increased transportation density. Dwelling areas were located in the north and south of Meram New Road in 1966 plan; moreover, official and public buildings such as military area (units, lodgings and school), educational areas and hospital (public hospital 1966) took place in this region. The region became a preferable place due to its characteristics such as closeness to the center, easy transportation, clean air, lack of city noise etc. (Köseoğlu and Aydın, 2009). Konya gained the administrative status of metropolis in 1987 and then there main metropolitan districts occurred; Meram, Selçuklu and Karatay. In 1990 plan, New Meram region was considered to be an available dwelling area and 167 ha dwelling development area and 5000 population were foreseen (Yenice, 2005). Construction changes and legal decisions after the increase in population density and rent region status of the region became the trigger of the transition in the region. The dwelling texture used to be single-storey or ground+1 storey. However, new dwellings with ground+2 storey can be seen on new road and density of these dwellings increased. (Köseoğlu and Aydın, 2009). Most of the region consists of detached dwellings built in 1000-2000 m² parcels. The recent condition of Meram region results from its old definition as "green Meram". Although old yards and gardens turned into dwelling texture, these new dwellings were built within large gardens and thus the green texture still exists, decreasingly yet. High-rise buildings can be observed in construction areas which were zoned within last 20 years in Meram region. Old dwellings with 4 or 5 storeys are replaced by those with 10-12 storeys. High land value in the region compared to the land value in Konya province-wide triggered construction arrangements and thus storied constructions so as to make profit.

The background of studio apartments does not date back to old times in Meram region. In Turkey, studio apartment refers to dwellings with 1+0 (Living place), 1+1 (bedroom+living place), 2+1 (2 bedrooms+1 living place). These dwellings are especially suitable for new married couples, students and employed people living alone. In these dwellings, kitchen and living room; toilet and bathrooms are together. Being used as housekeeper's flat because roof spaces of buildings in Meram region are generally used, these dwellings started to emerge as buildings/dwelling textures consisting of studio apartments especially after 2010.

2.1. Study Areas in Meram Region: neighborhood and dwelling characteristics

Samples taken from Meram region were selected randomly from northern part of Meram New Road axis. In the regions, detached and low-rise (3-4 storey) dwelling textures are dense. Meram Training and Research Hospital, University Hospital, Faculty of Education and Faculty of Theology are interest zones in daily life. In addition, small commerce centers, primary schools, park arrangements, family health centers take place within neighborhood textures. The dwelling textures mostly consist of detached single or two storey buildings. The user profile generally consists of nuclear family with parents and children; in traditional textures, extended families can be seen as well. In small lands (300-400 m²), dwellings with single storey or ground+1 storey can be found. One apartment takes place in each storey. When the land size changes the number of apartments per storey increased to 2. The land size determines the dwelling size and dwellings in the texture are built as 3+1 (150-170 m²) or 4+1 (180-220 m²).
Neighborhood relations differ by age and gender of population. Homemakers visit each other and create a social environment. To have conversation in gardens, at doorsteps in certain times is common. Children play games in streets. Men communicate with each other in mosque or small commerce areas. Visits between neighborhood residents increases especially in religious festivals, weddings, and funerals. Neighborhood residents know their neighbors as they live in those streets for a long time. Residents of dwellings built in 1980s have a rooted sense of ownership as they witnessed almost everything new. In regions with high land values, detached dwelling can be seen as home ownership rather than renter. This situation increases to become known within neighborhood texture and creates a positive factor for social control. Others visit new residents of neighborhood. This visit is also a meeting visit. Even in house moving process, people cook for the new residents or offer a cake in traditional neighborhood relations. These relationships increase harmony in time and the sharing between neighbors maintains.

A Turkish proverb "Don't buy the house, buy the neighborhood" emphasizes the importance of neighbor and neighborliness. The progress of sharing by sincerity level can continue even the resident changes house within city.

Physical transitions resulted from studio apartments build in recent years in traditional Meram texture were investigated with four sample studies. As studio apartments are not used yet, neighborhood relations and physical texture were assessed through possible users (who purchased or rented these apartments).

2.1.1. Example 1 (Beyaz Yaka Studio Houses)

The sample area designed as 2 blocks and 18 duplex studio apartments on 2100 m² is located near Meram Medicine Faculty at Necmettin Erbakan University. There is also a private hospital with 90-bed capacity within walking distance to the building and a Training and Research Hospital of a private university with 200 beds capacity within 2 km distance. As can be seen in Table 1, there are duplex or two storey dwellings/villas build on 800-1000 m² lands around parcel corner faceted to Main Street. Owners of the surrounding dwellings are generally neighborhood residents in nuclear family structure and know each other. Those who prefer a traditional life style with parents/grandparents use different flats of the same garden house rather than using the same house.

The building is designed with 2 separate blocks and in studio house type. There are two commercial workplaces under the block located on Main Street Dwellings which are sold or rented out with furniture were designed to let 2 people live comfortably. Rent price is planned to be 800-1000 TL (385 euro-625 dollar) in September 2013.

Table 1. The characteristics of Beyaz Yaka Studio Houses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dwellings 1+1 = 90 m² / 2+1 = 110 m²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living area and kitchen, bathroom and toilet are designed within the same place. The kitchen is separated from the living area by the means of a niche.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to the information taken from the real estate; the people who want to rent or buy these dwellings are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The doctors came for the expertise in medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• (single) doctor academicians with their expertise in medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wealthy students of medicine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1.2. Example 2 (Eğitim Studio Houses)

There are 27 studio houses containing a living area and 1 bedroom (1+1). They are located in the northern part and close neighborhood of Education Faculty and Faculty of Medicine at Necmettin Erbakan University. There is Meram Training and Research Hospital with 1000 beds capacity within 5 minute walking distance to the area. There is single storey, duplex dwellings and three storied apartment buildings within neighborhood of the area. Neighborhood residents know their surrounding neighbors. However, the increase in dwelling numbers with new buildings influenced neighborhood relations. The handover of old dwellings, renting these houses to students to gain profit restricted relationships with neighborhood residents. The presence of 10-12 thousands students with night education recreated the area and the number of fast food, café, stationery, photocopy places increased to meet the needs of these students. The dense commerce area around hospital increase daily mobility in the region.

Eğitim studio houses were planned to be prepared for 2013-2014 academic year. As presented in Table 2, the building is located on main parcel faceted to the road. These studio houses are in final stage and their sizes are approximately 50 m². The basement and roof are involved into use, base floor and basement; first storey and garret attic are together.

2.1.3. Example 3 (Meram Studio)

The building is located within 15 minute distance to Faculty of Medicine at Necmettin Erbakan University; 10-12 minute to Meram Training and Research Hospital and 20 minute walking distance to faculty buildings. Furthermore, it is within 5-10 minute vehicle distance to private hospital and training and research hospital of the private university. There are detached dwellings in gardens and 3-4 storey apartment buildings within the texture. There are small workplaces near to the area located on main road.

It is similar to Eğitim studio houses in terms of architectural storey use. The building was planned to be prepared for 2013-2014 academic year. The building consists of 1+1 and 2+1 studio apartments. These studio houses are in final stage and their sizes are approximately; 1+1=60, 2+1=75 m². The data of user profile are shown in Table 3.

### Table 2. The characteristics of Eğitim Studio.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dwellings 1+1 = app 50 m²</th>
<th>Living area and kitchen, bathroom and toilet are designed within the same place.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>According to the information taken from the real estate; the people who want to rent or buy these dwellings are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The doctors come for the expertise in medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Young academicians living alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wealthy university students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The ones who want to buy these dwellings think with the aim of investment and having rent payment rather than living in them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3. The characteristics of Studio Meram.
Dwellings: 1+1 = 60-65 m²
2+1= 75-80 m²
Living area and kitchen, bathroom and toilet are designed within the same place.

According to the information taken from the real estate; the people who want to rent or buy these dwellings are:

- The doctors come for the expertise in medicine
- Young academicians living alone
- Wealthy university students.

The ones who want to buy these dwellings think with the aim of investment and having rent payment rather than living in them.

### 2.1.4. Example 4 (Studio Live)

It is located between Eğitim Studio and Meram Studio and it is within walking distance to Education and Theology Faculty, Meram Training and Research Hospital. There are detached single storey, two storey, and duplex villas around the building. There are small workplaces and a mosque in neighborhood.

It consists of 20 studio apartments with 1+1=50-60 m². The building is in construction process yet and it is planned to be finished within 6 months. The possible user profile is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. The characteristics of Studio Live.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dwellings: 1+1 = 50-60 m²</th>
<th>Living area and kitchen, bathroom and toilet are designed within the same place. The kitchen is separated from the living area by a equipment arrangement.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Considering the Eğitim ve Meram Studio Houses, the users of these dwellings – not on sale yet – can be:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The doctors come for the expertise in medicine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Young academicians living alone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wealthy university students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. Evaluation and Conclusion

Analyzing the physical status of studio houses, which started to take place in traditional texture, within available texture; it can be seen that they are different from existing dwelling patterns and they disturb social homogeneity. In areas with the same traditional land size, many more apartments/dwellings are built compared to the traditional texture. The new dwellings have less land areas, construction conditions and sizes compared to the traditional and they are constructed in line with the temporariness-mobility concept. Accordingly, one of the purposes of studio apartments is to gain more profit by means of evaluating the area in Meram region with high land value. Table 5 presents typology of traditional dwelling and studio houses and user profile.
Table 5. Traditional dwellings and studio houses typology in Meram Region.

Studio houses are perceived as a hotel, resting place in traditional texture. Unlike apartment structures which are reported to separate people from socializing, neighborhood relations; studio houses are mainly preferred by people who prefer living alone, love freedom and do not want social control mechanism. Analyzing the status of studio houses which are regarded as a tool for investment and profit for the use of especially university students and young employed people, it is believed that temporariness is inevitable. Temporariness will not only decrease the sharing between people but also brings along distrust. This situation will damage important neighborhood and neighborliness concepts such as ownership/adopter/ being known/social control/ privacy etc. Table 6 summarizes physical and sociologic characteristics of traditional dwellings and studio houses.

Moreover, existing and renting dwellings in the region are 30-50 year old. Renting prices of these dwellings vary between 300-500 TL and these dwellings are big enough to let a family live comfortably. There is a serious difference between individual cost of old dwellings used by 3-4 people and cost of studio houses. Although studio houses are offered to users with furniture, prices are now low for long term.

The sociologic change from social life to individualism and a future based on materiality and interests will have adverse effects on traditional and deep-rooted societies in long-term. Different dwelling typology offered to users in traditional textures will result in transition of social structure as well. Transition of social structure will start to trigger traditional social communication as well. Therefore, the loss of neighborhood values is a risk for societies. The issue which should be investigated in detailed sociologic research was assessed with structural reading and
matched with physical environment in this study. In any case, architectural structure is not independent of user, lifestyle of the user and thus the social environment.

Table 6. The physical and sociological characteristics of traditional neighbourhood fabric and the fabric, which will be formed by the existence of studio houses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical structure</th>
<th>The neighbourhood with the existence of studio houses</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one or two storey building (sometimes 3)</td>
<td>structure with the same template of the traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fabric including green areas</td>
<td>including the basement and attic to the dwelling usage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both introverted and extroverted structure</td>
<td>insufficient green area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separated private space arrangement</td>
<td>multiple function in single space,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the existence of privacy and sincerity</td>
<td>many dwellings on the same floor,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>specialization and publicity</td>
<td>multiple usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>decrease in privacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>alienation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>individual life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>temporariness, rootlessness (change of user)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not knowing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>undepth relationships</td>
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<td></td>
<td>nonassimilation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>lack of class separation, disconnection of communication with different classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>loneliness as a result of not communicating</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>trust issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>disappearance of social control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sociological characteristics

* Nuclear family
* Patriarchal family
* Neighbourhood relations depending on assistance
* Everybody know each other
* the existence of social stratification but contraction by the means of neighbourhood relations, assistance
* safe environment (recognizing the foreign people in the neighbourhood)
* individual life
* temporariness, rootlessness (change of user)
* not knowing
* undepth relationships
* nonassimilation
* lack of class separation, disconnection of communication with different classes.
* loneliness as a result of not communicating
* trust issues
* disappearance of social control

References


