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A REGENERATION STORY:

FROM THE OLD CENTRAL GARAGE TO THE NEW CITY SQUARE OF BURSA ABSTRACT

Recently, many discussions have been made about the changing nature of public spaces and the loss of public life. The focal point of these discussions is the policies about the privatization and control over public spaces. In this study, the regeneration/ privatization process of a public space was stated in terms of physical, functional and semantic analysis. The case study area, presently called City Square was an old terminal complex which became an urban decay area after it lost its function in 1997. After that the Municipality organized a square project competition in this area in 2005, however it resulted to cause the area transformed to a shopping mall. Thus, this paper aimed to analyze the old Central Garage District in terms of a mixed methodology design as the combination of interpretive-historical and qualitative researches. Finally, it was determined that the area lost the public identity in terms of accessibility and use and became a controlled and semi-public courtyard of a shopping mall.

Keywords: Public Space, Urban Decay, Regeneration, Privatization,

BİR DÖNÜŞÜM HİKAYESİ: ESKİ SANTRAL GARAJ'DAN YENİ BURSA KENT MEYDANI'NA ÖZET

Son yıllarda dünyanın pek çok kentinde kamusal mekanların insan hayatındaki yerinin değişmesi ve kamusal yaşamın önemini kaybetmesi üzerine bir çok tartışma yapılmaktadır. Bu tartışmaların odak noktasını kamusal mekanların özelleştirilerek kontrol altına alınması oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, bir kamusal mekanın dönüşüm/özelleşme süreci, fiziksel, işlevsel ve anlamsal analizlerle ortaya koyulmaya çalışılmıştır. Çalışma alanı eski bir terminal alanı yerine yapılan Kent Meydanı'dır. Santral Garaj olarak uzun yıllar kente hizmet eden bu alan, 1997'de işlevini kaybettikten sonra bir köhneme bölgesi haline gelmiştir. 2005 yılında ise, Bursa Büyükşehir Belediyesi alanla ilgili bir meydan projesi yarışması düzenlemiş ve yarışma alanın bir alışveriş merkezine dönüşmesiyle sonlanmıştır. Çalışmada alan, yorumlayıcı-tarihsel ve nitel yöntemlerle analiz edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, alanın erişim ve kullanım açısından kamusallık niteliğinin azaldığı, bir meydandan çok kontrollü ve yarı kamusal bir alışveriş merkezi avlusuna dönüştüğü tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kamusal Mekan, Köhneme, Dönüşüm, Özelleşme,
Bursa



1. INTRODUCTION (GİRİŞ)

Public spaces, which have existed since the first cities in the world, have been shaped according to different factors in history. In antiquity, public spaces, such as agoras, had a political meaning; however, they lost their political characteristics in time, and became religious and ceremonial areas reflecting the prestige of the rulers especially in the Middle Age. Together with the Renaissance, central despotism [1], colonialism and oligarchy, which were reflected in nation-states, became dominant. Although public spaces regained their political power with the Enlightenment period during which rationality was prevalent, this situation did not last long [2]. In the 19th century, the family became an idealized shelter, a world by itself, carrying values higher than public space [3].

Recently, many discussions have been made about the changing nature of public spaces and the loss of public life. At this point, some of the authors, looking at the $20^{\rm th}$ century, stated that carbased movement and the Modernist functionalist ideas (buildings as sculptures, "objects in space") caused to appear indefinable urban spaces which were intended to flow freely around buildings rather than to be contained by them [4 and 5].

After the 1980's, with reduction in the size and scope of the state, urban development was transferred to the private sector who ensured a return on its investment. Thus public goods, such as public space were seen as liability, as they could not be sold and had no direct profit for the private investor. Alternatively, local authorities and their elected politicians could not invest in those public goods that did not have an immediate political or economic return. A major reason for privatization of some public parks is that city governments cannot pay for taking care of them. Depending on this, new public spaces that were developed after the 1980's, therefore were controlled and restricted, in contrast to the more accessible and inclusive places of the past. This was a widespread phenomenon and became known as the privatization of public space [6].

At this point, some of the authors emphasize the increasing control over public spaces by legal regulations and design policies like destructive design (building "private city") and sanitary design (privatization, shadow privatization, the "Panopticon" approach and the "Hideaway" approach) [7]. The problem with public space is one of increasing alienation of people from the possibilities of unmediated social interaction and increasing control by powerful economic and social actors over the production and use of space [8].

As an example, the BIDs (Business Improvement Districts), private corporations that allow business and property owners in commercial districts to tax themselves voluntarily for maintenance and improvement of public areas under their control, can be criticized on the grounds of control, social stratification, accountability and vision [9].

In addition to these, public space can be transformed into a kind of private or semi-private space locally or symbolically. Locational transformation can be described by the creation of home territories, urban villages and mobile "homes" by means of traveling pack. They all require the immediate presence of a smaller or larger group of personally-known others. Symbolic transformation practiced by utilizing body management, by controlling gestures, facial expressions, movements. The individual can create around himself a symbolic shield of privacy [10].

Today, public spaces have begun to differ according to the conditions of ownership, management, maintenance, control, usage and function. In accordance with global consumption ideology, they are



began to be shaped as controlled shopping malls or most of old public spaces have started to lose their public character and have become areas serving transportation function. New generation accept shopping centers as the preeminent public spaces of our time. Yet, while shopping centers are undoubtedly gathering places, their private ownership has always raised questions about whether all the public has access to them and under what conditions.

In addition, since technological developments in public communication devices have supported individualism rather than socialization, passive visual observation and watching what people do in other places have replaced with active participation and experience. In this context, while public spaces spread virtually on the one hand, they are deserted physically, socially, and finally disappear on the other hand.

This study presents an interesting example of how a public space is privatized by a project competition. In this context, the paper constitute of five parts. After the introduction part, the significance of the research is going to be discussed, in the third part the experimental method used to analyze the area is going to be explained, in the fourth part, the method is going to be proved by a pilot case study and in the last part these analysis are going to be evaluated to find out the changing public identity of the area from the 1960s to present.

2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE (ÇALIŞMANIN ÖNEMİ)

Public open spaces which can be defined as active and accessible areas where social events, cultural and sportive activities, meetings, political and unionist actions, commercial events take place, and which are open to public use, play an important role in the development and sustainability of urban life. These areas embody certain common features like affording socialization, uniting public relations and spatial forms (environmental perception and aesthetics) and enabling the circulation of information, goods, opportunities and possibilities as the center of political and commercial activities. Moreover, public open spaces where coincidences can occur and result in productivities, [11], and which require an active administrative system with different partnerships and resources [12], reflect urban and architectural identity.

At this point, it is important to protect public spaces for related institutions who is in charge of developing urban design projects for public open spaces prospectively in order to develop and sustain social life, and to improve urban life quality. Considering the most important part of the design process is analyzing the area from past to present, it is necessary to analyze the public spaces systematically in order to develop design policies on sustaining public identity which is described by the criterions of accessibility and use for all and outlasting one generation [13].

3. THE METHOD OF THE RESEARCH (ARAŞTIRMA YÖNTEMİ)

In this study combined strategies (Table 1) were used to analyze public open spaces in urban districts. These are interpretive-historical and qualitative researches. Within the interpretive-historical design, archival documentation of development plans of the city, extensive archival research on popular media, inventory of buildings in the area and a detailed stylistic analysis of buildings were carried out. Not only verbal and visual data (eg. the media analysis), but also more quantitative data (eg. building inventories) were incorporated in this strategy. Within the qualitative design, ten



in-dept interviews with the users and employers working near the area and spatial analyses of building plans were carried out [14].

(Tablo 1.Kamusal dış mekanları analiz etmek için kullanılan stratejiler)

	<u> </u>
Strategies	Tactics: data sources
Interpretive- historical	• Archival documentation of development plans of the city
	 Building inventory of the area
	 Stylistic analysis of buildings
	 Verbal-visual analyses of media
	representations (local newspapers)
Qualitative	• In-dept, open ended interviews with users
	 Spatial analyses of building plans

4. CASE STUDY: THE OLD CENTRAL GARAGE AREA, THE NEW CITY SQUARE (ALAN ÇALIŞMASI: ESKİ SANTRAL GARAJ BÖLGESİ, YENİ KENT MEYDANI)

The authors chose the old Central Garage Area for the case study, because the district is located, at an important point -the intersection of Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara highways- of the city. The Central Garage Complex was the largest garage of the Balkans during the 1960's and because of this it was a source of pride to the citizens. After it lost its function in 1997, it became an urban decay area, however it kept its importance as the public transport centre for the whole city until 2005. During this period, the district became a subject of speculation. When it was anticipated that the new administrative and commercial center and tram junction point of the city would develop in this district in the 21st century, the Municipality organized a project competition with the aim of creating a public space -the City Square- in this area for the city of Bursa. Thus, the old terminal building which reflected certain features of modernism and had an important place in the collective memory of Bursa, was demolished during the implementation and the City Square Shopping Center was built instead of it. This was an important transformation for the identity of the district and the city. Thus, the old Central Garage Case can be a significant example for a study manifesting the changing meaning in public open spaces.

In addition to these, the researchers made a small inquiry about public open spaces in Bursa. They asked forty people from different socio-economic levels to choose the most important public open space among four options in the city center of Bursa. Only five people chose the City Square as the most important one. Then the authors made ten deep interviews for each option. However it was interesting that sixteen of the recents (thirty) made negative comments about the City Square. Thus, these reactions were a sign for the researcher to choose this area for a case study.

The area was analyzed in four periods as 1960-1978, 1978-1997, 1997-2005 and 2005-2012 which signify important milestones for the area. These periods can change for every public space related to the conditions of the city and the country in which it is in.



4.1. 1960-1978: From the Largest Garage of the Balkans to the Big Fire in the Central Garage (1960-1978: Balkanların en Büyük Garajından Büyük Santral Garaj Yangınına)

4.1.1. Physical and Functional Analysis (Fiziksel ve Işlevsel Analiz)

In 1954, an agreement had been made between the Municipality of Bursa and Head Office of Pensioners' Institute to build a Central Garage with the aim of uniting dispersed and small garages in Bursa [15]. The garage complex had been built in a deserted and an urban garbage area to the northwest of Bursa, because the terminal function had needed a large area and the city had begun to expand towards the North where there were a few textile factories. The Central Garage can be seen in the development plan of Bursa prepared by Piccinato who came Bursa after the big fire in the Hanlar District in 1958.

The Central Garage complex (Figure 1) which covered approximately 1.7 hectares had been opened in 1961. It had been constituted of the garage building in the north, hotel building and the offices under the canopy in the south, passenger hall building, bus service building and platforms in the middle of the complex. Buildings were the examples of rationalist-purist style which was the result of independent and universal architectural movements developed after the Second National Architecture Period [16]. Architects (Mesut Evren ve Ali Nihat Hasekioğlu) had a design approach which invokes both local and international architecture.



Figure 1. The Central Garage Complex before the fire, 1978 (Şekil 1. Yangından önce Santral Garaj kompleksi)

In terms of spatial organization, the garage building was near the motorway, the managerial, commercial and social buildings were oriented to the city. Form and function relations were positive in the site plan, but the facades were too transparent for a garage building. The buildings were very huge, however the architects had tried to keep a suitable scale with the environment by using different blocks for forms different functions. Functional design, geometric orientations, and modular facades were dominant in the complex. In addition to concrete system, fibrous floor and folded plate roof system were used in the construction of the buildings. It seemed that the architects used normative and iconic design methods together. The garage complex was more superior to the others in that times in terms of architectural construction.

In terms of paradigmatic context, the modular facades and external blind systems of the hotel building in the complex had similarities with the Istanbul Hilton Hotel. Besides the canopy, which supply functional and visual integrity in the complex was a new interpretation of the canopy of a traditional Turkish house.



4.1.2. Semantic Analysis (Anlamsal analiz)

In terms of social relations, when the Central Garage complex began to be built, it was criticized because of its location which was so distant from the city center. However, when it was opened as the largest garage of the Balkans in that period, all of the people had gone to see the garage and the citizens had been proud of it until 1978 when a big fire (Figure 2) caused the Garage building which had been used partially as a tobacco warehouse, to collapse [17]. Until the fire, it was a public space which was open 24 hours a day to everyone. It attracted the functions related with transportation like hotels, car services and gift shops. The people who had worked there in those times said that the working life in the garage was very nice, there was a very friendly atmosphere and strong relationship between bus drivers which can be seen rarely nowadays. In terms of experiences and urban memory, the garage had an important place in people's minds, because a garage is a place where people wait, meet or leave. Thus, most of the people matched the garage with their memory about childhood or dealings with their darlings and friends. Sometimes it was defined lively, sometimes transient.

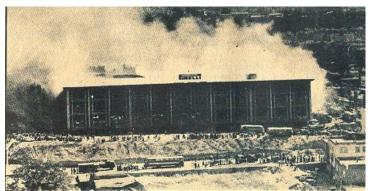


Figure 2. The Central Garage building during the fire, 1978 (Şekil 2. Yangın sırasında Santral Garaj Binası)

In terms of the symbolic elements about the garage, the meaning of the garage's name can be explained firstly. The word "central" (Santral) is pronounced like in French in Turkish and it means "a place where some particular activity is concentrated." In that time, this garage was a start and end point for all buses in Bursa. Besides, the life in the garage was a very coordinated. The users remembered the bells ringing at every fifteen minutes which arranged the working conditions of the garage. Thus, the garage was the representation of the order and discipline not only with its architecture, but also with the life inside. It reflected common "zeitgeist".

In addition to these, it was found out that the garage had connotative meanings like holiday, soldiery, meetings or farewells and candied chestnut beside its denotative meanings like transportation, waiting or being late.

4.2. 1978-1997: From the Big Fire in the Central Garage to the Construction of New Terminal of Bursa (1978-1997: Büyük Santral Garaj Yangınından Yeni Bursa Uluslararası ve Şehirlerarası Otobüs Terminalinin Inşasına)

4.2.1. Physical and Functional Analysis (Fiziksel ve Işlevsel Analiz)

After the fire, the remaining part of the Garage was used without any changes. However during the 1980s because of the increasing population in Bursa due to high migration rate, the



capacity of the Central Garage became insufficient. Thus, an architectural competition was organized by the Municipality of Bursa for a new garage building with a more rational program in the same area in 1986, but none of the the prize winning projects were implemented. In 1992-93, a cafeteria and passenger platforms were added to the complex.

Finally, the traffic problems resulting from the location of the Garage brought about the need for a new bus terminal outside the city center. The new bus terminal of Bursa was built on İstanbul highway, and began to be used in 1997, causing the Central Garage to lose its function. Thus, the area were abondened to decay.

4.2.2. Semantic Analysis (Anlamsal Analiz)

However the image of the Central Garage had changed after the fire. When it was opened, it had a very different image "it was the unique multistorey bus garage building", but after the fire the garage lost its image and this loss created sense of ambiguity about its future [18].

4.3. 1997-2005: From Becoming the Old Garage to the Project Competition (1997-2005: Eski Santral Garaj Haline Dönüşümden Proje Yarışmasına)

4.3.1. Physical and Functional Analysis (Fiziksel ve Işlevsel Analiz)

However, the potential of this area was comprehended by local authorities and the District was declared as a "special planning area" and in 1996, the old Central Garage District Urban Design Project was assigned to a private planning company by the Metropolitan Municipality of Bursa. As a result of these companies' proposals, it was concluded that the old Central Garage District should be developed as a mixture of land uses, and in 1998 the new plan which proposed high-rise and low-rise buildings, public open spaces and buildings under the ground level in the old terminal area was approved by the Municipality. After this, non-approved plan revisions continued. But none of the plans were implemented. Finally, the implementary development plan was changed in 2005, and the old terminal area was determined as a mixed use public square, followed by the decision to organize an architectural and urban design competition for this area [19].

After the garage lost its function, the area began to be used by minibuses as a terminal for inner city transportation and as a parking lot (Figure 3); the old passenger hall building and the tents served as a cheap marketplace (Figure 4);, and also as a refectory for poor people during Ramadan months. The old hotel building and the old garage management offices were used as offices and shops.

4.3.2. Semantic Analysis (Anlamsal Analiz)

In the course of the time, economic, physical, functional and social obsolescence, filtering and urban decay started in the Central Garage District. Besides, lack of confidence and social dilapidation started to be experienced in the District because of low-income groups like street urchins, beggars, prostitutes and peddlers (Figure 5) [19].





Figure 3. The minibus terminal in the old Central Garage area, 2005 (Şekil 3. Eski Santral Garaj'da minibus durakları)



Figure 4. The cheap marketplace in the old Central Garage area, 2005 (Şekil 4. Eski Santral Garaj'daki çadır pazarlar)



Figure 5. The street peddlers and closed shops on the ground floor of the old hotel building, 2005

(Şekil 5. Eski otel binasının zemin katındaki işportacılar ve kapalı dükkanlar)

Users' experience about the district were completely changed, there were no longer good memory. They complaint about the unsecured environment (Figure 6) and they stated that they compulsorily used the district for transportation. In addition to these, the image of the district changed too. Users defined the district as a "midden" and a "disgusting place"





Figure 6. The unused basement of the old passenger hall 2005 (Şekil 6.Yolcu holü binasının kullanıma kapatılmış bodrum katı)

4.4. 2005-2012: From the Project Competition to the City Square Shopping Center (2005-2012: Proje Yarışmasından Kent Meydanı Alışveriş Merkezi'ne)

4.4.1. Physical and Functional Analysis (Fiziksel ve Işlevsel Analiz)

In 2005, the Metropolitan Municipality of Bursa organized the Bursa Central Garage City Square Architectural and Urban Design Project Competition in the case study area. In the competition program, it was stated that the old Central Garage area should be integrated with the development plans of the region and with its environment. The city square and necessary functional arrangements which would give vitality to the square and symbolic reference to urban identity, were to be designed on the south. The square on which social and cultural activities like meetings, ceremonies, open air concerts and art facilities were expected, was going to belong to the public. In addition to these, spaces related to eating and drinking, entertainment, shopping, working, management and parking were to be considered and developed by competitors [20].

However from the beginning of the competition until the present, a lot of arguments have been made about the aim of the competition, the context of the specification, requirements from competitors, program, project evaluation criteria, the award winning projects and the first project (Figure 7). The most important critique about the competition was that the project was only limited in the old Central Garage area. Besides the project was not evaluated in a comprehensive urban regeneration project and it was not convenient to the Bursa transportation master plan, the specification of the competition and the development plan reports of the region. Thus, the local people and the other related actors did not participate in the project process effectively. It was interesting that in 2007, the Central Garage District was declared as an urban regeneration and development district, the borders of the project area was determined and the master plan was changed. Then a new project (figure 5) including commercial areas and offices was designed for the west of the Central Garage Area. Design process is still continuing [21].





Figure 7. Renderings from the first prize project of the Bursa Central Garage City Square Architectural and Urban Design Project Competition (Şekil 7. Bursa Santral Garaj Kent Meydanı Mimari ve Kentsel Tasarım Projesi Yarışması birincilik ödülü alan proje)

After the competition, the area which was owned by the Metropolitan Municipality of Bursa (%41) and Head Office of Pensioners' Institute (%59), was rented to a private company for 49 years. Then, the buildings in the Central Garage which embodied an important example of modern architectural heritage in Bursa and Turkey, and had a symbolic value in urban memory, were demolished completely in 2006. In the implementation phase, the project was revised in terms of fuctional and spatial organization. Commercial facilities, the total building area of the project and the stories were increased. In the new project, shops, eating-drinking activities and cinema halls were placed in the triangular block, shops and cafes were placed in the building under the canopy, exhibition hall and shops were placed in the other building between these blocks. In addition to these, a super market, a playground and parking places were placed under the ground. Thus, the City Square (Figure 8) became an indefinable courtyard of a shopping center in the new Central Business District of Bursa.

In terms of urban context, the City Square has not been integrated with its environment physically and visually. It caused negative effects on the city's identity because of the dominance of the large triangular block which covered the silhouette of the city and the mountain from the north way. The buildings and the canopy are out of human scale and are does not adapt urban pattern. Actually, the City Square has neither physical nor functional qualities of a square. At this point, the users also stated that "the City Square is not a square, it is a shopping center"



Figure 8. The aerial view of the City Square (Şekil 8. Kent Meydanı hava fotoğrafı)

Actually, there are some problems about the relations between form and function too. Both the pedestrian-car relations and the pedestrian accesses have not been solved successfully in the site plan. The size of the square, green areas and precautions for climatic conditions are insufficient. The relation between the inside and the outside is very poor. Actually, the architects stated that they were inspired by the cocoon of an insect and the structure of the old passenger hall while they were designing the facades of the triangular block and the canopy. It seemed that the architects used the iconic design method.

Moreover the architects did not bring innovation to the shopping center design with its internal spaces, or with its facades. Concrete and steel systems were used in the construction of the buildings and the canopy. Geometric forms and orientations, and curtain walls were dominant in the complex, but there is not any harmony between the blocks.

4.4.2. Semantic Analysis (Semantik Analiz)

In terms of social, cultural and economic factors, the City Square became a controlled and semi-public courtyard of a shopping mall. Except the concerts and the other activities which motivate people to spend more money, an introverted life is dominant in the area. Moreover, when the buildings are closed in the evening, the area becomes desolated. While the settlements around the district include low and low-middle income groups, the shopping center serves upper income groups (Figure 9). At this point, some of the users complained that the City Square became an expensive place. ("If you do not buy something, you have not got any chance to spend time there, however formerly the shops and restaurants around the old Central Garage were cheaper and serve all income groups"). Moreover, tradesman working around the district complained that they were gaining more money before the City Square built.





Figure 9. One of the luxury shops in the City Square (Şekil 9. Kent Meydanı'ndaki lüks mağazalardan biri)

According to users, the most positive thing resulted with this project is that the area became a safer place and the quality of users changed. But these changes do not affect the image of the City Square. When it is asked users what they remember when they think about the City Square, the users' answers are like below:

Negative

Nothing
Bad architecture
Disgusting place
There is nothing like a square
Shopping mall
Unfriendly place

Positive

A large space
Pool
Green areas
Hotels and Uludag Kebab
Memory
Tranquility
Change

Moreover, the other users which were not in the sample group described the square as an undefined, disintegrated and unsafe place and as a concrete jungle resulted with the political relationship based on interests. Some of the users stated that as people get used to the City Square, these negative reactions related to the newness of the area and the habits of the citizens, will decrease.

In terms of experiences and urban memory, it can be seen that, logic is more dominant than memory in the City Square. Because the complex has been in a limited relationship with its environment and there are regularly new spatial changes inside the buildings to increase the consumption at special theme days. Thus, the corporate identity of the stores are in the forefront and there are written and unwritten instructions about how the customers should use this complex. If the places of the stores in the complex change, the system of the complex doesn't change. Thus the square was the representation of consumption not only with its architecture, but also with the life inside

Actually, the City Square has a different place in Bursa, because it has been the first square which was implemented as a result of an architectural project competition. In terms of symbolic elements, it can be seen that the name of the district was changed after the competition and most of the users do not use the name of "the Central Garage" anymore. The nameplate of the bus stops changed too. Some of the users emphasized that it is important to change the name of the



place to change the identity of this place. However, it can take time for people to get used to this new name.



Figure 10. Advertisement tower in the City Square (Şekil 10. Kent Meydanı'ndaki reklam kulesi)



Figure 11. Isolation of the City Square (Şekil 11. Kent Meydanı'nın çevresinden yalıtılmışlığı)

Moreover the name of the "City Square" has some hidden meanings. First of all, the word of "city" emphasize a sense of belonging to the citizens. Also, there is an effort to create a difference with the "square" from the other shopping centers. The symbolic figure of the City Square Shopping Mall is a wind rose which can be connected with the southwesterly wind, prevailing wind of Bursa. There is a tower (Figure 10) actually which serves as an advertisement surface and increases the visibility of shopping center from everywhere.



In addition to these, it was found out that the City Square had connotative meanings like Berlin Wall (Figure 11), the slum of Bursa, speculative income and unfairness beside its denotative meanings like commercial and entertaining activities.

5. CONCLUSION (SONUÇ)

As a result of these analysis and the interviews it is found out that different factors related to physical, functional and semantic dimensions came front in these four periods.

In these contexts, the Central Garage between 1960-1978 can be defined as a rationalist public space and a crowded focus point related to its function. Large-scaleness, order, discipline, withdrawn, but strong social relations were the results of the dominance of public sector related to the planned economic development period of Turkey. If the Central Garage is evaluated in terms of accessibility and use for all and collective memory in this period, it can be said that the area was accessible by all, also used by all, but it did not have a history for all.

The period between 1978-1997, can be defined as a transition period for the Central Garage which related to the situation of Turkey trying to implement liberal economic policies. In local context, the fire caused negative effects on identity of the area. In spite of increasing population and traffic problems, the area was still used as the terminal of Bursa. The area was still accessible by all, also used by all, in addition to these a collective memory was created about the garage in this period.

In the period between 1997-2005, after the loss of terminal function and with the effects of increasing privatizations at the end of 1990's, a lot of speculations were made about this area. With the sense of ambiguity about the area's future, the district became the scene of urban decay, a dangerous and unwanted place. Because of these, the area was not accessible and used by all in this period, however some experiences were still alive in the collective memory of the residents.

The turning point was the organization of an architectural competition for the area. However, it resulted with a dissappointment because the area was rented to a private company for 49 years and implemented project was changed to ensure more profit. Thus, the project competition was used by local authorities to produce concrete projects in a short period of time by means of populist planning decisions instead of paying attention to historical and social values.

It became one of the implementations in Turkey which only changed the physical structures of the neglected districts apart from holistic urban and social context. If the City Square is evaluated in terms of accessibility and use for all and collective memory in this period, the area's nature did not change. It is not accessible and used by all, besides there is nothing left in the area to indicate that a terminal once existed there. The old garage complex was demolished and deleted from the collective memory by the private - public sector partnership.

Shortly, the City Square between 2005-2012 can be defined as a physically, socially and economically disintegrated semi-public, unpopular urban interface. It was a victim of the ideology of consumption and populist approaches of the local authorities.



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