

Networks of solidarity within the community based organizations struggling for Beyoğlu - Istanbul

Senem Kozaman^{1*}, Tuba Inal Cekic²

¹Dr, Yildiz Technical University, Urban and Regional Planning Department

²Assoc. Prof., Yildiz Technical University, Urban and Regional Planning Department

*senemkozaman@gmail.com

Depending on David Harvey's work; built environment is produced by the accumulation and organization of capital and urban environment was also built, and is continuously destroyed and rebuilt, for the sake of creating a more efficient arena for circulation. This process of "*creative destruction*" is accelerating and is clearly visible in many cities around the globe (Harvey, 2008, 2013). Accordingly; urban space became both a commodity to reproduce capital and a subject of collective struggle in many countries like Turkey. On the other hand; research on urban movements commonly presents that; governing cities and particularly urban public land will gain importance since movements to protect the existing environment against rampant construction frequently succeeded (Mayer, 2012). Furthermore they have the potential to congregate local groups together in global coalitions in which people gather on a common ground for a better life claiming for their right to the city.

The metropolis of Istanbul where the research carried out, is one of the most dynamic cities of Turkey and also a city that these urban re-development politics and struggles revealed itself the most. Considering Istanbul, the practices of urban transformation and privatization of public urban land have led to criticism about the role of central government in urban development. Also the lack of citizen involvement in decision-making has led to the formation of a number of community-based organizations (grassroots). "Neighborhood organizations" and "solidarity groups" (initiatives) have become an increasingly important part of politics and civil society. In 2013, one of the striking example of a struggle between society and political authority, Gezi Movement took place in Beyoğlu. Gezi resistance, gives an opportunity for critical evaluation of the participatory tools in spatial decision making processes and

has emerged as an example that forefront social benefit rather than personal interests. And also provide a unification in the protection of natural environment. On the other hand, many people interpreted the main motive of this movement as a revolt against oppressive decision making system. Furthermore, the importance of community based organizations and the relations between these organizations come into prominence particularly after Gezi Movement.

Community-based organizations have an important role in establishing collective action against to urban-related interventions and strengthening the awareness in urban rights of citizens. The networks between organizations are also crucial for collaborations and help to solve the needs and demands of citizens as a union. This paper focuses on network analysis between CBOs and NGOs and aim to reveal some results that may help to reinforce relationships among organizations to improve their capacity. The concept of social networks and social network analysis to express and identify the relationship between actors and members of social systems, provide a valuable contribution for exploring relational and structural aspects of a community or a group.

In order to understand the relations between organizations in Istanbul, Beyoğlu is selected as a case study area in terms of social, political and economic aspects, due to the originality and diversity in cultural, spatial, historical status of the district. Furthermore, the district provides important opportunities as Beyoğlu became a subject of mega projects and urban transformation.

Three distinct project areas were chosen to minimize the CBO and NGO population, therefore most of the NGOs in Istanbul are located in Beyoğlu. These projects are Okmeydani Transformation Project, Taksim Pedestrianization / Gezi Park Project and Galataport Project. The CBOs and NGOs that are involved in any part of this projects development process are taken into consideration as a network member. The involvement can be defined as an opposition -any action against them (like press a charge)- or any involvement to the press meetings or participation meetings.

The relations were questioned in eight main topics that are classified as information exchange, collaboration, legal support, financial support, tools-hardware support, common event arrangements, media communication support and employee support.

Consequently, the final expected product of this research is to reveal the relationships between organizations, to understand the important actors that bridges the unity for struggles. This is also crucial in developing hints for the improvement of relations within the network owing to the fact that every aspects in a community should be articulated.