

PLANNING CULTURE OF TURKEY IN CASE OF BODRUM

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ABSTRACT: The built environment of Turkey is the result plan codes that are defined in set of different scale physical plans which prepared under the control mechanism of the governmental bodies. However the organizational, managerial and technical dimensions of these plans are not sufficient enough to create good quality spaces and urban places in cities of Turkey. The city of Bodrum in Turkey had faced these planning problems. Bodrum, which was a calm fishery village in 1970s, has transformed to an alienated urban tissue with tourism facilities and excess building stocks at present. And this paper is the presentation of this context and its planning culture which it is a part of a study exploring the question of the autonomy of architecture with the problem area of Bodrum in the consumption age within the neo-liberal policies.

KEYWORDS: Bodrum, Planning Codes and Culture, (Non)-Autonomous Architecture, Local-Central Authority, Transformation, Management

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Bodrum, which was a calm fishery village in 1970s, now has transformed to an alienated urban tissue with tourism facilities and housing units. In this transformation; the four phases in Bodrum's political and planning history are seen since 1948(46)¹. First phase was *the Under-Development Phase* in which Bodrum has been a small fishery village until 1970s. Second one was *the First Development (Research) Phase* in which the first planning decisions were derived from the vernacular characteristics in order to preserve them during the tourism's developments from 1970 to 1980. Third one was *the Fast Development Phase* in which the deteriorations due to the building constructions were seen because of the increasing demands of the tourism sector in Bodrum Peninsula from 1980 to 2000s. Finally, in *the Confusion Phase* the global forces and the capitalist demands have increased to consume the whole Bodrum Peninsula by the demands of foreign investors through the Turkish developers since 2000s.

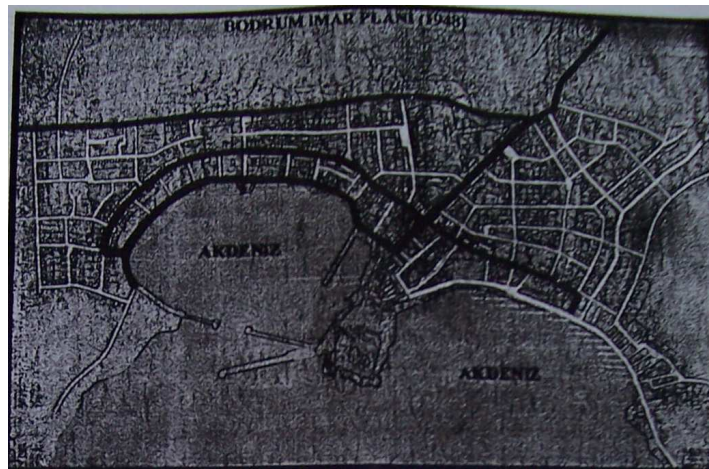


Figure 1 The First Implementation Plan of Bodrum Center in 1948

¹ The date of the first implementation plan

In these periods, in which the tourism development has been continuing within a dynamic socio political context, too many partial *implementation plans*² of the built environment for the tourism usage especially for the second summer houses have been proposed and approved since 1982. Hence, the period after 1980s has seen the most deterioration process of the historical, cultural, environmental and natural values due to these partial plans.

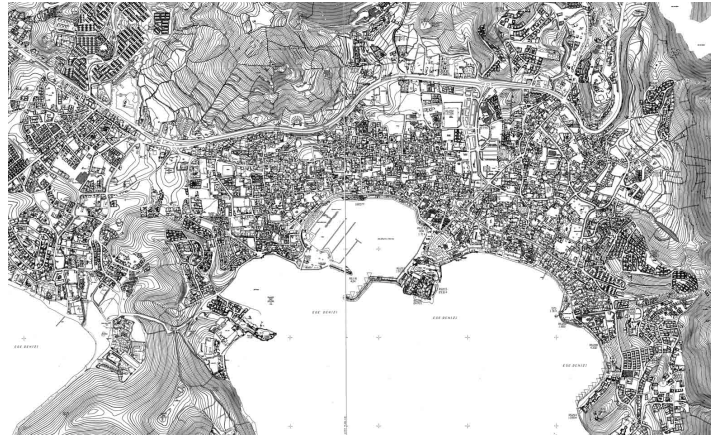


Figure 2 Present condition of Bodrum Center in 2007

After the problems increased by this partial planning attitude, the comprehensive planning attempt has started after 1991. However, the central authority has not managed to handle the process successfully due to the unsuccessful *environmental physical plans*³ and unsuccessful collaboration of the central authority with other stakeholders. The local representatives, NGOs or all other actors were ignored from all these design phases.

Now the spatial planning of Bodrum becomes a chronic problem. The planning culture of the central government without any collaboration with the local representatives, idea of the development of only one sector of tourism and not caring the natural and cultural values of Bodrum, the wrong details and rules of plans, the strict and confused planning codes in these plans were strongly objected by the professional unions in Bodrum- especially by the chamber of architects- and caused the cancellation of all these environmental physical plans approved in 1991, 1998, 2002, 2003 and 2007.

Presently, although new physical planning attempts in different scale by various central body representatives are proposed,⁴ this is not sufficient enough to solve all problems; because other institutions are still continuing to design by previous traditional planning culture of Turkey. Hence, the control mechanism of the building stock by the local organs is not sufficient enough to create good quality of spaces. The decisions and regulations put on by one strong and powerful decision maker. And every local organ has developed them and proposed a solution in the way of its understanding. Finally, in the recent developments this power has aimed to be controlled by only one central authority in order to accelerate the solutions or desires of the decision maker actors such as investors, developers and planners.

2 THE PLANNING CULTURE OF TURKEY

Implementation and Physical Plans of Bodrum

The spatial environments of the Republican Period⁵ have always been discussed that they have not created good quality of spaces whereas they only comprise physical dimensioning within a limited time and

² In scale of 1/1.000

³ In scale of 1/25.000

⁴ One of the central authorities (Ministry of Construction and Settlement) has started to question unsuccessful prior attempts and tried to offer a new model

⁵ Period after the declaration of republic in 1923

not suggest a scenario or spatial development for future. In fact the spaces of Turkey are designed and formed by planning hierarchy in which the legislative formation that has started by the “construction law.”

On the contrary to the limitations of legislations, Duyguluer (1989: 23) defends that this construction law has a flexible definition and has not much limitation on the built environment in its content. However, this leads to the problem of how the planning procedure is going to be issued. The insufficient content of this law- legislative background- of these plans has created confusions both in technical issues in which detail the plans have to be prepared and in administrative subjects of which bodies are the authority for these plans. The plan scales, content and detail are not clarified successfully in this planning hierarchy. Besides, as the authority is not defined each institution such as the various central authorities-ministries, municipalities and NGOs tries to develop a plan under its power.

Then; the planning legislations, defining how the planning mechanisms should be, become the suggestion for this “construction law” problem. The main problem within the content of Turkish Planning system in case of Bodrum is that the legislative rules for planning city have not comprise adequate architectural considerations, and little concerns have ended in a stereotype architectural character of the built environment.

As the planning legislations have not complemented the physical plans, the strict rules of the legislations defining the planning system have aimed to be abolished by proposing plan codes (Duyguluer, 1989). But, these plan notes should also be questioned as the result of the conventional and monotone built environments, in which the creation process has annihilated the autonomy of architecture.

The studies on the city development and built environment generally analyzed from the point of urban and city planners. In the built environment the aesthetic control is aimed to be defined by the strict quantitative codes. According to Ünlü (2005, 3), design control must go beyond aesthetics to tackle with all issues of urban design, sustainability and be linked with a broad multi-dimensional planning strategy, to deliver meaningful benefits to the community.

The plan codes of Bodrum comprise Procedural Codes as Legislative and Juridical ones, Contextual Codes as Environmental and Physical Planning ones, and Architectural Codes that define the built environment. The Architectural Codes grouped as Functional, Dimensional, Visual and Constructional codes which are strictly defining the architectural projects.

However, the plan codes defining the building quality in detail have eradicated the creativity of architecture and architects. Construction law(s), related legislations, plans and plan notes which comprise limitations, rules, definitions for city and urban planning and architecture have not realize a multi-dimensional planning and design strategy and cause the negative development of the built environment and architecture.

As to sum up, the negative effects on the built environment of these legislations can be summarized as; single building in a parcel⁶, increase of allotments, small parcels in the urban context and physical limitations of the buildings in these parcels with increasing the building stock and failures in the creation of open spaces. Beside these physical limitations, the study of TÜBİTAK (Duyguluer, 1989: 16) about construction legislations has stated that the limitations have not only technical but also social, economic, administrative and financial.

3 AUTONOMOUS ARCHITECTURE

Implementation plans are the most powerful tool for the definition of spatial quality in Turkey; these plans have been prepared by the results of individual and instant decisions of intuitions. Then, the codes of these plans become the most important tool for the built environment. But this model has to be questioned because of the fact that in creation process the autonomous architecture has lost its status and the spatial and environmental qualities of the context have gone to a deterioration process.

The present new dynamics and transformations in social, economic and political life have proved that this model should not be questioned and understood by the condition of the past politic and economic constraints. The loss of central authority, development of the neo-liberal economic dimensions, separation of

⁶ The alteration in the construction law has allowed building more than one building with physical dimensional limitations.

architecture and planning all have to be considered in the question of the situation of the autonomy of the architecture.

It can be pointed that these developments increased the separation of planning and architecture. As Tekeli indicates, in 1960s the strong government and weak citizens make possible to plan the Turkish cities totally, despite the unsuccessful attempts. On the contrary to this fact, he has stated that cities are in race at the present. Today the (big) lands for new actor(s) are limited, so there is a planning understanding in negotiation. Developers and investors are both planning the physical environment and doing the construction. The idea is that the complex mechanism of this contemporary period cannot be understood by the old planning methods; therefore, this change and transformation have to be investigated.⁷ And in this transformation the problem of autonomy of architecture becomes important.

The dictionary meaning of autonomy is explained as “the quality or state of being independent, free and self directing, individual or group freedom” in Webster Dictionary, and as “self government or freedom of action” in Oxford Dictionary. On the other hand, discussions of the autonomy of the architecture according to Hays should be more important than what the autonomy is. Because; if the autonomy has not been defined well and has not been so powerful than the political ideologies, the relation of the power of the politics with place-ground and space become dominant. And then, the final product moves away from the cultural and moral consciousness of the society.

The building context is shaped under the power relations. Architecture has long processes of struggles with the political and economical pressures since the beginning of the century. Hence, the autonomy of architecture is just an important word to achieve for creative works. Like “art-making, which according to the logic of autonomy successfully finds its target in direct proportion to its disengagement from the business of the world” (Wood; 2002, 49). However, the aesthetic struggle of architecture and the autonomy of architecture are more difficult than those of an art-work. Because of the fact that, “architecture is always answerable and never disengaged from the business of the world; and it would have plenty to lose if it were to disengage itself. Unlike painting, architecture historically never gave up its close connection to authority (Wood; 2002).

4 CONCLUSION

Bodrum which had a vernacular character now has been transformed to a consumption meta for building sector. This transformation has created confusions and blurs in minds since the acceleration of tourism which have increased presently. Housing types of Bodrum have transformed into a heavy programmatic structure. The rules for housing units are bulky and many of the rules do not increase the creativity of architecture. These rules only define the quantitative properties. The vernacular architecture of Bodrum has transformed into a mass produced object during the planning attempts/phases.

Bodrum planned unsuccessfully for the rents of the building stock instead of a tourism destination with a spatial planning understanding. At present, neo-liberal economic policies are aimed to transform, use and utilize the peninsula in a form of big scale investment projects that most of them are not questioned and discussed well.

The architectural rules and codes of these plans in Bodrum have created only one type architecture which demolished the authenticity of architecture and formed an environment of increased homogenization. The plan decisions narrow the architectural applications and creation in the building construction. Too many plans, plan revisions and plan codes which had not any strategic view for future has damaged the environmental, cultural, historical and architectural features of Bodrum. In the end product the problem and loss of the autonomy of architecture become obvious. Then, the idea of a new model, Urban Architecture, have to be proposed as a new model instead of the plan codes and too many partial plans both considering only the physical qualities of the built environment.

As Ünlü's (2005) stated the change of the socio-political context can not be tackled by the static nature of development plans within the regulatory context which is going to be ended with tensions in planning control mechanisms. The new model has to consider a multi-dimensional planning strategy, named as *Urban Architecture* in which the urban design, sustainability, aesthetic, environmental and architecture etc. are thought of.

⁷ www.arkitera.com

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