

CULTURAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PLANNED REFUGEE HOUSES IN İZMİR (TURKEY) FROM THE POINT OF CONSERVATION

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ABSTRACT

In the second half of the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire confronted with serious immigration fluctuations stimulated by the wars at almost all borders of the state. Immediately after the Crimean War, the Ottoman-Russian War and the Ottoman-Greek War, different refugee groups from the Balkans, Aegean Islands and Russia (approximately 1.500.000. people) were forced to immigrate to some pre-determined regions of Anatolia. Naturally, the existence of such a huge population activities caused serious settlement problems and brought into the requirement of a planned resettlement in different Ottoman towns. In order to provide with houses for those large refuge groups, many settlements were constructed in conformity with the 19th century Ottoman urban-building regulations. Initial examples of those planned refugee settlements mostly appeared at the borders of Anatolian towns, and they inspired a peculiar way of urbanization under the control of Ottoman government.

Historically, İzmir, one of the main intersection points for immigrants, witnessed various urbanization practices as well as cross-cultural vernacular architecture. In this connection, the paper tries to discover the architectural heritage of refugee settlements in İzmir, with a particular emphasis upon the cultural significance of the Değirmendağı district as a planned settlement region constructed for refugees. Having examined typological properties of the refugee houses in Değirmendağı, it demonstrates the reasons of the significance of the district as a planned refugee settlement for cultural and architectural history of Turkey.

Keywords: Değirmendağı District in İzmir, Planned Immigrant Districts in Anatolia, Architecture of Refugee Houses, 19th century, grid-iron plan.

INTRODUCTION

During the 19th century, the traditional physical structure of the Anatolian cities passed through a transformation as a result of the changes in the socio-economic and administrative structure of the Ottoman Empire. Mainly, two agents produced the new formations in the physical space of the cities (Tekeli, 1985, 882).

The foreign organizations controlled by foreign capital as well as the foreign construction firms constituted the first group. Either financially supporting the urban development projects, or implementing these projects themselves, this foreign group took part in the creation of new physical formations.

The Ottoman governors constituted the second group. The Ottoman government reorganized the institutional structure of the architectural organization and enacted several regulations about streets and buildings: *Ebniye Kanunu* (1848), *Turuk-Ebniye Kanunu* (1864), *Ebniye Kanunu* (1882) (Ergin, 1992; Temizsoy, 2002; Selman, 1982). In these regulations, there are strict rules concerning a wide range of issues. They are mainly about streets in order to meet the necessities of new intra-urban transportation, measures against fire and the planning principles of immigrant districts and new settlements. All solutions were actually sought with the emergence of such profound problems.

To understand the transformation in the physical structure of Anatolian cities as a result of the immigration, Temizsoy (2002) examined the efforts of Ottoman governors for solving the resettlement problem of immigrants. The study focused on the planned districts constructed for the resettlement of refugees immigrated after Ottoman Russian War (1877-1878). The research indicates that some immigrant districts were the outcome of a spontaneous building process in which refugees constructed their houses and districts with the collaboration of the native citizens. But some other quarters were constructed by the Ottoman state according to certain urban and architectural planning principles written in the *Turuk ve Ebniye* Regulation (1864) and the *Ebniye* Law (1882). Here it should be stressed that there is no any specific regulation enacted exclusively for the resettlement problem of refugees. The planned resettlement areas are highly important since they are the witness of a significant transformation in the modes of urbanization but also they indicate the policy of Ottoman governors in the reformation of residential architecture in the 19th century.

The examples of Boşnak Mahallesi in Ankara (Aktüre, 1978, 104), Altıparmak Mahallesi in Bursa (Türkoğlu, 2002), Mecidiye and Hamidiye Mahalleleri in Afyon (Aktüre, 1978, 104), Edirnekapı Mahallesi in İstanbul (Selman, 1982, 173-176) show that the planned immigrant districts are constructed in grid-iron system; streets in new settlements are either parallel or perpendicular to each other and they are aligned. The width of the streets mostly varied between 6 m, 7.5 m

and 9 m. as defined by the rules in regulations. On the subject, Tekeli (1982, 899) states, “the regular road pattern and the order of buildings lots of the planned refugee districts constitute a contrast to the traditional residential structure of Ottoman cities”.

This study introduced an unknown planned immigrant district in İzmir, named Değirmendağı, based on the master thesis prepared by the author (Temizsoy, 2002). There are only a few publications (Baykara, 1974:41; Serçe, 1999:165; Atay, 1978:60) that mention about the region as an immigrant district. According to these works, the region was developed as a settlement for Tatarian and Rumelian refugees after the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War. Also in Bilsel’s work (1999), Mecidiye Mahallesi in Değirmendağı is introduced as a planned district for the resettlement of refugees. However, there is no indepth research on the urban development and the residential architecture of this particular district.

For this purpose, the paper traces a twofold line of exploration: In the first place, the formation of the planned is examined through İzmir city maps and historic documents. In the second place, the physical properties of the planned refugees’ settlement is analysed in terms of the urban fabric of the district and vernacular architecture of refugee houses.

PLANNED RESETTLEMENT AREA IN DEĞİRMENDAĞI DISTRICT, İZMİR

The city of İzmir located on the junction of trade roads played a significantly important role in the resettlement of refugees throughout the second half of 19th century. Not only the appropriate links of İzmir to inner regions, but also to the other port cities facilitated the consigning process of refugees to inner regions or coastal towns by trains and ships. In this respect, it is important to note that not all the refugees were consigned from İzmir to other regions; some refugee groups were also settled in İzmir and its vicinity. Approximately 5.000 Crimean and Caucasian refugees were settled in İzmir during the period between 1854 and 1861 (Saydam, 1997, 131). After the Ottoman-Russian War (1877-78), a Turkish and Muslim population from Crimea-Caucasia and Rumelia (the West Thrace) and a small group of Jewish population from Russia immigrated to İzmir. In 1878 the total population of these two immigrant groups approximately reached to 66.000 people. Most of the refugees were driven to the coastal towns or other provinces such as Konya, Adana in Anatolia by ships or trains. A group of Rumelian refugees, the population of which varied between 5.000 and 6.000 were settled in the peripheries of İzmir (Öztürk, 1990, 34-35).

The Refugee Commission, the Municipal Administration and the Governorship of İzmir were participated in providing refugee groups with house assistance in



Figure 1. Actual Situation of Değirmendağı District (Author, 2002:110)

1880s and 1890s. The refugees were mostly settled by the Refugee Commission under the control of the mayor of Municipal Administration (Serçe, 1998, 60-64). The Municipal Administration, who was authorized administratively, made all the decisions about the location of settlements. Accordingly, the uninhabited lands adjacent to the *Yukarı Türk Quarter* were opened to the building construction in order to meet the urgent resettlement requirements of the refugees in 1880s. The Governor of İzmir also made some contributions to the development of new immigrant neighbourhoods by constructing the main streets, which linked new settlement areas to the city centre. Some of the municipal functions were also carried out by the Governorship of İzmir: e.g., streets were constructed and the installation of the sewerage system was started (Raif, 1927).

The immigrant district in Değirmendağı is located on the south of the historic city, adjusted to the Kemeraltı. As it is seen on the plan, three mahalles constitute the planned district in Değirmendağı: Selimiye, Fatih and Mecidiye. The main streets that were constructed during the last quarter of the 19th century are surrounding the planned district. Accordingly, Değirmendağı is surrounded by Midhat Paşa Street on the west, Birleşmiş Milletler Street on the north and Esrefpaşa Street on the east.

The Formation of The Planned Settlement in Değirmendağı

The formation of Değirmendağı District is examined through the comparison of four city maps prepared by engineers of Western origin and Ottomans: the first

one prepared by Saad in 1876, the second one drawn by the Municipality of İzmir (1891), the third one presenting the system of water lines prepared by a British company (1900-1905) and finally the cadastral plans prepared by İzmir Municipality (1934). Moreover, this study refers to archive documents.

Değirmendağı in 1876

As it is seen on the Saad's İzmir map (1876), a hill at the southwest of the city rises steeply from the sea and constitutes the natural southwestern borders of the Turkish *Mahalles* (district) in 1876. This area is named Değirmendağı in the city map. It is represented as the cemeteries of Muslim and Jewish population. While Muslim cemeteries are situated on the eastern and southeastern sides of the hill, Jewish cemeteries are located on the northern and northwestern side extending as a narrow strip along the coast from the *Sarı Kışla* (the military barrack) to west. Between Jewish and Muslim cemeteries on the northeastern slopes of the hill, there is a small settlement extending from the Turkish Mahalles. The settlement pattern sloping down the Değirmendağı presents a typical organic urban fabric as that of the Turkish Mahalles. In 1876, the western slope of the hill was an unoccupied land. The most remarkable thing on the Değirmendağı is the ruined temple standing on the hilltop. It is represented on the city map in dotted lines, which



Figure 2. Değirmendağı on The Map of Lamec Saad (1876) (Temizsoy, 2002:63)

Figure 3. New Settlements in Değirmendağı on The 1891 Map of İzmir (Temizsoy, 2002:89)

probably indicates the approximate location of a non-existing temple in 1876. In the same period, the narrow strip along the coast, where Değirmendağı merged with the sea on the northeastern side of the hill, was used as the field of maneuver by the soldiers of Sarı Kışla. Next to this drill field, there is a trapezoidal building that is the prison. Finally, it is seen that there is a small street passing behind the Sarı Kışla towards Değirmendağı that connects Konak to Göztepe used by horse carriages.

Değirmendağı in 1885

In 1885, an inventory was prepared that presented the name of mahalles in İzmir with the enumeration of buildings and streets (Serçe, 1999, 164). This inventory gives significant information about the mahalles forming the Değirmendağı District in 1885 (Table 1). First of all, four mahalles in Değirmendağı are recorded among the Muslim District, except Karataş-Osmaniye. Because of the Greeks being the majority group, Karataş-Osmaniye is recorded as a Greek District. Secondly, there is no building owned by non-Muslim population in four neighbourhoods. From the demographic point of view, it can be argued that the inhabitants were Muslims in these mahalles in 1885. Thirdly, each mahalle in Değirmendağı has a consecutive number started from the number 17. In 1885, there were 25 Muslim Mahalles in İzmir and the last numbers are indicating new neighbourhoods in İzmir. Thus, this numerical system indicates that the settlement located on the Değirmendağı was founded in the late 19th century. Finally, there is no data in this document about the total number of streets in Muslim *mahalles*. One reason for this uncertainty might be because these areas were probably still under construction in 1885.

Table 1. Mahalles in Değirmendağı According to The Inventory of 1885
(SERÇE, 1999:171)

NAMES OF THE MAHALLES THAT FORMED THE PLANNED DISTRICT IN DEĞİRMENDAĞI (1885)	No	Number of Streets	Number of Houses					Total Buildings
			Greek	Foreigner	Jewish	Armenian	Muslim	
Mazlum Bey Çeşmesinde Birinci Hamidiye Mahallesi (M)	17	-	-	-	-	-	218	218
Mazlum Bey Çeşmesinde İkinci Hamidiye Mahallesi (M)	18	-	-	-	-	-	100	100
Şerifiye Mahallesi (M)	19	-	-	-	-	-	219	219
Orta Mahalle (M)	23	-	-	-	-	-	80	80
Karataş or Osmaniye (G)	16	9	34	3	11	59	61	158
TOTAL							678	775

According to the Inventory, there were 678 houses owned by Muslims existed in the planned district while the total enumeration of buildings owned by Muslims was 5.906 in the city of İzmir. Thus, it can be deduced that total number of Muslim buildings in Değirmendağı is 11% of total Muslim buildings in İzmir. If the average population living in a Muslim building were 7-8 people, the population of the Muslim mahalles would be between 4.700 and 5.400; the whole population would be 5.200 and 6.000 people in Değirmendağı District. Consequently, it can easily be deduced from all these historical records that Değirmendağı was an important resettlement area for refugees immigrated İzmir after Ottoman-Russian War (1877-1878).

Değirmendağı District in 1891

New settlement plots in Değirmendağı District appeared first in the *Salname* (Ottoman Annuals) dated 1891. As it is seen on the city map prepared by the Governorship of İzmir, new neighbourhoods extending on the northwest of Değirmendağı are founded on a higher level as compared to the small neighbourhood on the northeastern slopes of Değirmendağı. Although it is difficult to understand the settlement pattern of this new settlement, it has a relatively regular aspect with its regular street pattern. These new settlements would most probably indicate the planned resettlement are of Tatarian and Rumelian refugees settled in Değirmendağı.

Construction of Main Streets, Mosques and School Buildings in 1890s

During the governance of Halil Rıfat Paşa, the governorship of İzmir made important contributions in the development of Değirmendağı. During his first term (1889-1891), Halil Rıfat Paşa developed the urban structure of the new immigrant district in Değirmendağı while in his second term (1893-1896), new settlements on the northwestern slopes of Değirmendağı were linked to the city centre by the Halil Rıfat Paşa Street (Raif, 1927, 41).

During the same period, three mosques and the primary school of Sarıkamış were constructed on the central position of the mahalles. It means that they were most probably specific as urban blocks and building lots during the planning process in the late 19th century. These buildings are still regularly used by the inhabitants of Değirmendağı (Figure 4). As several mosques constructed by Ottomans (Cerasi, 1999, 137), they were constructed with the financial supports of notables so they are carrying the names of the notables, who donated money for the constructions. According to the inscription panels, these buildings are named the Nur Kamer Mosque (1893), the Hacı Ethem Mosque (1899) and the Akarcalı Mosque (no inscription panel). It is surprising to see that the construction of three mosques is dated to approximately fifteen years later than the first refugee houses constructed in the district. This situation indicates that the priority was given

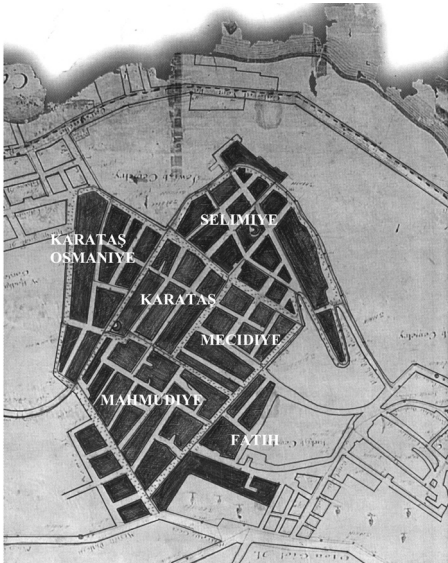


Figure 4. British Plan of Water Lines System (1905-1910) (Temizsoy, 2002:95-96)

to the resettlement of refugees during 1880's. However, we know that the refugee commissions in 1880s were charged with the construction of mescid and school building in new resettlement areas of refugees (Dersaadet Muhâcirin İdâresi Talimâtı, 1878, 39). Thus the state most probably provided religious and educational needs of the refugees during the 1880s by constructing small mescid and the school of Sarıkamış in Değirmendağı District.

Değirmendağı District in 1905-1910

As it is seen in the plan of city water supply system prepared by English engineers (1905-1910), for the first time, the whole district is appeared on city maps (Atay, 1998, 193). The plan

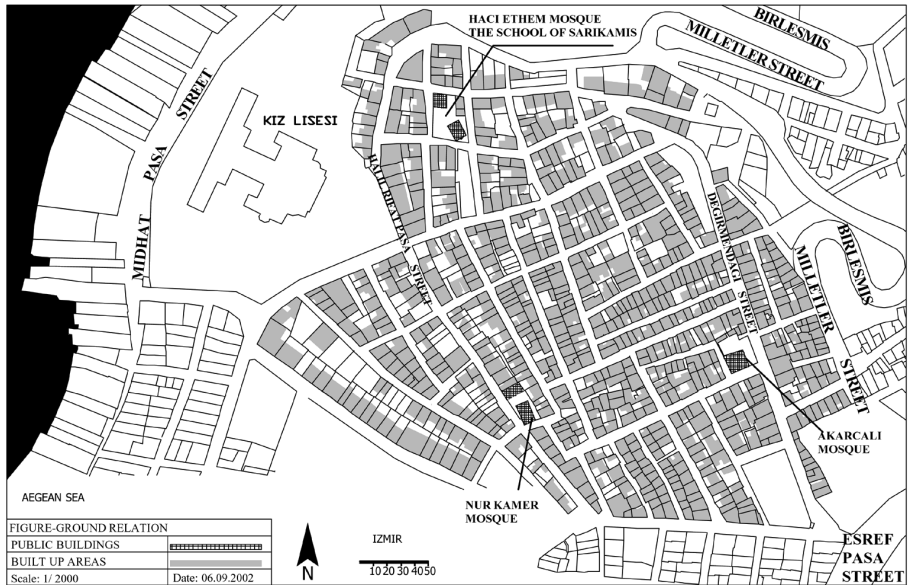


Figure 5. Figure-Ground Relation (Temizsoy, 2002: 111-113)

shows the new pipeline system to be installed in Turkish sketchy as well as in Değirmendağı. Unfortunately, there is no information whether the pipeline system was really implemented or the plan only shows the planning decisions.

As it is seen on the plan, the general layout of new settlements obeys to the rules of geometric principles: the streets intersected each other perpendicularly and divided the area into mostly identical rectangular urban blocks. The planned settlement area is still surrounded by Jewish cemetery on the northern and northeastern side of the hill and by Turkish cemeteries on the eastern side. The western slope of Değirmendağı is presented as garden. The close vicinity of the Değirmendağı district was still uninhabited at the beginning of the 20th century. There are large Turkish cemeteries between the planned settlement in Değirmendağı and the old Turkish neighbourhoods. On the plan, only two mosques- Hacı Ethem Mosque and Nurkamer Mosque- are marked. Because of the lack of officials' concern with Muslim mahalles, Akarcalı Mosque is not presented that was constructed in the last decade of the 19th century while the location of Hacı Ethem Mosque is presented on a different urban block.

Administratively, in 1911, six mahalles constituted the planned district. As it is seen on the plan, the main streets of the district separate these mahalles administratively but this separation is not visually perceived during the transition from one mahalle to the other.

Değirmendağı District in 1934

The cadastral plans in 1/500 scale prepared by the İzmir Municipality indicate the general layout of the district with its regular street network and urban blocks that remain mostly the same until today. The cadastral plans present the location of buildings and small gardens on the building lots that give significant information about the house-garden relations or house-street relations. Administratively, the planned settlement was reconstituted in three mahalles in 1934: Selimiye, Mecidiye and Fatih.

The cadastral plans indicate that streets were carrying names in 1934 but the city guides (İzmir Şehir Rehberi, 1946; İzmir Şehri Mahalle ve Sokak Numaraları Rehberi, 1939) indicate that the Municipality of İzmir assigned a particular number for each street in 1939 (Temizsoy, 2002, 82). Moreover, the Jewish cemetery on the northern slopes of Değirmendağı is removed and the area is completely planted in trees and named Bahribaba Park (Serçe, 1998, 141-143). Also a new school building (Erkek Muallim Mektebi) and a police station are constructed on the northern slope of Değirmendağı.

Analysis of Urban Fabric: Street Systems, Blocks, Building Lots, Houses

The urban and architectural properties of Değirmendağı district will be sum up as follow:

Street Systems

The resettlement area in the Değirmendağı District is planned in grid-iron system. The streets following east-west and north-south directions intersect each other perpendicularly while they divide the area into rectangular building lots as well as regular urban blocks. It is interesting to see that the general layout neglected the physical limitations of the topography as it is implemented in a geometric order on a very sloppy area in order to create a regular urban fabric in İzmir. Today, the street pattern following north-south and east-west directions is still readable because the district is mostly preserved during the 20th century.

As it is seen on the plan, there is a U shaped loop surrounding the planned district. It is formed by Halil Rıfat Paşa Street and Değirmendağı Street that are constructed in 7.5 m. and 9 m. wide respectively. These two streets functioned as the main streets of the districts in the north-south directions. In the 19th century, commercial and residential uses were intermingled on both sides of the loop: small trade activities were mostly carried on the ground floor while the first floors of buildings mostly functioned as residence. Besides the development of commercial activities along the loop, three mosques and the school building were constructed on the main streets: the Nur Kamer Mosque, the Hacı Ethem Mosque and the school of Sarıkamış were located on the Halil Rıfat Paşa Street while the Akarcalı Mosque was located on the Değirmendağı Street. Today, the architectural properties of the houses indicate that the construction standards, quality of workmanship and properties of facade components are better on both sides of these streets, which are the results of the special features of the Halil Rıfat Paşa Street and the Değirmendağı Street.

The streets forming the Değirmendağı District are constructed according to certain planning principles. The widths of the streets conform with the street dimensions fixed in the Building Regulation (Ebniye Law) enacted in 1882. The widths of streets vary among 6 m., 7.5 m., and 9 m. Considering the streets in the city center being mostly less than 4 m. wide, it is very interesting to see that the planned settlement in Değirmendağı is a significant example for newly constructed planned settlements. As the widths of linear streets vary among 6 m., 7.5 m. and 9 m., new street system in Değirmendağı can serve both pedestrians and vehicles. During the 19th century, however, we know that the old street system could not meet the necessities of new intra-urban transportation that led to some traffic problems in the city centre. It is surprising to see that there is no cul-de-sacs in the study area. In traditional Ottoman mahalles, however, we know that cul-de-sacs were privileged semi-public/semi private spaces where passed the everyday life of people.

Urban Blocks

The second analysis about the urban fabric is the form of the urban blocks and their location in the site. As it is seen on the plan (Figure 5), the dimensions of the urban blocks vary according to the topography. Square urban blocks are generally located on the northern and eastern of the planned district while rectangular ones are on the western and southern slopes of Değirmendağı. This is the natural result of the properties of topography: square form in plain lands and rectangular urban form in sloppy lands fit better.

Urban blocks in square form have generally large gardens in the middle of the blocks. The access to these gardens is mostly along a narrow street connected to main regular streets but they are not perceived from the streets. These gardens are different from the back gardens of houses because they are presented as separate lots in the cadastral plans.

In the rectangular urban blocks, however, gardens are located on backside of the houses that comprise private green areas. It is seen that private gardens function mainly as natural illumination and ventilation because of their measures.

Although gardens are mostly located on the backside of houses in the planned district, there are also front gardens in corner plots. To leave space among houses on the corner of streets can be evaluated as a measure to prevent the expansion of fire. There is also an article in the Building Regulation dated 1847-1848 about the corner buildings. According to the Regulation, corner building in the conflated area would leave space to the main street and the other street during the reconstruction of the site.

Building Lots

Urban blocks are divided into rectangular building lots in different lengths and widths. In general, short sides of rectangular lots are facing the street, which is at least 3 m. - 4 m. wide. Because of the topography, building lots are oriented in north-south direction on the northern and eastern sides of the hill while they are oriented in west-east directions on the western sides of the district.

Houses

Houses in the planned district are adjacently arranged in long and narrow building lots and they are built parallel to the street. Considering the advantages of attached houses such as raising density, lowering infrastructure costs, facility of installation of drainage system, it is rational to construct the refugees' houses in an adjacent order. Architectural properties of existing buildings indicate that small and simple houses having one or two-storey were planned to meet the settlement necessity of large refugee groups (the measures of building lots are varied among 25m²-80m²). Considering the urgent resettlement problem of refugees,

it is understandable that main concerns of simplicity, economy and functionality have shaped the architecture of the refugee houses in İzmir.

Architecture of Refugees' Houses

Refugee houses in the site have one or two storey. Because of the slope, houses generally have basements. In general, houses are reached with a couple of stairs from the street and the difference-in-level in between the house and street defines an entrance space like an entrance niche. Because of narrow plot arrangements, houses mostly have side entries in order to leave maximum space for living in the houses.

Plan

There is a tendency to construct refugee houses in certain architectural typologies. The study of the typological properties shows that most of the houses have a simple linear plan arrangement in rectangular forms or L-shaped. Below, the common features of refugee house plans are given.

Ground Floor Plan: The entrance from the street opens to a rectangular hall, which extends between the entrance door and the door of the backyard. It mainly function as a circulation space, to where the rooms, kitchen, staircase and the door of garden open. If the refugee house is so small, the hall function as the main living room. In general, there is a room/rooms right next to the hall. These rooms have visual contact with the street while the service spaces (particularly kitchen) at the back face the backyard. Service spaces mostly have no relation with the outside but the windows opening to the backyard provides partial lighting.

Some buildings are built in L-shaped plan on ground floor. There are rooms next to and across the entrance hall. The service spaces are partly separated from the main body of the building. In some examples, however, service spaces are not extended outside the building and the room next to the staircase function as a service unit. In addition to that, service spaces (such as kitchen) in some samples are on a lower level than other spaces and the height of this space is also kept lower than other sections in order to create additional room above. This intermediate floor looking at the back garden is reached through the stairs.

Second Floor Plan: Rooms mainly function as sleeping units looking at the street as well as the back garden and there is no service space. In some samples especially on the main streets, there is a balcony at the middle of the façade that is generally made of wood supported with cast iron consoles from beneath.

Basement Floor Plan: The houses in the planned district, generally, have basement floors under the street level, which is the result of the floor level heightened from the street level as well as the location of the building on the slopes of the hill. The height of the basement, which is in connection with the upper floor, is

generally kept lower than a typical floor and it is utilized as a service floor for storage, laundry, etc. In these types of houses, the main entrance on the first floor is generally 2-storey high and placed in a niche that gives a monumental appearance to the building. The number of steps to the entrance door is determined by the height of the basement. In some samples, the basement floor in the height of a typical floor function as an independent unit and they are usually utilized as shops. In both cases, basements have relation with streets and courtyard with their windows.
































FACADE TYPOLOGY OF HOUSES IN DEĞİRMENDAĞI	Houses Having Side Entrance				Houses Having Central Entrance					
					Symmetry		Asymmetry			
	1-Storey H.	Basement								
										
	2-Storey Houses	Balcony								
										
										
	2-Storey Houses with Basement									
										

Figure 6. Housing Façade Typology in The Study Area (Temizsoy, 2002:130)

Facade Typology

The study on the façade typology illustrates that a modular typology is used in the construction of the refugee houses in Değirmendağı district. The location of the entrance door, stairs and balcony on the façade and the windows placing on the same vertical axis are the main features of this modular system. The locations of these features on the facade created different typologies but also they have many common properties. Façade typology of refugee houses can be primarily analysed according to the location of entrance hall in the plan (Figure 6).

Houses having side halls (Type 1): The entrance door is placed on one side of the façade and it is a few steps higher than the street level. In Değirmendağı District, this type is more widespread;

Houses having central halls (Type 2): This type has central entrance door while the windows are located on both sides of the door. This type has two main sub-group; the entrance door at the symmetrical axe, and the entrance door at the asymmetrical axe.

These features of residential architecture are also observed in different districts of İzmir that were developed during the same period (Buca, Foca). This type of houses is named the Chios style house that appeared first during the 19th century and it was popular until the first quarter of 20th century. Thus the typological properties and building techniques show that local know-how and craftsmanship were used in the construction of refugee houses. However, to relate such a style only to the city's craftsmen will be a naive conclusion. It is more appropriate to consider the assistance of the local government for the simplest/fastest/cheapest application of the regulations together with the use of new and standardized construction techniques in İzmir in late 19th century.

EVALUATION OF DEĞİRMENDAĞI DISTRICT FROM THE POINT OF CONSERVATION

The most determined feature of Değirmendağı district is that the region has not gone through major deterioration both in urban fabric and residential architecture. Most of the houses have kept their originality with minor changes because the buildings in the area are defined within the conservation law (*Konak I. Kentsel Sit Alanı*) enacted by the Regional Preservation Council. Moreover, houses are still used by their owners, the average age of who is above 70. The elderly inhabitants state that they will continue to live in their houses because this environment is part of their collective memory. They give significant information about refugee movements in the 19th century, social structure and ethnicity of people, daily life in the past and architecture of houses.

But, most likely, the originality of the district will be vanished in the following years. Today, houses in the district are still being abandoned and some are being replaced with 5-6 story apartment blocks. This progress will soon lead to the lost of originality in the tissue and the architecture. So, this study will hopefully serve for documentary purposes of the region. Significance of the district for social and architectural history of Turkey is one of the main reasons for the necessity of conservation of the district in its integrity. This feature simplifies the study while comparing the historical data with the current situation and tracing the application of the regulations in the region.

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