CHAPTER 2

STAGE AND THE BEYOND: EXAMINING CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION IN THE URBAN PUBLIC SPACES AND THE THIRD PLACES*

SAHNE VE ÖTESİ: KENTTE GÖSTERİŞÇİ TÜKETİM VE ÜÇÜNCÜ YERLER

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ABSTRACT

In social life, individuals use appearances and actions to present themselves. The people who build their identity through their cultural, social and economic capitals tend to use consumption as a tool to create an impression among groups that they want to become a part of. The urban space which is the place of conspicuous consumption also becomes the consumed object itself. This study aims to examine the role of self-presentation and social relations in the social (re)production of the space. Therefore, a field research was carried out in the Karaköy neighborhood of Beyoğlu, Istanbul.

It is concluded that the urban space has been shaped by conspicuous consumption with certain representations. Individuals choose the places according to the impression they want to create; they get to be involved in groups they feel that they belong in through their capitals. At that point, the urban space starts (re)producing itself. In the field research in-depth interview, observation, and commented walk techniques were used. It is concluded that Karaköy is considered as a stage, influenced by its cafes, restaurants, design shops, and street festivals, as well as its “authentic” texture. Furthermore, with the emergence of social media, the audience has grown in number. Therefore, Goffman’s dramaturgy method was used for the analysis. Finally, the concept “beyond the stage” was developed based on the interaction of the stage with the people and the places outside of it, which highly affects the formation and sustainability of the stage.

Keywords: Conspicuous consumption, urban space, consuming places, capitals, (beyond) the stage

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ÖZET

Toplumsal hayatta kişiler görünüşleriyle ve eylemleriyle birtakım izlenimler yaymaktadır. Kendi kimliklerini sahip oldukları kültürel, sosyal ve ekonomik sermayeleri aracılığıyla inşa eden kişiler, tüketimi ise parçası olmak istedikleri gruplar üzerinde izlenim yaratmak amacıyla bir araç olarak kullanma eğilimindedir. Bu durum gösterişçi tüketimin mekânı olan kent mekânını aynı zamanda tüketilen nesnelerden biri haline getirmektedir. Bu çalışmayla birlikte benliğin sunumunun ve toplumsal ilişkilerin mekânın toplumsal (yeniden) üretimindeki rolünü incelemek amaçlanmaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda İstanbul'un Beyoğlu ilçesinin Karaköy semtinde bir saha araştırması yürütülmüştür.

Çalışmada gösterişçi tüketimle birlikte kent mekânının belli temsillerle şekillendiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Kişiler yaymak istedikleri izlenime göre görünecekleri mekânları seçmekte; sahip oldukları sermayelerle ait hissettikleri gruba dahil olmaktadır. Bu noktada kentsel mekân ise kendini (yeniden) üretmektedir. Durum çalışması olarak geliştirilen araştırmada derinlemesine mülakat ve gözlem teknikleri ile rehberli gezi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada Karaköy'ün içerisinde barındırdığı üçüncü yerlerin, tasarım pazarlarının, sokak festivallerinin ve semtin "otantik" yapısının etkisiyle "sahne" olarak şekillendiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Buna ek olarak sosyal medyanın da denkleme girmesiyle benliğin sunumunda izleyici kitlesi artmıştır. Bu sebeple analizde Goffman'ın dramaturji yöntemine başvurulmuştur. Son olarak sahnenin sahne dışındaki mekânlarla ve insanlarla olan etkileşiminin, sahnenin oluşumundaki ve sürdürülebilirliğindeki etkisi temel alınarak "sahnenin ötesi" kavramı geliştirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gösterişçi tüketim, kentsel mekan, tüketici mekanları, sermayeler, sahne (ötesi)

1. Introduction

The urban space is in a continuous formation process as a social space. Urbanites affect the formation of the urban space, and the urban space affects the formation of the lifestyle and socialization of the urbanites. They use various tools to present themselves in public life and to improve their social relations. While urbanites apply to various representations to fit in the group they feel belong in, they distinguish themselves from others through impressions they create. In this distinction individuals instrumentalize a variety of things through consumption. Although consumption does not constitute a new title of these instrumentalizations, the variety of things consumed today has increased more than ever before. As Baudrillard (1998, p. 193) states “[Consumption] is a statement of contemporary society about itself, the way our society speaks itself”. The urban space is one of the consumed. The conspicuous consumption shows itself in the urban space at its best. The urban space establishes the places of conspicuous consumption designed for the audience.

In the 19th century, with the development of transportation trade, and the increase in the consumption level of social classes, goods started to be consumed above their use value. Sennett defined this as “the investment of personal feeling” and “being in the public” as “a personal and passive experience” (Sennett, 2002, p. 145).

Consumption as a tool of self-presentation, varies as product consumption and space consumption. Consumption has become socialized because it is meaningless without the audience: In the end, the evolution of many consumer products depends on power relations among producers, the quest for self-definition and social status among consumers, and floating cultural representations of “cool” (Zukin & Smith Maguire, 2004, p. 180). Correspondingly, Urry remarks that the satisfaction gained from consumption is provided in agreement with social acceptance, and not the service:

Part of what people buy is in effect a particular social composition of other consumers, and this is difficult for the providers of the services to ensure. It is this which creates the ‘ambience’ of a particular cosmopolitan city, a stylish hotel, a lively nightclub and so on. The satisfaction is derived not from the individual act of consumption but from the fact that all sorts of other people are also consumers of the service and these people are deemed appropriate to the particular consumption in question. (Urry, 2002, p. 131).

In addition to the meanings assigned to the space through social relations, within urban entrepreneurialism some urban policies invest in consumption by assigning new images and meanings to the space in order to contribute to the economy. Investments in consumption through urban policies and the usage of the urban space as a place for creating a desired

impression in identity building have caused a transformation. Since public spaces and third places started to be used as places for people to create impressions, the tool of creating impressions has become (conspicuous) consumption.

Within the scope of this research, the reflections of conspicuous consumption in the urban space has been examined in the Karaköy neighborhood of Istanbul. The research was built around the question of how people use consumption in identity building and self-presentation and what impact the spaces that turn into objects of consumption have on shaping the cities. For this study a field study was conducted between 2016-2019 in public places and third places in Karaköy. In the field research, in-depth interview, observation and commented walk techniques were used. In the analysis of the information obtained, by applying Goffman's dramaturgy method, discussions about consuming places and self-presentation in public life were developed.

Given the background, first, the conspicuous consumption and its reflections in the urban space are discussed. Second, the capitals used by the subjects of the conspicuous consumption in the practices of distinction and self-presentation are explained. In chapter four, Karaköy is introduced as the urban space for the examination of conspicuous consumption and the method of the research is stated. In chapter five, the stage is re-established in Karaköy by using the dramaturgy method; the urban space and the subjects of conspicuous consumption are analyzed. In this analysis, a new discussion has been developed on the importance of the interaction of the stage with the people and places outside of it. In conclusion, the effect of conspicuous consumption on urban space is open to discussion.

2. Conspicuous Consumption and Urban Space

Veblen (2014) developed the concept of "conspicuous consumption" with reference to the instrumentalization of consumption and put the "leisure class" at its center. The leisure class uses conspicuous consumption in order to gain social dignity and status: They dress fashionably; use luxury and expensive products. The status images of the leisure class in the past were consumption practices such as doing sports for pleasure; owning as many slaves as they could since their wealth was measured by the number of slaves they owned, working less, buying large houses with huge gardens. Women are another means of representation of wealth through their jewelry, attitudes and long nails showing that they don't do any work; they would hold large parties, where they invited all their friends and competitors. According to Veblen, status is more fundamental than class, and it is the determinant of the dynamics of social relations. Conspicuous consumption is conspicuous due to the magnificence of the

purchased product and the need for areas to show and display this magnificence. Ownership and display are two important factors. Therefore, public relations are essential for conspicuous consumption.

In describing this evolving practice of consumption, Sennett referred to Marx's concept of commodity fetishism: Attention could be diverted from the social conditions under which the objects were made to the objects themselves, if the goods could acquire a mystery, a meaning, a set of associations which had nothing to do with their use (Marx; Sennett, 2002, p. 145). The success of commodity fetishism is based on the relationship between capitalism and public culture: Capitalism provides commodity production, and public culture provides the act of consuming them. Individuals have become a part of commodity fetishism to display their personality or status. This has turned personality into a "social category" and introduced it into the public sphere (Sennett, 2002).

In a study published in 1998, Zukin stated that "During the past 30 years, the meaning of "urban lifestyles" has changed from a fairly stable prerogative of social status (Weber, 1946) to an aggressive pursuit of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984)" (1998, p. 825). In this context, while people have tended towards various cultural consumptions, city policies have turned towards cultural investments (Zukin, 1998). Further, industries based on designing and producing goods for specific lifestyles are now seen as contributing to a city's economic growth (Molotch, 1996; Zukin, 1998, p. 825). Consumption places such as design shops, restaurants, boutiques, cafes have started to become widespread in the city with the support of city managers to "aestheticise" the city. The support of the city managers is related to urban redevelopment strategies: Urban redevelopment strategies based on consumption focus on visual attractions that make people spend money. They include an array of consumption spaces from restaurants and tourist zones to museums of art and other cultural fields, gambling casinos, sports stadia and specialized stores (Zukin, 1998, p. 832).

Cities are now seen as places of consumption instead of production (Hannigan, 1998; Zukin, 1991; Zukin, 1998), appear as "simulated places which are there for consumption" (Urry, 2002, p. 21). The visual consumption of time and space "has led to the city being predominantly reconstructed as a centre for postmodern consumption—the city has become a spectacle, a 'dreamscape of visual consumption'" (Urry, 2002, pp. 20-21; Zukin, 1992, p. 221).

Urry draws special attention to tourism and tourists in examining consuming places. Focusing on the "tourist gaze", Urry (2002), emphasizes that the gaze is formed through

images, and that tourism is in fact related to the collection of these images. Urry distinguishes the tourist gaze as a romantic, collective, spectatorial (communal activity, brief encounters, collection of different signs), environmental (scanning) and an anthropological (solitary, scanning and active interpretation) gaze. He states that it is the existence of other people that form the character of the collective tourist gaze: What gives a place its authentic texture is the people in it. In the romantic approach, the spread of mass tourism is often criticized, and it is claimed that natural beauties are destroyed by crowds. Attracted by the authenticity of the space, what the romantics fear the most is the loss of that authenticity.

Urry claims that “much tourism becomes in effect a search for the photogenic” (2002, p. 176) and in this context, people are in search of different things and are constantly consuming places - including nature. He states that the relationship between tourism and space has proceeded to a new stage with photography; and adds that a paradoxical process where the loss of a space’s old features - or its authenticity - by popularization, has led people to discover new places and consume those.

The consumption places that have become instrumentalized in self-presentation, are the most visible places in the cities: public spaces and third places. Streets, squares, green spaces, parks as places where you exhibit what you consume, or as an image of your lifestyle; restaurants, cafes, bars, art galleries etc. as consumption places that are privately owned, and yet publicly used, are places where encounters occur in public life and consumption can be displayed.

By comparing daily life to theater, Sennett discussed public life through the concepts of actor, audience, stage and role:

In a society with a strong public life there should be affinities between the domains of stage and street; there should be something comparable in the expressive experience crowds have had in these two realms. As public life declines, these affinities should erode. The logical setting for studying this relation of stage and street is the great city. It is in this milieu that the life of strangers in crowds is most in evidence and that transactions between strangers acquire a special importance. (Sennett, 2002, p. 37).

Oldenburg stated that the third places become “the core settings of informal public life” (Oldenburg, 1999, p. 41) in times when the pleasure of the city is reduced to consumerism. The first place being home and the second place the work setting, Oldenburg attributed a number of features to the third places where people meet at regular intervals: Third places are neutral areas where people feel comfortable; it is home away home. A place that is a leveler is, by its nature, an inclusive place (Oldenburg, 1999, p. 47); it is accessible to the

public. Physically, they are typically plain, unimpressive looking. Although people tend to be closer to the people they share the same social status with among others, third places are places that expand the possibilities: Within third places, the charm and flavor of one's personality, irrespective of his or her station in life, is what counts (Oldenburg, 1999, p. 47). The purpose is to enjoy someone's friendship. Its customers are regulars; it is a place to meet with acquaintances. Oldenburg states that "the lure of third place is its regulars" rather than "seating capacity, variety of beverages served, availability of parking, prices and other features" (1999, p. 55).

In the first conceptualization of Oldenburg, places such as cafes, restaurants, bars, bookstores, hairdressers step forth as the third places. Mikunda (2004) disagrees with Oldenburg's idea on the characteristics of the third places: Unlike Oldenburg, he claimed that there are commercial places that draw attention with their visuality, and thus can be instrumentalized in self-presentation (Crick, 2011). Over time, places known as public spaces such as churches, parks, main streets, libraries have joined third places. On the other hand, "virtual third places" are also included in the debate: A new discussion has been opened on the idea that social media may be a third place that overcomes the constraints of time and space (Crick, 2011).

3. Capitals: Keys to Enter the Stage

Capitals constitute the key concepts in this study, as tools used by people who are subject of conspicuous consumption for self-presentation in consumption places. Understanding Bourdieu's capitals is possible through habitus and field concepts.

Bourdieu establishes the concepts of capital and habitus on the fields of struggle. The field is the locus of relations of force -and not only of meaning- and of struggles aimed at transforming it, and therefore of endless change (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 103). The "agents" struggle with each other to profit from a field; he states that certain capitals that define the structure of the area are determinant in this struggle.

Bourdieu (1992, 1996) determined three basic capitals which were economic, cultural and social capital, together with symbolic capital: Economic capital refers to the income level and the property ownership of the individuals: the economic resources they have in general. Cultural capital is the information that passes through the family and/or through education. The level of education is not the only factor in cultural capital ownership as a certain income level is needed when it comes to cultural spending. Social capital is the social

relations network developed by individuals. Symbolic capital can be defined as an image of the other three capitals.

Bourdieu (1996) states that a group that is at the forefront of economic and cultural capital ownership ranks low in the other capital. He claims that families with both capitals seek to develop social capital. Similarly, he mentions that capitals are used for movements within and between fields: vertical movements, upwards or downwards, in the same vertical sector, that is, in the same field (e.g., from school teacher to professor, or from small businessman to big businessman); and transverse movements, from one field to another, which may occur either horizontally (a schoolteacher, or his son, becomes a small shopkeeper) or between different levels (a shopkeeper, or his son, becomes an industrialist) (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 131). However, large-scale examples of these movements are uncommon, especially when the impact of economic capital is intense. In these times where access to people, groups and information has become easier, capital ownership is earned by the efforts of people; children's capital can now be different from their families' capital.

Bourdieu defines *habitus*, another concept used in this context, as “a socialized subjectivity” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 126).

The *habitus* is necessity internalized and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions; it is a general, transposable disposition which carries out a systematic, universal application-beyond the limits of what has been directly learnt-of the necessity inherent in the learning conditions. That is why an agent's whole set of practices (or those of a whole set of agents produced by similar conditions) are both systematic, inasmuch as they are the product of the application of identical (or interchangeable) schemes, and systematically distinct from the practices constituting another life-style (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 170).

Bourdieu (1992) states that social representations and practices arise from the relationship between *habitus* and space. *Habitus* belonging forms an important concept in this study.

4. Examining an Urban Space: Sensing, Walking and Building the Field

4.1. Research Field: Karaköy

With the emergence of global competition between cities, city managers have developed various strategies; creating an image is one of them. Along with the places of consumption that have become widespread in the city with the support of the city administrators, individuals

have found many different places and opportunities for their self-presentation. In the 2010s Karaköy became an example of places simulated for consumption and for this reason the neighborhood was chosen as the research field.

Figure 1: Karaköy

Karaköy has been one of the most important centers of Istanbul throughout history with its harbor and trade. The neighborhood has been defined as “the door to the West” for hosting different cultures. It is a neighborhood in the Beyoğlu district, extending from Ataturk Bridge in the west to the Galataport construction site in the east, and it is bordered by the tram line and the Bankalar Street in the north. The neighborhood’s borders, whose limitations are reported differently in different sources, were drawn based on historical continuity and social acceptance within this research. The neighborhood has been divided into two areas by the tram line. The left side is Perşembe Pazarı where trade and traditional crafts culture still continue. The right side of Karaköy has been turned into an area where the service, culture and entertainment sector gained importance in the 2010s. The stage was established here, due to a high level of conspicuous consumption resulting from the concentration of places of consumption.

Karaköy has been undergoing a dynamic transformation since the beginning of 2010. Formerly, in the evening it became an unsafe neighborhood after the shops such as the

machinists and glassers were closed. The transformation started with the arrival of the culture and the art sector in the neighborhood in the late 2000s. Art galleries and independent artists in Cihangir and Istiklal Avenue moved to Karaköy as a result of the increasing rents. The creative class followed the artists. And since 2010, cafés, restaurants and bars, which were previously in Asmalımescit and Istiklal Avenue, subsist in the neighborhood. Tophane with its traditional neighborhood culture, Galata with its tourist spots and Eminönü with its commercial relations and its link to the historical peninsula are neighborhoods that interact with Karaköy.

Taking a photo and analyzing Karaköy in the transformation process has provided an opportunity for various discussions about the roots, effects and potential of the transformations in urban space. The fact that the research was carried out in such a process of transformation and that the neighborhood has its own characteristics provided unique analysis for the research.

4.2. Research Method

The qualitative research method was used to analyze the neighborhood. However, various other techniques and senses were used to analyze the urban space in depth. Observations were carried out in the field; photographs were taken, and in-depth interviews were made with 41 people. Additionally, commented walks were held in the field with 12 participants. With these walks, both the researcher and the participant had the chance to speak about the field by using various senses (see also Simmel, 1997) and experience directly. Participants' definitions, representations, and the relationships they have established have become more concrete with the walks. Goffman's dramaturgy method was used in the analysis, in light of the information obtained. Walks were also used as a means to set up the stage in the field.

While Goffman discusses the practice of presentation of self, he mentions that people display "performances" to create an impression and to prove the accuracy of these impressions. The person displaying the performances is the "actor" and the people and the groups watching the performance are the "audience". The pre-established pattern of action in the performances constitute the "part" or "routine". The people who help the parts are called the "performance team". The stimulant that gives the impression of the player's social status is "appearance", and the stimulants that give the impression of their part are "manner". "Front" that part of the performances which constantly functions; and the decorative arrangements in the area are "setting". "Backstage" refers to the area where the facts which might discredit the fostered impression are hidden. Goffman mentions two functions that must be performed in performances, and these functions, if any, are attempted to be provided by the team's "director":

“First, the director may be given the special duty of bringing back into line any member of the team whose performance becomes unsuitable. (...) Secondly, the director may be given the special duty of allocating the parts in the performance and the personal front that is employed in each part, for each establishment may be seen as a place with a number of characters to dispose of to prospective performers and as an assemblage of sign equipment or ceremonial paraphernalia to be allocated.” (Goffman, 1956, p. 61).

When an actor takes on an established social role, usually he finds that a particular front has already been established for it. Whether his acquisition of the role was primarily motivated by a desire to perform the given task or by a desire to maintain the corresponding front, the actor will find that he must do both (Goffman, 1956, p. 17).

Goffman’s conceptualizations of presentation of self shows how intense this practice is and how it depends on many factors. The actor may believe in himself/herself during the act of convincing the other side while carrying out this practice in everyday life. However, at the point where he/she performs different parts that conflict or do not match the actor’s own reality, can crack even when “audience segregation” occurs. The number of a person’s parts that are compatible and incompatible with each other is directly proportionate to the degree of his/her worrying about the impressions that the other people form of himself/herself: “he has as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he cares.” (James, pp. 128-129; Goffman, 1956, p. 31). With the instrumentalization of urban space in self-presentation, the number of factors affecting each other increases.

5. Setting the Stage

Karaköy and its inner circle are divided into areas as a result of the dramaturgy method used to examine conspicuous consumption.

Figure 2: Stage and the beyond at Karaköy.

The red area represents the stage and the highlights on it symbolize the peak points of conspicuous consumption. The Galataport Project, Perşembe Pazarı, Galata, Tophane and the rest of the Karaköy together compose beyond the stage. In this section, Karaköy and the related urban spaces are analyzed in sub sections such as the stage, backstage and beyond the stage.

5.1. The Stage

Goffman defines the area where performances are exhibited as the front. When it comes to physical space, it is possible to define narrow streets full of cafes and restaurants with illuminated grape trees as the front.

Photo 1 and Photo 2: Karaköy's street with third places and grape trees

The front is an area filled with interior and outdoor designs that emphasize the historical texture of the neighborhood, colorful and interesting objects, table chairs spread out on its narrow streets, and cafes with authentically designed backyards. These streets, which are used by the customers of these cafes and restaurants as podiums, contain iconic corners for photo sharing on social media.

Photo 3 and Photo 4: Graffiti and street art at the stage

Similarly, the streets of the neighborhood, which serve as a decoration for those who visit there, are designed to be consumed; its discredited parts are made over to look marginal and authentic. Today, in addition to the urban space, social media has also become a front for the actors. In fact, social media (mostly Instagram) and bloggers are the most popular ways for customers to discover cafes. The third wave and other cafes, streets and graffiti on the streets of Karaköy - the stage - can be defined as the setting. Research participants who visited Karaköy's cafes as customers have defined the stage as "authentic" and as a place that "has a unique atmosphere" and stated that those who came on the stage were "stylish people". Along with that, the employees of the consumption places state that the "vintage" makeover of the stage provides an advantage for them because "vintage" also reflects an image. A cafe that once was a machine shop, keeps its old interior design; and the actors who neglect the former state of the stage and prefer to consider it as vintage ask the question: "Was this a famous cafe before? What a good design!"

On the other hand, customers correspond to two concepts in the conceptualization of Goffman: Customers are both actors and audiences. When considered in the context of social media, the customers are actors and the followers are audiences. Goffman's actor concept should not be limited to customers only: Considering the fact that walking is defined as "promenading" and taking photos in front of graffiti as "trend", in the example of Karaköy, people who walk on the streets, and take photos are also considered actors. A research participant described this situation as a selfie economy: "People come here to see, to be seen and use this place as a podium for social media, there is a serious selfie economy here, especially through graffiti".

Photo 5 and Photo 6: Streets with objects and images as places of the selfie economy

The actors also have an appearance and manner that give an impression of their social status and parts. The standardized looks and attitudes of the actors form their personal front. Most of the actors of Karaköy are defined as “hipster” by the research participants. The routine of the stage is eating and drinking, following the fashion, shopping from overpriced boutiques, taking photos and enjoying the “authenticity” of the place, as Zukin emphasizes. Personal front and pattern of action form the *unwritten rules* of the stage.

As the assistants in the demonstration of these parts, employees are the performance team. By expanding the concept of Goffman’s performance team, it is possible to include the graffiti itself with its artists; and designers who decorate the enterprises and, in general, the policies carried out for the neighbor to the performance team. On the other hand, Goffman talks about the “director” as the person who keeps the actors alive in their parts and organizes personal front. In the case of Karaköy, the question of who the director is is critical; because saying that the director is only society or policies excludes another’s influence; in this respect, it is possible to say that the director is the order that is shaped by economic and political policies; sustainable by the social acceptance (Bahçekapılı, 2018, pp. 81-82).

The conspicuous consumption in Karaköy gives us a layered information on the class and status discussions in places of consumption. It is clear that the class distinctions are no longer valid in places of consumption within the ownership of cultural and social capital. People who find the places and go there have overpriced coffees and meals with their last money and make their self-presentations in the cafe atmosphere for a few hours. These few hours spent in the habitus which they tried to belong (or already belong) have been criticized as being a demonstration of “showing off” by the eyes that are not part of the conspicuous consumption.

In addition to the criticism of actors, there have been three other criticisms of places of consumption: Criticisms that describe the places as “western copies” come first. Second,

“niche spaces” which appeal to a much more limited and defined audience are mentioned and described by a research participant as follows: “So you have to feel comfortable to step inside, you have to feel harmonious with that place. They are not particularly inviting for everyone; they seem to be saying “Come if you will fit in”. Therefore, some of the cafes in Karaköy may only appeal to a niche audience”. Lastly, it is also mentioned that there are cafes and restaurants for the mass culture in the neighborhood whose numbers are increasing day by day and “spaces with a spirit of the past” were not opened due to cost of the rent in the neighborhood.

Cafes, the largest type of the third place in Karaköy, have very high rents and therefore offer a wide range of options for their customers to keep their business going at any hour. For this reason, they aim to provide all kinds of food and beverages rather than serving only coffee, food or drinks. Along with that, the places create various images and build a unique identity for themselves in order to increase their preferability and to define their customer profile among other cafes they compete with in such a narrow area. When the neighborhood became trendy, a cafe boom took place. Moreover, some of the cafes, whose number is increasing day by day, close in quite a short time due to the high rents and competition with others. It is possible to see the front image entirely renewed when visited after a week. This is also related to the actors’ attempt to convince themselves of the simulation created with the role and the environment they are in: The actors want to go to cool places and feel that they are cool.

Photo 7 and Photo 8: A third wave cafe (left) and a pub with an open-air black theatre (right)

The places of consumption form their own representation with the icons they choose to display: The third wave cafe in Photo 7 (left), has this creatively-designed and “cool” table made out of a tractor; while the pub in Photo 8 (right) chooses to stand out with its black and white open-air cinema creating a nostalgic atmosphere. It aims to attract people who are willing to consume in those places mentioned above.

In addition to the cafes, the stage hosts design shops and art galleries. As stated before, art galleries presence in Karaköy precedes the pre-eminence of conspicuous consumption in the neighborhood. Art galleries in Istanbul and in different parts of the world choose to move to different regions to escape from high rents. They constitute a group that transforms the region with their cultural, social and economic capital owners where they move. Before moving to Karaköy from the Istiklal Avenue and Cihangir, art galleries first opened in Tophane where they were not welcomed because of the transformation they created. There were conflicts due to the cultural differences between the locals and the new users. The galleries that could not stay in Tophane, went all the way down to Karaköy. Art galleries in Karaköy serve the stage by providing an opportunity to increase the cultural and social capital; and by making the owned capitals including economic capital visible. On the other hand, design shops are places that have become widespread following the preeminence of conspicuous consumption in the neighborhood. These places appear on the stage as places that appeal to the “tastes” of the social segment that visit the neighborhood.

Large-scale street festivals, which were held in Karaköy for a period of time, have also had an important effect on Karaköy functioning as a place of self-presentation. These street festivals, organized by cafes and restaurants, were held in the form of large open-air parties that hosted thousands of people, with entrance tickets in closed streets. However, they were ended as a result of the complaints of other users of the district. The conservative structure of Karaköy’s neighboring district, Tophane, also played a role in this. Karaköy’s relationship with Tophane has become tense after Karaköy became the center of the entertainment industry and conspicuous consumption. Karaköy (whose stage area had been considered as Tophane for a long time, elderly people still emphasize that to this day), which shared similar characteristics with Tophane in the past, is now in conflict with Tophane after its own transformation. Tophane’s sense of ownership for Karaköy and the fact that some tradesmen in the neighborhood are from Tophane caused them to exhibit a certain attitude towards places and events with alcohol.

Places of consumption, streets and events are important components of the stage. In addition to food and beverage consumption, other forms of consumption observed on the stage are: design product consumption, consumption of space, and consumption of authenticity. However, the stage also has a backstage, and in the case of Karaköy, the backstage has its own characteristics.

5.2. Backstage

In Karaköy, the backstage is Tophane Park, which is literally located behind the stage and in borders of the Galataport Project. In the park, which rarely is used, a historical fountain serves as an accommodation for the homeless. The park hosts a wide variety of people from the homeless to paper collectors, thinner addicts and students.

Photo 9 and Photo 10: A homeless person in a historical fountain (left) and road work on the stage (right)

In the Photo 9, an “unwanted” image stays in the backstage. On the other hand, the road work (Photo 10) is in the entrance part of the stage which serves as a podium. At this point “unwanted images” infiltrate the stage. This intertwinement continues throughout the stage: It is possible to see children and elderly people selling napkins, beggars, asylum seekers, thinner addicts; or drilled in the street where the consumption places are located. In this regard, there is no sharp distinction between the stage and the back of the stage in Karaköy.

In a similar way, peddlers such as waste collectors and secondhand collectors are among other users of the stage. Despite the high rents and the grand transformation of social life in the district, it is observed that some of the old crafts are still active in the neighborhood. While the tradesmen are able to preserve their customer potential owing to the recognition they have earned through their longstanding existence, small cafes and other businesses continue to exist serving the local craftsmen and the local residents of Tophane.

Photo 11 and Photo 12: An image from “uncool café” which does not fit the stage (left) and a warning sign from an art vernissage (right)

It is possible to observe another effect of Tophane on Karaköy through a warning sign that warns people at the vernissage not to go outside with an alcoholic beverage. These images that leak into the stage and discredit the stage constitute the original side of Karaköy, which is still undergoing transformation.

5.3. Beyond the Stage

When applying the dramaturgy method to Karaköy, it was determined that there are certain places affecting the transformation of the stage, that can neither be defined as the stage nor backstage. These places had significance independently from the stage and had features that affected the stage. Consequently, there were places related to the stage and places beyond it. Beyond the stage concept has been developed to define these places that can help to better understand the formation and transformation of the stage.

Beyond the stage defines the places (or districts) associated with the stage. These places may have the feature of feeding the stage or affecting the transformation of it. Beyond the

stage is a critical concept, both in terms of its interaction with the stage and emphasizing the reality and importance of beyond the stage. The concept emphasizes that the stage does not consist only of an identified, bordered place; it will broaden one's viewpoint while analyzing the stage and the actors. Beyond the stage, it is expanding and spreading in terms of distance and association. The places that form the stage extend from the regions of Karaköy that are not defined as the stage to different districts of Istanbul presenting various associations as direct and indirect effects.

With the concept beyond the stage, the places mentioned are considered both separately and in their interactions with the stage. While various factors in the transformation of the stage are revealed and the existence and importance of the stage are recognized, the place mentioned is handled within its own reality and the stage is overcome by recognizing the developments, events and dynamics beyond the stage.

The Beyond the stage area also covers a different group of people on the stage, who do not belong to the stage however do not discredit it. Small peddlers of Karaköy are the most concrete examples of this situation and the interaction of the stage and beyond the stage in general. Peddlers selling dry beans and rice, mussels, juices, fish and bread spread out on and off the stage. These peddlers belong not to the back of the stage but beyond, as they are considered as a “marginal part” of Karaköy by the actors. So, beyond the stage can be observed to start inside the stage.

Photo 13, Photo 14 and Photo 15: Kamondo Stairs (left), Salt Galata(top-right), a rooftop chapel (bottom-right)

One step further from the stage, there are places that represent cultural diversity spread both on the stage and in the other parts of Karaköy. Karaköy, which has been home to a wide variety of cultures throughout its history, hosts diverse places of worship; but chapels on the top floors of the apartments as a remarkable place. For example, when a person sitting in a third wave cafe, raises her/his head, she/he can see a church was constituted by Belarusians during the Russian Revolution in 1917 and interact with it to feed the cultural capital. It is often emphasized that these chapels bear the “authentic” feature of the neighborhood.

Within a short distance from the stage, cultural institutions and historic areas in several different parts of the neighborhood can be seen. These places, which are frequent destinations for tourists, include the roads that lead to Karaköy. The Kamondo Stairs, which take place at Bankalar Street, with their historical, cultural and architectural features, are examples of places beyond the stage in terms of being preferred as a passageway for tourists who want to go to Taksim from the historical peninsula (or vice versa). The stage of Karaköy ranks first in places chosen for spending time before and after the activities organized in cultural institutions which students also take part in.

Photo 16 and Photo 17: Perşembe Pazarı

Perşembe Pazarı, which stands out with commercial affairs, is one of the places that has interaction with the stage. Perşembe Pazarı, which started to accommodate the creative sectors within its inns with the impact of the stage, affects the boundaries and the spread of the stage as an area that has not lost its characteristic in the neighborhood in historical continuity. Perşembe Pazarı, which has strong shop and street relations, reveals two different urban life cultures by being located next to the stage.

Another area that is located next to the stage is observed to have a direct effect on it; it can be considered as one of the main factors in the creation of the stage. The Galataport Project, built behind the stage, is a cruise port project. The fact that it contains a shopping center, public spaces such as squares and streets reaching to the Bosphorus, cafes, restaurants, hotels, and that it appeals to the Western and upper class in the picture drawn by the project has had

an effect in increasing the value of the stage prior to the completion of the project. The project, which was still under construction in 2020, sparked the discussions of rent creation on stage and overall in Karaköy; high rents and the prestige of the project were important factors that played a role in the formation of the stage.

Concerning the neighboring districts of Karaköy, Tophane has been mentioned together with various examples in the article. Tophane, which has a direct effect on the activities on the stage, is considered beyond the stage with the impact of its social structure. Cultural capital owners in Cihangir (and some from the İstiklal Avenue) and the social group from the İstiklal Avenue and Asmalımescit move to Karaköy and thus these neighborhoods are beyond the stage. While the major source of the transition from Cihangir to Karaköy was high rents; various social causes have contributed to the shift of the entertainment industry from the İstiklal Avenue and Asmalımescit to Karaköy. First, following the intervention to the cafes and bars in Asmalımescit where it was interwoven with the street, the consumer group there looked for a new place. Then, after the 2013 Gezi Resistance, the concentration of security forces in Taksim Square and İstiklal Avenue, and the tension in the atmosphere affected social life. Social life paused in this area following the infinite infrastructure works on İstiklal Avenue and the terrorist attack in 2016. Upon its revival, İstiklal Avenue and Taksim changed the social segment that they addressed, and they were filled with places for tourists from the Arab countries. As a result of the changing social and cultural structure, the entertainment sector has turned to new places. Because of these events, Taksim and its surroundings form beyond the stage. The Galata neighborhood for its tourist spots, Eminönü for its commercial relations and tourist routes are considered as beyond the stage.

Beyond the spatial connections, Karaköy shares similarities with certain other districts and neighborhoods that form beyond the stage, in terms of its transformation period. The transformation process of Karaköy as a stage started with the entertainment sector shifting down to Karaköy as a result of the transformation in Beyoğlu. For the social groups in Beyoğlu looking for alternative entertainment places Karaköy, the center of Kadıköy and Beşiktaş have been prominent places. Although they have very different social, cultural, economic, demographic, architectural features and dynamics, these places have undergone similar transformation processes and host similar consumption places. Despite the fact that their transformation processes started at different times, they have been observed to have affected each other beyond measure; they have interacted by means of their spatial characteristics and the social groups they addressed.

It is possible to trace this similarity on a global scale by moving from Karaköy to Istanbul and one step further from Istanbul. As a result of globalization, different cities with

different characteristics experience similar processes. While the common point with them is the consumption of the space, the representations used in it can differ. In Karaköy, a place becomes a consumption object with its “western style”, whereas in London it is a place that hangs an “orientalist rug” on its wall. Sometimes a wall with decrepit plaster can be described as “vintage” in a culture. The meaning of “authentic” and “cool”, which differ culturally, manifest themselves with representations in urban space. No matter what type of images authenticate the urban space and make it consumable, consumption does not end; it only changes method and form.

6. Conclusion

Individuals position themselves in society with their cultural, social and economic capitals, and a series of performances serve for these positions to be socially accepted. The opportunities of exhibiting these performances have increased in cities; the urban space has become both the object of consumption and the space of consumption with the performances of the people as well as the consumption-oriented strategies of the city managers. Conspicuous consumption, on the other hand, has had an effect on the impression people wanted to create and on shaping the urban space. The cities in which urban consumption has been concentrated, became a stage and “One became a figure in a contrived landscape” (Sennett, 2002, p. 68).

While conspicuous consumption continues to be observed in the physical place and the place of consumption as a tool of self-presentation for people; it has been brought to a new sphere that reinforces its impact at the point it reaches today: social media. The performances, which are exhibited for a few hours and for a limited number of audiences in the urban space, reach a wider audience and last as long as the actors wish. With the emergence of this sphere, an excessively strong factor affecting the transformation process of urban spaces has been added to urban life. Karaköy, which was analyzed in this research by examining the effect of conspicuous consumption on the urban space, becomes a place where the stage setup is experienced differently with its unique processes and features. In the neighborhood, where the locals and the new users show differences, the relationship and sense of belonging of the locals do not allow the stage to be just the stage. So much so that what should be left in the backstage is leaking into the stage. Social media, which functions as an alternative front, is where these leaks are hidden and the backstage does not interfere with the stage; therefore, it creates an area where the impression created is not spoiled. The backstage that leaks onto the stage is important in the research in order to ensure that the actors, viewers and the people who are not part of the stage encounter each other. The fact that social media does not spoil the

illusion and reach more people, sometimes makes it used more dominantly in self-presentation than the urban space. People who go to the places of consumption to share photos on social media -and sometimes without benefitting from the services offered by the place, make the selfie economy work.

The concept of beyond the stage is important in terms of revealing the formation process of the stage, the factors that affect it and its dynamism. In the analysis of the stage and the actors, it provides a broader perspective. Even if conspicuous consumption is only observed in the place (stage), there are different places and people in the city that contribute to its continuity and progress. Karaköy, as a city center that exemplifies these interactions in the most striking way, provided an opportunity to unveil these relations.

In the interviews conducted during the field research, it was criticized that the customers and daily visitors in Karaköy went there for the purpose of displaying their social status and showing off, and this attitude shaped the urban space and made it into a stage. These criticisms have been developed by the people who use Karaköy, in line with their needs: Those who are looking for a place to spend social time and have fun in the inner circle and work in it also use the third places in Karaköy. They state that the actors perform by adding the images of the place, on top of the images that they have on themselves. The actors prefer the places with appropriate images for their cultural capital; they use their social capital to enter the habitus they want to belong to. When it comes to conspicuous consumption, a certain amount of economic capital ownership is required; hence, money is a basic tool to enter the stage. However, in this case, wealth does not depend on a class definition; the entrance to the stage can be realized simply by saving up the amount required for a single visit to the stage. Once the stage has been entered, time is given to perform and to take and share instant images of the performances. The self-presentation is completed with the presence of the performance in the urban space and the presence of the social media where the instant images of the performance are shared - until enough money is saved for another visit to the stage.

While the actors make their capital visible in the place in order to be included in the habitus they feel they belong in, on the other hand, the places turn to images containing the characteristics of the habitus they want to be represented with. Spaces also apply the images in order to stand out among other consumption places in Karaköy and to be preferred by the actors. While Oldenburg defines the third places as comfortable, simple and where the status is negligible, these features disappear when conspicuous consumption is involved. On the other hand, Oldenburg's regulars concept and people getting together and having fun on a common ground reflect the habitus concept in the third place. The purpose of the presentation of the self and the performances displayed is to be included in this group having a pleasant time together.

Conspicuous consumption is experienced on stage with bodies adorned with commodities representing their wealth and cultural and economic capital. While the self-presentation of the people is observed in a certain way in the urban space, the habitus existing in the space is notably diverse. Different habitus are located side by side in places equipped with appropriate images. In this regard, despite the similarity of the performances on the stage, the diversity of the cultural and social capitals leads to the coexistence of different habitus.

The stage, which should provide a simulated and isolated image from other realities, is the space of encounters in Karaköy. The peddlers enable the interactions between the stage and beyond by responding to the needs of people who do not belong to the stage, who work within and around the stage and people who pass it by or transfer between different public transport lines. The actors used this as a distinctive feature of the stage among other stages by assigning it the meaning of marginal and cool. The stage is defined by this marginality and the characteristics that provide these encounters, and this also becomes consumable. On the other hand, this case shows that some part of everyday life proceeds in the same way depending its importance in urban life.

Today the biggest fear of the places (also of the people) is to be ordinary. Along with the acceleration and spread of consumption, becoming ordinary emerged as a global threat with the effect of globalization and standardization. The fact that anything is easily accessed and consumed in a wide variety of places with the increase of accessibility and imitation cause things to be seen as ordinary. Within the consumer society there is the danger of not being cool anymore depending on the floating cultural representations of “cool” and the danger of being ordinary which is considered to be more unacceptable than being not cool. The fear of being ordinary has reached such a pitch that it can cause an entire appearance of a consumed place or a consumption place to change within a week. What falls into the pit of ordinariness is not consumed but is doomed to disappear.

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