

AN ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION OF KONYA CITY

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Abstract: Konya is an important city that has been home to different civilizations throughout history, has been used as a capital by the Seljuk State for a long time and extending to the neolithic turn of the past. The foundation of the historical city center of Konya started around the mound settlement known today as Alâeddin Hill. This area has been used centrally by different civilizations for many years and the most magnificent time of this area was the Seljuk period. The development of the historical city center was realized between Alâeddin Hill and Mevlana Tomb. The rich architectural content of different civilizations is clearly seen on this powerful axis. It contains many different artifacts belonging to the Seljuk, Ottoman and Republican era, where the architectural values that can be accepted as our cultural heritage of different periods are together and serve as a whole. This axis, which contributes to the rich architectural content of the city today, still maintains its vitality. With this study, the daily contribution of the historical city center was examined through the buildings. Alaeddin Hill - Mevlana Museum, which are contain many qualified building, has been accepted as an area study. The three qualified samples which are identified on the axis were analyzed in terms of historical, urban and structural, and the influence of these structures on the area was determined. The effects of urban and cultural heritage of architectural values are revealed in the analyzes made. As a result of these analyzes; It has been reached that the buildings give an identity to the center of the city and its surroundings, that it is an important factor in the perception of the places it is in, its reading and that it creates a focus reflecting character of the its period.

Keywords: Konya, Architectural Space, Historical City, Historical Buildings

Introduction

Anatolia has been regarded as the whole of architectural values that reflect the architectural values of our country in the best and clearest way. Anatolia has also prosperous architectural content which is exhibiting the history of the past for us. Different civilizations, cultures and way of lives with the existing architecture have shed light on our age. Existing architectural structures have traces of different periods and all together have determined social, cultural, economic and artistic values. The architectural texture, which is a major factor in the formation of the region or the city, is a focal point for tourists and visitors. With its strong past, strong culture and spatial relation, the attraction power of the region for the users is also high. Thus, this has increased the value and quality of the city/region. In this way, all the qualified architectural values of the city have been seen as a gain.

Konya is a city that has preserved its significance thanks to its geographical features and position on the caravan routes in Anatolia and the significance as the capital of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum for many years. Hence, Konya has been called as “Dârü’l- Mülk” (capital city) and become one of the most important centres of Turkish-Islamic culture and art in Anatolia (Baykara, 2002).

Historically, Konya has developed as a single-centred city. The central business areas of the city are Alaeddin Hill and its surroundings. The historical city center is located on Mevlana Street, which is the most significant transportation artery of the city, and mainly south side between Alaeddin Hill and Mevlana Külliyesi. The historical city center located between Alaeddin Tepesi and Mevlana Külliyesi is the area with the highest accessibility in the city (Ter and Özbek, 2005).

Mevlana Road has a significant texture among the architectural sides of the city. This texture has been destroyed several times in the last 100-150 years and has been subjected to reconstruction studies. In this study, the main aim is to examine and analyse the losses and gains experienced in terms of street and building scale throughout the historical process. It has been aimed at searching the current situation of the area and its positive and negative aspects. In this context, the development of the axis of Alaeddin Hill and Mevlana Tomb has been researched. In the area, three buildings which have functionally, structurally and spatially interesting historical process have been selected as sample. These buildings: Konya Governorship Building, İplikçi Mosque, the Central Bank Building.

Materials and Methods

The architectural transformation and transformation of the city center was discussed at Konya Governorship Building, Iplikci Mosque, Central Bank Building and it has been determined how the city entered into a process of changing during different periods. The historical, urban, structural and spatial values of the area were analyzed in the sample building. In the light of the researches and evaluations, the impact of architectural values on the city and cultural heritage has been revealed. The contribution of the sample building to the field has been determined in the historical process and the interaction of the area with the building has been analyzed. In this context, the existing architectural works of the area and its richness have been revealed. The values of the buildings belonging to different periods ensure that the field has rich content. The coexistence of different cultures in the field ensures the architectural quality. Therefore, user and visitor density increases in this area as a normal result.

Historical Development Process of Konya City Center

Konya with its geographical location, its historical and cultural wealth has always preserved its significance as a settlement. Konya was the capital of the Seljuks and important architectural works were brought to the city during this era (Baykara, 2002).

The development of the city from the Seljuks to our age has been organized around Alaeddin Hill which is an old tumulus. This hill has been dominating over 750 years and has provided control. The Phrygians, Lydians, Persians and Romans used this area as a settlement in the past (Bala, 2002). The city remained as a province of the Roman Empire until 395 AD. In Byzantium era, it became a Byzantine city aftermath of fragmentation/dissolution of the Roman Empire. The "Iconium" (the country of icons) in the Byzantium encountered Islamic raids and was compressed into Alaeddin Hill (Karpuz, 1998). The Turks, after 1071, have regarded this region as homeland. Because, the region familiar to Central Asia in terms of their natural and climatic conditions. This area surrounded by grazing lands suitable for horses and livestock is easy to defend in the Turkish war tactics and to be evacuated when necessary and it is appropriate for being a capital with a hill which is appropriate/suitable for the ruler-army-headquarters. Alaeddin Hill has important architectural content because it has been housed in the entire history from the Phrygian period to the Seljuks as the first place where Konya was founded (Kuştepe, 2011).

The first settlement area of Konya (Ikonion), a Roman colony city, has been Alaeddin Hill and the south side of the hill. In the Byzantine period, the locals established settlements in the areas of Alaeddin Hill and the southern areas. In the 13th century, the settlement texture of the city concentrated around the Alaeddin Hill. The Seljuk period constituted the best period of history in terms of both the social structure and political life of Konya, as well as transformation on physical texture. Alaeddin Keykubat brought Rumi (Mevlana Jelaeddin Rumi) and his father Bahaeddin Veled to Konya in 1229. Their immigration has increased the attractiveness of the city. Meanwhile, the scientists and intellectuals of the era began to come to Konya. After Rumi came to the city, the city overflowed from the city walls. It can be stated that the reason behind this overflow Rumi settled down outside of the city walls. Thus, apart from the baileys, free textured, enclosed streets and neighbourhoods that are integrated with garden and rich interior architecture began to be formed. After the death of Rumi, the city started to become a visited place and a social center which has commercial functions. As a capital, Konya was organized with an artistic, aesthetic architecture and understanding of a system that befitted Seljuks' dignity in their era. In 1308, the city was under the dominance of different principals with the collapse of the Seljuks. It was under the Ilkhanids' dominance and then it ruled by Karamanid and finally it was under the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire. The city, which had been under Ottoman rule in 1465, became a provincial state where princes became the governor of the Ottoman Empire, the army camped in for the military expeditions towards the East. As a result, with the Ottomans, reconstruction activities in Konya began to decline. However, after the death of Rumi, the activities continued in the dervish lodge (dergah) which was founded for the name of Rumi. At the same time Rumi's thoughts have continued to pervade around the dervish lodge. Thus, the dervish lodge has become a center of visitation and social center and has continued to contribute to its neighbourhood. In addition, thanks to its significance, the region has had functionality for trade. It has been known that in addition to these riches, the number of the houses has intensified in this area. With the beginning of the construction of the Mevlana Tomb, the Mevlevi people began to gather around the dervish lodge. Therefore, new residential areas began to form outside the city walls. As shown by the large cemetery area behind the dervish lodge, the understanding of being close to the tomb of Rumi became widely seen after the death (Konyalı, 1997). This condensation, which emerged around the dervish lodge, also affected roads of the city. During the Middle Ages and the following period, the city consisted of the center of a circle around Alaeddin Hill where the inner castle is located, and the radial roads leading to that centre (Kuştepe, 2011).

Due to the authority provided by a central empire in the Ottoman era, the walls lost their former significance. However, the entrance points of the roads to the city were again the fortifications. The perimeter of each door has become an art and trade district, and shops have been opened and bazaars have been formed around them. These

city walls, which were connected to the city roads, have influenced the formation of the urban road system (Ter and Özbek, 2005).

It was the period when the Ottoman Empire suffered economic difficulties from 1880 to 1900. In this period, there was no maintenance of historical monuments. The visuals of Konya in the early 19th century has proven this situation (Kuştepe, 2011).

The fire that started in 1867 and continued for three days became one of the important events that affected the physical structure of the city. After the fire, slow but continuous construction/zoning activity was seen in the city. These activities gained momentum in 1898-1902, and streets and roads which were crossing each other in the city center were opened. The most important of these streets is Mevlana Road which stretches between Alaeddin Hill and Mevlana Külliyesi, which still have been preserved its significance today (Kuştepe, 2011).

In the 19th and 20th century, Mevlana Külliyesi and its surroundings became the prestigious settlement area of the city, and buildings that have 2 or 3 floors have started to be built in Mevlana Road where houses of wealthy merchants and civil servants of the city were located. For the signalizing the borders of the old city center, the restrictive order of old transportation spine which can be defined as an embedded channels system played an active role. Historically, Konya has developed as a single-centered city. The business areas in the center of the city are located around Alaeddin Hill and its vicinity (Kuştepe, 2011).

The beginning of the 1900-1923, the early times of the 19th century, the First World War period when the Ottoman Empire participated and defeated. In this period, many architectural works on Mevlana Road demolished due to wrong policies. 9 madrasahs and 2 mosques between Alaeddin Hill and Governorship Building were ruined and disappeared and Mevlana Road was also built during this period (Kuştepe, 2011).

The process of development and change of the axis have caused the current situation of the city. Many civilizations, cultural and architectural values have combined and formed the city center of Konya as a whole. Each structure and space has had a separate value and contribution to the axis. The buildings belonging to different periods and different styles have fulfilled functions of our age and provide the opportunity to utilize facilities of the city. A few of these structures are Konya Governorship Building, İplikçi Mosque, Central Bank Building, which have been located on the axis in different periods. All have reflected the best of their era and provide a rich architectural content to the region. These constructions, which existed during the development process of the axis and continued to be carried to our age, are the cultural components that connect the past and the future (Semerci, 2017).

Iplikçi Mosque

The Iplikçi Mosque is a building which was built on the southern side of the main road extending from Alaeddin Hill (from the citadel) to the east. The front entrance gate of the building which was built on Alaeddin Road, a central place in the city, is opened into the main road. The date of construction of the building is 1201 (Figure 1). It has been thought that the mosque was constructed since there was a necessity for Friday prayers. It has been known that there was a madrasah (Altunaba) in the vicinity of the building which does not exist today.

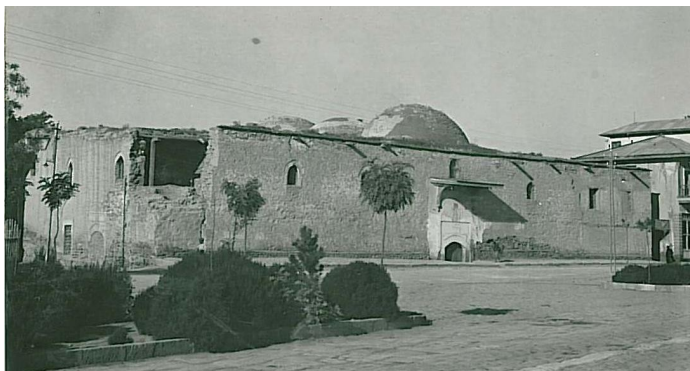


Figure 1. An old photograph of the building (Karpuz, 2009).

The dome in front of the mosque's niche is from the Friday prayer masjids (Mescid-i Cuma) of the Great Seljuks. The building has been considered as one of the first examples of the system adopted in Seljuk mosque in terms of plan, in the 13th century (Figure 2). It is one of the two examples in Anatolia where bricks are used as building material (Kuştepe, 2011), (Figure 3). It has been known that the mosque has been restored many times during

different periods in the past. As a result of these restorations, the mosque has constantly changed. But it has never lost its original identity.

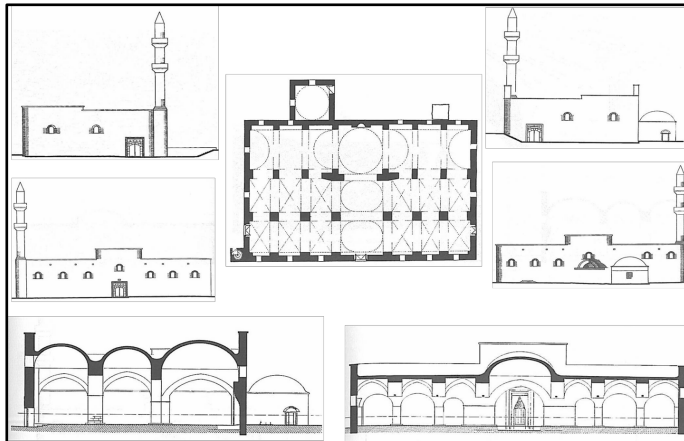


Figure 2. Building's plan, sections and views (Aygör, 2010).



Figure 3. Today's photo of the building.

The Mosque which reflects the Seljuk period on the axis in the best way, has added a distinctive value to the area. The building, which has enriched the functional and historical influence of the area, has been continuing to transmit the architectural value of its period.

Konya Governorship Building

The Governorship Building, also known as the Government Building, was built with using regular stones of the outer fortress walls of Konya in 1885-1886 during the period of Said Pasha of the Pre-Republican Governors of Konya (Figure 4). It has the architectural style of the 1st National Architecture Period. The building has a rectangular plan, courtyard and 3 floors (Duran, 2006).



Figure 4. An old photograph of the building (Karpuz, 1998).

Governorship Building is one of the administrative structures that were ordered to be built in the provinces by Abdul Hamid II within the framework of the strengthening policies of the Ottoman provincial organization. The governorship building is a public building that has been directed to the square and to the Mevlana Museum and which has been continues to pursue its function located in the exact center of the Alaaddin-Mevlana axis. It is a building that we can figure out the features of the period (1st National Architecture) with looking its façade and plan and it distinguishes itself in silhouette and its gabarite is in tune with the buildings in surrounding. It has quadrangular form, so that we can easily perceive symmetry and rhythm. It is a masonry building which was constructed by using cutting stone (Karpuz, 2009), (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Today's photo of the building.

Central Bank Building

The Central Bank of Konya was built in 1975-1976. The building is located on the historical axis between the Alaeddin Hill and the Mevlana Tomb (Mevlana Road) in Konya city centre (Kapuz, 2003). It can be stated that Konya Branch of the Central Bank draws attention as a good example of modern republican structures (Figure 6-7).



Figure 6. A photo of the building (Mimarlık s.76).



Figure 7. A photo of the building (Mimarlık s.76).

The Central Bank, where the different functions are appeared together as planning is unique for also distinctive details on its façade. In order to provide natural lighting of mezzanine which is above the ground floor, liveliness has been provided on the façade.

The liveliness that provides uniqueness in modern lines of the building has shown itself within the elevation differences (Mimarlık p.76).

Konya Branch of the Central Bank Building is one of the prominent examples of modern buildings during the Republican Period. The building, which is one of the rare examples of modern buildings in the city of Konya and the Central Anatolia, appropriately summarizes the architectural movement that it has (Karpuz, 2003). This structure also is a pioneer work for other modern constructions of the city. Building has gained unique condition, since construction of the building was determined as a result of a project competition and it has modern identity. Having been registered as an example of modern building, the Central Bank has maintained its presence and function since its establishment with its strong identity.

Conclusion

Mevlana Road has been an economic, educational, religious, administrative, social and cultural center throughout history. This center has needed to be perceived well as the connection between the past and the present. Therefore, the history of the area and the process of spatial change should be appropriately analysed. The axis has witnessed different transformation and transformation processes in different periods and has functional diversity by incorporating different spaces. On the axle, changes have taken place in different scales during the process. As it can be figured out from the historical process of the area, structures belonging to different civilizations were destroyed while structures belonging to other civilizations (cultural) were found in the region. A typical example of this situation is the İş Bank Building. After finding a place in a different position on the axis, it has maintained its continuity functionally with a different architectural style in a different position afterwards. As we have pointed out here, the function of architectural understanding, position, characteristic and quality of structures have constantly

changed. It is interesting to protect the function within the strong central character of the area. As a result, structures, architects, spaces and functions in the historical city centres are constantly undergoing a change. In parallel, the city center reflects different cultures, civilizations and understandings as a whole. The important thing to note here is that the richness of the urban center, enriched by architectural diversity, can be included in this concept. This is because every building (architecture) that has taken place in the past and actively participated in the period has constant value that the area possesses and still contributes to the richness of the area.

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