Spatial Character Analysis of Streets as Public Spaces: The Case of Izmit Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street, Turkey

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Abstract. The word “public” was first used to refer to the theatre audience in France in the mid-17th century. In the 18th century, it turned into the meaning of “public space incorporating a large variety of people and composed of acquaintances and strangers”. The concepts of publicity, public space, and public realm have been studied and described by many researchers in the course of time. These descriptions show the development of public space as well. In the very general sense, public spaces are areas of personal and social happiness; collective living spaces of the society; areas of expression of natural and cultural variety; and key elements providing a ground for the establishment of an identity. In the United Nations’ report on public spaces, public space is addressed under six groups: 1. The spaces we intensely used in our daily life; 2. Green open public spaces; 3. Public activity spaces which users can go in without any difficulty, are open to public, and are under protection; 4. Public sector realm (social agreements in which the people are represented, contribute to collective goods, and trust in the administrators elected); 5. City as a public space; 6. Cyberspace. As cities grow, public spaces transform and diversify. Attempts are made to meet the changing needs through types of space developed. However, the character of the existing public spaces, the distribution of open spaces and parks and their inadequacy, the destruction of public space, and the things that are required to be done stand as important issues to be addressed. One of the public spaces going through transformation are streets which we intensely use in our daily life. In general, streets are defined as roads with buildings on both sides in settlements such as provinces and districts whose boundaries are determined by neighbouring buildings. Some researchers have defined streets based on their social functions. According to them, streets are meeting spaces; spaces to deal with strangers; the house of the society; the main elements of urban existence; spaces as changeable as life; symbolic models of urban problems; and symbols of free city. However, the role of streets, which are so important in our daily life, has only been reduced to pass. They have been divided into two between pedestrians and vehicles and lost many social functions of theirs. Accordingly, the present study aims to answer the question of whether the above-mentioned features and characters of streets as public spaces are still maintained with special reference to a street, which is one of the main streets of İzmit, Turkey. The street, which was called İmre Tökelı Avenue, Hamidiye Street (1908), and Demiryolu Tekeli Street (1948) in the course of time, is currently called Hürriyet and Cumhuriyet Street. The people also call it “walking road”. According to the sources, the history of this street is the history of İzmit as well. The past and present spatial character of the study area will be revealed through archive reviews, city development plants, face-to-face interviews, and surveys. Problems will be determined, and recommendations will be developed.
1. Introduction

The word “public” was first used to refer to the theatre audience in France in the mid-17th century. In the 18th century, it turned into the meaning of “public space incorporating a large variety of people and composed of acquaintances and strangers”. According to Sennett, such a person is a “public man” [1]. The term “public” has continued to develop new meanings and connotations in the modern world. Arendt [2], explains the two meanings that are inherent in the term “publicity. Firstly, the term means that everything that appear in public can be seen and heard by everyone and has the widest possible publicity. The second one, on the other hand, refers to the world as a world that is common to all of us as distinguished by our privately owned one. Sennett [1], explains it in the same way as does Arendt by using the concepts of “public” and “private” together: “Public” signifies the area of life that is open to scrutiny of anyone while “private” means the area of life that is defined by family and friends. Vernez Moudan [3, 4], defines public realm as a place where diverse groups come together. Francis [4] prefers to handle public space and public realm together. Public realm is perceived, regarded and controlled as places that are as open to public as is public space. Public space is the common ground for civility and a sense of publicness where publicity is developed and expressed. Some studies define “public space” through the types of public space. According to a study on living spaces conducted at the Bartlett School of Planning [5], public space “involves all the natural and artificial environment to which the public can access freely; roads and squares in a settlement area which are open to commercial or urban use; open spaces and parks; and also all the public/private spaces to which public access is not limited (at least during the day).” Banerjee [6], explains the concept of public space as the parks, playgrounds or public space systems within a public realm. According to the Urban Design Guidelines prepared by the Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA) [7], public spaces comprise the roads, squares, parks, green spaces and other outdoor places which are accessible without any keys, are available and can be easily used by everyone. In the United Nations’ Report [8], public spaces are defined as places which are open to public or which can be accessed and used by everyone without any charges and where everyone is free to enjoy themselves. Public spaces are areas of personal and social happiness; collective living spaces of the society; areas of expression of natural and cultural variety; and key elements providing a ground for the establishment of an identity. The public recognizes itself in public spaces and follows the development of spatial quality.

1.1. Categories of public spaces

In the afore-mentioned report, public spaces are grouped into six categories: 1. The spaces we intensely use in our daily and these spaces host open-air markets, performances, events, political gatherings, demonstrations and informal activities; 2. Green open public spaces; 3. Public activity spaces that are accessible without any difficulty, are open to public, and are publicly-maintained; 4. Public sector realm; 5. The city as public space; 6. Cyberspace. As cities grow, public spaces transform and diversify. Attempts are made to meet the changing needs through types of space developed. However, the character of the existing public spaces, the distribution of open spaces and parks and their inadequacy, the destruction of public space, and the things that are required to be done stand as important issues to be addressed. One of the public spaces going through transformation are streets which we intensely use in our daily life [6].

1.2. Streets as public spaces

Streets are defined as routes that can be narrower or shorter than avenue [9] with buildings on both sides in settlements such as provinces and districts or as paved surfaces whose boundaries are determined by neighbouring buildings [10]. In addition to the above-mentioned physical characteristics, streets have social functions. Lefebvre [11], in his book “Urban revolution” has come up with arguments both for and against streets. In his arguments for streets, streets are not spaces of circulation or transition but meeting spaces. In other words, streets have informative, symbolic and ludic functions. In his arguments against streets, he says people do not interact in the streets but they just approach each other. Jacobs, in her book “Death and life of great American cities” [12], argues
that when one thinks of a city, its streets is the first thing to come to mind. If a city’s streets look interesting, the city looks interesting. One of the main functions of streets is feeling safe when walking in the streets. According to her, the streets of the city are places where strangers deal with it. Besides, they have to ensure the safety of and protect all the peaceable and well-meaning strangers who pass through these streets. Benjamin in his book “Passages” [13] defines streets as the home for the society. The streets are also "essential elements of urban existence". According to Wilcox [14], streets are a symbolic model of the problems of a city and are the symbol of a free city. Here, everyone collaborates to create opportunities for others. According to a study by CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) and ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) in the United Kingdom [15], street (from Latin root “sternere” meaning pave) is a multipurpose space that entails activity as much as movement and enclosure. As the time and social life change so do the types of streets. Moughtin [16], indicates that classification of streets starts with Vitruvius and his description of the three street scenes designed for use as the backdrop of a theatre. From Cardo, Decumanus, and Colonnade streets of the Roman era to modern streets many definitions and types of streets have been created [17]. In the current literature, the word street is used interchangeably with the terms path, avenue, highway, way and route. Sometimes, the terms road, boulevard and promenade are added to this list [16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22]. However, the role of streets, which are so important in our daily life, has only been reduced to pass. They have been divided into two between pedestrians and vehicles and lost many social functions of theirs. It has evolved into a network for/by consumption. Streets have now turned into points of compulsory working, areas of programmed spare time activities, and points of transition between houses and working places [11]. Accordingly, the present study aims to answer the question of whether the above-mentioned features and characters of streets as public spaces are still maintained with special reference to a street, which is one of the main streets of Izmit, Turkey. The street studied in the research is Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street, one of the main streets of Izmit.

2. Research Area and Method

2.1. İzmit

![Figure 1. Location of İzmit on the map of Kocaeli](image)

Izmit is the central district of Kocaeli province (figure 1) and thanks to the land and sea transport opportunities, it has been an important city since the antiquity. Due to these opportunities, its
importance grew considerably during the Roman era. During the Ottoman reign, it became an important place of stopover on the Persian and Al Jazeera route and, for passengers, many inns (hans), kervansarays and warehouses were built in the area. Due to the fact that it was located close to forests, lumber trade flourished in Izmit; shipyards were built in the district. Haydarpasa - Izmit train line crossing the Hamidiye Street in the center of Izmit started to operate in 1873 and Izmit-Adapazari train line was founded in 1890. After the construction of Ankara Street, shipping and inland transit as well as trade operations were transferred to this street [24]. Today, the “Baghdad Route” constructed during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent passes through Inonu Street [25]. The first postal service to Izmit was offered by the ship named “Mesiri Bahri” in 1844 and the main type of transport became ships as of that date; later on, however, people switched to land transport due the low speed of ships operating at the Gulf of Izmit. This process began in the 1970s [26]. Railway crossing Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street was closed in 1999 and was transferred to the coastal side of D100 Highway, which was constructed by filling up the coast [27]. In 2014, high-speed rail line between Ankara and Istanbul, which passes through Izmit, was completed and started to operate [28]. Cengiz Topel Airport began to operate in 2011 [29].

Today, Izmit is a coastal and industrial city thanks to the land, sea and air transport opportunities it offers. It also continues to be a “historical city” which has hosted many civilizations from past to present. Izmit, an important city, has several historical streets, yet only a few of its commercial streets have survived to date. They are Istiklal Street (Hanlar Ici – Carsi-yi Muslim), Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street (Imre Tokeli Boulevard, Hamidiye Street, Demiryolu Tekeli Street, Hurriyet Street, Tekeli Hurriyet Street), Baghdad Route (Inonu Street, Istanbul Street, Turan Gunes Street), Fethiye Street [30]. Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street has been chosen as the study area on the basis of some facts. One reason is that it has been the most important street of Izmit since Ottoman times and has served as a commercial street. Another reason is that it has a special place in urban dwellers’ minds with its historical aspects and perceptual-social-physical characteristics. Finally, it is preferred due to the fact that it is an important space for socialization.

2.2. Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street
Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street is one of the important and historical commercial streets located at the center of Izmit and running in the east-west direction through a 1.37 km long route. According to resources, history of this street is the history of Izmit (table 1). Throughout Izmit’s history, the names and organization of the street have been altered many times. It can be clearly seen on maps and photos as well. Previously known as Imre Tokeli Boulevard, it was named “Hamidiye” in the late 19th century after the railway was built on the street. Construction of the Istanbul-Izmit part of the Baghdad rail line started on August 4, 1871 and was completed in 1873. Izmit - Arifiye - Adapazari line was completed in 1890 [31]. The street was reorganized in 1888 by Selim Srri Pasha, an Izmit Governor of the Ottoman State, and the two sides of the railway were broadened. Besides, plane trees were planted on both sides of the railway [30]. They were taken under the protection of the Council of Monuments of Bursa province in 2003. Plane trees used to form a line from Izmit Railway Station to the city center. Yet, after the demolition of the walls of the shipyard, plane trees in the area were cut down [32]. The name of Hamidiye Street was changed as “Hurriyet Street” around 1910-1911 [33, 25]. In an article in “Turk Yolu Newspaper”, the street is referred to as “Demiryolu – Tekeli” [30]. On a map from 1914, the street is referred to as “Hurriyet Street” (figure 2). It crosses “Istasyon Street” and “Manastır Street” to the west. It runs through four neighborhoods (Neighborhood of Abdusselam, Rum/Greek, Tepecik, Omeraga).

In the northern part of the street are “Kapanonu Bazaar” and “Hanlarici Bazaars”. In the southern part are coffee shops (kahvehane), a covered bazaar, evkaf stores (stores of Pious Foundations), Fevziye Mosque (opposite to Kapanonu Bazaar) and the municipality building. The area between Kapanonu Bazaar and Pertev Pasa Street is the area of an open-air market. Previously, the street had only a few but luxurious mansions; however, it is clear from images that the number of commercial
buildings on the street has increased in the course of time [25]. The first zoning plan of Izmit was prepared by Jansen, a German professor of urbanization, and was approved by the city council in a meeting in 1939. Jansen indicated in his plan that not only vehicles but also pedestrians deserved some privileges on the street [35]. On a map from 1957, both sides of the street are a part of Hurriyet Street. On map approved in 1967, however, the street to its north is called Tekeli (the location of Cumhuriyet Street) while the street to its south is called Hurriyet Street (table 2).

Table 1. Images of Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street in time.

| Image Description                                      | Date       | Location                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| Hamidiye Street 1890, Photo G. Berggren [34]           | 1911       | Hamidiye Street - 1930s    |
| Postcard dated 1911 - Hamidiye Street [34]             |            | Hurriyet Street - 1930s   |

Figure 2. Hurriyet Street on a map from 1914 [24]: 1. Kapanönü Bazaar 2. Hanlarıçı Bazaars 3. Coffee shops (kahvehane) 4. Covered Bazaar 5. Evkaf stores (stores of Pious Foundations) 6. Fevziye Mosque 7. Municipality Building

Known as Imre-Tokeli Boulevard, Hamidiye Street, Demiryolu Tekeli Street, Hurriyet Street or Tekeli Hurriyet Street through time and is divided into two parts by the railway crossing it, the street is today known as Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street. However, it has also begun to be named “Walking route” by the society after the railway was removed and the street was reorganized (figure 3) [30]. The street is bordered by an office of the Central Bank of Turkey and Izmit Railway Station to the west and Ataturk Boulevard to the east. The branch in the north of this two-part street is called “Hurriyet Street” while the one in its south is called “Cumhuriyet Street”. Hurriyet Street crosses Saray Yokusu Street on the eastern side and is connected to Istanbul Karayolu Street. As to Cumhuriyet Street, it diverges and leads to İstasyon Street. On the western side, on the other hand, both streets intersect with Leyla
Atakan Street. Along its 1.37 km long route, the street runs through four neighbourhoods (Neighborhood of Kemalpasa, Tepecik, Omeraga and Karabas).

Table 2. Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street on maps dated 1957 and 1967.

These neighbourhoods are also cited in the “Neighbourhood Areas of Izmit Province and their Population in the Year 1914” [24]. Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street is the main road of the city and hence have been hosting many historical places within its borders. Yet, only a few of these places have survived to date because of the change and transformation the city has gone through. Fevziye Mosque has been reconstructed. Only parts of the mosque, infants’ school and bath remained after the Pertev Pasa (Yeni Cuma) Complex (1579). Although Kapanonu Bazaar to the north of Fevziye Mosque and Yemeniciler Bazaar to the west of the mosque have lost their originality, they still preserve their commercial functions. Ulugazi Primary School (1932) still serves as a primary school with its second extension matching the original structure and the third building which was finished and opened in the academic year 1992-1993 [38]. Izmit Municipality Office, the Regie Company (Tekel Office) and warehouses have not survived to the present day (table 3). Street improvement works aimed at the problems of transformation and fall of streets as public spaces and reduction of streets to areas of transition only are based on the idea of creating liveable streets. The present study focuses on defining the characters/features of public spaces particularly those of streets.

2.3. Method of the study

In general, there are three main dimensions in the conceptualization of the character of the public space: 1.The context for action (Socio/economic ve physical/spacial environment) 2. the kit of parts 3. The qualities [5]. In the study “By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System” conducted by DETR (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions) and CABE (Commission for
Architecture and the Built Environment) in the United Kingdom [40] public space character is defined as “a place with its own identity”. According to the same study, quality of the urban space is defined as “attractive and successful outdoor areas.” Thirteen criteria are set for the evaluation of the quality of urban space: 1. Hard landscaping; 2. Planting on the street; 3. Street furniture; 4. Structures; 5. Signs and banners; 6. Lighting elements; 7. Public art; 8. Shopfronts; 9. Advertisements; 10. Special treatments and provision; 11. Safety and security; 12. Traffic and highway installations; 13. Uses of public realm. Apart from public space character studies, there are interesting studies that focus on “characters of streets.” Francis [18], defines democratic streets and expresses features of these streets: 1. Use and user diversity 2. Accessibility 3. Participation/Modification 4. Real and symbolic control 5. Traffic management 6. Safety/Security 7. Ground Flour-Street relationship 8. Comfort 9. Ecological quality 10. Economic health 11. Environmental learning and competence 12. Love 13. Conflict Untermann [41] attracts attention to seven significant standards to be followed in designing streets for public use: 1. Arterial road width; 2. Speed of travel; 3. Intersection Radius; 4. Sidewalks; 5. Pedestrian islands; 6. Traffic signals; 7. Parking and drive ways. According to Jacobs [42] great streets have some common physical properties: 1. Places for people to walk with some leisure; 2. Physical comfort; 3. Definition; 4. Qualities that engage the eyes; 5. Transparency; 6. Complementarity; 7. Maintenance; 8. Quality of construction and design. Southworth and Ben-Joseph [43], set some standards for streets in residential areas: 1. Supporting varied uses of streets including playgrounds for kids and spaces for adult recreation; 2. Designing and managing the street to ensure user safety and comfort; 3. Well-connected, interesting pedestrian network; 4. Ensuring convenient access of people to the street, allowing traffic flow; 5. Diversifying street functions; 6. Relating the design of the street to its historical settlement areas and natural sites; 7. Conserving land. CABE and ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) have suggested the concept of “Streetscape for Streets” [15]. It defines “design quality and visual effect of the street and particularly how to treat and organize pedestrian realm.” Problematic examples of management of public realms are studied in a study by CABE/BBC Radio 4 [44, 5] and in the study streets of shame and the properties of best and worst streets are identified. The best streets are those which are “clean and well-maintained, well-lit and safe, accessible (pedestrian and vehicular), comfortable to use, human, attractive and distinctive” and have “pedestrians and traffic in harmony, good attractions and associated activity, sensitive alterations and quality landscaping.” Marshall [17], handles characteristics of streets under four headings: 1. Form (Physical characteristics) 2. Use (Activity on Street) 3. Relation (Relative position of a Street) 4. Designation. According to APA (American Planning Association) [45], when designing new streets or recreating older ones there are seven spatial character elements to be taken into consideration: 1. Building form; 2. Streetscape; 3. Parking areas; 4. Traffic; 5. Pedestrian connections; 6. Bicycles; 7. Access. According to a study by PPS (Project for Public Spaces), an internationally renowned, non-profit technical assistance, planning, design and educational organization [20], recently people have been talking about the concept of “loss of place”. Streets that give a sense of community to people should own such features as “activity and interest at street level, comfort, slow-flowing traffic, on-street parking, plenty of sidewalks, and an overall image.” Great streets’ qualities are “attractions and destinations, identity and image, active edge uses, amenities, management, seasonal strategies, diverse user groups, traffic, transit and the pedestrian, blending of uses and modes, protects neighborhoods” [46]. According to Yazıcıoğlu Halu [21, 47], there are five main elements that define characters of streets as urban spaces: 1. The city itself (city and urban space relationship); 2. Historical data (the presence of walking in historical continuity, conventions); 3. Perceptual/Insight Features; 4. Social/Behavioral Features; 5. Physical/Formal Features.

In the first part of the study, “evaluation criteria for the character of urban space” developed by DETR and CABE [40] was used. Physical features of Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street are defined in this part and such aspects as “buildings that demarcate the street, uses of ground floor, pedestrian flow/vehicular access, public – private realm analysis, other streets that connect to the main street, planting on the street, street furniture, hard landscaping” are analyzed. In the second part, open-ended
survey method was utilized. In the preparation of the survey questions, Yazıcıoğlu Halu’s [21] survey concerning “Personal Characteristics and Community Features of Streets” and Erdönmez’s [48] survey questions about “profiles of street users, purposes of street use, whether a street meets the needs or not, quality of public space” were used. In the third section, “A Scale for the Evaluation of Physical Environment Characteristics”, developed by Yazıcıoğlu Halu [21], was adopted. In this scale, users were expected to evaluate the “Perceptual/Insight, Social/Behavioural, Physical/Formal, features of the subject street.

Table 3. Significant historical buildings on Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street.

| Building Name                                      | Year   |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Fevziye Mosque (end of the 19th century)          |        |
| Pertev Paşa Mosque (1895)                         |        |
| Kapanönü Bazaar                                   | [34].  |
| Izmit Municipality Building                       | [34].  |
| Yemenciler/Shoemakers Bazaar                     | [30].  |
| Ulugazi Primary School                            | [25].  |
| Regie Company (Tekel Office) - 1905               | [39].  |
| Warehouse of İzmit Regie Company (Tekel office)   | [34].  |

3. Result and discussions
In this part, findings and evaluations of the field study conducted within the framework defined in the study method.

3.1. An evaluation of Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street in relation to its physical features
It is seen that the boundaries of the street are largely defined by ground floor +6 (ground floor plus 6 floors) and ground floor +4 buildings. Apart from them, stand also ground floor+3, ground floor+5 and ground floor+2 buildings on the boundaries of the street (figure 4, figure 5).

Figure 4. Silhouette of Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street

If the buildings that border the street are examined in relation to uses of ground floors, it can be understood that their commercial function is still preferred all along the street (figure 6). The Walking Route is a linear axis that is designed particularly for pedestrians and is separated from the vehicular section with planting strips. Sidewalks are parallel to the Walking Route all along the Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street. As it is the busiest street of the city both socially and commercially, there is heavy traffic on the side streets that are connected to it. Traffic intensiveness varies in the course of the day as the boundary of the street is formed by such buildings as mosque, school, and university. Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street is a site of heavy vehicle use as it is close and parallel to D100 Highway, a
street with heavy vehicle use. All the side streets are connected to this axis as one-way or two-way streets.

Apart from the purposes of prayer, Yeni Cuma Mosque and Fevziye Mosque, located on the axis of the Walking Route, serves as meeting and relaxation points thanks to their parks. Yeni Cuma (Pertev Pasa) and Fevziye Mosque parks and the park in front of the İzmit Municipality Building, where remains of the burnt down Regie Company (Tekel Office) still stand, are the largest public spaces on the subject street (table 4). Many side streets are connected to the street in the north-south direction. However, there are four other streets that run in the same direction and intersect it vertically: Fethiye Street, Alemdar Street, Pertev Pasa Street, Leyla Atakan Street.

Planting on the street is seasonally arranged by İzmit Municipality. Besides, historic plane trees planted by Selim Sırrı Pasha, an İzmit Governor of the Ottoman State, and registered today still survive. The Walking Route serves a meeting, waiting and relaxation venue for urban settlers; and therefore, this is taken into consideration in the installation of street furniture. Along this axis, there are 106 street lights, 37 wooden rubbish bin, 52 metal containers, 15 billboards, 4 telephone boxes, 2 street libraries, 1 music station, 28 wooden benches and 42 metal benches. The vehicle route on each side of the Walking Route is paved with asphalt. Bicycle and walking routes on the central lane are paved with cobblestones of different shapes and colours.

3.2. Survey Study
Field study was done as part of the space analysis and evaluation in architecture course during the spring semester of the academic year 2015 – 2016. Researchers carried out the field study on Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street with randomly selected 100 users. Demographics of the participants were as follows:

- 53% of the participants were female and 47% were male.
- It is seen that the largest age group was 16-25 as the street preserves its commercial function, there are food & beverage facilities around and the street is close to a university and a high school (41%). The second group consisted of those aged between 34 and 45 (18%).
Users participating in the survey were mostly university graduates and/or university students (57%) and the rest of the participants were high school graduates and/or students (43%).

A great majority of the participants of the survey lived in different districts of Kocaeli province (52%). However, participants were predominantly those living in Umuttepe (14%), Bayındırlık (9%) and Yahya Kaptan (8%) neighborhoods, in which mostly university study reside.

Results of the survey on “profiles of street users, purposes of street use, whether a street meets the needs or not, quality of public space” and those of the scale for the evaluation of physical environment characteristics concerning perceptual/insight, social/behavioral, physical/formal features are presented in the conclusions part of the paper.

Table 4. Public and private spaces on the street

4. Conclusions
In the present study, character of Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street, an important trade and transport route since Ottoman times and its significance in the daily lives of its users have been revealed: 1. Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street is, according to the definitions in section 1.1, both a pedestrian street and a commercial street [18, 19]. It is a street with the features of a great street, commercial street, main street [21] and a boulevard [21, 22]; 2. From its users, it is a walking route, and a venue for eating/drinking and shopping. It is an important center in daily life; 3. In terms of its perceptual/insight features, with its flat and linear appearance, the points that mark its ends (An Office of the Central Bank of Turkey and Izmit Railway Station to the west and Ataturk Boulevard to the east) and with the historic plane trees planted by Selim Sirri Pasha, an Izmit Governor of the Ottoman State, it is a place to which its settlers have a sense of “belonging.” The street sets an example to other streets as a place with its commercial and physical features and food/beverage facilities; 4. In terms of its social/behavioral features, it is a place of meeting and encounter with sidewalks of sufficient size and quality.
It is a public space offering adequate shopping opportunities, yet needs to be developed in terms of cultural, recreation and exhibition centers. In addition, the street requires urban equipment. It is an easily accessible street, and is safe to walk during the day; 5. In terms of its physical/formal features, the slope and length of the street are convenient. Buildings on the boundary of the street form a dense pattern. People particularly do not like the facades of buildings. Its green environment (street plantings rearranged each season by Izmit Municipality as well as the plane trees planted by Selim Sırrı Pasha, an Izmit Governor of the Ottoman State, on both sides of the street) and the park facilities are the most appreciated elements of the street (Municipality Park, Fevziye Mosque Park, Yeni Cuma/Pertev Pasha Mosque Park). This fact is also confirmed by the results obtained via the open-ended survey questions. The street lacks proper cleaning and maintenance services and also does not have enough parking spaces.

Not only researchers’ conclusions but also the results of the open-ended survey and the scale for the evaluation of physical environment indicate the existence of some problems. These problems and possible solutions are as follows: 1. The space is not or is only rarely used at nights. This indicates the existence of some safety problems at night; 2. There is not any meeting point along the street, almost 1.37 km in length. The most renowned place is Yeni Cuma/Pertev Pasa Mosque Park. This park has green areas, urban equipment and a tea garden. Considering this, it is also clear that other parks (Fevziye Mosque Park, Municipality Park) should be evaluated within the context of the features of urban parks and should be designed in view of the results; 3. Not only researchers’ conclusions but also the responses to the open-ended survey and the scale for the evaluation of physical environment confirmed the need for cultural, recreation and exhibition centers. If the street can serve additional of purposes, safety issues at night and during the day will disappear and the street will be integrated more into daily life; 4. Street furniture needs of the street, an intensely used location by the city dwellers, should urgently be met; 5. The vehicle route and co-existence of the pedestrians and vehicles on the street should be assessed and the issue should be solved 6. The street should be redesigned together with several side streets connected to it in the north-south direction; 7. Ensuring coherence among the buildings that border the street is essential; 8. Cleaning and maintenance services and parking spaces should be enhanced. Results of the study show that Hurriyet and Cumhuriyet Street still preserves some afore-mentioned street characteristics (Section 1.1 and Section 2.3). Besides, if solutions to the problems identified by the study are approved and applied by public institutions, it will be a major step in ensuring the survival of the street and handing it down to future generations.

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