

## Porticos on Moda Street and the Re-production of Space

Moda Caddesi'ndeki Portikler ve Mekânın Yeniden Üretimi

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### Abstract

According to Lefebvre, space is a social production, which is incomprehensible without the rhythms of everyday life. All rhythms of everyday life encompass a time-space relationship. One needs to outsee these rhythms to be able to understand and analyze them; a certain degree of externality triggers the analytical mind. To perceive that space is a social production, the present study deals with the porticos on the Moda Street of Kadıköy, which are regarded as an interface wherein the rhythm of life changes. To better understand the everyday life rhythms of these porticos, which are used by both pedestrians and shopkeepers, secondary actors of the porticoes, especially street vendors were observed. Finally, the reproduction of porticos with the everyday life and practices was discussed. It is hoped that this study will contribute to Lefebvre's discussion of space theory, which asserts a conception of space as a social production.

**Keywords:** Portico, İstanbul, Kadıköy, Moda Caddesi, Social Production of Space.

### Özet

Lefebvre'ye göre mekân toplumsal bir üretilimdir ve bu gündelik yaşamın ritimleri olmadan anlaşılabilir. Gündelik hayatta tüm ritimler, bir zamanın bir mekânla ilişkisini kapsar. Ritimleri kavrayabilmek ve analiz edebilmek için ritimlerin dışına çıkmak gerekir; belli bir dışsallık, analitik aklın işlemlerini sağlar. Bu çalışmada, mekânın toplumsal bir üretim olduğunu kavrayabilmek için gündelik hayatın ritminin değiştiği bir arayüz olduğu düşünülen Kadıköy, Moda'da bulunan, Moda Caddesi'ndeki portikler ele alınmıştır. Hem yayalar hem de dükkan sahipleri tarafından kullanılan bu portiklerde geçen gündelik hayatın ritmini anlamak için özellikle portiklerin ikincil aktörleri olan sokak satıcıları gözlemlenmiştir. Gözlem sonucunda, portiklerin gündelik yaşam ve pratikler ile yeniden üretimi yorumlanmıştır. Yapılan bu çalışmanın, Lefebvre'nin sözünü ettiği, mekânın toplumsal bir üretim olduğunu öne süren mekân teorisi arayışının sürdürülmesine katkı sağlayacağı umulmaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Portik, İstanbul, Kadıköy, Moda Caddesi, Mekânın Toplumsal Üretimi.

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## 1. Introduction

Despite the contemporary theories assuming that time and space are relative to each other, traditional theories that conceive of time and space as two separate entities do exist. In social sciences, time continues to be categorized as measured time, historical time, working time, leisure time, casual time, and so on. Similarly, it is known that in the field of architecture, space has been considered only with its physical dimension until recently. Indeed, Lefebvre contends that space is a social production and an area of multidimensional interaction. He claims that an analysis of the everyday life rhythms will manifest how and why space-time is a social production. Rhythms embody the relation of a time to a space, a localized time, or a temporalized space. Thus, to perceive that space is a social production, the present study deals with the porticos on the Moda Street of Kadıköy, which are regarded as an interface wherein the rhythm of life changes.

This section elaborates on the concept of *portico* before moving onto the observations conducted. The space defined by the term “portico”<sup>3</sup>, which has reflected different forms of urban space usage since antiquity, varies depending on place and time. The term “portico” is currently used to refer to an "arch", "arcade," or "colonnade" in Turkish; it is, according to the İstanbul Zoning Regulation, the resultant walkway when the ground floor of buildings is pulled in on the architectural plan<sup>4</sup>. Such defined porticos are more common in the cities of some Mediterranean countries such as Spain, Italy, Greece and Turkey. For example, today a large portion of Athens city center has ground level porticoed structures. This form can also be seen in İstanbul, mainly in three regions in Kadıköy: Osmanağa, Rasimpaşa, and Caferağa. They are situated in Söğütlü Çeşme Street, Karakolhane Street, and Neşet Ömer Street and Moda Street, respectively (Figures 1-5). The way these porticos in the Kadıköy neighborhood are used tends to vary. The porticos on Söğütlü Çeşme Street have mostly turned into walkways for pedestrians, whereas those on Karakolhane Street have become spaces that are extensions of shops, unused by the pedestrians and staying independent of the flow on the street. Those that are on Moda Street are for the use of both the pedestrians and the shop owners. Indeed, the porticos on Moda Street have gained importance in that they are transitional spaces between the public and private, breeding spatial relations and social interactions.

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<sup>3</sup> A portico is defined as follows in the Dictionary of Art Concepts and Terms: 1. A porch supported by small columns leading to the entrance. It is only used to describe such elements in the western architecture. 2. In antiquity, an arch functioning as the walkway with a roof structure over it, enclosing a colonnaded street on both sides with retail units right behind 3. A colonnade, supported by columns, which was generally used as an arcade and enclosing a courtyard in antiquity (Sözen and Tanyeli, 2015: 249).

<sup>4</sup> According to İstanbul Zoning Regulation’s Article 4 published in the Official Gazette of 20 May 2018, a portico is a walkway with a roof structure open at three sides, obtained by retrieving the peripheral walls at the height of ground floor and along the front facade, and preserving the structural colons, where allowed by the zoning plan for structures with no adjacent yard, to provide wider pedestrian sidewalks open for public use (URL-1).



**Figure 1.** Porticos in Kadıköy; Osmanağa (Söğütlü Çeşme Street), Rasimpaşa (Karakolhane Street) and Caferaga (Neşet Ömer Street and Moda Street)



**Figure 2-3.** A portico in Athens<sup>5</sup> and a portico on Söğütlü Çeşme Street, Kadıköy

<sup>5</sup> Unlike the examples in the Kadıköy neighborhood, in this portico in Athens, the portico and the pavement outside have the same flooring material, which causes the space to be perceived as a whole.



**Figure 4-5.** Porticos in Kadıköy; Rasimpaşa Karakolhane Street and Caferağa Moda Street

Transition spaces are expected to be important and rigid boundaries in terms of property ownership, yet in the pluralistic and dynamic nature of the urban space, it is often observed that they are conducive to permeability and interaction, or publicity. Urban density, movement, and speed increase the encounters between public and private. This brings more interaction and sharing to the city dwellers. The interfaces providing spaces for encounters are produced and enriched over and over again as they are experienced by the city dwellers.

The term intersection, in many fields, is used to describe the areas that cross when two opposing or adjoining situations meet. Such crossings, in case of transitions between public and private spaces, lead to either interaction or discordance (Dirik, 2009). The outcome is characterized by whether the interface space is a rigid boundary or a flexible room conducive to interaction.

The spaces which are not set off by rigid boundaries and which shape everyday life practices somewhat function as the outer facades of the public spaces. Defined as interfaces, these spaces physically join places, as well as socially and visually molding their surroundings. According to Gehl (1987), the interface describes the transition between the public and private both physically and socially. The urban interfaces spatially belong to both the exterior and interior spaces; though merely a transitional area, a threshold between these spaces is a point where the city residents open to the city, the urban life is shaped and the public space is defined (Bala, 2006; Özsel, 2009; Dirik, 2009; Eren and Taşlı, 2020).

The urban interfaces define the transition between the public and private, yet their role generally outstretches a simple transition area; they are indeed semi-public and/or semi-private areas defining new volumes that are open, semi-open, and semi-closed (Kökner, 2001; Bala, 2006). Experience based contacts between the public spaces and private spaces such as houses, shops, and studios enrich the possibilities of experiences in both directions (Gehl, 1987). These practices are reproduced through the rhythms of everyday life. This production changes the space, which in turn changes the rhythms of everyday life.

With the zoning plans that influence the urban texture, the concept of interface has gained a different meaning in Turkey. In Turkey, the approach to construction is one that divides the urban texture into parcels and has rigid transitions, which hinders a sustained flexibility and fluidity between the interfaces in most of the urban texture (Bala, 2006). Therefore, such consistently fluid interfaces, which can be seen in urban centers, are of prominent importance for the urban pattern. Unquestionably, porticos surrounding the city's streets and squares are the best examples of them (Madanipour, 2003: 63-64). It seems that the porticos on Moda Street are interfaces influencing daily rhythms and embodying various forms of appropriation through daily practices.

## 2. Porticos on Moda Street

As is well-known, Moda Street has been used as the main axis enabling transportation between Kadıköy Bazaar and the Moda neighborhood since 1880's, with construction of settlements on it since then (Figure 6). In those years, there were mostly wooden and masonry buildings on this street, which had been named as the Moda Bazaar<sup>6</sup> since 1960's (Figure 7). It is known that, during these years, there were various shops on this street mostly run by Armenians and Greeks (Türker, 2008: 85). The road was widened according to a change in the zoning plan coming into effect in 1960's, and the buildings on it were demolished to be replaced by multi-storey constructions in concrete. It is during this transformation that porticoed buildings started to be built on Moda Street.

Although 1960s are generally marked as the time when porticos on Moda Street were built<sup>7</sup>, the portico section's drawing detail in the plan of Kadıköy, Söğütlü Çeşme Street, dated 1940 and signed by Henri Prost, is evidence to the fact that the decisions about the building of porticos in Kadıköy had been taken earlier than that (Figure 8). Inclusion of specifications concerning the porticoed buildings in the zoning regulations was first seen many years later in the 1:500 scale Moda Central Development Plan dated 21 December 1973 in the following note: "h: 5 storeys above portico" (Güngördü, 2017: 79). The current data, however, shows that the roads and streets on which porticoed buildings will be constructed are to be determined by the decisions of Application Zoning Plan in accordance with Article 49 of Istanbul Zoning Regulation dated 20 May 2018. Last but not least, the current zoning plan of Moda Street does not include a plan detail about porticos, yet it marks the portico areas beneath the buildings as "abandoned" (Figure 9-10).

Today, residential places are generally on the upper floors of the buildings on Moda Street, whereas shops are on the lower floors. The porticoed buildings here are the three blocks between Mühürdar Karakolu Street and Neşe Street on the west, extending along

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<sup>6</sup> For a sketch showing the shops on the street when it was the historic center of the neighborhood: (Önce, 1998: p.39).

<sup>7</sup> In addition to the textual and visual sources cited in the study, Melih Ziya Sezer, a pharmacist and an old resident of Moda Street, stated in an interview that the transformation on the street started in 1960's. In 1967, he moved from his old shop to the porticoed building right next to it on the street. On one of the portico columns of Leylak Building 99 Moda Street, there is a sign which reads "Architecture Hamit Duru 1961".

a total length of 190 meters and another three blocks between Ağabey Street and Dr. Esat Işık Street on the east, extending along a total length of 170 meters, respectively. There is no area designated for pedestrian use except for the porticos on both sides of the street. On the east, right after the porticos are parking lots and the street, and on the west, alongside the portico, a bicycle path, which is actually actively used by pedestrians.

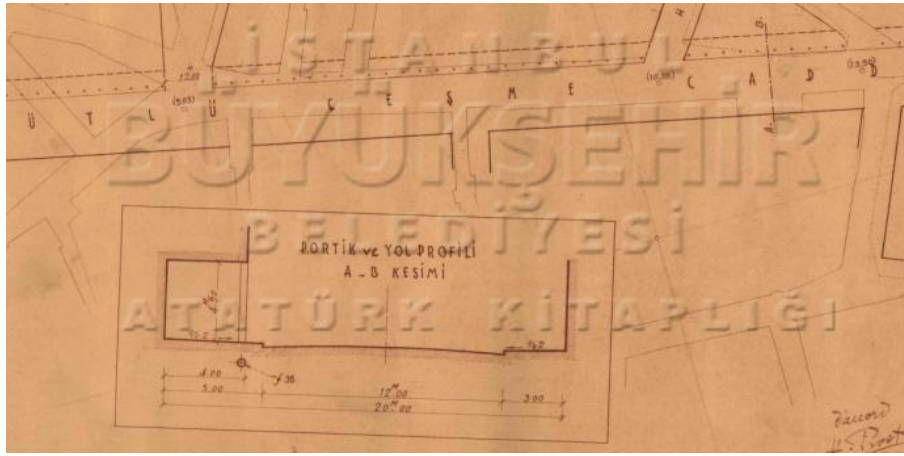


**Figure 6.** Moda Street as shown in the 1882 Stolpe Map (URL-2)

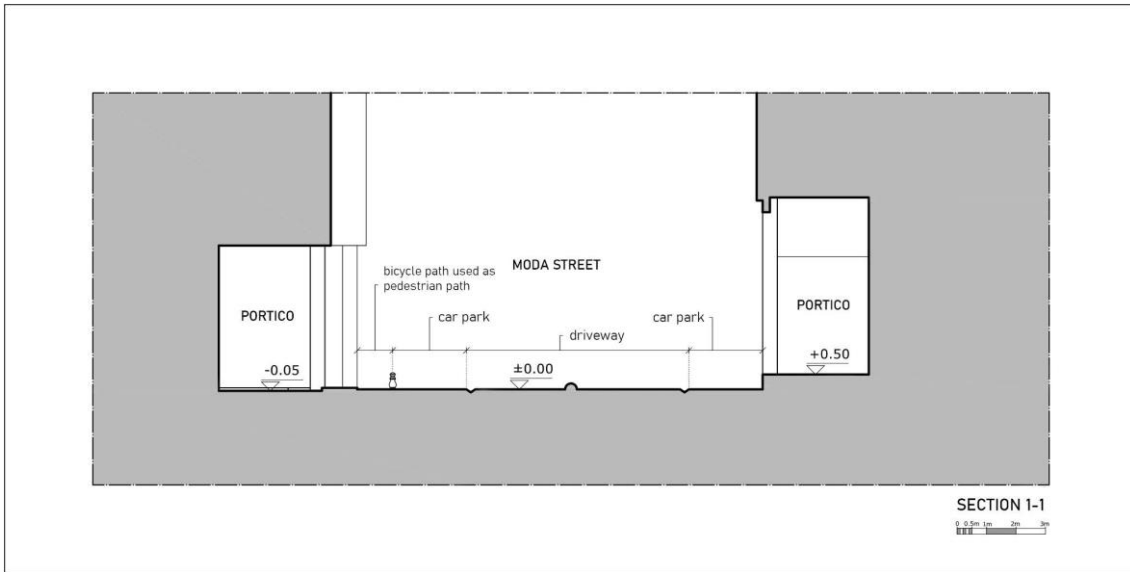


**Figure 7.** Around early 1960's, Moda Street<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>"Yeni-Moda Pharmacy Store", p.90. Information concerning the date of the photograph was obtained from the pharmacist, Melih Ziya Sezer.



**Figure 8.** The portico section's detail in the plan of Kadıköy, Söğütlü Çeşme Street drawn by Henri Prost, 1940 (URL-3)<sup>9</sup>



**Figure 9.** The portico section's detail in Kadıköy, Moda Street<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> We would like to thank Y. Mimar Seda Özen Bilgili for helping us obtain this document.

<sup>10</sup> This drawing was made by Aslıhan Ece Paköz.



**Figure 10.** The plan showing the porticos on Moda Street (Municipality of Kadıköy, 2019)

It seems that the porticos on Moda Street has been a varied setting for functions such as walkway for pedestrians, semi-outdoor seating for shop owners, workplace for street sellers, and shelter to stray animals. Appropriated by the needs of different users, porticos act as an interface between the public and private. It is presumed that this situation is related to an Ottoman tradition associated with the absence of the concept of boundary. In the Islamic cities, the term *finā* is used to refer to passage gradually from one unit to the other<sup>11</sup> (Yerasimos, 1999: 11).

The public space use and pedestrian flow on Moda Street tend to manifest different characteristics at different points along the porticos. As is indicated by the municipality concerning the boundaries of the nonconforming use, some of the shops that stretch out along the portico utilize the portico as a semi-outdoor space with a natural roof. Public space use observed in all commercial establishments on Moda Street varies along the porticos in terms of their locations and boundaries. While the areas in front of the retail shops are outlined for nonconforming use along the street in general, as regards the portico in particular, both the area in front of the shops and that between the columns

<sup>11</sup> The *finā* in Ottoman cities is the part commonly used by those who have a right to the street, with parties having an expanding right on the side closer to their property. According to the Roman Law, a totally abstract concept of boundary lies in the foundation of land ownership, and this boundary, which is faintly marked, separates two entirely different legal entities, e.g. two private properties, or a private property and a public space, from each other.



are done so. The boundaries of the nonconforming use can be defined by lines drawn on the floor, as well as by the variety in flooring materials (Figure 11-12). Therefore, the porticos in a sense transform the streets, obscuring their public-private boundaries.



**Figure 11-12.** The boundaries of the nonconforming use defined by drawn lines and floor materials.

The porticos on Moda Street are thought to possess a pavement feature that encloses the pedestrian flow within themselves. Porticos' being topped with ceilings and the elevation differences between the porticos and the bicycle path on the west and parking lot on the east make the porticos easily distinguishable from their environment along the block. In addition, the slope of the road causes elevation differences in the porticos, which are later connected to each other with added steps and ramps. These elevation differences can also be noticed in the way the floor and the ceiling coverings of the porticos were matched with the shops. The shops that are along the portico sometimes use more than the area right in front of themselves, spreading out into the quota of other shops. Every shop attempts to physically identify the area in the front by means of different surfaces and elements that define three-dimensional spaces. Nevertheless, these identifications continuously get blurred as a result of everyday life practices, and sometimes the shops that are lined up along the portico use each other's areas. For instance, the area in front of a watch shop is used by the teahouse next door during its closed hours (Figure 13-14). Similarly, a cargo company uses the area in front of the neighboring pharmacy store to load and unload cargo (Figure 15). Shared space usage leads, on the one hand, to shared ownership and cooperation among shops, but on the other hand, active use of this space causes disruption of pedestrian flow from time to time. This situation affects the bicycle path that goes along the portico, also. At first sight, the bike path and driveway are "clearly" separated by elevation differences, the materials used, and marks drawn on the ground (Figure 16). However, as the porticos, which are partially used by the shops, are congested by pedestrians, the pedestrians have to use the bicycle path. Moreover, it is already impossible to bike on the bicycle path because of the added difficulty caused by vehicles parking on the path, trash containers, and telephone boxes (Figure 17-18).



**Figure13-14.**Usage of the outer space in different times of the day: Teahouse uses the space in front of the watch shop when it's closed



**Figure 15.** Usage of the outer space in different times of the day: Cargo company uses the space in front of the pharmacy store during cargo loading and unloading hours



**Figure 16.**The bicycle path



**Figure 17-18.** The usage of the bicycle path by the pedestrians, in relation to the uses of the portico

### 3. Reproduction of Porticos

In his 1974 book “Production of Space”, Lefebvre maintains that *space* had implied nothing but some geometric concept until recently and mostly associated with the terms *Euclidean space*, *isotropic*, or *eternal*. The common opinion is that the concept of space originates from mathematics, and indeed merely from this field science, yet the expression “social space” is complex (Lefebvre, 1998: 1). In his book *Production of space*, Lefebvre maintains that social space, especially the urban space, exists in diversity. This diversity is mostly implicative of flakiness, as in the well-known Millefeuille dough, rather than the homogeneity-isotropy of a classic (Euclidean/Carthesian) mathematical space (Lefebvre, 1998: 86). He maintains that a space theory that envisages the space as a room for multidimensional interaction is only possible through a holistic perception of the physical, mental, and societal space, which is commonly presumed to be fractured. For a concomitant comprehension of different dimensions of the space, it should be conceptualized as a process that is produced. Then, everything gets inter-connected within a single continuity (Lefebvre, 1998: 34).

“Appropriation”, a concept Lefebvre draws attention to in his book, may be described as conflict caused by intervention to spaces that have been designed by social practices and the resultant ambiguity leading to the appropriation of space: “It may be said of a natural space modified in order to serve the needs and possibilities of a group that it has been appropriated by that group.” Lefebvre contends that reproduction or reappropriation of space cannot be understood apart from the rhythms of life (1998: 165-166).

In his work “Rhythmanalysis”, Lefebvre discusses space, time, and everyday life, and analyses the complex relationship between cyclical and linear repetitions of life. The cyclical comes from the cosmic, or from nature, that is from days, nights, seasons, sea waves and tides, monthly cycles, and so forth. The linear, on the other hand, comes

from the social practice, hence from human activity: the monotony of actions and acts (behaviors), the imposed structures. The cyclical repetition and linear repetition diverge from each other in analysis, but in reality, they constantly interfere with each other (Lefebvre, 2021: 32).

For Lefebvre, everyday life is not the successive passage of time, but the relation of time periods with each other in time, in accordance with its rhythms. The everyday realm is the conflict within the processes imposed by socio-economic organization of simultaneous and indestructible rhythmic production, consumption, circulation, and habitat, and the place, stage, and inherence of this conflict (Lefebvre, 2021: 100-103).

Lefebvre, who proposes that the concept of rhythm be used as a tool to analyze the everyday life, in fact, does not propose the analysis of the rhythm but the utilization of the rhythm as a tool for analysis. To this end, he describes the imaginary persona 'rhythm analyst' and its characteristics: Nothing stands still for the rhythm analyst, who can hear the wind, rain, and storms, and perceive the slowness and the never-ending motion of a stone, wall, and tree trunk. This is not a static object; time is not ascribed to subject (Lefebvre, 2021: 46).

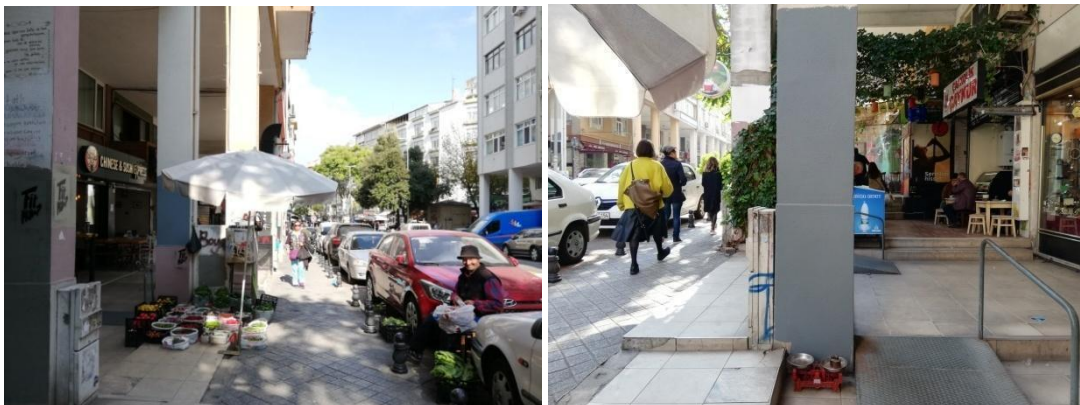
Lefebvre contends that one needs to exceed the rhythms to comprehend and analyze them. A certain externality triggers the analytical mind (Lefebvre, 2021: 53). When the rhythms are analyzed and perceived, it can be understood that all rhythms embody the relation of a time with a space, or a localized time, or even a temporalized space (Lefebvre, 2021: 113).

In this context, the present study turns to everyday life to focus on space with the time dimension. Therefore, it carries out observations in the porticoed areas on Moda Street, regarded as interfaces where the rhythm of everyday life shifts. To help grasp the rhythm, the secondary actors of the porticos, the street vendors, were observed.

As Lefebvre asserts, spaces are reproduced through societal practices. It is the daily routines that reproduce or appropriate the spaces (2015: 184). Similarly, Moda Street, especially the urban space rendered by the porticos along the street, is a place where the everyday life routines are observed, the temporal change, flow, and dynamism are heartfelt, and societal practices are formed. The intensity of activity in these porticos varies across the seasons, even across the times of the day. Just as the shop owners do, street sellers occupy the porticos at certain times of the day, transforming the space beneath. Indeed, street vendors, from the vegetable seller and rosary crafter to local food seller, join at various times the everyday life that runs through the porticos in Moda Street. For example, the vegetable vendor stays from morning till evening, while the rosary crafter shows up late afternoon, and the local food seller works only for two hours, especially in front of the shops that do not have outdoor seating. Irregular as their usage times are through the day, these people have obviously owned the space of porticos. In addition to the potential to make the highest sale, when choosing their spot in the porticos, they probably consider factors such as whether there is a wall to use, a

ramp, and electric panel, or a wall plant or ivy. Bringing in varied stuff such as the necessary tools for sitting and protective umbrellas, apart from the products they sell, i.e. with the added surfaces and features, as well as the pre-existing area of porticos, the street vendors continuously define new masses and reproduce the relevant areas at various times along the day through different life practices. Thus, the occupation of the portico tends to change at varying temporal and functional cross sections of the hourly, daily, monthly, and yearly rhythms of the societal practices.

Street vendors' joining a typical day at the Moda Street's porticos and using them may clearly depict the appropriation of the space. For example, one of the areas within the colonnade that extends along the street has been occupied by a vegetable seller. The vegetable vendor laid his vegetables in the area formed between the unaligned columns of two buildings and in front of the electric panel placed here, and so claimed this space. The thus created spot provided him at the same time with a back surface where he could hang his belongings. While the physical elements of the portico happened to define the vegetable vendor's sales area, this in turn redefines the portico. By the column right opposite where he laid his vegetables, between the staircase and the ramp, he placed his vegetable scale. Thus, at times of selling practice, the entire area has transformed into an area with defined surfaces on four sides, having certain volume and appealing to the pedestrian flow under the portico and on the bicycle path (Figure 19-20).



**Figure 19-20.** The transformation of the columns and the space surrounding them during times of selling

Similarly, the rosary crafter has settled between the two columns in a position to address both flow directions on the bicycle path and pedestrian walkway. The bicycle path is now the walkway for pedestrians, yet a ramp at this point covers half of the pedestrian path, where pedestrians prefer the flat side of it, creating a suitable spot for the rosary crafter to work. Here, the elevation difference right in front of one of the columns of the portico and the line defining it, together with a sheet of cardboard placed on the ground, turn into a work and sales place. The front of the other column, similarly, functions as the seating area by the help of a simple layer (a sheet of cardboard) (Figure 21).

This time, a small area between another column and a small wall near to it have become the workplace of a local food seller. The salesman sits on an indoor type chair while

selling his products, and at other times, he leaves it inside one of the shops. He uses the small wall next to his seat to crack the walnuts he sells (Figure 22).



**Figure 21-22.** The daily uses of salesmen and the production of space

Apart from all these, the porticos have other users: people living in the floors above. For this group, porticos seem to be used as a street, rather than as an in-between space because, as seen in some of these porticoed buildings, the building residents pass through an iron gate before they reach the main entrance, and this creates a secondary in-between space between the building and the porticos. These gates are somewhat a necessary precaution against the intense use of porticos. Still, shop owners utilize the space created by the addition of these extra gates in front of the entrance of the building, exceeding the nonconforming boundaries, thus even these new and more rigidly drawn boundaries get ambiguous in the course of everyday life with temporary elements and immediate functions that fit into limited times (Figure 23). Although some of the porticoed buildings that have been in Moda Street for quite a long time were demolished for the urban transformation project, new structures with porticoes are built in their place in the same way, with new traces being added with each new form and material used in these structures (Figure 24).



**Figure 23.** The secondary in-between space created between the building and the portico



**Figure 24.** Urban transformation in Kadıköy, creating new patterns and materials on the same portico

#### 4. In lieu of conclusion

To Lefebvre, a theory of space revealing that space is a multidimensional interaction area can only be possible by means of a holistic understanding of the physical, mental, and social space, which is usually conceived of as being fractured. A holistic perception of space is impossible without the rhythms of everyday life. Proposing the use of rhythm concept as a tool to analyze the everyday life, Lefebvre, in fact does not imply the analysis of the rhythm, but the utilization of it as a tool for analysis. Thus, the present study focuses on the porticos on Moda Street, which are regarded as interfaces shifting the rhythms of everyday life. Although Moda Street, which had functioned as a bazaar up until 1960's, has undergone various transformations over time, it has always remained as an actively used urban space. The rhythms in the flow of everyday life along porticos on the street have been particularly analyzed through the street vendors, the secondary actors of the porticoes. An analysis of the usage of porticos throughout the day has revealed how they are appropriated according to the rhythms of social practices. This situation has been associated with continuous reproduction of the space as a result of owning, and blurring of the clear boundaries drawn by urban planning studies. As Harvey asserts, regardless of the city planners' endeavors, societal practices cannot be determined by architectural forms because, no matter how fixed the representation schemes are, they are notoriously known to detach themselves from the buoy they are attached to (Harvey, 2010: 231).

#### Author Contributions

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1. Designing the study 2. Data collection 3. Analysis and interpretation of data 4. Writing the manuscript 5. Critical revision			

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The photographs for which no source is indicated were all taken by the authors themselves in 2019 (Photographs 2-5, 11-16, 19-23 by Aslıhan Ece Paköz, and photographs 17, 18, 24 by Hale Sinirlioğlu).

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