ORIGINAL ARTICLE

A qualitative research on emigration and identity in İzmir–Eşrefpaşa

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Abstract

Eşrefpaşa has been considered as a migration settlement where every emigrant, immigrant or refugee has an opportunity to live freely according to their tradition and culture without any pressure considering the ethnic and social diversity. This article aims to comprehend how the next generations of emigrants in Eşrefpaşa describe their ancestors, identities, cultures and urban environment and highlight the transformations they faced spatially and socially. After conducting an in-depth interview study of 26 people between the ages of 35 and 85 years, the analysis revealed that second and third generations preserve their culture, while the identity of emigration has substantially decreased for the fourth generation due to the undeniable effects of individualism and globalization on society since the early 2000s. The outcomes obtained in this paper, the most up-to-date of the rare oral interviews performed with the emigrants in Eşrefpaşa, can be used as a resource of discussion for developing future research.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding cities is only possible by respecting all identities, cultures and historical heritages within socio-spatial dynamics. İlhan Pınar uses this expression on the importance of respecting the historical values existing in the city, 'Those who do not know the history of the city where they live and those, who are not aware of the necessity of history to make the city a liveable place, will only consume it.' (Baltazzi, 2015:12). Spatial strategies for

areas with different characteristics should have a vision respecting the cultural heritages. İzmir, a significant port city of the Eastern Mediterranean and Asia Minor, has had a unique cultural and historical richness as a settlement favoured by various immigrants for centuries (Jackson, 2012). Especially after Trade Agreement signed on 16 August 1838, several European merchants, and immigrants preferred İzmir, a cosmopolitan symbol of the Modern Ottoman Empire, the urban structure developed by infrastructure projects, and hundreds of immigrants came to the city to work (Şenişik, 2013; Tanış & Havik, 2020; Yorulmaz, 1993).

Economic growth triggering migration to İzmir had a detrimental effect on mobility, particularly after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Until today, İzmir has been recreated by each immigrant and has become multi-layered and multicultural. Some regions expanded, some transformed and some were formed and developed by migration. The focus of this study is the exchange of population, an obligatory and international migration, and the connection between space and mobility in Eşrefpaşa, formed by migration.

In the twentieth century, one of the most fundamental goals of nation-states is to unite society under a single national culture and create a population with shared values. Therefore, language and culture, two elements that bind society together, were the most highlighted matters in the early twentieth century (Sepetcioğlu, 2010). After World War I, minorities in Turkey and Greece, defined as dangerous for both countries, were to migrate out of the country they live in to end social and economic conflicts and promote demographic homogenization during the Conference of Lausanne negotiations (Goalwin, 2018). In this regard, about 2 million minorities were resettled compulsorily within the Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations, signed on the first stage of the Lausanne Conference, on 30 January 1923, between Turkey and Greece to homogenize populations in both countries within the circumstances of nation-state structures (Arı, 1990; Karakılıç, 2021; Tansug, 2011). Erden (2004) reports that it was an essential step that approximately 1.5 million Greeks and nearly 500,000 were exchanged during the transformation in several ways of both countries into a nation-state. While Arı (2000) remarks that 1.2 million Orthodox Christian Greeks and 350,000 Muslim Turks were obligated to migrate in the 1920s, Adıgüzel (2016) and Pentzopoulos (1962) confirm that 1.2 million Orthodox Greeks emigrated to Greece. As mentioned in the History of Settlement (1932; as cited in Ülker, 2008), 499,239 Muslim emigrants were settled within the Protocol; however, Hirschon (2016) highlights that the number of Muslim emigrants was 355,635. Comerford (2000) states that between 900,000–1.3 million Greeks and 350,000–500,000 Turks migrated within the Protocol. These numbers of both Orthodox and Muslim emigrants are approximately similar, with slight variations in different sources. Çanlı (1994) emphasizes that the difference between the statements regarding the number of emigrants in various studies may stem from the emigrants who travelled by their vehicles and were unaccompanied by the Kızılay[1]. Because the people, subject to exchange, were determined according to the principle of the religion rather than national origin or language, Muslims speaking Greek (e.g. Muslim Turks from mainly Crete and Yanya) and Orthodox Christians speaking Turkish (e.g. Orthodox Turks from Karaman) were to migrate besides all other settlements of Turkey and Greece, except Western Thrace and İstanbul (Adıgüzel, 2016; Arslan, 2012; Emgili, 2017; Şenışık, 2016). Therefore, both countries witnessed the concept of identity based on religion and ethnicity melting into each other among the minorities who had lived together for centuries (Comerford, 2000; Erden, 2004; Kolluoğlu, 2013; Paköz Türkeli, 2020).

Following the settlement policies of exchange protocol, emigrants in Turkey were carried to urban and rural neighbourhoods abandoned by non-Muslims and settled in vacant lands and houses. While there were possibilities for the emigrants to keep their culture alive in isolated villages, some could not preserve their identity and cultural habits in regions where the locals were living together (Bayındır Goularas, 2012). In this aspect, the exchange was a serious struggle for the society to adapt and keep their cultural memory alive, considering that adaptation is a continuous process of transformation and adjustment (Ruben, 1983). Accordingly, although oral history studies, which sustain memories of the exchange, are subjective expressions (Bedlek, 2017), it is clear that oral narratives are much necessary to understand a city and its historical and social development.

Population exchange and emigration as research topics have become increasingly popular among students, independent researchers and professors, especially in the last few years. Since in-depth interviews allow the

researchers to get plenty of information about the experiences untold and cultural heritages lost after the exchange, it has been a quite common method favoured by many researchers, especially in the last two decades. For instance, Erden (2004) uses the concept of nationalization and shows how emigrants took part in this process and how nationalization supplied them with a way of creating their identity by focusing on every difficulty they faced. Haytoğlu (2006) reaches similar socio-economic outcomes with other researchers, but contrarily, he highlights their longing for the hometown they left according to the interviews with the emigrants in Denizli. Concentrating on the resettlement of the emigrants in Ayvalık and the cultural and economic conflicts they experienced, Yılmaz (2011), unlike other researchers, discusses the differences between the emigrants from Lesbos and Crete as well and the collective identity of Ayvalık they created. Kolluoğlu (2013) also gets the chance to conduct interviews with the first and second generations of the emigrants and locals living in the various formerly villages of İzmir, and he discusses the imposition of the insubstantial borders of the national identity over the regional boundaries of the nation-state. Paköz Türkeli (2020) examines the factors that affect the adaptation and communication processes of the emigrants in Çatalca and the consequences of the exchange on the multicultural social structure in this region. In a similar vein, Kahvecioğlu Ağbaba and Furat (2019) focus on how the emigrants in Niğde communicated with the locals, how they defined themselves sustainably and the perception of a shared identity for future generations. Şahin and Duran (2019), focusing on the emigrants who settled in Hamidiye Village in Turgutlu, emphasize that the emigrants change the culture positively in the regions where they moved, despite all the difficulties. Unlike many others, Karakılıç (2021) tries to comprehend relations among social memory and identity in Sarıdünya village within the concept of habitus from Bourdieu's oeuvre, and change of tobacco production in the village due to the agricultural transformation after the 1980s. Similar to these papers, this study tries to understand the role of cultural memory in their daily lives, emigration as an identity, adaptation processes, their longing for the past, the difficulties they experienced such as social exclusion, being ignored in economic relations for a long time and being humiliated, and finally the mutual transformation of the cultures and habits after the exchange. Unlike the aforementioned studies, this research also discusses the relationship between spatial transformation of Eşrefpaşa over decades and settlers, particularly emigrants, to understand the significance of emigration on the collective identity of Eşrefpaşa and this region itself as a physical environment and home through the emigrants' perspective. This study discovers that the emigrants in Eşrefpaşa, socially and spatially excluded because of their diverse culture, are now an essential part of a rich culture, as Eşrefpaşalı and emigrant, together with the local people and later immigrants, even if it is not the same as before due to the spatial interventions carried out according to the urban policies of that period.

The aim of this article is twofold. First, this paper aims to present a comprehensive approach to an understanding of the influences of spatial transformations and urban strategies on social changes in Eşrefpaşa considering its potential in a deep variety based on the historical and demographic background. Second, it is aimed to determine the emigrants' perspectives of immigration addressing their experience in social change in Eşrefpaşa and the level of consciousness on the memory of emigration, belongingness to Eşrefpaşa and being part of a collective identity in Eşrefpaşa regarding the complete disappearance of their cultural traces from collective memory. Accordingly, we search responses to questions like whether multiculturalism is a sustainable strategy by focusing on emigrants in Eşrefpaşa and the relationship between their feelings of belonging to emigration heritage (sense of ethnic belonging) and Eşrefpaşa (sense of regional belonging). Although several research works were conducted about the immigration's influence on space and society in İzmir, the novelty of this research arises from oral narratives of the in-depth interview conducted in Eşrefpaşa to gain an understanding of the nexus between demographic changes and spatial transformations through oral expressions. Although the exchange of population and emigration is studied by chiefly sociologists and historians, this paper will start for every researcher, especially urban planners like us, who wants to study both emigrants' perspectives, identity, and culture and Eşrefpaşa as a multicultural and multi-layered research field with its rich urban history.

In what follows, first, the theoretical framework is provided. Second, important concepts to understand the topic are explained. Then, in-depth interviews are analysed and evaluated. Eventually, the last part deals with

the outcomes based on the findings presented in the previous section. The spatial and social transformation in Eşrefpaşa is described with the help of both the interviewees and theoretical framework. Plus, how valuable and effective the human factor is essential in this particular field is emphasized with the subjective judgements gathered in the interviews.

TERMINOLOGY: IDENTITY, ETHNICITY, CULTURE AND EMIGRANT

How the emigrants define Eşrefpaşa, how they develop the social character of this region, and how they are influenced by the evolution of its spatial and social character over time are the main concerns of this research focusing on the nexus between space and human. The principal issues are identity, culture and exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey among various concepts. The individuals, forced to migrate within the exchange protocol signed in 1923, suffered major problems such as the prolongation of bureaucratic processes, high rate of unemployment, and unauthorized occupation of the abandoned buildings and fields in the districts where they resettled as emigrants with governmental support or as free immigrants (Bayındır Goularas, 2012; Yıldırım, 2016). Besides such economic and bureaucratic problems, the most unexpected difficulty was social exclusion and humiliating expressions by some locals because of emigrants' ethnic identity, culture and mother tongue, which were considerably unfamiliar with the locals (Erden, 2004; Güler, 2012). Those experiences became the main concerns of the stories told to the later generations so that collective and social memory carried through these narratives to the present and shared in in-depth interviews. Terms such as identity and culture are briefly explained for the main subject to be understood better by the reader; furthermore, the exchange of populations, the international and obligatory migration protocol to which emigrants were subject, is emphasized in consideration of those terms.

Identity, defined as the entire signals, qualities and characteristics that reveal what kind of person an individual is as a social entity, carries a perception that expresses the individual's stance in life and collective belonging (Türk Dil Kurumu (TDK), 2020; Yanık, 2013;). Cresswell (2004) states that individuals seek private roles to define themselves in a community and try to create particular spaces where they can recreate their identity in order to survive. Similarly, Hague and Jenkins (2004) states that individual and place must not be considered separately from each other; moreover, the conception of identity and the sustainable conservation of space are highly correlated. In a region such as Eşrefpaşa, which has been multi-layered and multicultural due to numerous settlers with various cultures over the decades, the preservation of spatial identity and uniqueness in the region has a clear and mutual relationship with the sense of belonging of those living there.

Since belongingness is handled within the concept of identity, it is pretty significant to fathom what identity requires to define the sense of belonging. Human beings tend to express negative behavioural indications such as loneliness and isolation in the absence of the sense of belonging, one of the most fundamental requirements according to Maslow (1954), while it is necessary and essential to find a place to belong for this feeling in Norberg Shulz's opinion (1971). Regarding the place attachment, claimed as a primary necessity by both researchers aforementioned, Rollero and Piccoli (2010) argue that the sense of belonging would be considered, only if the individuals have domination on the physical environment as each part of it.

Ethnicity represents a common subjectivity consisting of language, belief, nationality, motherland, collective culture and many concepts of a shared history (Rumbaut, 2015). Concerning these common matters, the emigrants were forced to abandon their motherland and adopt their new identities in the regions they settled in due to the exchange protocol (Sepetcioğlu, 2014). After migration, unification methods simply control homogenization within a community or ethnic differentiation; in other words, heterogeneity (Rumbaut, 2015). Although assimilation took a great place in blurring ethnic or racial discrimination with all social and cultural identities after the exchange, the emigrants were very careful and protective about being identified themselves not as immigrants but mainly as emigrants, and they used such a traumatic experience to create a space for themselves in society (Kolluoğlu, 2013). Şenışık (2016) affirms that the identification of individuals based on ethnicity and ethnic identity

is a principal outcome of a nation-state policy and emphasizes the inevitability of the result that the emigrants recreate their identity and belonging. Eventually, emigration as an identity existing since the 1920s in Greece became a respectful identification in Turkey, as the number of scientific research in Turkey and the desire to seek the roots of the last generation emigrants have increased (Sepetçioğlu, 2014).

Culture, defined as all tangible and intangible values created in the historical, social development process and the tools to carry them to next generations, is generally expressed by Şenişik (2013) as a comprehensive lifestyle and common symbols while described an arrangement that gives purpose to life itself to convey one's knowledge and skills to others through symbolic forms according to Tatlıdil (2009; TDK, 2020). Culture is not separate from migration, plus in some circumstances, the immigrants' cultural values may change involuntarily (Epstein & Gang, 2010). Culture can seldom evolve into prevailing values adopted by immigrants and locals in a particular area. In brief, culture in social continuity has had a unifying and inclusive nature over time, unlike identity and ethnicity, distinctive and descriptive theories.

Migration can be basically defined as the mobility of individuals or groups from one area to another permanently or semi-permanently (Lee, 1966). Immigrants carry not only their families but also their mindsets, professional and daily habits, beliefs they accept and cultural and ethnic definitions representing themselves as unique human beings. They try to build a new but familiar life in strange places where they settled. In this regard, migration, much depending on identity and culture, influenced societies and cities for centuries. Immigration and settlement regulations in the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey had frequently used in demographic homogenization towards the twentieth century. So, it would be wise to mention the concept of the exchange of populations, obligatory and permanent migration, to understand the importance of migration in this study.

After the Lausanne Peace Conference, held at the end of the Greco–Turkish War, the future of the minorities in Turkey and Greece would be decided to prevent both countries from interfering in their internal affairs (Kılıçoğlu Cihangir, 2013). The idea of population exchange for both countries was suggested by Fridtjof Nansen, who had defended both communities' rights to transport their countries because of the long-standing peace, tolerance and remembrance shared by Turks and Greeks (Czajka, 2014). So, homogenization of the population was preferred by the newly established Turkey, and the problems regarding minorities brought about population exchange, which is the topic of this study (Erdal, 2017). The exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey was decided within the Convention concerning the Exchange of Greek, and Turkish Populations and Protocol signed on the Lausanne Conference, on 30 January 1923, to transfer the minorities defined as emigrants within the protocol. It was a determination of the proper areas for emigrants to settle within settlement legislation of the period (Sepetcioğlu, 2014). People, forced to migrate between 1923 and 1925 under supervision of the Mixed Commission, named emigrant within the protocol, while Muslim citizens of Ottoman Empire who migrated as from the territories lost were called immigrants (Balta, 2015; Erder, 2018). Individuals defined by these concepts adopted these titles and used them to describe their communities to which they belonged for decades.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY AND FIELDWORK

In oral history studies, explaining the subject by those who experienced it is essential. However, it is nearly impossible to reach first-generation emigrants as the exchange occurred about a hundred years ago. Hence, this research intended to reach the second- and third-generation emigrants in Eşrefpaşa, chosen as the focal area and one of the emigrants' settlement areas in İzmir. Considering that Eşrefpaşa's population has changed gradually, especially in the last sixty years, it is more sensible to focus on in-depth interviews rather than the survey method since there continues a simple perception of the basis, aim and ultimate understanding of conversations for gathering strong and reliable information (Rivas & Gibson–Light, 2016). So, it was necessary to carry out a detailed study on the interviewees' perceptions and expectations regarding the social and spatial condition of Eşrefpaşa by using in-depth interviews as a qualitative method in this research.

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According to Kvale (1996, as cited in Guion et al., 2001); this method, which enables to reach a rich data collection, consists of seven stages as theming, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting. Therefore, this method is ideal for researchers who prefer open-ended questions addressed to a specific group of people, rather than a survey method based on rich and detailed quantitative data, with many more people as a verbal data collection method to learn interviewees' perceptions and expectations on a particular topic and also has the flexibility to differ questions according to the theme (Guion et al., 2001; Spiggle, 1994). To put it differently, the focal group is determined within a theme restricted, an interview guide with questions is prepared to guide the conversation and move on to the next question without leaving the theme.

In-depth interviews, mostly with individual respondents, ultimately aim to gain an in-depth understanding of the cases, like many other oral techniques, and especially to comprehend how individuals behave and think (Cacciattolo, 2015). For this reason, it enables individuals to interact socially with researchers in a more comprehensive way and offers a more general information gathering method thanks to its qualitative characteristics. The ability of the interviewers to explain questions if not understood by the respondents and identify topics that help the discussion makes it more comfortable to obtain information about the logic behind the answers (Cacciattolo, 2015; Kwortnik, 2003). Nevertheless, this technique was criticized by Rubin and Rubin, and Pitirim Sorokin, for its connection with emotions with being basic, uncertain and vulnerable to criticism (Rivas & Gibson–Light, 2016).

All in all, a qualitative methodology using in-depth interviews is favoured to demonstrate sociological and psychological dynamics into space, understand how the emigrants adapt to the region and city where they settled and interpret İzmir, where social alteration influences the spatial transformation, with the contribution of verbal and written sources, within the framework of city planning visions and principles.

Interview

In-depth interviews and participant observation were the principal data gathering practices. Face-to-face interviews, carried out by one researcher, were completed between November 2019 and January 2020, and each meeting lasted from a minimum of 15 to 60 minutes. The interviews took place in the neighbourhoods of Eşrefpaşa in mukhtar offices, exchange associations, and on the streets. In particular, interviews with elders on the outside in cold weather conditions were completed within a period of 15 minutes. Interview questions focused on two main topics as spatial structure and demographic characteristics. Besides, the questions referred to how the emigrants' spatial and social belongingness in Eşrefpaşa and how they understand the space and society.

The selection of study field

We focused on Eşrefpaşa, one of the primary settlements of the immigrants, because this region, as an urban area formed and developed by migration, has a rich urban history in terms of examining the detailed development of planning studies, its unique collective memory and social character that changes its face over time with the influence of demographic dynamism (Yıldızer Özkan, 2020). Eşrefpaşa, within the boundaries of Konak as the central district of İzmir today, is located just south of Kemeraltı bazaar, the historical and traditional commercial centre.

Muslim immigrants from the Balkans and Caucasia settled in Değirmendağı, Kemer Bridge and Kadifekale due to the territorial losses mainly since the nineteenth century, and Eşrefpaşa was established by Mayor Eşref Pasha during 1885–1907 (Baran, 2003; Karaoğlu, 2001). In this respect, it is considerably accurate to state that the Eşrefpaşa region has been established and formed by the settlement of immigrants from the territories lost since the end of nineteenth century and sprawled to the southwards, attaching to the central urban pattern in the following years. Focusing on the Yağheneler located in the south of Eşrefpaşa, it is assumed that Eşrefpaşa expanded from Kemeraltı towards the south. As Fedakâr and Akçiçek (2019:28–29) state, from the north to the

south, Eşrefpaşa borders Bayramyeri and Yağhaneler; to the west, it borders Üçyol, and the region shares its entire eastern boundary with Beştepeler. Eşrefpaşa covers a common boundary as delineated in Figure 1, according to the written statements and the in-depth interviews.

Immigrants in İzmir moved towards the upper neighbourhoods because of housing shortage in the city centre due to the military operations in Western Anatolia in the 1920s (Karaoğlu, 2001). Settlement areas expanded to the periphery after the establishment of the Republic. Eşrefpaşa was utterly one of the main areas in the central district where a great deal of the emigrants settled between 1912 and 1930. Hence, it was inevitable that the region was proposed as a new residential area in the Danger and Prost's Plan in 1925 (Yüksel, 2006).

Examining the representations of Eşrefpaşa and İnönü Main Roads in Figure 2, the principal road lines of Eşrefpaşa in this plan, it is obvious that the north and centre of Eşrefpaşa were already a residential area, the southward expansion was anticipated. 'Nouveau quartier d'habitat' written in the south of Eşrefpaşa means 'New Housing Area' in English. So, this region defined as a new settlement to provide housing for the population increase.

After World War II, residential areas constantly extended to satisfy the housing demand in large cities like İzmir due to the increasing migration from rural to urban. The land-use plan by Le Corbusier in 1945, on the other hand, made a significant contribution to the improvement of the urban construction by guiding land-use and development plans for İzmir (Bilsel, 1999, 2009).

As can be seen in Figure 3, this plan also intends a holistic approach in planning practices rather than a partial approach and accepts the south of the Eşrefpaşa region, receiving immigrants frequently, as the new residential area (Yüksel, 2006).

Considering the rapid growth of trade, the emergence of new business groups and the professional skills gained by different ethnic groups after WWII, specific neighbourhood formations emerged and developed on an ethnic basis in İzmir as in many cities (Peker, 2017). As citizenship and kinship relations were significant for immigrants coming to big cities, those from the same cities or cultures created their neighbourhoods and resided there together as in Eşrefpaşa (İpek, 2017). In this period, as the consequences of rapid urbanization in the city centre appeared, a new, modernist and comprehensive land-use plan was announced in 1955 to prevent any irregular
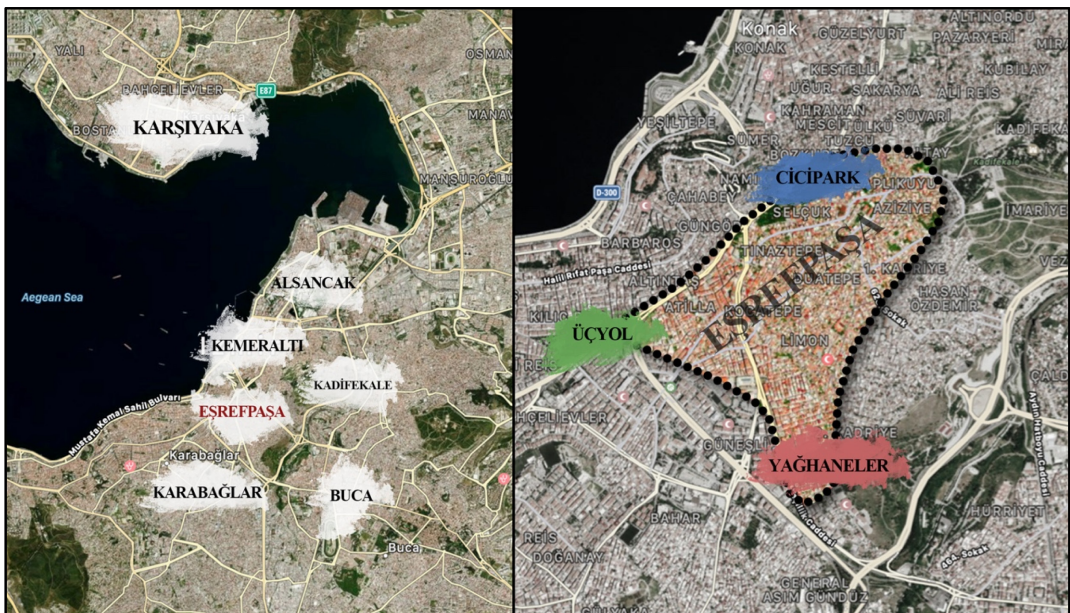

FIGURE 1 Eşrefpaşa and its surroundings. Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021
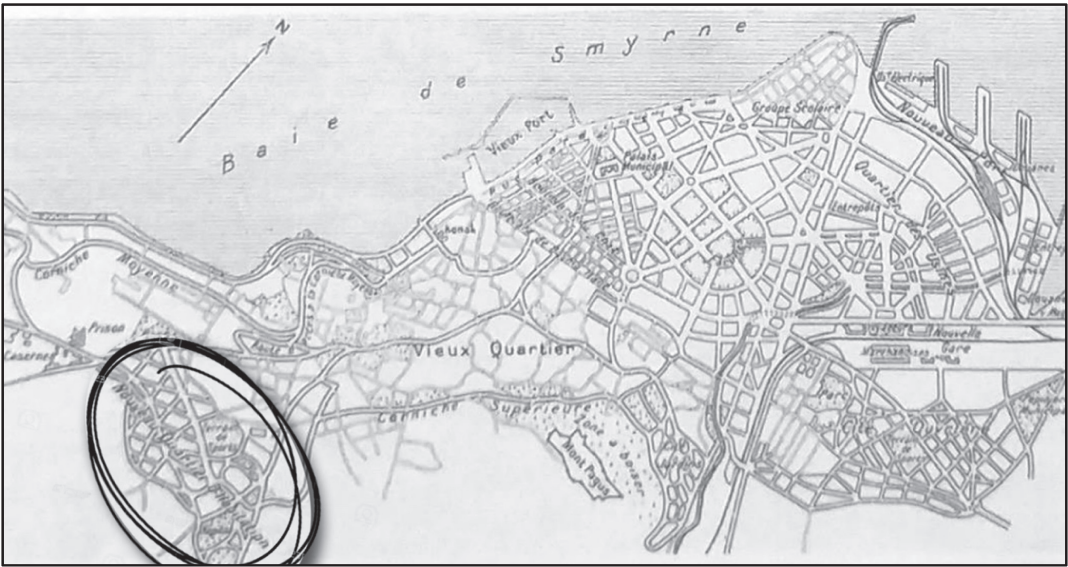
FIGURE 2 Eşrefpaşa as a residential area in danger and prost's plan. Source: Serçe et al. (2003)
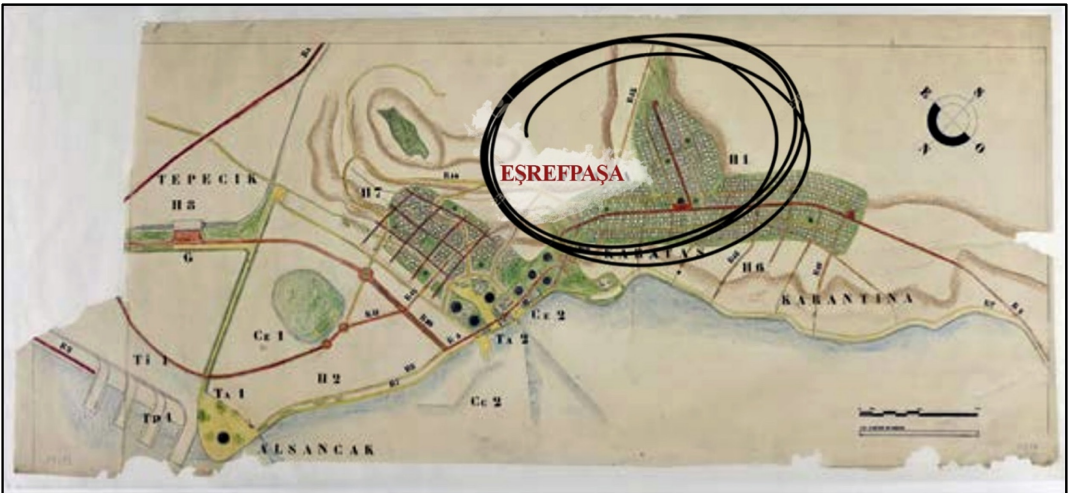

FIGURE 3 Eşrefpaşa and its surroundings in LE corbusier's plan. Source: Altınkaya Genel (2017)

construction and determine expansion zones, while proposing technical and social infrastructure areas (Aşkan, 2011). However, slums increasingly growing in the central areas of İzmir since the 1950s maintained despite revised plans because continuous migration to the city centre more extended in the following years, and unexpected limitations happened in putting plans into practice (Karaoğlu, 2001). Although the latter plans following the chancing urbanism perspective regarding neoliberal policies in the 1980s endeavoured to renew this area, most of those projects failed to fulfil their purposes due to constantly increasing immigration to Eşrefpaşa and its surroundings and uncontrolled illegal housing. Nevertheless, despite unsuccessful and insufficient planning decisions over the years, this region has been one of the most favoured settlements of emigrants and immigrants in İzmir due to its proximity to central business areas, cheap housing stock and strong kinship relations in the last century.

In this regard, we have chosen Eşrefpaşa, the most appropriate field for in-depth interviews with emigrants and one of the first guests of the region where kinship and neighbourhood relations is intensive. Various immigrant groups consider Eşrefpaşa as a common living area even though they live spatially separately and accept the space they live in as identification of themselves. In this region, where the concept of identity at the spatial and social level is an effective tool from the use of area to civil organizations, there is a social mosaic that intertwines under the umbrella of *Eşrefpaşalılık*[2.]. Since the establishment of the Republic, immigrants from many regions of the country contributed to this field to develop on the settlement traces of the emigrants from the days ahead to now.

Study participant

In-depth interviews were carried out through the exchange associations and the mukhtars in Eşrefpaşa. The study sample consisted of 26 people: aged 35–85 years, currently residing in Eşrefpaşa or living there for a period. To understand their perception of Eşrefpaşa, we asked the interviewees various questions about the region and its inhabitants. As most of the third and fourth generation emigrants left Eşrefpaşa, many of the interviewees were 56 years old and over (Table 1).

To avoid gender-specific definitions in the interviewees' experiences, an equal representation by gender was provided in this study. The final representation included twelve women and fourteen men, which corresponds to 46 per cent female and 54 per cent male. When asked about their origins, 69 per cent of the interviewees were of Cretan origin, 12 per cent were Crete and Thessaloniki origin, 7 per cent were of Thessaloniki origin, and 12 per cent were non-emigrant (Table 2).

15 per cent of the interviewees are former residents of Eşrefpaşa, and 85 per cent of them still reside there.
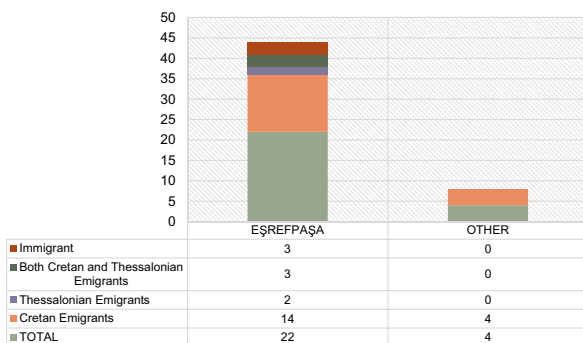
Study limitations

Limitations of the study are presented in this section. The main difficulty was to reach the emigrants because a great deal of the emigrants left Eşrefpaşa through years considering the regular immigration from Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia in the last fifty years and the Syrian refugees in the last decade. This mobility corrupted the demographic stability and damaged the sense of belonging of the emigrants persistent since the exchange. As most of the emigrants left Eşrefpaşa or became isolated from the region due to the gradual migrations to Eşrefpaşa, the number of the interviews was lower than expected.

TABLE 1 Participants by age groups and gender

	0-18	19-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-70	71+
Men	0	0	0	0	3	8	3
Women	0	0	0	2	5	4	1
Number of Participants	0	0	0	2	8	12	4

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021.

TABLE 2   The interviewees' hometowns and current place of residences

	EŞREFPAŞA	OTHER
■ Immigrant	3	0
■ Both Cretan and Thessalonian Emigrants	3	0
■ Thessalonian Emigrants	2	0
■ Cretan Emigrants	14	4
■ TOTAL	22	4

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021.

Secondly, the first-generation emigrants passed away until the time of this study. Respectively, some information asked was responded unclearly by the next generations, as expected, some details about the first years of the exchange were not clarified precisely.

Ultimately, it was not possible to get every answer during the interviews in the field because of the difficulties such as distrust and lack of communication towards people outside the region in such a period when people have become introverted and individualistic due to globalization, crowding and technological developments in İzmir as in the world. Notably, they were reluctant to express their opinions about the questions regarding immigration and immigrants in Eşrefpaşa first, and they were hesitating to reveal their thoughts. They felt uncomfortable to give answers to identity-based questions in the expected clarity. Besides, the interviewees tried to keep the interviews short during the outdoor interviews, and they only shared specific parts of their long family stories.

RESULTS

This part is devoted to the presentation and analysis of the significant findings of this research. After examining the difficulties experienced by the emigrants following residing in this area and the principal reasons for these challenges, secondly, we present the interviewees' motivations for choosing Eşrefpaşa. These ideas are reviewed as the main features of this region, mainly kinship relations, spatial routines and Eşrefpaşa's location. The next part deals with the emigrants' lives in Eşrefpaşa, regarding their perspectives on other immigrants. The last section in social indicators elaborates on the relationship between neighbourhood and self-identity. The next part, concentrating on spatial indicators, begins with spatial circumstances regarding the judgements of the interviewees on the spatial problems of Eşrefpaşa. The expectation about Eşrefpaşa and potential issues for further studies are discussed in the last part.

Social Indicators

Difficulties after population exchange

During the interviews, there were some expressions that many emigrants were subjected to social exclusion by the locals when they came to Anatolia first. Naturally, such an exclusionary approach affected both the emigrants and immigrants after countless wars causing social, spatial and economic destruction. In this respect, the constant interaction between locals and first-generation emigrants, especially those of Cretan origin, could be established in a long period of time since they did not speak a mutual language with the locals in the early years of their

arrival in Eşrefpaşa and İzmir. Cretan emigrants used to speak a language known as Romeika, known as Ancient Greek, rather than Turkish and Greek because Crete did not have a land connection with Anatolia and Rumelia. Undeniably, the difference in mother tongue had hindered the communication of several crowds, such as Cretan emigrants and locals in İzmir, for quite a long time.

Besides, Katz and Weaver (2003) describe culture as an essential behaviour that differentiates the eating habits, and similarly, Beşirli (2010) argues that food as cultural nourishment comes to the forefront as a social identity as well as being a biological matter. Cretan emigrants had an herb and olive oil-focused diet (Tarcan, 2020). Such diversities caused them to be excluded by locals in Eşrefpaşa and be called half infidel. As Cretan interviewees stated, the emigrants abstained from communicating with the locals for many years, and the marriage bonds to develop kinship relations with locals were built much later. Paköz Türkeli (2020) states that this was favoured by emigrants because they needed the language spoken at home to be understood by the bride/groom, as expected. When asked the interviewees about whether the first-generation emigrants were exposed to social exclusion, 19 per cent said yes, 12 per cent answered no, and 69 per cent of the interviewees mentioned that they do not know. Generally, the difficulties experienced in the 1920s were uncertain since some first-generation emigrants did not recount the social problems they experienced to the later generations, and some mentioned them briefly. For this reason, some interviewees claimed that they do not have any idea, or they remained silent. Some stated that the elders somehow run their business with their relatives. The emigrants' support for each other improved to connections based on citizenship relations, so that – if they ever encountered any exclusion – that exclusion from society was not told to the following generations for avoiding any permanent hatred. Those who answered yes stated that their families were one of the first emigrants settled in Turkey, and appended the Cretan emigrants without any social support, could not communicate with the locals because of their language.

Hirschon (2016) and Paköz Türkeli (2020) reported that although some emigrants managed to adapt themselves to new environments after migration, some were unquestionably rejected by locals since those whose native languages were different from the locals were treated like they were Christians and Greeks by Muslim locals. They attacked the ethnic and religious identities of Greek-speaking Muslim emigrants with half-infidel and Greek seed, and Turkish-speaking Orthodox emigrants with Turkish seed as the insulting representatives of the sociological trauma of the Treaty of Lausanne, plus the expectation of a smooth assimilation of the emigrants was a truly distant and non–practical approach (Hirschon, R. & trans., 2016; Iğsiz, 2008).

Görken (2018) and Koloğlu (2013) state that Cretan emigrants' adaptation was challenging since they were labelled as half-infidel by the non-emigrants, they had not a chance to intermarry with the locals, and 'Citizen, Speak Turkish' campaign came into force in 1930–1940. When the surname law was enacted, the emigrants got surnames such as Turk and Patriot with migration-induced traumas and social exclusion, so that, they hoped to be accepted by the community which they believed as their motherland. Besides, the relationships between emigrants and locals began to soften, and the edges got blurred since the 1950s. Similarly, Emgili (2017) states that the emigrants were withdrawn into themselves due to approaches supporting national identity. Güler (2012) declares that the Cretan emigrants not speaking Turkish, especially, underwent mockery and humiliation, but unlike other interview studies, the stages of rejection varied regarding the social class differences. As the exchange reshaped the social structure, the emigrants had to leave their old lives and adopt new ones in their new and permanent homeland. Bhugra and Becker (2005) describe the situation of emigrants abstaining from teaching their language to the following generations because of the policies forcing them to learn and speak Turkish and their enthusiasm to get acceptance in the society as the failure of transferring their memories, values, and even the languages they speak in other words, cultural bereavement. However, their social and political exclusion for a long time played an essential role in preserving their own culture, tradition, and historical values for some (Yasdag, 2019). The statements of the interviewees who support this idea are as follows (Personal Communication, November 16, 2019):

When we were little, all neighbours were from Crete. They would sit and chat. "I want to learn (this language) too." I was a child. "Mother, let me know what you said." "Don't speak (this language)

daughter, no need." "Mom, let me have a little bit." They did not teach. We learned a little by our-selves. For example, in the past, there was only one Greek channel on the TV, black and white. We used to sit like that, my mother would understand, of course, she was speaking in her own language. "Mom, what did they say?" She used to say, "Oh, be quiet, Kakomira."[3.]

(Woman, 46, Cretan emigrant)

Everyone already knew each other. Compared to the conditions of that day, I do not know anyone in the place where we live. When we went out on the street, everyone knew each other. Cretan women spoke in Cretan. I used to understand... My mother knew both Turkish and Cretan (Greek). So did my father. Because acceptance inside (the society) was a bit troublesome, family marriages were pretty common among Cretans, consanguineous marriages. My parents also made a consan-guineous marriage. Do you know what affected me the most? In the growing age of a human being, in the adolescence period, when you stumble into puberty, there was something like "Citizen, Speak Turkish." Well, I ask(ed) my mother, "why does not my mother and grandmother speak Turkish?" Truly, I wish I had learned Greek. (It was) my biggest mistake.

(Man, 76, Cretan emigrant)

Why Eşrefpaşa?

The interviewees residing in Eşrefpaşa were asked whether they were considering moving from Eşrefpaşa and the reply was no. Those who moved from Eşrefpaşa were asked what circumstances were effective in making this decision. Table 3 shows the reasons for both scenarios.

Table 3 shows the causes of people leaving the neighbourhood divided into two main topics, the change in social and spatial character. While 31 per cent emphasized the spatial reasons related to planning decisions and the deterioration of the neighbourhood character, 69 per cent highlighted the sociological reasons such as the feeling of discomfort and the lack of belongingness due to other immigrants in the region. While some em-igrants in Eşrefpaşa continue to reside there due to kinship relations, spatial habits and acceptance by others, most of them moved from Eşrefpaşa because of the transformation of the social structure and urban environ-ment. Similar to the findings from the interviews in this paper, Şan and Küçük (2018) states that migration is very effective in urban segregation and rapid urban change caused by immigration cannot satisfy the needs of the immigrants. Accordingly, a region receiving perpetual immigration causes some immigrant groups to live in their

TABLE 3 The reasons for both leaving Eşrefpaşa and continuing to live in this region

Emigrants want to Leave	Emigrants do NOT want to leave
Continuous migration to this district	Kinship relations
Illegal economical activities	Spatial habit
Insecurity (drugs, idle and ruined buildings)	Geographical location of the region being close to the city centre
Intolerance between different ethnicities	Willingness to live in a Low–Storey and / or detached house
Lack of urban transformation	Workplace which is in this area
Housing Stock which is old and out of maintenance	
Transportation problems arising from an inclined region	
Lack of public and cultural spaces	

Source: Prepared by the authors according to the interviews, 2020.

neighbourhoods separately and some, such as emigrants in Eşrefpaşa, to leave the area. Besides, Eşrefpaşa is quite a typical example of a disadvantaged area according to Şan and Küçük (2018) working on urban segregation and spatial poverty, considering that Eşrefpaşa, located in the city centre, has affordable housing, inadequate infrastructure areas, insecurity for many and been abandoned by high-income groups.

The interviewee, one of the third-generation emigrants of Thessaloniki origin, summarized the change in the social structure of Eşrefpaşa and its surrounding as follows (Personal communication, 4 January 2020):

> In the area … there are few emigrants and in my upper neighbourhoods. Ours (Aziziye Neighbourhood) has a mixed (social) structure. I was born here and grew up, but after 1995–96 immigration from the east began. The former residents died of old age, (and) their children did not want to stay (here). Since they also moved to different districts, this place became more like a migration area of the easterners. That's why very few people remain, whom I can call emigrants like us.
>
> (Woman, 35, Thessalonian emigrant)

Three of the answers, also seen in Table 3, regarding the reasons why especially the following generations of the emigrants left Eşrefpaşa, are as follows, respectively, the problems about the change in the society, the housing structure in the neighbourhood, and the decrease in the friendly relationships and economic activities (Personal communication, December 28, 2019):

> Cretans' most explicit feature was that they did not live far away (from each other), like a colony. On an upper street, a lower street. Everyone knew each other as well. Even though they were from Crete and not relatives, they socialized like relatives. You know, the citizenship thing, it was closer. Whether (there was) an illness or health, everyone helps(ed). Even in deaths, everyone used to cook a meal and carry the food every evening while prayer was saying. The Cretans had good traditions. Society has changed. When the apartments began (to be constructed), immigration started to come from outside (of Eşrefpaşa). As for migration, we have gradually remained, the last generations.
>
> (Man, 76, Cretan emigrant)

The interviewees residing in Eşrefpaşa, on the other hand, embrace Eşrefpaşa due to many reasons shown in Table 3 and do not desire to leave this region. Along with the following statements, the importance of the place attachment and place itself, perceived as a homeland in Paköz Türkeli's (2020) in-depth interviews, is emphasized based on relatives and family relations highlighted by Jansen (1970, as cited in Paköz Türkeli, 2020) (Personal communication, 7 December 2019):

> I swear, I personally do not intend to move anywhere. Because of the air, the wind, the transportation, every subject that I find here. I salute fifty people from my home until I arrive at my shop. It is essential. Whenever he/she changes the district where he/she lives, he/she becomes lonely. We are again with our old friends, adding new ones to them. We must talk to everybody because we are tradesmen. I am glad to live in Eşrefpaşa. We have different areas where we can get air. We live in Urla pier for three or four months, (and) it seems enough for us. It is also quite pleasing there.
>
> (Man, 52, Cretan emigrant)

> One of my daughters and sons is in Bornova, one is in Karşıyaka, and one is somewhere (else). They always want me to go there, but I cannot leave. I was born and raised here. When I go out on the road, I see at least ten or fifteen (familiar) people. When we leave here, we don't see it anywhere.
>
> (Man, 85, Cretan emigrant)

Urban life and relationships with Eşrefpaşa

Urban life, where neighbourly and commercial activities relations remain, is a combination of public common spaces and private properties. In this case, Eşrefpaşa is essential for all residents who share this space. Embracing the environment during the development of collective memory shows the interaction of society and space and improve social and spatial attachment. A sense of belonging reveals in various forms, such as continuous communication and connection with oneself and their surroundings and creating a social identity associated with the other members of the community (May, 2011). The figurative reproduction of the public space, which supports the sense of belonging, is very influential in informing a particular identity in Eşrefpaşa. As in Eşrefpaşa, the Cretan emigrants carried their own unique culture everywhere they live, through experiences and narratives (Şenişik, 2013). Coffeehouses *(Kahvehane in Turkish)* were such places where both emigrants and locals socialized and shared traditions and collective memory; on the other hand, emigrants, immigrants, and locals used to share separate tables within the same space where the cultural contradictions were also observed (Bayındır Goularas, 2012; Karaoğlu, 2001). As mentioned by the interviewees, coffeehouses, the main places for socialization in the region, have played a great role in the social consciousness of Eşrefpaşa residents. As Göçmenoğlu (2015) states, Mumcu and Kako Coffeehouses in Eşrefpaşa, Düzyollar Coffeehouse in the Beştepeler and Kız Ahmet's Coffeehouse in Tatar Neighbourhood have been among the primary coffeehouses for years. Considering numerous Cretan emigrants in Eşrefpaşa, their interest in coffeehouse and hookah culture has been effective in this particular tradition in the region. The photograph of Cretan Turks smoking hookah on the postcard in Figure 4 is a representative proof of this culture.

In addition to coffeehouses, another of the spatial traces of the emigrants in Eşrefpaşa is the districts named after them. For example, as every Eşrefpaşa resident claims, the names of the areas such as Kako and Düzyollar come from the emigrants. According to the interviewees, the word Kako, which gave its name to the Kako grocer and Kako Slope *(Kako Yokuşu in Turkish)* located in the south of Yapıcıoğlu, is of Greek origin, means wicked, and comes from a bully named Kako. One of the interviewees stated the following sentences on this topic (Personal communication, 7 December 2019):

> There was Hüso, the confectioner (Tatlıcı in Turkish) in Çimentepe Neighbourhood. Hasan Usta, brother of Tatlıcı Hüso, was the chief of the tobacco store. They were related to Düzyollar. A large

Turcs crétois fumant leur fameux narghilé.

FIGURE 4 Cretan turks smoking hookah. Source: Grecehebdo.gr, 2020

family... They came from Crete in 1897. They also gave a neighbourhood its name. (Like) Düzyollar district. Like, like Kako. Well … There is a Fethi Baba bus station. Fethi Baba, who gave the station its name, also came from Crete.

(Man, 61, Cretan emigrant)

The interviewees were asked whether the associations regarding Eşrefpaşa and emigration as solidarity networks are significant for them and their transfer of these cultures to the next generations. All interviewees agreed that the associations are valuable in preserving the emigrant identity in Eşrefpaşa and in passing on to the next generations (Personal communication, December 19, 2019):

I worked in a coffee house for thirty-five years. I'm asocial now. Back then, in cafe houses and associations (we were spending time). We established the Eşrefpaşa Residents Support and Solidarity Association, but it is no longer open. We are also the founders of Eşrefpaşaspor (football team). But there isn't that much (activity) anymore. Everyone tries to support their family. The old communications and relationships are no longer exist. Associations continue this (relationships), of course. We have no other entertainment.

(Man, 78, Cretan emigrant)

Solidarity and benevolence have a great significance for emigrants in Eşrefpaşa. Evaluating the data gathered from the interviews, the demographic characteristics of Eşrefpaşa began to suffer since the perception of solidarity and benevolence changed. As a result of overcrowding over the years, social relations based on familiarity gained value, compared to the past (Personal communication, December 14, 2019):

Even in the neighbourhood at that time, 'the smell of the food may have gone to my neighbour, maybe they can eat something, maybe they cannot.' You would take them (to your neighbours) too. You came from the market after shopping. People would not even reveal the things they bought from the market. There was absolute solidarity …. No self–interest. At that time, the Republic was recently established. My mother used to walk around the tradesmen so that the new country's children improved further, and our country progressed more. She used to do something to them (as a gift). She did not leave those poor children without clothes during the feast. There was such solidarity.

(Man, 76, Cretan emigrant)

Problems related to immigration to Eşrefpaşa

Emigrants built their houses by using the state aid and/or bank loans on the lands given by the state in the 1920s–30s (Kaya, 2013). Nevertheless, slums, low-cost buildings, were built to satisfy the particular need for shelter without worrying about any aesthetic concern and expanded around Eşrefpaşa in the following years. After migrating from rural parts of Anatolia to Eşrefpaşa in the 1940s, they live with their relatives first, and they build their own illegal houses in the next years. Kinship relation, a very natural form of communication, was essential among the following immigrants coming to Eşrefpaşa. Considering social connections depending on the common backgrounds or interests, a neighbourhood expresses a personal decision of the desired settlement area (Can, 2016). These neighbourhoods have become living spaces with unique dynamics of strong social relations based on regional separations (Zengin Çelik et al., 2019).

In this respect, some questions were asked to the interviewees regarding the effects of later migrations on the region to examine the emigrants' perspective towards other immigrants. 83 per cent stated that they were not happy with the migration, and the emigrants left the region due to the continuing migration during the last fifty years. Although

17 per cent of them claimed that the area altered a lot due to migrations throughout the years, they emphasized that Eşrefpaşa belongs to everyone, respecting that the other immigrants in the region also have different cultures.

> …And the demographic structure of this area started to change. It started to become a kind of alienation (in Eşrefpaşa). I would not have thought that I would live in a different place away from Eşrefpaşa in İzmir. But do you know what happened? Two pubs were opened on the left (of my house), and I left away (in 1995). It changed in an instant. It stopped to be a decent neighbourhood, (then) it turned into a different point.
>
> (Man, 76, Cretan emigrant)

> They moved to quiet places. After a particular age, they did not want to raise their children in Eşrefpaşa because Eşrefpaşa has been a troubled place recently. They moved to places where more calm and cultured people live. This area has become a cosmopolitan place by migration. Immigration has shifted a lot from Kadifekale to this area. (Our people) stayed away (from the other immigrants) … They also went to those regions (Üçyol, Hatay, and Güzelyalı residential districts) because they were in good conditions and a decent environment there. Here, our elder Cretans remained, who could not get their economic conditions better.
>
> (Man, 58, Cretan emigrant)

Most interviewees did not tend to judge Syrian immigrants who have been living in the region for the last ten years. In general, they mentioned that the immigrants damaged the Eşrefpaşa's social character and spatial environment, yet they did not attribute these problems to a particular ethnic group. The interviewees specifically explained the next generations' abandonment of Eşrefpaşa. The statement of an interviewee, who refers to the change in the community with the arrival of Syrian migrants to Eşrefpaşa, is as follows (Personal communication, 23 November 2019):

> In truth, those who are pleased are quite many, and some are not (satisfied). In other words, they are upset because those cases (increase in immigration and crime) have occurred within eight–ten years. So, they're moving somewhere else …. That's increased quite a bit in eight–ten years…
>
> (Man, 69, immigrant)

Defining themselves as Eşrefpaşalı and an emigrant

Every immigrant must navigate through a process of acculturation[4], negotiating how well their own cultural values, traditions, beliefs and habits fit with those of the locals (Berry, 2006). Some struggle to exist in society by adaptation, some by assimilation, some by integration. Regarding this issue, Öztürk (2018) states that examining the emigrants coming to Anatolia, the success of the Cretan emigrants in terms of carrying their culture, traditions, and habits to the next generations compared to the emigrants from Rumelia, were linked to their protective instinct and isolated living conditions, which are different from other immigrants from Aegean islands in terms of its geographical and historical position. Altman et al. (1980) argue that the environment and lifestyle take form within the cultural characteristics of an individual, and the culture becomes more complicated as the vicinity changes. On the other hand, Sencer (1983) states that immigrants manifest three different attitudes in current regions they have migrated to, respectively, fanatically dedication to their beliefs and traditions, alienation to their heritage for the sake of being a part of the society, and adaptation the values and behaviours of the region they live in by protecting their own identity. Accordingly, it is understood that the emigrants were first isolated from others, and then, they have maintained their identity as emigrants, moreover, have become related to the identity of Eşrefpaşa, which they have created cumulatively and collectively with other immigrants in the region.

All the interviewees who answered the questions about their perception of the identity as a Cretan emigrant are pleased about being both Eşrefpaşa residents and emigrants. Considering most Cretan emigrants in Eşrefpaşa, the identity of the Cretan emigrants stands out more. Two of the interviewees who conveyed their opinions about not adopting the identity by the next generations in Eşrefpaşa stated the following (Personal communication, 28 December 2019):

> The new generation is not like um... They are distant, do you understand? She/he doesn't explain things as I do. She/he'll say, 'where am I from? I am from İzmir.' But you have a hometown. There is a place where you come from. How shall I deny my origin? My father was also born here (Eşrefpaşa). I am from Crete. It is my origin. Some people do not accept it. Now, you do not know who Cretan is and who is not.
>
> (Man, 43, Cretan emigrant)

The interviewer above stresses that the next generations embrace the Cretan identity less than the older generations and do not prefer to express themselves in this way. The statement below is from an interviewer who emphasizes the idea of Eşrefpaşalı. Considering that almost all the interviewees are second- and third-generation emigrants, the following statement almost summarizes the general judgement about Eşrefpaşa. Emigrants who consider it a privilege to live in this district are proud to define themselves as Eşrefpaşalı and an emigrant. Besides, Eşrefpaşalılık is positively not a concept only owned by Balkan immigrants or emigrants. This is a kind of a label that every immigrant residing in this region uses to describe oneself. So, this region is unifying and integrating for all different immigrants and adopted by the people living there, from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present day unlike the other demographically dynamic districts in İzmir. To sum up, Eşrefpaşa has a positively original and remarkable potential in sociological research in the city.

> Eşrefpaşalılık is something else. It is truly a privilege. Yes, we have that spirit now. It will not continue after us because our children always do things (e.g. spend time) with the locals like Albanians, Laz, Kurds, and people like that. That feature (being an Eşrefpaşalı) is now disappearing.
>
> (Man, 43, Cretan emigrant)

Eşrefpaşa has become an immigrant settlement within the years. Jenkins (2008) states that the presence of the people called others in society causes opposite groups to encapsulate themselves in a differentiated definition and subsequently to the formation itself of a collective identity. The values that create the collective identity of the region and the perception of emigration and Eşrefpaşa are the matters for all immigrants who settled there, shared the public space, affected Eşrefpaşa and were affected by it. Herein the interviews, it is understood that immigrants' relatives in Eşrefpaşa welcomed the collective history and identity with social and cultural qualities. The houses in Eşrefpaşa changed owners after some Eşrefpaşa residents left; in the meanwhile, next immigrants as new Eşrefpaşa residents differentiated the character of the region. Consequently, the longing for space and yearning for previous relationships disappeared today were emphasized constantly.

Spatial indicators

Problems of the area regarding planning practices

As the concept of belonging, inspired by spatial symbols in a region, triggers an individual's tendency to be a part of the relevant environment, that person with an attachment to a particular place can develop belongingness to the buildings in that place (Bowlby, 1988; Giuliani, 2003). When considering this judgement, it would be positively

correct to say that the spatial changes in Eşrefpaşa affected the belonging of all groups living there and their desire to live there. As Fedakâr and Akçiçek (2019) state, Eşrefpaşa was an area where the people used to recognize and help each other constantly, in addition to the sincere relationships between shopkeepers and purchasers until the expansion of Eşrefpaşa Main Road for providing the technical infrastructure for the increasing population in Eşrefpaşa. The transformation of such a mainline brought about the weakening of relationships; in other words, a social transformation in the region compared to the past (Fedakâr & Akçiçek, 2019). An increasing migration after 1970, an essential part of the residents in Eşrefpaşa, including the emigrants, immigrants and locals, needed to leave the area (Fedakâr & Akçiçek, 2019). As far as it is noticed from in-depth interviews, although some emigrants in Eşrefpaşa moved after the expansion of Eşrefpaşa Main Road, they have still longed for this region for various reasons.

This region experienced changes and transformations depending on modern requirements, especially after the 1980s, by neoliberal urban policies. During those years, following the change in the control of the lands and buildings in Eşrefpaşa, the two-story houses were demolished, and remarkably the residential areas were constructed as high-rise. The areas where people spend time within their modern needs and habits evolved. One of these instances is that Şenocak and Lozan cinemas, significant cultural values in Eşrefpaşa, do not exist today.

An interviewee addressed Şenocak Cinema, one of the great historical places in the city, and mentioned that social dynamics differed in the quality and quantity of public spaces as a result of modern practices such as the construction of high-rise buildings (Personal communication, 19 December 2019):

> Since this is the central place, all social activities were happening here (Eşrefpaşa). For example, we had a Şenocak cinema. From this street to that one below, all the artists, from Zeki Müren to the other popular singers and artists, performed here. All of them used to come to the fair where they would give concerts. This place has experienced something very great. We had the famous painter, Hamdi father. He was the symbol of this place (and) he used to make the posters for all the cinemas. This was something, Ecole. When did old things start to be spoiled? When the high buildings began (to be constructed) … This place of ours (Eşrefpaşa) after the '70s.'
>
> (Man, 76, Cretan emigrant)

As mentioned above, radical changes such as the demolition of shops and residences have unpredictably differentiated human relations after the expansion (Figure 5). An interviewee stated the following comment about how planning affected life in Eşrefpaşa (Personal communication, 14 December 2019):

> A family from Konya settled in Eşrefpaşa… What spoiled Eşrefpaşa was the widening of that (Eşrefpaşa Main Road) street, he said. Before that street was expanded, the shopkeepers were in contact with each other, he said. 'There was a big social thing'. The widening of the street prevented this, he said. I never thought about that (before).
>
> (Woman, 35, Thessalonian emigrant)

Since the perception of ideological messages is effective in personalities with a high sense of belonging accordingly (Kırlı Özer et al., 2020), it is quite reasonable that the people who belonged to the region and the history of that area have a tremendous awareness of symbols and artefacts caring historical character. Considering the commitment of the emigrant interviewees to Eşrefpaşa as their home, it is not a coincidence that they have a high perception of the old structures in Eşrefpaşa based on the place-belonging relationship; hence, the interviewees mentioned the destruction of the historic houses, some of which belongs to probably pre-Republican period, and the construction of high-rise apartments. Focusing on Figure 6, showing both registered and unregistered historical buildings located in Eşrefpaşa, residences numbered 1 and 4 are historical but unregistered houses, while the ones numbered 2 and 3 are registered as immovable cultural and natural assets to protect by the Regional
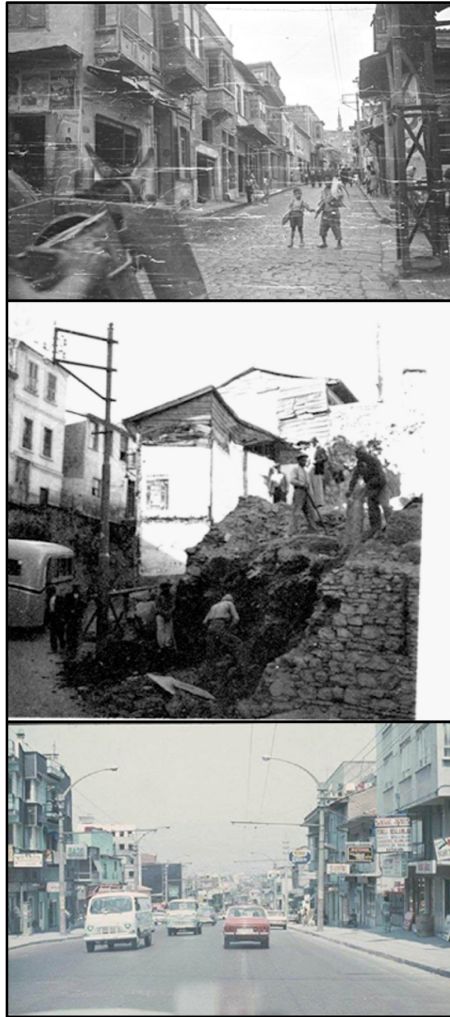
FIGURE 5 Eşrefpaşa street before its expansion (above), expanding (MIDDLE) and after the expansion (BELOW). Source: Yıldızer Özkan, 2020

Board of Protection of Cultural Heritage No. 1 within the Article 6 of the Law on the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Property No. 2863 (Konak Municipality, 2020). Although the interviewees support urban transformation, mentioned in the following sections, for reasons such as the construction of modern buildings and a decent urban design, they cannot ignore the old buildings of historical significance in Eşrefpaşa (Personal Communication, 7 December 2019):

> Now, of course, it comes from the generation. There is no way to protect it (the spirit) here (any-more). Also, Eşrefpaşa was, what do they call it, demolished at least two or three times, as I know. It is what we call expropriation... Our elders did not understand the value (of history) in that expro-priation. They wrecked all the old structures. This mosque (Büyük İhsaniye Mosque) remained as a symbol. It probably will be removed if they find a place to move it in the future. Because it does not have domes, it is considered as a masjid, not a mosque. Now, when you destroy the old, preserving the past disappears. Believe that those houses (Greek houses) had such doors and windows that you would admire that craftsmanship and ironwork. Those bay windows, those windows. We grew

FIGURE 6   Historic Houses in EŞREFPAŞA. Source: Personal archive, 2019

up in those houses. All were destroyed because of that expropriation. They (the ones who demolished the old structure) did not think about today (and) they did not care about the history.

The interviewees, who are sensitive to this issue, also provided information about the houses that they considered as old (Personal communication, 23 November 2019):

Most (of the old houses) in Eşrefpaşa were destroyed. There is no trace of the Greeks. It was destroyed. There are only a few old houses left now.

(Woman, 35, Thessalonian emigrant)

Yes, there are historic houses. They do not do (repair etc.) them anything the houses now remain like that. The owners destroyed some houses, while the others repair their dwellings until they can afford it. We are waiting for what will happen (to Eşrefpaşa) when urban transformation happens.

(Woman, 60, Thessalonian emigrant)

For instance, Eşrefpaşa, Yapıcıoğlu ... These buildings (in there) are over fifty-sixty years old; I be-
lieve. Before that, think of (the land) as an olive grove. If we focus on its history, these (neighbour-
hoods) are remarkably ancient places. There are such beautiful houses (in the streets) above. It is
quite a tiny house from the outside. Once inside (the house), the view of İzmir bay at the backyard
part of the house. Some protect the houses inherited from their parents, and some destroy theirs
(historic houses). Plenty of eastern immigrants destroy old houses and immediately build new ones.
But there are also people that you can find that sense of tradition, although it is rare.

(Woman, 35, Thessalonian emigrant)

It is highlighted that the emigration culture and traditional neighbourhood form were replaced by individu-
alization, broader streets and high-storey apartments. The unifying feature of the identity of Eşrefpaşa, a quite
fundamental factor in the embracement of the region keeping the common memory alive, was weakened by those
developments (Personal communication, 7 December 2019):

There are not many (close) neighbours in the apartment we currently live in. There are no traditional
community relationships anymore. People are scared. I guess they don't want to go in (somebody's
house) and out like that too much. I like the neighbourhoods very much. Even if they don't speak
to me, I knock on their doors. 'How are you? Are you okay?' I do prepare something and give it (to
them) ... The place we live in is a unit of thirty–two flats in an apartment. There are four flats on
our floor. I reside in one of them. I have two more neighbours. I also keep in touch with them. Nice
relationships. Hello, I say, but I can't visit (them) a lot.

(Woman, 47, Cretan emigrant)

It is declared that neighbourly relations turned into an alteration of emotions based on only slight friendship
rather than a kinship that includes support and reliability, which takes time and effort. In the statement below,
it is stated that the cultural, historical and social values in Eşrefpaşa should be preserved, emphasizing on social
relations in this region.

There was a community in this Eşrefpaşa. Look! The closer the tradesmen are, the more energetic
the bazaar is. I'm still observing this. Think of Buca, where the tradesmen are a little close from
Şirinyer towards the monument. It has energy. For instance, in Betonyol, there is an activity. That
movement is lost in us now. When my shop here is open in the morning, how can I greet the other
shopkeepers who are far? Believe me, on the way to my house –I live a little further down the road–
I don't want to go across the road and shop. There is traffic, and the distance is far. I'm shopping on
my way, girl. These are quite essential in preserving the past.

(Man, 68, Cretan emigrant)

To sum up, because there is a direct proportion between the duration of residence in a region and belonging
(Riger & Lavrakas, 1981; Taylor et al., 1985), the emigrants in Eşrefpaşa have figured themselves as hosts of the
area and embraced the place more than the immigrants who came in the later years.

Future expectations

Urban transformation, which can be defined as the renewal of structures for more solid working, living and hous-
ing conditions, is an economic-oriented practice and which should aim to provide a permanent solution for the
improvement of a region transforming, mostly neglecting the social and historical character of the area (Couch

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& Denneman, 2000; Thomas, 2003). Recently, urban transformation is the most popular method and a critical strategy on the schedule of environmental transformation of both Eşrefpaşa and İzmir as a whole city. Although modern but unaesthetic high-rise apartments have taken the places of traditional structures in Eşrefpaşa for the last decades and caused Eşrefpaşa to become like any other place in İzmir, it is undeniable that these buildings, not having the historical characteristics of the region, were built within the current plan decisions. Considering that the various problems regarding constant immigration, poor quality of the physical environment and social relations weakening day by day have made urban transformation inevitable, it is quite a critical issue of how it changes the unique culture in Eşrefpaşa.

The interviewees were asked what such a practice means for them. 62 per cent defined urban transformation as the reconstruction of the buildings as apartments with a modern silhouette satisfying the social and technical infrastructure requirements in Eşrefpaşa. 38 per cent of the interviewees declared that they were worried about more immigration after urban transformation; therefore, they did not embrace the idea of high-rise housing construction yet. Some statements of the interviewees supporting urban transformation as follows (Personal communication, 4 January 2020):

> It would be good. Those with low income live in a twenty square metre room. Conditions would improve... It doesn't attract much immigration here. Cheap houses in the foothills of Kadifekale opened to immigrants, but (new immigrants) would not come here.
>
> (Woman, 52, Thessalonian emigrant)

> Presently, of course, old buildings. Here is an earthquake zone. Of course, old buildings need reconstruction now. Because now, tomorrow, or one day if there is a tremor, the people living there would be trapped under that wreckage. That (urban transformation) must be done, and it is required to renew (the area).
>
> (Woman, 35, Thessalonian emigrant)

> If urban transformation takes place here, something good will happen here. That is very meaningful. Because the houses are in ruins, they are flooded every day. But if urban transformation begins, it (the environment) will be clean. Friends like you also come, sit, and drink their tea or coffee .... Infrastructure needs to be developed. That is why I say that urban transformation is crucial. Surely everyone comes (here). Owners take their parts. Those who are not owners go elsewhere. It is the way.
>
> (Man, 55, Thessalonian emigrant)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Apart from written documents, oral history studies formed by individuals' narratives on collective memory reveal valuable information about their lives in cities and communities. This research examined the emigrants' sense of belonging in Eşrefpaşa to endeavour to clarify whether Eşrefpaşa was demographically multicultural, and whether the emigrants and other immigrants coming to the region in the last century managed to live their own culture without any assimilation or pressure. The interviews revealed that, in general, all immigrants brought their traditions, habits, and identities with them when they came to Eşrefpaşa, and they managed to transfer these unique values to the next generations. This study discovered that the surviving traces of the population exchange remain in Eşrefpaşa, one of the major destinations in İzmir during the population exchange, which was the most unexpected demographic experiences of the Early Republican period of Turkey.

Vorkinn and Riese (2001) state that individuals with strong bonds with the area they live in do not imagine leaving that region, but on the contrary, they react against this idea. Likewise, Jorgensen and Stedman (2001)

and Gustafson (2009) claim that the neighbourly and kinship relations positively affect the one's belonging to the place. As a result of the in-depth interviews, this study has obtained a very similar result supporting the statements above-mentioned and has determined that the emigrants feeling a sense of belonging to Eşrefpaşa and the society resist leaving the place. Place attachment has been sufficient in the emigrants' caring about the physical environment moreover, they maintained the Eşrefpaşa culture, combined with their own culture, and being an Eşrefpaşalı with wholehearted devotion.

Then, the 83 per cent of the interviewees, who expressed their dissatisfaction with the continuous immigration from the early Republic era to the present in Eşrefpaşa, stated that the spatial and social transformation caused this region to become less decent, and continued that the immigrants damaged the spatial character of Eşrefpaşa. According to Baumeister and Leary (1995), individuals need routine and friendly interpersonal relationships with a particular group of people instinctively, and after the basic needs are satisfied, individuals need to belong to a community or a place. Remarkably, the immigrant groups without any sense of belonging to space or who settle unwillingly due to the comparatively affordable housing in the region confirm the opinion of Gustafson (2001), that individuals, who do not experience place attachment, perceive the area as temporary and consume it. According to Vertovec (2007), the bond between immigrants with their temporary settlements is more vulnerable than the relationship between the people and the area where they permanently settled. In this regard, immigrant groups perceiving Eşrefpaşa as a passing settlement focused on utilizing the space only, rather than integrating with space and society, while the emigrants, one of the first owners of Eşrefpaşa, remained attached to this place. Besides, Billing (2006) states that there is a direct nexus between the period of residence and the sense of belonging. In this respect, it is understandable that the emigrants, who have resided in Eşrefpaşa for decades, feel more belonging than the other immigrants who have arrived in the area in the following years. In addition, the fact that those who do not desire to leave this place are elders mostly, and those who left Eşrefpaşa made this decision when they were pretty young confirms Billing's opinion. Nevertheless, they insistently emphasized that even though plenty emigrants moved from this region, they could not forget what really means to them. Because Eşrefpaşa has been such a place where a common memory is shared, also all habits, traditions and social character belonging to different immigrants in the region remains to the present. Thus, the identity of Eşrefpaşalılık, continuously mentioned and embraced by all interviewees, is based on being a part of this region regardless of where they come from. The interviewees defined bullying (*Kabadayılık* in Turkish) in Eşrefpaşa as a form of existence based on a duty to protect the peace of the region rather than a style that disturbs the public order and manifests illegal acts. Bullying in Eşrefpaşa, which reflects the partially introverted and protective character of Eşrefpaşa, can be described as the transfer of the lifestyle of Cretan emigrants from Crete Island living in Eşrefpaşa, considering that Kaya and Yılmaz (2016) highlight emigrants made precious contributions to the traditional speech technique, vocabulary and lifestyle there according to the in-depth interviews conducted with second and third generations.

On the other hand, Tweed and Sutherland (2007) state that urban conservation is not for only a healthy physical environment but also a unique long-lasting character and urban identity. In this respect, the historical events and location should be handled as a whole. Although there are few registered buildings worth preserving in Eşrefpaşa, the interviewees, aware of the immovable heritage, mentioned that they longed for historical values and memories of those buildings and structures. Twigger–Ross and Uzzell (1996) argue that the desire of individuals to live in such places where the remains of historical memories are preserved increases. In this study, the results of the interviews support the arguments mentioned above, and the preservation of historic buildings and memories has an undeniable effect on the individuals not leaving this region because of the long-lived memories of the emigrants kept alive. Although very few tangible heritages have survived the present day as far as is known, apart from the settlement boundaries of the emigrants on the old maps, the emigrants' intangible cultural heritage remain in this region. For instance, various areas were named after the emigrants who lived in Eşrefpaşa for a period. The names such as Kako, Düzyollar and Fethi Baba are still used for specific areas today, and they partially define certain areas with spatial boundaries. Focusing on the multicultural and

introverted society in Eşrefpaşa, all immigrants, primarily the Cretan emigrants, have contributed to the region in many ways for years.

Biçen Gören (2019) emphasizes that as diversity in society grows, the need for unity increases accordingly, and differences may be regarded as a threat in the community if trust and commitment are weak. According to Gordon's theory on immigrants' adaptation, assimilation is quite necessary to adapt to the cultural values of the country they settled in by abandoning their own cultures to develop a national identity and a sense of belonging (Alba & Nee, 1997). Unlike the arguments assuming that multiculturalism is over, Modood (2014; as cited in Biçen Gören, 2019) states that this integrative view is more necessary today, so a multicultural idea of citizenship prevents problems regarding identities, if any, from escalating. As Baumann (2006) highlights, cultural change is actually culture itself, as former habits changes and evolves. Ultimately, multiculturalism as a governmental strategy accepts cultural diversity in the society, besides government policies supporting immigrants' cultural preservation (Wu & So, 2020). Murphy (1965) states that immigrants from various cultures do not experience marginalization, discrimination, bullying and assimilation in communities supporting multiculturalism. Now in Eşrefpaşa, it is understood that this region promotes multiculturalism since the immigrants are subjected to no intervention for assimilation, focusing on the cultural diversity in the society. Supporting these observations, Eşrefpaşa culture and identity, which have changed and developed collectively and cumulatively, exists as an essential tangible and intangible part of İzmir with its own uniqueness. Although each immigrant has the opportunity to preserve their own language, habits and traditions, everyone has adopted a common Eşrefpaşa culture. Therefore, the culture of emigration survived to the present day by accumulating and carrying from the first generation to the other. While there are barely any written sources on Eşrefpaşa's urban and demographic development and the emigrants in the region except for Karaoğlu (2001) and Fedakâr and Akçiçek (2019), the in-depth interviews in this study surely reveal essential knowledge for the researchers working on the perspectives of emigrants and other immigrants in this region in the following years.

Moreover, stating that Eşrefpaşa is in a spatial and relatively social transformation, the interviewees added that the construction of high-rise apartments and wide roads irrevocably affects the region, traditional human relations and shared public spaces do not survive, and historical components continue disappearing over time. Apart from all these incidents, significantly effective on emigrants leave Eşrefpaşa, 62 per cent of the interviewees, strong-minded residing in Eşrefpaşa, support the urban transformation to improve the degraded parts of the region. While Breakwell (1986) argues that providing services such as security and infrastructure in line with the expectations of the settlers increases the belonging and happiness towards that area, Gündüz and Erdem (2010) emphasize that urban space, which transforms rapidly and unplanned with the effect of globalization, begins to weaken the users' belonging and subsequently to the cultural relations. For this reason, urban transformation projects that improve the infrastructure and idle areas of the region and make Eşrefpaşa a decent district again, as defined by the interviewees, but caring for all values of the region are required.

Besides, the interviews showed that the interviewees in Eşrefpaşa had a high level of consciousness, especially regarding the historical buildings. As urban planners, we believe that building a healthy physical environment in Eşrefpaşa will be achieved by well-described construction conditions and land-use decisions with a perception satisfying the technical and social infrastructural demand and maintaining the social life dynamics by respecting the existing urban pattern and historic building stock. Besides, as well as building a good environment, the social and economic security is considerably precious that Syrians, as the newest immigrant group who settled in Eşrefpaşa, to find common ground within the multi-layered demographic structure of the region, which has been an immigrant zone for decades.

Conclusively, in this paper, we had the opportunity to emphasize the historical importance of Eşrefpaşa and its immigrant settlement identity, and we tried to make sociological and urban assumptions about the region by focusing on the emigrants in Eşrefpaşa. Since plenty of people with various cultures and languages collectively share and continuously recreate this region, we recommend the local government to determine the proper and sustainable strategies for conservation of all historic residences registered or unregistered in this region, ensure that all immigrants embrace the neighbourhood as hosts instead of guests and design common public spaces for everyone. At the same time,

more spatial and social concerns regarding each neighbourhood and immigrants living there with diverse cultures to improve multicultural network shall be encouraged. A sustainable multiculturalism policy that includes and produces many cultural units of various sizes, supported by Konuk (2000), makes it possible for both the emigrants and other immigrants, who share Eşrefpaşa as a place and identity, to continue to live there. An extensive and permanent strategy, caring for all immigrants in multicultural settlements like Eşrefpaşa to integrate and live together in harmony and peace, is needed and demanded to promote multiculturalism by consulting all immigrants in the region and designing integration programmes. Only in this way, it will be possible for everyone, especially young people, can adapt to society by embracing their identities, sharing the district, contributing to Eşrefpaşa's culture, and redesigning the urban environment within demographic dynamics. After all, the exchange of population playing such a critical role in chancing various areas socially and spatially in both countries shall be valued in our country, if possible, by contacting emigrants' relatives and handling several academic studies. As Erden (2004:278) states, 'This seems to be urgent, as it is desired to interview people who experienced the population exchange and the following years. The time for that is shortening day by day, and in a few years time there will remain no such person left'.

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INTERNET RESOURCES

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PEER REVIEW

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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ENDNOTES

1. Also known as the Turkish Red Crescent, it is a charity establishment, which was found in 1868 to offer various and essential services for social solidarity and provide social welfare, according to Kizilay.org.tr.
2. Eşrefpaşalılık means the concept of defining oneself as a resident of Eşrefpaşa.
3. Eşrefpaşalı means one who lives in Eşrefpaşa/being an Eşrefpaşa resident
4. It is estimated that this word corresponds to the word, κακομοιρα (kakomoira in Latin letters) in modern Greek, which means unfortunate person according to wordreference.com.

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