

Urban Renewal Activities in Turkey: The Trabzon Experience

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Introduction

- Since 1950s, in the developing countries such as Turkey, some areas of the cities filled with squatter houses that are unhealthy, not earthquake proof, not have enough physical conditions through the industrialization, urbanization, population growth and rural to urban migration
- For example, in Istanbul, half of the 1.2 million houses are illegal and more, both legal and illegal houses do not meet the technical conditions (Gürsel, 2003).
- To solve this problem, one of best approaches is urban renewal practice both in Turkey and in the rest of the world.
- Urban renewal is an application that identify the unhealthy and non livable areas in the city and make these areas healthy and livable

- In Turkey urban renewal projects become popular since The Marmara earthquake in 1999.
- 17127 people died, 43953 people got hurt, 77342 houses and shops were destroyed or were heavily damaged due to The Marmara Earthquake and Yalova Earthquake (T.C. Başbakanlık Kriz Yönetim Merkezi).
- The earthquakes caused destruction of thousands of buildings and proved that buildings too weak for earthquakes and do not meet the enough physical conditions.
- After that government launched urban renewal projects all over the country to destruct these buildings and building new ones which have enough physical conditions for earthquakes and other disasters through the urban renewal activities.

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- In the developing countries such as Turkey, urban renewal is seen a zoning application such as land adjustment. But it is more than that. It is more comprehensive and complicated.
- Urban renewal projects should be considered together with its social, economic and environmental effects on the practice area and whole city.
- In the urban renewal areas, after the renewal process an increase in value of properties is experienced. These areas become the center of interest

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PHYSICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF URBAN RENEWAL

Physical Dimension

- Physical dimension of the urban renewal is about physical conditions of buildings, housing, communication systems, infrastructure, open spaces, parks, and environment.

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Social Dimension

- Social dimension of urban renewal is about educational status and health status of property owners who effect from urban renewal, how they react to urban renewal and how they effect from urban renewal. The participation of property owners who effect from urban renewal to project should be ensured.
- In Turkey and most of the other developing countries, urban renewal means just physical renewal, the participation of property owner to the project is ignored and after the urban renewal social dimension is not analyzed enough. So this caused that the urban renewals like this become short-lived, not sustainable and incomplete.

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Economic Dimension

- When studying the economic dimension of urban renewal, we analyze how the people who lives urban renewal area is effected from urban renewal in the point of profit or loss. In economic dimension of urban renewal, such topics with the urban renewal project the changes in income of property owners in the area, the profit they gain or the loss they gain after renewal and the coast of urban renewal project to the government are discussed

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Trabzon Province Zagnos Valley Urban Project



A view from Zagnos Valley in the 1970s.

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- Zagnos Valley is in the ancient center of the city and lies near the historical Castle Of Trabzon where is in the first order protected area. It is an important air corridor of the city.
- As a result of rapid urbanization and rural to urban migration, city developed along the coast line, so people who lives in the rural area migrated to this area because this area is very close to the coast line and it is in the center of the city.
- Zagnos Valley is filled with square houses in a short time. To solve this problem urban renewal practice was implemented. In this study we analyzed physical, social and economic dimensions of this urban renewal practice.

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Before the Urban Renewal



This irregular urbanization happened as a result of low-income people's wish to be close city center and coast line

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Before the renewal...

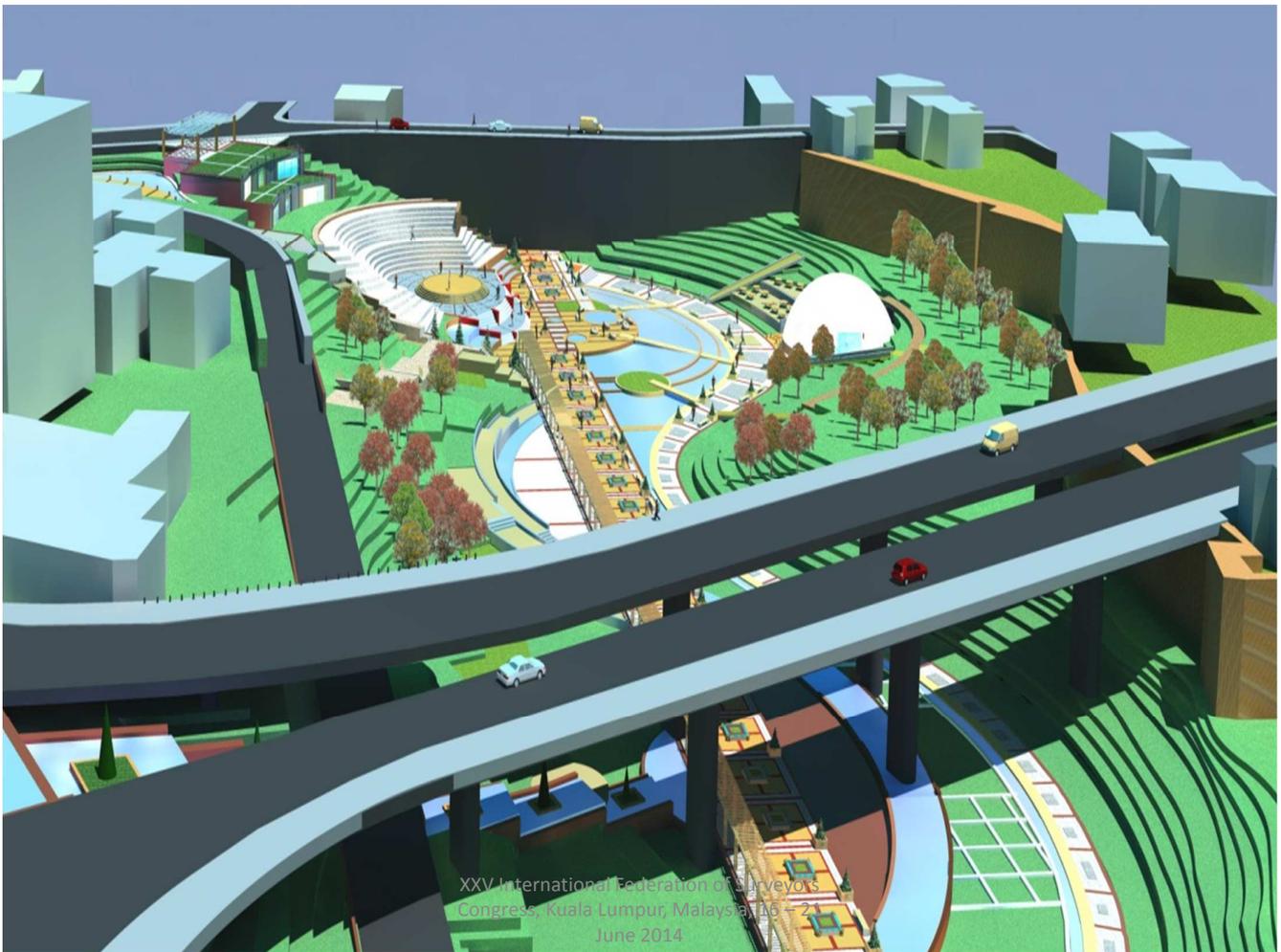
- There were 304 buildings in the study area
- Almost all of the buildings were squatter houses and unauthorized
- Most of the buildings were 2 or 3 storey
- In a survey that is made, 191 of 275 people reached were owners of the houses and 84 of the 275 people were tenant.

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The Analyze of The Situation Before and After The Renewal With Its Physical, Social and Economic Dimensions

- Physical Renewal
- Before the renewal, %80 of the houses in this area have 2 or 3 floors.
- After the renewal, all the buildings in the area destroyed and the area has a nice view with a good urban design. Area designed as a recreation area and area gained a view that is consisting of park and green space which people have good time, can relax.
- Outdated urban tissue completely healed and the area has been gained to public. More over while doing this, green spaces and open spaces are created, the area has been gained a more spacious environment.

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- Social Renewal
- People who lived in the area before the urban renewal was happy about their lives. They expressed that they are pleased neighborly relationships and they did not to leave from the area.
- Although discourse of the municipality and Housing Development Administration of Turkey (HDAT) is that the project will be carried out in a participatory way, during our surveys we seen that they have learned the project when the project started and during the field studies. Municipality and HDAT have not worked well in this regard and the people were not able to participate in the project. This is one of the biggest problems of urban renewal projects that are practiced in the developing countries such as Turkey.

- When the expropriation began, half of the property owners wanted money for compensation and the other half of the property owners wanted house for compensation from HDAT.
- %60 of the property owners who wanted house for compensation wanted from houses that are built by HDAT in the Bahcecik neighborhood where is close to Zagnos Valley
- After the renewal the houses that given by HDAT (2+1 Or 3+1)to property owners were enough for small families but not for big families.
- When we look at social renewal of the area, before the renewal this area was a place that nobody wants to visit except local residents but after the renewal this area has become a center of interest, has become a place where people can rest and can have a good time and gained a lot of prestige. In summer various activities and festivals are organized in this area and social environment for all of the public are provided

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The houses that is given to property owners by HDAT in Bahcecik



A festival in Zagnos Valley after the Urban Renewal

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Economic Renewal

- In order to analyze the economic dimension of the urban renewal, we did a survey with the property owners who effects from urban renewal and we had interviews with real estate agents. As a result of these studies we had findings as following.
- %66.66 of the property owners who effects from urban renewal project think the money given to them for compensation for their properties is not enough for either apartment.
- Due to project was made in the form of stages, the valuation for a particular region after the environment of the region has changed at stage 2 was different from the valuation for the same region at stage 1. This situation has caused unfair sharings between property owners.
- Expropriation costs have paid to the property owners with 3-4 months long periods. HDAT has determined the value of properties, value increases at during construction has led to the injustice. For the first expropriated properties real estate valuations was lower but during the project environment changed and the value of nearby properties increased. This caused that later expropriated properties valued for higher prices than first expropriated ones and so injustice payments has been made in the area between property owners.

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- After the urban renewal, real estates around the urban renewal area greatly increased in value. After the urban renewal, real estate prices that is around 80,000TL-90,000TL before the urban renewal up to 200,000 TL-300,000 TL. So values of properties around the urban renewal area have increased about %300.
- After the renewal the people who does not want to leave from their neighbors, wanted to purchase houses from places where are close to Zagnos Valley. But due to increase in the values of the properties near the Zagnos Valley after the urban renewal, they paid much more than take for compensation and so they've lost money.
- When we analyze the property valuations during the urban renewal, owners of the shops have loss much more than owners of the houses. Because appraised values of the houses were almost equal to the current values but appraised values of the shops were very low from the current values of them. Therefore shop owners have loss much more.

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CONCLUSION

- In this study, Zagnos Valley urban renewal project has analyzed with its physical, social and economic dimensions.
- Physically, all of the squatter houses that located in the area destructed, urban design that consisting of green spaces and parks has been created.



before



after

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- Socially, the area's security problems have been resolved
- Area, where people come together and socialize, have fun, and various festivals are organized has been turned into a center of interest.
- But about participation of the property owners to the project, we have seen that municipality and HDAT officials could not provide the participation of the property owners to the Project. Most of the property owners have been informed about project only during the field studies. Property owners stated that they never talked with the officials about Project before the field studies.

- Economically homeowners, with the money they took for compensation of their homes, they did not lose much. But shop owners with the money they took for the compensation of their shops lost much.
- Property owners who take money for the compensation of their properties wanted to buy a house from a place where is close to the Zagnos Valley. But after the urban renewal, prices of the houses that are close to Zagnos Valley were tripled. So they could not buy houses from where they want ot to buy houses from where they want, they lost money.
- In Turkey and other developing countries, urban renewal is used as a tool for liquidation for gain profit, urban renewal seen just physically destruction of old houses and building new ones instead and only physical dimension of the urban renewal is seen as important. However, urban renewal projects like Zagnos Valley are much more than physical renewal for gain profit and become a model project although it has some shortcomings socially and economically.

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