

EXAMINATION OF EFFECT OF GLOBALIZATION ON URBAN LANDSCAPE THROUGH TRABZON ÇÖMLEKÇİ URBAN TRANSFORMATION FIELD IN THE CONTEXT OF URBAN STRUCTURE

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Abstract

The phenomenon of globalization happening in today's world exerts influence over developing countries and is tried to shape societies' economic, social and cultural life in line with the countries' economic goals. Globalization process rapidly increasing its effect to hold the world economy affects unavoidably our life space through its results and in turn, our urban structure. Urban landscape, one of the main components of urban structure, also undergoes a change during period of change and begins to gradually lose its fundamental duty within the city.

Change requirement brought about by globalization leads to any changes, including way of providing municipal services, urban physical structure, city identity and even life-style of town-dwellers, and these changes have occurred through large-scale projects most apparently. These projects developed as capital-driven weaken the fundamental principles of planning in urban areas. In such an environment, drastic changes have occurred in the planning and designing of the urban landscape and its managements within the process. Public urban landscape areas have replaced with private urban landscape ones in many places. The impact of this change that has taken place alters the perception of space in morphological, physical, social and administrative aspects. What are changes in these phenomena, how do they occur and these changes are having today to what extent are a situation that should be questioned. Urban landscape, one of precursors of city structure, firstly needs to be correctly identified and perceived so that all of these questions can be answered.

Globalization process that begins to rapidly surge in all of Turkey in 2000s starting with the 1980s, changing content of urban landscape constituting the most important elements of public space within the frame of changing urban developments depending on global economic processes and design approaches will be discussed through Trabzon potter urban transformation field in this report.

Key Words: Globalization, urban landscape, urban renewal, sustainability, urban design

1. Introduction

Today, urban transformation projects are significant both in urban and national development strategies. Within the framework of emerging and changing conditions, urban areas also face changes and become the focus of certain actors in the cities. Urban areas that have completed their physical and economic lives await reanimation and fields that have outrun their physical and social functionality await a new life and renewed habitation.

In this process, a newly popular concept, "urban transformation" is introduced. The transformation approach that was introduced in our cities impulsively and rapidly penetrated urban areas, and continue in several historical and slum areas and in urban centers in the world and Turkey concurrently.

Here, the significant issue is the necessity to define the urban transformation concept for each region or urban area accurately and identification of the reason and objective of transformation in areas that would undergo transformation correctly. Because, urban spatial structure is shaped with unique processes and social dynamics. International transformation experiences taken as examples should only serve as general guidelines. Urban transformation occurs with the interaction of different variables in each country. Thus, urban transformation in metropolitan cities in Turkey occurs as a result of the interaction of socio-economic, administrative, environmental and physical variables. In this context, to comprehend and to intervene in urban transformation in Turkey, it is significant to understand economic, social, environmental and administrative/legal changes and to develop models that take these variables into account.

The present study includes two main sections. Initially, the factors effective on urban transformation and its types, the expectations of actors that utilize the urban space and affect the urban transformation in that space, and the relationship between the concepts of urban transformation and urban landscape sustainability will be scrutinized. In the second main section, the 3rd stage of the transformation project that would be implemented at Trabzon province, Ortahisar township Çömlekçi neighborhood and its benefits and risks for the city and urban landscape will be addressed.

2. Scrutiny of Urban Transformation Concept

The concept of “urban transformation” is used as a tool to resolve urban problems in the field of urban planning (Bülbül, 2008). Thomas (2003) defines the concept as a comprehensive action that attempts to provide holistic and permanent physical, social, and economic solutions against various problems experienced in the space. The aim of urban transformation applications is to identify the factors that result in physical, social or economic collapse in urban space and to produce effective solutions to remove these factors and thus, revitalization and resurrection of problem areas.

According to Robert and Skys (2000), revitalization of local economic dynamics in urban transformation process is a trigger of urban transformation. Thus, urban transformation could also be defined as a constituency of comprehensive vision and action that aims to render urban areas, which are in the process of physical, environmental and social demise, habitable and vital areas again and win them back for urban use by reactivating the dynamics of local economy.

On the other hand, Couch (2000) described urban transformation, which is among the approaches for solution of urban problems, as “a planning approach that forms the synthesis of the objectives of urban development and urban preservation.” According to Couch, transformation includes the objectives of urban development and at the same time, proposes new methods for urban rehabilitation or revitalization that advocate conservationist approaches.

In this framework, urban transformation does not only entail the self-renewal of the space, but also is an economic, social and physical reproduction process. To define the concept of urban transformation accurately and comprehensively within this production process, it is necessary to first define concepts such as urban renewal / renovation, rehabilitation, urban revitalization, redevelopment, urban regeneration, and gentrification.

- Urban Renewal / Urban Renovation

Urban renewal could be defined as demolishing and rebuilding old areas or spaces within urban structure, but it could also be conceived as removal of the old and wear (Keskin, 2004). In developed countries, urban renewal is used to assist basically three objectives (Keles, 2004); the first is the removal of poor neighborhoods, the second is the renewal of urban centers to eliminate the differences in vitality between these and other parts of the cities and surrounding cities, and the third is to improve economic possibilities for local governments in urban centers.

- Urban Revitalization

This is revitalization of the urban areas that experience a socio-cultural, economic or physical decay by removal or change of the factors that cause the decay (Özden, 2001).

- Urban Rehabilitation

It could be defined as rehabilitation of old urban areas that are under the effect of deformation, but have not lost their unique qualities yet (Özden, 2001).

- Urban Conservation

Urban conservation could be defined as prevention of the destruction of the physical structure of the society that reflects its past social, economic conditions and cultural values under the pressures of changing social and economic conditions and to preserve their livelihood by integration with the modern society and developments (Engin, 1997).

- Redevelopment

Redevelopment is conducted where conservation and rehabilitation would not be sufficient. Redevelopment is to conduct public research, receiving recommendations from related councils after the urban renewal plan is structured and providing development to result in economic vitality (Keskin, 2004).

- Urban Gentrification

It is defined as social and physical renewal and change that occurs by replacement of low income groups, which emerge during the renewal process of old urban centers and inhabit these areas, with individuals that belong to higher income groups. Here, the most significant factor is the change in the class of society that inhabits the space rather than the physical change experienced in the space. Gentrification is higher income groups increasing the economic, physical and environmental value of slumming or worn-out areas by replacing the low income groups inhabiting these areas (Keskin, 2004).

- Regeneration

It is a set of comprehensive and integrated vision and actions that aim to render urban areas, which are in the process of physical and social recess, inhabitable and vital areas again by mobilizing the dynamics of local economy and a part of the urban structure once more (Roberts, 2000).

All these definitions, which are the integral parts of the concept of urban development, show us that urban transformation does not occur by itself and is not a natural process, but in fact entails economic, social, cultural, even political aims and goals.

2.1 Objectives of Urban Transformation

Due to the content of urban transformation concept that was scrutinized in detail in the second section of the present study, it was identified that the mentioned concept should include certain objectives. Thus, it was concluded that there were five main objectives of urban transformation.

Goals of Urban Transformation
To halt physical deformation in the cities and provide sustainability for the historical texture
To increase urban quality of life and mobilize cultural dynamics
To revitalize economic life
To resolve urban problems by establishing a direct correlation between physical and social urban problems and to provide participation at every scale

Table 1; Goals of Urban Transformation Resource(Roberts, 2000; cited by Bogenç, 2009)

- To halt physical deformation in the cities and provide sustainability for the historical texture:
Urban transformation aims to rehabilitation of problematic textures against the physical decay and the danger of destruction of cultural heritage experienced especially in historical centers with a sustainable and holistic approach. Urban transformation does not deal with only physical decay of the historical urban texture, but also with slum areas, abandoned urban areas and newly settled areas. After the stage of identification of problematic areas, urban transformation implements the methods of developing programs for rehabilitation and conservation of the physical texture and intervention to the area with operational tools (Bogenç, 2009).
- To revitalize economic life:
One of the principal reasons for urban sections to become decay areas is the loss of economic vitality in these parts. Urban transformation aims to be a tool in revitalization and improvement of areas in physical, environmental and social decay and local economy. Refunctioning of abandoned areas would be a driving force for physical renovation and mobilize economic dynamics with methods such as creating new spatial or organizational formations that would mobilize local trade or production in decay residential areas. As a result of economic development, existing employment opportunities and resources would ameliorate and better social and environmental conditions would be provided (Bogenç, 2009).
- To increase urban quality of life and mobilize cultural dynamics;
In the process of improvement of urban quality of life and mobilization of culture-based dynamics, urban transformation has an active role in revitalization of local economy, improvement of physical environment, creation of more amenable urban space and refunctioning of the space or revitalization of old functions by mobilizing the new dynamics of the local culture (Bogenç, 2009).
- To provide participation at every scale:
Urban transformation aims to integrate decision processes from top to bottom and participation from bottom to the top through the models it develops for the solution of physical, social and economic problems. In the decision making processes for problem solving in urban transformation areas, it aims for the active participation of local people, local initiatives and non-governmental organizations and both feedback and collaboration between decision makers and users in application processes (Bogenç, 2009).
- To resolve urban problems by establishing a direct correlation between physical and social urban problems:
One of the most significant factors for the decay in urban areas is social decay or deformation. Urban transformation projects basically investigate the reasons for social decay and provide proposals to prevent this decay to find solutions for urban decay and deformation problem (Bogenç, 2009).
In short, the core of urban transformation concept includes a dynamism expressed in change, transformation, revitalization, and reanimation. However, it is necessary to define the concept and identify its goals adequately to manage this dynamism accurately and to improve and conserve both cultural and social assets within the areas of urban transformation, while increasing the physical quality of life within the space. Do the urban transformation projects implemented in Turkey fulfill all or some of the abovementioned goals? Which of the

physical, social, cultural and economic parameters were featured in large scale urban transformation projects conducted in Izmir, Istanbul and Ankara during recent years? To pose all these questions and to search for answers, it is necessary to be fluent in urban transformation legislation (legislation passed for the benefit of the actors of transformation!) and to have knowledge on present structural and social status of transformed urban spaces. Çömlekçi neighborhood, selected as an example in the present study, is one of the spaces of urban transformation that would be the subject of the abovementioned scrutiny.

2.2 Types of Urban Transformation

When identifying the types of urban transformation, the first classification could be conducted based on the quality of the authority that implements the transformation. The first type is the transformations that occur as a result of the accumulation of individual transformation decisions made by individuals in the society or proprietors. For instance, the transformation that has been experienced at Kuzguncuk, Istanbul since 1980's was such a transformation. The second type is the wholesale transformation of a specific area conducted by a strong willed authority. For instance, the Dikmen Valley Project in Ankara transformed a slum area into a prestigious residential settlement under the leadership of the municipality (Ceylan, 2007).

Many recent transformation projects fit in the definition of the second classification. Kadifekale in Izmir, Sulukule in Istanbul were emptied of their population with wholesale projects in the name of preserving the historical texture. Although it looks like open green area use is proposed in Izmir Kadifekale, Sulukule example is prominent with its building typology created for high income groups and destroyed cultural texture.

3. Expectations from Urban Transformation

The concepts of "brand cities" and "competing cities" emerged to express the change forced upon or burdened on the metropolises by globalization and to increase international competition or to discuss this competition on a certain level. Urban transformation projects are used as significant tools to maintain the race between the cities and to make these cities so-called centers of attraction. Within the context of this change, both national and local level expectations are either produced or increased. Local level expectations are created by local governments and local people. Then, what are the expectations of these groups from the transformation?

It is necessary to classify expectations as social-spatial and economical expectations. Because, each expectation group desires to transform / change the space they lives in or administer for a different aim or goal.

Economical expectations:

- To diversify the economy,
- To attempt to solve problems such as unemployment by adding new jobs for the labor force,
- To increase the attraction of the area for economic investments by new organization of the urban space and thus, expecting the area to attract other investments and job opportunities within the context of market dynamics.

Socio-spatial Expectations:

- Expectations of local governments to prevent especially the exclusion of decay areas by resolving the problems pertaining to these areas,
- To improve building quality, infrastructure and environment,
- A participative, socially just socio-spatial development which does not contradict with natural conservation goals, consistent with sustainable urban development principles.

Certain expectations among the abovementioned groups define the desires of the people, while others reflect the wishes of local government and powerful private sector actors behind the local government. However, if the risks that could emerge during implementation would be ignored, the expectations would not be satisfactory for the local people. Especially, if the urban transformation areas are not completely defined and all data on the area could not be obtained or would not be obtained (!) accurately, and if the urban transformation areas are defined and implementation is conducted in favor of the powerful private sector actors, it is not possible to talk about the desires and expectations of the people or a sustainable urban goal. The risks that could arise during the process could be listed as below:

Risks pertaining to the process:

- Transformation process is risky. There is no ample evidence that support the success of transformation projects. Turok (2004) stated that there is too much pragmatism and trial and error in transformation applications and satisfactory indicators for effective policies only emerged during recent years and thus, they are still far from being a series of proven principles and applications. Therefore, when an urban transformation project is applied to another city, it is obvious that the results would not be the same.

- Projects that are not implemented with a collaborative management approach, could not provide participation, and do not aim to increase capacity carry the risk of being obstructed by different groups during implementation.
- Lagged or insufficient communications between the actors could cause partial and ex parte definition of the problems and thus, a narrow scale of solution recommendations that should be investigated (Sönmez, 2003, cited by Ceylan, 2007).
- Although the success of transformation projects are generally measured by the magnitude and creativity, there is always a risk of a more creative city shadowing the success of the former.

Socio-spatial risks:

- Physical improvement of a location without a change in individuals' socio-economic conditions could result in reevaluation of the property values in the area (Turok, 2004). Thus, those who could not afford the new leases would have to relocate. The process that is defined as gentrification is among the most important risks of urban transformation projects. Urban transformation should primarily create processes that would not intervene in habitation preferences of (Sökmen, 2004, cited by Ceylan, 2007).

Socio-economic risks:

Urban transformation process could create job opportunities for the local people. However, there is a risk that local people could not access the related job opportunities. Thus, to prevent the abovementioned risks, local people should be trained for the qualifications that would enable them to access these job opportunities.

- Market-oriented urban transformation projects create development potential via access to the infrastructure or reorganization of the image of an area. However, a transformation based on market dynamics also carries the risk of low income groups to lose the services they receive or job opportunities.
- It is difficult for the projects that are constructed in the local scale and could not recruit the support of the central government to realize an economic revival.
- If the expectation is projects that could create social justice consistent with sustainable urbanization goals in urban transformation projects which are implemented with the participation of several actors, public welfare is expected of them. Then, local governments need to be powerful in the negotiation table and aim to create public interest, failure of local government in negotiations is considered as another risk area.
- Revitalization strategies that do not highlight topicality and do not support topically constructed production modes and designed only based on the demands of consumption culture and projects created accordingly do not have a great chance of success (Özdemir, 2003, cited by Ceylan, 2007).

Among all these risks and expectations, in fact whether urban structure that is conceived in a specific scale but in fact related to the whole urban area and sustainable structure of the city could be maintained by urban transformation projects is a significant risk by itself.

4. Correlation Between Sustainability and Urban Transformation Within the Context of Urban Landscape

The relationship between sustainability and urban transformation is defined by Percy [59] within the dimensions of the contributions of urban transformation to environmental sustainability, economic activity and social requirements. Environmental-physical improvement is a common goal of most urban transformation programs. Services industry that grows in many cities requires a better environmental quality to attract domestic investments. However, literature demonstrated that economic development trumps over most environmental concerns.

Founding the environmental, social and economic sustainability, considered among the general objectives of urban transformation, in a rational basis and instead of transformation programs to become a tool of physical intervention, creating interest and unequal redistribution, the necessity of developing approaches that avail the real participation of local people and benefiting from the provided opportunities are prominent in this context. In theory, urban transformation established certain criteria in the name of urban sustainability. These are:

- Conservation of cultural and urban architectural heritage,
- Conservation of urban functions and form,
- Provide social sustainability,
- Increase the quality of public transportation and reduce vehicle dependency,
- Provide diversity of activities and continuous use in urban centers.

As mentioned above, urban transformation includes the concept of dynamism. Similar to urban transformation approaches that establish future oriented strategies, sustainability approaches also conceives undetermined processes. In this context, to form a correlation between the two approaches, it is necessary to utilize urban transformation as a tool to connect the sustainability concept and the space. This connection should be conducted within the context of locality-specific settlement criteria. Introduction of application principles that include green habitat or sustainable settlement criteria in the area where the transformation would be applied is one of the actions that are needed for conservation, development and sustenance of urban landscape.

Defined urban transformation concept will be scrutinized based on Trabzon province Ortahisar township Çömlekçi neighborhood urban transformation work, applied sections and the vision presented for the area and the contribution of these factors to local people, economy and local and national administration and specifically the urban landscape under the light of the above theoretical section constructed by addressing the urban transformation objectives, expectations, risks and the connection between spatial transformation and urban landscape.

5. Trabzon Ortahisar Township Çömlekçi Neighborhood Urban Transformation Example

5.1 The Content of Çömlekçi Urban Transformation Project

During recent years, urban transformation projects have accelerated in Trabzon province, construction work continue in several areas in the city and certain transformation projects have completed. Within the provincial limits, urban transformation projects implemented in especially Ortahisar township include Hagia Sophia transformation project, Narlıbahçe urban transformation project, Ortahisar urban renewal project, Zagnos valley urban transformation project, Tabakhane valley urban transformation project, Çömlekçi urban transformation project, and Pelitli urban transformation project.

In the present study, Çömlekçi urban transformation project, which is in demolition stage, will be scrutinized. Çömlekçi neighborhood became the object of transformation due to its location, its proximity to the harbor and present urban center within the Ortahisar township and the city limits, its historical structures and texture. Another reason why it was at the focus of transformation is the fact that wrong spatial use decisions in the past caused the area to decay and worn-out. Historical building typology and texture that the area contains differentiates the area from other transformation projects. The fact that users of the area are considered as lower group users and it has been used for illegal trade caused the area to be excluded by other urban users and created security concerns. On the other hand, existence of a local user that was born and raised within the limits of the project assigns us the responsibility of thinking in a multi-dimensional manner about the area. Several urban transformation projects were implemented in several countries in the world in spaces with similar uses and the urbanites were favorable about the results. However, the degree of benefits that applications that would be implemented in Çömlekçi location within the context of urban transformation project and resulting spatial uses would provide should be questioned in detail.

The project would be implemented in three stages on an area of 22,405 m² including Esentepe, Kaymaklı and Değirmendere neighborhoods. In Esentepe neighborhood, 123 buildings out of 134 were demolished as part of the first stage of the project.



Figure1; Urban Transformation Project Phase 1 Project Area

It was reported that negotiations with local people have started in the second stage and the transformation project is promoted with statements that Çömlekçi first stage urban transformation area would contribute to Trabzon province and will be worthy of Trabzon's name, history and culture.

Here, there are two significant issues. First, no efforts were spent to increase project awareness among the people of the province and the region. The project area was demolished using work machinery for days, and the passersby understand that there will be a transformation in the area by reading the billboards there, however, they learn nothing about the type of utilization proposed for the area and which functions or definitions will exist in the field of the project. This information is also not available for the academic staff in the region. Another issue is the fact that the property owners in Zağros Valley transformation project moved into the residences built by TOKI against their homes or lands. The same is not true for Çömlekçi project. They are expected to leave the area after they are paid for expropriation. This is considered as a good opportunity for area residents. Because, it presents a solution for those who try to survive under economic difficulties. Another issue is the fact that the trade activities in this area that disturb the province and the township in general would cease to exist and the area would gain a new profile with the new vision that would be introduced (!). This is fully supported by the locals.

It is not possible to obtain the necessary plan and design project infrastructure to define and scrutinize the physical intervention conducted in the first stage. It is not possible to identify the tools that would be used to provide social participation, which was listed as one of the five objectives of this transformation project. In the present study, a 3D video produced within the context of the project was obtained about the spatial decisions made for the future of the area. Here, pros and cons of the project and the presence of urban landscape will be discussed based on spatial use.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

5.2 Scrutiny of the Project that would Be Implemented at Çömlekçi Transformation Area Based on Urban Landscaping

The 3D visual data that the present study was based on anticipate building of high rise commercial centers, congress halls and hotels at the harbor front of the area. Due to the highway that runs between the project area and the harbor, access would be maintained at the eastern and western fronts. Western front is connected to the present city square. Project visuals mention future presence of light rail systems. However, there is no information about where this system that passes through the project area would begin or end. This raises the question whether the rail system was used only as a visual in the 3D presentation.



Figure 2; Examples from the proposed project (<http://www.arsingazetesi.com/haber/trabzon/comlekci-donusuyor/249.html>)



Figure 3; Examples from the proposed project (<http://www.arsingazetesi.com/haber/trabzon/comlekci-donusuyor/249.html>)

Usage decisions in solely the first stage of the project demonstrated that historical conservation was not provided except for a mere 25 historical buildings and the area was designed for high income groups. Here, it needs to be noted that the project area within the township is predominantly a conservation site. The urban connection for the area could be established on the western side where it is currently connected with the central square, but it could be observed that there is a road reserved for vehicle traffic in that area, which weakens the connection between the transformation area and the urban center.

Urban landscape is perceivable physical environment that includes all visual data that form the city. This definition includes several data such as urban topography, mass and void relationship, water element, flora, and present building use. The fact that recently landscape is perceived only as green areas, and action plans of several cities include increasing green areas and this objective is implemented as increasing grasslands, introduces the question whether a transformation project that would be designed along the same lines could or would contribute to urban landscape and sustainability.

An analysis of the sample project area based on the abovementioned concerns demonstrated that the data used as resources in the present study were not able to provide a definition for urban landscaping and the sustainability of the city in the future.

6. Result

Çömlekçi urban transformation project that is being implemented within a rapid and dense process does not reflect a holistic planning characteristics similar to others. For a sustainable urban landscape; environmental management, sustainable transportation and sustainable buildings are required.

It is obvious that it does not contain sustainable urban design themes. Because, there are no plan base, report or detail for the present. When it is considered that local administrators are eager to implement the project right away, it is not difficult to project that it would not be possible to prepare all details within a short period of time.

A situation that should be turned into an advantage is the fact that the existing transformation space is completely demolished and a new process has begun. It is necessary to determine and apply the criteria for a sustainable urban landscape during the implementation stage with the participation of the people and academicians. The urban landscape potential of the province where the sample area is located reflects vast

riches and diversity. However, the present transformation would result in gentrification of the people and in a way, the urban landscape would have the tendency of gentrification.

It is necessary to determine the criteria for the new buildings to be constructed within the context of the project. It is necessary to state how the natural circulation would be transformed within the area.

It is necessary to clearly mention the parameters that are utilized in determination of spatial use criteria in the area. Today, everyone knows that historical skyline and structure could not be conserved by preserving a few historical buildings. Then, what were the criteria for determination of the conserved historical buildings in the area, and if preserved, commercial center applications that exert tremendous pressure in the area would allow the conservation of these historical assets for how long?

Furthermore, it should be also remembered that transformation applications would also transform the lives of the inhabitants of the transformation area. Households/individuals who are bound to leave their habitat should be provided new choices within their socio-economic conditions. Otherwise, they could face social exclusion problems since they are drawn apart from their habitat and neighbors that they had social relationships with.

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