THE EFFECTS OF URBAN TRANSFORMATION APPLICATIONS ON A PLACE'S MEMORY AN ANALYSIS ON ZAGNOS VALLEY IN TRABZON

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ABSTRACT

Cities desire to keep alive their history, life experiences, cultures, customs and transfer to the next generations. In this context, the built environment, which constitutes the main structure of the city, enters the region and constitutes the largest part of the city's memory. However, with the development of different needs and functions over time, the built environment undergoes some changes parallel to its life cycle. Along with these changes, many cities are unable to maintain their connection with their history. Some of the cities that protect and maintain the memory of the city with strong representations until today are facing the threat of urban transformation. Especially, the destruction under the name of this transformation, which is experienced in the historical regions of the cities, breaks the connections of the city and the history of the city and destroys their life experiences. With the transformation projects realized in the historical cities, the memory of the city is being destroyed and the cities are rapidly involved in the process of identity loss with similar projects. The Place is far from being integrated with individualization, not allowing them to live their identity, their self respect; but transformed into similar units. Whereas a place is the whole of differences which is undeniably the greatest wealth. In accelerated urban transformation applications, especially in today's Turkey, must be approached with great sensitivity to place's memory. Otherwise, fast, unplanned and misapplicable practices can create irreplaceable gaps in the place's memory and this brings many problems like socio-cultural alienation. It is undoubtedly necessary to stand in a long and detailed manner on the practices, effects of urban transformation. In this context, through the urban transformation example in Zagnos valley, which has a strong historical background in the city of Trabzon, the effects of transformation projects on urban memory and urban identity were assessed and aimed at bringing solutions to the problem of memory depletion which comes together with urban transformation projects.

Keywords: Zagnos Valley, Urban Transformation, Memory of Place

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1. INTRODUCTION

Urban areas can change and transform over time due to physical, social, environmental, economic and political factors. The changes and transformations in urban space are sometimes in the direction of increasing space and quality of life, but sometimes they cause economic, social, environmental and physical collapse and deterioration of the space. The concept of "Urban Transformation" is used as a tool to solve urban problems in the field of planning. According to Thomas (2003), urban transformation is a comprehensive action that tries to provide holistic and lasting solutions in terms of physical, social, economic and social aspects in the face of various problems in the space. With urban transformation applications, it is aimed to identify the factors that cause physical, social or economic depression in the urban space, to produce effective solutions to eliminate these factors and thus to revive the problematic areas. Various scientists have made the definition of urban transformation. According to Linchfield (1992); Urban transformation, the need to better understand the processes of urban degradation, and the consensus on the results achieved in the transformation to be performed; According to Dannison (1993); Urban transformation, the method to solve the problems concentrated in the urban depression areas in a coordinated way; According to Roberts (2000); Urban transformation is to try to achieve continuous improvement of the economic, physical, social and environmental conditions of an area as a comprehensive and integrated vision and action.

The need for transformation in the cities is due to the economic and social system deterioration in urban areas. The decline in the quality of the environment and in the quality of social life, the economic strains that have emerged over time in urban areas requires the intervention of the built space. Urban transformation applications are also being applied not only in addressing urban problems, but also in meeting new demands and anticipations that have emerged as a result of policies aimed at achieving economic growth and social welfare (Eren, 2006).

According to Roberts (2000), urban transformation has emerged to serve five basic purposes:

1. Establish a direct relationship between the physical conditions of the city and social problems,
2. Responding to the need for constant physical change of many elements of urban fabric,
3. Put forward a successful economic development approach that enhances urban welfare and quality of life,
4. Set out strategies for the most effective use of urban areas and to avoid unnecessary urban expansion,
5. Meeting the need to shape urban politics as a product of social conditions and political forces.

Cities in Turkey are faced with problems arising from various reasons such as overpopulated areas, disaster hazards, wrong location selection, and unskilled construction. Each of these problems is a factor that creates the need for urban transformation for our country. In the Ottoman period, the first examples of urban transformation practices were started with rebuilding fire zone. Today it has continued to improve urban areas with low illegal and poor quality of life and with applications of large scale projects such as shopping centers.

The developments in the socio-economic structure of the country in the 1950s and the following years led to an increase in the rate of urbanization and an increase in the urban population, the cities have entered a period of rapid transformation which they have never seen since these years. In this process new centers emerged, the development directions of the cities have changed, most of the buildings have been demolished and multi-storey buildings have been built, areas that are not suitable for settlement such as green areas and agricultural lands

started to be covered with houses, urban centers have become more crowded and valuable (Tekeli, 1991; Kıray, 1982).

The effects of this rapid change of life and the subsequent transformation practices are inevitable on the memory of the city. In this context, it is necessary to understand the concept of urban memory and to grasp the effects of transformation applications on memory.

In this study, "Zağnos Valley Urban Transformation Project" which is the first urban transformation project of Trabzon province will be examined. The purpose of the site selection is that Zagnos Valley is one of the focal points of the city and the social effect of the transformation project is obvious on the people of this region. In the review, the transformation project focuses on the social impact of the people who reside in the region and use the region. When the transformation projects are being done, together with the constructions, people's lives and memories are collapsing. With this study, it is aimed to be a reference for the future urban transformation projects to be included in the living conditions as well as in the new buildings.

2. URBAN MEMORY

According to Cevizci (2000), memory is the ability to recall past experiences; reminiscence of experiments or experiences, the power of mind revival and historical protection; Non-deducible knowledge of past memories over the memorable subject or knowledge of objects that it has perceived in the past.

Definitions of memory in philosophy dictionaries: The mental function that allows the living in the past to think through designs, imagery, images in the absence of real tangible assets; the ability to keep experiences, feelings, impressions, perceptions; The inner time experience which is thought to determine the relationship entered over time (Güçlü, 2002).

If we look at the concept of memory spatially, the first houses where the childhood period passes are revealed. The first houses are the basis of the individual's first experiences (Malouf, 1986). One carries his first experience of space to his later life. Childhood is a period in which one has his own consciousness and one sees own in the uniqueness of existence. Childhood is often reminiscent of a more abstract life in mind. Remembrances and childhood memories are integrated with the memories of the place where they lived. There is a permanent "place" in childhood memories. The subconscious repeats the return to where it belongs in childhood. For many people, the return to where you lived in childhood ends with very different experiences. Failing to find the house where the person lives, changing the environment, seeing the collapse of the house, realizing that people's most favorite game is no longer happen in the space are very different emotions. As a psychological endeavor, people are caught up in childhood memories belonging to certain places that remind them of where they came from, where they are, or how they grew up when the family dynamics broke down. Childhood memories are like an extension of personality (Cooper, 1992).

The house in which the person was born was recorded physically in the psychological world beyond the memories. It is a collection of organic habits. Even if twenty years have elapsed, even if many staircases resembling each other have been climbed, the person regain the reflexes of that first staircase in the house of his birth, the first step in that moment a little high, he/she will not be stumled again as it used to step. The existence of the house is reopened in a faithful manner to the person. The squeaky door opens with the same hand movement and he/she can go without light to the roof space. Even the smallest door latch is easily accessible (Bachelard, 1969). From this point of view, it is inevitable that childhood spaces lost together with urban transformation will cause memory loss on the individual.

Figure 1. The memory loss of a child living in Aleppo and the picture he painted

As we move towards the urban scale from the housing scale, the scope of the concept of memory expands and it includes the community, not just one person. The physical structure of the city reveals a reality; this reality is understood only when the physical structure relates to memories and experiences through memory. The city becomes a phenomenon by the accumulation of some memories and stories in social memory besides physicality. According to Rossi (2006), social memory, which establishes the relation with the place where the community lives, is important because it provides the concept of the structure of the city, its uniqueness, and its architectural significance. This uniqueness, as it is from the format originates from the event; the city is moved beyond the physical dimension by the accumulation of the experiences of the events and it is reestablished imaginary in the social memory. This sequence of events are based on the physicality of the city and it forms the memory of the city; thus the urban memory can be transferred to generations through the physicalities in the city.

Many of the urban memories are buried in the surroundings of physical formations and traces, past is transferred to the future in this way. The streets, monuments, architectural forms of a city have a very big discourse in history. Only the urban structure does not change over time, the forms that represent the city change over time. Architecture in the city is not only a form represented by planners and architects in a certain order, they are also included in the society at the same time (Boyer, 1996).

For the formation of an urban memory of a community, the space adopted by society needs to be equipped with experience or memories. In fact, it is necessary for the memory to become a part of an activity in order to a place become a meaningful place. In this case, if you have commitment, it is inevitable that you have a memory of that time. But the opposite is not always the case. That is to say, having bad experiences or memories of the city, having a sense of urban memory does not always indicate a high place commitment. Two main components are required for the formation of urban memory: the first is the place to remember, the second is the society to remember.

It is necessary for the place to be remembered to gain meaning and value, to be experienced and to have a sense of the day-to-day identity of the past. Lewıcka (2008) used the definition of urban reminders as a way of remembering space, seeing society as passive and city as the factor. According to this, urban reminders are directly linked to the transfer of historical information from the previous residents of a city; but they can indirectly influence the memory of the city with the interest and curiosity of discovering the forgotten past of the city. However, these transfers may weaken over time, as urban people can not experience it themselves. Thus, extinction can also be observed in urban memory. In order for this memory to remain strong and continue, all the elements that bear witness to the past must be preserved and kept up to day-by-day, all elements of the city's whole structure must be kept together, sustainability must be ensured and it is necessary to reach to modern-day. In this context, the streets forming the

urban texture, historical structures, and tree-shaded paths occupy memory with perceptual factors such as smell and sound that will wake up the same effect in every pass.

At this point, it is also necessary to mention the concept of appropriation. Appropriation can be seen as the authority of the individual or the community, or an indicator of control, which occurs when a place or space is transformed. The individual organizes the space that his own space or he feel like his space and this space is dialectically different from the space of others. This phenomenon is generally expressed by the concept of appropriation, ownership. Appropriation is the personalization of a place, or object, by a person or group to organize the boundaries between them and other people, it is the behavior of transmitting the message that "it is owned". The self-owned space is made meaningful to the individual and engraved into the individual's memory.

Marx states that everything that bourgeois society produces is destined to collapse after a while. "Everything that is rigid", according to Marx, is done to disperse, break up, and fall down the next day. Berman (2004) suggests that even the most influential and most beautiful of bourgeois structures are "disposable", they resemble tents rather than pyramids in Egypt or aqueducts in Rome in terms of social functioning and they can quickly lose his values because of the transience that these similarities symbolize.

Stating that the transformations of the cities had left permanent traces in the cities, Çalak (2012) suggests that radical changes or devastation caused by political decisions or wars in cities may lead to significant breaks in urban memory. Berman (2004) argued that the investments required for some parts of the urban space were stopped for economic or political reasons, so that in many cases, the possibilities of growth and development of the parts in question have been abolished, they were left to rot by reason of completing their life, and they were eventually faced with the oppression of destruction. It is quite painful to see this urban landscape for any citizen surrounded by old walls or ruined houses; such that Halbwachs (1992) suggests that the individual who witnesses the destruction of the objects that make up his physical universe will feel that a fragment of himself is also dead with this destruction. This disturbing situation for the individual is uncomfortable at the same time in the community scale but the reaction of the individual and the community to this situation is not the same. Such situations, which can only be annoying and distressing for the individual, cause anger explosions and uprisings at the community level; The community resists the changes in its physical surroundings with all the power which receives from its own traditions (Halbwachs, 1992). When communities have to abandon change, they once again redefine themselves in order to adapt to the new conditions that arise in their physical environment.

Watching the old times of some structures in the urban space is painful, but in the process of aging, the structures are as valuable as ever before, and memories hidden in social memory through these structures are as vital as ever before. The destructive processes of natural and human activity confronted by constructions that are part of social life in cities create shakes in social memory; on the other hand, as these structures become exhausted, they become memories that stimulate social memory with every image. The relationship that individuals and communities establish with the locale or city with the event, has some meaning to the objects and places in the urban space; thus some constructions of urban space become a phenomenon that can be produced in many different ways in the memory of communities. The fact that the city is a social phenomenon depends on being defined by such social constructs. Although these structures have emerged as means of shaping the urban space, a period later, social consciousness, as representations embodied by architecture through architecture, began to form signifiers or founding points that resisted city change. At this point, the destructions confronted by such structures, which are the carriers of social memory in urban space, are

antagonistic as the processes that trigger forgetting, and in this sense, a social memory is lost. In this context, the destructions of the Zağnos Valley urban reconstruction project and the effects of these destructions on urban memory will be examined.

3. ZAGNOS VALLEY

The geographical structure of Trabzon is generally divided into deep valleys although it is in the form of mountains parallel to the shore. Zağnos and Tabakhane Valleys are the elements that constitute the borders of the ancient city of Trabzon. Zağnos Valley is located in the center of the city of Trabzon, west of Ortahisar Historical Castle.

Figure 2. Satellite images of Zagnos Valley

Antique city's west side is surrounded by Zağnos Valley and İmaret Creek, east side is surrounded by Tabakhane Valley and Kuzgundere. Tabakhane Bridge on Kuzgundere and Zagnos Bridge on Imaret Creek are the bridges that establish the connection while being reached through the ancient city wall. These two bridges provide access through Ortahisar by showing changes since unknown dates (Bıjıskyan, 1998). Imaret Creek that flows through the Zagnos Valley into the sea forms a natural boundary between Ortahisar and Gülbahar Hatun Neighborhood. Born from the steep slopes in the south and meeting the Black Sea in the north, Imaret Creek and Kuzgundere were closed over time after the intensive construction in the valleys.

Figure 3. Zağnos Valley from past to nowadays

The first urban development plan of the city of Trabzon was based on the Lambert Plan (1938), aimed at ecological and environmentally conscious planning that envisages air corridors to be built along the valleys to provide natural airflow to the sea from the mountains with low-rise and gardened settlement in accordance with the temperate humid climate of the city. Zağnos and Tabakhane Valleys are the vaults that provide the air circulation envisaged in the city of Trabzon. They have fulfilled their duties until the 1980s in the past historical process. However, in the course of time, rapid urbanization and distorted settlement in Trabzon also manifested itself in these valleys. These valleys have become one of the areas where irregular structure is intense. As a result, the "Zağnos Valley Urban Transformation Project", jointly

conducted by the Trabzon Municipality and the Housing Development Administration (TOKİ), came into force in 2004 and the Zağnos Valley was declared "Urban Transformation Area" in 2005. With this decision, urban development and transformation project started to work in these valleys.

Figure 4. Destruction in the valley of Zagnos - The loss of the memory of the city

According to a survey on this transformation project, 61.4% of the respondents said they were sorry that they heard the project for the first time, 15.9% were satisfied, 9.1% could not believe it and 13.6% were unresponsive. The reason of sadness is shown that many memories and neighbors relations will end after many years of living in this area. Other people who happy with this desctruction are those who are uncomfortable with the negative physical environment of the area. Those who are unresponsive say they do not know what to think or what to do first and those who can not believe are not convincing because they are told that they will be destroyed for years (Bülbül, 2008).

Figure 5. A visual about the urban transformation in Zagnos valley

4. CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

The consumption contest in today's society shows itself in the field of architecture. Understanding of building, consuming, destroying and making new buildings imposed on us by modern architecture influences us in all its aspects. With this understanding, cities have entered the process of irreversible change and transformation. With this process of entering the cities, the memories of the city began to disappear. If this transformation process can not

be countered, our cities will become completely unrecognizable in the very near future. At this point, urban transformation projects are emerging with the most tragic anticipation. Urban transformation projects are implemented as a state policy in our country. Most of the time, these projects are ruining a city's memory from its historical roots. It does not care about the streets of the city with its livelihoods. It destroy people's memories, their neighborhoods, their playgrounds and their homes carelessly.

Figure 6. Zağnos Valley before urban transformation

The urban transformation practice in the Zagnos valley has emerged with the aim of improving but not achieving its goal as a result of misplaced projections and wrong decisions. As a result of the observations made, it was determined that the areas emerging after the transformation were devoid of the concept of space, unused, idle and undefined. At the same time, it was observed that the mass houses built after the transformation were not aesthetic ; they are idle and typical projects.

Figure 7. Zağnos Valley and TOKI housing after urban transformation

In addition to eliminating the livelihoods of existing people before the transformation, there are also undefined places for new users. It has been suggested that the flow of circulation in the city will be in good condition with the evacuation of the valley, but this flow is blocked by the massive masses built. Also, as a result of misapplications, the area has become more prone to floods (Image 8). The transformation applied in the Zagnos valley resulted in a memory loss for the people of the region, where people lost their homes, the streets they played, the corner they met, the first meeting places.

Figure 8. Flood in valley

As a result of all the evaluations made within the scope of the study, it was aimed to make a suggestion specific to the Zağnos valley and to contribute to the subsequent transformation projects. The basic approach of the proposal prepared in this direction is the concept of "curing by protecting". With this approach, it is aimed to preserve the existing street texture and to improve the construction in the area without collapsing as much as possible. It was found more appropriate to build new structures that do not harm street-related structures, which are destined to be demolished. In this sense, repair work is the most important step of the targeted improvement. In particular, it is proposed to repair the interior spaces of buildings which are not suitable in terms of quality of life and to arrange the facades where these structures relate to outdoor space. The design of the façade is very effective on the public sphere and new facades should be designed to bring vitality to the space. In addition, the skeleton system must be protected if it can not perform its function, and if necessary, the structure may be strengthened to provide new functions. To exemplify the Zagnos valley, an inconvenient structure for use as a residence can be loaded with functions such as a cafeteria that can bring vitality to the area. In this case, it would be positive to ensure that the people who are leaving their dwellings should reside in the region in the direction of their will.

As a result, the urban transformation projects that are being implemented in our country and the mass housing that are found in the transformation areas must be prevented, to force people to live in stacked boxes should be abandoned as soon as possible, the architecture that has its duty to produce the soul, the nature, the spaces that have lost their identity must immediately return to its original form.

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