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HISTORICAL URBAN FABRIC OF ISPARTA CITY, ITS PROBLEMS, SOLUTION OFFERS AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Turkey possesses a culture heritage stemming from its geographical position and long standing history incomparable to any of the country all over the world which assumes a universal importance. The fact that the assets and cultural diversity owned by Turkey like rich natural and cultural heritage, archaeological merits, language, religion, tradition, architectural environment, music, games, clothing, nutrition are experiencing the danger of extinction even before they are introduced properly and that extinction represents a global importance for the future of humankind should always be kept in mind. The rich and deep cultural heritage and its potential, having existed consecutively within the course of the history as well as in the same environment, have not only been evaluated in line with their functions but they have also been experiencing an immense period of destruction and extinction and have been considered as a barrier in front of the development, thus they have been demolished. The urban fabric of Isparta and the registered historical buildings within the fabric have recently witnessed this process more rapidly. The urban fabric of Isparta and the historical buildings within the fabric, situated in the city center and facing the danger of extinction, should be evaluated within the framework of sustainable urban growth and protection. In this connection with this study essential work was carried out and certain suggestions made about the sustainability of historical urban fabric, which is most important structures of the historically, archaeologically and culturally valuable items.

ISPARTA TARİHİ KENTSEL DOKUSU, SORUNLARI, ÇÖZÜM ÖNERİLERİ VE SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİR KENTSEL GELİŞİM

Anahtar Kelimeler

*Sürdürülebilir;
Tarihsel;
Kentsel;
Doku;
Isparta.*

Özet

Türkiye, coğrafi konumu ve köklü tarihinden gelen, dünyanın hiçbir ülkesinde görülme- yen zenginlikte ve yoğunlukta evrensel önemde bir kültür mirasına sahiptir. Anadolu'nun bağrında taşıdığı zengin doğal ve kültürel mirası, arkeolojik değerleri, dil, din, gelenek, mimari çevre, müzik, oyun, giyim, beslenme gibi farklı alanlardaki kültür zenginliğinin yeterince ortaya çıkarılmadan, arındırma ve yeniden üretim sürecine aktarılmadan yok olma süreci ile karşı karşıya olduğu ve bu yok oluşun bütün insanlığın geleceği açısından uluslararası öneme sahip olduğu gerçeği hiçbir zaman unutulmamalıdır. Gerek zaman içinde art arda, gerek mekan içinde yan yana var olan bu zengin kültür birikimi ve taşıdığı potansiyel, yaşamın her alanında yeni yatırımların verimli kaynağı olarak değerlendirilemediği gibi, büyük bir tahrip ve yok olma sürecini yaşamakta, adeta kalkınmanın önünde bir engel olarak görülmekte ve yıkıma uğratılmaktadır. Isparta tarihi kentsel dokusu ve kent merkezinde bulunan tescilli tarihi yapılar son zamanlarda bu süreçte daha hızlı tanık olmuştur. Yok olma süreci ile karşı karşıya olan Isparta tarihi kentsel dokusu ve kent merkezinde bulunan tescilli tarihi yapılar sürdürülebilir kentsel gelişme çerçevesinde değerlendirilmelidir. Bu bağlamda bu çalışma ile gerekli çalışmalar yapılmış, tarihsel, arkeolojik, kültürel değerlerin, önemli yapıların korunması ve tarihi kent dokusunun sürdürülebilirliği konusunda çeşitli öneriler getirilmiştir.

1. Introduction

The fact that the historical urban fabric and historical artifacts be preserved and evaluated has recently gained importance though to a limited extent. However, nearly in every age the demolition and destruction of historical buildings and the artifacts assuming historical nature have largely been failed to obviate. In the course of the time, such assets have not been preserved and evaluated as duly as possible due to several reasons (economic concerns, intentional or unintentional negligence, fires, oppressions, erroneous building development schemes, etc.).

The city of Isparta, having witnessed a quite rapid population growth after the foundation of Süleyman Demirel University in 1992, has been experiencing dramatic urbanization as well as economic growth processes. When the efforts to boost the economic growth and to profit from emerging growth incomes have doubled with oblivion, ignorance, reluctance and insufficient financial resources to preserve historical urban fabric and assets, such fabric and assets have been vandalized and disappeared in great rapid pace. Large amount of the fabric and the historical buildings within this fabric having managed to survive so far have been abandoned to their fates. The fact that the historical assets shall disappear soon as long as the necessary precautions are not taken is evident.

Considering the proper and sober utilization of historical assets primarily, the necessity to perform protection applications in Isparta assuming very rich historical entity, guiding and directing the irremediable physical touches and the utilization methods in the way that they enhance the tourism growth of the region and that they contribute financial support to their owners, is standing in the forefront in view of the sustainable protection of the historical urban fabric.

Within the framework of this study, the current situation, problems of historical urban fabric and historical assets to be

preserved in Isparta and solution offers to these problems and the feasibility of the offers pursuant to a sustainable urbanization have been highlighted. Besides, due to the direct correlation between the protection and economy, the issue of the financial resources, which shall be exploited for protection applications, has also been argued out within the scope of this study.

2. Isparta, Its Historical Urban Fabric, Problems, Solution Offers And Sustainable Urban Development

2.1. Isparta City

Located at the heart of the Lake District of the Mediterranean Region, Isparta has an important geographic position and an ancient history and has gained an important, economically functional role in Turkey especially, because of developments it showed in the country's Republican period. Rose cultivation and carpet making are identified with the name of Isparta: it has an important reputation and market in Turkey and even in the world with what has become the urban identity of Isparta and its symbol.

Isparta has a very significant potential in terms of historical, archaeological and cultural values. The important historical and archaeological values that are estimated will offer greater potential in the future with proper evaluation. However, on account of the rise in the population and close location of the historical fabric to the city center, traditional fabric faces the danger of non-existence. It is an important problem for historical fabric that the new urban developments occur irregularly and without any identity by neglecting the fabric.

Because the historical fabric was denser in the city, the area that was first proclaimed an Old Site Area and later had its Old Site Area status removed and where work continued on protection at a scale of one building [1].

For today 128 registered buildings are still usable in the area in which historical buildings that were taken under protection on a single building scale and which has now completely lost its characteristic as a Old Site Area. Parallel to the positive developments in the protection subject in recent years, some of the registered buildings in Isparta too are being restored both by the public sector and by the private sector and are being evaluated for suitable functions.

2.2. Historical Urban Fabric and Historical Assets to be Preserved

Committee of Protection of Cultural Natural Heritage conducts the registration procedures of the buildings to be preserved under "The Law No 2863 on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage" as well as "The Regulation on the Determination and Registration of Immovable Cultural and Natural Properties to be preserved" [2]. A field of 40 hectares bearing quite rich historical fabric in the center of Isparta was declared as protected area in 1977. Mostly situated within this area, nearly 105 buildings were registered until 1984. However, the number receded to 58 in 2000s due to several reasons such as earning profit, oblivion, erroneous reparation, fire, insufficient financial resources, etc. As a result of the efforts, 128 immovable together with the previous ones were registered in the city center in 2007.

In summary, we witness a building group, the protection necessity of which was registered on the basis of laws and the number of which went down of several reasons though they were taken into inventories of the museum, which requires special interest. The current physical qualities of the buildings and the neighborhoods where these buildings appear display various characteristics.

The all registered buildings in the historical urban fabric have been examined on their sites for the purposes of this study and the result of the examination has been reflected on the table 1. As can be inferred from the

table, 59 pieces are residences out of 75 registered buildings while the rest 16 are other buildings: 2 schools, 5 mosques, 2 churches, 1 inn, 2 Turkish baths, 4 government buildings as well as 7 fountains, 2 monumental trees. Today, 9 % of these buildings (12) is ruined, 17 % (21) seriously damaged, 15 % (19) middle-damaged, 14 % (18) least-damaged, and 45 % (58) is sound. The sound, least and middle damaged buildings are still in use (Table 1).

"Building Scheme for Protection Purposes" drafted within the framework of the resolution issued by The Committee of Protection of Cultural Natural Heritage in 1977 was put into force between the years 1979 and 1984. While the practice of Isparta Building Scheme for Protection Purposes needed to be monitored and observed as true with all other building schemes, an effective monitoring mechanism were not able to be established.

The protection practices later on were carried on having integrated the provisions of Building Scheme for Protection Purposes with current city building scheme. The borders of the protected areas were abolished in 1984 under the resolution of the committee and the practices, which are still in effect now, were initiated. A plenty of erroneous restoration, reparation and renovation activities are striking examples of these practices. These gradually lead to the demolition and extinction of the Urban Protected Area. Moreover, the new settlements in the region assuming rich historical fabric accelerate the extinction process and affect the sustainable growth of the city negatively.

2.3 Reflections on the Practices of Protection of Historical Urban Fabric

It is possible to classify the protection practices in two groups as "active" and "passive". "Passive protection" is the practices involving the actions rather like registration, limiting the rights on the goods and properties, planning, restraining, inspection and penalization in which the proprietorship as well as the responsibility

of protection are transferred to second entities and parties. “Active protection” is the practices involving the actions rather like directing, supporting, and purchase, exchange, confiscating, planning and

preparing project as well as application of the projects in which the protection, proprietorship and responsibility are shared or undertaken completely.

Table 1. Current Physical Situation of Historical Buildings in the Historical Urban Fabric (Other Buildings: Schools, Churches, Mosques, Khans, Baths, Official Buildings)

Buildings		Physical Situation of Historical Buildings (2013)					
Their Neighborhood	Types	Ruined	Seriously Damaged	Middle Damaged	Least Damaged	Healthy	Total
Keçeci Neighborhood	Houses	3	2	2	2	8	17
	Other Buildings						0
Turan Neighborhood	Houses		2		3	2	7
	Other Buildings		2				2
Gazi Kemal Neighborhood	Houses	3	6	5	5	20	39
	Other Buildings				2	3	5
Çelebiler Neighborhood	Houses	4	3	4	3	7	21
	Other Buildings			2	1	2	5
Kepeci Neighborhood	Houses			2		2	4
	Other Buildings					3	3
Hızırbey Neighborhood	Houses		2		1	3	6
	Other Buildings						0
Doğancı Neighborhood	Houses		2	2		1	5
	Other Buildings		1				1
İskender Neighborhood	Houses	2	1	1		2	6
	Other Buildings					1	1
Other Neighborhood	Houses						0
	Other Buildings			1	1	4	6
TOTAL		12	21	19	18	58	128
		9%	17%	15%	14%	45%	100%

In Isparta the active protection practices are largely upheld. For the Protection Provisions set what to be done and not to be done quite clearly, the practices of all NGOs, firms and entities including the other central and local authorities are directed and inspected within the scope of mentioned logic.

The exchange of public lands and ground plots with valuable cultural properties and establishment of the legal infrastructure which will make it possible will be the most crucial steps in protection efforts. These steps are of immense importance so as to preserve the historical urban fabric of Isparta and the buildings within the fabric. Firstly, the resolution of the proprietorship

problem (such as confiscation, exchange, purchase), later on planning and preparing project, and finally, funding the project, directing the project and dealing with the maintenance and operation issues of the project should be the main dispositions of the municipality regarding protection.

Despite the fact that the resources are scarce, the staff is inadequate and the bureaucratic processes are too complicated and slow for the protection practices, the giant steps must be taken under the aegis of The Committee of Protection and voluntary organizations concerned with the protection regarding the constitution of solidarity and cooperation mechanisms with the purpose of practice. The municipality should undertake the required institutional arrangements to assume the responsibility of the protection projects entirely or partly and to offer technical consultancy services. Thus, the municipalities are to fulfill the services like guiding, organizing, assisting in creating the projects of sketching, restoration and restitution for the purposes of helping property owners as well as the inspection missions.

It is possible to bring up tax and loan concessions in case various funds are ensured for likely protection projects. Thus, the municipality shall turn into the agency not only laying down the borders of the protection but also encouraging, directing, supporting and inspecting those practicing protection applications. The municipality is to restructure itself in line with the responsibilities and functions in the form of educating the staff in the system through service-in-training and developing projects to strengthen these situations.

That the municipality has defended the local and personal interests averted by the protection resolutions and translated the protection resolutions into "utilization, opening to settlement" motives perceiving the protection as obstacle and planning for the purposes of protection as a kind of "Building Scheme" has been fuelling the lack of confidence with in the context of the protection of the historical assets. In this

context, the initiation of the above mentioned actions shall do away with this notion completely. Besides, the constitution of every kind of policy, program, plan, and project regarding the protection and of positive required initiatives regarding the budget shall help make up for the deficiency of coordination between central authorities, Governorship and Municipalities [3].

2.4. The Control of the Funds and Urban Profits in the Protection of the Historical Urban Fabric

Another point to be considered to resolve the issue of funding which is one of the most crucial problems encountered in the protection practices is to elaborate on the methods which shall reduce the cost without affecting the quality. The issue of cost is often identified with the insufficient funds in the protection projects. However, the term enhancing the funds is by and large restricted to the fund search/obtain method. Whereas, beyond the fund search methods like deepening the budget incomes and seeking for financial support for projects, it is essential to develop the strategies of utilizing the available funds in the optimum level and most importantly of creating funds.

Within the context of creating funds, below mentioned points may be considered:

- Designing the protection projects as fund creating and ensuring the fund created by the project to remain at the project.
- Activation of foreign funds for the protection projects (EU funds, European Resettlement Funds, The United Nations, The World Monuments Union).
- Allocation of a portion of the rental revenues of publicly owned buildings for the purposes of restoration, rehabilitation and ensuring long-term and low-interest credits for the purposes of protection and renovation.

- Operation of the exchange mechanism frequently and effectively.
- Management of 10 % of property taxes for the purposes of protection practices thanks to the law no 5366 issued in 2007 is also considered as a positive act.

Within the context of utilizing the available funds in the optimum level, below mentioned points may be considered:

- Reducing the cost by means of the recommendations on the usage of material, blueprinting and workmanship.
- Founding the computer assisted labs with all equipment and technological infrastructure for the purposes of cost-effective sketching and restoration projects.

The urban profits must be taken under control to ensure the functionality of the protection from the perspective of the economy. For these purposes:

- Directing the urban development to the areas far from historical or natural sites and thus, preserving the speculative values of the sites and immovable under the protection.
- Taxing the urban profits and the profits stemming from the utilization of the buildings with historical value after their dismantlement to a great extent.
- Ensuring the returns of the urban growth profits following their taxation as protection credits and subsidies.
- Applying special schedules in infrastructure services for protected areas and registered buildings; ensuring several conveniences and priorities in urban service issues [3].

2.5. Sustainable Urban Development on Historical Urban Area

The usages that create historical urban fabric, has been built to provide for the social and economic needs their period. Changing life styles, policy, capital power, population increase, immigration etc. brought about different demands and caused different living space. In the process of the variation and the development, it is necessary that historical urban fabrics should provide the present day needs, and their environmental and living qualities should be increased. So they do not turn into debris areas. The solution offers have to be submitted having a purpose of protection-improvement-renewal which lay a bridge between the past and the future and this will protect identification phenomenon [4].

Nowadays, a few urban has fabric without loss of their natural organic forms. Especially it is impossible to talk about conscientiously protected and not changed old fabrics in our big cities [5]. The same condition is available for city of Isparta. Especially the impression of the new settlement on the historical fabric lands if the provision is not made for it in short term, it will completely destroy the current historical fabric. However, nowadays the importance of the historical and cultural sustainability has further increased. Cities are spaces which provide cultural needs and all kinds of life functions of the people (accommodation, working, resting, entertainment etc.). For the cities, it is important that its own properties, values and identification have been protected to sustain of their life. The sustainable urban development is an important process to protect of the values which mentioned above and including transfer to the next generations and to get future.

In the city of Isparta, strategy, plan, project aimed at create sustainable a city and programs aimed at applications have to be developed for the purpose of the protection of the historical fabric in Isparta and natural environment and historical and cultural values near surroundings of Isparta.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

The notion of protection does not reflect itself too often in the policies of political parties as well as in the programs of central and local administrations and does not appear as a project of its own or as a sub-element of the projects. The fact that the awareness of protection be developed in the society and that the issue assumes trans-parties and even trans-governmental importance should be underlined continually.

While a definite position is to be adopted against the destruction, demolition and extinction of the historical assets bearing the tracks of the past and symbolizing the identity of the cities where they are situated from a socio economic view, the notion of protection has not been adopted as a responsibility, an objective or as a policy in desired level in our society lacking the adequate awareness and cultivation on the issue. Excluding exceptions, neither entities, central and local administrations nor concerned public and labor unions and NGOs acknowledges the necessity of preserving natural and historical assets as a prerequisite. It is recognized that the efforts regarding protection have not fared quite successful and that the practices are too poor. Nonetheless, the necessary steps are to be taken rapidly despite all the difficulties so as to illustrate sample practices for the people in the neighborhood and the protection practices are to be applied in a sample area. For instance, the maintenance and renovation of the registered houses on Imam Hasan Street in Isparta city center and the rehabilitation of these buildings, though not in expected level, may be appraised as a crucial step and attempt.

The possibilities to establish a sound cooperation between public and labor organizations and NGOs, central and local administrations are always available. For instance, Damgacı Street in Isparta city centre, where the historical fabric appears abundantly, may be exemplified for such a practice. The most crucial factor of exemplifying this area is that the

investments may fare return in a short span of time as well as that it may prove to Isparta community that the historical assets may turn into profit-bearing estates. The points, having been underlined within the scope of the study, must be taken into account regarding what kind of practice should be applied to realize the processes.

The deficiency of culture and awareness of history and protection appears to be the most crucial problem in the protection of the historical urban fabric and registered buildings within this fabric. Another protection problem is the inability to form an interrelation between the old urban fabric and the newly created urban fabric in planning. The society is to be made conscious of the issues of the history and protection through various press organs and lectures to overcome above mentioned protection problems. The leadership and financial support of the public sector may be ensured manufacturing public sentiment on the protection of registered buildings.

The sustainable urban growth in Isparta may only be realized when the historical fabric in the city centre be preserved and perpetuated. Perpetuating the historical fabric in Isparta city centre, constituting a part of historical heritage of Turkey, and delivering this heritage to the next generations integrating with the contemporary living by ensuring their economic, cultural and physical development in healthy conditions are gaining importance. Each building within the historical urban fabric should be applied protection practices with reference to their own qualities, problems and limits and the depreciations should be halted so as to ensure the permanence. The protection problems underlined should also be handled seriously and permanent solutions should be activated.

Resolution of the protection problems of the historical fabric of Isparta, determining the peculiarities of especially registered historical civilian architecture buildings, setting the problems, performing the required attempts and evaluating these problems in terms of present day assume

immense importance. Recommendations which will arouse positive impacts may be developed if the tourism is dealt with as a medium in the functions which shall be assigned to historical buildings. For instance, the regional and historical assets which may bring alternative solutions to coastal tourism are becoming crucial. Thus, the culture tourism shall stand in the forefront. It is assumed that the most acceptable method in the protection practices today is to ascribe new functions to the buildings [6].

That the new urban settlements in Isparta develop in a chaotic and dehumanized style ruling out the traditional fabric is a great menace to historical fabric. Besides, that some of the government buildings (The Law Court Building, Police Department Building, etc.) start moving to north axis settlement area of Isparta alleviates the settlement pressures on the historical fabric and the intercommunication, commercial and economic burden of the city center appear as quite positive initiatives.

In the short, medium and long term, the awareness of protection is to be fostered and the local authorities are to be prompted and backed for purposes of protection planning. Furthermore, the new techniques are to be developed participating in national and international projects regarding protection planning and a society which is a reflector of its culture, participatory and active and which possess the awareness of protected and sound cities, of sober, comfortable and sustainable environment is to be targeted.

Conflict Of Interest

No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

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