

# Unique Cases of Squatter Prevention Projects in Turkey

## *Tozkoparan neighbourhood*

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From the 1950s onwards, rapid urbanisation and internal immigration created an urgent need for housing, resulting in uncontrolled and unplanned urban growth in Turkey's largest cities and Istanbul in particular. Public authorities offered only limited solutions to the problem of sheltering the urban poor, and only after it had already been partially solved through spontaneous and informal methods. Local politicians and public authorities came under harsh criticism for using public investment to provide housing for the middle and upper-middle classes. The city expanded without sufficient infrastructure, apart from the construction of highways.



*Fig. 1. General view of Tozkoparan neighbourhood. Photo by the author.*

This chapter aims to highlight the unique period from 1960–1980 in terms of housing policies, through the unique housing program, Gecekondu Önleme Bölgeleri (Squatter Prevention Areas) and its first built example, the neighbourhood of Tozkoparan. Designed according to contemporary planning principles of post-war modernism, Tozkoparan incorporated the functional division and hierarchy of spaces recommended by the charter of Athens. A historiographical investigation of the space, however, reveals an alternative reading of the canonical criticisms of post-war modernism, such as “empty, numbing repetition of forms left over from the presumed-authentic historical avant-garde”.<sup>1</sup> Many recent publications assert the importance of understanding architectural history through comprehending different aspects of modern architecture and the role of architects in it. Although focusing on physical environments of the so-called International Style with similar characteristics, these works also discuss the unique qualities of each neighbourhood. In the case of Tozkoparan, the unique story of modernisation in Turkey, its housing politics and the strategies of the inhabitants developed through decades of occupation have manifested themselves in the form of spatial appropriations and community activities in the mostly open, common spaces.

Housing projects like Tozkoparan, which have transformed into lively neighbourhoods and strong communities over the last 50 years, are now under pressure from urban renewal projects. From the perspective of architecture and planning, a better comprehension of the effects of welfare politics on the urbanisation of Istanbul can give a broader understanding of its urban history. Hopefully we can learn from this history how to create better decision-making processes, remembering the importance of participation in the making of common space in the continuous transformation of neighbourhoods and the city.

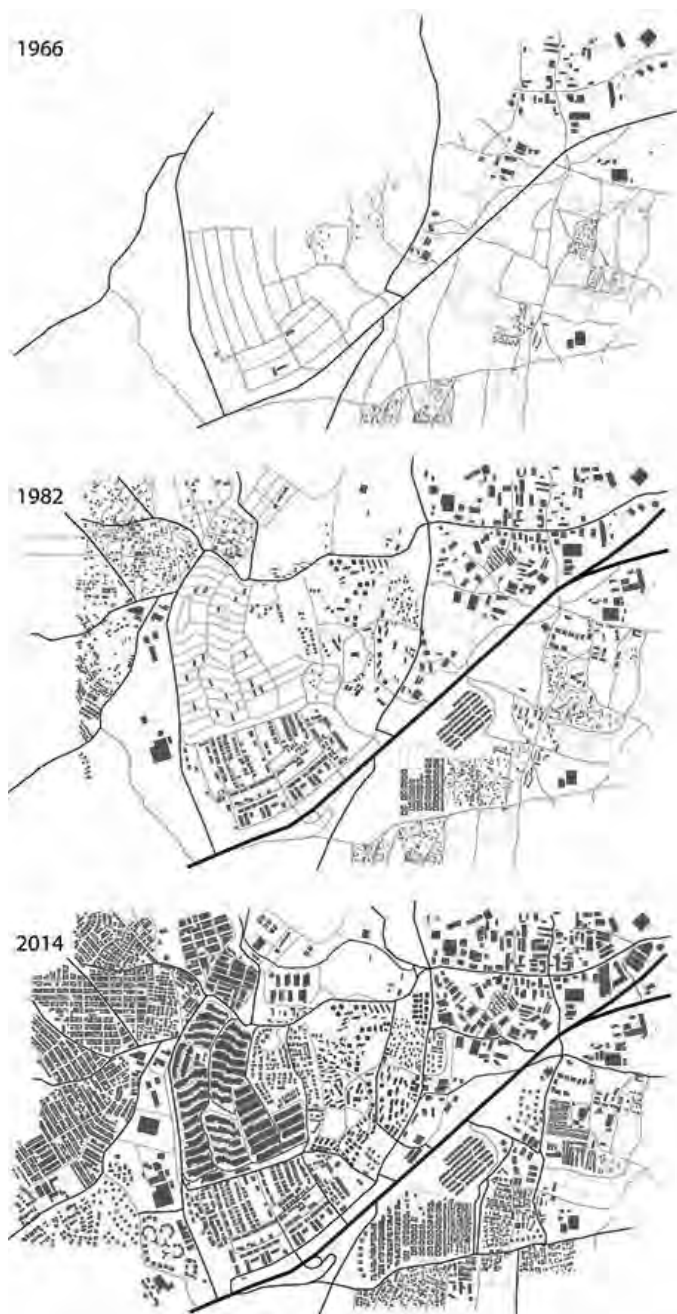
## Background

From the 1950s onwards, the urgent need for housing resulted in uncontrolled and unplanned urban growth in Turkey’s largest cities and Istanbul in particular. Public authorities offered only limited solutions to the problem of sheltering the urban poor and only after the lack of housing had been partially solved through spontaneous and informal methods. From the mid-1950s onwards, immigration provided essential labour power for a growing Istanbul, yet the housing policies put in place were insufficient to house the increase in urban population. Even though public housing was very much on the political agenda, the housing projects implemented for the urban poor remained far outnumbered by illegal neighbourhoods. This was especially the case in Istanbul. Not being able to finance the mass housing option but also compelled to work for popular satisfaction and a positive general opinion, recurring amnesties for illegal urbanisation were issued. However, following the military coup of 1980, new governments were no longer expected to offer solutions to illegal housing and the uncontrolled expansion of the city through urban planning.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hays. *Architecture’s desire: reading the late avant-garde*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Therefore, a mass of illegally-built and unplanned housing became part of the housing market; Aslan, Şükrü and Erman, Tahire. “The Transformation of the Urban Periphery: Once Upon a Time There Were Gecekondu in Istanbul”, In *Whose City Is That? Culture, Design, Spectacle and Capital in Istanbul*, ed. D. Özhan Koçak and O. K. Koçak, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 106.

In this climate of rapid modernisation of the city and immense urban sprawl without sufficient infrastructure, the period between 1960–1980 has a special importance from the perspective of the role of architects and planners in decision-making processes. In this period, a limited number of initial social housing programs called Gecekondu Önleme Bölgeleri (Squatter Prevention Areas) were put into place by public organisations across Turkey, after being made possible by the Squatter Act of 1966. This chapter is focusing on this housing program and especially on the first built example, Tozkoparan, which can be regarded as one of the results of welfare politics of the 1960s. The neighbourhood is the result of politics which enabled professional contributions to the informally expanding urban texture and created a space in contrast with its surroundings (fig. 2).



*Fig. 2. Maps from the years 1966, 1982 and 2014, showing the transformation of the neighborhood with the surrounding area. Graphics by the author.*

The mixed methodology adopted in this chapter consists of a historiographic reading of the archival material and of written resources including both academic papers and popular publications. At the same time, it combines the literature review with the findings of in-depth interviews carried out with residents about their contribution to the space. Many of the alterations demonstrated the lack of various necessary elements in the initial project. On the other hand, the unforeseen usages of common spaces have become distinctive elements of the neighbourhood for both the users and from the professional point of view developed throughout the research.

## The Squatter Act and squatter prevention project

The lack of housing in large cities across Turkey needed a fast solution. The housing politics of the 1960s and 1970s were policies that represented steps towards a welfare society but they were not as effective as intended.<sup>3</sup> In 1950, the Democratic Party (DP) won both the general and municipal elections. The discourse of the DP contributed directly to the construction of populist urban politics, redirecting long-lost attention back to the neglected metropolis of Istanbul.<sup>4</sup> Accelerated industrialization in this period increased the demand for housing, private transport encouraged further sprawl, the appropriation of the old city centre affected the everyday lives of its inhabitants and forced evictions resulted in extensive housing problems and yet state institutions could not afford a real solution despite issues of urbanisation beginning to dominate political discourse.<sup>5</sup>

In the period after the military coup on May 27, 1960, architects and planners who criticised the existing system on the one hand cooperated with state bodies and on the other, participated or worked as jury members in architectural competitions for public buildings.<sup>6</sup> Urban planning professionals in government institutions saw their influence in urban spaces increase and these professionals adopted a more 'socialist' perspective in parallel to state organizations.<sup>7</sup> However idealistic, these pursuits did not result in fulfilling outcomes either.

In the case of Istanbul, the general problem of insufficient public housing production has led to a growing self-regulated construction and housing market. Since housing production was mainly conducted and controlled by the private sector, the state could place constraints on taxes and loans.<sup>8</sup> In 1953, a new law redefined and extended the scope of municipal jurisdiction. In 1958, *Hürriyet* daily newspaper covered the detection and demolition of squatter houses around the Florya and Mecidiyeköy neighborhoods located at the time on the edges of the city. The article mentioned new apartment blocks to be built around Kazlıçeşme (which is

<sup>3</sup> Bozdoğan, Sibel. and Akcan, Esra. *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2012), 141.

<sup>4</sup> Makal, Ahmet. *Türkiye'de çok partili dönemde çalışma ilişkileri: 1946–1963*, (İstanbul: İmge Kitabevi, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> Keyder, Çağlar. *İstanbul: Küresel ile Yerel Arasında*, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> Bozdoğan and Akcan. *Turkey; Tekeli, İlhan. İstanbul'un Planlanmasının ve Gelişmesinin Öyküsü*, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları 2003).

<sup>7</sup> Ekinci, Oktay. *İstanbul'u sarsan 10 yıl:(1983–1993)*, (İstanbul: Anahtar Kitaplar Yayınevi, 1994); Tekeli, İlhan. *Belediyeçilik yazıları (1976–1991)*, (İstanbul: IULA-EMME, 1992); Batuman, Bülent. "Early Republican Ankara": Struggle over Historical Representation and the Politics of Urban Historiography", *Journal of Urban History*, 37(5), 661–679, 2011

<sup>8</sup> T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, "Kalkınma Planı (Birinci Beş Yıl) 1963–1967", 1963, January 29, 2015, 433.

also located outside of the city walls, near to neighbouring industrial facilities) for the *gecekondu*<sup>9</sup> settlers. Another newspaper in 1962 indicated that local authorities might start construction on the empty municipal land.<sup>10</sup> These proclamations were indicators of a vast change in terms of urban space, not only in the production of domestic space but the introduction of a new public space, namely the undefined and therefore almost derelict common, in between spaces.

A critical threshold for this change was the new Gecekondu Act (No. 775), passed in 1966, which authorized the state to provide shelter directly.<sup>11</sup> The aim of this act was the “rehabilitation and clearance of existing squatters and the prevention of further illegal constructions”.<sup>12</sup> Mass housing was proposed as a solution for the first time in the second Five-Year Development Plan for the period 1968–1972.<sup>13</sup> 53 neighbourhoods based on the Squatter Prevention Project were redesigned, requiring the prohibition and removal of illegal construction between 1966–1980.<sup>14</sup>

In the early period, when state institutions first proposed prevention projects as a valid solution to housing problems, the areas the project would encompass were chosen in accordance with a similar logic of existing illegal settlements<sup>15</sup>. In the 2000s, and particularly after 2007, the Mass Housing Authority acquired all the authority and responsibilities granted to the Ministry of Reconstruction and Resettlement by the Gecekondu Act. After that transition, the squatter prevention areas were targeted by governmental institutions as areas for renewal. The redefinition of this land from areas for social housing to areas for urban renewal is indicative of the changing politics of housing in Turkey.

## Tozkoparan neighbourhood

Tozkoparan is located on the European side of Istanbul, to the north of the E-5 highway which connects the city centre to the west. The so-called Reconstruction and Resettlement Blocks in Tozkoparan consist of the standard design developed by the central government’s housing agency. The first blocks in the neighborhood were those built in order to house people who had lost their homes due to demo-

<sup>9</sup> *Gecekondu* is a Turkish term, meaning “settled at night”, used very commonly to describe the informal houses.

<sup>10</sup> *Milliyet*, “Nisan ayında başlıyor”, (Milliyet Daily Newspaper, February 8, 1962).

<sup>11</sup> The Squatter Act of 1966 was a legislative and also a cultural threshold, being the first law to include the word *gecekondu*.

<sup>12</sup> T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Mevzuat Bilgi Sistemi, “4309 Gecekondu Kanunu”, 1966. January 29, 2015, 1.

<sup>13</sup> T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Müsteşarlığı, “İkinci Beş Yıllık Kalkınma Planı 1968–1972”, 1968. May 1, 2015, 273.

<sup>14</sup> The area outside of the city walls, accommodating factories and workshops, were also surrounded with squatter neighborhoods. Zekai Görgülü’s studies show that in the period between the new legislation in 1966 and the year of study in 1982, the designated Squatter Prevention Areas were concentrated around Bakırköy, Eyüp, Gaziosmanpaşa and Kağıthane on the European side of Istanbul; and Kartal, Maltepe and Üsküdar neighborhoods on the Asian side of the city. Görgülü, Zekai. *İstanbul Metropolitan Alanında Gecekondu Önleme Bölgelerinin Mekenasal Konumları ve Fizik Mekan Çözümlenmeleri*. PhD Thesis. (Yıldız Technical University, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, 1982), 176.

<sup>15</sup> Besides property ownership status and expropriation costs, the location and its relationship with the rest of the city, the accumulation of population, distance to areas of employment and connectivity in terms of public transportation were taken into consideration in the determination of the project areas (Görgülü. *İstanbul Metropolitan*, 117). Therefore, the earlier examples would be aligned in these aspects with the needs of the informal settlements’ choices.

litions on the historical peninsula in the late 1950's.<sup>16</sup> The land for the Tozkoparan SPP was expropriated by the Ministry of Reconstruction and Resettlement in 1962. Later research<sup>17</sup> stated that 26 percent of the land taken over already belonged to the public and official parliamentary reports show that infrastructure works such as roads, the sewerage system, water and electricity were continuing in 1965.<sup>18</sup> The construction of 6,000 housing units was planned, yet as the 1977 study was published, only 2,914 units had been completed.<sup>19</sup>

The partially realized project of 1973 had many qualities in common with contemporary housing projects (fig. 3). It consisted of low-rise blocks in which small repeated units were positioned freely. Spaces in central locations were reserved for public uses such as education, sports, culture and shopping. Four variations of apartment blocks and single-family houses appeared as different housing types. The smallest units, of around 30–35 square meters, were in the A-blocks which had an open courtyard. The rationalist general layout of the project was developed around a main axis in the north-south direction. The main centre consisted of small shops. Apart from the schools, there were two neighbourhood parks and green areas in-between the housing blocks. These planning principles clearly corresponded with modernist planning in terms of functional zoning and the usage of green belts for isolation.

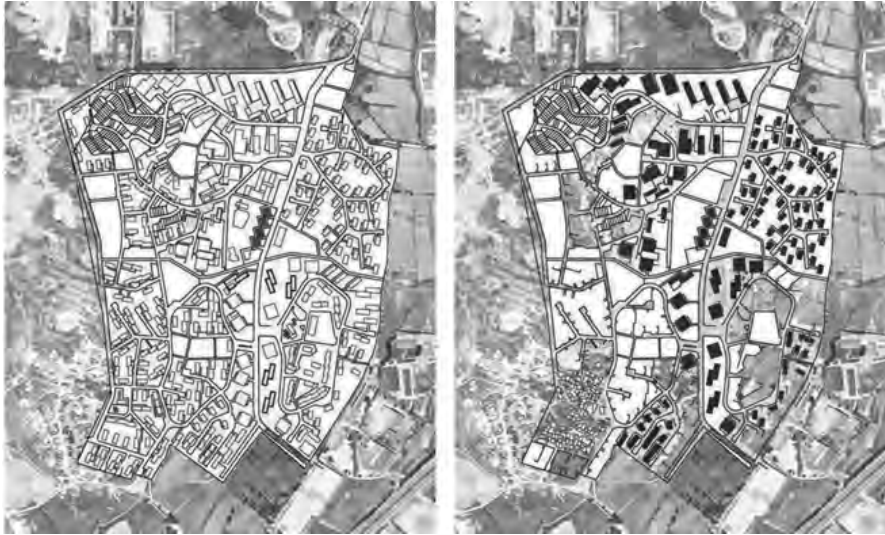


Fig. 3. A comparison between the original plan (Atasoy, 1973) and the partially constructed project in the year 1970. The initial proposal was published in Ayla Atasoy's thesis dated 1973. Graphics by the author based on aerial photos taken from the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality online archive, [sehirharitasi.ibb.gov.tr](http://sehirharitasi.ibb.gov.tr) and made for this research.

Academic studies, news reports and interviews carried out with the inhabitants show the absence of many elements of a housing environment when the first settlers arrived. Although the apartment blocks were complete, the open spaces

<sup>16</sup> Öktem Ünsal, Binnur. and Türkün, Asuman. "Tozkoparan: Bir Sosyal Mesken Alanının Tasfiyesi" In *Mülk, Mahal, İnsan: İstanbul'da Kentsel Dönüşüm*. ed. Asuman Türkün, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi, 2014), 315.

<sup>17</sup> Tuna, Orhan. *İstanbul Gecekondu Önleme Bölgeleri Araştırması*, (İstanbul: Bilmen Basımevi, 1977).

<sup>18</sup> Cumhuriyet Senatosu Tutanak Dergisi, 36'ncı Birleşim, 24 (4), Accessed April 13, 2016), 106.

<sup>19</sup> Tuna, Orhan. *İstanbul Gecekondu Önleme Bölgeleri Araştırması*, (İstanbul: Bilmen Basımevi, 1977), 31.

were neglected, and many infrastructural elements were missing (fig. 4). Crucial missing requirements included storage bunkers specifically for coal or vegetation, a pre-school, a study centre, a library for the younger population and sports facilities. These oversights by the municipality, which was responsible for common spaces, led the inhabitants to initiate individual or group interventions in order to produce these public spaces. These acts have had both positive and negative outcomes on the present-day situation. The strong community and solidarity within the community is strongly connected to its past deficiencies.<sup>20</sup>



Fig. 4. An informal extension in the open space between the blocks. Photo by the author.

The buildings in Tozkoparan were erected using traditional construction methods and they are built as concrete frame structures. Although the structural skeleton, consisting of columns and beams, would have enabled a free-façade organization and flexibility both in the short- and long-terms, the designs benefited in a limited sense from the potential of the concrete frame structural system. Narrow, cantilevered balconies amounted to only a small proportion of the entire façade in terms of width, leading to less open and semi-open spaces, less flexibility and limiting the possibilities for intervention by the inhabitants. Interventions by residents appear at various scales. There are many transformations at the unit scale, such as incorporating balcony spaces within the apartments, changing the plan or façade organization, building extensions. In addition, many common spaces in and between the blocks have been appropriated. The earliest proof of physical interventions into the space was reported in a 1967 newspaper article, which documented that inhabitants were building coal storage bunkers with scavenged materials.<sup>21</sup> Recent interviews have shown that the majority of dwellers in an A-type apartment block decided to block off the open entrance to the courtyard and started to use

<sup>20</sup> Interview 1, 2014; Interview 3, 2015. For the interviews, see Şoher, Şebnem. *Modern Yapı Stoğunun Yeniden Değerlendirilmesi: İstanbul, Tozkoparan*, PhD Thesis, (Istanbul Technical University, İTÜ Graduate School of Science Engineering and Technology, Architectural Design Doctorate Program, İstanbul: 2017).

<sup>21</sup> *Milliyet*, Sosyal Meskenlerde Gecekondu, (Milliyet Daily Newspaper, 13 August, 1967), 1.

the space for mutual gatherings, celebrations, weddings and birthdays.<sup>22</sup> The staircases and open corridors were also used by the neighbours jointly as both living and storage spaces.

The open spaces in-between the apartment blocks have been altered according to residents' common needs. The storage space or semi-open structures for car parking has been expanded on the street level. In addition to these functions, many incomplete structures under transformation are standing around the blocks or in the empty lots, serving as open living rooms for inhabitants and their guests on summer days. Edible gardens or enclosures for animals also redefined the common spaces. Built through individual initiations, many of the inhabitants have benefited from these interventions. Changing functions such as the renovation of car parking into a market space or a playground have been among the flexible usages that have adapted the buildings to everyday life. Consequently, the popular use of common spaces has created unexpected encounters and strong bonds between neighbors after many years (fig. 5).<sup>23</sup>



Fig. 5. A semi-open structure for gathering. Photo by the author.

## Deprivation, densification and stagnation

After the 1980s, with changing regulations and new lifestyles, the neighbourhood was deprived of its cultural activities. Inhabitants who are old enough to remember, mentioned cinemas and community picnics in the park. The now closed down cinema is located in the centre of the initial plan, yet the current function of the area has additional commercial usage. There are still various little shops open, like the adjacent two-storey markets. Although they refer to their memories with a kind of nostalgia, their concerns include the deprivation of daily encounters with neighbours and the lack of cultural activities to bring the younger generations together. According to the interviewees, the community spirit has deteriorated. While the

<sup>22</sup> Interview 1, 2014, see Şoher. *Modern Yapı Stoğunun*.

<sup>23</sup> Interview 1–2, 2014, see Şoher. *Modern Yapı Stoğunun*.



common spaces were functionally transformed, some of the empty lots in and around the project were assigned for new public housing projects. As a result, the number of public facilities has decreased, while the demand from the increased number of inhabitants has increased (fig. 6).



*Fig. 6. An extension for different purposes. Photo by the author.*

Tozkoparan was declared an urban renewal area in 2008. The risk of an earthquake was the underlying reason given for the decision.<sup>24</sup> The neighborhood organisation and residents of the area have taken legal action against the urban renewal process, demanding a transparent, inclusive process. From the point of space-making, the urban renewal process has interrupted the organic transformation of the space. The owners of the rental apartments have been concerned about the future of their buildings and are not enthusiastic about investing in them.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, the interviews showed that they felt neglected by the public authorities in the ongoing renewal debate. They complain of a lack of maintenance and insufficient provisions of public services. Many inhabitants have left the area as a result of these ambiguous conditions. One of the reasons for urban renewal was social deterioration, although deterioration occurred as one of the results of the urban renewal decision, making it a self-fulfilling prophecy.

## Within the narrative of modernity and architecture

Comprehensive research on the case study has introduced a further discussion on modernism in architecture and the discourse on modern planning and architecture. As described above, the given example accommodates many of the characteristics of the period where early modernist ideas in architecture have been implemented. Although realised with semi-industrial construction methods, the morphological attributes of the apartment buildings, the repetitive nature and the urban planning principles enabled the project to be evaluated within the scope of criticisms towards contemporary physical environments.

<sup>24</sup> Mimdap. ("TOKİ Güngören'in çehresini değiştirecek" 2008. Accessed June 12, 2014).

<sup>25</sup> Interview 3, 2015, see Şoher. *Modern Yapı Stoğunun*.

The modern examples of the post-World War II period have been severely criticised for poorly representing social complexities, lacking references to locality, personal experience or geographical/climatic variations and for their dependence on industrial development and mass production.<sup>26</sup> All through the second half of the century, protests against planned housing zones and mass-housing projects took place and citizens claimed their rights to participate in the decision-making processes regarding their city.<sup>27</sup> But social housing projects, such as Tozkoparan were designed by central organisations, such as the Ministry of Reconstruction and Resettlement and as parts of central housing programs. In cases such as the Plattenbau in Germany, the industrialised production of houses helped the authorities improve the standards of living for millions of inhabitants,<sup>28</sup> even while those were to reside in these environments vehemently protested their construction. Within this rapid production, an architecture incorporating the theoretical arguments of the beginning of the century was hard to recognise. At the same time, the leading role of architecture and urbanism was to be questioned.

Following these transformations, new tendencies in architecture in the second half of the century, especially autonomous architecture or new design approaches “for a theoretically rigorous architecture” detracted from the utopian or socially engaged position.<sup>29</sup> As a consequence of the economic agenda of the 1980s, social housing, as one of the gains of the welfare politics was absorbed by market dynamics and the majority of architectural production has become more finance-oriented, concerned with securing the returns on investment for investors.<sup>30</sup> Following the traces of modernism in the contemporary urban structure, therefore reflects a form of nostalgia, a longing for a belief that an industrial utopia was possible to achieve.<sup>31</sup> From the perspective of architecture and urbanism disciplines, the nostalgia is more evident regarding the belief that this utopia was to be reached through the disciplines’ tools.

Hilde Heynen argues that the notions inherent to early modern ideologies in architecture, such as “open plan, transparency between inside and outside, collective housing, rationalization, hygiene, efficiency, and ergonomics”<sup>32</sup> were tools to transform the domestic life radically to an extent that would affect the domestic roles, individuals’ attachments to material possessions and so on. From Sant’Elia’s *Manifesto of Futurist Architecture* (1915) to Siegfried Giedeon’s *Befreites Wohnen* (1929) a new architecture was represented as a tool to create change, where the

<sup>26</sup> Mumford, Eric Paul. *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism: 1928–1960*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002); Goldhagen, Sarah Williams. and Legault, Réjean. “Introduction: Critical themes of postwar modernism”, In *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar*, ed. Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Réjean Legault, (Montréal : Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2000); Hays. *Architecture's desire*.

<sup>27</sup> Rowlands, Robert., Musterd, Sako. and Van Kempen, Ronald. *Mass housing in Europe: multiple faces of development, change and response*, (Basingstoke: Pallgrave Macmillan, 2009); Stickells, Lee. and Rice, Charles. “Interview with Reinhold Martin”, *Architectural Theory Review*, 15(3), 324–331, (2010).

<sup>28</sup> O’Sullivan, Feargus. “A Second Life for Berlin’s Plattenbau”, (London: CityLab, September 8, 2018).

<sup>29</sup> Cowherd, Robert. “Notes on Post-criticality: Towards an Architecture of Reflexive Modernisation”, *Footprint*, 3(1), 65–76, (2009), 67.

<sup>30</sup> Ghidoni, Matteo. “Editorial”, *San Rocco*, 10: Ecology, 3–9, (2014), 8; Rowlands. *Mass housing in Europe*; Stickells. “Interview with Reinhold Martin”.

<sup>31</sup> Buck-Morss, Susan. “The city as dreamworld and catastrophe”, *October*, Vol. 73, (Summer, 1995), 9.

<sup>32</sup> Heynen, Hildegard. “Modernity and domesticity: Tensions and contradictions”, In *Negotiating domesticity: Spatial productions of gender in modern architecture*, ed. Hildegard Heynen and Gülsüm Baydar, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 16.

space itself needs to be in constant transformation.<sup>33</sup> But as Heynen pointed out, new cultural patterns evolved around consumerism requiring a domestic architecture such as any other product, which is based on personal choice and perhaps in recent times also based on the idea of customisation, rather than standardization and uniformity.<sup>34</sup> Both the notion of standardized minimum space and public space were discontinued as a consequence of the neo-liberal economy and it was not only the fault of the original design ideas.<sup>35</sup> The changing perspective on housing was only a part of a more complex network of dynamics.

Both the architecture theory and the grand narrative around the failure of modernism evoked a disengagement from the social positioning. However, this nostalgia around the modern heritage is not to lead to a romanticisation of the problems of these environments or on the contrary, to strengthen the myth of failure. Investigated thoroughly examples such as Tozkoparan, manifest the merits and the problems of the modernist experiment under the influence of changing housing politics.

## As a conclusion

Leaving the similarities aside, not all the post-war housing estates are uniform. Therefore, it is important to understand the internal and external dynamics that have affected the specific examples, no matter how similar their physical characteristics or their appearance might be.<sup>36</sup> A great many distinguished studies have been conducted to understand these environments by focusing on the larger policy and planning choices, rather than being solely distracted by the architectural production.<sup>37</sup>

The original Tozkoparan neighborhood has many physical characteristics in common with post-war housing estates from different geographical and economic contexts. In that sense, Ada Huxtable's (1981) opinion on Le Corbusier's Pessac neighbourhood, in her article published in the *New York Times*, is very relevant in the evaluation of Tozkoparan as a modern housing estate: "flexible enough to endure". While many examples have already been demolished or on the contrary, preserved in their entirety, this example has endured urban transformation due to the flexibility of its architecture and the flexibility hidden in the cultural patterns and the history of urban politics in Turkey.

<sup>33</sup> Schaeffer, Emil, and Giedion, Siegfried. *Befreites wohnen*. (Frankfurt, Orell Füssli, 1929); Sant'Elia, Antonio. "Manifesto of Futurist Architecture, 1914", In *Futurist Manifestos*, ed. Umbro Apollonio, (New York: Viking Press, 1973, 160–172.

<sup>34</sup> Heynen. "Modernity and domesticity", 19.

<sup>35</sup> Deckker, Thomas. (Ed.), *Modern City Revisited*, (Abingdon-on-Thames, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2000), 3.

<sup>36</sup> Power, Anne. *Estates on the edge*, (2nd), (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 83; Urban, Florian. *Tower and slab: histories of global mass housing*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2013), 2–5.

<sup>37</sup> Bristol, Katharine G. "The Pruitt-Igoe Myth", *Journal of Architectural Education* 44(3), 163–171, (1991); Hanley, Lynsey. *Estates: An intimate history*, (London: Granta, 2007); Rowlands, Robert., Musterd, Sako. and Van Kempen, Ronald. *Mass housing in Europe: multiple faces of development, change and response*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Maudlin, Daniel and Vellinga, Marcel. (Eds.), *Consuming architecture: On the occupation, appropriation and interpretation of buildings*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2014); Swenarton, Mark., Avermaete, Tom. and Van den Heuvel, Dirk. *Architecture and the welfare state*, (New York and London: Routledge, 2014).



*Fig. 7. A house block in the Tozkoparan neighbourhood. Photo by the author.*

Today, the majority of Istanbul has self-regulated origins. This means that the density and organization of building blocks are mostly organic and/or they have followed the geometry of previous parcelization originating in agricultural or industrial usages. Few early examples of planned areas such as Tozkoparan are voids in the urban texture; instead, they display vertical development and the constant densification of the city. The lack of claims or responsibility over the open spaces gave the neighbourhood its unique, lively relationships and physical characteristics. At the same time, the ratio of open spaces to housing is the reason why these areas became the target of urban renewal decisions in the first place.

Reflecting a nostalgia towards a previous period of housing policies, Tozkoparan has been flexible enough to endure social, economic and social change because and in spite of the conditions it has gone through. Evaluated within the scope of its unique history, the neighbourhood represents some of the promises of early modernist approaches in architecture and also many problematic sides of the urban politics of the last 50 years. The flexibility and/or the inadequacies enabled ongoing space making processes where the inhabitants managed to appropriate the space according to their changing needs. Considering two perspectives in the same example, an important outcome of this research is what it has granted us: An important testimony of a past from which we can learn lessons about the significance of the human scale and the undefined in-between spaces.

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