



Tmovski pristan 2, p.p. 4717, 1127 Ljubljana, SLOVENIA
Phone: +386 1 420 13 00, fax: +386 1 420 13 30
E-mail: info@uirs.si, web: <http://www.uirs.si>



Workshop 24 - Cross-border Second Home Ownership

Minority versus Majority: Privileges for "Homes"

Beril Özmen Mayer

berozma@gmail.com

Nesil Baytin

nesil.baytin@emu.edu.tr

Paper presented at the ENHR conference
"Housing in an expanding Europe:
theory, policy, participation and implementation"

Ljubljana, Slovenia

2 - 5 July 2006

MINORITY VERSUS MAJORITY: PRIVILEGES FOR HOMES

*Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nesil Baytin & Assist. Prof. Dr. Beril Özmen-Mayer
Eastern Mediterranean University, Faculty of Architecture,
U-HERA (Unit for Housing, Education, Research, Advisory Services)
u-hera@emu.edu.tr, nesil.baytin@emu.edu.tr, berozma@gmail.com*

Abstract

Within the framework of existing political conditions in North Cyprus, high demand for "Second Homes" by the people of EU countries, mostly of UK, resulted in production of increasing number of single family dwellings either individually or as housing estates, causing an intense momentum in the construction industry and activation in the economy. However, this bright picture is shadowed by the negative impacts of this sudden 'housing boom'.

In this paper, first the main framework which shapes the state-of-art of housing sector will be given. Secondly, contradictions-versus- implicit in existing situation will be analyzed and evaluated from multi-dimensional points of view with the aim of elucidating the negative consequences, which are given in the following chapter. As a summary, the main point will be questioning the privileges of "the minority as non-locals" for owning "secondary homes" in contradiction to "the majority as local citizens" becoming, rapidly, incapable of affording even 'first homes'. The study goes on with further 'questions and remarks' since the main goal is to open up a discussion on this utterly important issue which should continue beyond the scope of this paper and the conference.

Body Text

This paper was written on the basis of the ongoing experience of North Cyprus on housing. This review could not be based on a wide range of literature review on account of any organized research, which has not yet been commenced based on satisfying degree of a quantitative study. On the basis of the island has a very specific socio-political grounds, obscurity in the statistics and lack of information are imposed by the conflicting issues in the area in last few decades; data collection is being undertaken on the issue by some international bodies which are not open to the publicity. Therefore, the methodology followed is based on literature survey including the local and foreign newspapers, observations on the cases, interpretation of piecemeal works, and real-life experiences. The fact that island of Cyprus in general, Northern part in particular, has an extraordinary socio-political situation which makes this experience unique in the sense that the conditions shaping it and its outcomes are full of contradictions, each and every of them being oppose to the other, makes it necessary for the authors refer to the paradoxes of relevant political grounds where necessary. This paper deals with the state-of-art of housing under the light of the current socio-political and economic conditions, both from global and local perspectives. Its future impacts are going to be emphasized for the benefit of both the country itself and of Expanding Europe.

1. Picturing the Problems of Housing in North Cyprus

Island of Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean that is located 65 km away from Turkey, 95 km from Syria, 350 km from Egypt and 750 km from Greece. Its political attractiveness stems from its location, the eastern corner of Mediterranean region, which has always had great geopolitical significance due to not only political ambitions but also its natural beauties (James, 2002). Two native communities, the Turkish and Greek Cypriots have been sharing the island settled in two separate States, 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' in Northern and 'Republic of Cyprus' in Southern part. However, the Greek part represents the whole island since the international community, with the exception of Turkey, does not recognize the TRNC as a sovereign nation. As one of the consequences of this situation Turkish part has been and still is under economical and social embargos applied by the Western world, bringing with it difficult economic conditions versus the economical welfare of the Greek part. In 2004, per capita GDP income is \$20,961 for Greek Cypriots; about \$7,350 for Turkish Cypriots (US Dept. of State, 2006). With recourse to political jargon 'Cyprus conflict or stalemate', conflict between two native communities could not be solved since 1950s. The first major movement towards to a solution was 'opening of the borders' between them on 23rd April 2003. Following was the Referenda in both sides in 24 April 2004, based on the Annan Proposal which was developed through United Nation in search for Reunification. The results were devastating as the Greek part voted 76 % as 'No', whereas in the North part it was 65 % as 'Yes'. These two events, accelerating the ongoing changes in the last 5 years now, triggered housing and construction sectors, forged the framework of the housing experience of North Cyprus in a very problematical manner.

According to UN Resolution Plan should any conflict appears, anybody who has invested in a property, would have compensation rights afterwards. This factor influenced foreigners and Turkish Cypriots who would like to use this as an opportunity to "import Buyers" instead of "exporting Goods" in the case that embargoes may continue for a longer period. In line with this, after the Referenda, increasing expectancy on removal of the embargos and admittance to EU, encourage foreigners to own land and 'Secondary Homes' in the Northern part. Foreign investors and their local counterparts, getting very much aware of this attraction, began to invest heavily on land, and construction of 'Housing Estates' gained an unforeseen impetus. Housing construction sector boosted, resulting in ever-increasing prices, leaving no room for the middle-income locals to have even their first 'Homes' through this momentum. The housing boom has added more complications to the existing socio-political problems due to different reasons. For instance, the conflicting situations of Turkish Cypriot living in former Greek Cypriot property in the north, and Greek Cypriots living in former Turkish Cypriot property left in the south of the island cause problems. This has been more intensified through dispensation of 'unrecognized titles' of land or property to foreigners in 'an unrecognized state' (Bryant, 2005).

If the background of the construction industry reviewed as in January 1991; it can be perceived as an important segment of the Turkish Cypriot economy. This sector provided about 10 percent of employment and about 7 percent of GDP in the late 1980s. Demand for housing, especially for the refugees displaced by the events of 1974, extensive work on the infrastructure, and a rapidly expanding tourist industry accounted for much of this activity. Government financed housing programs for civil servants also helped maintain the construction industry. The cost of government sponsored social housing was cheaper than in the private sector and permitted ordinary wage-earners to become homeowners as a governmental set off sensible solutions to the housing problems on that period (Anon. 2005).

In 1980-1990, outcome of new establishment of several universities as an educational investment to the island by the initiation of Turkey, later by the private enterprises, housing construction and demand have increased in line with the population of students and staff of these universities. Small towns of North Cyprus, for instance, Gazimagusa has started to change their features and turning into a medium size university town with the population of 64 429 in the last Census (Soyer, 2006). The city owns the biggest university named Eastern Mediterranean University with 16000 students and staff. The main consequence was new, unplanned urban housing construction on areas with insufficient infrastructure and public amenities due to the rapid and spontaneous development. However, the rate has never been faster than ever as in the present housing and construction boom.

In the period of 1990 to the New Millennium 2000, the development of construction sector underwent a smooth improvement. Later, the process has shifted North Cyprus becoming a 'Pull centre' because of having competitiveness of a virgin island, a 'to-be' part of EU and significantly cheaper one, even if there is a restriction of buying only one residence for one name. In the Housing Boom, in between 2002-2006, the housing market developed into a very active situation. Great number of houses have exceedingly been produced and all over North Cyprus, including seashores, urban centres, peripheries or totally outside the cities, wherever is available. After a couple of years from the hot agenda of Annan Plan of United Nation, this speculative phenomenon dramatically is traced in all northern regions especially in Girne which is the most demanded vicinity and resort area of the island. Even in mountainous sites have been filled with villas to sell non- local people at the expense of erasing the natural topography.

Due to the economic struggles, Cypriot Turks began to sell their land to clarify unwanted title deeds, as well as to obtain economic viability. If we revise some statistical data, 2600 dönüm (1,337.8 m²) property in total were sold to Greeks in last 30 years, 1974-2004. Afterwards, this amount has come up to 2827 dönüm only in the year 2004; continued as 1300 dönüm in the first ten months of 2005 as by effects of Annan Plan. As a result, the land sold to foreigners is 4127 dönüm since 2004. Quantity of permission of construction to foreign nationals; in the city of Girne (Kyrenia), is 2006, in Gazimagusa (Famagusta) 485, Lefkosa (Nicosia) 469 in last 20 months. The foreign buyers has raised % 276 in last four years, 2002 - 2006 with total numbers 2714 for individual applications (Anon, 2 Aug. & 20 Feb. 2006).

2. Paradoxes

PARADOX I IN-clusion of European Union 'Versus' EX-clusion

EU Expectancy on the Agenda was in contradictory between two communities in Cyprus, even if mostly both governments have been pretending to share the same political views. In the meantime, situation of North has not been improved after the borders opening, although she voted in favour of re-unification; embargoes are still applied and hopes to unify again as a recognized state are fading away. This is the prime 'versus'/ contradictory component shaping the whole framework pertaining to the 'Housing' experience since local people regards to the boost in construction sector as the only opportunity and means for achieving the economic welfare that they were anticipating to attain. Yet, it is due to the very same reason that foreign people invest in property in Northern part: The prices are incomparably lower than their homelands as cost of living. Pension wages of Europeans is enough to live in a certain standards in the island. Besides, prices of the properties increase along with the cost of living for the local people, since it is also arranged according to the purchasing

capacity of the foreigners who are paid in more strong currencies against to Turkish Liras in consequence of high demands to raising profit in this blur atmosphere. As a conclusion, this paradox has brought social un-sustainability in terms of coherence of legality in the application of different criteria for the citizens of North, and the South.

PARADOX II

Legalizing Property –Versus- Unknown Situation of the Land

In northern part of the island, housing sector has exploded for two main reasons: The first issue is the expectations of Turkish citizens to become a part of Europe as the whole island, and the second is related to the solutions brought by the UN Resolution Plan to the existing problems of deeds of land and property, since the government of Greek part, which is recognized internationally, claims that most of the land in the north has Greek titles and occupied by their Turkish counterparts. With the hope of becoming a part of the European Union, local people rushed for legalization of their title deeds before the referenda. They have either extended their existing buildings or have constructed new houses. In the meantime, various type of housing, such as single family detached and semi- detached homes, villas and flats were constructed and sold to foreigners or to local high- income group. This was the first series of hectic efforts in this sector, as if 'rushing to not the gold but to the property' in case of acceptance of UN Resolution plan by both sides.

It was a very dramatic momentum to solve ownership problems of immovable properties. Actually, these attempts have accelerated and brought lots of side effects and complications, while an international recognition for title deeds were searched for. Although, nobody - Turkish Cypriot or Foreign- is assured about ownership, housing sector has persisted to be boosted. Everyday, new rules and arrangements are being implemented by official departments, sparking off citizens' expectations on these matters. Consequently, legalising process of landed properties has pushed the sector in very unhealthy development in multiple levels and dimensions.

PARADOX III

EU People invests in TRNC -Versus- the "Acquis Communautaire"

When Cyprus entered the European Union in 2004, the entire island was supposed to become under the treaty of the EU rules and regulations, which is called the "Acquis Communautaire". The major point here is that the European law is to be implemented only in the areas of the 'Republic of Cyprus', under the control of the internationally recognized government, until 'Re-unification' occurs, as the European Commission concluded in Helsinki, 1999. Therefore, 'the Acquis' has been suspended in the unrecognized North (The Washington Times, 2002). While certain outlying regions of the EU obtain exemptions from EU law, Northern Cyprus is the only part of the Union where such laws are not enforceable, claiming North Cyprus being illegal part of the island.

The reality is just the reverse: In earlier years, a small amount of population from Western Europe especially from UK, Germany and Holland have been buying houses especially for living after retirement in this warm corner of the Mediterranean climate. Since 2003, more foreigners were attracted to buy more houses, after the border gates along Green Line were opened, providing easier access to the northern part through south, without any touch-down to the airports of Turkey; as known, direct flights from Europe to Northern Cyprus have been forbidden by the South after division of the island in 1974. It is fair to say that foreign people

flooded to Northern Cyprus either to buy a 'Secondary House' or for spending rest of their life or simply for investment purposes, attracted by the natural beauties of the land in this warm corner of the Mediterranean climate and low cost of living, ignoring the 'suspension' of Acquis Communautaire and international laws.

Consequences of this 'versus' are multidimensional, some examples are given below to mention but a few: Puzzling cases and persecutions resulting in law courts have taken place for Turkish people, Greeks and foreigners in relation to illegal use of the property. For instance, a British couple "Orams" has been sued due to construction of a villa on a Greek Cypriot's former property in Lapithos Village with prosecution to pay a compensation and demolition of the villa by the Greek Cypriot Court in the south. Since Greek Cypriot parliament demanded that Orams be judged by the courts in their country, the case is currently under appeal of London High Court, to be dealt with on 18 - 20 July, 2006. Foreigners are waiting for the final results of this case, which would be a sample agreement afterwards (Wilson, 2005; Anon, 8 April 2006). Furthermore, rejection of Greek Cypriots against the Turkish Cypriots' challenge and UN efforts for reunification has directed individuals to implement legal mechanisms in the northern side. For instance, an English occupant of Karmi, an old village where the community of mostly foreigners restored the houses on long-term leases provided by Turkish Cypriot government and habituated "as a foreign enclave", made complaint of the case that a Greek Cypriot woman and friends visited the house, formerly her father's coffee shop, and enter the garden to pick some flowers up; were arrested for trespassing, detained overnight and released with a fine by the Turkish Authorities (Bryant, 2005). In spite of all that were pointed out above, investments continue increasingly generating new demands, as contrary to the European Laws by its own European citizens.

PARADOX IV

Housing Boom -Versus- Affordability: Minority -Versus- Majority

Through the housing boom mentioned above, market prices of housing become close to the ones in other EU countries. The cost of living has started to rise due to the increasing number of foreign population who are able to pay in foreign currency while Turkish money is losing its value; prices are arranged according to their purchasing power and changing demands imposed by them of the society.

Furthermore, a socially significant issue regarding 'First' homes of locals is that young people prefer to have their own homes before they get married, showing the similar association as in some of the Western countries as mentioned by some researchers (Mulder, 2005). To this end, either with the supports from the families or through getting credits from banks or both, it was within young people's reach to own a house. At present, due to the enormous increase in the prices, this tradition has become a luxury for middle-income group and a privilege only for the children of the high-income. Actually, families are willing to prepare their children's homes as part of their future, which has been an ongoing tradition, in North Cyprus.

Conclusively, this panorama causes the local and the others, who face to the situation of negative impacts with a social unbalance and inequity in the country. The outcome is excessively opposed to the principles of 'social sustainability'. Foreigners as minority in the population, who are able to afford to buy, are pouring money to invest for their 'Secondary Homes' in the European Borders. Nowadays, this reality is opposite to the majority as local people, who can not afford to buy their 'First' homes.

PARADOX V

Housing Boom -Versus- Inadequate Public Amenities: 'Houses + Houses Only'

In the initial stage of Housing Boom, the private investigator has focused mostly for second homes or holiday houses for both locals and foreigners. Yet, they built "housing + housing only" without providing any public facilities. The requirement of the outdoor and indoor facilities decreases in an enormous way because of lack of public facilities. This can be seen any different level of housing scheme in North Cyprus at the moment such as in the cluster of single family houses, group villas, housing estates. Apparently, residential environments needs to be fed with better neighbourhood relations through designing private, public and in-between domains; not only just houses next to each other. In the meantime, the old-fashioned by-laws in housing sector provide these possibilities not designing in the realm of qualitative and innovative principles in all related professions. The housing schemes are seen as a series of resembled copies of group of villas. Surprisingly, some firms claim that they are building people's dreams with these copy-and- paste monotonous environments (Ozmen-Mayer, 2006). Afterwards, poor standards of construction and designs in housing integrate with the city as well as a vast extension in parallel to the seashores to deteriorate the ecological features and the climate.

PARADOX VI

Appropriate Housing for the Local -Versus- the New-Comer

Within the framework of the above mentioned physical environment, built-environment of North Cyprus consists of the building stock of varied types in line with the peculiarities of the island's historical periods, such as Lusignan, Venetian, Ottoman, British and more recent modern architecture. Building practices of nations dominating in the island have been loyal to the already existing architectural culture which was in harmony with the requirements of natural environment before global impact took over this governance. Moreover, along the Mediterranean coast, as different climates require different architectural responses, vernacular architecture developed many authentic typologies and technologies in order to satisfy many different necessities through the centuries. Not only this architecture is very suitable to the climatic needs of different regions, but also to their varying economical, cultural and social needs. In modern societies many features of this kind of architecture seems to be out of date; new technologies and new materials and construction processes are in the market. In contrast to our tight bonds to high technology, the new millennium is an era when energy saving has, necessarily, become one of the main problems of the world, whereas vernacular architecture has been and is still, fully, offering positive notions that can be borrowed. They are much more considerate enough to sustain the Earth's resources and reverts the environmental impacts into positive ways, therefore, more sustainable than the modern ones. There is a treasure of studies analyzing the vernacular architecture for Mediterranean basin in its climatic aspects, showing how a traditional method is still observed not only as fundamental characters of our cultural heritage, but also as compatible with the environmental factors which should be taken into consideration for having high environmental and sustainable quality while taking the responsibility of creating new housing environments in this overwhelmingly important part of Mediterranean Region (Rasulo, 2003).

Although, it would not sound realistic to propose to apply 'original building traditions', since overall circumstances have drastically altered; it is possible to learn from them to adapt some of the principles of the space use and habits and building alternatives to the new designs. Some construction methods and material can be 'replicated in modern terms' (Dincyurek et al., 2003). Nowadays, nearly all new housing schemes in North Cyprus are

designed and built without consideration the local architectural values and lifestyle due to the global profit makers. This changes housing typology excessively. Hence, hardly any noble examples with a vernacular touch can be monitored in this manner as the market forces shaped architectural route of the country by the reason of insensitive mass production of homes.

PARADOX VII

Untouched Ecology -Versus- Torn Apart & Invested Land

In latest periods of modernization, in which new materials, technology have been used in the design and construction as a means of controlling indoor environment, buildings which are not orientated any consistency with prevailing wind, flora and fauna and the overall natural environment. Increase of population in urban areas and, consequently, in land prices resulted in the construction of multi-storey apartment houses, either individually or as mass-housing projects having the same ignorance, even the one-family dwellings followed same route mainly in urban areas, following in rural ones. Consequently, built environment acquires the architectural quality neither in building nor in settlement scale.

As well known, landscape of Cyprus is characterized by mountains, plains and beaches. The two highest mountain ranges of Cyprus are Troodos, that covers most of the southern and western portions of the island, and Besparmak which runs along most of the north coastline. The mountains are separated by the Central Mesaoria Plain that extends the length of the island from east to west and is noticeable for production of cereal crops and having wide variety of wildflowers throughout the seasons. Cyprus boasts many clean and intact sandy beaches in the world offering a variety of water sports. Moreover, Caretta Carettas- Green Turtles of the Mediterranean lay their eggs in the Karpaz area beaches during summertime which emphasizes these ecological distinct characteristics. Speaking on general grounds, building construction is one of the main activities, which causes contamination of the environment and consuming energy sources of many settlements in the Earth. Architecture is one of the profession should be in harmony with nature, including its immediate environs. Last few years in political and economic life of North Cyprus has led excessive housing production to deteriorate even the most precious pieces of lands in terms of natural beauty and 'Untouched'ness, to the degree of spoiling the natural richness of the country, which is by itself a treasure and for the tourism sector.

PARADOX VIII

Villas of Luxury -Versus- Insufficient Infrastructure

Non-existence of master or no implementation of the plan either in country or in the city scale has been observed, except for the capital city of Lefkosa. Any kind of development as industrial, residential, etc. is undertaken with no reference to the whole, spur-of-the-moment actions are taken on the land wherever available for construction. Roads, cables and power linkages, telecommunication, water supply are provided spontaneously without base on an overall planned network. Therefore, both the superstructure and infrastructure are implemented in an undisciplined way. Regretfully, while running after the ambitions to have luxurious houses and profit obtainable through their production, there remains no time and no space for considering the natural environmental factors and the ones related to already existing built environment -historical sites and buildings, wonderful masterpieces of local architecture, and thus respecting the human right to live in harmony with nature and surrounding a qualitative built environment. The future of the country is being built on this

shaking with the grounds of so-called 'global economy' which by some social scientists is, rightly diagnosed as a 'global joke'.

Infrastructure has been decreasing with lack of water, insufficient for electric power, uneven garbage collection and processing because of land filled by construction of new developed villas with pools. Municipality provisions in urban areas are not satisfactory to serving, even far from basic garbage collection. The present service is not dealt with scientific treatments, and turn out hills of garbage in certain areas as in Dikmen in Lefkosa. Relevant environmental problems increase in parallel to the amount of litter collection even with the existing population at present will be multiply with the increasing number of population.

In North Cyprus there is no sewage system; and septic tank are widely used instead, although in the hotels on the coast to have their sewage systems and purification is obligatory. Therefore, it is natural to expect that the new housing developments on the coastal lines will pollute the clean sea already having the 'Blue Flag'. In Girne region where most of the housing estates are constructed for and by the foreigners, in line with the increasing population, sea contamination has already begun to send signals through the observation and discomfort given to the human-beings by the existence of large medusas for the first time this year in North Cyprus.

Another issue is the shortage of electrical energy. It is very expensive since existing electric-power stations are insufficient in quality and quantity; therefore, some amount is imported from the Greek side. In recent years energy cuts began to be more often and for longer periods than the locals have got used to, making every sector suffer, including universities. The problem has many facets: It is the result of increasing population and number of houses and villas having enough number of spaces for almost each member of the family to have his-her room necessitating artificial lighting during night time. Furthermore, air conditioning is considered as the only way to provide heating and cooling in the country, while central heating was out of question until most recently; and it became a concern of some constructors in case of foreigners request central heating. However, it has to be notified that this system needs to have an extra energy source, be it electricity or fuel oil, or any other, which has to be imported as well as seeking for more renewable and sustainable solutions.

North Cyprus has a population of almost 265,000 with the foreign university students about 26,000 and the tourism sector with capacity of 3000 beds. The consumptive water supplies for these major groups are: for Residents: 250; Universities: 150; Tourism: 200 litre for a day per person. Respectively, the percentages of residential, industrial, and commercial use of water are 80%, 12% and 8%. Water shortage is another great problem which began in the 1960s. Recent research on rainfall in Southern Cyprus indicates that there is presently 14% less rainfall than the beginning of this century. Aquifers in North Cyprus have been the island's main water resource since no perennial streams are available, however, Guzelyurt coastal aquifer, the biggest providing water to the whole country, faces alarmingly salt-water intrusion due to water extraction above the safe threshold. This causes not only higher values of salt contamination along the coastal aquifers, but also the depletion of the small size inland aquifers within 10 years (Elkiran & Ergil, 2005).

These are the striking facts obtained through scientific studies, local people have real life experiences confirming with them. They suffer of the water shortage since running water is provided twice or three times a week and in insufficient amounts by the municipality, even at a considerable price. Therefore, they have to buy water for the daily household use from the private firms or individuals selling water of questionable quality. Drinking water is mostly bought from and transported to houses by some private companies which were encouraged

by growing demand and the resulting deficiency to use small-scale desalination plants operating the reverse osmosis method to meet their needs or it is imported from Turkey and sold in the markets. It is obvious that these add up to the water budget of the local households and to the country. While the existing situation is at the edge of crisis, while even at present residential use of water is 80% of total and still while the population residing in the country is increasing, in almost every advertisement for a new housing development, one can see the promise for swimming pools, at least two in a small size development or, worse, one for each villa, at reasonable prices with the foreign currency. And the consumers are fascinated by the thought of having outdoor swimming pools usable in nearly eight months a year, which would, perhaps, be impossible even to dream, back in their home countries.

Groundwater resources supply water not only to the municipalities but also to the agricultural sector which is the backbone of the country's economy. Hence, the demand of water for irrigation plays a great role for efficient agricultural production, and especially for the citrus fruits as being one of the main export items. The problem of sacrificing the natural flora and agricultural areas for housing construction has already reached alarming dimensions: North Cyprus is very famous for the quality and pureness of the olive oil produced, but it will hardly be possible even to mention it in a very near future, since olive tree yards are sacrificed to 'sweet profit' of building activity, destroyed one after another, since the owners can not resist the relevant conditions of economy imposed on to them, mentioned in previous paragraphs in detail.

The point is that the consumers of the housing market are mostly from developed Western countries, where citizens take the provision of adequate and sufficient infrastructure, water and electricity by their States granted for, as their natural rights, and where they do not experience these problems. On the other hand, the luxury that they can not afford in their countries is offered in North Cyprus at very affordable costs, so it is, for them, only a monetary issue to have swimming pools or not whereas for the local people water means a lot more than that is "Productivity in agriculture and sustain their life".

PARADOX IX

Environmental Awareness of EU –Versus- Speculative Investments in TRNC

As mentioned before, North Cyprus has a variety of Mediterranean climate, flora and fauna, and topography is very rich, changing from plains to mountains, from valleys to sea coast. Each type of topography is a different input which, if utilized, would enhance housing designs, nevertheless which is hardly ever taken into consideration either by the construction firms or by the 'consumers'. Moreover, topography, in some mountainous areas is changed so harshly that some hills do not exist anymore, for placing housing settlements on flat surfaces. the significant point is that none of the 'consumers' is questioning this approach; instead the requests are on some luxury items: as mentioned above, northern Cyprus is a country where water resources are so scarce that most of the local people is provided with running water by the municipalities only two times a week, while the new comer are requesting individual swimming pools in their gardens.

As it is stated in different sources of news, this building sprout has reached to such "a fever pitch" that people continue buying these mushrooming houses and villas, unconsciously. The construction is even more predatory near to the famous ancient Salamis Ruins in Famagusta, the seashores being filled up with concrete boxes in a very symmetrical way (Markham, 2005). Even the Karpaz area, which is of prime importance not only for the country but for

the whole world, is easily sacrificed due to the ambitious demands for having a 'gorgeous villa' in its close vicinity, is parcelled by the foreign investors and their local partners. Evidently, these valuable terrains are endangered as being construction site in expense of erasing topographies and vegetation as well as animal species in the long run.

In the developing countries, pollution levels are even higher because sewage treatment and industrial regulation are minimal. But for those countries, the consequences of unplanned and poorly managed development go beyond pollution to the destruction of vital coastal resources. When the fact of insufficiency of the infrastructure in the country is considered together with the facts above, it is fair enough to mark the situation as scary as in: (Hinrichsen, 1996)

'Seen closer up, it becomes clear that the planet's coasts are in trouble'

Unfortunately, people are still demanding these houses for their near future without thinking on the Mother Earth's anguish in exchange of having property and houses in an obscure, even illegal way. They do not question if the housing (dwelling unit) they buy on this piece of land have any harm to "Sustainability" of the land and the society, although they are mostly from the western countries in which we believe that awareness over the 'Principles of Sustainable Developments' are higher than here. Actually, this seems to be out of question in these circumstances. Consequently, portrait of 'Secondary homes' in North Cyprus exhibits the significant contradiction in between the renown European awareness to environmental and sustainable matters and what is being realised upon the Request of European people. Most of the people do not question if the housing (dwelling unit) they buy on this piece of land have any harm to "Sustainability" of the land and the society, although they are mostly from the western countries where, presumably, awareness on the 'Principles of Sustainable Developments' are higher than in developing countries. Actually, this seems to be is out of question under current circumstances, the responsibility of consequences remains to be shouldered by the decision-makers on all levels expectations for the Consumer.

Globalization should not, in fact, mean that the Mother Earth be exploited in a 'speculated effort'. Numerous meetings and activities were held, many agreements were signed, and a lot of scientific publications were published in order for protecting the world. When examined with real concern, one will, undeniably, see that, the good intentions, principles, and measures put forward could find implementation only in the developed western countries, and underdeveloped countries were sacrificed for the benefit of global economy. It is obvious that the Western countries are capable of buying anything due to great economic power and high level of technology they have attained. Nevertheless, the state of affairs does not give any creature on Earth the right to spoil the world; nobody is rich enough to be able to pay for the cost of damaging the future of next generations.

3. Overall Impacts on the local architecture

Whereas the positive impact of globalisation is claimed to be a "win-win situations" and to disseminate modern high technologies, breakthroughs and higher living standards all around the world; negative effects cause many contradictory conditions. Globalization confirms homogenisation and integration to the rest of the world. However, a great deal of fragmentation and disintegration intensifying cultural conflicts, transforming into cacophony instead of sophistication, retreating of the civil society, and declining the authority of the state in underdeveloped countries. Besides, *"the process is quite likely to create environmental damages and cultural corrosion"* (Ghosh & Aker, 2006). As a result of the

facts above, towns and lands of Northern Cyprus are altered into a vulnerable level. The results of these sudden developments appeared in an unstable way of living for native groups of people as well as foreign owners. The conflicting matters of this unhealthy development have influenced the country on social, ecological and infrastructure levels. Moreover, the quality of life and architecture in housing environments of North Cyprus has entered in a more problematic route.

On one hand, demand for "Second Homes of Europeans" has triggered the Construction Industry and activated the economy, which is very motivating factor for the local, who are involved with the sector. On the other hand, people has de-motivated due to having higher cost of life, not having enough infrastructure, electricity and water; sharing the natural resources with more human population. In fact, foreign people who are making these investments due to the reason that the Northern part is -actually, was- the untouched piece of land, now it is becoming 'torn- apart', the whole country appears as erasing natural features seems more or less alike a construction site.

The daily life has been paralyzed due to the general structure of these towns, which can not maintain these populations due to undeveloped conditions of the island. It needs to be fore-planned for this specific development beforehand by authorities and professionals with future scenarios of the Cyprus Problem. The heavy impact on the local people life will be seen after a while, because the architecture of the cities, population, nature and ecology are changing in an uncontrollable and unsustainable way, such as all we know, stunning example of globalization from Hong Kong and Dubai. After a while, local people would have no room to live in their society; what is more, their life changing without their consent with their lifestyle, traditions and habits. This is a kind of "permanent stamp effect", and hard to eliminate this when it has happened.

Economical impact of last decade emphasizes that local inhabitants will not afford even first homes or their children's homes for the securing their future, as they are accustomed to as a family tradition in Northern Cyprus. Besides, foreigners can buy and invest second or third houses because of housing market giving extreme profits such as "Yediveren", which is a Turkish saying means that very efficient, fruitful; and it gives "seven" against to "one". Housing supply is needed of demands for foreign nationals to buy houses in Cyprus due to their pension wages are not to live in their countries. Secondly, the life cost is lower than UK and EU countries. Thirdly, they might prefer to live here due to sunny and natural environment. However, there will be no piece of earth remain here if this speedy phase could continues in this manner. In addition to these factors, social isolations of citizens in their own land creates a negative impact in housing estates bought for certain ethnics or nationals; and the ones who afford to build and buy such villas from certain higher income as especially in Girne area. This occurrence also affected as dead investments if there might be not enough buyers/ clients, although housing constructions continue in an explosive way. In other way round, lots of money invested to have these new housing schemes; even if people buy these houses, in which they do not occupy most of the time in a year, may be only in summer or vacations. On top of that, the circumstances create dilemmas against social sustainability, coherence and equity issues accordingly.

4. Questions and Remarks

In the recent four years, increase in housing production for the consumers of 'Secondary Homes' in North Cyprus force out itself in a significantly unsustainable pattern, creating negative effects on society, economy and ecology, which are the trilogy of main principles of sustainability and human well being.

European Housing Expansion into North Cyprus has revealed a framework of an exceptional situation that the land has been speculated by the profit-makers-foreigners and their local counterparts- by abusing the hopes of ordinary people- be it local or foreign, while local government has also taken this opportunity to take advantage of the situation to declare this as "the development of housing sector" in spite of the country, the environment, the nature, the people and the character of the island, without any planning. This can be interpreted as a kind of surrender to the "Global Housing Market"-of global economy-, which is witnessed in other developing countries as well.

North Cyprus is the 'pull centre', a situation taking place due to its natural beauty, and economic features which are advantageous for Europeans. However, there is once more an inconsistency can be observed. The minority group, who is demanding permanent housing in North Cyprus to spend rest of their life, is well over retirement- age, does not contribute to any production in the country, and act only as 'Consumers' of existing energy resources, of environment and nature. Simultaneously, local young generation is being forced to leave TRNC to the EU, especially to UK, seeking for job opportunities, hoping to have reached the economical level enabling them to establish a life, owning a decent house, getting married, settling a secure job in order to make their life more accomplished when they return, all due to the social and economic inequality mentioned above. In reality, this can be expressed as a "brain-drain" amongst local community to EU Countries. The young age-group is inclined to leave the country, is comprised of, mostly, highly-qualified workforce, university graduates. This age-group displacement influences social sustainability in a critical way. Therefore, the issue which would lead to 'competitiveness between European cities' is not only, for better housing standards, but also parameters related to the social, environmental and economic sustainability which would find their reflection on the built environment as the 'Housing environments' appropriate for every citizen of the society.

Through the process of interstate residential mobility, it is desirable that the migrants do participate in the formation of the housing environments in terms of environmental, social and economical consciousness for the country they move in. This necessitates that the migrants do consider themselves equally responsible for the well-being of that foreign land. In case of North Cyprus, new dwellers take part in this process only as 'plain' consumers, not even attempting to question if the dwellings they buy are designed with the due awareness of climatic conditions, of surrounding natural environment such as topography, flora, fauna, and of energy efficiency, let alone remarking about or requesting these issues. Cases might be expressed with many associated issues. The essence of the matter is that there is a task on the 'consumers' as to request the dwelling's appropriateness in its environmental as well as socio-cultural context. For instance, Karmi Village, in the city of Girne, is a housing settlement where the community of mostly English foreigners restored old village houses with the long-term loans given by the Turkish Cypriot Government, in the most suitable way of positive, active and fruitful participation of migrants as to the environment. However, it became a kind of 'Gated community' closed to the local people's home ownership, demonstrating negative impacts of interstate residential mobility.

Therefore, the issue of participation has multi-dimensional. The market works as expected under the conditions of the "Global Economy". Nevertheless, a very significant actor of the market is the user, without whom there would be no market at all, in other words, the user is the one whose requirements and preferences have the power to shape other actors and decision-makers on all levels. With users questioning and requesting that the housing be suitable to the local physical, social and economic environments and sustainable in these terms, which is sometimes called the 'triple bottom line' by which the viability and success of design and development should be assessed the picture is, strongly, encouraged to change (Bennetts, et al., 2002).

....other actors will be approaching to the matter in line with these requirements in order to be able to make profit. This, on the other hand, will make a way to an innovation in housing which will provide homeowners with more for less; enable homebuilders to build more-desirable homes at lower cost; and help governments address major challenges such as making homes more affordable, improving energy efficiency, and reducing susceptibility to natural disasters (Bernstein, et al., 2003).

Accordingly, architecture, profession of introducing, forming and, unfortunate to say- injecting- built-environments into the natural environments in modern era, should provide imaginative and expressive solutions driven by socio-cultural impacts as well as a generation of highly creative designs. It is by definition inter-disciplinary; it requires the collaboration of ecologists, engineers, planners, physicists, psychologists, sociologists, economists, and other specialists, being aware of the requirements and open to the participation of users, to create appropriate conditions for housing production.

This study is hoped to open up a new gate for 'discussion and activity platforms' on the subject in the 'Expanding European Community', in a broader, humanitarian context focusing on, not the 'Global monetary profit' but the 'Global wellness profit', paying particular attention to the issues and conditions forcing North Cyprus change to become a 'torn-apart, spoiled 'piece of land, once 'untouched'. As last but not, at all, the least, the obligation to touch upon the philosophical grounds of developing the built-environment seems to be inevitable and significant: As Kuban, Professor in Architecture, puts forward, characteristically, the state-of-art of affairs is caused not only by the lack of expected organizational efficiency of the bodies such as professional institutions, NGOs, central and local authorities representing their political views, users, etc., but also by the problems such as fraud, partisanship beyond professionalism and politics. The most important deficiency in built environments is that they damage the natural environment; and repulsiveness is dominating to architecture. He, further, refers to Durkheim: "*if the ethical standards are not established, it is impossible to expect that a city serves other functions to the citizen!*" (Kuban, 2006).

Believing that extending this requirement to the built-environment as a whole will not be unfair; we, the architects, design professionals, developers, users, central and local authorities, politicians of the expanding Europe, should try our bests to find ways to work together to produce better designs and implementations in a more ethical manner not only for the sake of built environment, but with the aim of protecting the Earth, which shelters us all. To begin with, let us ask ourselves, courageously:

Who will be the winner and who will be the loser in this game of the global economy, if we go on exploiting the Mother Earth?

References

- Anon, (2 Aug. 2006). KKTC Şantiyeye Döndü. in "Kıbrıs" Local Newspaper.
- Anon, (20 Feb. 2006). Annan Planı Satışı Tetikledi. in "Kıbrıs" Local Newspaper.
- Anon, (2005). Construction Data as of January 1991. www.AllRefer.com-Cyprus-Construction.mht
- Anon, (27 November 2005). İnşaat Böyle Patladı. in "Kıbrıs" Local Newspaper.
- Anon, (8 April 2006). Üç Günde Tamamlanacak. in "Kıbrıs" Local Newspaper.
- Bennetts, H. et al., (2002). Understanding Sustainable Architecture. Spon Press.
- Bernstein et al., (2003). Building Better Homes: Government Strategies for Promoting Innovation in Housing. Rand.
- Bryant, R. (2005). A Dangerous Trend in Cyprus. in Middle East Report: MER 235. Europe and Islam: The Challenge of Inclusion. <http://merip.org/mer/mer235/Bryant.html>
- Dincyurek, O., Mallick, F. H., Numan I. (2003). Cultural and environmental values in the arcaded Mesaorian houses of Cyprus. Building and Environment, Volume 38, Issue 12, December: 1463-1473.
- Elkiran, G. and Ergil, M. (2005). The Assessment of Water Budget of North Cyprus. Building and Environment. www.sciencedirect.com (doi:10.1016/j.buildenv.2005.06.014). Elsevier.
- Ghosh, B.N. and Aker, S. (2006). Future of North Cyprus: An economic-strategic appraisal. doi:10.1016/j.futures.2006.02.013. Elsevier.
- Hinrichsen, D. (1996). Coasts in Crisis. National Academy of Sciences. Issues in Science and Technology, Vol. 12- Summer. Gale Group: 39.
- ICG- International Crisis Group. (8 March 2006). The Cyprus Stalemate: What Next? Europe Report N°171. www.crisisgroup.org.
- James, A. (2002). Keeping the Peace in the Cyprus Crisis of 1963-64, Palgrave: 3-4.
- KUBAN, D. (May 2006) for Istanbul, "a speech" in Istanbul Chamber of Architects, Istanbul.
- Markham, N. (2005, August 28). Will This Goldrush Mean the Rape of Northern Cyprus? Olive Groves Are Bulldozed as Ever More Property Speculators Grab Land Ahead of a Political Solution. The Mail on Sunday. London, England: 1.
- Mulder, C. H. (2005). Home Ownership and Family Formation. ENHR Congress, Reykjavik.
- Ozmen-Mayer, B. (2006). "Cut & Paste"; "Produce & Sell" Housing. Second Housing Symposium, Association of Northern Cyprus Chamber of Engineers and Architects, Mavi Basin, Lefkosa, pp: 173-188.

Rasulo, M. (2003). Vernacular Architecture related to the climate in the Mediterranean Basin: a Lesson We Should Learn. International Journal for Housing and Its Applications. Vol. 27, no. 3: 177-188.

Soyer, F. S. (5 may 2006). TRNC Prime Minister's Declaration on the Census. www.kktcbasbakanlik.org/

The Washington Times. (1 Nov 2002) Cyprus and the EU. News World Communications, Inc.; Gale Group: A 22.

US Department of State. (January 2006). Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5376.htm#people>.

Wilson, S. (14 April 2005). N. Cyprus Property Row Hots up. BBC News, <http://bbc.co.uk>.