



The Model Housing and Urban Rehabilitation of Sambuca Di Sicilia, Italy

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Abstract

This paper aimed to study the concept of the urban and cultural environment in terms of rehabilitation to initially reprogram, redevelop the area, and conduct the analysis of images of the city. Theories, figures and grounds, and traditional architecture were also studied based on the sustainable city population and old urban rehabilitation in the studied area for the adaptation of old houses to present-day life and the acceptable standards by providing modern facilities in Sambuca di Sicilia, Agrigento, Sicily, Italy. Besides, literature was also employed to understand the theories used to create tools for analyzing the studied areas, leading to the results of the program design. There are three main areas; firstly, economic district consisting of markets and hostels, secondly, reconstruction of old buildings for housing, and lastly, vacation house and street arts according to public and private tourism policy and conservation of Arab-baroque architectural styles. The result is in a conceptual plan given to buyers and real estate developers in the city. To study trends and development directions according to the state policy to help decide when investing in real estate. The study is designed to apply to any cities with the same problems.

Keywords: Urban rehabilitation, Housing, Tourist city, Sambuca di Sicilia, Arab architectural style, Baroque architectural style.

1. Introduction

Sambuca di Sicilia is a commune (municipality) in Agrigento province, Sicily, Italy. The city has a total area of 96.37 km². It is located 350 m above sea level between Lago Arancio lake and Monte Genuardo Monte, surrounded by nature and vineyards. Sambuca in 2016 won the “Borgo dei Borghi” award for the most beautiful village in Italy.

Sambuca has a long history and been widely known as Saracen (Arabic). After the Arab conquest of Sicily by Emir Zabut during Arab-Byzantine wars in the 830s, the Islamic urban planning was applied. Until in 1300, Sambuca was defeated by the Swabian Roman emperor and given to the Italian family of Barberini in 1900 which turned Islamic into Roman civilization; thus, a patchwork of contrasting architectural styles with Arabic and baroque influences are seen.

This year, 2020, the economic instability in Italy (Figure 1) has led to rapidly falling population and emigration of many graduates and young professionals leaving behind empty houses in Sicily's Sambuca (Figure 2). The state government is now offering homes for buyers at just one euro or around 34.60 Thai baht (exchange rate on 26/02/2020). The renovation must be started within three months after the purchase with the minimum expense of 15,000 euros or around 519,035.11 Thai baht (exchange rate on 26/02/2020). The houses can be renovated and tuned in to restaurants, hotels or resorts to meet the project's objective that is to promote local business.



Figure 1 GDP Growth & Inflation of Italy Economy

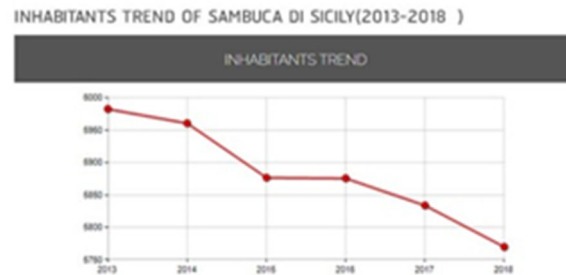


Figure 2 Inhabitants Trend of Sambuca di Sicily (2013 - 2018)



Figure 3 Interior of one euro house before renovation



Figure 4 One euro house before & after renovation

However, (Figure 3, Figure 4) the project to revitalize the abandoned, empty houses in Sicily's Sambuca is either not enough and sustainable or helps promote local tourism which leads to a question of how this thesis can sustainably revive the city and conserve its cultures, arts, and architecture. By using the method of urban renewal.

2. Objectives

1. To study urban rehabilitation of Sambuca di Sicilia
2. To study housing development in urban rehabilitation theory

3. Materials and Methods

In this study, the author has pointed out interesting subjects on urban and city population rehabilitation of Sambuca using the following study tools (Figure 5).

3.1 Define data and their sources and study concepts, related researches, and physical and social data to consider the concept of urban renewal.

3.2 Collect data by studying theories, figure and ground, traditional architecture, and theses and collect statistic data from the internet concerning urban planning, traditional architecture, and other related data such as aerial photograph from google earth.

3.3 Use the image of city theory to analyze the possibility of developing the area designed.

3.4 Design a concept to improve Sambuca to follow the analysis of the city morphology and study theory of urban renewal by rehabilitation.



3.5 plan and design to rehabilitate by applying urban planning,

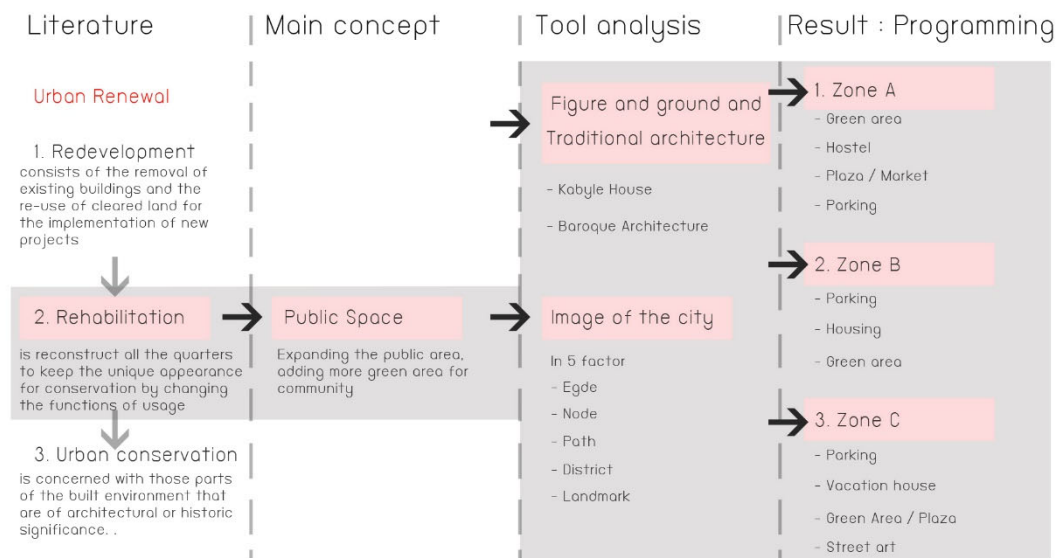


Figure 5 The examples of methods analysis

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 In the study of Urban renewal. There are three main concepts;

4.1.1 Redevelopment

The redevelopment consists of the removal of existing buildings and the re-use of cleared land for the implementation of new projects (Miller, 1959). This approach applies to areas in which buildings are in seriously deteriorated condition and have no preservation value, or in which the arrangement of buildings is such that the area cannot provide satisfactory living conditions (Miller, 1959). In such cases, demolition and reconstruction, of whole blocks or small sections, is often thought to be the only solution to ensure future comfort and safety of the residents (Broudehoux, 1994).

4.1.2 Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation, often termed conservation or preservation, can be defined as the opposite of redevelopment. It is based on preserving, repairing, and restoring the natural and human-made environments of existing neighborhoods. Rehabilitation applies to areas where buildings are generally in structurally sound condition but have deteriorated because of neglected maintenance (Miller, 1959). It takes advantage of the existing housing stock as a valuable resource and adapts old houses to present-day life and acceptable standards by providing modern facilities (Zixuan, 1989; Broudehoux, 1994).

4.1.3 Urban conservation

Urban conservation is concerned with those parts of the built environment that are of architectural or historic significance, which includes buildings (individually or in groups), localities (streets, blocks, environments or precincts), special gardens or landscapes, and other structures.

4.2 The study of theories, figure and ground, and traditional architecture revealed that;

4.2.1 In 830, figure and ground of Sambuca di Sicilia were similar to the North African, which has a compact group of buildings that could be easily distinguished from the rest of the town center from its variety of courtyard shapes (such as elbow, fork, bayonet and hook) and irregular road system. Besides, most streets are covered or at least accessed through an archway (Figure 6), and the architecture is similar to the Kabyle house (Figure 7) (Pier Paolo Racioppi, 2020).



Figure 6 Figure and ground of Sambuca di Sicilia In 830

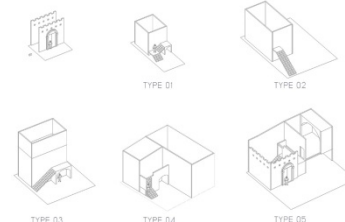


Figure 7 Kabyle House

4.2.2 In 1300, Sambuca di Sicilia the city wall was expanded, and palaces, baroque mansions, churches, monasteries, and convents were built (Figure 8 and 9).



Figure 8 Figure and ground of Sambuca di Sicilia In 1300



Figure 9 Baroque Architecture

4.2.3 This year, 2020, the figure and ground have developed into three parts; the outskirts, old city, and new city (Figure 10). The old city is up against abandoned architecture, which leads to an idea of urban renewal in the concept of urban rehabilitation, that is, rehabilitating a building is precisely taking one building and restoring/improving the details of Arab-baroque architectural styles (Figure 11) from a decrepit condition to its highest and best use. In contrast, urban rehabilitation done in the city involves multiple buildings, streets, commercial and residential uses, parks, transportation, and more.

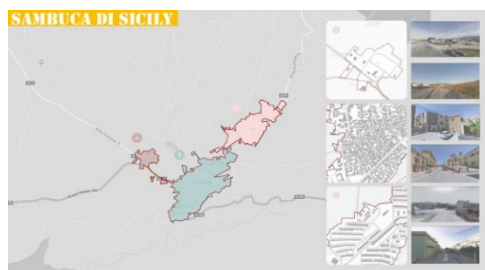


Figure 10 Figure and ground of Sambuca di Sicily



Figure 11 Details of Sambuca di Sicily house

4.3 The physical of the study area of Sambuca city, from the theory of Kevin Lynch about Image of the city in 5 factors, Edge, Node, Path, District, and Landmark (Lynch, 1960) (Figure 12) indicated that the area included living, school, commercial, food, travelling, arts, and culture quarter spread along the main road of the city no. 69 and Saracen quarter. In the beginning, the city has a lot of 'one euro project' in this area. According to the article, impacted to develop how to choose a place from where 'one euro project' located near the economics are to Saracen, quarter follows the tourism development (Figure 13).

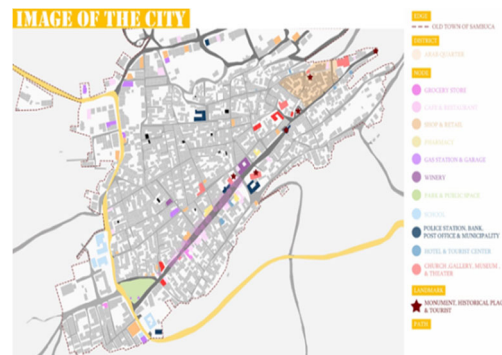


Figure 12 Image of the city

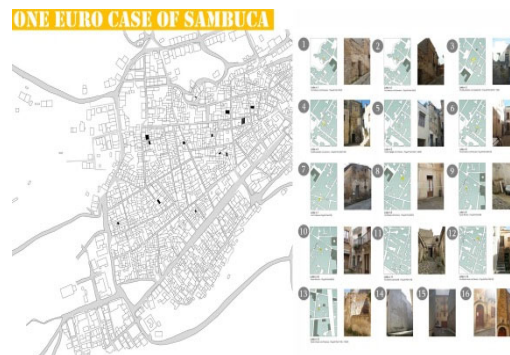


Figure 13 One euro house

4.4 The concept of rehabilitation is reconstructed all the quarters to keep the unique appearance for conservation by changing the functions of usage to accomplish current goals and improve the activities quarters such as expanding the public area, adding more green area for the community to recover the town and increase the population. Otherwise, the development that follows local politics to adapt previous community to the economics community, stimulate the economy and sustained income.

The recommendation for design guideline as follows

4.4.1 Activities quarter development

Choose the area that has a design reference as 'One Euro Project' and is nearby the economics and Saracen quarter to connect main area and access to each other. It is recommended to develop the area in 3 Zones (Figure 14).

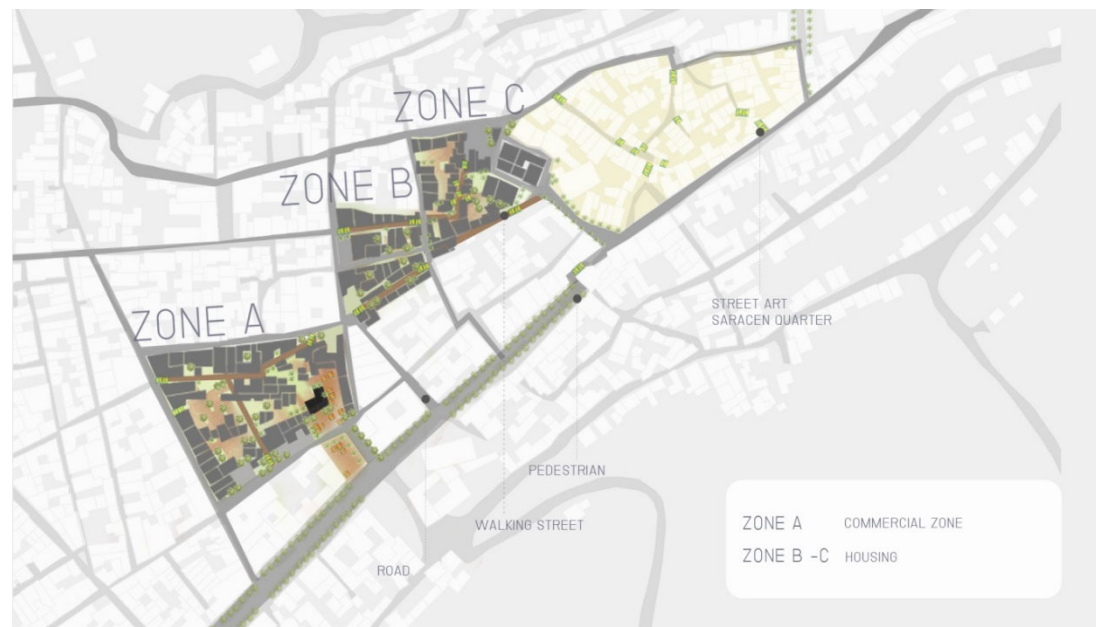


Figure 14 The conceptual master plan of Sambuca di Sicily urban rehabilitation



Economic Zone

Zone A is near to the economic quarter including

ZONE A

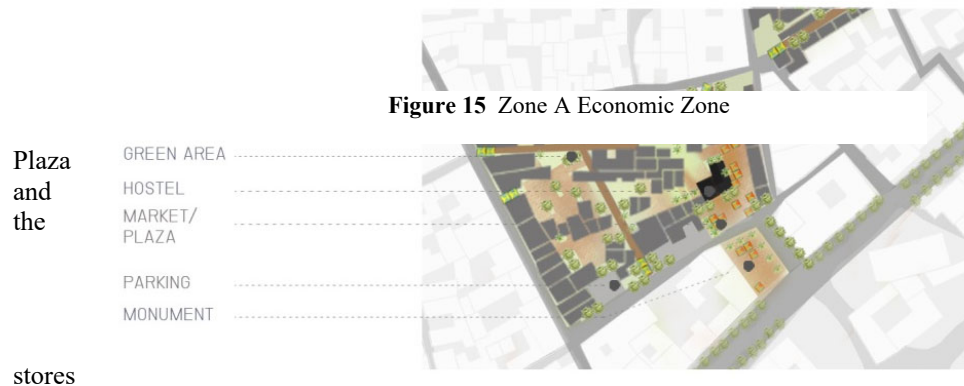


Figure 15 Zone A Economic Zone

The was developed connected to monument of economics quarter to support the increasing and market. Design Hostel

is a local government's support to help stimulate tourism and sustainable income. Also, convenient car park for tourist and local people was included. More green and public quarter were added for local people. At last, the atmosphere and the appearance of the building had changed, but the identity in Arab – Baroque architecture style remained (Figure 15).

Housing Zone

Zone B located between Zone A and C including

ZONE B



Figure 16 Zone B Housing

Model housing was developed to support the population growth of inhabitants in Sambuca di Sicily. More green and public space were added for the residents. The atmosphere and the appearance of the building had changed, but the identity in Arab – Baroque architecture style remained (Figure 16).

Zone C is near to the Saracen quarter including



ZONE C



Figure 17 Zone C Vacation House

Vacation houses were developed to support tourist policy. More green and public space were added for the residents. The atmosphere and the appearance of the building had changed, but the identity in Arab – Baroque architecture style remained. Besides, there were street arts as a Tourist Attraction that links to the Saracen quarter (Figure 17).

4.5 The discussion from the objective of this conservative research with city planning and physical design in the 3 study areas, studying the theories of urban rehabilitation by changing the functions of usage to accomplish current goals and improve the activities quarters such as expanding the public area and restoring the natural environments of existing neighborhoods. To help to sustain the reconstructions of the city, raising of the population, promoting the government policy, and giving an impetus to the economy are actions which create impacts in many ways as follows (Figure 18 and 19).

4.5.1 Travelling

The town has a passageway that separates the tourism footpaths from the roads to avoid accidents and solve narrow passageway.

4.5.2 Living space from the abandoned and unmanaged areas

After being developed and managed, the abandoned and unmanaged areas became the most efficient. For example, public area, green area, and car parks were developed for the living quality, and street arts and plaza were added for giving an impetus to the economics.

4.5.3 Tourism

Accommodations for tourist (Hostel) were added to attract teenagers/backpacker. Moreover, vocation houses were developed to attract family traveller or long-term stay.

4.5.4 Conservation Keep the unique appearance building, arts and architecture to conserve and attract the tourist.

4.5.5 Economy and Investment

A Recuperation of economy of the town and building the long-term income to the government under hostel project which is the local business belong to the government.

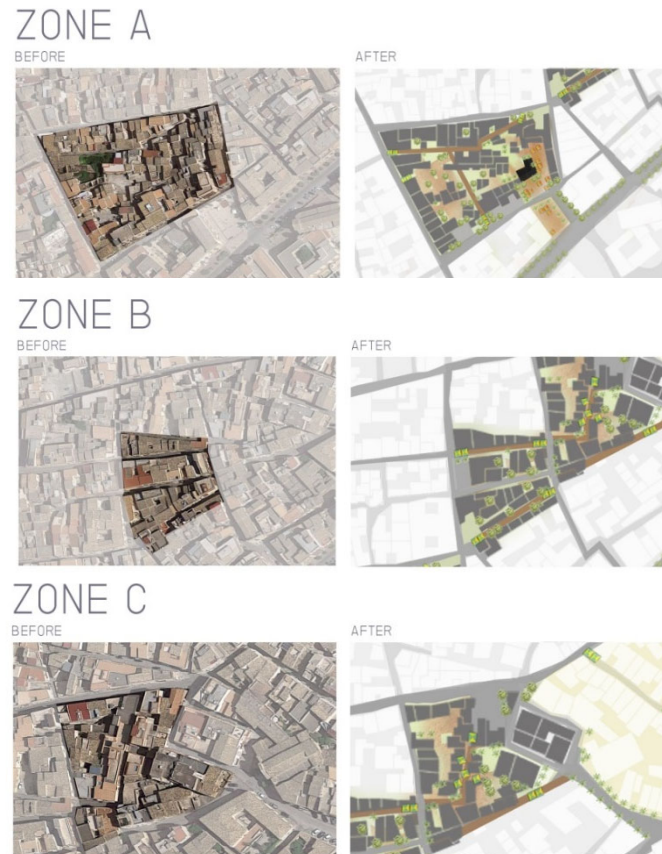


Figure 18 Before & after of zone A, B and C



Figure 19 Before & after of master plan

5. Conclusion

This research focused on the development of the old town Sambuca city, Agrigento, Sicily Island, Italy, to help conserve the town and its cultures through the concept of rehabilitation. Three different areas were suggested in the development project according to the local policy regarding the tourism industry. The first area concerned the economy, hostels, shops, and markets to connect the previous economic areas to the newly designed area. The second area was added with shelters in order to support permanent habitation from population renaissance by connecting Zone A and C. The last zone is developed by building vacation houses



and creating street arts to raise tourism by connecting these places to the town's important attraction that must be visited, the Saracen quarter.

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