

Istanbul's Resilience in Question: Resilience, Decision-Making Process, Planning Politics

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Abstract: An important environmental issue related to planning is created by the political orientation of the government in Turkey. Especially in the new millennium, the government has focused on achieving economic growth and avoiding the global economic crises as its primary targets. These priorities resulted in efficiency-oriented planning policies in which the metropolitan city of Istanbul is the main field of operation because of its capacity to become a regional centre of finance in the global economy. In this respect, Istanbul is regarded to have the capacity of fuelling the economic boost because of its historic, strategic and environmental assets. The city has become a dynamic bundle of urban operations. Existing public areas such as parks, forests, seashores are subjected to land development; renewal projects transform deteriorated poor neighbourhoods into high income neighbourhoods or inner-city attractions for tourism or globally marketed business areas with high quality offices. Vacant land which is reserved as potential green space for new developments in the plan is given new functions with high densities. This paper attempts to present how local government is pursuing these ends and legitimizing its means by abusing the earthquake risks, and how planning regulations are bent in order to pave the road for foreign and domestic capital. These actions are discussed in relation to the typology of planning approaches and the question of resilience.

Key words: Urban planning, regional planning, resilience.

1. Historical Background (1950-1980): Shifts in Urban Policy

The resilience of a city is its capacity to survive disturbances [1]. Disturbances may be natural disasters, in which case it is the ability of a city to develop quick adjustment policies which serve to mitigate the present and to prevent the future hazards. Disturbances may also be of social character like violence, poverty or inequalities. If that is the case then administrative mechanisms of a resilient city develop quick diagnostic techniques and creative solutions to those problems. In this respect, organizational capacities of central and local governments play important parts. Another type of disturbance occurs due to the destructive nature of urban and regional projects. Regional policies increasing development gaps, urban projects destroying the environment, urban operations dismantling cultural heritage and disregarding differentiated identities are threats generated by dominant economic and political

powers and institutional arrangements.

Istanbul is a city which has had its share from several of the abovementioned disturbances like wars, occupation, riots, large fires, earthquakes. In the early years of the Republic (1923) the primary concerns of the administration were the stagnated urban economy, insufficiency of basic amenities and the declining population. A countrywide restructuring policy was introduced which included the establishment of state enterprises and supporting institutions in agriculture, manufacturing, education and health, rural and urban development. In Istanbul, the focus was on creation of public parks, renewal of public squares, reorganization of burnt-out areas. The 1930s and 1940s are characterized as the decades of restructuring operations. Efforts in this respect included the reorganization or new establishment of institutions, such as the Bank of Municipalities, proclamation of new laws concerning settlements, and commissioning a master plan.

In the 1950s, the city experienced two socio-spatial traumas with different dynamics. The first one came as an outcome of regional and economic policies of unbalanced growth: an overwhelming number of migrants from remote rural parts of the country *invaded* the city. These newcomers, settling mainly on vacant land adjacent to newly developing industries, were supplying the labour pool. Their self-organized solution to the shortage of low-cost housing in the city created low quality squatter neighbourhoods mostly on vacant state properties.

The other trauma was created by the government in the form of massive urban operations. New roads on the shores of the Marmara Sea and the Golden Horn, an airport on the West end, outside the Historic Peninsula, a new port to serve the sea traffic between the European and the Asian sides. Prime Minister Menderes described his vision of a modern city in an interview in 1956 with following words: “As it is not possible to conceive a city without beautiful and imposing squares and all centres of the city of Istanbul is going to be improved and will be surrounded by large buildings as befitting the fame of the city. In the development and renovation of Istanbul, besides squares, roadways and imposing buildings we need monuments as well. Statues of our world-renowned ancestors will be the sign of our appreciation of the value and merits of our past”. Those operations lasted 3,5 years. The vision of a *beautiful, rich* city resulted in the expropriation and demolition of 7289 buildings for the sake of opening large boulevards and squares [2]. The wave of demolitions also hit several historic buildings, monuments of Roman and Ottoman times and examples of vernacular architecture.

From the second half of the 1950s on, rural migration and squatter housing (*‘gecekondu’*), which were increasing at an unprecedented rate, became chronic problems. The population of the city, which was 1.078.399 in 1945, rose to 1.166.477 in 1950 and nearly doubled (1.882.029) in 1960. In the following three decades, Istanbul’s main struggle has been with the

ever-increasing population, growth of unauthorized housing and industrial plants. Throughout these years, the character of unauthorized housing changed from simple shanty constructions to multi-storeyed buildings. First examples in the 1950s and early 1960s were simple barracks, often with tiny gardens, which were built to meet basic needs of shelter and survival. Later examples of illegal housing were several storied apartment buildings built for low-income as well as for high-income groups. An informal land market was dominating the urban form of that era. Self-made landlords became agents of migration to the city. The land supply was created through occupation of unguarded public and, in most cases, private land. Urban critiques of that era urged the governments to take precautions against the rapid growth of the city which would have destructive effects on the environment, on the social-cultural-physical sustainability of the city itself, and on the country’s balanced development.

In 1961, the state was defined as a ‘social and welfare state’ in the new constitution. Its cardinal aims were declared as decreasing the development gap between regions, achieving a balanced development model, and pursuing planned development. In the first half of the 1960s, one of the main aims of the government was to construct the institutional framework for planned development. The State Planning Organization was established and authorized with preparing economic and social development plans while a unit within it would be responsible for preparing regional plans. Correspondingly, in Istanbul, new planning institutions were established under the authority of the local government, i.e. The Municipality of Istanbul, and they were given the task of preparing the master plan and implementation plans in accordance with the regional plan. This was an early attempt to decentralize the planning power. However, in the second half of this decade, following the elections, regional planning and balanced development principles became subject to controversies. In the

meantime, the urban growth in Istanbul had been gaining momentum. In response to the deficiencies of the prevailing planning system, a new law was passed in 1972. The most outstanding feature of it was that it granted the power of preparing or commissioning metropolitan master plans to the Ministry of Reconstruction and Resettlement, i.e. the central government. The approval of the related municipalities would not be required.

The 1980s mark the beginning of a market-oriented urbanism and the deregulation of the planning system. Especially, in the second half of the 1980s, various established concepts of planning and public administration were questioned. Debates ranged from the delegation of planning authority to the notion of public authority. All concepts, norms and planning notions of the preceding periods were subject to controversies. Reorganization in the administrative body, introduction of new concepts and institutions into the system and new regulations leading to the redistribution of some public resources were characteristic novelties of the following two decades.

At present, in the new millennium, the source of important sustainability issues in Istanbul is the political orientation of the government. Especially since 2011, after a clean win in the elections, the government has focused on pursuing high economic growth and avoiding global economic crises as its primary targets. In this respect, Istanbul has become an attractive investment location for the construction industry and the very promising real estate market of enormous size. In the year 2000, the population of the city had reached ten million and the density 830 persons/km² according to the province border. Latest statistics indicate that by the end of 2012 [3], Istanbul had 13 854 740 residents, i.e. 18,3% of the country's total population (75 627 384). According to the annual household expenditure survey of the Turkish Statistics Institute (TUIK), the residents of Istanbul devoted 32,6% of their total consumption expenditure to housing and rent [4-6].

In the second part of this paper we try to demonstrate the controversial ways and means that are being used to transfer Istanbul into a "global city". Our focus will be on the institutional restructuring process which leads to the centralization of the decision power in urban matters and the dismantling of traditional instruments of democratic control within the planning apparatus. In the subsequent parts we discuss how some projects on the planning agenda of Istanbul threaten sustainability. Further, we emphasize cases where regeneration, renewal and redevelopment operations become instruments of resource transfer, and resilience is threatened through the contradiction between the discourse used by the authorities to promote such urban projects and the course of action they take.

2. The Paradigm Shift (1980-2012) - Institutional Framework

- The restructuring process consists of two phases. In the first phase from 1983 to 2002, deregulation was the main motive behind the government's actions. New laws and governmental decrees targeted decentralization of the administrative power (Table1). The Law of Greater City Municipalities, which was issued in 1984, reorganized the structure of urban governing. That law allowed the formation of smaller municipalities –district municipalities- under the administrative umbrella of the Greater City Municipality, and authorized them to prepare or commission plans and to enforce them in their territories. This law also determined the division of duties within the hierarchy of local governments. Next year (1985) The Building Code no.3194 was issued. It determined how the power of regulating urban development was to be used by different levels of municipalities. In the same year, the Law of Mass Housing (no.2985) was promulgated. This law defined the duties and financial resources of the Housing Development Administration of Turkey (TOKI) which was established in the same year. The purpose of these institutional arrangements was to meet the housing

need of low- and middle-income groups by increasing the *adequate* supply in the formal market. However, two years later, in 1986, a *development amnesty law* (no.3290) was passed. This law was declaring all structures built before 1985 legal, without any reservations regarding urban facilities. As a result of these institutional arrangements, the city developed into the periphery: Informal housing areas, i.e. squatter or *gecekondu* neighbourhoods, experienced vertical development after the amnesty. Having secured their property rights, the residents of modest *gecekondu* neighbourhoods wanted to make the most of their building rights. Consequently, one or two storied squatter areas of the past changed to multi- storied apartment houses. Low urban quality of those neighbourhoods worsened after the amnesty because the so-called insufficiency of urban amenities and the associated low urban quality continued. District municipalities applied more flexible planning approaches which easily grew into clientelistic relations.

- New laws, regulations, and financial policies attracted large capital into the construction sector which, until the 1980s, consisted mainly of small-scale firms. Thus, the pattern of urban development changed from incremental to brisk growth with large scale housing projects on the outskirts of the city.

In 1999, the earthquake with about 58.000 casualties became the impetus for the second phase of restructuring. Between 2003 and 2005, a chain of laws was issued. These laws constituted the legal framework of marketing the city in the global market. In spite of the localization efforts in the first phase, The Amendment to the Law of Incentives for Tourism (No.4957) marked the intention of returning to centralizing the planning power. With this amendment, the power of declaring a location as a “tourism spot”, and preparing development plans at every scale for that selected location, was invested in the central government. In the second phase, between 2004 and

2008 [7, 8], a new wave of laws and regulations put new financial resources at the disposal of smaller municipalities and transferred more power from central government to the local government. Meanwhile, a new law abolished municipalities below a certain size. In general, it can be said that localization and centralization of occurred simultaneously in that phase.

By the year 2010 [9], Istanbul had two master plans at scales 1/100.000 and 1/25.000, and a regional development plan (2010-2013) prepared by the regional development agency. 2010 was also the beginning of a new wave of laws concerning spatial organizations. In 2010, an amendment to the Law of Municipalities empowered local (district) governments to develop regeneration projects. In 2011, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization was established with the intention of coordinating all spheres of urban development. In 2012, a very controversial law, the Law of the Regeneration of Areas under Disaster Risk has been enacted. Main aim of the law is explained in the first clause as “to create safe and inhabitable environments across the country by ensuring the transformation of the areas at risk of disasters and the demolition of buildings at risk”. Although this aim is perfectly acceptable, other clauses evoke serious concerns that individual projects might easily depart from the declared aim and serve some privileged groups. One of the reasons for concern is the definition of risk. In this law, buildings with *expired economic lives* are considered in risk, in addition to disaster prone structures. Furthermore, this law empowers the Ministry and/or the local government to expand the boundaries of an area under risk as to include new and perfectly safe buildings in the immediate vicinity. Local authorities of the Ministry are entitled to this decision if such a modification is necessary for the success of the chosen project. Another controversial clause is about the superiority of this law above all other legislation concerning land use, environment, sustainability and conservation [10, 11].

Table 1 First phase of restructuring (1980 - 2000): Deregulation.

PROMULGATION	DOCUMENT TITLE	AIMS	EFFECTS - OUTCOMES
1982	Tourism Subsidies Act (2634)	To centralize the planning power for the sake of fast and smooth tourism development projects.	New hotels and shopping centres built on urban forests, public parks.
1983-1984-1987	The Law of Amnesty for Unauthorized Buildings (2805, 2981, 3366)	Legalization of gecekondu (squatter) areas.	Growing residential areas in the periphery
1984	The Law of the Greater City Municipality (3030)	Decentralization of the planning power; creation of district municipalities within the Greater City; flexibility in the planning system.	
1984	The Law of Mass Housing (2985)	Housing supply low- and middle-income groups; incentives and cheap credit to support large scale production. Founding the Housing Development Administration of Turkey (TOKI)	
1985	Building Code (3194)	Decentralization of the planning power.	Plan revisions for increasing densities in low-density areas which, as a result, have become disaster prone spaces. Developments for high-income housing and university campuses.
1986	The Law of Amnesty for Unauthorized Buildings (3290)	Shift from subsistence housing (gecekondu) to speculative behaviour. Disregard of the minimum amenity standards; confusion in the hierarchy of the planning system and control mechanisms.	Unhealthy and unsafe residential areas (70% of the city); 'oil stain' like urban growth along motorways.

Table 2 Second phase of restructuring (2000 - 2012): Re-regulating and Restructuring.

PROMULGATION	DOCUMENT TITLE	AIMS	EFFECTS - OUTCOMES
01.08.2003	Amendment to the Tourism Subsidies Act (4957)	Centralizing the planning power for specific areas.	Forests are allocated for tourism developments.
1990-2005-2008	Amendment to the Shore Law (3621),	The aim is to promote new investments in coastal areas; to facilitate the construction of new Courvoisier ports, marinas, and urban development in the hinterlands of those establishments.	Haydarpaşa, Galataport, Zeytinburnu projects
1984-2003-2004-2008-2012	Amendment to the Mass Housing Law (2985)	The aim is to facilitate PPP and regulate the redistribution of the surplus value to be created through new developments.	With amendments, the TOKI has been converted into a separate planning authority outside the prevailing planning system.
10.07.2004	The Law of the Municipalities of Greater Cities (5216)		The border of municipality has been expanded,
07.12.2004	The Municipalities Law (5272) - amendment of the clause 73	The aim is to authorize municipalities to make regeneration projects under the supervision of the Greater City Municipality.	
05.07.2005	The Law on Renovating, Conserving and Actively Using Dilapidated Historical and Cultural Immovable Assets (5366)	Flexibility in the definitions of concepts like cultural, historic, and preservation; creating a new institution specific for renewal areas	Places and buildings of historic and cultural value are degraded.
0.07.2003	İstanbul Disaster Mitigation Plan (IDMP)	Developing strategies at metropolitan scale; growth directions of the city; legal and financial models based on negotiation and participation.	IDMP has never been implemented. However, some concepts which were introduced in it were later used out of context, for justifying gentrification.
25.01.2006	Law of the Establishment of Regional Development Agencies		
06.08.2008	Law packages	The aim is to facilitate privatization.	
2009	Approval of the Master Plan for Istanbul	Scale:(1/100000)	

Table 2 to be continued

15.12.2012	The Law of Urban Regeneration [Transformation] in Areas under Disaster Risk (6306)	Risk mitigation. Facilitate new developments in risk areas: the law authorizes the Ministry to expand the boundaries of a risk area, i.e. to include risk free structures, when it is required for the approved project.	Gentrification; old low-density neighbourhoods are transformed into high density areas with insufficient facilities. Transportation problems should be expected.
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3. Contested Projects

One of the basic principles in the Master Plan of Istanbul (1/100.000) the direction of urban growth. It is strongly recommended not to allow any urban development to the North because the forests in that part of the metropolis function like its lungs and provide the ventilation. Similarly, several water reservoirs and basins in the North have positive climatic effects and provide the fresh water of the city. However, the city has been growing north. The first bridge was built in 1973, the second in 1988. As shown below (Maps 1-2), each bridge over the Bosphorus stimulated new developments.

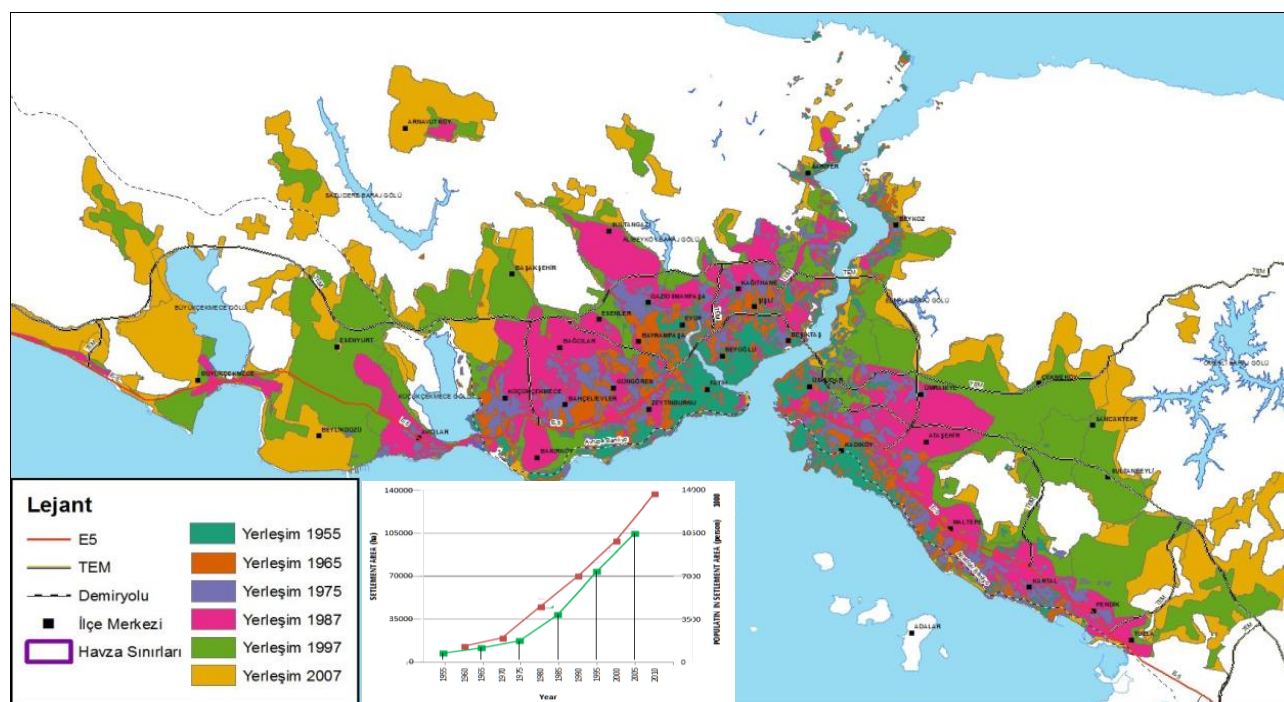
In 2011 and 2012, the central government announced a chain of mega projects, all to be realized in the North, in the forest areas and water basins: two new towns to the north of Istanbul, near the Black Sea; two

development project areas and the third airport in North West; the third bridge to connect Asia and Europe to the north of the second bridge; a canal to connect the Black Sea and the Marmara as an alternative to the Bosphorus (Map 3). Total area of these projects amounts to 40000 ha, the population is estimated to be around 6 million.

3.1 Mega Projects

New cities: Two new urban settlements, one on each side of the metropolis, are to be developed. The area of the new city on the European side will be approximately 2500 Ha and its population is estimated 1 million.

Third Bridge over the Bosphorus: Although the Master Plan (2009) limits urban development in the North, the PM declared his decision for a third bridge over the Bosphorus. Critical analyses of this project



Map 1 The development of Istanbul. Source: İbrahim TAŞDEMİR, Fatmagül BATUK.

emphasize the probable damage on the environment which will be created by the bridge itself, by its link roads, and the new developments which they will induce. NGOs, environmentalists, planners and several professional groups and chambers have pronounced their critiques in various forms. The experts who prepared the environmental assessment report stated how vast the negative effects of this bridge will be. According to their official report, approximately 2,5 million trees will be destroyed; 931 Ha agricultural land, 680 Ha of natural reserve areas, plus 1453 ha of forest area and nature parks will be negatively affected by the bridge and its links [12].

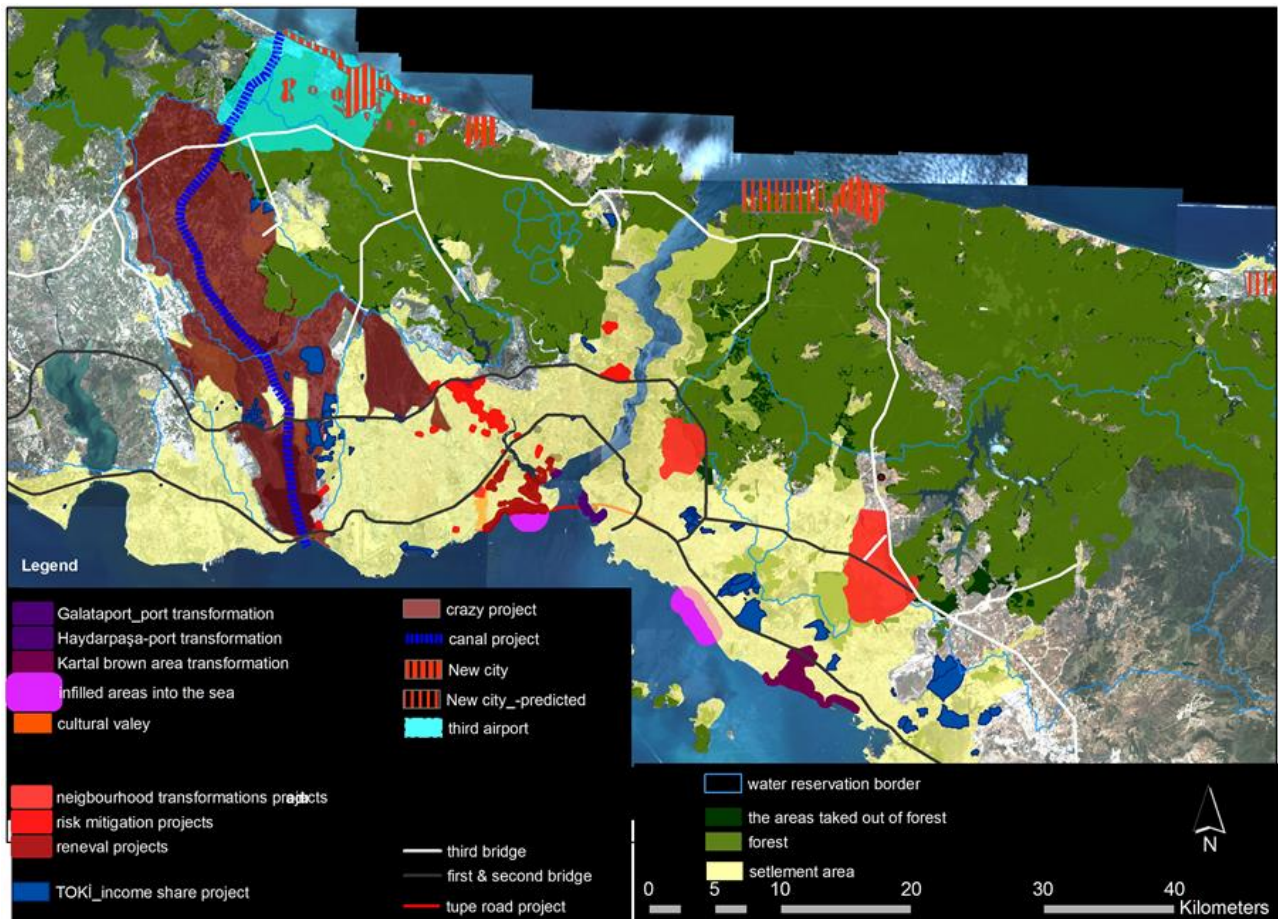
Third airport: Total area of the new airport project will be 9000 ha including 6400 ha of natural lands and destruction of 2.513.341 trees. It will also destroy one

of the most important water supplies of the city [13].

Canal Istanbul: This 45-50 km long, 25m deep canal will connect the Black Sea with The Marmara Sea. Experts criticize the project because it will destroy the habitat at enormous scales, and this will be irreversible (Map 4).

3.2 Smaller Projects with Greater Effects

There are also smaller development projects which are strongly disputed. Most of these projects are expected to have a multitude of destructive effects, direct or indirect. Some projects are to be realized at the cost of urban green areas which are considerably insufficient in the city, i.e. approximately 6,4m²/person according to the local government. Researches show that at some localities in the CBD like Beyoglu where



Map 2 Mega Projects (alias Crazy Projects); redevelopment, regeneration, renewal projects, The map prepared by the authors using Official Gazette of the Republic of Turkey.



Map 3 Canal Istanbul.

Source: http://www.yapi.com.tr/Haberler/kanal-istanbulda-fizibilite-calismalari-tamamlandi-mi_107322.html.



Map 4 The conservation plan of Beyoğlu.

Taksim Gezi Park is located, this amount is as low as 3,5 m². Considering that all green spots like traffic islands, playgrounds etc. are included in that computation, some experts believe that the real amount of green areas is around 1,65m²/person [14]. Therefore, the redevelopment project targeting the Taksim Gezi Park (Image1) at the city centre is perceived by planners and segments of the citizens as an attack on

the environment as well as on the quality of life. The project consists of building a replica of 19th century military barracks on public park premises, which will house various functions including a mall and luxury residences (Image 2). It is obvious that the area enclosed by the new building will no longer be available to free public use. The project is promoted by the central government in spite of the fact that the area

is defined as an Urban Conservation Area in the official Conservation Plan (Map5) which was approved by the Municipality in 2010.

Another iconic location which is the target of redevelopment is the Train Station Haydarpasa (Image 3). This train station has been the main Asian entrance to the city since 19th century, until bridges were constructed. It is located next to an important cargo port with ro-ro and container terminal. The cargo port is to be relocated according to the master plan of Istanbul. Therefore, the importance of Haydarpasa as a transportation hub is expected to weaken. Furthermore, the high-speed railway project to connect Istanbul with Ankara and a few other major cities in Anatolia create compatibility problems for the old station.

The redevelopment project to create a tourism-sports-business complex (Images 4-5-6) surrounding this 19th century structure has been taken to court by several NGOs with varying allegations. The charges against the project were based on the notion of cultural sustainability. Namely, the station and the cluster of significant 19th or early 20th century public buildings in its vicinity constitute a solemn part of Istanbul's identity. Moreover, this area and the station are inseparable from the identity of the Old City because they are situated right across the Historical Peninsula. Further allocations were concerning the privatization of public space through this project, on the grounds that it is the local government's fundamental duty to provide adequate public spaces and green areas for its citizens.



Image 1 The photography of Taksim Gezi Park.

Sources: http://www.beyoglu.bel.tr/images/icsayfa/kentsel_sit_uygulama_imar_plani_b.jpg.



Image 2 The simulations of Taksim Gezi Park.



Image 3 Haydarpaşa Train Station.

Source: (1)<http://mustafahos.blogspot.com/2010/12/ask-olsun-haydarpasa.html>;
(2) http://wowturkey.com/tr162/k_mustafakumbar_haydarpasa.jpg



Image 4 New project in 2005.

Source:<http://www.rayturkiye.com/haydarpasa-otel-olmaya-bir-adim-daha-yaklasti/>



Image 5 New project in 2013.



Image 6 The new project for Haydarpaşa.

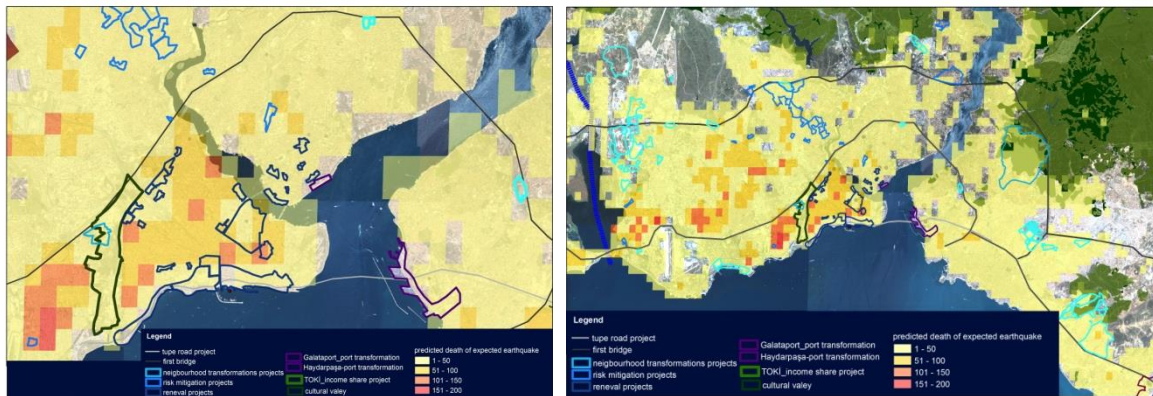
Source: <http://i.sabah.com.tr/sbh/2012/11/16/394048967591.jpg>.

3.3 Disaster Mitigation, Sanitation and Transfer of Resources

As mentioned earlier in this paper, the great earthquake of 1999 triggered radical approaches in the city. The Municipality commissioned a master plan (IDMP) for disaster mitigation in Istanbul to a team of academics from four universities. It was clearly stated in the IDMP (2003) as well as in numerous successive reports and studies that excessive population increase is putting a burden on Istanbul's transport, public infrastructure, and housing. Regarding the diversity of issues, IDMP suggested a holistic approach, a regional plan, flexibility in the choice of instruments. Further, a specific model for financing, adequate strategies for effective community participation, and a long-term calendar related to the hierarchy of risk areas were recommended.

The master plan used the data of a preceding research

of hazard assessment and estimation by JICA to determine the hierarchy of disaster-prone areas. According to this analysis the Historical Peninsula (Old City) has the highest risk due to the deterioration of its historic building stock. Yet, these buildings accommodate a very active part of the metropolitan economy. Similarly, areas where densities were increased with urban upgrading projects following the amnesty laws were in that highest risk group. However, urban projects which have been announced or carried out since 2005 have a different location pattern. Map 6 demonstrates that the locations of renewal and regeneration projects do not correspond to the distribution of earthquake risks. Areas on the map are shaded according to the degree of casualty risk in case of an earthquake. Red denotes the highest and yellow the lowest risk group. Project areas are shown with blue and dark blue borders.



Map 5 Distribution of urban renewal, regeneration, and redevelopment projects on the background of casualty risk areas.

3.4 Low-density areas to be redeveloped into 'high-density safe areas'

Recent operations in Istanbul imply an urban management approach which is fundamentally different than what was suggested in the IDMP. Since 2005, central government initiated 65 development projects of diverse characteristics, i.e. renewal, regeneration, redevelopment, which have been and will be affecting people, heritage and natural environment on 10 000 ha of land. Most of the selected project areas have low-densities. In some

cases the residents constitute the most vulnerable segments of the society who have neither the economic nor the social power to become partners in the redevelopment or negotiate. The strategy seems to be profit oriented, pragmatic, and lacking basic urban concerns regarding technical infrastructure, quality of life, and social dimensions of planning.

We selected two examples of redevelopment project areas, RPA1 and RPA2, on the Asian side of Istanbul. These urban spaces have been declared 'high-risk areas' where redevelopment is compulsory according to the

law. However, in both cases, the risk and redevelopment criteria of the government need to be questioned. The first example (RPA1) is in Kucukbakkalkoy, in the midst of a dense residential area which had been planned in 1980's with very scarce green space and high density (800 prs/ha). In contrast to the general morphological character of the district, the RPA1 is a very low-density (180 prs/ha) neighbourhood with relatively high rate of green space. This neighbourhood had been planned and constructed by the state in 1969 as one of several *gecekond* prevention regions. The aim was to create a low-income residential area with good urban quality. It is hard to recognize the "risk mitigation" purpose of the government in choosing this minimum-risk neighbourhood for redevelopment because the area is far away from the fault; the soil is strong and the density is very low. RPA1 is indicated with a red line on Image 7.



Image 7 Area under disaster risk, K $\ddot{u}$ çükbakkalköy.

The second example, Hekimbasi (RPA2), represents the lack of environmental sensitivity in urban operations. There are two issues in this case: the degree of risk and the size of project area. On the one hand, the selected neighbourhood is an area with minimum earthquake hazard risk. On the other hand, the size of the total project area (1000 ha) is much larger than the risk area because the neighbouring forest (code 2B) is also included. Code 2B designates those forest areas where constructions may be permitted. Thus, these choices of location and size indicate that the operations in Hekimbasi are motivated by intentions other than disaster risk mitigation.

4. 'Regeneration' Project for Gentrification

Sulukule: Sulukule is a centuries old gypsy Roma neighbourhood in the Old City, inside south walls. The inhabitants of the area developed specific uses of space



Image 8 The area reserved for the regeneration project is oversized compared to the risk area.



Image 9 Sulukule before gentrification.



Image 10 Sulukule before gentrification.



Image 11 Sulukule after gentrification.



Image 12 Sulukule after gentrification

and a thick communal life which helped them to survive despite very low incomes. In other words, their survival strategies were embedded in that place.

When the District Municipality announced the 'regeneration' project critiques indicated that the project was not realistic because the inhabitants absolutely lacked the necessary means. Nevertheless, the district mayor insisted; the demolitions began in 2006 [15] continued till 2009. Some of the inhabitants, 900 property owners, agreed to become partners in the

project. Others had to move to a mass housing area in the periphery. However, they had problems of integration and had to return to seek refuge in the vicinity of Sulukule. Those property owners who chose to become partners in the project were surprised, too. Because when the first 50 families were told to move in, they were also told that the prices doubled, i.e. they had to pay 2.500 TL per m² although the price was 1.250 TL when the partnership was established. In 2013, the Sulukule project has been suspended by the court. This project is significant because it has crystallized the hidden gentrification agenda. The photographs below show the gypsy neighbourhood Sulukule before (Images 9-10) and after (Images 11-12) gentrification.

5. Conclusions: Modesty, Justice, Empathy and Honesty for Resilience

"Sustainability means meeting the multiple needs of a community (physical, social, economic and environmental) without limiting the capacity of future generations to meet their own needs" [16-20]. Hopes for a sustainable Istanbul depend on the mediating, negotiating, and participating capacities of the city. Trust is one of the keywords for resilience. Misuse of popular discourses results in a stressful relationship between the citizens and the government. Integrity, modesty and coherence on government's part would help making the city more resilient. The ability of the government to reconstruct the trust in its policies is closely associated with its choice between 'profit oriented' and 'sustainability oriented' planning.

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