AN EVALUATION OF URBAN TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS

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Abstract

The paper aims to find criteria for appraising the existing urban transformation projects in view of capacity, quality and participation. The way of developing processes affecting the urban zone transformed as (1) socio-culturally and (2) physically is discussed within a case study, called Zeytinburnu. It is the oldest squatter settlement in Istanbul and represents the first project implementation area of squatter housing rehabilitation in the nation. In the last decade, urban transformation has found a way to have the pilot project in the Zeytinburnu region. Throughout its examination, it has been possible to put into perspective the national housing policy and local strategies. Architects, researchers and other professionals in the field, when they design such large-scale urban transformation projects, must understand the issue of the rapid growth of developing cities, which are at the same time trying to become global cities; and generate alternatives, which are sustainable and economical, as well as fit for the community and formal authorities. It is then hoped that some generalized principles of evaluation with strategies flexible enough to match diverse and complex urban problems will be arrived at, which in turn be a direct feedback on the beginning of the planning process.

Introduction
Goal and Approach

This paper aims to examine the final transformation, in particular, to find criteria to provide feedback for appraising the existing urban transformation projects. These projects have been examined recently for their non-democratic implementation and for non-feasible components within the existing legal framework. Zeytinburnu was selected to start with urban transformation. It has become a major experimentation case on the national and international agenda, as represented in the formation of a special unit involving transformation with local municipal institutions. A key point will be Zeytinburnu as a sub-center to Bakirkoy. Furthermore, Istanbul has been declared to be a mega city in the future by the World Bank – which also projected that more than 97% of the world's population would be living in the mega cities by the year 2030 (Yapıcı, 2005). Archival studies on Zeytinburnu, updated by the current work of the Istanbul Municipality

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Urban Transformation Atelier and compared to the actual current situation through visual documents taken by a group of graduate students of Architecture Faculty of Istanbul Technical University for a course, constitute the main methodology to the selected region in Istanbul (Course Notes, 2005-2006).

Theoretical Background

Urban transformation aims to better the social, economic and spatial quality of the cities. Related concepts are urban regeneration, urban renewal, rehabilitation and gentrification. Sustainability of urban renewal must be provided in planning. For urban transformation, urban rehabilitation and urban housing stock management must be integrated. Dilapidation of a neighborhood is an important consequence in the changing cities.

Urban renewal, rehabilitation, improvement and regeneration are synonymously used for urban transformation. Ironically among some groups like NGOs, these connotations or components of urban transformations actually lead to urban restructuring, privatization, and control in the globalized world (www.peyzaj. org/2005/Haber/haberdetay.asp,HABER). Urban transformation takes place as part of the nature of the dynamics of the city. However, it can be planned and positively oriented through policies. At the base of such policies lie values and change in the values. The transformation of the whole society takes place. A new relationship is formed between culture and economy. Cultural industries include broadcast media, film, publishing, recorded music, design, architecture (classical) and visual art, theater, concerts and museums (traditional ones).

"Innovation, continual transformations, personal choice, creativity –all these were cultural values in the 1970s and 80s ran close to the transformation of cultural consumption and, increasingly, cultural production". In this context, cultural intermediaries must link global flows to a specifically local component, to make cultural infrastructures a significant element of local city planning. The cultural intermediaries are concerned with opening up local space to new practices, to transform local cultures to act as agents of cultural change. According to Zukin those transform symbolic and spatial practices of an area: specialist shops, cafe bars, galleries and restaurants and change consumption of an area; i.e. loft-living, historic restoration, valuing the character (Zukin, 1995). Many cultural intermediaries across Europe have emerged as entrepreneurs, cultural catalysts that actively transform the local cultural landscape of the city. In this sense, first linkages between cultural industries and local policy makers are found around urban regeneration projects.

Urry states that global flows are increasingly made up of signs, images, texts, designs and sounds that have primarily aesthetic significance. Thus the city from a global economy perspective becomes more important than the state. The cultural sector usually mixes the value and the money by making the economic value dependent on the cultural value. There is an emotional investment in the product but at the same time a want and need to sell it (Urry, 1995).

The first major transformation of the cities was during the breakthrough of the 19th century in European cities. It was the period of industrialization and those cities of the

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Developed Countries had completed their "industrialization" by the end of the 19th century. In that sense their first transformations were complete. However, the Developing Countries experienced their industrialization in the mid 20th century, and unlike those cities of the Developed World, they have not been able to complete their industrialization; they are struggling between the growth to meet the requirements of industrialization and "globalization" - the current transformation state of the contemporary cities. Major cities all over the world are unavoidably under the influence of this transformation due to the fact that the new millennium is the age of rapid spreading of information and online communications. A major difference between the two stages of transformation is that in the first there was a separation in geography of rural and urban; while in the second, the location in geography was not as significant. Thus during the first era, the urban areas increased at the expense of rural areas by in-and-out migrations to the urban areas where capital is to be produced and in the second one, one could be less dependent on physical location and still be in touch with the world (Thorns, 2002).

In the Developing World, a lot of urban rehabilitation projects have been designed to tackle the regularizing of urban transformation. Some implementations such as the following have been successful in achieving their goals: the Guangzhou case in 2003 in China was realized during the last decade of the 20th century. The goals were to provide workers with a reasonable income level, and to promote the purchase of a house with a flexible credit system. Its success is in the renewal of the houses and construction of apartments. In Indonesia after the 1980s, in order to complete the improvement of conditions of Kampung, all houses were provided with water and electricity. The major issue was to tackle the integration of this area with the existing urban geography. In Sri Lanka, the Million House Program took place in the 1980s to meet the needs of one million homeless, despite, some organization problems. In Thailand, Bangkok, during the late 70s, a transformation project took place in a hundred year old settlement, Sengki. The community had invaded this public land. The aim was to sell to the settlers the land they had invaded for a low price. It was a successful project. In Caracas, Barrio Brisas de Truno, a project was implemented at the beginning of the 21st century. Solution to the issues of the settlement regarded land ownership, an infrastructure network, education through participation, and provision of housing especially for women. Unique to this project each family was given two plots of land, one for its shelter needs and the other to sell out in order to meet the housing and infrastructure costs. The final achievement was in re-organizing the land and increasing its value. In Rio, Carioca River, a participatory improvement of a composite neighborhood took place. Three middle-class neighborhood associations, twelve low-income groups, the municipality and various governmental firms have worked together for its success. The aim was to clean Carioca River and to revert to the canal's orientation on the border. The project ended with a low budget due to participation. In Turkey in Ankara 4000 gecekondus and 120,000 people in Dikmen and Portakal Cicegi Vadi were affected by projects In the Portakal Cicegi project, the goal was to share the rent to be created (Pulat-Gokmen, Dulgeroglu- Yuksel et al., 2003).

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Turkey is a Developing Country, and Istanbul is one of its major cities, which accommodates a very significant proportion of the total industry in the nation. The city is not only in the process of becoming a world city, but also on the way to getting prepared for the possibility of a big Marmara earthquake. This preparation by the urban authorities is in the form of identifying the risky areas to be redeemed and to demolish the deteriorated quarters which have been rehabilitated before (Anon, 2006). The current transformations focus on the "not well-rehabilitated" squatter neighborhoods, rather than the whole city. Zeytinburnu is a former squatter settlement (stated to be so formally by Saran (1971) and Hart (1969)), dating back to the 1950s, but prior to that it was a planned industrial site, mainly for leather processing. Its closeness to water and its location at the periphery, made it fit for industrial investments.

Urban Transformation Processes

The assumption here is new economies, political and cultural relations coming out of a transformation, experienced globally, are embedded in the space. The actors of the transformation must have some sort of an agreement if not a consensus among themselves to carry it out. The local, central authorities, CBOs and NGOs, etc. must participate and make a consensus. It should be considered as what it was before the 1980s when it flourished all over the world, and after 1980 when it spread out. This chronological classification must be discussed in view of the role of the city on the national and spatial specialization and task-share, as it influences the urban transformation processes. National as well as local resources shape it. These components must be supported by institutional infrastructures.

In the 21rst century, the economical, political and social factors as well as spatial factors interact with the fast transportation networks. These factors actually form the transformation processes. The new era is described by scholars as global information economies. While passing into this stage, the cities are transformed. In turn, information and technological developments are spread (Kayasu, Yasar, 2003). Information-based economies and urban areas are closely related as these economies generate strategic collaborations beyond the national borders supported by intense travels. These (urban) areas have become centers of attention as they are being transformed economically, politically, socially and spatially with global re-structuring. With the movement from Fordist production into post-Fordist production, reaction against international markets arises and spatial production becomes dependent on the space in the need to be close to the natural sources. The finance and service sectors gather in the central metropolis. Within this context, various social groups have chosen different life styles, which in turn are reflected in the transformation and development of residential spaces. This in turn has motivated transformation.

The post-Fordist era, has caused degeneration in the urban areas, both in socio-economic terms and spatial terms (Sokmen, 2003). Here space is a means of generating sources. According to the author, entrepreneurship and post-modern architecture and urban forms are closely related. The urban medium has a competitive quality. Between 1982 and 1992, mass-housing became a major life style in Turkey or in Istanbul, producing a prominent housing type.

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Components

The components of urban transformation can be classified as "social", "economical" and "physical". The social components are: advanced educational level, improved quality of the social infrastructure, and social interaction. The economic components are: increasing the quality of the existing economic activities, the types of the economic activities, and the dependency of the areas with close proximity. The physical components are: increasing cultural areas and natural areas, rehabilitating the housing stock, generating the green areas and life corridors.

Relations with each other and relations with foreign partners become important when conceiving transformation projects. The sector to be involved into transformation process is tourism. Lefebvre, Harvey and Castells all have theorized about the urban land and its dynamics with emphasis on the lands' transformations. The pros are (a) various groups that begin to occupy the area, and (b) safety in view of earthquake. Urban dynamics leading to urban transformation require, according to Tekeli(2006): (1) multi-actor participation, (2) sustainable urban development, (3) protective cultural inheritance, (4) urban integration, (5) marketable land, and (6) viable cultural activities. New collaboration can be sought for source generating activities, i.e. with the IMF or the World Bank which play significant roles in economic globalization. Dynamics affecting the urban population after the 1980s are new technology, global economies, world city, and need for distinction (Tekeli, 2006). The two groups of factors of urban dynamics interact with each other as well as within. The National Report from the HABITAT ll Conference and the process of involvement into the European Union have influenced the production of action plans to be sustainable within a sound and healthy life leading to the generation of new models for urban transformation projects.

The major properties of the Zeytinburnu Transformation Project, as proposed, are that it is a phased process and a neighborhood based housing renewal project and that priorities are given to the risky buildings which are to be mitigated. The idea has been to increase the low-density areas and decrease the high-density areas. In general, the transformation project was planned in such a way so as not to relocate the existing settlers. There would be about half times increase in the number of new built areas, which is estimated to bring a 95% increase in total real-estate values. Commerce, housing, offices and such urban services as the like are to be built along the major transportation axes, with the housing areas deliberately intended to have sufficient services. An urban spine with a linear urban center is considered and a major pedestrian route is planned with heavy building activity around it. The properties of this spine are as follows:

• metro-gate and metro-mod foci connected,
• tram and bus transportation systems included,
• pedestrianized main route,
• occasional urban plazas,
• green belts,
• multi-story and continuous new building orientations,
• ground, underground and upper-ground floor connections of pedestrians,
• extensive and large parking capacity (www.ibb.gov.tr).

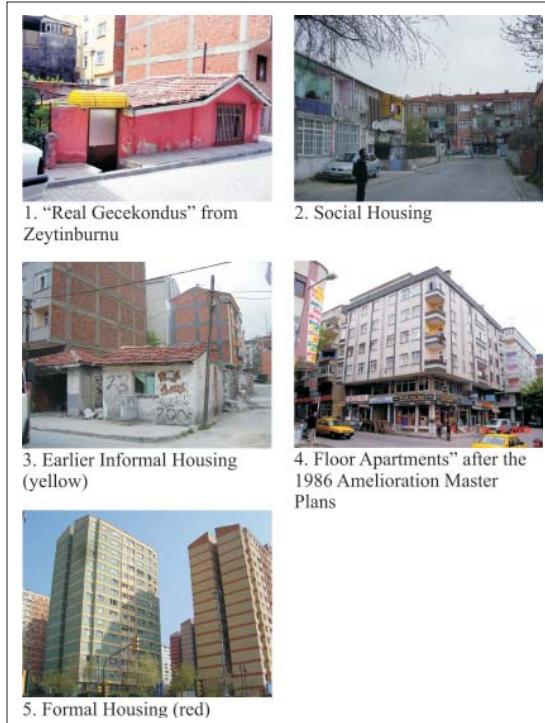YASEMIN ALKİŞER, YURDANUR DULGEROGLU-YUKSEL, and GULCIN PULAT-GOKMEN

Figure 1: Zeytinburnu in the Process of Transformation Through Photoes (Source: Y.D. Yuksel, 2006).

With this planned transformation, a large sub-center is to be formed, and a sustainable development is expected to be achieved. Thus, the surplus to be achieved through increased land use and values is to be shared by and used for the local community. Two approaches to gentrification are (1) the economic approach and (2) the individual approach. The first one is concerned with rent differential in the city or the urban land due to population mobility; while the second is related to consumer choices (Uzun, 2005). The first one seems to be the case for Zeytinburnu. Yet, unlike the conventional major actors in gentrification, the elite administrators and professionals, here the planned transformation is initiated by the local authorities and supported by various agencies and sponsors (FIG. 1).

Urban Transformation Projects in Istanbul

The conceptual framework of the urban transformation projects in Istanbul can be explained by generating a global vision in which the Euro-Asia corridor is opened by way of the city; forming regional vision central districts and stages, city axes and their locations and roles; mega-urban transformation as civilization jumps; improving the information society as reflected in space organization in the form of a communication valley and prestigious center; generating green corridors /belts for green to join blue. Furthermore, big environmental projects and ecological transformations are envisioned in which nature recreates herself. In four mahalles of Zeytinburnu and Uskudar, one on the European and the other on the Anatolian side of Istanbul, for instance, MAG (meaning Quarter Disaster Volunteers in Turkish) have been formed. They give educational services to the communities for getting prepared for the expected big Marmara earthquake.

Zeytinburnu is not the only area to be transformed in a planned fashion but it is considered an exemplary one to continue the transformation process. Moreover, just like in Zeytinburnu, in Galata and Haydarpasa, both areas by the sea and with cultural landmarks, are to be transformed into large scale port-projects. Yet, Zeytinburnu was the first among them because it was thought to be the most risky in its urban pattern with very

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little green and over-built quarters. This is not a surprise because it was the first squatter housing area, which later became a squatter town within the city of Istanbul. In order to change the area into a contemporary settlement, in-depth studies are to be undertaken in order to examine its urban structure. Local authorities have formed a responsible unit for this design task.

The idea was to create planned sustainable urban designs, for Zeytinburnu in particular, and for Istanbul in general. These projects involved the following zoning types: recreational, cultural and touristic areas (as in Kucukcekmece, Avcilar); central construction areas (as in Kartal, Ikitelli and Zeytinburnu); Community Center Projects (as in Beylikduzu and Kagithane); Residential Zones Urban Transformation Projects (as in Zeytinburnu).

As the first transformation project, Zeytinburnu with its total area of 1,560,000m2 is intended to be a national and international tourism and commercial center. The existing land use being mostly residential, by the transformation project, the population living in the settlement is planned to be moved to the Ikitelli region and its vicinity. Projects can be categorized as: landscape development to connect the inlands to the water; cultural valley project (city wall) to renew city walls; industrial zone transformation (www.ibb.gov.tr).

Development of Zeytinburnu and its Planned Transformation

Before the Planned Period, gecekondu policies were to prevent squatter house construction, legalization, and prevention through the allocation of low cost land. Their implementation

has been loose: Some regions, although within the demolition program, have been put under rehabilitation because demolition implementation could not be carried out.

The former squatter town has a population of 247,669 within 16,030 buildings in 13 quarters (mahalles) on a land of 1,200 ha. In the engineering reports of the Zeytinburnu Pilot Project, Zeytinburnu is found to have 2,295 high risk buildings, 15,019 of which are housing, 2,893 of which are commercial, and 791 of which are industrial. It was estimated that overall, 72,388 individuals will be affected. The area has been intensely built up, lacking adequate green for parks and playgrounds also to be used as gathering areas during a disaster. The demolition and rebuilding activities are expected to be completed within 3 years (www.ibb.gov.tr). The first squatter town in Istanbul, Zeytinburnu is expected to have an exemplary transformation project which will consider the earthquake risk. The head of the metropolitan municipality considered this area to represent Istanbul in view of its social make up and building construction. The project offers two alternatives to the Zeytinburnu inhabitants: (1) those who would like to stay within the settlement may remain if they are willing to pay extra for the new housing (2) those who want to move out, there will be other quarters in Istanbul, such as Topkapi and Ikitelli where new housing – 100,000 and 300,000 respectively, are to be built. Furthermore, this project of transformation is planned to be implemented in 10 other sub-municipalities of Istanbul. Some legal changes to be made at the existing urban development plans are considered to be supportive of these activities (www.ibb.gov.tr).

Zeytinburnu was originally agricultural land which

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was later illegally subdivided and invaded by the in-migrants coming from Western Thrace and in-migrants coming from rural Turkey. The need for low-cost housing for them who were mostly working in the factories was unmet by the government, so they found their own solutions for shelter. They built houses themselves near the factories to minimize cost. The pilot project attacks these problems vis-à-vis developing strategies for economic growth, increase the educational level, and increase the human capacities. Middle or higher income groups go through an infiltration process. The gentrification may take place in Zeytinburnu in the future, because if the pilot transformation project is implemented with the expected new law on Istanbul's transformation to be issued, then, the movement of certain social groups who would be forced to evacuate their houses either because they block the existing routes according to the Emergency Plan or because they are in earthquake hazardous condition.

Authorities' reasons for choosing Zeytinburnu for the first pilot project are the following: i) It has high potential for transformation; ii) it constitutes a model for Turkey at large; iii) it has high concentrations of squatter houses; iv) it has unplanned urban growth going out of control; v) it accommodates all problematic building categories.

The total cost of the entire project is estimated to be US$950 million, and in 2004 the Mayor's request to undertake the planning of the Zeytinburnu Transformation Project was accepted. He formed a Disaster Preparedness Group because a big Marmara earthquake is expected. Also, for the year 2010, Istanbul has been selected by the European Cultural Union as the Cultural Capital of Europe. This was the mission given to the city in the process of joining the European Union. Zeytinburnu has been selected as a pilot project to make it safe in view of building stock, urban-public spaces, and infrastructure. It is a coordinated project and was started simultaneously with the Earthquake Master Plan for Istanbul with four distinguished universities in Turkey after the big Earthquake in Turkey in 1999. It is expected that when this pilot project is completed, it would be applied to other locations in Istanbul. According to the Earthquake Master Plan, the existing building stock must be reassessed carefully.

The Zeytinburnu urban transformation project was first initiated by Mayor Gurtuna in 1999 with the Istanbul 2030 Vision Project, called "the leader city of the Information Age: Istanbul". In 2002 the Istanbul Metropolitan Atelier was formed in order to implement urban transformation projects. In 2003, the project was bid to BIMTAS, a foundation of Municipality. Studies on the identification of the model, and the implementation phase are in progress. In the meanwhile, hotel complexes were constructed by the end of 2006 on land with an area of 12,000m2. The Action Plan, resulting from the earthquake preparedness pilot project in Zeytinburnu starts with examining the existing situation. In Istanbul, the high-rises which were started in the mid-80s have grown greatly (2110) (Yapici, 2005). According to the plan, three luxury hotels were planned. These can be realized only if 2400 houses out of a total of 16,030 are demolished in Zeytinburnu. That means that in place of the old and removed leather ateliers, touristic and cultural spaces are to be created. Local Action Planning involves the following Units and tasks: (1) investigations of diagnose; (2) making of road maps by IDMP (The

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Earthquake Master Plan for Istanbul-EMPI); (3) YEP prescription; and (4) Pilot Project for Curement / medication.

Zeytinburnu, predominantly a residential area, is accessed from the sea through the nearby Bakirkoy Port for sea bus services starting from the 1980s. In the 1990s, light-rail and metro systems connected the region to Aksaray, a transition area. The railway was an old transportation system and minibus routes had been created there much earlier, in the 1960s and '70s as a major connection between various neighborhoods in Zeytinburnu as well as with other parts of the city. The transformation project is the Strategic and Action Plan and aims to provide priorities in short, medium, and long terms in order to re-orient areas like Zeytinburnu in Istanbul where the earthquake risk is high. Factors justifying such effort and motivating factors are (1) unsafe building stock; (2) over-built areas; and (3) insufficient urban standards. The next step is to determine the priorities of escape routes and additional open areas.

Leather factories started to be established in the 1950s and with the opening of the roads connected to the sea, the factories were spread out over the whole of Kazlicesme (with an area of 190,000m2). In multi-story buildings, 220 leather ateliers were established. Even before the conquest of Constantinople, Fatih Sultan Mehmet built leather factories there next to the sea (Sinik, 2006). So it has a long history of contributing to the leather sector of the city and of the country. A significant portion of these ateliers actually occupied invaded land and were not removed due to the amnesty laws. This was all part of the planned development of industrial zones in Istanbul. Yet as the policies changed, so did

Zeytinburnu and during the period from 1985 to 1992, those factories were moved to Tuzla on the Anatolian side of the Bosphorus.

Zeytinburnu has had three phases of transformation: The first,was the change in the nature of the land from agricultural use into housing settlement by way of in-migrations into the area, causing the settlement to be over-populated and over-built (1947-on). The Second, transformation occurred when the first and major Squatter Law was passed and the whole area was marked for implementation of "Rehabilitation" vis-à-vis the housing typology which changed from one or two story temporarily-built structures for one family each into a vertical, multi-story dense housing area, while the composition of the population changed into a more heterogeneous one since 1966. The third major transformation is the one in which the area has been denoted as a "high-risk" earthquake zone with the result of re-mapping, and re-working (2000-on) are about to be undertaken in order to: (1) open new corridors of escape; (2) make place for gathering areas, and (3) demolish buildings at risk. All are parts and components of the Emergency Action Plan of Istanbul.

The Emergency Action Plan

According to the IMM (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality) map, Zeytinburnu has been classified with '"irregular buildings" (IMM, 1995); this program involves demolition of high-risk buildings and re-building on their sites. The criteria for each are interesting (FIG. 2). The Emergency corridors or the green belts are designed routes, which are to move personnel, supplies and equipment to staging areas in order to serve major population centers. Gathering zones are public

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places such as schools, mosques, gardens and sports facilities. For Gathering Areas, exit routes and intersections, risky buildings and grounds, south-east and west orientations have been the criteria. In selecting the buildings to demolish, risky buildings on the exit routes and interfering buildings blocking the exit roads are the criteria. Selecting axes as exit routes the criteria has been: accessibility to gathering areas, accessibility to

forming a transportation network and counter-forming of the mahalle (quarter) borders, along with building axes, building numbers, heights and title-deeds. Also needed is the creation of gathering areas to serve as first aid and first care areas after an earthquake before being moved to their temporary shelters. The emergency gathering places are also considered parks during regular times.

Temporary shelter areas are for immediate shelter, sanitation, and distribution of aid while the damage is assessed in the case of an earthquake. They must have capacities for communication and transportation by air, land, or sea by cars helicopters and ferries. The third goal is the creation of temporary housing to serve until the victims of the earthquake are moved to their long-term residences, after a natural disease and or after the demolition of high-risk buildings. The Quarter-renewing Action Program depends on the re-building approach. The improvement of the Zeytinburnu Community and the settlement during the first decade of formation of the settlement was due to the informal network based on voluntary associations which helped with the physical and social development of the settlement (Aksoylu-Dulgeroglu, 1984). Actually the first transportation network had been locally created and enabled the settlement to have access to the city center in the late 50s and even during the 60s. Furthermore, the associations which were classified according to their mission (i.e., sports, mini-buses, etc.,) continually helped with the consolidation of the community.

The Sumer neighborhood is the oldest quarter in Zeytinburnu and the most deteriorated residential area. The strategies for upgrading the habitable houses and demolishing those which are not, become important. In other words,

Emergency Routes (Shown by red Color)

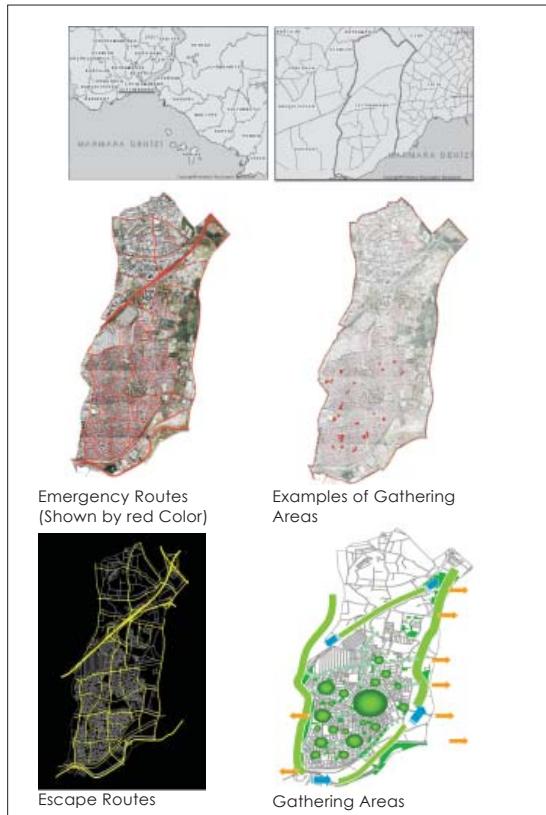Examples of Gathering Areas

Escape Routes

Gathering Areas

Figure 2: Zeytinburnu Site Plan, Life Corridor Gathering Areas, Temporary Shelter Areas (Source: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Urban Transformation Atelier, 2006).

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the area has priority over other mahalles in that regard. Zeytinburnu was declared an industrial zone or site in 1947. The population reached 247,669 (2000 Census, Turkish Statistical Institute). Creation of a second-degree transportation axis will be constructed (20m wide) serving as the main evacuation and transportation way.

Dilemmas and Issues

Urban transformation projects aim at increasing the quality of the community and the settlement but just the opposite unwanted outcomes may occur: dilapidation of the houses, deterioration of the environment, all due to the non-integrated approach. Moving from Fordism into post-Fordism in the Post-Modern Era is characterized by opportunities, easy flow of information, personnel and product over the world. Flexibility and privatization policies have become important in that respect.

Urban transformation is more than "gecekondu" spatial transformation into a rehabilitated residential area or any other zoning. It is important to make at least part of the transformation project however, because of rapidly changing social and physical structures which need to be planned for growth with respect to the city. About 15% of the houses will be demolished (Zeytinburnu Pilot Project Report. People feel uncertainty and lack information about the pilot transformation project to be implemented on their site and to affect their lives directly as well as their use of urban space. A recently formed association in Cirpici mahalle has the view of the citizens: uncertainty and lack of trust in the government.

Amnesty Laws were increasing housing problems because they were short-term solutions. When mobility is motivated, migration and social change inevitably affect the spatial organization of the city as well as the production and communication. There are several dilemmas involved in the urban transformation projects: firstly, collaboration of public institutions and the community. In most cases, including Zeytinburnu, the dwellers are uninformed about the decisions about their settlements which will directly affect their lives. These decisions may carry adverse consequences and may be deliberately hidden from them. A Zeytinburnu NGO member had expressed such concerns in confronting the Zeytinburnu transformation project. Secondly, the notion of an ideal urban transformation project involves the generation of healthy and high quality living environments for the dwellers. Yet, this activity frequently involves demolition and eviction which would be followed by relocation and displacement of the dwellers (for example in Zeytinburnu, to open up green land a significant number of houses will have to be demolished). Thirdly, a more delicate rehabilitation would have been a better choice than a pilot transformation project for an old squatter settlement which has already been rehabilitated in the past. Thus the selection of the setting is an issue. Fourthly, some groups think that the implied institutional goal of the transformation project is to gain further rent or profit through re-zoning the land spared for residential, thus shifting the target group from the already existing dwellers to another group outside, which usually has a higher income status.

Critique and Concluding Assessment Principles

The Zeytinburnu Transformation Project can be criticized for not being transparently planned

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to be implemented. Furthermore, the reality of the possibility of an earthquake requires a paradigmatic shift in terms of replacing urban growth with urban rehabilitation and urban transformation processes. There should be local participation and implementation methods, and action planning with urgent implementation, and the development of a relevant legal framework (Balamir, 2004). Possible negative impact of the plans is that the tightly knit social make up of the settlement could be broken if the members of the neighborhood are forced to leave. This in turn, may generate a community upheaval – detrimental to the local (administrative) authorities and the project itself. They may have to go to lower-income settlements, which would and might be unacceptable to the people who actually prospered there over the decades by starting from scratch and moving from vendor to small entrepreneur, from temporary to permanent shelter and who built for their offsprings. It is wrong to think of the Zeytinburnu transformation project as a squatter housing transformation project only, because unfortunately the squatter dwelling is sometimes recognized as the type first developed in Zeytinburnu. Squatter housing transformation projects usually mean that an area invaded by squatters is cleaned through expropriation of these lands by the Municipality and the Mass Housing Authority to later build Mass housing projects.

During the last decade, the law implementers and the academicians have discussed the pros and cons of urban transformation projects. As a result (1) the construction does not go to all potential beneficiaries; and (2) the interest span of the participants has not become continuous. (3) phased construction is a very useful possibility; (4) it is a low-cost alternative; (5) it is socially fit;

and (6) as long as it protects the ease of access to the social facilities.

The new projects to be built require so much demolition that the sincere attachment of the local authorities to the transformation project is questioned by the local people. Too much demolition, as if building from scratch, was a mistake. This is an already highly populated area. For creating parks and gardens, 500,000 demolitions have to take place. In Istanbul urban transformation is interpreted differently than the usual definitions would convey and is interpreted as an earthquake transformation and a 'gecekondu' transformation (www.wow. TURKEY. com). The projects of urban transformation are limited by their own space orientations, scales and goals. The multi-actor issue is significant but unfortunately is approached as a technical matter and in a fragmented manner. Over the last two decades, 'space' and 'society' have created transformable impacts on each other (Unverdi, 2003).

A planned effort is advantageous in the long term, as long as it takes into account the sustainable multi-dimensional outlook. Sometimes there is no integration with the rest of the planning system. There is a discussion about the issue of squatter housing areas which have not been enabled to be transformed with community participation during urban re-generation / gentrification or restructuring (Dundar, 2003). Accordingly, social transformation is an indicator of cultural and economical re-structuring following the physical transformation. As a principle, "transformation" should be defined as a process, which should help the urban competition in integration with the global system. In Turkey, its implementations are done with the underlying concept of the

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only "remedy" to the slum and squatter housing areas; however, in general it is meant to increase the global competition in the central zones of the global capital starting with the 1970s. Applications in Turkey have been in the form of providing alternatives to rehabilitation plans. Many existing roads being too narrow do not fulfill the necessities in case of emergency. The seaside provides or rather should provide a huge gathering area as well as huge spaces for every sort of supply in case of an earthquake, the railway tracks could collapse and block the connection to the seaside. Gathering areas by the coast are found to be more fit for temporary dwellings.

People's reactions are restless and uneasy about the transformation process. They need to participate into the process through NGOs and CBOs during the decision process, So far, it is not a 'community-based' project but a 'from- top-down' one. In France, when people protested the demolitions as part of the urban transformation project, the government had to take back some steps and stopped the implementation of the project. It is a multi-actor, multi-disciplinary activity, according to the plan. Furthermore, the legal and administrative infrastructure needs to be strengthened before and after an earthquake. However, the NGOs and the community at large seem to be not gliven the opportunity to have their decisions heard. The community organizations or the nonprofit organizations consider the whole project as one in which poverty and deprivation are made even worse, with the lack of infrastructure. Under these conditions, Istanbul cannot become a world city like New York or London or Tokyo or Paris. Fewer demolitions, a participatory process, and moving from project to policy are the key points to an acceptable transformation process. Thus, for a successful and feasible urban transformation, the level of intervention must be gentle and public and private, all actors, formal and informal (government and community) should work in full collaboration.

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