

Urban Regeneration and Social Segregation: The Case of İstanbul¹

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Abstract: *Despite some of its negative consequences, urbanization is seen as an indicator for development and, thus, has been widely supported in Turkey. In recent years, as the migration to urban areas has slowed down, some more comprehensive steps have been taken to solve urban problems, particularly inadequate housing supply and squatter housing areas. In this respect, urban regeneration is presented as a panacea for the solution of many urban problems and the renewal of cities. Yet, social, cultural and historical aspects of city life are often ignored. Since 2005, many urban regeneration projects have been carried out one after another in many cities in Turkey. This process seems to have exclusive and disintegrative consequences as the displacement of the poor and marginal groups in large cities has shown. After a conceptual and theoretical introduction, this paper critically reviews recent urban regeneration projects and the experience and struggle of some urban residents in Turkey, particularly in the studied neighborhoods in İstanbul. Besides, the dynamics of segregation and exclusion involved in the process of urban regeneration project implementation in the studied communities are analyzed.*

Keywords: *Urbanization, urban regeneration, segregation, exclusion, İstanbul*

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Özet: *Bazı olumsuz sonuçlarına rağmen kentleşme kalkınmanın bir göstergesi olarak algılanmakta ve bunun için de Türkiye’de geniş destek bulmaktadır. Son yıllarda, kente göçün yavaşlamasına paralel olarak, kentsel sorunları çözmek için daha kapsamlı adımlar atılmaktadır. Bu bağlamda kentsel dönüşüm, kentlerin sorunlarına çözüm üretilmesi ve kentlerin yenilmesi için en iyi tek çözüm olarak ortaya atılmaktadır. Ancak, bu yaklaşımda, kent yaşamının toplumsal, kültürel ve tarihi olduğu gerçeği çoğu kez gözden kaçırılmaktadır. 2005’ten bu yana, Türkiye’de birçok kentte kentsel dönüşüm projeleri birbiri ardına hayata geçirilmeye başlanmıştır. Bu sürecin, büyük kentlerde yoksul ve marjinal grupların yerlerinden edilmeleri sürecinin de gösterdiği gibi, toplumsal ayrışma ve dışlamaya neden olan boyutları bulunmaktadır. Çalışmada, kavramsal ve kuramsal bir girişten sonra, Türkiye’deki özellikle de İstanbul’daki kentsel dönüşüm süreci ve incelenen mahallelerde yaşayanların deneyim ve mücadeleleri ortaya konarak, eleştirel bir gözle ele alınmaktadır. Ayrıca, incelenen mahallelerde*

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uygulanan kentsel dönüşüm proje süreçlerinde ortaya çıkan ayrışma ve dışlama dinamikleri çözümlenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kentleşme, kentsel dönüşüm, ayrışma, dışlama, İstanbul

Introduction

In recent years, crucial changes have taken place in urban areas in Turkey as in the world. In the case of Turkey, change meant urbanization and urban development to many people, especially during the 1980s and 1990s. It was in 1985 when the proportion of people living in cities reached just over 50 percent. Today, 75 percent of the population lives in urban areas in Turkey. The main reasons for the urban growth have been rapid migration to cities, uncontrolled and unplanned urbanization trends and economic development in Turkey. These trends have two meanings. One is that urban development has not been shaped by a momentum of industrialization in Turkish case and accompanying demand for labor in cities. Yet, this limited industrialization did not deter the masses of people and peasants from moving into cities. This migration to urban areas has resulted in serious problems, such as ample supply of unskilled labor, insufficient shelter supply, inadequate urban infrastructure and urban services, traffic congestion, environmental degradation, poverty and deprivation, among others.

Despite its negative consequences, urbanization has been considered as an indication of development. It has helped revive urban economies, provided the cheap labor required in urban areas, and crowded people in urban areas where their needs could be met easier and better than rural areas. In addition; the housing needs of new urban dwellers to which the state could not produce an answer have been met to a great degree by the construction of squatter housing (called "gecekondu" in Turkish that literally means a shelter constructed overnight) in the outskirts of the cities via informal ways by directly the new comers themselves.

The patterns of urbanization and urban development have changed over the years in Turkey. As the migration to urban areas has slowed down in recent years, more steps have been taken in order to solve the problems in cities. Especially since 2005, urban development meant urban regeneration as well as the development of empty urban lands. In this process, the strongest actors are developers, municipalities and the central government. In Turkey, some central government agencies and individual municipalities make the decisions concerning major urban regeneration operations, organize necessary resources for regeneration projects and/or select the main contractors. State Planning Organization (SPO) as well as Housing Development Administration (HAD, or TOKİ in Turkish) at the national level and the municipalities (often in partnership with HDA) at the local level have been leading actors in the process of urban regeneration in Turkey. As the main public contractor, HDA was created in 1984 and given power to undertake urban development and to provide urban housing. The creation of

SPO goes back to the 1960s when there was a need to centrally plan national economic development in Turkey. Yet, SPO also have power in planning urban development through planning and controlling development.

Rapid migration to urban areas particularly in the 1980s and 1990s forced governments to produce some solutions for urban problems. Yet, the inadequacy of public resources prevented the development of effective solutions. New comers to the cities were left to construct their own housing and find ways on their own to hang on to the new life in the city. Of course, there were investments in the cities but they were inadequate to meet the demand from the ever increasing number of migrants. After, AKP (Justice and Development Party) administration came to power in 2002, urban regeneration has become the main strategy for urban development. In fact, urban regeneration has been presented as a panacea for the solution of many urban problems. Accordingly, urban regeneration projects have been carried out one after another in order to clear squatter housing, to renew some dilapidated neighborhoods, to provide for basic urban infrastructure, urban housing and services, and to increase the attraction of cities in Turkey, particularly in large cities such as İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir. In this process, many cities have had a chance to improve housing stock and urban infrastructure but some disadvantaged groups in many cities in Turkey have been displaced or relocated.

This paper attempts to present and analyze the data on the urban regeneration efforts particularly in the two neighborhoods in Maltepe Municipal District in İstanbul. In this study, after a conceptual and theoretical introduction, urban regeneration projects carried out in Turkey in recent years are critically reviewed and evaluated. More specifically, the urban regeneration process and the experience of the residents in Başbüyük and Gülsuyu communities in İstanbul are presented and analyzed. Finally, the processes of segregation, exclusion and displacement of the residents involved in the process of urban regeneration in Başbüyük and Gülsuyu (and Sulukule as the pilot study area) communities are evaluated and examined.

Urban Regeneration and Theoretical Background

Urban regeneration refers to renewal of the decayed parts of urban areas, complete transformation of empty urban lands, rehabilitation of deprived squatter housing areas, redevelopment of infrastructure, rejuvenation of severely dilapidated urban districts or derelict urban neighborhoods, improvement of the quality of life and the environment, prevention of illegal residential development etc. as well as conservation of agricultural lands, environmental assets and cultural and historical heritage (Gibson & Longstaff, 1982: 12; Gül, 1997; Dickinson, 2005: 225; UNEP,

2004: 7-8; Gül & Dulupçu, 2010).² The efforts of urban regeneration aim at improving economy, developing spatial, natural and physical environment and vitalizing the community. In this process, urban land is often transformed functionally and structurally through urban regeneration (Tekeli, 2003). However, it is expected that urban regeneration achieves such goals without compromising social or environmental aims and sustainability (Hemphill et al., 2002: 353-354; Blackman, 1995).

Despite this technical and spatial definition, urban regeneration also has socio-economic aspects to it. In Turkish case, urban regeneration is adopted as the main tool for spatial urban change and squatter housing clearance, and applied as a panacea to solve many other urban problems. Besides, particularly in the case of İstanbul, it is also considered as the main strategy to increase the attraction of the city in the global market and its competitive advantage over other global cities with regional impact, such as Cairo, Moscow and Prague. Of course, globalization, the race among the cities of developing world to attract international capital and investment, and the dominant rhetoric dictating cities as the places of consumption and capital accumulation rather than spaces of living, working and social interaction, all have some impact on such a perception of urban regeneration and, specifically, on the utilization of this method as the key method of urban thriving in Turkish case. In this approach, exchange value of cities is prized more than their use value and, thus, cities are perceived just like any other commercial goods circulating in the market, priced according to the demand. Thus, cities are subject to marketing as the means of attracting investment and as the spaces of deriving profit. The latest proposal of AKP government to open a new channel to the west of the Bosphorus connecting Black Sea and inland Marmara Sea, and make İstanbul more attractive for international investment is another good example of that approach.³ This example clearly shows how the government fabricates new urban space as a means of production in order to create the conditions for capital accumulation, and how the current government tries to channel investment into Turkey. In fact, AKP government as well as İstanbul Metropolitan Municipal Administration are both ready to play an entrepreneurial role in place marketing through large investments by increasing locational advantages of İstanbul.⁴

² In the literature, urban regeneration is sometimes utilized interchangeably with urban renewal, urban redevelopment, urban reconstruction, urban revitalization, urban renaissance, gentrification, etc.

³ It should be emphasized here that Prime Minister R. T. Erdoğan was the mayor of İstanbul before becoming the leader of AKP and then the Prime Minister. Thus, Erdoğan has continued to have an interest in economic and urban development in İstanbul. He made several policy proposals and had a majority of them implemented, such as the third bridge over the Bosphorus and Marmaray Rail Road Project, connecting the Anatolian and European sides of İstanbul through a tunnel underneath the Bosphorus. One of the important proposals that Erdoğan have not had a chance to get done so far is the transfer of the headquarters of Turkish Central Bank to İstanbul from Ankara.

⁴ The importance of İstanbul in the global market for Turkey is particularly emphasized by Keyder and Öncü (1993); and Keyder (2004). The theoretical background of the role of cities in the global market is well documented by Sassen (2001) and the importance of urban

However, in such an understanding of the city and urban regeneration, the social, cultural or historical aspects and assets of city life are ignored, and cities are seen as global goods that could be renewed, gentrified or regenerated for advertisement, marketing and investment. Besides, this view also tends to ignore the fact that regeneration is often associated with increased social, economic and spatial segregation. Goldsmith (2001) argues that, despite some trickledown benefits of successful economic development efforts, "most major metropolitan areas contain significant social segregation"; and that "disadvantaged groups continue to remain disadvantaged, and that the problems associated with such groups are growing rather than diminishing." Sassen (2001) also points to the similar tendencies in globalized cities. Moreover, Lefebvre (1991) states that urban space is segregated into hierarchical and isolated social ghettos. Furthermore, Marcuse (1993) suggests that "the extent of homelessness, the growth of gentrification and abandonment, the role of displacement as a mechanism of expansion by the middle classes, the growth of turf allegiance and battles, the role of government in promoting gentrification and the changing form of political cleavages, most of which stem from the nature of modern capitalism" (cited in Hamnett, 2001: 167).

More specific the cities of the United States, Castell's 1989 study presents 'the polarization and segmentation' of occupational structure, income distribution, and spatial areas resulting from the process of internationalization and techno-economic restructuring going in today's US society and economy. Furthermore, Wilson's 1987 study, another influential and stimulating study in the area of urban poverty and segregation, documents the socio-economic isolation of the urban black poor, due to social constraints, economic restructuring, an increasingly restrictive housing market and discrimination. Finally, Moore and Pinderhughes contrast and compare the black inner-cities' characteristics with Hispanic barrios by using Wilson's study. The authors indicate that gentrification has had a significant impact on some Hispanic neighborhoods by replacing their residence to upgrade the neighborhood's housing stock.

In Turkish case, urban regeneration also involves segregation and exclusion. Some disadvantaged groups in many cities in Turkey have been displaced or relocated. The findings of the research this paper is based upon indicate that urban regeneration in İstanbul tends to force people to relocate and leave their houses. The main reason for this is because the process of urban renewal is often carried out in such relatively poor squatter housing areas of İstanbul where the poor, Gypsies, minority groups, leftist groups or other marginal groups live. In other words, a purification effort and gentrification seem to be taking place under the name of urban regeneration and with the main goal of making urban space more attractive for investment and / or upper income groups to move in. Besides, the local residents are

space for capital accumulation and capitalist production is well established theoretically by Lefebvre (1991) and Harvey (1985; 1989).

excluded particularly from policy and decision making of the urban regeneration process. The indigenous characteristics and needs of neighborhoods, the ideas of the local residents are not taken into consideration. The local residents do not necessarily oppose urban regeneration projects. Yet, they complain that they have never been informed about the projects, and that their options have not been taken into consideration. Thus, urban regeneration process in Turkey could be defined as "management on behalf of the managed" style of policy making to reflect its non-participatory character, because the residents of the neighborhoods are almost entirely excluded from the decision making and implementation processes (See also Ergun, 2009: 824, 827).

Urban Regeneration in Turkey

Urban growth has happened since the 1950s in Turkey. Large cities such as İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir along with settlements in the coastal regions have received a great deal of the migrants particularly since the 1980s and this has increased the pressure on city administrations. In urban areas receiving excessive migration, the rate of housing construction has not been able to match the rate of population increase, and thus, many migrants built up squatter housing (*gecekondu*) on the outskirts of the urban areas. Thus, urban regeneration entered into Turkish literature in the 1980s and the pace of urban regeneration has accelerated after 2005. The recent urban regeneration projects in Turkey have been put into effect in order to correct the undesirable consequences of rapid, uncontrolled and unplanned urbanization, such as flawed urban system, informal economy, environmental degradation, squatter housing and concentrated poverty.

The early examples of urban regeneration in Turkey were squatter housing clearance and mass housing projects, such as Orange Flower Valley and Dikmen Valley Urban Renewal Projects in Ankara, and Golden Horne project in İstanbul. These early examples were mainly high-profile, symbolic infrastructural projects, aiming to polish the image of the cities. In the case of Golden Horne projects, İstanbul Metropolitan Municipal Administration took action to demolish more than thirty thousand commercial and residential buildings along the shores of the Golden Horn and replaced them with parks, gardens and a large auto route along the shore line. The goal was to make İstanbul more presentable in the global market (Keyder & Öncü, 1993). Yet, these projects have attracted more migrants to Ankara and İstanbul, adding to already crowded marginalized pool of workers, housing problems, urban congestion and urban infrastructure inadequacies, among others. Yet, it is doubtful that the infrastructural needs of existing rundown neighborhoods and the opinions of their residents were considered. Today more than 145 small to large size urban regeneration projects are implemented by the HDA and Ankara Metropolitan Municipality in partnership with other related actors (municipalities, home buyers, private developers, construction firms etc.)

only within the borders of Ankara (<http://www.ankara.bel.tr>; www.toki.gov.tr). It is almost the same in İstanbul (www.toki.gov.tr; Kocabaş, 2006) and İzmir (<http://www.izmir.bel.tr>). As of 2010, the main actor in urban regeneration process, the Housing Development Agency has undergone urban regeneration projects in 56 provinces all over Turkey (Radikal, 2010).

The forms of urban development and urban regeneration vary in Turkey. Squatter housing area rehabilitation and mass social housing construction are the major types of urban regeneration. In clearing squatter housing areas, not only an illegally occupied squatter housing zone is rehabilitated and renewed but also a vacant area is planned for the purpose of providing modern housing units to transfer squatter housing residents. As a first step in this model of regeneration, municipalities identify illegally settled regions within their borders and cooperate with the HDA through a protocol to rehabilitate those regions through an urban regeneration project. The HDA prepares a housing development program to construct modern housing units for the squatter housing residents on a different vacant area generally provided by municipalities to the HDA. On the other hand, municipalities identify illegally-settled households to be evicted and then clear the occupied land. The cleared land, then, is used by the HDA and municipality and regenerated through urban renewal projects because such urban squatter housing areas are often located in central city and, thus, are very valuable. Yet, the construction of houses is done by private developers selected through an open tender. Such projects may also involve relocating landfills or waste dumps, clearing old waste dumping sites, improving environmental quality and infrastructure, creating social and public facilities related to leisure, entertainment, public services, open and green space, commercial services, etc. (Gül & Dulupçu, 2010).

Some urban regeneration projects may also include the reorganization and revitalization of large dilapidated or deteriorated urban zones and the reuse of such areas for different functions ranging from housing, offices, public areas, leisure, entertainment, trade, shopping etc. The restoration or renovation of historical and traditional buildings or areas is another type of urban regeneration in Turkey. Metropolitan and district municipalities, the HDA, universities, the Ministry of Culture, civic organizations, professionals, local residents, national and international organizations (particularly UNESCO) are involved in renovation projects. Such projects are often implemented in derelict central parts of cities (e.g., Ulus in Ankara, Kemeralti in İzmir, Beyoglu, Balat, Galata and Eminönü in İstanbul) or old industrial districts. The goal is to rehabilitate and upgrade these central parts of big cities or old industrial districts. In addition, the creation of changes in image, the attraction of businesses, service activities and tourism, the establishment of new shopping facilities, and the improvement of the landscape. Such efforts may often be intertwined with conservation and restoration efforts. As further examples of urban regeneration in Turkey, the establishment of

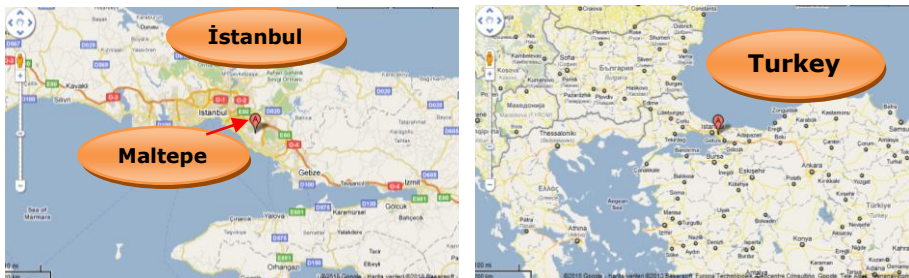
industrial parks, techno-parks, business centers and research areas along with the clearance, rehabilitation and renewal of urban disaster areas can be mentioned.

Urban Regeneration in the Communities of Başbüyük and Gülsuyu in İstanbul

The data used in this paper come from a field research carried out between April 2009 and June 2010 in the communities of Başbüyük and Gülsuyu located in the Maltepe Municipal District in the Anatolian-side of İstanbul. Sulukule in İstanbul had been selected as the research field first, and a pilot study carried out in this neighborhood. Yet, the urban regeneration project in Sulukule was about to be completed. Thus, the neighborhoods of Başbüyük and Gülsuyu were selected as the research field. Both of the communities have been going through a troublesome process of urban regeneration. In determining the sample communities, the existence of resistance and ethnic minorities were also taken into consideration. 50 people were interviewed in the each of the two communities. The researchers also contacted civic organizations and interviewed the representatives of these civic organizations regarding the process of urban regeneration their communities and their views on this process. The secondary data are also utilized to present the cases more clearly.

Some characteristics of the sample communities

The neighborhoods of Başbüyük and Gülsuyu are located on top and shoulders of the two hills facing one another in the district of Maltepe in İstanbul. The community of Başbüyük has a 750-year history (İseri, 2010: 115). Yet, its population mainly increased during the 1980s and 1990s, when businesses, urban infrastructure, public services and a hospital were established in the neighborhood (Sen, 2010: 327; Kuyucu & Atayurt, 2008: 36; Şenyüksel, 2009: 6-7).



Maps 1-2. The Location of the Municipal District of Maltepe in İstanbul, Turkey

On July 16, 2004, the District Municipality of Maltepe, where the community is located, the Metropolitan İstanbul Municipality and Housing Development Agency signed a joint protocol and the developmental rights on the neighborhood of Başibüyük were transferred to HDA. On October 09, 2006, the district municipality made some amendments to the protocol, which was approved by the Metropolitan İstanbul Municipality on January 11, 2007. According to this amendment, the whole neighborhood with its open public spaces and parks in the area of regeneration was given to the control of HDA for redevelopment (Atayurt, 2008: 19; İmece, 2009: 20). There were appeals to these decisions in the court, and the court ordered that the regeneration project in Başibüyük was to be stopped. Despite the court decision, the multi-story apartment project was completed by HDA (İmece, 2009: 21).

The foundation of Gülsuyu neighborhood goes back to the 1950s when the first wave of migration to big cities in Turkey started, and when the need for unskilled labor increased in the factories nearby the neighborhood (Bozkulak, 2005: 250). There are water wells in the neighborhood and the neighborhood gets its name from these wells. Until the 1980s, all the housing in the neighborhood was squatter housing. With the legal regulations and municipal development plans providing for squatter housing development exemption, many people got their houses and land registered in 1989. In July of 2004, the Metropolitan İstanbul Municipality included Gülsuyu as well as eight other neighborhoods with a population around 250 to 300 thousand people in the urban regeneration area with its new development plan for the North of Highway E-5, which is the main auto route connecting the West to East through İstanbul. After the new plan, the population of the neighborhoods was planned to be around 150 thousand in sum, meaning that the rest would have to relocate and leave the places where they had been living. Therefore, thousands of the residents protested and petitioned against regeneration, and there were 32 appeals at the courts against the municipal development plans and regeneration projects (Çavuşoğlu; 2008: 28-29; Kuyucu & Atayurt, 2008: 37; Şen, 2010: 330; İmece, 2009: 20).

After all these objections and appeals, the Metropolitan İstanbul Municipality had to prepare a new development plan and regeneration project for these neighborhoods in the municipal district of Maltepe in 2005. In this new regeneration project, only the neighborhoods of Başibüyük, Gülensu and Gülsuyu are included and other neighborhoods are excluded from the project. The regeneration project was put into effect in the neighborhood of Başibüyük (Maltepe Belediyesi, 2007: 71) but the implementation in Gülsuyu was delayed due to intense protests.



Picture 1 (by Cem Ergun). A view of from Basibüyük.



Picture 2 (by Cem Ergun). A view from Gülsuyu.

The neighborhoods of Gülsuyu and Başibüyük are very close to the Universities of Yeditepe and Maltepe, the connection of TEM and E-5 Highways, Sabiha Gökçen Airport, and Kartal – Kadıköy railway line and big shopping malls. Besides, these two neighborhoods have high altitude from the sea level, are next to the forests, have strong geological base for high-rise apartment construction and have really beautiful scenery of the islands in Marmara Sea as seen in the picture (Kahraman, 2006: 99).

İlmen (2001: 66) describes the District of Maltepe as in the following statement:

"What makes our neighborhood valuable is its location that is at a very convenient distance to and overlooking the Islands in Marmara Sea, which is one of the most beautiful regions in İstanbul."

A Discussion of Findings

The findings of the research are classified into two groups: the findings on social and demographic characteristics, and on the views and attitudes of the interviewees about the urban regeneration project.

Findings on social and demographic characteristics

The interviews were carried out on the base of voluntarism. In the neighborhood of Başibüyük, 43 women and 7 men were interviewed whereas in the neighborhood of Gülsuyu 18 women and 32 men were interviewed. In total, 100 people were interviewed, 61 percent of whom were women and 39 percent of whom were men.

The data collected indicate that there were only three persons in the sample group who were born in İstanbul. The dwellers in Gülsuyu were generally from East and Central Anatolia (88 percent) whereas the dwellers in Başibüyük were mostly from Central and North Anatolia (78 percent). The

level of educational attainment of the residents interviewed in the neighborhoods was low. 81 percent of the interviewees had elementary level or less education. The two third of the interviewees lived in families of 4 or more persons.

Most of the interviewees lived in houses either registered or with title deed. Only 5 interviewees (5 percent) said that they had no registration document or title deed proving the ownership of their house and property. Almost two third of the interviewees (62 percent) said that they built their house themselves. Only 11 percent of the residents in the sample bought the house in which they lived whereas 19 percent rented their houses. The rest lived in the houses belonging to their parents. There were only a few new comers in these neighborhoods. 81 percent of the interviewees declared that they lived in their present houses more than 10 years.

Findings on the views and attitudes of the interviewees about urban regeneration projects

When the interviewees were asked about "whether or not they were informed about the urban regeneration project implemented in their neighborhood", 92 percent of them said that they were never informed about the urban regeneration project. Only 8 percent in the neighborhood of Başbüyük said that they were somehow informed about the project. Similarly, when the interviewees were asked about "whether or not their opinion on the urban regeneration project implemented in their neighborhood was asked", 100 percent of them said that they were never asked anything about the urban regeneration project. In much the same way, all of the interviewees declared that they were never invited to get involved the decision making process. However, it was always in the media that the people responsible for the implementation of the urban regeneration project asserted that they had tried to convince the residents of the regeneration areas about the projects, and that the decisions had been made always with the voluntary participation of the residents of the neighborhoods where the project had to be implemented (Bayraktar, 2007: 54). Besides, Bayraktar, the president of the Housing Development Agency (HDA) at the time and currently the Minister of Environment and Urbanization, declared that "HDA and municipalities together determine the involved stakeholders in the urban regeneration area and establish a commission in order to provide information to each and every stakeholder in the neighborhoods where the regeneration projects are to be implemented" (Bayraktar, 2007: 47).

The interviewees seemed to have information about the content of the urban regeneration project. When they were asked about "what kind of information they had about the urban regeneration project in the neighborhood", a great majority of the interviewees (89 percent) in both neighborhoods replied that the existing houses would be destroyed and multi-story apartments would be erected. When the interviewees were asked

about "what the urban regeneration project in the neighborhood meant for them", a majority of them seemed to be in fear of losing their houses where they had been living with their families for many years. 40 percent of the respondents said that the urban regeneration meant "destruction" for them whereas 33 percent declared that urban regeneration was the method of opening up the neighborhood to the rich and developers. 14 percent indicated that it would mean misery for the renters, and another 13 percent said that regeneration would harm the residents one way or another. To illustrate how the residents of the regenerated neighborhoods felt about the regeneration projects, the views of one respondent from Başibüyük is presented below:

"They will take away our houses and put us out on the street. In order to build my house I stole from the money that I should have spent for my children's education. We were about to get better economically and have felt a little more comfortable recently. But now they want to destroy our houses and lives. This is a world for the rich, and there is no place for people like us in this world. In order to convince us, they say that we are not safe in these houses because they are illegal, or because they are not resistant to earthquakes. If they were illegal, why you as the municipality provide utilities to us? If you do this project without throwing me out on the street, that is okay with me. But that is not what they want. They want us out of these neighborhoods and then they want to come in here, own these places and live here like pashas or kings."

Another respondent from Başibüyük described the urban regeneration as follows:

"I cannot understand whether this project is a regeneration or exile. They carry it out with the police force. They are not here to serve us, but to the developers and the rich. They say that the HDA will give us apartments. But they ask us to take up a loan on and pay it back over 10 to 20 years. They want to tie us to themselves through debt."

Given below are the views of another respondent on the urban regeneration project in the neighborhood of Gülsuyu:

"Urban regeneration means the transformation of the neighborhoods of the labor into multi-story apartments and luxury residents or villas. They offer us apartments like match-boxes. And what is worse is that the apartments they offer us are erected upon the water wells that give this neighborhood its name. They say that our houses are not safe but the apartments they built are on the water resources and wells and they cannot persuade me that they are safer than my house is. Moreover, they want me to go and get loans to buy the new apartments and pay it back over the years until I die. We are poor people. We cannot pay such a loan back. I believe that they do not want to regenerate our neighborhood but exterminate us and then come and settle in here. But we do not want to leave our houses."

A further example of the views of residents of Başibüyük about the regeneration project is given below:

"It is not easy to get used to living in the apartments after we have lived for many years in houses with garden. I cannot live within four walls. The HDA offers us apartments but we have to find a loan to buy it and give away our houses, as well. I do not get it. I will have to pay back the loan, there will be monthly apartment payments. How can I afford it?"

A final example of how the residents of Gülsuyu felt about the regeneration project is given below:

"The representatives of the municipalities and the HDA are not sincere about the urban regeneration project and they have hidden goals. They have been trying to do this for so many years. They want to destroy this neighborhood. There are different ethnic and ideological groups here: Alevis, Gypsies, the poor, the labor or leftists. They are annoyed of this diversity and do not want us here. Besides, they find these lands very valuable and want to take away everything from us. They were not able to do it before. But now they want to achieve the two goals together at once by urban regeneration. They will get rid of us first, and then bring in the rich."

The breakdown of the responses by the interviewees for the question on "the possible influences of the urban regeneration project on the residents and the neighborhood" indicate that a great majority of the respondents are worried about adverse impact of the urban regeneration project on them and / or their neighborhoods. Almost 90 percent of the respondents think that they would lose either the order of their lives or houses or neighborhoods.

The findings display that the residents of the neighborhood of Gülsuyu have never received any offer of a new apartment from the management of the urban regeneration project by the time of our interviews. This indicates that many people make up their minds about the how to go about the urban regeneration project by talking to the neighbors or other community leaders. 36 percent of the residents of the neighborhood of Başbüyük declare the same thing. But, 64 percent of the residents of the neighborhood of Başbüyük say that they got an offer to vacate their houses and get a loan to buy one of the newly built apartments by the HDA in the neighborhood. Yet, 40 percent of those people who got an offer are doubtful if they would be able to pay the loan back whereas 24 percent of them say that they would never accept such an offer from the HDA.

When the interviewees are asked about "what they would do if they had power to decide about the urban generation project in their neighborhood", two third of the respondents (64 percent) seem to have positive approaches towards renewing their neighborhood or improving the infrastructure in their neighborhood as seen in Table 1. But, they do not want their houses to be destructed. An additional 17 percent answer that question by only saying that "their houses should not be demolished".

Response	Başbüyük	Gülsuyu	Total
Give the residents their title deeds and let them decide what to do	16	3	19
	32.0%	6.0%	19.0%
Would not demolish houses	12	5	17
	24.0%	10.0%	17.0%
Renew neighborhood without destructing it	22	14	36
	44.0%	28.0%	36.0%
Improve infrastructure	0	28	28
	0%	56.0%	28.0%
Total	50	50	100
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

When the interviewees are asked directly about under which conditions they would approve an urban regeneration in their neighborhood, their responses get more complicated. This could be considered as another sign of the possible positive approach towards the regeneration projects if they had been involved in the process and if their opinions had been asked.

Response	Başbüyük	Gülsuyu	Total
The residents should be allowed to build their own house by contracting with the builders	5	0	5
	10.0%	0%	5.0%
If I am given an apartment without getting any loans	12	5	17
	24.0%	10.0%	17.0%
If I am provided with inexpensive rental apartments	3	1	4
	6.0%	2.0%	4.0%
If we continue to stay in the neighborhood	13	14	27
	26.0%	28.0%	27.0%
Would never accept	17	18	35
	34.0%	36.0%	35.0%
If we are allowed in decision making processes	0	12	12
	0%	24.0%	12.0%
Total	50	50	100
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The responses indicate that only 35 percent insist on the idea of never accepting any offer by the HDA. Yet, the respondents seem to be positive about urban regeneration project if they were allowed to continue staying in the neighborhood, included in the decision making process, given apartments without extra financial burden, or offered affordable rental apartments.

Pictures Tells the Story

Here are some pictures to help get a grasp of the living environment and regeneration process in the communities of Başibüyük and Gülsuyu in Maltepe and Sulukule (pilot study area of the research) in İstanbul.



Picture 3 (by Cem Ergun). A view from Başibüyük



Picture 4 (by Cem Ergun). A view from Başibüyük



Picture 5 (by Cem Ergun). A view from Gülsuyu

Two views from Başibüyük are presented in picture 3 on the left and picture 4 in the middle. Many of the old apartments in the neighborhood seen in this picture are in line for demolition for opening up space for new high rise apartments, single family housing, villas and shopping malls. Picture 5 on the right shows an undeveloped area in Gülsuyu. Both neighborhoods did have several empty lots for development which made the area attractive for developers.



Picture 6. A view from Sulukule (by Nese Ozan)



Picture 7. A view from Sulukule (by Nese Ozan)

Pictures 6 to 9 given above and taken in the pilot study area in the neighborhood of Sulukule in İstanbul give a clear sense of what regeneration means for the residents of such regenerated neighborhoods. Many residents left out without a place to live. Some were asked to go to the newly constructed HAD apartments outside the city and very far away from the neighborhood where they used to live. But many could not get used to living

in those high rise apartments because they have grown up in houses with small gardens despite the fact that many of these houses are considered as squatter housing. Besides, they lived very close to the small businesses or other temporary and informal day work opportunities in their neighborhood. Thus, they felt that they had to return to the city center or the same neighborhood where they used to live. Homeowners resisted demolition teams and police and tried not to leave their houses. Yet, they would finally have to leave their houses. Overall, regeneration meant for the residents the destruction of not only their houses and neighborhoods, but also *"their lives and hopes."*

Conclusion

As already pointed out above, the patterns of urbanization have changed, and the types of urban development have become diversified over the years in Turkey, particularly since the start of the third millennium. Within the last 6 or 7 years urban development were widely used to refer to urban regeneration and the development of empty urban lands. This was validated by the results of our research. The findings suggest that urban regeneration in the cases of Başibüyük, Gülsuyu and Sulukule in İstanbul has the goals of renewing the housing stock and infrastructure and of making the area attractive for developers to invest, start-up or other businesses to come in and for upper-class members to move in and reside.

However, urban regeneration process in the neighborhoods of Başibüyük and Gülsuyu where the field research were carried out is found to be exclusive in the sense that the residents of the area are not included in the decision making and implementation process of the urban regeneration projects. The residents complain about the fact that their opinions or preferences have not been asked in the preparation or implementation of the projects. Besides, the implementation of the projects are found to produce spatial and social segregation by displacing or forcing to relocate the poor, Gypsies, some minorities or other marginal groups. It also meant economic segregation because they were asked to live outside the city where there were no job opportunities. Thus, the residents of regeneration areas feel powerless in and excluded from the decision making and implementation processes, and they tend to oppose the regeneration efforts in their neighborhoods. On the management part of the project, it seems to be a failure not to inform the residents about the regeneration process and not to try to get their consent. Despite this overall negative picture, some residents seem to be constructive about the urban regeneration projects and appear not to oppose renewal and improvement efforts in their neighborhoods if they were allowed to continue staying in the neighborhood, included in the decision making process, given apartments without extra financial burden, or / and offered affordable rental apartments.

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