Int. Journal for Housing Science, Vol.36, No.2 pp.59-71, 2012
Published in the United States

TRANSFORMATIONS OF ISTANBUL: A VOYAGE FROM PAST TO FUTURE

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ABSTRACT

"Population growth and immigration from rural areas to cities have created an enormous housing demand, which has been one of the major problems of Turkey since the 1950s. National governments, local authorities and even universities were not prepared when faced with such a rapid urbanization process. As a result of this uncontrolled process, our big cities, and especially Istanbul, underwent big structural changes. According to Zeynep Çelik, Istanbul has had to face two major transformations in its history because of its unique location. The first of these took place after the conquest of the city by Mehmet II in 1453, and the second took place in the nineteenth century. In this second, government-sponsored transformation, modernization efforts recast traditional urban policies based on Islamic law, and replaced the urban administration, institutions and organizations with new ones." (Z. Çelik, 1991, p16)

The third and perhaps the most radical transformation started in the 1960s, when Istanbul started to attract migrants from all over the country. This third transformation can be analysed in different phases: In the 1950s and 1960s public housing, mass housing production and housing cooperatives were the main developments, but these mainly government-funded projects did not meet the demand, especially in big cities like Istanbul when it started to attract an extraordinary number of migrants. As a result of massive migration, illegal housing developments started to emerge in the 1950s on green areas or empty lands near the centre and then spread to the outskirts of the city as the number of migrants kept growing. Squatterization-Gecekondulaşma became the main pattern to meet the housing demands of

0146-6518/02/59-71, 2012

newcomers. Parallel to these developments, the existing city structure started to be transformed by new city plans where the municipality changed the land use patterns. The density of these areas was increased and existing low-rise housing units were developed into 5- or 6-storey apartment buildings at the initiative of the private sector. The Kocaeli earthquake in 1999 had a serious impact on new developments and not only the central government but the inhabitants themselves started to question whether their environment, the communal facilities, and the houses and flats themselves were earthquake resistant. This new phenomenon, together with the emerging economic dynamism, gave birth to a new transformation process. This process, which has come about only in recent years, may be classified as the fourth phase. Since the year 2000, Istanbul has been involved in a new transformation process with new urban transformation projects, transportation systems, new international investments, new land policies and Grand Projects. Since the year 2000, housing demand and provision in Turkey have been re-shaped, and both the public and private sectors have started to realise urban transformation projects based on new legal developments by the government and municipalities. Condominium projects have started to be large in scale and gated communities have become a reality. In this paper, the transformations that Istanbul has undergone since the beginning of the 20th century will be outlined and analysed. Future developments will be discussed in the conclusion.

Key words: Istanbul, Transformation of Cities, Architecture and City.

Historical Background of Istanbul

Istanbul was the capital city of the Eastern Mediterranean basin for almost 1,600 years from the establishment of the Eastern Roman Empire until the end of Ottoman rule and it has enjoyed a unique geographical location and a diversity of cultures which the city hosted for centuries with tolerance and great pride. (Çelik, Z., 1993) It served as capital city to three empires which represented different eras, different cultures and different religions, and brought about transformations to the shape of the city. These transformations were sometimes radical, were sometimes embedded in each other, and sometimes were the continuation of the previous ones. The visible signs of each era within one environment, sometimes incongruously but mostly coexisting harmoniously, have made Istanbul an even more attractive and vibrant city. Istanbul is a city where continents and seas form an outstanding geography. People, cultures, religions and languages have been mixed over the centuries to create a unique civilisation with a great tolerance of diversity.

Doğan Kuban says that: "Each city has a life of its own, shaped by the particular conditions of its history and its geographical location. And within the limits imposed by these conditions, each city has found solutions to the physical, social and psychological challenges it has faced." But have the cities really been able to find

solutions to these challenges or have they accepted some facts implicitly and tried to live with these facts?

Dogan Kuban distinguishes five different layers in the history of Istanbul. He states that: "Istanbul, which grew along the banks of the Bosphorus, has seen five layers of civilizations, each resting on the ruins of the previous one. Layer 1: The Roman city of Septimius Severus was erected on the ruins of Byzantium, but the continuation of the pagan traditions prevented a total rupture with the past. Layer 2: Emperor Constantine founded in Eastern Rome a new capital for Christianity, but the lingering on of pagan customs under his rule and under his successors continued to prevent a total break with the past until the rise of Islam. Layer 3: The medieval Christian city gradually supplanted the Roman one, with the loss of Roman traditions. Layer 4: The medieval city in turn was replaced by the Turkish-Islamic capital, which is now being destroyed by the contemporary megapolis. This has been defined as Layer 5 (Kuban, D., "Ode to Istanbul", 1996 p1)

According to Zeynep Çelik, Istanbul has had to face two major transformations in its history.

The First Transformation: The first transformation took place after the conquest of the city by Mehmet II in 1453. Mehmet II made his largest investments in religious buildings. While he constructed many new mosques in Istanbul, he also converted 17 churches into mosques. It was also during his reign that imperial palaces started to be built. Topkapı Palace was constructed in its present form between 1459-1465. (Zeynep Çelik, 1999, p25). There is no doubt that the great Ottoman architect Sinan made great contributions to this new era, and created many monuments not only in Istanbul but all over the Ottoman Empire.

Demographic Growth and Composition of the Population I

The chaotic urban pattern that was the Ottoman capital of the early nineteenth century was the result of diverse social, cultural, aesthetic and economic influences. Istanbul and its suburbs had some 391,000 inhabitants in the 19th century. In the four decades from 1844 to the 1880s, its population more than doubled, being 430,000 in 1844, 547,437 in 1856, and 851,527 in 1878. However, by 1885, population growth had stabilised. At the end of 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the population of the city was diverse, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic, not only because of the existing population profile but also as a result of many immigrants coming from the Balkans and Russia.

The Second Transformation: Zeynep Çelik states that: "In the nineteenth century a second transformation took place. In this government-sponsored transformation, modernisation efforts recast the traditional urban policies based on Islamic law, replaced the urban administration, institutions and organizations with new ones

adopting European precedents, and introducing another set of building types, this time conforming to the requirements of a modern Westernised lifestyle" (Z. Çelik, 1991 p16). In this period a new and more effective municipal organization was established. Police, fire brigades, and public transportation services were provided. This westernization started in 1838 and continued until 1908.

Five Sultans served the country during these years and they introduced important reforms in the military, educational and administrative systems. This period witnessed industrial developments that were also seen elsewhere in the empire, in areas such as textiles and iron and steel. Ottoman industrial products were exhibited in all major fairs held in European cities. As these industries were not truly national and depended on western technology, they did not develop and did not succeed in competing at international level.

In 1879, it was deemed necessary to clean up the waterfront. Due to sea transportation and for sanitary reasons, as well as because of the need to improve the urban image, many projects were created to clean and regulate the waterfront. The decision to build the first subway system between Karaköy and Pera was taken in 1869 and construction began in 1875. The Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople was established in 1872 as a private company to construct and run the system for a time. The tunnel is 554.80m in length, and 6.70m in width with a station at either end, and it was the first subway system in the empire. New arteries, bridges over the Golden Horn, horse-pulled trams, a subway, a sea transportation system, railroad development, new residential developments, and new municipal legislation all helped to create a western style city life in Istanbul, with its very cosmopolitan population.

A City With Many Harbors

Istanbul is at the crossroads of continents with a very strategic location where many harbours have been functional for centuries. These harbours have shaped the distribution of the sectors and the relevant physical structure of the city itself. For this reason, a brief look at the harbours of Istanbul may help the reader to better understand the structure of the city.

From the very beginning of Byzantium, a number of promontories and inlets formed new harbours to be used for different functions and different directions. There are many harbours in and around Istanbul (especially along the Marmara shores) mentioned in Byzantine sources. These sources also give information about the harbours outside the city walls, such as Hepdoman in Bakırköy-Yeşilköy, Ayias Mamas in Beşiktaş and Damalis in Üsküdar, which was known as "Öküz Limanı" in Ottoman Empire times. On the Asian side, Haydarpaşa, Kalamış and Kartal harbours date back to the 8th and 9th centuries AD. In accordance with economic and political developments over the centuries, these harbors lost their importance from time to time

and then flourished again to play their roles in the course of history of Istanbul (Istanbul, ITO, 1997, p69).

It is unquestionable that until the 20th century, the most active estuary was the Golden Horn, with wharves extending along both its shores serving European trade and foreign merchants in the areas of Karaköy and Tophane, while international trade was based mainly at the Galata harbour. The Golden Horn wharves began in Eminönü and extended to Balat. The Eminönü wharf had customs control, this being mainly for valuable goods such as costly fabrics, precious stones, metals, honey and olive oil, and it was here that ships which were coming from and going to the Don and Danube and the Black Sea and Aegean Sea were loaded and unloaded. The "Zindan Iskelesi" (Dungeon Wharf) was mainly used for ships coming from Egypt with wax, coffee and rice. "Yemiş Iskelesi" (Fruits Wharf) was for vegetables and fresh fruits. For timber and other construction materials, there was "Ayazma Kapısı Iskelesi" (Sacred Spring Gate Wharf) further to the west, and beyond this lay "Unkapanı Iskelesi" (Unkapanı Wharf), which was for grain and "Balat Iskelesi" (Balat Wharf) which was used for a variety of goods. The main commercial centre of the city consisted of the Grand Bazaar, the Egyptian Bazaar and other open air markets like Mahmutpaşa. All of these were within the hinterland of the Golden Horn and its wharves. This was the area where visitors who came to Istanbul for commercial reasons by ship or boat would stay. During Ottoman times many hans (commercial buildings), mosques and hamams (public baths) were constructed in this area. Right up to the present day, it has always been a colourful and attractive place, and Galata harbour has always been frequented by Europeans and other foreigner visitors. The area of Azapkapı and Tophane represented maritime trade and was the main port for the import and export trade. The southern shore of the Golden Horn was mainly used as dockyards and for the Ottoman fleet; the shipyards called "Haliç" (The Golden Horn), "Camialtı" and "Taşkızak" still stand to this day in their original locations, despite having lost their importance since the beginning of the1990s, when the entire shipbuilding sector moved to the Tuzla area of Istanbul. Today, big cruise ships and other domestic passengers ships and boats use Galata and Eminönü harbours, the commercial harbour remained at Haydarpaşa and a new one was established along the coast of the Marmara Sea at Dilovası.

Demographic Growth and Composition of the Population II

The physical size of Istanbul has grown from its original 1,440 hectares, which was within the city walls, to 200,000 hectares today together with unprecedented population growth: 1,000,059 inhabitants in 1897, 1,200,000 inhabitants in 1914, 691,000 inhabitants in 1927, 1,167,000 inhabitants in 1950, 7,521,000 inhabitants in 1990, and 13,452,000 inhabitants in 2007 (Akpınar, I.A., 2010). Today, the Istanbul metropolitan area has some 15 million inhabitants.

After the establishment of the Turkish Republic one of the largest state-coordinated exchanges in the world was agreed and carried out between Turkey and Greece. As a result of this exchange programme, many minority groups left the city and as a result, the population has become dominated by Turkish and Muslim citizens since then.

The Third Transformation

The third transformation which can be added to this list and is still ongoing started to emerge towards the second half of the 20th century (Saglamer, G., 1999). A new era began with the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923. In the years immediately after the founding of the republic, Istanbul seemed to lose the social, cultural and economic significance it had enjoyed in Ottoman times. However, from the 1930s onwards it once again became the most important city of the country.

Istanbul had a very diverse population until the second half of the 20th century and was perceived as a bridge between west and east. Starting in the 1960s, the migration of the Greek and other minorities to Europe and the USA had an important impact on the city's population profile.

The last and perhaps most radical transformation took place in the second half of the 20th century when, from the 1960s onwards, Istanbul received very intensive migration from rural areas, and the city was not prepared to absorb this huge influx. According to the information provided by the Municipality of Istanbul, some 18 people arrive in Istanbul as migrants every hour. It has also been stated by several sources that 400,000 people arrive in Istanbul every year.

Istanbul has been struggling with population growth since the 1950s, trying to preserve its identity in the face of uncontrolled illegal developments. The changes which occurred in Istanbul in the second half of last century reflected the social and cultural differences of its population within the transition process (Saglamer, et al., 1994). From the 1960s onwards, the city underwent big changes and was faced with the most dramatic transformation of its history because of the high growth rate in its population caused by migration from rural areas.

The newcomers who came from different parts of Anatolia did not only transform the city into "a village" but also started to play an important role in the political life of the country. From the 1960s onwards, some political parties designed their programmes to use this potential to increase their power. This perhaps most radical transformation can be analysed in different phases: in the first of these, the 1950s and 1960s, public housing, mass production, and housing cooperatives were the main types of development. However, especially in big cities like Istanbul when it started to attract enormous amount of migration, these mainly government-funded projects could not meet the demand. Ataköy, Levent and Acıbadem developments were in this group. These settlements were only setting examples, and were far from meeting the housing

demand in Istanbul. Consequently, these areas were mainly inhabited by the middle class. The number of migrants from the middle class did not constitute a very large population and these comparatively wealthy groups preferred to integrate themselves in the existing city structure. New housing areas started to appear such as Şişli and Nişantaşı with their individual housing blocks alongside government-funded new settlements. These individual apartment blocks have survived and are still in use as a main housing pattern.

In the second phase of the third transformation, as a result of massive migration in the 1950s, illegal housing developments started to emerge near the city centre on green areas or empty land and gradually spread to the outskirts of the city as the number of migrants kept growing. Squatterisation (gecekondulaşma) thus became the main pattern for meeting the housing demands of newcomers. Starting from the 1960s, illegal housing settlements were more widespread than legal development and for many years municipalities had almost no control over this type of settlements and today, over 50% of the population lives in this type of illegal housing. Parallel to these developments in the existing city, plans started to be transformed by new land use patterns where the Municipality increased the density of the population in these areas. Consequently, existing low-rise housing units were transformed into 5- or 6-storey apartment buildings at the initiative of the private sector. It is estimated that the population of Istanbul is nearly 15 million and that there are over 1.6 million housing units. The share of migration in the population growth of Istanbul is 75%.

The phenomenon that David Drakakis described in his book has occurred in the Istanbul metropolitan area for the last 5-6 decades. He explained this phenomenon in the following way: "extended metropolitan regions represent a fusion of urban and regional developments in which the distinction between what is urban and what is rural has become blurred as cities expand along corridors of communication, by-passing surrounding small towns and villages, which subsequently experience in situ changes in function and occupation" (David Drakakis, Third World Cities, p21) This rural and urban hybridization is setting a new land use pattern which is called "city village" by many researchers is the new species of urbanism across the world."

Patrick Hayes quotes from Chris Devonshire: "No country has grown to middle income without industrializing and urbanizing. None has grown to high income without vibrant cities. The rush to cities in developing countries seems chaotic, but it is necessary. It seems unprecedented, but it has happened before. It had to have because the move to density that is manifest in urbanization is closely related to the transformation of an economy from agrarian to industrial to post-industria."(Chris Devonshire-Ellis "China's Mega City 2011.)

The United Nations' influential "State of the World's Cities" report cautioned that cities contain both order and chaos. In them reside beauty and ugliness, virtue and vice... Cities are the physical manifestation of humanity's noblest ideas, ambitions

and aspirations, but when not planned or governed properly, can be the repository of society's ills." Alaister Donald states that: "This description accepts - and perhaps endorses - the existence of opposites in the city. After all, creative tensions have always been central to the metropolitan experience", (Donald, A., 2011, p33).

Alaister Donald goes on (p35) to say that: "being a settler in a slum area is still a liberation: an environment and emerging set of social relations that brought with them the possibility of freedom from many of the ties and rituals that previously held people back. Yes, there was dirt and squalor, poverty was frequently extreme; and you probably didn't know your neighbours. But ultimately all of these might be considered prices worth paying. As places where new social interactions were being forged on the basis of the destruction of traditional relations, emerging cities offered the individual the potential to have a say in his or her own future.

That is exactly what has happened in Istanbul - with one important exception: the important role that kinship played when newcomers were choosing their settlement area in or nearby the city. Migrants coming from the same family, village, town, region tended to settle together in the İstanbul metropolitan area. This created a very lively social environment and solidarity between them, which made life easier for them compared to the lives of those who settled in areas where they initially knew nobody. This pattern also had a big impact on the plan layouts of the squatter settlements in certain areas: newcomers had a tendency to build their houses in a similar style to their original houses in their home villages or towns (Saglamer,G.,1993, 1999).

Istanbul in the New Millennium

Although Istanbul is in the earthquake zone of Turkey, until the Kocaeli earthquake in 1999 there was no serious action to improve the built environment and make the city a comparatively safe place with regard to the earthquake risk. The Kocaeli earthquake had a serious impact on new developments and not only the central government but the inhabitants themselves started to question whether their environment, the communal facilities, and the houses and flats themselves were earthquake resistant. This new phenomenon, together with an emerging economic dynamism gave birth to the new transformation process. This process may in the future be classified as the fourth phase.

Since the year 2000, Istanbul has been in a new transformation process with new urban transformation projects, transportation systems, new international investments, new land policies and Grand Projects. Since the year 2000, housing demand and provision in Turkey have been re-shaped and both the public and private sectors have started to realise urban transformation projects based on new legal developments by

the government and municipalities. Condominium projects have started to be large-scale projects and gated communities have become a reality.

A major problem in big cities in Turkey has always been transportation. Turkey has 92 cars per 1,000 inhabitants whereas the EU15 have 500, but Turkey's transportation networks are not sufficient even for this low ratio of cars. Istanbul is the largest city in Turkey and as of 2000 is home to nearly 20 % of the country's total population. It is also home to 20% of all motor vehicles in Turkey, 32% of new cars that go on the country's roads, 2.5 million vehicles at the present moment.

The current local maritime traffic in Istanbul includes 2.5 million citizens who use the waterways on a daily basis for transport and other purposes. Taking into account Istanbul's geographic location and the Bosphorus, which is 31 km long, and the Marmara Sea it is obvious that Istanbul has not been using sea transportation to best advantage. There is an important reason for this: the number of ships passing through the Bosphorus straits has been increasing at a high rate. The number has risen from 4,500 in 1938 to 50,000 today. Notably, the number of oil tankers and other dangerous cargo vessels rose from 4,248 in 1996 to 10,153 in 2010 (Karakullukçu,M., 2012, pg 28).

The imbalance between the European and Asian sides of Istanbul's Bosphorus creates enormous traffic problems in the city: 32 % and 68 % of the population live on the Asian side and European side of the city respectively. In recent years housing developments started to increase on the Asian side because of the reasonable prices for both purchasing and renting property, as well as the pleasant environment, shopping and sports facilities and excellent health care and educational services. Three important changes had an enormous impact on the new developments: first, the 1999 earthquake changed all the criteria and expectations of housing design and construction; second, the global economy: Turkey became a member of G20; third, security problems started to dominate people's lives.

As a result, new land development models started to emerge and these have gained momentum in the last few years. Many shopping centres, business centres, gated communities and transportation networks have been built, and there are many more coming: Büyükdere – Levent - Maslak, Loft, Canyon and Safir by M&M Tabanlıoğlu, Zorlu Zincirlikuyu Project by Emre Arolat. In the western part of the European side of the Bosphorus towards Tekirdag, many new housing developments have been realised and still a lot of investment is being made. Similar developments are also going on on the Asian side of the Bosphorus. There are several Grand Projects initiated by the Greater Municipality and Central Government in Istanbul such as the MARMARAY Railway Tunnel, the Golden Horn Cable-Stayed Bridge, a third bridge over the Bosphorus, the Bosphorus Motorway Tunnel, a third Istanbul airport in Silivri, an Izmit Bay crossing bridge, a Dardanel bridge and a 45km long Black Sea–Marmara Sea canal.

Besides private sector initiatives in housing investments, TOKI (Mass Housing Investment Organisation), a state-owned company, has constructed more than 500,000 dwelling units in Turkey, and TOKI still has large projects to be realised in the Istanbul metropolitan area. It is not in the scope of this paper to evaluate and compare these new developments but rather to try to give a broad picture of new developments in the Istanbul metropolitan area.

Conclusions: Istanbul in the New Millennium

The first and second transformations were top down processes orchestrated and funded by the state/sultans. These transformations were successful in terms of physical transformations and they were discrete processes, as they related mainly to physical entities such as building new religious buildings, bazaars or providing trams, sea transportation, infrastructure etc, but social and cultural transformations are still going on. Over the centuries, Istanbul has suffered from this mismatch between physical and social/cultural transformations and sometimes the provision of infrastructure or new components has not been carried out in an efficient and effective way.

The first phase of the third transformation was created directly by and was mostly funded by the people who migrated to Istanbul from rural areas from the 1960s onwards. Therefore, this was a bottom up process and it was ultimately not possible to control or to monitor this process by the state or local authority for many years. The main drivers for the first phase were the desire for better job opportunities, better living conditions, cultural, economic, social asymmetric structures, freedom from the traditional environment, better educational and health services and security, which led to an uncontrolled population growth. Istanbul was not prepared to absorb such a big influx from rural areas. In this phase all the developments were basically "horizontal", as they were dependent on a lack of funding and primitive building construction systems (if any) implemented by the newcomers. There is one more and maybe the most important parameter that prevented migrants from constructing better buildings: the fact that they were occupying land illegally.

The second phase of the third transformation was funded by the private sector (both national and international) and in part by the state (TOKI). The private sector has played a major role in building investments since the end of the 20th century. The main driver for the 2nd phase was economic growth: an increase in the GDP, global real estate mechanisms, suitable conditions offered by the private sector to people who would like to own a house within an environment where they will have more facilities, better security and a pleasant landscape.

There is one more important parameter which should be mentioned here: the earthquake risk in Istanbul. This new development gave rise to many gated

communities, residences, condominiums and shopping malls, offices, cultural centres etc. In this phase, developments tended to be "vertical". The Greater Municipality started to change the land use patterns and made it possible in many parts of the city to build high-rise buildings which have dramatically changed the sky line of the city.

What Future: Is The City Under Threat?

As a megapol, Istanbul is responsible for almost half of the country's industrial production, services, trade and income tax.

More than half of the country's total VAT and trade tax are collected from the Istanbul metropolitan area. This economic picture defines Istanbul's role in the country and in the region as well. The hinterland of Istanbul is not only Turkey, but the Middle East, the Balkans, the Eastern Mediterranean Basin, the Black Sea and the Caucuses. If we were to carry out a SWOT analysis of the city we would be able to understand more about its strengths and weaknesses along with its opportunities and threats. It is obvious that its geography, location, history and cultural richness, economic power and transportation opportunities are its most important strengths and have made it a hub or magnet city in the region.

What are the main threats? Potential threats are: uncontrollable population growth, unpredictable economic growth, being attractive for the global real estate sector, uncontrolled land development, harmful privatisation policies, inequality in citizens' socio-economic conditions. Settlements provide certain services depending on their customers' economic conditions, the scale of the settlement and the relationships between the settlement and its environment, all of which define the content of the settlement. There are inconsistencies and imbalances between content and scale which can be seen in areas such as insufficient infrastructure and transportation, the loss of green areas, and lack of attention to the earthquake risk and security.

There are also many opportunities for Istanbul, and it seems that opportunities are likely to increase in the coming years, but it is impossible to guess what these opportunities may be. At the moment, it seems these may arise from its geographic location, emerging political potential, and economic power, being at the crossroads of energy corridors, an emerging tendency for being a hub for air transportation between east and west, and becoming a new centre for art and design, as well as attracting more and more tourists. However, there are also uncertainties regarding its future opportunities.

At global level, all big cities - especially the ones in the developing world - are very vulnerable in terms of future uncertainties. On the other hand, uncertainty pervades all aspects of life, and offers challenges and possibilities. What would be the best strategy to deal with these threats, if they are actually threats, since the world is so interconnected and "super-complex"? In which areas might uncertainities create

serious problems and in which excellent opportunities? Some of them may be listed as follows: natural disasters, economic crises, political crises, wars, the scarcity of natural resources, terrorism, security, technological developments, the knowledge society, climate change, energy.

Rem Koolhaas explains his ideas about uncertainty for coming urban developments: "If there is to be a 'new urbanism' it will be the staging of uncertainty; it will no longer be concerned with the arrangement of more or less permanent objects but with the irrigation of territories with potential." (Williams, A., Sharro, K., 2011 p169).

How to prepare our cities for all of these uncertainties? Under these circumstances, decision-makers have to have flexible policies and enough resources to meet the emerging needs and demands with the participation of all the stakeholders. Alan Hudson has tried to explain this phenomenon by means of the triangle of state-citizen-market: " The mutual interaction between a globalised economy, cultural diversity and human artefacts gives rise to urbanisation, the sociology of the city, and the making of public policy as the relationship between the state, the market and the citizen. This is not a linear or one-dimensional relationship because it applies simultaneously at global, national and local levels."(Hudson, A., 2011, p23). This triple helix may create a strong commitment among stakeholders to handle the problems in a holistic and efficient way.

Claire Berlinski compares the city (İstanbul) to Berlin, telling of the dread and exhilaration of a city on the verge of political catastrophe, but where a sudden liberalisation has also unleashed the social and political imagination. Her Istanbul today is vast, filled with promise, loneliness, wonderment, poverty, dreams, creativity, art, violence, energy, paranoia, freedom, mysticism, experimentation, anxiety, vice and glamour. Such a city thrives on being in a perpetual state of flux. "The old world had vanished", she observes, and gone is "its agrarian economy, its reassuring class distinctions and social order. An alien and fragile political order had been imposed in its place. Experimental music, art, and cinema flourished; fascinations arose with utopianism, fortune-telling, misticism, communism" (Berlinski, C., 2010)

Istanbul is a big city with its splendid cultural and geographic settings, its vibrant city structure, dynamic population, economic power and fascinating beauty.

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