Urban Integrated Mega Projects In The Northern İstanbul Metropolitan Region: Echoes Of Global Urbanisation On İstanbul

Tuba Kolat

Advisor: Dr. Catharina Gabrielsson
Degree Project
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Royal Institute of Technology (KTH)

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Preface

Since the last decade, İstanbul City Region has become a gateway for Turkey in terms of integration to global city networks and global economic system. This process, shaped by neoliberal politic economy, has put İstanbul in a crucial position as the center of attraction for international capital flows, labor force, and real estate developers.

As a result of these developments, İstanbul has turned into an enormous construction site that swallows its surrounding rural areas, villages, forests and natural resources by continuously expanding its city limits. Projections for the population of Istanbul for 2025 shows that 25% of the Turkish population is going to live in Istanbul by the middle of the coming decade. The city’s borders are effectively moved outwards through the construction of infrastructure in the form of highways, airports and port projects, gated communities, shopping malls and social housing projects. Notably, the northern development of Istanbul has been started with planning the Third Bosporus Bridge, the Third Airport and the Canal İstanbul Projects. These projects that have yet to be are promoted by politicians and investors, even are being seen as the biggest threat to İstanbul’s future by ecologists and other experts from various field.

Being the location for the region’s most important water basins and forests, the northern part of Istanbul has now been released to the free market by the ruling party under the moniker ‘New Istanbul’ without any opinion polls or efficient and reliable environmental impact assessment reports. Because of this, the discussions on the effects and potential risks of these projects has become a priority in debates on sustainability in Turkey connecting it to the wider discourse of sustainable urban development.
Background of the Study

By 1980s, neoliberalization has become the dominant political and ideological form of capitalist globalization and has brought about institutionalization and mobilization of market forces, commodification of peripheral and semi peripheral states. This transformation has echoed on cities by the process of urban restructuring (Brenner & Theodere 2002) containing gigantic projects that transformed the city, which are often called “urban integrated mega projects” (Shatkin 2011; Flyvbjerg 2014; Olds 1995).

Since last decades, as one of the rising cities that come to the fore in terms of global capital, Istanbul has been housing many spectacular mega projects that were put forward by the governments and private sector partnerships. Undoubtedly that, this process is a continuation of 1980s when economic and social structure of Turkey dramatically changed from Keynesian economic model into neoliberal economic model. Keyder (2005) describes this transformation that Istanbul has experienced as one of the world’s globalizing cities a shock of rapid integration into transnational networks and markets that has also brought with it the emergence of new social groups such as a new bourgeois and professional class since the 1980s. Globalized spaces of commerce and leisure emerged along with secluded residential areas on the outskirts of the city and in so doing adopted the lifestyle and consumption habits of their trans-
national counterparts. As Keyder has already reported in 1990, Istanbul should have been adequately integrated to globalization process by taking public benefit into account, in order to equally create welfare and to increase employment through capital flow. But when the last decades is observed, it seems that land market and the real estate sector within İstanbul constitute the main locus of capital accumulation and the construction sector is considered as the only tool for urban development. This circumstance brings up many large-scale urban projects, new regulations for the city’s urban planning system and new stakeholders as well as many discussions on İstanbul’s future.

Aim and Research Question

It would appear that, as urban planning professionals, we should set up a critical framework for our discussion on İstanbul Metropolitan Region’s uncontrolled and limitless growth. For that purpose, the thesis grounds on the ongoing urbanisation process in İstanbul, which shows different kinds of urban development model than in Western and Northern countries. This process is employed by private sector and government partnership, in a similar way with cities in developing countries that are also trying to get integrated to the global economic system. Yet, the question is what are the debates in İstanbul that this new form of urbanisation in terms of integration process to global economy has brought with?

To investigate the problem stated above, this thesis is going to focus on the massive development projects, in other words, mega integrated urban projects as classified by Shatkin (2011: 77) as “city or urban district-scale integrated development projects built on a for-profit basis, often by a single developer.” These are Northern İstanbul -Canal İstanbul-The Third Bridge-The Third Airport, which will be examined in an inductive perspective. As publication of each projects actualized through unsubstantial visual materials,
without transparency either in decision-making or implementation process, many questions arise like:

- In what way do new dynamics of the Twenty-first century’s global cities comply with İstanbul Metropolitan Region?
- To what extent does İstanbul’s northern development, through Canal İstanbul-The Third Bridge-the Third Airport projects, correspond to the “mega project” concept that has been observed within the developing world?
- In what direction is this ambitious urban growth taking İstanbul, and finally, who will win and who will lose?

In the guidance of these questions, İstanbul Metropolitan Region’s development going to be investigated within a critical and comprehensive context.

Chapter two starts with an evaluation of the “world city hypothesis” and critiques on the Twenty-first century cities. Afterwards, urban policies and the politic conditions that affect İstanbul’s urbanisation process is summed up from 1960s to 1990s. Further, the recent epoch of İstanbul’s urbanisation process is evaluated comparatively with Paris’s urbanisation in the Nineteenth Century associated with big projects in order to set a basic understanding on impacts of globalization and capital accumulation on cities within a historical background of the world city concept.

In the third chapter, tendencies to urbanisation and new axis of globalization and neoliberal policies in the Twenty-first Century are going to be discussed with regards to İstanbul in order to reveal fundamental distinctions from colonial type of development that was depicted in Haussmann’s Grand Project in Paris. In the third chapter, the mega project concept is going to be exemplified within three gigantic projects, in order to understand the typology of the development that is taking place in the Northern İstanbul. Following this, other implementation of Urban Integrated Mega Projects (UIMPs) around the world and their consequences are evaluated.
in order to expose the effects of UIMPs on territories as a tool of globalization and neoliberal development. Finally, the aim of this thesis is to develop further critiques and discussion on Istanbul Mega Region’s urban development, by discussing issues such as the maintenance of quality of urban environments, meeting the requirements for the guidance of mega region by taking various actors –such as residents in low-income communities- into account and regulation of the global capital flows, market economy and global finance that drive the development of urban regions.

Methodology

This thesis uncloaks underlying meanings and power relations in planning policies and current urban development strategies, in order to show their actual consequences for humans and nature. By that, this thesis takes a discursive perspective on the purpose of revealing various actors’ –such as politicians, capitalist undertakers, NGOs and citizens- intention of urban environment and urban planning discipline. In the second chapter, a literature review is conducted. Here, the first two sections depend on the “world city” concept and its evolution during the time, whereas the next two sections depend on the analysis of retrospective historical process of urban development. The final section touches upon the concept of “urban integrated mega projects” in order to set a framework for the discourse analysis of the three cases in İstanbul, which are consisted of the Canal İstanbul, Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge (The Third Bridge) and the Third Airport.

The social world is shaped by discourse which could be defined as an “ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices.” (Hajer & Versteeg 2005: 175) Foucault puts emphasize on the po-
tency of discourse by saying that in every society, production of discourse is controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures of exclusion such as prohibition in order to defuse its powers and dangers (Foucault 1971).

Discourse is a machine that is employed to analyze the way in which we use and produce the language through our knowledge, identity and understanding the world. For this purpose discourse analysis is theorized in a various different approach. One of these approaches comes from the social constructivist school. Social constructionists state that there is neither certain representation of reality nor universal truth but, instead, they are collectively constructed by gaining meanings-which are produced and also varied through knowledge and system of power- within discourses. (Jorgensen & Philips 2002) Hence, discourse analysis helps one to expose the actors, power relations, disciplines, doctrines, historical and cultural context that underlying the meanings in as well as to understand debates on complicated issues such as sustainable urban development that tries to gather economic growth, social equity and environmental protection under its roof. As a multi-disciplinary, multi-dimensional, multi-stakeholders and political field, sustainable urban development has caused conflicts between decision-makers, economists, politicians, environmentalists, NGOs and habitants. Every fields and actors under the umbrella of concept sustainable development, have their own aspects, which is no certain classification as right or wrong. Indeed, all these different sides deal with and interpret issues in very different ways. These sides sometimes complement but generally compete and conflict with each other. (Dryzek 1997) Herein, discourse analysis is not only a useful method to understand the way in which different stakeholders use the language and the real meanings and power relations hidden within their statements but also uncloak the impact of their actions on society, environment and both collective and individual consciousness. It is emphasized by Guattari (1989) that in the era of the machines of production of signs, images, syntax and
artificial intelligence we need to rethink and relink our social and individual practices under the umbrella of social ecology, mental ecology and environmental ecology. He claims that the deterioration between these three complementary themes not only causes the environmental distortion but also causes “the ignorance and fatalistic passivity” which lead to nonresistance to the authority’s actions, whether they are catastrophic or not. This condition of unquestioning results in “destruction and neutralization of democracy” (1989: 134).

Source Criticism

Academic publication and books have been chosen on purpose to present a critical perspective to current urban redevelopment trends associated with its historical development process. I principally have focused on negative effects and top-down economic-politic character of the subject matter, which is Urban Integrated Mega Projects within the globalization process. According to my standpoint, these new developments along with neoliberal economic policies cause considerable threats on our sustainable future. Hence, I might have been one-sided regarding to this subject matter and missed the possible contribution of mega projects on urban development in İstanbul. Despite this, I must say that most of the realized samples that I have gone through, I could not attain any contribution on sustainability that could rebut my argument.
A Literature Review Of The “World City” Hypothesis

In order to understand the creation of modern cities and the evolution of the urban planning discipline it is important to keep in mind the economic and political structure of the modern epoch that has formed them. As stated by Guattari (1989: 134), “to examine the modes of operation of earlier forms of capitalism” puts us in a better understanding of post-industrial capitalism “since they show the same tendency towards the accumulation of subjective power, both at the level of the capitalist elites, and in the ranks of the proletariat.” Following this quote this section will now look at forces that has been in play when world cities have been formed.

“The globalization that took place from the beginning of the Seventieth Century to the turn of the Twentieth Century were characterized by increasing industrialization, urbanisation, trade and economic growth.” (McCann & Acs 2010: 4) As Jones (2005) states, the Industrial Revolution lead off the economic growth through trade and manufacturing among West European Countries – particularly in Britain – which became the world’s largest manufacturing country during the Seventeenth Century. Geographical distances were dramatically reduced and economic policies were shaped by liberalization. This resulted in the fastest increase in cross-border capital flows and trade activities in modern history. Firms and
enterprises built vast webs of the first global economy. All these processes resulted in fast growing industry, growing economy, increasing urbanisation and migration in the industrialized world (Jones 2005; McCann & Acs 2010). In this period, the largest cities and largest companies were located in the world’s most productive economies (McCann & Acs 2010). As stated by Ferguson (cited by McCann & Acs 2010: 24) “... each of the technological or institutional developments driving globalization has also been associated with increasing urbanisation…”

This first global economy had collapsed by World War I. rise of the idea of nationalism caused a backlash against immigration. In the latter, the Great Depression resulted in economic shock and destruction of the international trading system. Colonial and peripheral countries started resist European Countries. Multinationals and corporate organizations continued to operate but it was evident that economic growth took its source from middle class consumers and had risen within the domestic market. Local identities became significant due to nationalism. Consumption of consumer goods had risen dramatically due to higher real incomes (Jones 2005). As McCann & Acs (2010) state, this period was particularly characterized by internal economic growth and anti-globalization process within individual national states and with limited urban growth.

The 1950s onwards, trade barriers and limitations were reduced and a number of trade and tariffs agreements were signed. All these developments formed a basis for reconstruction of a new global economy. Technologic developments and innovations in transport and communication made it easier for companies, people, knowledge and goods to move around the world. Even if there were many improvements in economy and technology, economic growth, integration of international capital and commodities, labor flows, the size of the multinational investment remained smaller than the late nineteenth and the beginning of the Twentieth Century (Jones 2005).
Jones (2005) argues that the year 1979 was the starting point for the new global economy along with the collapse of Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, China’s adaption to the market-oriented policies and rendering the national restrictions over cross-border capital flows and financial deregulations. Multinationals entities played a crucial role in the integration to global economy. Technological developments gave a chance to rich countries to “export jobs to locations with lower labor costs rather than import workers from such countries.” (Ibid: 37). The benefits of global capitalism were not balanced between and within nations. The stock of multinational investment, innovation, technological development, knowledge and information exchange remained particularly in North America, Western Europe, Japan and surprisingly in China whereas developing countries had experienced rapid and unbalanced urbanisation particularly in terms of population, scale and industrialization (Jones 2005; McCann & Acs 2010). Urban scale and hosting manufacturing industries do not necessarily mean an increase in economic productivity anymore. Cities or city regions with high global connectivity, headquarter functions, decision-making linkages, human capital mobility, asset management roles, transport linkages and finance linkages constitute today’s global cities (McCann & Acs 2010).

Global cities are the control centers of the global economy. They become the major points for the accumulation of both goods and commodities and the capital necessary to purchase them. They are luxurious, splendid cities, whose very splendor obscures the poverty on which their wealth is based (Friedmann & Wolff 1982). Friedmann & Wolff define major urban regions as cities with high level of concentration of world’s capital and high level of spatial articulation of the emerging world system of market and production through global networks of cities. These cities are large in size, typically ranging from five to fifteen million inhabitants and expanding rapidly and these highly urbanized regions play a vital part in the great capitalist undertaking to organize the world for the efficient extraction of surplus. They state that the character of urbanizing
process in terms of economic and social aspects, which define life in these “cities” reflect, to a considerable extent, the mode of their integration into the world economy. The form and strength of the city’s integration has a direct relation with the amount of headquarters that the city serves for transnational corporations, commodities produced for the world market, and the share of invested surplus capital. World cities also have a role as an ideological as the control centers of the global economy.

Firedmann (1986) asserts seven theses to explain urbanisation in the context of the economic globalization process.

1. A city’s integration with the world economy and world capitalist system is directly related with the functions that are assigned to the city in terms of division of labor which causes structural changes within the urban economy. Changes in metropolitan functions, the structure of metropolitan labor markets and physical form of the cities are affected by the direction and volume of transnational capital flows. Globalized urbanisation also brings about a spatial division of the functions of finance, management and production, in other words division of production and control.

2. Global capital uses key cities as a basis for the spatial organization and articulation of production and market. This circumstance enables to arrange world cities into a complex spatial hierarchy.

3. The structure and dynamics of world city’s production sector and employment directly reflect on the global control functions.

4. World cities constitute major base for the concentration and accumulation of international capital.

5. World cities are the main destination for both domestic and/or international migration flows.

6. World cities house the major conflicts of industrial capitalism such as spatial and class polarizations.

7. Enlargement of world cities leads to social costs, which tend to surpass the financial capacity of the state.
Sassen claims that economic globalization and new information technologies are reconfiguring the spatial organization of the economy, sociospatial arrangements and local labor markets within the global cities. The most distinctive factor is spatial organization of international division of labor, which leads collaboration and complementation between each city (Friedmann 1986; Westlund 2012). The most integrated cities into the global economy constitute the most connected and resistant cities.

According to Castell’s statements for today’s global cities, spatial organization is nothing but a result of social practice. In his “informational city”, material basis of society has reshaped through new communication and information technologies, new scales, scopes and intensities of networks. This new combination of layer of materials is defined as “the space of flows”. Castells suggests “a sandwich” structure to clarify his layer of materials. The first layer consists of infrastructural support for social practice based upon communication and information devices. The second layer is “meat” – which constitutes the most important part of the structure – defines societies in terms of hubs and nodes. Third layer describes high-level service sectors targeting “technology, financial, and managerial elites” (cited by Taylor 2004: 415) in common with Friedmann’s Local-Global Theses.

Critiques on Twenty-First Century’s Global City: The Evolution of “The World City Concept” and New Axis of Globalization

Cities that were constructed as a site of capital accumulation and battleground for remaking citizenship and civil society, always have been a place for launching world-conjuring projects, which are shaped by particular histories, national aspirations and flows of culture. After the financial meltdown in 2008 (the Great Recession), aspects of neoliberal economic growth and global finance
have faced to East part of the World, as countries like Singapore, Dubai, Shanghai and Hong Kong came to the fore. While capitals of big economies remain crucial players, Asian cities boomed and have witnessed the unexpected emergence of cities. This contemporary urban development and conditions, which re-scale cities and create “mega urban regions” as spaces of transnational accumulation and development (Roy 2009) have been dominated through two approaches in defining the parameters and perspectives: the political economy of globalization and in the latter, the postcolonial focus on subaltern agency. This postcolonial approach views cities outside the Euro-American region as animated milieus by subaltern resistances to dominant cities.

Nathan Rich (2014) states that globalization only can happen in specific type of space with access to particular labor forces and highly specialized infrastructures that can neutralize the obstacles brought on by long distances, global communication, and the transfer of goods and information. The past two decades have witnessed vast growth in the Second and the Third World countries such as India or China that offer cheap labor and flexibility both in terms of legislation system and social rights. Yet, these places lack of sufficient infrastructure system and networks in terms of being enable for global transmission and communication. As Taylor (2004) states, these cities constitute “gateway nodes” or “regional command centres” for international capital and multinational companies to open up to the rest of the west and the north.

It is stated by Rich (2014) that, outskirts of these developing cities with vast amount of private investment, constructions and increasing migration suffers with poverty, deprivation and unhealthy living conditions, while some gleaming parts of the city house international corporate offices for Europe and US-based companies. For instance, Gurgaon, which is located within Delhi, has changed into the most important financial centre and hub for global outsourcing from a patchwork of small farms. In ten years, Gurgaon has become India’s third wealthiest city in terms of per capita income
as well as its population has increased by nearly 75 percent, with over 1.5 million people reported in the 2011 census. Rich goes on to say that:

“Planners and policy makers have been incapable of keeping up with the incredible rate of growth. As a result, private developers have been almost entirely responsible for the construction of this city, roughly the size of Philadelphia. Within this context, a new type of urban condition has emerged: an archipelago of private zones, with little public fabric holding them together. Glassy skyscrapers grow from dirt roads. Private companies provide basic services like water and electricity. Militarized fences and gates protect favored users from poorer outsiders. Simply put Gurgaon’s story is one of privatization. It represents the front line of a nation that is increasingly reliant on private companies to provide public services. It is the manifestation of a development-driven, deregulated economic power free to build a city, and its ongoing success ensures that Gurgaon will serve as a development model for elsewhere in India and the world.” (2004: 173)

Ananya Roy (2011) indicates two universal principles of globalization: capitalism and post-colonialism that are associated with a unified set of economic effects or political outcomes for shaping global spaces. As the 2008 economic crises, the sudden economic collapse of leading global cities, bring Asian cities to the fore in terms of global economy and political economy.

Even previous definition on World City, which belongs to Friedmann, Sassen and Taylor, provides strong base for further investigation, Roy (2011) claims that there are new ways to be a global city, which ensure a more dynamic and contemporary theory for understanding of the Twenty-first Century metropolis. In this sense, the production of space that proposed by Lefebvre (2007), pro-
vides an important framework to understand new forms of urban redevelopment. According to Lefebvre, space has a substantial role and a specific influence on the way in which power relations, productive forces, social stratification and ideologies are represented. Thereby, production of space “occurs by way of construction - in other words, by way of architecture, conceived of not as the building of a particular structure, palace or monument, but rather as a project embedded in a spatial context and a texture which call for ‘representations’ that will not vanish into the symbolic or imaginary realms.” (Lefebvre 2007:42)

This redevelopment process is also associated with the symbolic economies, in other word contemporary post-Fordist economy of contemporary postmodern cities, such as high-technology production, neo-artisanal manufacturing, cultural-products industries, the media, business and financial services (Scott 2001). Roy explains this new type of settlement, as “the Twenty-first Century metropolis is a chameleon. It shifts shape and size; margins become centres; centres become frontiers; regions become cities.” (2009: 827) Neither metropolitan nor national borders can restrict these new “postborder cities” or “regional cities” where have witnessed transnational accumulation and development. In this new concept, the Third World Cities, in other words postcolonial cities, have come to the fore as a new origin of globalization and modernity as well as neoliberalization (ibid.). According to Roy (2011) this circumstance highly related with “informality” that means unregulated, illegal, outside the scope of the state, house for poor and marginalized and often rendered by gentrification and urban redevelopment projects. “the Third World” informality has flexible context, lies within the scope of the state the way in which state determines what is informal and is employed for the production of the Twenty-first Century metropolitan space. Hereby, “Third World” informality is something that can be privatized and adapted to an unregulated market. As Roy (2011) states, peri-urbanisation of cities through commoditized informality is no more legal than squat-
ter settlements or shantytowns. Yet, class power, infrastructure, services and legitimacy marks them different than the landscape of slums and contributes to its acceptance. These new dynamics re-scale cities by agglomeration and re-shape by re-organizing its centre-margins-frontiers division, consequently creates the Twenty-first Century metropolis which found itself within Dubai metaphor which is the planet’s biggest building site, an emerging dreamworld of consumption and ‘supreme lifestyles’. The key strategies for Dubai to escape poverty were to become the commercial, financial and recreational hub of the Gulf, as Singapore has done. This post-modern city of webs has a role as the financial hub for Islamic militant groups thanks to its unregulated black economy. This regime brings in some liberties based on the rigorous spatial segregation of economic functions and ethnically circumscribed social classes (Davis 2006) as Roy (2011: 828) characterizes the city as “the place at which the distinctions between the black economy and global finance capital are erased, where city and nature are violently fused, and where the feudalism of an emirate meets up with an open cosmopolitanism.”

The Historical Background of Urbanisation Process of İstanbul

The transformations that İstanbul has witnessed are considered as an only tool to profit by advantages of global economy and reallocate these profits to all classes from top to bottom. Yet, this process has resulted in social degradation, environmental distortion, and increment of income disparity, spatial segregation due to canali-zing resources through capital interest. İstanbul has been described as a world city, since the Nineteenth Century when Ottoman Empire had begun to be a part of the capitalist world system due to its socio-cultural composition and population structure. Yet, it had lost its power after the constitution of the new Republic, which depends on nationalism, modernity and
secularism. According to founders of the new Republic, İstanbul was the symbol of Byzantine and Ottoman past, extravagancy, Islamic values and corruption that they would rather do without. This tension between Ankara and İstanbul was resolved by 1980s when neoliberal policies and the intention of being a part of the global economy has been launched, the focus has shifted from Ankara toward the old capital. Therefore, the neoliberalization and the globalization process that set into motion by 1980s are considered as an opportunity for İstanbul to regain its world city feature within both political and academic ground, while İstanbul has severed as the imperial legacy with glorifying the Ottoman Empire and its splendidness (Keyder 1993, 2000, 2008; Tekeli 1992).

The end of the modern epoch in Turkey came with the Democrat Party (DP) in 1950. Compare with the single-party reign, the Democrat Party had more liberal and populist political agenda and got its support mostly from the peasantry and immigrants, which moved to big cities from villages. Along with DP, 1950s has witnessed an implementation of Marshall Plans as sign of strong collaboration with USA. DP’s vision was developmentalist rather than globalizing and it seemed that DP recognized that İstanbul had to occupy the dominant position in the political economy of national development. Adnan Menderes, the chairmen of Democrat Party and the Prime Minister of Turkey owed his electoral success to giving veiled support to immigrants to occupy the land illegally, particularly in İstanbul. Therefore, the need for cheap labor force would be acquired in big cities, while squatters would substitute the need for decent social housing policies. Afterwards, he continued his program with tearing down old neighborhoods where mostly housed non-Muslim population and building up coast road and highways such as the Sahil Yolu traversing the Marmara coast from Sirkeci to Zeytinburnu with disintegrating neighborhoods such as Kumkapı and Samatya on its way and the thoroughfares within the Old City (Vatan Caddesi, Millet Caddesi and Atatürk Bulvari). Secondly, the new roads especially E-5 expressway that provides con-
nection between old town, the suburbs and the airport along the way, were built up and gave rise to the enlargement of squatter areas. As a consequence, İstanbul’s population doubled from 1950s to 1960s. Shantytowns kept sprawling where it was close to industry and easy to occupy. By the middle of 1970s, İstanbul was a grimy, neglected and chaotic third world metropolis, which suffered from insufficient infrastructure (Keyder 2008: 180-181).

The “world city” perspectives for İstanbul came along with the World Bank programme after 1980 military coup (Keyder 2008) and, has been approved and supported by all local authorities since 1980s and policies were designed according to integrate the globalization process, which also accompanies neoliberal policies (Öktem 2006). İstanbul has been seen as a “gate” to integrate into the world economy and be part of the global city networks. İstanbul’s strong relations with both foreign and domestic capital and massive private investments date back to 1980s, when the Motherland Party (ANAP) was elected to rule İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality. ANAP’s main policy was to direct both national and international capital to İstanbul, whereas İstanbul’s economic potentials, regional and global connections started to be abstracted from the rest of the country (Keyder 2008). Turgut Özal, the chairman of the Motherland Party and the Prime Minister of Turkey brought Bedrettin Dalan as the mayor of İstanbul. Bedrettin Dalan was known with his radical new concept for İstanbul, which has similarities with Haussmann’s operation in Paris. He changed the old fabric of the city with new boulevards, cleaning the old manufacturing districts around the Golden Horn, building of waterfront spaces and parks. Dalan’s operations, which are interrupted by the change of government in Ankara along with the resistance to implementation of neoliberalism, set up a ground for spatial transformation of İstanbul.

Many projects that brought in to action in this period were mostly employed to attract private sector investments and foreign capital. The following election for İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality was
won by the Social Democratic People's Party (SHP) that has “third wayist” political agenda. SHP tried to put social considerations into politic agenda while tried to integrate İstanbul to new world order that directed by globalization process and neoliberal policies (Öktem 2006). Yet, SHP lost its support due to failing to satisfy interest groups’ expectations and was accused by not being able to correspond with globalization process. Besides, low middle and middle class that mostly had lived in the squatter areas withdrew SHP’s support, due to feeling left out and being threatened by SHP’s global city vision, and yet started to take a side with the RP and Tayyip Erdoğan, the candidate of RP for the mayor of İstanbul Metropolitan City as the only one who had defended the squatter areas’ legitimacy and taken the part of immigrants in İstanbul. However, after six months of being elected, Tayyip Erdoğan mentioned that there is a need for a visa system for those who want to migrate to İstanbul, similar to what was put in practice in Ottoman Empire (Bora 2006).

Following the elections in 1994 being won by the Welfare Party (RP), Tayyip Erdoğan became the mayor of İstanbul, who aimed to revive Dalan’s vision into the political agenda. In that period, even politic uncertainty, early signs of economic crisis and the lack of legislative and institutional settings of a globalizing initiative had not allowed to large scale projects for creation of the global city. Erdoğan’s government provided a legal background for commodification of land and urban transformation (Keyder 2008). Along with the Welfare Party, Islamic and nationalist discourse had emphasized on İstanbul’s symbolic meaning as a centre of Ottoman-Islam civilization and disclaimed İstanbul’s westernization and Byzantine background. In accordance with Islamic ideology, as the most privileged characteristic of İstanbul, Islamic culture should be highlighted (Bora 2006). This intention still manifest itself by AKP’s desires on building a mosque in the Taksim Square, which is not only a very attractive location for tourists, but also, a subject of power. Habermas (1991: 233) touches upon this importance by
saying that “…the public sphere had actually become a reality in the realm of politics”. Taksim is the symbolic place for Mayday celebrations but this celebration has been banned in this particular place by governments since 1977 (except the years of 2010-2012). It is also the place where the Gezi Park Resistance took place. Another example for the AKP’s Islamic ideology is the Çamlıca Mosque project in İstanbul, which is the largest mosque yet to be constructed in Turkey. The Welfare Party (RP) accepted neoliberal economic trends and globalization process as a base for economic growth and claimed that Turkey’s economical growth depends on bringing İstanbul on the highest position within the world city hierarchy. For that purpose, RP indicated five main policies in their Structural Plan Report that published in 1995, in order to adapt İstanbul into neoliberal economic model: to increase the number of international events in the city, to develop tourism facilities, to decentralize industrial facilities, to support service sectors, and to enhance transportation and communication facilities (Öktem 2006). Yet, RP party was closed by T.C Constitutional Court in 1998, one year after the military memorandum on 28 February 1997—which also called postmodern coup, due to its Islamic structure that conflict with the secular forces in Turkey. RP’s closure gave rise to two different political parties. Some of the former managerial staff of RP renamed themselves as the Virtue Party and kept following RP’s ideology and policies, whereas more reformist and “third wayist” members of RP founded the Justice and Development Party (AKP) which highly commit to foreign and domestic capital, free market economy and privatizations (Öktem 2006). There are three main reasons for being delayed of reconstructed of İstanbul in terms of adaptation of globalization and AKP was seen as an opportunity for transformation. First of all, as coming from a marginal political party and Islamic ideology, RP and VP were not able to get support from centralized administration and modern elites of Turkey. Secondly, the 1999 İzmit earthquake caused enormous damage with substantial losses in property, factory and most importantly human life. Thirdly, budgetary cuts due to 2000/2001 economic crises...
as a one of the most severe economic crises that Turkey has ever witnessed. Within this political and economic atmosphere AKP was seen as a new breath (Keyder 2008). Hence, AKP won its first local elections for İstanbul in 2004 and gave rise to İstanbul’s transformation both in terms of administrative structure and in terms of spatial organization, and relations. As Kadir Topbaş, the mayor of İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality indicates that İstanbul has all characteristic that needed to be the regional and financial centre, therefore İstanbul has a great potential to be the gateway of Turkey to integration to world economy as well as command nodes for many other economies such as Balkans, Middle East and Far East (Baskan Topbas: İstanbul Küresel Finans Merkezi Oluyor, www.ibb.gov.tr, 14.03.2011).

AKP announced its political agenda as decentralization of authority, reconstruction of state-public relations, adapting participatory democracy model, reinforcement of market economy and competitive advantage, enhancement of governance and increasing social solidarity. Just as RP, AKP claims that Turkey’s economic development is strongly tied to İstanbul’s position within the world city networks and puts emphases that tourism, finance, culture and information sectors should be promoted in İstanbul, while its cultural and historical heritage should be protected and marketed, in order to get competitive advantage as a leading world city. For instance, the financial centre project in İstanbul is for to claim a regional position as a global banking and finance node, which also include the moving of the Central Bank from Ankara to İstanbul. As a consequence of that one might say that the route of the capital of Turkey is changing from Ankara to İstanbul, not legally but substantially (Keyder 2008; Öktem 2006).

AKP attaches importance to entrepreneurialism, marketing, image making, massive urban transformation and regeneration projects and considers these projects not only vision projects but also gentrification projects that contains clearance of city centre, squatter settlements and slum areas. Under the guidance of AKP’s politi-
ocal agenda, various fractions of national capital (includes Islamic capitals that had tried to recuperate its loss owing to the military memorandum on 1997) started investing on real estate sector that identified as the driving force behind economic growth (Öktem 2006).

Under AKP’s regime, urban politics and municipal governance have gained certain autonomy by decentralization of central authority as one of the undertakings of AKP, relating to urban development. Municipalities took over a crucial role to render city entrepreneurships and urban coalitions in search of global positioning of the city (Keyder 2008). As Keyder states, İstanbul gets immense amount of share from the captures of global capital, tourist flows thanks to world diplomatic activity and İstanbul’s regional command positions. The fact that the general idea within the Turkey tends to attach this rising position within the world city networks with urban transformation, which set ground for service, finance and business sector professionals, high-end tourists and managerial elites through creation of an entire new level of built environment with shopping malls, high income residential areas, restaurants, and cultural industries (2008). As a consequence of this transformation, the commodification of land, land speculation and yet exclusion of disadvantaged group seemed inevitable.

Urban Transformation Under Capitalist Conditions: Comparative Analysis of the Twenty-first Century’s İstanbul and the Nineteenth Century’s Paris

Urbanisation processes cannot be dissociated from structural changes within the governmental system, as well as economic and technological developments. As Fox (2012: 285) indicates, “urbanisation should be understood as a global historical process driven
by population dynamics associated with technological and institutional change.” The industrialization along with capital accumulation and the massive migration to the cities from rural areas set a ground for modern cities in colonial countries in the late Eighteenth Century. By the post-cold war period, neoliberal economic politics accompanied with internationalization of the capital had been set in motion, which gave a start to massive and unregulated urbanisation processes on cities located in post-colonial countries. These cities have been and are still experiencing post-modernization processes by exporting technology, high-qualified labor and investments in exchange with commodification of urban land, environmental distortion and social segregation under cover of decentralization and the integration to the global economy. On the surface, the urbanisation process seems to have different parameters between the industrial and global epoch. Indeed, they share the same basis, the way in which the state transforms urban areas into a ground for capital accumulation through either its own hand or delegating it to the private sectors. Thus, the intention of this chapter is to present the similar discourses, aspires and implementations between two different cities from two different epochs. The results will be employed for two different purposes. Firstly, to uncloak the economic and politic facts, which still remains, and secondly, the consequences that were experienced in the past in order to put attention on the possible side effects of top-down and massive urban planning policies.

The transformation of Paris in the Nineteenth Century depends on Napoléon III’s great ambitious on reconstructing Paris as a representation of order and modernity of his presidency. Second Empire that ruled by Napoléon III had witnessed the great displacement of Paris in order to create new capital of Europe and lead the nation to meet the challenges of the modern epoch. Similarly, the transformation of İstanbul in the Twenty-first Century is tied to Erdoğan’s vision on globalizing and marketing İstanbul as a representation of growing economy of Turkey, a memorial of Ottoman Empire and
a project of integrating the Turkish economy with global markets. Along with a new macro-regional environment created by the dissolution of the Soviet Bloc, cultural linkages between the Turkish-speaking states and turbulent dynamic of the Middle East, its size, history and location give İstanbul an opportunity to play an increasingly prominent role as regional trade centre (Enlil 2011).

As the same with Napoléon, Erdoğan has acquired his electoral success from peripheral neighborhoods, rural areas and small towns that suffer from the lack of resources (Kirkland 2013; Keyder 2010). Yet, both leaders designated their vision according to capitalist discourse. As Keyder states, in İstanbul “the new urban coalition -the city government, real estate concerns, the new bourgeoisie and the top echelons of the civil society, including the media and the city-boosting foundations funded by businessmen- strived to consolidate the city around their image of gentility” (2010: 3).

Napoléon introduced the transformation of Paris by stating that: “...Let us put all our efforts to embellishing this great city, to improving the condition of its citizens, ...open new streets, clean up the populous neighborhoods that lack air and daylight, and let the sun's beneficial rays penetrate everywhere behind our walls...” (Kirkland 2013: 43-44) and assigned Georges-Eugéne Haussmann as a prefect of the Seine Department, in order to implement his vision for Paris. This rebuilding process that led to displacement of 20% of the population, who mainly consisted of working class people who had lived in Paris's oldest neighborhood for generations and had belongings in northern and eastern Paris that were beginning to become urbanized (ibid.). The reality, which lies behind that vision, is not only to cope with unhealthy urban conditions such as epidemics, urban pollution and infrastructural issues such as the lack of clean water supply but also to create new spaces for western capital. Alike with Paris case, during this decade planning policies and legislations have attempted to clean the city from squatters, slum areas that located close to the city centre and to cre-
ate an agglomerated “lawful” city by absorbing nearby villages. A new legislation regarding to local governance, gives extraordinary powers to municipalities to clear illegal squatter areas and force their habitants to move newly designated neighborhoods administrated by The Mass Housing Directorate (TOKİ). With this attitude, the first legislation is ‘Renewal and Re-use of Deteriorated Historic Building Stock’ enacted in 2005 (Act No. 5366) that endows local authorities and TOKİ with new powers “to regenerate historic neighborhood where market forces are not sufficient or too slow to gentrify and transform” (Enlil 2011: 21). Second legislation is “earthquake legislation” that gives the power to the metropolitan municipality to demolish any building thought to be unprepared for the eventual big tremor. According to official declaration it has been planned to demolish 85,420 squatters (Durukan 2005) and move their inhabitants to low-cost high-rise projects located on the periphery of the metropolitan area. TOKİ, which has acquired extraordinary powers during AKP reign, allows its decision makers to construct on public land by free of all planning and zoning scrutiny. TOKİ creates new residential spaces and associate with private companies to build new housing projects where TOKİ gets a share of the flats by conducing to opening new areas as residential districts which come along with other developments such as new infrastructure projects and new transportation connections. Consequently, the city centre as the tourist showcase, full of restaurants, cafés, and entertainment venues which share the space with upscale residential neighborhoods that house a primarily middle-class, expensive and marginalizing cores surrounded by poorer neighborhoods waiting to be gentrified, or officially ‘regenerated’ under the auspices of TOKİ (Keyder 2010: 8).

By the mid-1850s, the French Economy had achieved a remarkable growth through industrialization. Besides, the regime was politically and militarily strong and stable that gave enough power to Napoléon III to actualize Paris’s transformation as a symbol of the continuity of French culture and vision of the kings from long ago. This growth process in Turkey is accompanied with trade, finance,
service and real estate sectors that mostly concentrated in İstanbul. As a result of financial expansion between 2002-2008, Turkey is considered as a hot spot among international investors, who have an increasing amount of money and seek for opportunity around the globe. Along with this circumstance, İstanbul became a global node that houses new type of bourgeoisie consisted of new professionals, management elites, and creative class who adopted their lifestyle and consumption habits of their transnational counterparts (Keyder 2010).

In the later 1850s Paris had run out of its financial budget. The city was not in a position to fund the next phase of the project without the financial support from the national government. Nevertheless, the Legislative Assembly that consisted of representatives from other parts of France did not agree on giving financial contribution from the national treasury, while many of the ministers were struggling with financial difficulties. Even taxation might have been a solution, Napoléon III clearly refused to put new taxes on Parisians (Kirkland 2013). On the other hand, transformation process in İstanbul is being financed through both public-private partnership and going out to tender to private companies. Hence this immense bubble of the real estate sector that includes commercial and office buildings, shopping centers, and upper/middle class residential development is financed by mostly global capital and encourage directly or indirectly by the bank loans, mortgage system and foreign funds. In other words, transnational capital found its way either through the banking system to new real-estate development corporations, which financed both the construction firms and the buyers or in the form of partnerships with local developers, whereas The Grand Project had been funded through direct state investments and credit creation with minor commercial enterprises and reform of financial structure to facilitate the physical infrastructures as the basis for economic reveal. The fact is state’s leading position within the urban transformation process still remains today despite the rhetoric of market-led and privately covered investments (Swyn- gedouw & Moulaert & Rodriguez 2002). Today, in İstanbul case,
state has strong collaboration with international capital and private sectors, particularly, which have closely engaged and been compatible with AKP’s political agenda. In this circumstance, the state’s mission is to alter the governmental structure in order to pave the way to assign urban transformation process to the private sectors in company with its rent value. Internationalization of the capital weakened the national borders and central administrations by spreading away through global integration process. Yet, the states’ authoritarian tendency, which is to designate cities in order to attract capital and reveal economy are common.

Hereby, one might say that the Second Empire had witnessed the exploration of entrepreneurial government and state intervention in mobilizing the capital into built environment (Harvey 2003). In 1868, the original estimate that reported for ten-year period for the realization of the project was 180 million francs, whereas it had eventually ballooned to 2.5 billion by 1870. Yet, only 0.3 billion francs was raised through the sale of land and materials. In parallel with these issues, France was going through several forms of economic crises and the size of the national debt had reached 1.4 billion francs. In spite of all the discussions regarding to whopping budget of the “grand travaux”, Haussmann claimed that the project would eventually pay itself through the taxes that would be asked future generations, who would benefit from the improvements by pointing out the increment value tax by more than 120 million a year (Kirkland 2013).

Haussmann had a more ideological concern, as he believed that the development of large-scale heavy industry, with all the unskilled workers it would attract, should not be encouraged in Paris or its vicinity. Thereby, imposing an extra tax on fuel and raw materials was a way of eliminating heavy industry near Paris. Clearance of industry from central areas is also one of the urban transformation strategies in İstanbul with the same attitude with Haussmann: to reduce opportunities for later generations of migrants, especially those in historic neighborhoods at the centre (Enlil 2011).
Napoléon III used 1867 the World Exposition as an opportunity to present Paris as a magnificent capital of the Second Empire to its guest, who came to attend to the World Exposition from all over the world. Erdoğan had showed similar intention with Haussmann by “declaring his dissatisfaction with the policies that had permitted the massive migration into the city, proposing that there should be a tax to make the city prohibitively expensive. Since this was legally and politically impossible, AKP’s policies had to be content with introducing the untrammeled workings of the market to the shaping of İstanbul’s social space.” (Keyder 2008: 182) Besides, there is an overwhelming interest and attempt on hosting global organizations such as Olympic Games and the World Exposition to strengthen both İstanbul’s and Turkey’s image within the global city hierarchy. In order to attract foreign investments, new business services sectors, real estate investments for upscale residences, luxury shopping and leisure as well as the global organizations stated above, the city had to look clean and ordered for tourists, with hotels, cultural centers, congress venues, museums and restaurants, while peripheral areas, often distant and inconvenient to the pushed-out beneficiaries (Ibid.). Swyngedouw et al. (2002) point out that these current urban development strategies permit recasting particular social groups as problematic, excluded, marginalized, and nonintegrated. For instance, urban regeneration projects in İstanbul, which are implemented within the central city, are employed for two objectives as it is experienced in Sulukule, Tarlabası and previously Cihangir, Galata and Süleymaniye cases. First of all is to clean up the visible aspect of the central city by gentrification projects in order to open up the urban areas with high rental value to the use of higher status groups. It is indicated by Harvey (2008) since urbanisation process has been a major tool for the surplus capital use, cities become a main subject for the private interest resulted with dispossession of marginalized group, immigrants and low income people under the adaption of the areas for “their highest and best use”. Second objective has the gloomier aim to clean the city from recent immigrants who mostly consist
of poor Kurdish peasants, driven out of their lands by the war that was taking place between the Turkish army and the Kurdish insurgency in the eastern and southeastern regions of the country. Instead of being able to invest in the informal construction of own-housing, they had to either rent or occupy the apartments located in the most dilapidated sections of the inner city (Keyder 2005).

As Kirkland (2013) pointed out that the transformation of Paris was actualized through the convergence of a whole array of social, cultural, and economic factors. After the big demonstration of Parisian workers (June Day) due to capitalist control over agents of production and unequal distribution of resources, socialist sentiment was worrying the bourgeoisie. Beside, the city was struggling by all side effects of industrial capitalism such as urban crime, degradation and epidemics. All these threats opened the way to the populist leader Napoléon III for presidency of the French Republic in 1848, and after a while the declaration of his Second Empire. Napoléon III was aware of requirements for capital accumulation and international markets, hence drove traditional loyalties of Napoleonic legend forward and reinforced his personal power through military and police power. Napoléon III’s way to deal with all these issues rooted in class conflicts and industrialization was to run authoritarian, populist policies that attract private investment and enhance circulation of capital, and space relations such as slum clearance around the city centre and improved traffic circulation, in order to assume control of the labor movement and actualize reforms and modernization. Haussmann was the most important actor of the transformation of Paris between 1850-1871. Power was highly concentrated on Napoléon III, who gave extensive authority to Haussmann. Thereby, Haussmann was not only responsible for individual buildings, infrastructure and architectural style but also responsible for creation a new concept of commercial urbanism. He opened the way to reproduction of space relations in order to foster the coalition of the state, finance capital and the propertied interest. During this transformation process, state actions, legiti-
macy and authority were employed for realization of these aspects. Napoléon III managed to maintain his power by satisfying the interest of the upper classes and thus receiving their support. Working class was pushed out of the city centre and class relations were reproduced and exposed to social control within Paris through restructuring of consumption and division of physical fabric. Yet, this materialization of space relations brought its social consequences such as the uprisings that gave birth to the Paris Commune of 1871 (Harvey 2003). Recep Tayyip Erdoğan bears a resemblance to Napoléon III in terms of engrossing to power on himself, nostalgializing the history and promoting the Ottoman Empire, ambitious on recreating İstanbul as a world city, aggressive neoliberal policies, authoritarian attitude against opponents and elitist approach even though being elected by peasantry, low and middle class.

Haussmann set massive long-term investment project in motion within the built environment in order to turn Napoléon III’s vision of Paris into reality. Ports and maritime, new transportation and communication systems allowed national capital to open to new world market and enhance international division of labor between 1850-1870. Haussmann’s coherent plan that consisted of a new network of roads, parks, monuments, sewers, symbolic spaces, leisure spaces, administrative buildings and housing reorganized the spatial frame of social and economic life in the capital. This process had ensued not only technological progress but also new world of spatial interconnections and the need for absorbing the surpluses of capital and labor power. Haussmann recognized the complex nature of the city that brought many different functions and features into relation to each other, therefore by reorganizing this complex system, he also reconstructed the meaning of citizenship and political identities according to new world (Harvey 2003).

Similarly with Paris, İstanbul’s transformation over the last decades has contributed to the global imaginary and an ambition on selling the city particularly focusing on İstanbul’s “bridge metaphor” that reflecting of being in-between Asia and Europe. Hereby, İstanbul has become an “in city” for global media, the art world, investors,
discerning tourists, curators of exhibits and real-estate developers (Keyder 2008) while creating a new type of citizenship: conservative, rich, well-educated, orientalized and traditional in accordance with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s vision. These new strata can be easily identified by the way in which they live, consume and socialize, where they reside and have education.

As Harvey (2003) emphasized that, the Grand Project also had affected the labor movement by pushing them beyond the Paris. Districts for middle and low incomes were relocated outside of the centre and their narrow, barricaded and liberated streets had been replaced by more easily controlled boulevard. As a consequence working class became less organized, yet got out of the authoritarian mechanism of the Second Empire such as to watch and control. As Castells (1976) states, the logic of this distribution of functions within the metropolitan region expressed the social structure of advanced capitalism, in other word a social differentiation of the regional space both in terms of activity and amenities and in terms of population. According to Paris Metropolitan Region’s array that decided by Haussmann, the centre of the urban area hosted administrative activity of the whole France, the amenities and essential services that respond the need to constitute crucial settings for capital such as bourgeois housing, head offices of companies and a concentrated business milieu of the Paris Metropolitan Region. The urban belt hosted the most important industrial zones and the suburban belt, which along the transportation routes, hosted housing estates for those who could not afford to live near the nucleus where the urban growth took place. This process takes place in İstanbul under cover of either urban regeneration projects within the inner city or transformative mega projects employed to create new, sterile and modern urban areas that appeal to upper class, high-skilled labor, headquarters, offices, companies as well as international labor. Within this process, middle class and low-income citizens are expelled towards to TOKİ residence on the city belt with insufficient infrastructure, unqualified urban environment and limited
connection with its surroundings. This dispossession from lands with high rent value to TOKİ, might be set in motion either with consent or under coercion, while İstanbul Metropolitan Region is becoming a megalopolis, the limit of which is unpredictable.

The consequences of such a development, that are experienced in Paris in the Eighteenth Century –which still remain- are uneven territorial development due to mobilize financial resources just one territory, by leaving other regions shrinking. Secondly, socially divided city structure and suburbanisation, which cause social segregation, as it is seen Paris Commun in 1871 as well as 2005 riots that started spreading from Paris’s poor and isolated neighborhoods on the periphery (Cole 2007). In today’s İstanbul these urban movements has started up through Gezi Park Resistance, which began against to neoliberal insolence, abuse of the right to the city and authoritarian governments and has spread all around the country.

New Tool for Reshaping the Global City: Concept of Urban Integrated Mega Projects

The past two decades have witnessed economic, spatial and technological transformation of globalizing capital cities, which echo to urban structure by massive physical development lead by state initiative in order to create new niches for revitalizing the urban fabric (Swyngedouw & Moulaert & Rodriguez 2002). These new urban forms are shaped by city’s economic and political functions, as a consequence of its integration process of the global and regional economy to have a key position as a coordination/command center for global flows of trade and investment. This reconfiguration and rebuilding process of the globalizing capital cities are associated with symbolic units of globalization, neoliberal politic economy and emergence of particular urban forms that identified
as an Urban Integrated Mega Projects (UIMPs), which take place particularly the Third World capital cities (Shatkin 2011) and illustrate the concrete process the way in which postmodern forms, post-Fordist economic dynamics, and neoliberal systems of governance are crafted and a new articulation of regulatory and governmental scales is produced (Swyngedouw at. all; 2002).

As Swyngedouw et al. (2002) state, that large-scale UIMPs have become one of the most remarkable and widespread urban transformation strategies pursued by city elites in search of economic growth and competitiveness as a part of the new political and economic regimes that are operative at local, regional, national and global scales.

Flyvbjerg (2014) identifies megaprojects that are large-scale, complex ventures that typically cost US$1 billion or more, take many years to develop and build, involve multiple public and private stakeholders, are transformational, and impact millions of people and designated to change the structure of society (Hirschman, quoted in ibid.) As it might be observed within the new development projects on İstanbul as a part of the 2023 vision for Turkey, Flyvbjerg (2014) emphasizes that megaprojects that involve regional or national scale investments such as high-speed rail lines, airports, seaports, motorways, hospitals, national health or pension, information and communication technology (ICT) systems, national broadband, the Olympics, large-scale signature architecture, offshore oil and gas extraction, the largest container and cruise ships, high energy particle accelerators, and the logistics systems used to run large supply chain–based companies are mostly used as the preferred delivery model for goods and services across a range of businesses and sectors, including infrastructure, water and energy, information technology, industrial processing plants, mining, supply chains, enterprise systems, strategic corporate initiatives and change programs, mergers and acquisitions, government administrative systems, banking, defense, intelligence, air and space ex-
ploration, urban regeneration, big science and major events. The reality that lies behind the idea of mega projects “to mitigate the effect of financial and economic crises by focusing on urban development” (ibid: 6), “to re-enforce the competitive position of their metropolitan economies in a context of rapidly changing local, national, and global competitive condition” and “to improve the tax basis of the city via a sociospatial and economic reorganization of metropolitan space” (Swyngedouw et al. 2002: 548, 557).

Urban Integrated Mega Projects are one of the substantial parts of symbolist characteristic of the Twenty-first Century globalizing cities. The effect of the contemporary globalization process laid the ground for such large-scale projects, which explains why UIMPs are being developed in the late Twentieth Century and sheds some light on their physical and financial structure (Olds 1995: 1719). As it is stated by Shatkin (2011: 78) These units are “city or district-scale integrated development projects built on a for profit basis, often by a single developer or a consortium of investors, sometimes in partnership with government entities” and “… conceived of as self-contained urban entities, containing residential, commercial, office and industrial space, in addition -in many cases- to schools, university campuses, hospitals, hotels and conventions centers.” Olds (1995: 1713) defined five characteristic of UIMPs; “(1) modeled on each other; (2) often developed and planned by architects, financiers, engineers, and planners who have experience working on and/or knowledge of previous or ongoing megaprojects in other cities around the world; (3) often developed with both explicit and implicit internationalization strategies in mind; (4) marketed to overseas firms and high-net-worth individuals for subsequent lease or purchase; and (5) designed to symbolize a global urban ‘utopia’ for the Twenty-first century.” UIMPs represent a physical aspect of the transformation of the urbanisation experience throughout from modernist and state driven policies for public realm to entrepreneurial urbanism, privatization of urban planning and commodification of urban fabric, particularly focusing on either new
residential or old industrial areas on the periphery (Shatkin 2011). Global UIMPs have emerged not only as a major form of real estate development, but also predominant state strategy that aggressively pursued for achieving economic development (ibid.). In the case of İstanbul, the investment on real estate sector and the creation of new spaces in major urban regions (ibid.) are associated with economic growth and welfare. Hence, this process is accompanied “by assistance in land acquisition, provision of links to urban infrastructure networks, regulatory relaxation, and rhetorical and political support for developer goals” (ibid: 81) mostly by ignoring environmental and social concerns and critics. This fact has echoed to İstanbul case with bypassing environmental and social impact assessments, statutory regulations, institutional bodies, local democracy and participation as well as changes in national or regional regulations.

For instance, rent-focused and top-down urban policies that are put forward by national governments in Turkey show that there is a remarkable ambition on branding and advertising İstanbul as “the major city of Turkey” through the Third Airport, which is the biggest airport in Europe; the Third Bosporus Bridge, which is the highest bridge in the world and Canal İstanbul, which is the most expensive project in the world with a ten billion dollar budget. This ambition leads reconfiguration of urban governance system from state-driven policies to public-private partnerships and entrepreneurial strategies that are employed to attract global capital (Shatkin 2011). Flyvbjerg (2014) titles this fact as a technological sublime, which drives megaproject development and clarifies its characteristic that “longest-tallest-fastest type of project”, which rapture engineers and technologists by pushing the limits for what technology can do. In so doing, the aim is to capture global capital by being “the first of anything” and this sublime is also might be accompanied by two other sublimes. The “political sublime” that is employed to represent politicians and makes their power visible through gigantic monuments on public on global arena and the “aesthetic sublime” that pleasures new elites of the Twenty-first
century by large, iconic and innovative projects.

As one of the 2023 vision of Turkey, it is mentioned that there is an intention to become one of the top five countries in terms of the amount of tourist and tourism revenue with 63 million dollar budget (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2007). İstanbul has a crucial role for realization of this target due to its existing tourist potential as a second popular tourism destination in Turkey with housing 24% of tourist and the ninth city among the list of the most attractive cities in the world (İstanbul Kalkınma Ajansı 2012).

This attempt to emphasize on tourism is explained by Shatkin (2011) as a one of the leading trend of the new global economy, which is associated with creation of new amenities and tourism facilities through public-private cooperation within the context of the for-profit UIMPs. Besides, there is a strong attempt to increase congresses and convention tourism in Turkey through vast amount of congress and convention centers projects and development plans that involve hotel, resident, shopping mall and leisure facilities within their surrounding areas by targeting international and intra-national working elites. As it is reported by İstanbul Regional Development Agency (2012), Turkey is coming to the fore in terms of congresses and conventions tourism by increasing the amount of both international and national organizations as well as “the hottest destination for property investors in Turkey”; it was the ‘rising star’ of the entire Middle East for real-estate and property investors” (Wolf 2005; cited by Enlil 2011: 22).

This circumstance is strongly linked to Turkey’s emergent political and economic situation within the global cities network. These attempts on creating welfare are assembled by Flyvbjerg (2014: 8) as “economic sublime of megaprojects” that business people and trade unions make large amounts of money by constructing these megaprojects, including money made for contractors, workers in construction and transportation, consultants, bankers, investors, landowners, lawyers, and developers.

As the most problematic case within the contemporary urban planning discourse in Turkey, the northern development of İstanbul
Metropolitan Region -involved Canal İstanbul-The Third Airport-The Third Bosporus Bridge- are going to be scrutinized in the emerging concept of UIMPs as a state strategy for urban development. Thus, it enables to set up of a conceptual and critical framework for uncloaking influences of new trends of globalized urbanisation process and new dynamics of economy politics in İstanbul as one of the leading globalizing cities. The second aim of the next chapter is to present corresponding and different features between İstanbul and other globalizing cities in emerging countries. To provide this comparative analysis, fundamental signs of UIMPs are going to be investigated within three mega projects located in the North İstanbul. This analysis is going to show how the facts and theories comply with each other and describe the experienced impacts of UIMPs through examples from Canal İstanbul, The Third Bridge and The Third Airport projects.

Realized Urban Integrated Projects Around the World and Their Impacts on the City

Metropolitan cities have been controlled and shaped by capital and global economic conditions. This process started to rise along with industrial revolution and technological developments as it seen in modernization of Paris the Nineteenth Century. Capitalist dominance of the urbanisation process and social structure of city, turn cities into a place of capital accumulation and circulation, which can be built-destroyed-rebuilt (Harvey 2003) in accordance with power relations and capital interest.

As a new axis of global capital and neoliberalization, particularly postcolonial cities has come to the fore with their large populations, aspiration to integrate global system and structural informality that enables governments to render legitimacy, social and
environmental rights in order to set a ground for international capital. Within this context “Urban Integrated Mega Projects” takes an important place as an appearing of neoliberalization and globalization within the built environment. UIMPs are presented as an instrument to provide opportunities to extract public investments for infrastructure, to overcome social exclusion and to benefit from global flows of international capital (Swyngedouw et al. 2002).

Flyvbjerg (2014) states that if UIMPs have been done and led successfully by policymakers, they could have resulted with positive effects. He argues that UIMPs:
- Create and sustain employment;
- Contain a large element of domestic inputs relative to imports;
- Improves productivity and competitiveness by lowering production costs;
- Benefits consumers through higher quality services; and
- Improves the environment when infrastructures that are environmentally sound replace infrastructures that aren’t (cited in ibid.; Hem; 2008:1).

Yet, many examples around the world show that as a new way of production of urban spaces, UIMPs are inherently more costly than expected, speculative and risky due to dependence of sales or rents of either land or building, economic and financial capability. This dependence on rent returns and the dynamics of the real estate sector for the feasibility and maintenance of the project, cause UIMPs to become high-income areas and creates islands of wealth in impoverishment environment, resulting in socioeconomically highly diversified cities (Swyngedouw et al. 2002). Not only post-colonial cities but also Western and Northern cities have witnessed the negative effect of UIMPs. For instance, Berlin Adlershof Science and Technology Park (BAAG), which started to be built in 1997 with the subsidiary of the City of Berlin, combined with European Structural Funds to build up infrastructure and technology. The project highly depends on increase of the land value, tax income and capturing investments. Yet, the turnover was lower then
expected due to the decline of land prices in Berlin.

Figure 1: “Berlin Adlershof Science and Technology Park accessed at http://en.twwtn.com/Upload/12/9/05132040783.jpg

2.19 billion Euro was estimated to come from private investments while 610 million Euro was planned to come from public funds between 1997-2010. Nevertheless by the end of 2001 -only four years in to the project- the amount of the funds that came from public funds was 560 million Euro. (Swyngedouw et. al.; 2002)

Figure 2: “Lisbon Expo Parque”, accessed at http://www.flickr.com/photos/krm_gib/3280778389/

Another mega project in Europe was Parque EXPO 98 in Lisbon with the stakeholding of the state as well as the municipalities of Lisbon and Loures and support from EU funds (ERDF and Cohesion Fund). Expected returns that consist of the sale of the land,
ticket sales, and sponsorships for the exposition were not achieved. Besides, the amount of funds that was directly devoted to the EXPO under the Urban Renovation Program of the EU’s Community Support Framework was around half of the whole share for the whole country for five years. Prices for EXPO flats and land located nearby the park area.

If it is examined to post-colonial countries, UIMPs are mostly run by state and private-sector actors, whereas EU funds constitute an important part of the total sum of the budget of the mega projects in European countries, thus it might be said that projects outside the European Union put more pressure on government budget then what has been experienced in European cities. For instance, India, where the initiation of economic liberalization in the early 1990s was accompanied by information technology and business outsourcing industries and therefore fostered the economic growth and generated demand for the creation of new urban spaces.

As an unsuccessful UIMP experience, most of the UIMPs in Kolkata-such as Maha Mumbai and Dankuni Township, failed despite government effort to drive them to realization. Kolkata was an extreme example that shows the shift from state led planning with
focus on public welfare and social equity to privatized planning and entrepreneurial governance. With globalization and liberalization, the governments put effort into realizing privatized real-estate development through land reform programs that render technically illegal settlements and land acquisition for high incomes and high-up economic activities such as finance and technology. Yet, this process had met tough resistance from the rural population due to displacement of rural communities and the commodification of land (Shatkin 2011). In contrast with Kolkata, Metro Manila in Philippines, where the UIMPs had showed a significant progress in terms of defining feature of Metro Manila’s urban morphology and designing spaces of elite consumerism and global business, the UIMP met much less resistance. Private corporations played a significant role in terms of acquisition of lands of former haciendas. In addition, Bases Conversion Development Authority also played a key position to sale of the state land. After the Asian Financial Crisis, a big part of the project was bought by Ayala Land Incorporated, which is the largest property developer in Philippines (ibid.).

Figure 4: “Site Development Plan in Metro Manila”, accessed at http://www.eton.com.ph/images/projects/ascent/sitedevelopmentplan.jpg
Urban Integrated Mega Projects in İstanbul: Towards to the Limitless City

Canal İstanbul

The intention of building a second Bosporus canal in İstanbul has gone back through Ottoman Empire, the Sixteenth Century as it emphasizes by R. Tayyip Erdoğan as a “realization of a dream”. The original idea was to connect the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea through canal in order to integrate local industries and natural resources and reduce transportation costs. In a latter, the former Prime Minister of Turkey, Bülent Ecevit had claimed the same vision in 1994; as yet it has not come through (Baypinar & Kundak 2011). In April 2011, the Prime Minister R. Tayyip Erdoğan has announced the Canal İstanbul Project, as a continuation of Ottoman vision. Main purpose of the project is to reduce the maritime traffic and to create a new alternative route to the Sea of Marmara from the Black Sea. Project, which would cost approximately 10 billion dollar, was claimed as a “magnificent” and “crazy” by the Prime Minister Erdoğan. R. Tayyip Erdoğan has rationale for the Canal İstanbul Project is manifold. Firstly, as one of the leading emerging market economy, Turkey needs to reinforce its connection and integration to global city networks.
Due to being the gateway city throughout history, İstanbul is an important tool for Turkey to strengthen its economic and strategic position in order to get competitive advantage. Secondly, it is claimed by the Prime Minister that the Bosporus has a crucial location due to being surrounded by historically important structures.

Yet, the risk of marina accident, like the one that happened in 1979 in Bosporus, and ship movements affect this historical pattern negatively. Hence, to depuration of international marine traffic from Bosporus to Canal İstanbul will decrease the current risk of historical patterns. Finally, the cost of large amount of tankers and vessels in consequence of waiting time in the Sea of Marmara will be discharged through reducing congestion in Bosporus by canalizing the international marine traffic to the Canal (Baypınar & Kundak 2011). In so doing, the Bosporus will meet the requirements for reinforcement of intra-city sea transportation; leisure and recreational activities while effectiveness of marine transition will be increased. Another important issue that has been pointed out in official website of the project is the limitations that The 1936 Montreux Treaty has brought out regarding to Bosporus transition.
According to The Montreux, all ships are free to pass (if taxes are paid) the straits unless the captain of the vessel asks for a port pilot. During wartime, having a port pilot is obligatory but free of charge. It is claimed in official statements that a new waterway for Istanbul, will bring money in the economy by charging for transition fees and increase military strength due to being detached from the Montreux, yet there is no clear statements on how the passage will be redirected to Canal İstanbul, while the Bosphorus is more

Beside these political and strategic measures, the project also include two new cities either side of the port in order to solve urban problems such as housing, transportation and needs of raising population and protect the historical and physical characteristic of Istanbul. The Canal Project, which was introduced by R. Tayyip Erdoğan, would transform İstanbul into a new city with two peninsulas and an island, representing an urban restructuring as well as a restructuring in transportation (Görgülü & Hacohasanoğlu 2012: 82). As it is stated in official website of Canal İstanbul, The Prime Minister has described the development projects as “energy-transportation-prosperity-employment project, and an urban planning
project, a family project, a housing project and most importantly an environmental project...”

According to the first envisagements of Canal İstanbul, it will include a marina, a financial center, a health center, residential areas and a theme park. International and regional transportation networks going to be supplied through the Third Airport, the Third Bridge and the North Marmara Highway. The Canal İstanbul Project makes a completely different impression then the Ottoman vision regarding the second passage from the Sea of Marmara to The Black Sea in order to develop local manufacture and construction. Yet, the current vision for the Canal İstanbul is designated to capture investments and economic growth through land rent (Baypinar & Kundak 2011). As is known, large-scale prestige projects like Canal İstanbul, always attract the interest of foreign direct investments, multinational companies and this interest is always seen as an important tool to achieve economic development.

In accordance with official declarations, required reserve areas will be provided with Küçükçekmece, Başakşehir, Altıntehir and Arnavutköy districts, which mostly involve vital natural protected areas such as Büyükçekmece and Küçükçekmece lagoon type of lake, Sazlidere Barrage and Belgrad Forest. The project is being criticized due to its location, where it has been determined as a forestland, agricultural land, water basin and groundwater basin in the Environmental Plan of İstanbul, which has a crucial importance for environmental sustainability. For that reason, the Canal İstanbul Project is blamed in The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats’ report on Mega Projects in İstanbul (Arslangündoğdu, et al. 2014) for has been designated without taking upper scale plans, and national and international measures regarding to natural and historical areas into account. Besides this, in order to meet a need for required land for new functions within Canal İstanbul Project, existing residential areas will be under threat of the huge displace
ment and dispossession of locals, which mostly consist of low income and middle-income citizens.

Despite ongoing debates and legal barriers such as large-scale plans, the expected deadline for the project is 2023, which is 100th anniversary of Republic of Turkey that associated with the 2023 Vision of Turkey. This vision is strongly associated with capturing investment and growth through creation of new economic areas (Shatkin 2011)

Canal İstanbul is considered as a “catastrophic project” by many professors, experts and NGO members for İstanbul’s future, whereas some of them highly support the project and claim that it would contribute to not only İstanbul’s but also Turkey’s economy. The Association of Turkish Independent Architects (TSMD), the Association of Turkish Real Estate Consultants, the Association of Urban Planners, Chamber of City Planners based on İstanbul and Chamber of Architects based on İstanbul describe the project as a “speculative” and put emphasize on the natural damage and population explosion that the project will bring into existence in case of its realization. However, Independent Industrialists and Businessmen’s Association, Professor Doctor Mesut Caşin (Yeditepe University, Department of International Relations), Architects Serdar İnan, who is chairman of İnanlar Constraction known with his full support for Canal İstanbul and his 30-billion Turkish Liras offer to construct the project, assert the project as a “magnificent” investment that fosters the economy of Turkey.

The Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge (The Third Bosphorus Bridge)

The idea of Third Bosphorus Bridge in İstanbul has started being discussed in 1990s in consequence of inadequacy of Bosphorus and the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge to encounter the connectivity between
Asian and European Side, while the discussion on the location for the Third Bosporus Bridge has remained uncertain. By the AKP reign “Third Bosporus Bridge” has become a current issue with a view to reduce traffic flow on the current bridges and to stabilize the traffic to a desired density and flow in the city. Yet, according to professionals’ opinions the Third Bosporus Bridge would increase the traffic congestion and trigger new problems rather than creating a solution, such as increasing speculation about the location (Görgülü & Hacohasanoğlu 2012).

Figure 7: “The location of the Third Bosporus Bridge”, Turkey General Directorate of Highways, accessed at http://www.kgm.gov.tr/SiteCollectionDocuments/KGMdocuments/Duyurular/KGM%20Katalog.pdf

In 2010, the Third Bosporus Bridge has been decided to be built on the northern part of İstanbul as put forward in the 1/25000 land use plan for İstanbul, even it is disaccorded with the 1/100000 environmental plan for İstanbul, which was approved in 2009. Hence, the legal ground of the project is really problematic due to being in contrast to Turkey Building Bylaws that strictly denotes “every plan must be designated in accordance with the rules and principles that
set in upper scale plans.” (TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası İstanbul Şubesi 2010)

Moreover, the junction points for the bridge, located on water bases, forests and agricultural areas within northern part of İstanbul which have been denoted as crucial areas for environmental sustainability and natural resources in the environmental plan of 2009 as the most important plan for İstanbul within the urban planning hierarchy (Arslangündoğdu, et al. 2014).


This circumstance constitutes another legal inconformity due to being in contrast to Turkey Building Bylaws that denotes “any area can not be used in the contrary of basis of the any scale plans, the region’s conditions and provisions of the regulations.” Besides the project, there have been attempts to get the project excluded from the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulation by the Ministry of Transportation and Communication (TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası İstanbul Şubesi 2010) in order to prevent any kind of legal
barrier by ignoring environmental privileges. Other conflict between the third bridge project and upper scale projects has showed up, when the 9th National Development Plan is investigated. Aims of the 9th National Development Plan are to reduce regional disparities, inequitable allocation of resources, to use funds and resources to overcome the inequality between developed and undeveloped cities and balance internal mobilization. Yet, the huge amount of required resources for the Third Bosporus Bridge, reinforcing of population and housing pressure on İstanbul as well as socio-economic inequality between İstanbul and the rest, go against to designated principles within the 9th National Plan (TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası İstanbul Şubesi 2010). The project is reasoned in its social and environmental impact assessment report that there is a lack of sufficient connections between Euro-Asia and a need for taking the international traffic and logistic involved heavy-duty vehicles and transit passengers out of the inner city.

In so doing, the project will provide an alternative passage that is located in the periphery. Yet, transit transportation and logistic activities contain just 2-3% percent of total travel between the European and Asian sides that consist of mostly private cars (82%) that cover just 24% of total passengers. This fact demonstrates that bridges mostly serve for private car passage instead of reinforcing public transportation (TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası İstanbul Şubesi 2010).

As it is stated in the official web page of the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, the 4.5 billion dollar budget project is being built by a “consortium” of İçtaş Constructing Manufacturing and Trading Inc. as one of the leading national investment groups and ASTALDI JV -an Italian Construction and Engineering Company- and being run 10 years through the “build operate transfer model”. The results of the project will then be transferred to the Ministry of Transportation, which also means privatization of the possible benefits, which is a typical characteristic of mega projects (Shatkin 2011; Olds 1995; Swyngedouw at. all 2002).
Another common point of the Third Bosporus Bridge Project with UIMPs is to be designed by French Architect Michel Virlogeux and Swiss T-Engineering, which are foreign companies with good reputation and wide portfolio all around the world. The ambition of being the tallest and largest bridge in the world, with 59 meters width and 322 meters height, the total length of tracks that are provided by the Third Bosporus Bridge is 114 km including two highways and high-speed train rail (Cuthber 2013). The expropriation process employed to provide required land for the bridge and connection routes, will cause destruction of 680-hectare natural protection area, 921 hectare agricultural area and 1453 hectare forest area involved more than 2.5 million trees (TMMOB Şehir Plançilari Odası İstanbul Şubesi 2010).

Since the construction of the Third Bosporus Bridge has started, the location of it has been changed four times due to judicial decision in order to reduce environmental impact. First change actualized due to overlapping with the Third Airport. The second change is decided by court; in order to avoid the overlapping with the martyrs’ cemetery and third change is made due to overlapping with flyways and flood plain. And last change is actualized in order to protect water resources in Taşdelen, where are located within the water basin. Yet there are still legal conflicts about the location, it is always emphasized in R. Tayyip Erdoğan’s speech that the bridge project is planned to carry out by 2023, as a part of the Turkey’s vision of to be the one of the biggest economy in the world.
The Third Airport

The Third Airport Project is another big investment located on the European part of the Black Sea, in the Northern İstanbul, having the raison d’être that existing airports in İstanbul fall short of the passenger target for the 2023 vision for İstanbul. The ten billion dollar budget project is going to be completed in three years, in a sequence of stages. At the first stage, it is aimed to achieve one hundred million passenger capacities per year and at the end it is planned to increase it to one hundred fifty million passengers per year. The project is motivated by inadequacy of Atatürk Airport, which has exceeded its bearing capacity as the total number of passengers has reached forty five million by 2011 (Gürsel & Toru Delibaşı 2013).

The Third Airport project has been put in a tender in May 2013, without waiting for approval of the environmental impact assessment report. The LİMAK-KOLİN-CENGİZ-MAPA-KALYON joint venture group has gotten the tender by offering twenty-two billion euro to build and manage the facility for twenty-five years. Following this, the Third Airport project was defeated by administrative court on 21st of January 2014 as well as local administrative court in 11th of March 2014 but still, the construction works have

72% percent of the project area consists of forest area and another 8% percent consists of the lakes and lagoons (Aydinonat 2013). 7650 hectares of land that required is determined to obtain from Yeniköy, Tayakadin, Ağaçlı and Akpinar villages (AK-TEL Mühendislik Eğt. Tur. Gd. San. Tic. Ltd. Şti. 2013) where, included water basis and forest areas, as they are denoted as a natural protection and mining areas in the 1/100000 environmental plan for İstanbul.

The main criterions for land selection are stated in assessment report of the project that, the scarcity of such a big land within İstanbul but the northern part which has limited private properties such as agricultural areas, vineyards, gardens as well as domiciles.

Figure 12: “İstanbul New Airport”, NordicArch, accessed at http://nordicarch.com/istanbul-new-airport#media

TOKİ will take part within the project both for decision process of expropriated price and dispossession process of these properties (ibid.). In all likelihood, TOKİ will be employed to provide housing
through providing loans to titleholders who will lose their properties. The Third Airport is designed as a misused project as it contains a 1100 hectare trade area, a car-park with capacity for 70000 cars, 1 medical center and 1 shopping mall and promoted as an environment friendly facility through its smart building design, which reduces energy consumption and produces its own power. Upon completion of the Third Airport Project that designed by four different architecture companies in the leadership of Nordic Office of Architecture, it is asserted that it will be the biggest airport in the world with one-hundred-fifty-million-passenger capacity per year. According to BETAM report (2013), it is not possible to foresee Turkey’s economic condition in terms of the risk of economic instability. Even at the best conditions, İstanbul would not have reached one-hundred-twenty-million-passenger capacity for the next thirty years. Besides, according to estimations even though 3500 hectare would be enough for that amount of passengers, the Third Airport has contained 7400-hectare area within the northern part of İstanbul. Hereby, the question is “the way in which 4150-hectare space will be planned to use” required to be answered (Gürsel & Toru Delibaşi 2013).
As it is stated in environmental impact assessment report of the Third Airport (2013) that;

- More than hundred of thousands trees (657,950) are planning to be cut down whereas over then one million trees (1,855,391) are planning to replaced.
- In order to provide enough space for facilities involved by the project, more than seventy biotopes will be destroyed. Thereby, the area will lose its flora, fauna and natural features.
- Terkos Lake, which satisfies a major part of the need for potable water and water reservoirs such as Alibeyköy and Pirinççi, will be under threat of pollution and reduction of water catchment in basis.
- The project is located on migratory routes of birds. Thereby, the project will cause destruction of migratory birds’ vital activities.
- The traffic congestion inflicted by the project will increase the pollution and cause destruction of forest areas.


After all these threats that Third Airport Project will put through, public and official acceptance of the project is brought into question. In The Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey’s
Evaluation Report for the project, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report is criticized for giving place to legal feasibility of the project rather then its environmental feasibility, impacts and consequences. Within this context, the EIA report neglects its fundamental duty by ignoring environmental measures and focuses on technical details, legal conformity and obstacles that the project might get face to face with as though it was just red tape for the project, which is already decided to be actualized.

Despite the NGOs, the Chamber of Urban Planners, the Chamber of Architects and many locals that live in İstanbul have reacted against to the Third Airport, the leading companies and AKP politicians claim the project as a “necessity” for İstanbul. For instance, the chairman of Pegasus Airlines and the Chambers, the president of the Commodity Exchanges and Union Young Entrepreneurs Delegation Ali Sabancı, CEO of TAV Airports, Turkey’s leading brand in the global airport operation sector Sani Şener assert that the project is a crucial for İstanbul’s development vision and a “necessity” in order to play a leading role within the global economy.
The recreation of cities through capitalist development and global economic trends is not a new fact. Indeed, it dates back to the Nineteenth Century, when the industrial revolution gave rise to capitalist accumulation and bourgeoisie that constituted the new type of consumers needed for economic revival. Napoléon III and Haussmann were significant actors, who embodied these effects of industrialization within the Greater Paris Region and rebuilt the entire city by sharpening social stratification. With the ambition of being the “Capital of Europe”, Napoléon III set gigantic infrastructure investments, monumental buildings, wide boulevards and cleansing of the inner-city in a motion with causing a huge amount of deficit in state budget and territorial disparities. Furthermore, authoritarian, top down and elitist attitude to urban planning in the Greater Paris City Region caused an increase of the land value and a rapid increase in population (from under 1.3 million in 1851 to approximately 2 million by 1870), and yet gave birth to the Paris Commune of 1871 (Harvey 2003). In line with this fact, one might have seen that history repeats itself via the new global and neoliberal era that echoes on cities through stereotyped, gigantic urban development projects. These projects cause uneven territorial development, urban sprawl and therefore environmental distortion, rapid population growth and scarcity of resources as well as social conflicts as it is seen in Kolkata, Metro Manila, Lisbon and Berlin. The projects that fit within the UIMPs concept resulted with very large financial costs, more divided city structure and over-investment of labor time, due to budget overruns.
İstanbul, with 14 million the population (Turkish Statistical Institute 2012) and its emerging city region is one of the largest in South-East Europe and the Middle East. This uncontrolled growth that has been started in 1960s, is fostered by globalized and neoliberal urbanisation process along with top down, government driven mega projects accompanied with high-density housing developments led by TOKİ and creation of high-income private real estate developments. As it is stated in the previous chapter, three leading UIMPs in İstanbul -Canal İstanbul, the Third Bridge (Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge) and the Third Airport- were commissioned without neither public nor expert opinion and also break the measures indicated in upper scale master plans and the 1/100000 environmental plan. Whereas it is obvious that İstanbul’s carrying capacity is not able to tolerate further exploitation of natural resources and increase in population, all these projects cause urban sprawl towards the northern part of İstanbul, by giving rise to dense housing, shopping malls, business district and highways. According to İstanbul’s planning authority’s estimation the natural population capacity of İstanbul is limited to 16 million whereas Turkey Statistical Institution’s population projection shows that the city will reach 16 million by the year 2025. Yet, in case of realization of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s purpose on to build two new cities near the Canal project, which would have a population of about 1 million each, there is a high risk of exceeding the carrying capacity of İstanbul. Thus, these issues put İstanbul in a much more difficult situation which also includes ecological depletion, on top of the negative affects of UIMPs that experienced in many cases, such as social explosion, financial crisis, time wasting, exclusion of middle class and low-income citizens, deepening the urban poverty, uneven allocation of resources and uneven territorial development. Furthermore, with the Canal İstanbul project, 4 million people will be faced with displacement from their homes. In a similar way the Third Bosporus Bridge and the Third Airport will cause increase of the land value, thus they put the middle class and low-income citizens located near the projects under threat. Hence, there is a
need for reconsidering of the project areas, cost-benefit analysis, taking into account the possibility of financial crises and more importantly how to lead this project responsively without depriving of habitants’ housing right and deepening social injustice.

There is a control mechanism not only over the society but also over the environment, which is governed by authority and hegemonic class relations. In this repressed climate, we have to find a way to deal with it through multi-dimensionally reconstructing our knowledge and start thinking out of the box. Such an exercise might enable us to confront ourselves against to the uncontrolled growth of mega cities, which brings about new issues for urban planners to solve: how can growth be managed in a sustainable and equitable manner?


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INTERNET RESOURCES


Urban Integrated Mega Projects in the Northern Istanbul Metropolitan Region: Echoes of Global Urbanisation on Istanbul

23rd, 2014


