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THE CHANGING FACE OF WATERFRONT HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS IN PORT DISTRICT OF IZMIR, TURKEY

Abstract: Waterfront regeneration of port districts emerge as a tool for prestigious development of cities in urban re-imagining and growth. Creation of prestigious housing in these areas are part of a broader strategy of mixed-use and property-led development, but in absence of a holistic approach in planning and design, the urban landscapes may be developed merely on basis of the real estate frameworks. This article looks at how development trends of port cities can take an unintended stance in property-led regeneration of port districts, creating gated communities and failing to succeed in achieving the pre-determined objectives in urban planning. The discussion, which will address to issues of place-making, commodification of public space and planning policies, will take the port city of Izmir as the case. It is suggested that the adoption of a holistic approach to urban planning should guide the regeneration processes and design should take place-making into consideration.

Keywords: Housing, place-making, port district, urban design, waterfront regeneration.

Introduction

The current wave of waterfront redevelopments throughout the world fits well into the goal of global interurban competition. Whether considered in terms of housing, recreational, commercial or mixed-use developments, urban waterfronts apparently play a pivotal role in redevelopment as sites directly responding to consequences of economic restructuring. Particularly in port-cities where, due to decline of port-related activities and urban restructuring associated with deindustrialization, the old industrial facilities on the waterfront become abandoned leaving their valuable spaces to residential, commercial or cultural uses, the regeneration schemes vary from property-led to culture-led or from mixed-use to event-led developments. The port districts are now significant places at which both public and private parties target attractive and accessible designs as the new faces of port cities, proving their significant role as catalyst for the regeneration of inner urban areas.

The relationship between port and city interfaces and the changing socio-economic character of port cities provide a considerable documentation on the different, yet similar cases of Western waterfront cities. Urban regeneration processes including industrial waterfront redevelopment derive at least in part from changing port functions at a national and regional scale, from changing port functions at a local scale and from related urban economic restructuring [Hoyle 2000: 230]. Port areas have always played a crucial role in national economic development, but with the impact of changing circumstances of the post-industrial city, competition for waterfront spaces in port districts became an increasingly topical issue in urban policies. That is why the revitalization of docklands and associated waterfront development areas are discussed at length since the 1980s, of which many derelict and decaying docksides become a mark [Hoyle *et al.* 1988; Jones 1998]. Many waterfront projects in Western cities create social facilities, expand employment and regenerate the sites in a sustainable manner. However, this process manifests a shift from collective benefits to more individualized forms of public benefit with increasing commodification and circumscription of urban public space [Lehrer, Laidley 2008]. This trend appears to be changing the “faces” of almost all port cities targeting at urban competitiveness.

With the emerging need for aesthetic design touches for creation of more sustainable settings in place of formerly deteriorated industrial lands, many cities began to implement urban design projects for waterfront revitalization and adopted mostly mixed-use development strategies to connect port districts with the center of the city. Nevertheless, the course of such change in industrial waterfront settings appears to take different routes. Depending on the actors involved (whether there have been any public-private partnerships for regeneration), on the specific design approach (whether the design functions as an outcome of holistic planning processes and whether the new vision fits well into the target of connecting the port district with the city center), and on the level of public facilities (whether the new waterfront can start being accessible to all citizens), the revitalization of industrial waterfronts may end up with completely different urban settings to be discussed in terms of place-making, commodification of public space and planning policies.

This article intends to dwell upon the issue of how development trends of port cities can take an unintended stance in property-led regeneration of port districts, creating gated communities and failing to succeed in achieving the pre-determined objectives in urban planning. The discussion, which will address to issues of place-making, commodification of public space and planning policies, will take the port city of Izmir, as the case. In Izmir, a port city of 4.2 million inhabitants on the Aegean coast of Turkey, while the new city center within the port district has experienced the upsurge in high-rise mixed-use buildings, the planning practice appears to fail in keeping up with the speed of developments led by demands for higher profit. The specific case displays how harsh property-led regeneration can change the adopted objectives in planning and how far the emerging high-standard urban areas go distant from place-making.

1. Rising trends in contemporary planning and design of port cities

In the past four to five decades the developed countries with advanced economies have witnessed considerable urban change and deindustrialization, reflected upon a legacy of redevelopment in vacant and derelict lands, particularly on the waterfront. This legacy has had a spillover effect upon all port cities, where the challenge of bringing brownfield sites back into productive use [Adams *et al.* 2010] has ended in redevelopment of the port districts, sometimes through culture-led, property-led or housing-led regeneration, or other times through mixed-use or event-led regeneration schemes.

Whilst the first examples of waterfront regeneration date earlier to 1940s with the case of Liverpool waterfront in England [Couch 2003] and 1970s with the case of Baltimore's Inner Harbour revitalization in North America [Vayona 2011: 424], the rising trend for waterfront revitalization has steadily been extended to Europe and elsewhere particularly after the 1980s [Gospodini 2001]. Since then, waterfront regeneration projects emerged as large scale, prestige projects that acted often as a focus for the development of public-private partnerships and symbols for urban re-imagining [Hoyle *et al.* 1988; Bianchini *et al.* 1992; Loftman, Nevin 1996; Jones 1998; Bassett *et al.* 2002; Lehrer, Laidley 2008]. In many Western port cities, the redevelopment of port districts and distressed urban areas focussed on such prestigious schemes by refurbishing the physical environment including industrial heritage buildings and attracting business to invest in property development and job creation.

An integrated part of these schemes involved property development that began to be seen as catalyst for economic and population growth of inclining inner cities [Jones 1996; Gkartzios, Norris 2011]. Under neoliberal circumstances shaping the cities, there appears to be a heavy reliance on property-led development as an instrument to promote urban regeneration and waterfront projects are no exception within this course. When it comes to regeneration of prestigious parts of cities, such as waterfront areas, the organizational nature of property development appears to change, leaving direct impact on the emerging image of the city. Just as Imrie and Thomas [1993] has examined the relations between the property developers and the local authorities they call as the traditional purveyors of urban policy, the property industry is highly dependent on the development of organizational capacity of public authorities, which adopt property-led approach as an alternative to development by the public sector. While the demands of property developers have particular influence in changing the urban settings into "prestigiously developed" pieces of land, the process is inevitably accepted to be mainly guided by and through the public authorities. That is why the process of property-led regeneration may be the reason where local interests and community needs can be undermined, paving the way for commodification of public spaces and prioritization of shorter-term development goals of the property industry.

Property-led regeneration also favours dense mixed-use developments in areas to be newly-gained from previous industrial areas and port districts. As mentioned afore, the intense efforts to redesign derelict sites and waterfronts in port areas throughout the world is a part of the intention to regain these lands for public uses as well as new uses, such as offices, housing, commerce, and tourism mostly in the form of mixed use development, which appears to have taken central stage in recent decades. Mixed-use development is a concept largely embraced in real estate development process by the end users who demand space, the developers, the investors, public authorities that supply space and planners regulating space. Among the evident contributing factors for such resurgence of mixed-use development, take place longing for the sense of place and community, as one of the rising trends of new urban developments, traffic congestion, increasing gasoline prices and changing consumer demographics etc. [Herndon 2011]. By way of mixed-use development, it is possible to gain access to greater densities, respond to changing demands of consumers and integrate complementary urban uses via sustainable and livable place-making principles. In terms of its economic gains, mixed-use environments offer a well-connected catchment area of consumers for local businesses and as per social gains, such environments have the capacity to create inclusive places for local communities and stimulate livable destinations to visit and live at [Gökçen Dünder 2014]. Given the broad extent of the gains in integrating complementary uses in central parts of the urban environments, there is no doubt that mixed-use regeneration is also highly embraced by both public and private parties in redevelopment of waterfront areas as well.

Looking through the lens of recent trends in contemporary developments in planning and design of cities, the third trend to be dwelled upon, after property-led and mixed-use regeneration, is place-making principles in urban design which play a crucial role in creation of aesthetically pleasing environments. There is no coincidence where policies for competitive cities of the 21st century put place-making to the fore [Pierce *et. al.* 2011] such that the idea is now central to the creation of new creative knowledge-regions, targeting at representation and development of cities' distinctive characteristics, linked very much to the strategy of place-marketing [Musterd, Kovacs 2013]. Particularly under conditions where cities experience dramatic restructuring under global and local forces, it is highly accepted that a more effective approach to urban regeneration may involve making urban design central to the process of revitalizing urban areas. Within this course, place-making is one of the keys to promotion of creative patterns of use, where considerable attention is being paid to physical, cultural and social identities that define a place, support its ongoing evolution and foster sense of belongingness to place. On the other side, it is acknowledged that place-making is an inherently networked process, constituted by the socio-spatial relationships that link individuals together through a common place-frame, which makes it a part of socio-spatial political processes and networking [Pierce *et. al.* 2011: 54] as well. In terms of politics of place, place-making constitutes the essence of cooperative or conflictual ties in making

of a neighbourhood. Here, the idea of a sense of place is linked to territoriality, which is the basis for the development of distinctive social and cultural milieus [Musterd, Kovacs 2013a: 98]. Inspired by thoughts of Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte from the first times the term was coined in 1960s for design and planning of cities, place-making offers the chance to create not only inviting public spaces, but also prevent from traffic-dominated streets, little-used parks and open spaces, isolated and underperforming development projects. In fact, place-making is uttered to be more than principles, but a philosophy and a process shaping contemporary cities' central areas. The practical integration of urban design using place-making principles and urban regeneration offers the potential for development of a new civic pride as well as the marketing of a newly conceived place within a new urban landscape. Evidently, there is a shift of focus in place-making from mere physical design of distinctive environments that create a sense of place to a more complex set of factors involving place-marketing or place-branding. Recent urban policies, especially for competitive cities, focus more on promoting creative environments through redevelopment of urban settings with a distinct character and a particular feel that makes the place stand out among others, an attraction point for the new-comers, among which creative professionals emerge as the new target group. Despite the critiques brought to the term "creative class" by Florida [2002], [Peck 2005; Scott 2006], the promotion of new creative environments and 'cool city' images produced via place-making principles still attract the creative professionals [Vanolo 2008]. Since urban design is claimed to be closely linked to the politics of place-marketing [Harvey 1989], the adopted approach to the design of entrepreneurial environments, such as brownfields, shall also mind such architectural styles and forms that assert individual identity and reduce local feelings of alienation and exclusion caused by the effects of globalization. This will in turn aid in creation of such a revitalized urban economy and civic pride that may not only be seen as a physical or economic process, but also addresses to the social and cultural life of the city. Thus, when planning and design of brownfield sites or particularly port districts do not target at regeneration of these areas mainly through place-making, regaining such derelict urban areas shall imply dominance of real estate market demands where isolated components give shape to physical space. It is often argued in related literature that [Lawton *et al.* 2013; Musterd, Kovacs 2013], place-making of competitive cities should focus not on implementing elitist policies, including real-estate speculative development, gentrification and the enhancement of prestigious districts, but rather on more inclusive policies involving physical planning tailored for local conditions, taking account of distinctive local legacies and assets.

In general terms, the recent trends for development of urban environments provide a set of factors to be considered in planning and design of contemporary cities. Within this scope, regeneration of waterfront areas as the prestigious parts of city centres can be deemed as successful to the extent property and mixed-use development are balanced via urban design based on place-making principles, a process to be duly operated by public authorities and regulated by planners and urban designers.

2. Case of Izmir port district

Port city of Izmir is not unique in its intentions to thrive taking part in the global interurban competition and therefore views its waterfront as a strategic step along this road. Having lost its uniqueness and distinctiveness in terms of urban development patterns to a great extent in its recent past, Izmir struggles for gaining back its losses mainly through revitalization of its port district. The port district and its environs is also where the new city center is being erected up high, reflecting the targets for urban competitiveness of the new city-region. Yet, the case of Izmir as a competitive city is unique in the sense that the adopted regeneration schemes get ahead of planning strategies in change of port functions based mainly on mixed uses (commercial – offices – residential and tourism). Despite the planned targets, the port districts' links with maritime transport and waterborne trade in one form or another are not abandoned, even though the main assumption underlying the planning and design strategies of the new city center defined by the port was mainly dependent upon change of these links towards mainly touristic forms of development. The case is also unique in the sense that, the adopted approach does not include any comprehensive strategy to how the course of regeneration may pursue public and private partnerships and fails to stick to pre-defined planning strategies for the port-district. There have been plenty of revisions in plans, but property-led development still demands for site-specific decisions, leaving no space for any holistic design or planning. This problem manifests itself particularly in terms of conversion of brownfield sites into residential uses, which ought to create a liveable environment with all its supplementary neighbourhood facilities, but is rather confined to rapid growth of gated communities within the new city center. Recent developments in the port district of Izmir are therefore worth notice in the sense that they leave a considerable impact upon the mixed-use trends in near proximity of the port on the one hand, and district-wide residential development trends, on the other.

In understanding the current water and city relations from the perspective of property-led regeneration and urban competitiveness, the historical background in Izmir provides for a broader look into the ways of change in the so-called new face of the competitive city and its planning and design for the future. This broader look displays a city shifting from its cosmopolitan character to that of a more competitive one.

2.1. Changing faces of Izmir from a cosmopolitan to a competitive city

Following the introduction of liberalization policies after 1980, Izmir as the third largest city in Turkey shifted away from being a cosmopolitan city to a more competitive one. Uneven economic and residential development is associated with these trends. In order to highlight the urban growth of the city within which the

waterfront housing developments take and give shape, brief historical background information shall be given to highlight the existing circumstances.

In the course of history, relations between the water and the city have gone through major changes. Whereas there has been a more intimate relationship with the water in the period prior to the declaration of the Republic, this relationship owed its intimacy to the cosmopolitan port-city character of Izmir, which was further reinforced with establishment of its first Ottoman port in 1877. The Ottoman port helped the city function as the Western gate of the entire empire, attracting many merchants from Western nations to reside in the city and creating separate quarters where the English, French, Italian, Jewish, Armenian, Greek and Muslim inhabitants altogether created a cosmopolitan layout. Known as the most important city of the Ottomans in terms of foreign trade, reflected in its names as the 'Pearl of Levant', 'Capital of Levant' or the 'Petit Paris' in the 19th century, the waterfront was home to many commercial and business activities [hotels, theatres, clubs etc.] at the center and to housing with direct relations with the water along other directions from the center.

This relationship has had to cease for some time with the 1922 Fire, which dated to the end of the National Independence War and destroyed three fourths of the city. The start of the Republican Period [1923-1948] corresponded to the idea of 'erasing the past' and implied a brand new architectural understanding that found its reflections on emergence of villas built along the coast. The direct relation with the water still could support the Western style of life in the city, where for instance, the waterfront houses had sea baths of their own or where there were public sea baths. The city has kept its attractiveness in all periods though. Having a great hinterland as supported by its port characteristics, the city has attracted great numbers of population from other regions in Turkey, resulting in severe flows of migration and rapid urbanization, which has mainly been irregular. This trend has begun to prevail the Liberal Period [1948-1960], paving the way for rapid growth of squatter settlements on the skirts of the hills facing the bay. As the city was geographically stuck in between the bay and the mountains, there was no other way to get denser on the waterfront. The geographical constraints were not the only factor limiting urban growth, but other natural factors such as forestry lands also determined the urban macroform.

The establishment of the new port in 1959 has been followed by rapid development of inner-city industrialization and the added impact of the 1965 Condominium Act has encouraged destruction of historical houses, creating the 'building walls' all along the coasts surrounding the bay. The emergence of social/mass housing projects dates to this period known as the Planned Period [1960-1980]. During the Neo-liberal Period [post-1980s], the urban pattern on the waterfront consist of 'building walls' and high-rise mass housing projects for high income groups on the coast, and squatter settlements and social housing estates on the skirts of the surrounding hills. The beautification of the waterfront public areas have had a triggering impact upon emergence of residences at the center and gated communities at the peripheral waterfront

areas. The 2000s have been the times during which the urban policy targeted at a new vision for the entire city. The redevelopment debates of the Port district are set forth in parallel.

This brief historical background (Table 1) summarizes how the city has turned first from an ancient Neolithic city to a trade city of Greco-Roman times, then from a cosmopolitan city of Ottoman times, to a port city of modern times that is left at the periphery of the country, trying to deal with its major problems of irregular urbanization on the one hand, and struggling hard to gain back its identity as a regenerated port city on the other. The cosmopolitan structure of the city has been in opposition to the government policy in all times, no matter the Empire or the Republican central government, which has left the city by itself in catching up with the pace of urbanization. The first comprehensive planning effort has taken place in 1973, but was followed by partial revisions in 1978, 1989, and 1994 (Fig. 1) until the final urban region plan has been approved in 2006 and revised in 2012 (Fig. 2). In all these periods, the rear parts of the port were planned as the new city center, but the actual redevelopment of the center could not take start until 2001, when the port district was subject to an international urban design competition. There also was consistent pressure on urban waterfronts for reconstruction starting with the 1960s, until the 1980s, redevelopment in the 1980s and regeneration after the 1990s.

The city of Izmir can be deemed to consist of multiple identities which shall be guiding its future prospects. These multiple identities of the city and its newly-emerging competitive city center have new implications for the regeneration of the port district as well.

- *Identity as a gateway city:* The trading activities of the port city have facilitated its integration with the outer world in all times, giving the city a “gateway” character. The economic relations led by foreign trade in the past century has evidently been reflected upon the socio-cultural scene, creating a cosmopolitan character, but today this character changes its mode into a competitive city, where the new city center including the port district is to play a vital role.
- *Identity as a waterfront city:* Surrounding the Izmir bay, the built environment has unsuitably been characterized by a blocked waterfront, where the spatial layout consists of attached buildings creating a wall along the coast, disregarding the climatic, topographical and Mediterranean character of the city. Under such circumstances, the port district and its environs appear to offer an alternative form of mixed-use development, but also triggering the demands gated-residential development in the rear parts.
- *Identity as a Mediterranean city:* While the city suffers from loss of its natural assets (insufficiency of a green network and lack of green in residential areas), the architectural styles of the neo-liberal period reflect no distinctive characteristics of the urban geography in general. However, despite the need for new forms of Mediterranean architecture, the property-led development of the port district of-

Table 1

Major periods underlying urban growth with respect to waterfront housing and developments in Izmir

Periods	Major characteristics
Historical Periods (Neolithic – Greco-Roman, Beyliks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A city of 8500 years: the first settlement of Izmir dating back to prehistoric times, the Neolithic Period, 6000 BC. • Smyrna, a city first founded at Tepekule-Bayraklı, which was then a peninsula, at 3000BC (nine different archeological layers are documented) • Due to reasons of security, the city of Smyrna was moved from its location at Bayraklı to skirts of Mount Pagos for erection of the new Greek city during 300BC, where the wealth of Smyrnians increased. • A major city of trade during the Greco-Roman times and the Beyliks period • Distinctive geographical location always attracting invading populations (Lydians, Persians), in the course of history
Pre-Republican Period (Ottoman times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the most important city of the Ottomans in terms of foreign trade (Ottoman port built in 1877) • modernization of the city with its cosmopolitan structure • 1st nationalist architectural movement • spatial reflections of Westernization • different social groups of <i>multi-identity</i> – different districts • direct relation with the waterfront
Republican Period [1923-1948]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need to re-erect the city after 1922 Fire devastating almost three fourths of the city • structural transformations of the Republican Ideology: "erasing the past" • early Modernism of Contemporary/"Western" Izmir • brand new architectural understanding • post-war [Independence War] troubles
Liberal Period [1948-1960]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1940s: 2nd nationalist architectural movement (contemporary design with interpretation of civil architecture and use of indigenous materials and workmanship) • prismatic compositions; emphasized window frames; projections resembling the "cumba" of Ottoman architecture; rhythmic rectangular windows • 1950s: villas and "family apartments", apartments for rent • Post-1950s: international style (invitation of foreign architects including René Dange – 1925, Le Corbusier – 1948 and Bodmer – 1959) • start of accelerated urbanization and intense flows of migration • squatter settlements in peripheries • the new port was built in 1959

Planned Period [1960-1980]	rapid development of inner-city industrialization • 1960s-1970s-need for housing: "uninterrupted walls" of buildings dominating not only the waterfront, but the city's entire spatial appearance • 1965 – Condominium Act resulting in rise of population density via increase in building heights: over-density • social/mass housing projects on the peripheral cheap lands on the hills [conventional construction systems] • mass housing for higher income: commercial housing
Neo-Liberal Period [post-1980]	de-industrialization and beautification of prestigious areas and the waterfront • new populism upon urbanization [urban development exemptions, allocation of title deeds, slum reclamation, revision plans, mass housing] • urban regeneration projects & displacement • gated communities • residences at the city center • industrialized construction methods (tunnel formwork systems; steel frames; pile foundations <i>etc.</i>)

fers such densely-planned areas that the new high-rise, mixed-use architecture emerges as the new trend of living in the city center. Yet, the resultant spatial layout provides a brand new competitive look, a new skyline to the city with a completely different character, but irrespective of any emphasis on the Mediterranean.



Figure 1. The Master Plan of Izmir on scale 1/25000, 1978

Source: Metropolitan Municipality of Izmir (Fig. 1, 2).

(Dark colors: existing settlement areas; Light colors: settlement areas to be newly developed; City center at the core; Areas to be naturally preserved and non-residential, industrial areas are located at the peripheral areas).

2.2. The New Port city character: major factors shaping the waterfront developments

While the property-led regeneration programmes of derelict urban areas including port districts in most European cities are operationalized via direct public spending with indirect supports in the form of fiscal reliefs [Jones, Evans 2008], the strategy of regeneration of port districts in Turkey trialled a variety of planning measures guided by the private sector in particular. Urban regeneration policy in Turkey broadly reflects the international trends of property-led development, where more attention is being paid to private-sector investment. However, the heavy reliance on property-led development as an instrument to promote urban regeneration is evidently insensitive to the multi-dimensional nature of the needs that must be addressed. The port district regeneration experience of Izmir reflects this insensitivity to a considerable extent.

The idea of redevelopment of the port district within the broader concept of “new” central business district has taken start with the 2000s, followed by organization of the International Urban Design Idea Competition for the Port District of Izmir in 2001. To start with, the adopted vision for increasing competitiveness of the city on global scale via creating a brand new city center at the port district was indeed similar to other port district regeneration projects of many European cities going through de-industrialization. Urban design idea competition was chosen as a method to reach this targeted vision and for this reason, the boundaries were confined to the new central business since the 1970s [EgeMimarlık 2005]. After the competition, this area began to be referred to as the Third Izmir, a title given by German architect Jochen Brandi as the winner of the first prize. Third Izmir denotes the historical traces pertaining to emergence of the city first at Bayraklı where the ruins of the ancient city take place today, and secondly the settlement has moved to Mount Pagos (Kadifekale), the skirts of which is very close to the historical center of the city today. Brandi emphasized a link between these three Izmir in his design concept (Fig. 3).

Originally, the very same area was planned as the modern city center in master plan of the 1970s, but the targeted development could not take place there for decades (Fig. 1), leaving the entire area to non-residential and industrial uses dominating the port district. In line with the objective of increasing urban competitiveness via regeneration of port district, the urban design idea competition was based on the assumption that the trade port would eventually be moved to its new location at Çandarlı, within a distance of around 85 km far from Izmir. According to the scenario, following the removal of trade port activities, the remaining port space was going to be allocated to commerce as well as touristic facilities including cruise tourism. This scenario was in fact related to major problems experienced in trade port activities, such that the trade port no longer had the chance to develop further within its existing boundaries, causing a considerable shortfall in its logistics facilities. There was need for new container terminals where deep-sea vessels could moor. Additionally the shoaling problem of

the Inner Bay still continued despite its betterment via canal dredging to increase sea depth. Izmir Port also failed to cover the demand for a transit port. [Karataş 2014]. There emerged a dilemma, however, between assumptions of the competition aiming at a new vision based on regeneration and the actual uses taking place at the port district and its environs. The site was still being used for port facilities, preventing from any depiction as a derelict and vacant brownfield site to be cleaned and presented to the urban use in a much sterile context than that of a polluted land. The debates, therefore, were based on an idea that the port be converted into more public means of uses, but its current uses constituted a major binding factor against such regenerative ideas to be realized thoroughly. Yet, the total area covered by the Third Izmir amounts to 550 hectares as a considerably vast area for redevelopment (Fig. 3).

The entire regeneration scheme of the port district was based on tourism and trade facilities mainly, but residential uses were also partly included in the form of mixed-use development. The areas in proximity to the port consisted of pre-industrial buildings of architectural and historical importance, which have been planned as hotels, commerce, recreation and all sorts of cultural activities that were to support cultural tourism. [*Competition Brief* 2001]. The only existing residential area within the competition site was an ethnoscape known as the Romani district, which has been subject to heated debates on whether the community was to be gentrified, leaving their living places to touristic facilities or residences of major private companies.

After the competition, there has been an official master plan prepared in the period of 2001-2003 for the city center (Fig. 4). Interestingly, unlike many other port

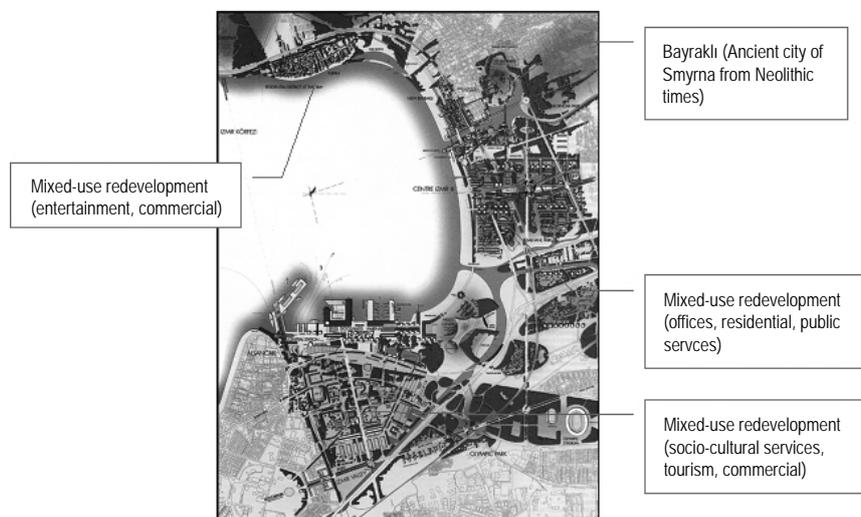


Figure 3. First Prize – Jochen Brandi project – International Urban Design Idea Competition for the Port District of Izmir, 2001

Source: EgeMimarlık, 2005, available online at [<http://egemimarlik.org/40-41/40-41-21.pdf>].

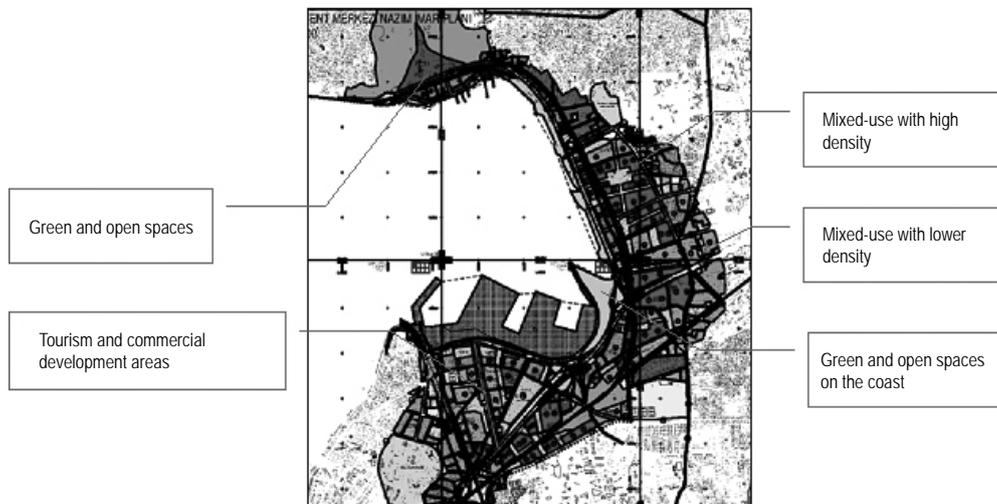


Figure 4. Master Plan on scale 1/5000 for the New City Center of Izmir, 2003

Source: Metropolitan Municipality of Izmir.

cities where the brownfield sites are regenerated holistically, the trade port was left outside the boundaries of the master plan. This was because of the major opposition that came from the Port Authority itself. At the time, the adopted privatization strategy involved transfer of operational rights, while ownership of the ports and the port assets and land remain public property. By this way, the operational rights of Izmir Port were transferred to the private sector for a period of forty-nine years more. This means that bulk cargo transportation of Izmir Port will continue and essence of the idea of holistic regeneration will evidently have to be postponed. The need for additional capacity for container transportation is shared by construction of an additional smaller port in Nemrut and another existing one in Aliğa, solving the problems of bulk cargo freight for the time being, but delaying the overall vision of the city center fast forward fifty years.

Having been approved in 2003, this master plan was remarkable for being based on an urban design project. Unfortunately, the oppositions were not over. Due to plenty of objections carried on to court by property-owners of the area, the master plan was repeatedly subject to revisions in 2005, 2006, 2007 and then finally in 2010 as the fourth revision. Consideration of the annulment actions against plans for Izmir New City Center reveals that only a small part of these actions were against the entire plan, while the majority was based on parcel-based objections against the planning decisions on lower scale [Ünverdi 2014]. As a result of absence of any collaborative planning process, where all stakeholders could have a chance to participate at some stage in planning, the disputes stemmed mainly from the fact that the property-owners were yet not committed to the city master plan they were not informed of and failed

to imagine the scope of long-term benefits that could have been achieved [Gökçen Dündar 2010].

While the Western experience in urban regeneration projects of port cities emphasize the need for negotiating agreements with the local groups and these projects are accordingly seen as symbols of successful transition to a new form of governance with focus for the development of public-private partnerships [Basset *et al.* 2002], this has not been the case in Izmir. There was resistance from not only the property-owners, but also the public institutions and non-governmental organizations including chambers of architects and planners. As mentioned afore, the main assumption of the entire regeneration scheme of Izmir's port district was dependent upon removal of the trade port to another location and be dominated by cruise tourism activities with wider impacts in the near as well as distant environment. Yet, the Port Authority postponed this target for about fifty years after, if not delayed for another fifty years again. Such ways of conflict and resistance stem from lack of any 'policy maturity' [Adams *et al.* 2010: 77], where policy problems cannot be turned into policy solutions in flowering or maturing of brownfield policies and from lack of dialogue between public actors, namely local administration and the port authority, since the focus is on the maritime activity for port representatives and on the quality of life for the city leaders [Garcia 2008]. In case of Izmir, conflict and resistance among these public actors have been the two major factors shaping the developments of the port district. Despite these circumstances however, the impacts of the master plan reached beyond its targets for changing the urban vision, particularly with respect to housing developments within and beyond the plan. It is noteworthy that, with the impact of developments for the new central business district, the trend for mixed-use was also reflected on the upper scale plans. There has been a major change in planning decisions of the regional master plan on scale 1/25,000 (Fig. 2), such that the industrial areas neighbouring the Port District at the eastern direction were all converted into mixed-use consisting of housing and commerce facilities. The results of this change in planning decisions were to change the overall image of the new city center entirely.

2.3. The impacts of the master plan on waterfront housing developments

Different modes of production in residential developments in Izmir used to consist of build-and-sell type of development, social housing (though in minority) and high-income proto-type housing estates shaping the entire residential areas of the city. In the Post District, the mixed-use development trends could not be shaped by any holistic urban regeneration project involving partnership of public and private actors, but instead, the build-and sell type of development for creation of a prestigious environment was dominated by the private sector in particular. Compounded by the added impact of the master plan for the new city center, the waterfront housing areas began to take the form

of high-rise architecture within a mixed-use environment within the district and grew uncontrollably via property-led regeneration at neighbouring districts.

After the approval of the plan in 2003 and its fourth, but final revision in 2010, the redevelopment of the port district is dramatically changing the layout and skyline of the new city center and its near environs. This change was also triggered for the neighbouring areas by the upper scale plan encouraging mixed-use in place of existing industrial areas at the eastern side. This changing face of the redevelopment area gained visibility in terms of district-specific as well as city-wide impacts of the regenerated port district on mixed-use developments including housing.

District-specific impacts on waterfront housing redevelopments

Even though the planning decisions of the new city center failed to operate a holistic regeneration scheme for the Port District, the impact of the New City Center Master Plan succeeded to change the overall image of the city at the waterfront. The trend for mixed-use high-rise architecture found its reflections in the nascent port district as part of a broader growth-oriented strategy to re-image the city in an increasingly competitive urban system. The planners proposed not only increase in building ratios as a major tool to trigger property-led development, but also re-imagining the city through mixed-use high-rise architecture (Photos 1-3).

With the intention to refashion the port landscape by facilitating mixed-use development, the vertical development of the center offers such a broad grain where the planning code gives small parcels building ratios between 3.00-3.50 as FAR (Floor Area Ratio), creating a newly-built urban pattern of new-fashion skyscrapers that meet the demands for high-profile residences and prestigious offices with great view of the Bay, yet framed with logistic facilities of the trade port. The complementary uses for commercial activities including cafes, restaurants, shops and malls are all developing on these parcels, but located separately on each.

Just similar to projects in many other waterfront European cities [such as HafenCity in Hamburg; Stefanovics 2016], the emerging readymade lifestyle marked by private consumption and domestic services as well as business activities are indeed enjoyed by middle and high class professionals to a great extent. There appears to be no problem in selling of the properties since the market values rise constantly. For example, in Ege Perla¹ a mixed-use project with its twin towers consisting of offices, residences and shopping mall, the two-thirds of all properties have been pur-

¹ The mixed-use project Ege Perla, which is being developed over 18,392 m² in the new city center of Izmir was launched Is GYO. Ege Perla comprises a shopping center with 25,000 m² GLA and 111 home and 65 home-offices in 46 and 29-story towers with a total saleable area of 30,000 m². The home and home offices, in different types and sizes ranging between 1+1 and 5+1 Executive all have gulf view. The book-building of the project started in mid-October and the pre-selling activity started on November 7, 2012 with an average price of US \$3,000 (approx. €2,355) per m². (Source: European real Estate Media news dated November 11, 2012, available online at <http://europe-re.com/ege-perla-mixed-use-project-launched-in-izmir-tr/1763>).



Photo 1. Silhouette of Izmir New City Center from the Inner Bay
Source: [https://instagram.com/izmir_gokdelenleri/].



Photo 2. Silhouette of Izmir New City Center from the Inner Bay
Source: Author's personal archive (photo 2, 3).



Photo 3. Silhouette of Izmir New City Center from the Inner Bay

chased [*Kanyon Corp.* 2018] even though the project was yet at its initial stages. It is also interesting to mention that Ege Perla is a joint project of Istanbul firms, namely Eczacıbaşı Holding's firm called Kanyon Corp. and Is GYO, both among the leading business holdings and banks of the country, revealing that the property market in the city is not confined to local, but also national business actors.

Yet, the challenge in creation of such a dynamic city center belongs to provision of housing facilities. High-rise development entailed additional problems in terms of lack of detailed analysis concerning the increased density, vehicular access, infrastructure, ground endurance, light and shadow *etc.* [Topal 2008]. However, leaving aside the ongoing debates on these problems and the new image of high-rise architecture in public opinion, the fact that this brand new center is home to a new lifestyle and living in residences requires treating the issue of planning in a foresighted way on basis of place-making. As discussed earlier, the recent trends in contemporary planning and design of cities dwell upon urban place-making as central to increasing sense of belongingness and civic pride *via* creation of aesthetically pleasing environments that support physical, cultural and social identities. Planners and designers worldwide focus on the idea of creating socio-spatial relationships linking people within a place-frame with “community in the mind”. For instance, the design principles for the New Urbanism movement constitute one which comes to the fore among all others with the idea of “neighbourhood” or a “shared sense of place” at the core of its design approach. By way of such principles, the design serves the needs of sociability, cultural activity, economic wellbeing and most prominently, engagement in sense of belongingness that have reflections in giving the city a special identity of its own.

However, the waterfront developments creating a prestigious environment of high-profile residences in case of Izmir port district lack not only human scale to create any socio-spatial networks, but also the possibility to promote diversity that fits into the essence of a mixed-use development. It can well be argued that the existing urban developments rely both on economic production as well as socio-cultural consumption of place [Zukin 1982], but high-rise architecture consisting of distant blocks with dangerous traffic flows in between evidently cannot be the tools to reach the core idea in place-making that balance the ways of production and consumption. Neighbourhood interaction and resident’s attachment to place are the two objectives that contemporary planning and design of cities emphasize, whether in development areas or areas to be re-invested at the urban cores. Real-estate capital fluctuations guide this process where urban land is perceived under the aspect of its exchange value, but it still is possible to manage urban development through planning decisions that reorient capital investment from high-rise mixed use towards more intelligent ways of erecting creative knowledge regions via urban place-making linked with place-marketing. Contrarily in case of Izmir port district, the chance of creating new urban places is limited to high-rise architecture lacking any vision for place-making as well as place-marketing.

City-wide impacts on housing developments

The planning and design measures for the port district of Izmir followed property-led urban development that changed the layout of not only the new city center, but also its immediate environs. As mentioned afore, the upper scale regional master plan also encouraged this shift in spatial development from industrial to mixed

use environments. Today, industrial districts are currently being converted into new housing areas of the city at Bornova district, at the eastern part of the Port. There is even a new name given to this part of the city, *Yeni Bornova* in Turkish, *i.e.*, New Bornova, symbolizing the emphasis on the “new” image of the district.

The results of this shift in land use are two-fold. The physical developments and concomitant intervention in property markets depart neither from any place-making strategies, as already discussed, and grow in the form of gated communities, nor are part of



Figure 5. Map of plan amendments on parcel-scale (1, 4, 5, 7, 19, 20, 21: Amendments held by the Ministry of Environment and Organization; 8, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18: Amendments held by Privatization Office; 2, 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 22, 23: Amendments held by the Metropolitan Municipality of Izmir)

1 – “Folkart Life” Housing Project; 2 – Yaşar Holding (Abandoned Industrial Premises); 3 – Şifa Hospital Allocated To University Area; 4 – Yaşar University (From Non-Residential Areas Into University Uses); 5 – Orkide Industrial Premises; 6 – Transformation From Non-Residential Into Housing And Commercial Mixed Use; 7 – Akça Holding; 8 – Public Institution Into CBD; 9 – “Folkart Incity” Housing Project; 10 – “Folkart Time” Housing Project; 11 – Kavuklar A.Ş. Tower; 12 – “Ontan Grup” Housing Project; 13 – “Avcılar” Housing Project; 14 – Villasaray Tourism Corp.; 15 – From Industrial Into Housing And Commercial Mixed Use; 16 – Alsancak Trade Port; 17 – Alsancak Cruise Port; 18 – “Mahal Bomonti Izmir” Housing Project; 19 – Abandoned Industrial Premises Into Mixed Use By Toki (Housing-Commercial-Tourism); 20 – Volley Otel; 21 – Housing Into Mixed Use (Housing – Commercial); 22 – Old Bus Station Into Mixed Use (Housing-Commercial-Tourism-Business); 23 – Zorlu Holding

Source: Chamber of City Planners in Izmir, Press Release, 2017.

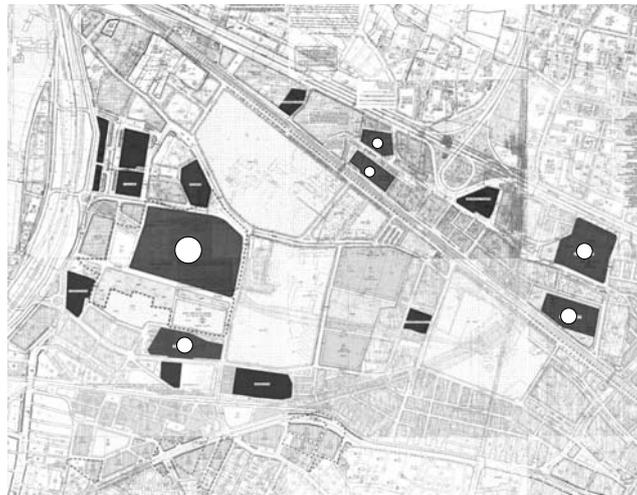


Figure 6. The scope of new housing and mixed-use projects in New Bornova District

White dotted Dark color: Mixed-Use Projects that were once Industrial Premises

Dark color Housing Projects identified as Non-Residential Areas in the Master Plan

Source: Bornova Municipality, Planning Department, February 2018.

any holistic planning strategy in Izmir. A brief study on planning amendments (Figs 5 and 6) within immediate environs of the Port district displays the extent of this problem.

There is no doubt that restructuring of formerly-industrial areas into downtown requires changes in land uses of not only the city center, but also the immediate environs' capacity for residential development. Residences are always welcome to create a lively atmosphere at the center. Yet, in giving way to business, it is not the lower-income, but higher-income households that are wanted. That appears to be the very same case in New Bornova. In this newly-developing post-industrial district, the planners as well as contractors witnessed the rising demand for prestigious housing and mixed-use development. No need to say that this has to do with the quality of life enhancements targeted as the new vision of the plan. In parallel to the vision of developing significant, high-profile and prestigious lands, the specific housing developments targeted at creation of gated communities. It is interesting however, to state that in a decaying environment which is industrial in character, the developers do not have any choice to erect "gated" environments for reasons of security, as well as quality of life and place image, since the immediate environs of their projects consist either of warehouses, manufacturing units, industrial premises or any sort of industrial uses that no upper-middle class affluence would prefer to see looking at the window of their residences. This points to the need for lack of a holistic planning approach as well.

The brief study given in Figures 5 and 6 questions the extent of how the conversion of land uses take place in absence of holistic planning operations on lower scales. Figure 5 displays the plan amendments held by three different authorities, namely the



Figure 7. The two incremental master plans prepared by MMI, but cancelled by the Court in 2017
 Source: File No. 2016/1222 Izmir Administrative Court, Expertise Report, 2017. (Crosshatched areas: Mixed-use commercial and residential; White transparent area: Master Plan for Part 1; Other areas: Master Plan for Part 2)

Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, the Privatization Administration and the Metropolitan Municipality of Izmir (MMI). All amendments are approved specifically for related parcels, meaning that there is no holistic plan prepared. Most of these projects (namely Folkart Life, Folkart Incity, Avcılar *etc.*) are sued for having been given priorities in formation of these gated environments, such that they increase the population density, but do not provide for any complementary land uses such as green infrastructure, education, health facilities *etc.* within the boundaries of the specific plan. Nevertheless, the MMI intends to provide a solution to this problem by way of preparing several disjointed master plans (Fig. 7) instead of one comprehensive one, but then there was again another problem concerning the plan boundaries. These master plans, which can be deemed as incremental in character, were again objected and carried on to court by the chambers of architects and planners, resulting in no approval, as of early 2018.

In dealing with the logical consequence of a prolonged phase of economic restructuring that continues to release former industrially occupied land for new uses, such remaking of old port areas and other obsolete industrial sites in central areas give rise to a new form of urban place for sure [Helbrecht, Dirksmeier 2012]. Land is cleared from factories, warehouses, depots *etc.* and are redeveloped into new central business districts. However, the planning approach appears to play a pivotal role within this process. In absence of any holistic planning approach, these areas may distinguish themselves as enclaves of private affluence with weak attachments of their residents to the local area. The resultant picture does not promise for any sound development of the city-wide development of housing in Izmir for the very same reason.

Conclusion

As part of wider urban entrepreneurial strategies cities employ, waterfront regeneration projects emerge as the new tools to become more proactive and creative in attracting inward investment and creating jobs to booster urban economies. Particularly when combined with the character of being a port city, these strategies offer many cities the door to a completely different vision of urban development. The cases of success in many Western cities like Barcelona, Newcastle upon Tyne or Hamburg, among many others in the long list, create epitomes of exemplary for those 'starter' cities yet in the beginning of urban waterfront regeneration. With the intention to partake in the international networks, urban regeneration processes have also been guiding the recent urban policies in Izmir as a port city as well and it has only been a decade since the first step taken as an international competition for its port district. The idea underlying the competition was based on the assumption that the port facilities were to be relocated. Considering that the planning processes following the urban design competition have had to confront many obstacles along the way, the consequent waterfront regeneration of the port district remains behind its targets. Provided that the city and the port authority have not successfully developed the necessary means of negotiation and work towards mutual improvements, as suggested by Garcia [2008: 50], the port authority privileged the efficiency of maritime activity whereas the city leaders aimed at pursuing improvements to their citizens' quality of life, but the extent of success in this aim is debatable with respect to issues of mixed-use development, place-making, formation of gated-communities and holistic planning.

These challenging issues are also influential upon housing developments within and near proximity to the Port district as well as shaping the city-wide housing trends. The housing problem of the metropolitan city is indeed a difficult task to handle. While the port character of the city has caused the city be subject to irregular urbanization and illegal housing covering the majority of the urban layout, on the one hand, it offers a solution for the city's vision to be further enhanced, on the other. Trend of

mixed-use development in relation to place-making remains a major topic to be duly and elaborately debated as an urban policy. Secondly, it should be noted that regeneration matters require commitment to the plans, which requires collaborative planning processes to be formulated in specific. In all circumstances, planning activities are bound to adopt a holistic approach, given that proliferation of gated communities, dominance of property-led growth, lack of place-making and insufficiency of complementary urban facilities in mixed-use environments may entail further problems in the near future.

The global economy and trends brought by early Modernity has often created a degree of similarity of urban forms within different geographic locations. Whether on the waterfront or not, cities have begun to lose their distinctness and uniqueness due mainly to increasing economies of scale. When combined with the factors resulting from being a port city as well as the debates on regeneration of the port district, the waterfront developments attain a much different direction. In this vein, the targeted vision of high-rise mixed-use developments emerges as a major debate to be dwelled upon in formation of new places. In fact, it can even be argued that this conflicts with the idea of offering distinctive regenerated environments to be presented in the global interurban competition. There emerge certain parameters in shaping the urban form on the waterfront: property ownership, urban economy, rapid rise of population and the adaptation to global trends in terms of place-making and urban marketing can be named among such. When perceived from a historical point of view, the new housing developments on the waterfront in Izmir appears to be sheltering cases that intend to break the past trends in housing, yet with more emphasis on prestige in marketing terms. Izmir has a long road to take along the route of its new vision as a contemporary regenerated port city, which renders it as crucial to foster comprehensive strategies to deal with its critical issues of regeneration.

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