Viewpoint

Global transformations versus local dynamics in Istanbul
Planning in a fragmented metropolis

Feyzan Erkip

Bilkent University, Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture, 06533, Ankara, Turkey

Istanbul, as the greatest metropolis of Turkey and one of the great cities of the world, has been rapidly transforming in recent years. This paper analyzes various aspects of this transformation to lead to an understanding of an appropriate strategy for metropolitan governance. Recent politicial developments indicate an apparent fragmentation of Istanbul citizens into segments with different expectations and life-styles that make new strategies of governance urgent and vital, yet harder. Istanbul is an arena waiting for the invasion of different citizen groups with different ethnic, religious and communal backgrounds. Although Turkish urban policy has never been welfare-oriented, market and outward orientation has never been so dominant. Policy issues seem to help the articulation with the world economy and to make Istanbul more attractive for foreign capital. Urban politics and government cover only a limited area of urban dynamics in Istanbul. A new approach to governance requires a strategic change in the state of mind of elected municipal officials towards the integration of various communities into governing practices, regardless of their bases of formation. Recent developments give clues about the governance potential in Turkish metropolises. Istanbul, with its urgent problems, may constitute a case study for other cities in Turkey. © 2000 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved

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Introduction

Istanbul, as the greatest metropolis of Turkey and one of the great cities of the world, has been rapidly transforming in recent years. The transformation has its roots in the historical and cultural dominance of Istanbul over the rest of the country. Throughout Turkish history, Istanbul's economic, cultural and societal leadership has had an extensive impact on the whole country. However, the recent transformation has partly stemmed from the globalization tendencies, which influence developing countries as well as the most developed ones.

In this study, various aspects of this transformation are going to be analyzed to lead to an understanding of an appropriate strategy for metropolitan governance. As indicated in an earlier study (Erkip, 1997a), government strategies must cope with the ever growing problems of metropolitan Istanbul. Among these, unemployment, housing problem, inequality and the problems of social justice and redistribution could be stated. Recent political developments indicate an apparent fragmentation of Istanbul citizens into segments with different expectations and life-styles that make the new strategies of governance urgent and vital, yet harder. However, local characteristics and dynamics of Istanbul need to be analyzed further as they may help to solve such critical problems. Local government administration is prone to political influences of the state and various power groups and needs to be reestablished according to the changing and varying needs of Istanbul's population. Global influences may support or distort the direction of metropolitan governance in Istanbul.

Economic restructuring in Istanbul

Beginning from the 1980s, Turkey has been pursuing a market-oriented and outward-looking growth strategy, which is a fundamental shift from the previous protectionist, import-substitution growth strategy. The belief behind this shift was that the country's development was becoming severely constrained by the inefficiencies of the domestic economy. With this belief, the policy-makers of the post-1980 period introduced a policy framework encouraging new developments in the economic environment. The impacts of this framework can be observed in various sectors of the economy and in the economic structure itself. A positive approach to foreign capital, growth and variety of consumer goods, and restructuring the retail industry are important (for a thorough analysis of the transformation in retail industry, see Tokatlí and Boyací, 1998). As a result of this shift, there was a dramatic increase in the number of branches of multinational companies and in the number of partnerships of foreign firms with Turkish corporations. Recent research (Tokatlí and Erkip, 1998) on foreign investment in producer services in Turkey indicated that 95% of the producer service firms receiving foreign capital were established after 1984 and almost 75% of them were located in Istanbul.

Before 1980, manufacturing was the main investment area of foreign capital, whereas the service sector attracted foreign investment in increasing amounts after that date due to the above mentioned structural changes in the Turkish economy. The service sector enormously increased its share in the economy and 81% of foreign investment went to services in 1996 (Foreign Investment Directorate, 1996). This change reflects the tendency of both domestic and foreign investors to invest in low-productivity sectors. As expected, foreign investors preferred to invest in non-manufacturing areas such as tourism and producer services (consultancy, banking and insurance). Non-banking financial services and information services are the other favourite investment areas. Price Waterhouse, Arthur Andersen, Cooper and Lybrand, Arthur Young, Zet-Nielsen

are amongst the most recognizable firms investing in producer services in Turkey (Tokatlí and Erkip, 1998). Commercial activities which are supported by globalizing consumption patterns, also attracted corporate and foreign capital at the expense of a number of losers among small retailers, and increasing social inequality among citizens (Tokatlí and Boyací, 1999).

This development in favor of service sectors is consistent with the decrease in manufacturing investment (Sönmez, 1996; Aksoy, 1996). Consequences of this shift from manufacturing to service sectors are twofold; (1) it serves as a basis for the integration with the world economy, (2) it creates a new employee group as a high-paid, high-educated professional segment of the population that can also serve as a bridge between the global and local values and lifestyles. Although the value produced by manufacturing decreases, the employment rate has been quite stable (it decreased from 33.6% in 1980 to 32.8% in 1990) indicating a serious decrease in the share of wage-earners in manufacturing (Aksoy, 1996). This decrease in real income has been deepened by the inequality caused by newly emerged global life-styles of service sector employees as indicated by Sassen (1998). The income distribution trend indicates that the share of all quintiles except the highest has been decreasing (see Table 1 for a comparison between Istanbul and other biggest metropolises of Turkey in this respect).

The flourishing sector in Istanbul's economy is the service sector, including services such as tourism, banking and finance, consulting and other business services, except the surviving textile industry as the primary force of manufacturing. This is also reflected in urban land use where the city center has been occupied mostly by producer services in recent years (Berköz, 1998). Industry has left the urban core since 1980s due to high land prices and the state incentives given to the adjacent cities to decentralize industry in Istanbul. All these changes motivated the fragmentation of population within the borders of the city. Middle and upper income groups are attracted by suburban development following global examples, although Istanbul has a unique character with historical and

cultural inheritance in the urban core. However, due to the transformation in the economy and consequent land-use, most of the popular residential neighborhoods with historic and authentic characteristics are prone to the invasion of non-residential use, as in the case of Eminönü where a "...mix of development (which) has created a lively and even pleasantly-congested urban environment of business, trade, tourism and culture, be that at the expense of authentic community life" (Akpínar *et al.*, 1998) (see Table 2 as an example of mix land use in a central district and Fig. 1 for the city map illustrating central and peripheral districts).

Previously, the housing demand of middle and upper income groups was met by independent contractors who were small in scale and weak in capital. Thanks to the state supporting large corporations that have been trying to cope with decreasing profits in manufacturing, housing investments turned out to be the most profitable area of investment. Higher profit rates are sustained by public land invaded by corporations, almost in the same manner that squatters did once. The only difference is in the style of consent of the state, which ignores the invasion in both cases, yet provides infrastructure and other urban services more willingly this time. After the land is sold to the firms at lower prices, municipal authorities undertake the development of land. The newly emerging conflicts of interest between squatters and large construction firms force the state to choose the side of the latter (Buğra, 1998). The squatters have also been transforming as being increasingly built by contractors instead of the owners themselves. Data indicate that both the land and the squatters have been extensively commercialized. More than 75% of the land is bought from the previous owners and again 75% of dwellings are either bought (25%) or contracted (50%) in the squatter settlements in Istanbul (SPO, 1991). Erder's (1996) findings also support the differentiation of landowner, builder and user in squatter areas. Thus, both formal and informal housing investments turned out to be the parts of an "immoral economy of housing" which are determined by "reciprocity relations" between state

Table 1 Income distribution in the metropolitan cities

	Istanbul		Ankara		Izmir	
Years	1986	1994	1986	1994	1986	1994
Income quintiles						
I	4.6	4.2	5.7	6.3	5.9	6.5
II	7.7	6.7	20.0	10.6	9.3	10.3
III	11.9	9.9	14.4	15.3	12.8	14.6
IV	18.2	15.1	22.0	21.8	17.8	21.0
V	57.6	64.1	47.9	46.0	54.2	47.6

Source: Sönmez (1996); SIS (1998)

Table 2 Distribution of predominant activities in the traditional center (Eminönü)

Activity	Area (ha)	[%]
Trade	81.3	17.10
Residential	69.6	14.65
Institutional – administrative	66.7	13.53
Parks – sports	55.4	11.68
Education	29.2	6.16
Religious	18.5	3.90
Workshops	16.3	3.48
Open space	12.1	2.54
Offices	9.0	1.89
Storage	7.9	1.66
Hotels	3.3	0.70
Health	1.6	0.32
Total	474.1	100.0

Source: Akpınar et al. (1998)

and various power groups (Buğra, 1998).

Following the presentation of economic developments that focuses on the supply-side, social and cultural transformations should be considered to complete the framework. It is not surprising that this aspect is dominated by extensive consumerism due to global influences, despite the local forces intervening them.

Social and cultural transformations

The housing market of Istanbul is the most important indicator of social aspirations of its citizens. Until
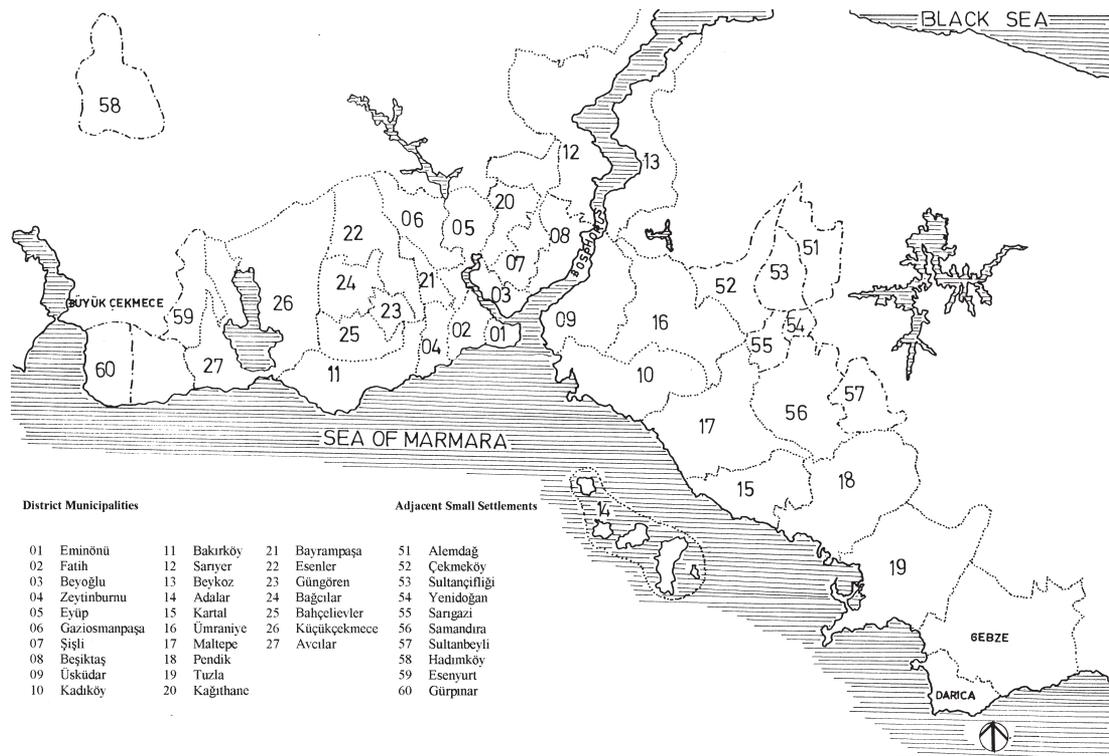

Figure 1 District map of Istanbul

recently, an apartment with a Bosphorus view was sufficient to satisfy most high-paid urban professionals (Öncü, 1997). Recent developments caused by the changing economic structure and global influences have created a new metropolitan life-style of middle and upper income groups, which has resulted in a demand for luxurious suburban houses with cultural connotations. "Californian villas" are sold easily at incredibly high prices—over $1 million—with a demand surpassing the supply (Erkip, 1999). This process reminds us the situation in the US in 1950s when dwellings were marketed with French ads indicating the taste of a new élite (Schor, 1998). Today's housing market of Istanbul aims at selling distinctive taste in a similar way (Erkip, 1999).

Considering the new consumption patterns and social aspirations, private universities, shopping malls and hotels have also attracted the investors as the most profitable areas. These developments are supported by political choices of the state through the provision of public land in most cases. Thus, efforts devoted to the globalization of Istanbul have gone far beyond the consumption of Coca-Cola and McDonaldization. However, there has been an ongoing debate on the globalization of Istanbul concerning the advantages and disadvantages for the local economy and culture (Keyder and Öncü, 1993; Aksoy and Robins, 1993; Köksal, 1993).

Local conditions always intrude. Cultural events such as International Music Festival, International Film Festival, International Theatre Festival play their role in reflecting the distinctive taste of a global élite, whereas local appears in the themes like "from Mehter—an authentic Turkish theme—to Mozart" as recently used by a concert organization. The most recent Metallica Concert attracted 30 000 people and police forces took the same security precautions as they did to control the fans of a local arabesque singer. Regardless of being global or local, the state or market mechanism react more or less similarly both in the case of luxurious housing vs squatter and Metallica vs an arabesque singer. This indicates an interesting controversy between low and high-income citizens

or low and high-culture, even though these categories do not always overlap.

In this process, it is getting clear that the complexity and diversity of Istanbul is far beyond the imagination of local government authorities. Traditional religious and ethnic segments of the population such as Christians, Jews, Kurds, Alevis have either been diminishing in number and variety or occupying only a few neighborhoods (Somersan, 1997). Istanbul turns out to be an arena waiting for the invasion of different citizen groups with different ethnic, religious and communal background. The recent municipal election results indicate that the political choices spatially overlap with formal/informal neighborhoods in a persistent way. Greater and district municipalities are shared between political parties with different ideologies and policies[1] (Sönmez, 1999). However, it is interesting to note that the "global Istanbul" is a shared ideal of all political parties ranging from social democrats to right-wings with religious tendencies. Even the ones which oppose globalization of Istanbul—former Welfare Party (Refah Partisi)—accepted that Istanbul should attract foreign capital from the Middle East, the Balkans and Turkic Republics instead of integration with Western capital. All political parties are quite aware of the fact that Istanbul has already been fragmented in an irreversible manner and needs managerial and financial strategies to survive (Bora, 1997). Yet, none of them seem to have an understanding and proposal for the fragmented structure and inequalities. The incapabilities of local governments lie in the traditional role of local government in national politics. Recent developments indicate that local dynamics of various citizen groups—increasingly turning to be communities—guide the patterns of transformation in Istanbul. Globalization matters to the extent of these diversities, since the local government is not capable of

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[1]However, the dominance of FP (religious right-wing party) over municipalities has also been persistent. In addition to the greater municipality, mayors of 18 districts were of FP candidates. It is not a coincidence that these districts are at the lower ranks of development and education levels.

providing the requirements of global capital as well.

Existing structure and problems of local government in metropolitan cities

In Turkey, metropolitan government structure has been a two-tier system with greater and district municipalities since 1984. This structure was proposed as a decentralization effort, together with a substantial budget increase. Although it seemed to be a managerial effort to provide services more efficiently, the performance has been disappointing as the service responsibilities were shared between greater and district municipalities on the basis of service size, rather than the characteristics of the services and the citizens. This aspect was discussed in an earlier study (Erkip, 1997b). The impact of decentralization on the representation of citizen groups at local government level however, was and is not a concern despite the changes in legal and organizational structures that caused such expectations. When controlling power over land development and use was transferred to greater and district municipalities, this change was expected to give way to the participation of planning professionals at the local level. Now, it is clear that the new distribution of power between central and local governments made urban land more available for big construction companies instead of squatters.

Although Turkish urban policy has never been welfare oriented, market and outward orientation has never been so dominant. Urban politics and government cover only a limited area of urban dynamics in Istanbul. The city is divided between formal and informal settlements occupied by diverse economic, social and cultural groups. (Köksal, 1993) The privatization of urban service provision made the situation even worse for poor settlements. Formal urban policy of local government is a mix of different models with different policy objectives and ideological standpoints as a result of incompatible urban problems and priorities. Another source of "ungovernability" may be the "conflict over values and objectives within the city administration" (Pierre, 1999) which is valid

for the Istanbul case as the elected officials of metropolitan and district municipalities reflect different political choices of citizens occupying various jurisdictions. It seems that the central decisions of the state count more than the local government even for the formal sector. Local governments failed to transform their role from providing urban services that they can not cope with "to urban management (incorporating the private sector's strengths) to the urban governance phase which acknowledges the community sector's role" and they certainly could not "address the question of which groups bear the sacrifices in order to achieve the growth associated with structural adjustment programs" (Harpham and Boateng, 1997). This transformation requires responsive local authorities, which can learn from their experiences with different citizen groups.

The problem of governance: dealing with a fragmented metropolis

The problem of social justice as a consequence of the above-mentioned structural changes, has already been discussed in an earlier study by the author (Erkip, 1997a). As far as the issue of social justice is concerned, global influences have caused greater inequalities among citizens as uneven income distribution is now accompanied by the vigorous consumption of upper income groups. Exhaustive consumption of globally promoted goods and life-styles increases social segregation. Here, it will be sufficient to note that the existing inequalities among the citizen groups have been sharpening in recent years and are still ignored by the state and local authorities. Main policy issue seems to help the articulation with the world economy and to make Istanbul more attractive for foreign capital. As stated by Cox (1995), "local economic development policies to attract business in a competitive environment, are likely to sustain and even support the inequalities in the distribution of benefits. Power relations are expected to redistribute the benefits in an increasingly uneven way". This seems to be the case for Istanbul. A broad segment

of Istanbul's population has been left out of the process of articulation (Ercan, 1996). Within this frame, lower income groups, women, children and elderly have been increasingly participating in the work force as a consequence of insufficient household income. It is not surprising that the lower income quintiles and other sources of cheap labor constitute an important part of the attractiveness of Istanbul for foreign capital as some global tendencies (such as widely discussed Nike and Benetton cases) indicated.

The inequalities in the economic and social processes are also reflected in the locational choice of citizen groups. Within the limits of empirical data on spatial distribution of population, one can conclude that a fragmented structure dominates the map of Istanbul (see Fig. 1). Although there is nothing new in the separation of higher and lower income neighborhoods, recent buffers appear between these two groups occupied by middle-income groups (Güvenç and I<a). A recent research (Özbay, 1999) on the characteristics of district populations indicate that certain districts—located mostly in the city center and the seaside—have attracted the higher levels of citizen groups—i.e. education level—whereas some others—peripheral ones as expected— have been occupied by the newcomers with lower income and education (see Table 3). Their political choices through recent election results also indicate the segregation[2] (Sönmez, 1999). The tension created by a social and cultural exclusion is another important problem. Gated communities with security-guards have been becoming usual scenes in Istanbul. An interesting interpretation of locational choice by citizens is that income level is the dominant factor for upper income groups to create a life-style with new consumption patterns (Güvenç and Işık). Squatters which were previously referred to as poor, illegal settlements

[2]Sönmez (1999) points out that central parties have been losing their dominance in Istanbul after 1995 elections and leaving their place to central left and right-wing parties. This comment that stems from the last (1999) election results is very coherent with the tendency of segregation and polarization of citizens (see Table 3).

in a more neutral and technical terminology, now invoke feelings of "otherness" and "social disorder" (Aksoy and Robins, 1996). However, there are clues that social ties—dominantly community and religion—are more important for lower income groups. Erder's research (Erder, 1996) on a squatter settlement indicated that most of the squatters do not approve the construction of new squatters in their district and they do not see themselves as squatters. Commercialization of squatters created a group of tenants that is about 40% in certain neighbourhoods. Almost all groups state that they do not like to have poor people in their neighbourhood. Other research by the same author (Erder, 1997) on a heterogeneous district in terms of formal and informal settlements, indicated the tension between them. It also indicated that the reason of diversity might be of ethnic and religious background, as well as citizenship—being from the same region or the city before coming to Istanbul. Their relations with public institutions and local governments are totally different. This difference constitutes the core of the local forces and affects global ones, as well as the governance of Istanbul. Urban governance, covering "the notion of civil society, which can be defined as the public life of individuals and institutions outside the control of the state" (Harpham and Boateng, 1997) seems to be the only way out from the limited scope of local governments.

Conclusion

Recent developments give clues about the governance potential in Turkish metropolises. Istanbul, with its urgent problems, may constitute a valuable case for other cities in Turkey. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as the representatives of relatively organized citizen groups flourished and have been activated by the negative conditions of metropolitan life and failure of local governments to cope with them (in Istanbul there were more than 10 000 NGOs in 1997)[3] (Gönel, 1998).

[3]As expected, the increasing number of NGOs has initiated a debate on the definition and functions of NGOs (TETTV, 1998; Birikim, 2000). Their contribution to rescue efforts and aid campaigns after the

Table 3 Some indicators of segregation in Istanbul districts

Districts[a]	Population (1997)	Rate of population increase (1990–1997) (%)	Development index[b]	Education level of incoming population (%)[c]	Results of the last election (1999) (%)[d]		
					Central Left	Central	Right
Central districts							
Beşiktaş	202 783	0.765	2.384	43.1	40.7	25.6	9.5
Bakurköy +	1 523 310	1.957	2.194	32.0	37.6	29.8	10.4
Kadýköy	699 379	1.084	2.070	42.9	39.4	22.1	15.1
Şişli	257 049	0.370	1.737	33.6	36.6	21.2	15.9
Eminönü	65 246	− 3.514	1.727	17.1	18.1	15.8	24.3
Beyoğlu	231 826	0.175	1.546	20.4	28.3	15.1	26.3
Fatih	432 590	− 0.954	1.483	23.5	27.1	19.3	27.3
Peripheral districts							
Beykoz	193 067	2.350	1.570	12.9	27.0	21.1	28.2
Kartal +	842 646	4.579	1.538	18.1	34.2	13.2	27.1
Ümraniye	498 952	7.208	1.388	19.2	27.7	12.8	31.2
Pendik +	433 734	5.475	1.273	12.9	30.8	12.4	32.3
Gaziosmanpaşa	649 648	7.156	1.182	7.9	31.0	14.6	33.0
Kağuthane	317 238	2.354	1.122	12.2	28.2	14.8	30.0
Zeytinburnu	228 786	4.610	1.000	13.3	28.6	17.4	25.8

[a]The districts indicated with + , was divided into new districts after 1990 census. 1990 district borders are taken as the basis for the calculation of 1997 populations and rate of population increase for these three districts.[b]This index was calculated by SIS (State Institute of Statistics) in 1995 and is considered as a more elaborate indicator than GDP, since it is based upon a weighted average of household income distribution. The development index takes values in between 1 and 3; 1 indicating the least and 3 indicating the most developed level.[c]The percentage of population with high school and higher education.[d]These are the groups of political parties that collected the majority of the votes and are influential on national and city politics. **Source**: compiled from SIS (2000); Özbay (1999); Sönmez (1999).

Their demand for a broader participation in local matters may well be utilized to support communication between local institutions and citizen groups. Imrie and Thomas (1995) claim that "those cities which are socially and economically heterogeneous are more likely to be politically active". Istanbul generously satisfies the diversity condition of population to be politically active and there has appeared limited, yet promising activities of organized citizen groups.

However, representation of unorganized citizen groups is even more important in terms of the conflicts and tension created between them and the organized groups. The most dominant demand of squatters is being a part of

the urban system and their first efforts are directed towards this aim. The tension that begins between relatively older and better-organized parts of the squatter districts and newly added and less or unorganized groups is also supported by ethnic, religious and economic differences. Thus, the process can be seen as a continuous struggle of different groups of squatters at different levels of integration with urban life. Data by limited empirical research (Erder, 1996, 1997; Ayata, 1991) indicate that there are different strategies according to the channels open to citizen groups. Communal interests may be defended in various ways, permitting small communities to see broader public interests such as connecting to urban infrastructure and transportation system prior to community interests (Ayata, 1991). It seems that an older institution "muhtarlik"—(muhtar is an elected official in villages and neighbourhoods in the city) still undertakes an important responsibility, despite the limited jurisdiction in the cities with only bureaucratic routines. Although, this institution is not defined as a part of the local administration in the cities, it serves as the mediator between citi-

zens, and municipal and state administrations. In addition to carrying out daily routines, they also serve as the mediators in the conflicts among local groups (Erder, 1996). It should be noted that squatters use this institution according to their level of development and integration to the city as their demands concentrate on basic infrastructure that has been left out the reach of metropolitan municipalities in recent years. Cultural and educational demands are to be satisfied by the neighbourhoods themselves that have to be organized as informal communities on ethnic and religious bases. This tendency has a threatening potential to increase tension even further as one of their dominant motives is the controversy between the community and the "others". The existing situation of degrading squatters as "others" in the formal urban structure may be a rough categorization when various others are considered. Yet, the condition of diversity can not be a positive aspect of Turkish cities unless awareness for the need of a structural change in metropolitan administration emerges. Many countries feel the need for "strategic changes and organizational reorien-

major earthquake in August 1999 also helped them to gain popularity and indicated the importance of NGOs in such emergency situations that require cooperation between state and civil society. Recently, the need for cooperation with NGOs is also pointed out by state officials. The role of NGOs in national and local politics is on the agenda in many countries due to various problems caused by globalization and its impacts. The popularity of NGOs could be used to learn from their experiences with the state and local governments.

tations" in their local government system with substantially different reasons (see for instance, Ben-Elia, 1996). Unfortunately, there are no such clues in the arena of urban politics in Turkey. This needs to have a different understanding of communal interests and to initiate redistributive policies to protect unorganized or informally organized groups. As Buğra (1998) states, however, "it seems highly doubtful that a formal, impersonal process of redistribution aimed at the protection of communal interest can smoothly emerge out of the historical pattern of state redistributive practices in the country". This is the most problematic issue against the reorientation and reorganization of urban governments in Turkey, since they behave as the part of the reciprocal relations of state. A new approach to governance requires a strategic change in the state of mind of elected municipal officials towards the integration of various communities into governing practices, regardless of their bases of formation. Practical problems, such as the appropriate scale for a more representative and participative local administration, can be solved following practices of other countries with specific reference to Turkish situation. It is apparent that the scale of district municipalities is far from giving way to citizen participation (see Table 3 for the population of selected districts). Although some districts were divided to form new municipal districts after 1990, most of the districts' population is still too high to support citizen participation either through NGOs or informal communities. The size of the districts should be the further focus of concern to be able to discuss strategies for urban governance in Turkey.

As a conclusion, it has appeared that the problem with urban governments lies in political and ideological concerns rather than solely economics. Turkish metropolitan cities, particularly Istanbul, require an understanding of governance to deal with the complex and diversified needs of citizens. Local governments in their existing state can not respond to the citizen groups with incompatible urban identities. The period under the influence of global trends has observed the supportive role of informal ties and organizations formed by citizen groups that lost contact with urban governments. It is time—if not late—to consider the potential of local communities in urban governance to deal with social inequalities and future threats which may be caused by them.

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