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Description / Background context:

The convention and congress organization business grew into new dimensions, as a globally operating sector, emancipating from common cultural tourism. Expanding classical cultural tourism opera-
tions to the Marmaray is the most ambitious infrastructure project in Istanbul since the Olympic stadium.

Flagship Project: Marmaray

Marmaray is the most ambitious infrastructure project in Istanbul since its growth into megapolitan size. The mobility strategy in the decades of the growth-into-megapolis was based on the question: How can we enclose more land in order to settle more population? and the answer, „per highways“. This irrational strategy created an unsustainable mo-
del of urbanization. As distances grew, the times spent on commuting became unbearable. The urban experience of most citizens got limited to commuting or even immobility, the urban experience and hence the public life fell apart, got highly fragmented. This is most likely the major life quality deficiency Istanbulians, hindering Istanbul attracting, among others, more International headquarters.

The construction of a 76 kms long metropolitan railroad linking the 2 regions via an integrated sub-bosphorus tunnel and the largest in

ternational in Europe (1.5 mio passengers/day in Yenikapı 2004), and is likely to swallow 2.5 bio euros, till its opening in 2012/13, mainly invested by Japanese International Cooperation Bank and German in-
vestment banks.

As provamy has a direct effect on socialization, Marmaray is likely to
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During the Olympic Games, at the

Hidirellez is celebrated with wishes for the new year

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Successfull birth of urban resistance movements

Mayoral Dalan planned in 1980s to extend the Central Business district towards Taksim square, bulldozing existing structures and rebuilding on the

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ISTANBUL

STRUGGLING TO PAVE THE ROAD TO IMPLEMENT METROPOLITAN MAINSTREAM POLICIES WITHIN THE NEW GREATER CENTER - WHILE CONTINUING WITH INDUSTRIAL GROWTH AND INFORMALITY AT THE METROPOLITAN PERIPHERY

Istanbul caught up with the NMM agenda since late 80’s, which requires a de-industrialized historical / geographical centre as a precondition. In local context, this includes cleansing informality, poverty, pollution and degradation from the centre. These had originally come ‘as default’ with that second wave industrialization at the periphery (of central economies) after WW II. However, the contradictorily will to continue industrialization coexisted with NMM, The migration of low skilled labour force and rapid urbanization were continued and Istanbul metropolitan area grew simultaneously to a considerable size exceeding 10 millions: Such circumstances make the efforts to establish policies of NMM appear both Sisyphus-like and at the same time explain the rather harsh methods implementing them.

Popular resistance movements, as well as the fragmented state power and the ruthless competition among capital fractions hindered smooth and quick privatizations. Most tenders had to be repeated due to rumours of corruption and conspiracy as processes are not transparent, and re-use concepts, unclear to public.

The big, corporate capital discovered the production of the urban as the major tool for capital accumulation and became the main actor in the city. It adjusted to globalization quickly and was eager to cope with the new metropolitan mainstream. However the state with its antiquated culture could not catch up; stops, failures, misinvestments, financial, architectural and artistic scandals abounded, even in the field of its intended flagship projects. Hence the cityscape is visibly dominated by symbolic products of independent capital investments. Vast geographies were gentrified, still they remained rather limited in greater metropolitan scale.

A greater building stock was stigmatized as ungen-tri able behind a severe mental threshold, which evoked state led bulk gentrification with forced re-settlements. This is obviously the part of the state side, according to a division of labour with capital. Big PR tools like European Capital of Culture 2010 were instrumentalized to justify expulsion policies. During 2010, Istanbul will most likely be listed by UNESCO at its Sao Paolo Conference as “World heritage under threat”.

Most successful in terms of new metropoliten mainstream were originally low pro- le projects, that be-gun slow, and linked well rooted cultural capital with resources of rather marginal investors, like Santez istanbul or the Hidirellez feast.

The violent urban transformation is best visible at vast bulldozed industrial areas on urban waterfronts, and at the new central finance and business district alongside the Büyükder axis with its symbolic skyline of skyscrapers. Between this and the historical political center on the peninsula, which became the central tourism business district, a “corridor of centralities” emerged, that contains central areas for congress business, cultural industries, pilgrimage industries, and for symbolic and political presence. A very high value real estate geography emerged between the corridor and the bosphorus coast.

Geographies of Centrality:

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