



# **A Recipe for Conflict in the Historic Environment of Istanbul: The Case of Tarlabasi**

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## **Abstract**

This paper aims to examine the processes of gentrification from a somewhat different point of view. It focuses on ‘renovation’ and ‘regeneration projects’, as well as the gentrification concept with regard to urban policies that have particularly enriched the holders of capital in the historic neighbourhoods of Istanbul. Gentrification, happening alongside with renovation and regeneration, reveals significant problems in the social structure of the city such as displacement, social polarization, social inequality and damage to the historical environment. This paper contributes to the expansion of the understanding of gentrification concept with a case study that is outside the scope of ‘usual suspects’, while theorizing the role of the Turkish state during urban transformation processes through the everyday struggles and conflicts that unfold on the ground.

## **Keywords**

State-led gentrification; urban regeneration; displacement; global South; social inequality; urban renovation

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## Introduction

Gentrification studies are dominated by theorizations and conceptualizations from Western European and North American perspectives (Lees, 2012, 2014). The term ‘gentrification’ was coined in London by sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964 and has been borrowed in discussions of this concept ever since (Smith, 2002; Atkinson and Bridge, 2005). However, more recently, gentrification scholars have begun to critique the idea of applying this Western concept to the global East and South (Lees, Shin and Lopez-Morales, 2015,2016; Ley and Teo, 2014).

Istanbul can be situated differently in this debate, for it sits awkwardly between East (Asia) and West (Europe), and indeed, can also be categorized as a Middle Eastern city. Gentrification research in Turkey started relatively early in comparison to other non-Euro-American studies, in the early 1980s, when it focused on historical neighbourhoods in central Istanbul (Islam and Sakizlioglu, 2015; Islam, 2005). Gentrification was led by the private housing markets and seemed to share many of the same features of pioneer (classic or first wave) gentrification with Euro-America. However, over the last 15 years or so, processes of state-led gentrification have emerged, in the guise of massive urban regeneration and renewal projects facilitated by the state. These are displacing very marginal and working class people from now valuable land in Istanbul and refashioning these areas for the use of middle and upper classes. Such projects seem to have more in common with counterparts in the global South (Shin, 2009a; Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010) than those of the global North (though there is state-led gentrification happening in the global North, too), including displacement by the state, pushing low-income residents to the periphery (Wu, 2004; Shin, 2008), and making the land market ready for gentrification (cr. Lopez-Morales, 2011).

This paper expands our understanding of gentrification with a case study outside the scope of what Lees et al. (2015: 2) call ‘usual suspects’. At the same time, this study contributes to re-theorizing the role of the Turkish state during the state-led gentrification of a historical neighbourhood that includes many social actors, their tactics, the strategies and conflicts between them.

Using a critical realist approach, I examine state-led gentrification and what that means for the concept in the global South and North. The structural causes explored are social-economic change, ethnic cleansing, and the state’s desire to ‘upgrade’ certain neighbourhoods economically. Following this, I discuss social and economic changes in Turkey, which are part of structures, and gentrification in Istanbul following from them. I then discuss gentrification processes in Tarlabasi since the early 2000s in order to understand: (i) interventions by the state; (ii) organisations operating in these processes: and (iii) forms of resistance, which is part of the agency, against the socio-spatial segregation created by ‘renewal’ using a discussion of the interviews I conducted in the neighbourhood. I conclude the paper with reflections on the socio-political effects of the Project, such as the

representation of the people of Tarlabasi, and how this became a source of conflict and starting point for resistance.

### **State-led Gentrification**

Gentrification – the transformation of an area from working class to middle-class - is a popular topic of urban inquiry (Lees et al., 2008). Since the 1960s, there has been extensive analysis in gentrification in the global North (see Smith, 1977, 1996; Beauregard, 1984; Lees and Butler, 2006; Paton, 2014; Ley, 2003; Lees et al., 2008). From the 1960s to the 1980s, gentrification in world cities took place mostly through the private housing market, which is now usually referred to as ‘classical gentrification’ (see Davidson, 2008; Lees et al., 2008). This arises from some households’ willingness to pay for housing in certain areas that were previously ‘undesirable’. The second type is state-led gentrification, which I define as gentrification that results from state-led urban ‘renovation’ or ‘regeneration’ projects. It may lead to similar effects to those of market-led gentrification, such as displacement, social polarization and damage to the historical environment; however, in the case of state-led, these effects are experienced more rapidly and in a more brutal fashion (Can, 2016).

Local and district level governments are important in this, because it is local urban policies – besides global economic flows and national policies – that can determine whether an area with a considerable ‘rent gap’ will be gentrified or not (Jelinek, 2011). Rent gap theory (Smith (1979) argues that with time, development of urban land and expansion creates a tension between ‘capitalized ground rent’, the economic return from the rights to use land with its present use, and ‘potential ground rent’, the return that could be earned if the land were put to its ‘optimal highest use’ (highest rent). When the gap between potential and capitalized ground rent increases, pressure for land use change also increases: residential gentrification is one way of realising the value created by a rent gap (Smith, 1979; 1996).

However, rent gap theory was heavily criticised during the 1980s and 1990s for not examining demand aspect of gentrification (Hamnett, 1984; Paton, 2014), although, as pointed out by some scholars (see Slater, 2015; Lees, Shin and Lopez-Morales, 2016), ‘it was never designed to do so’ (Slater, 2015, p. 121). The rising price of land and buildings in working class inner-city areas identified by rent-gap theory cannot be understood without theorising the demand for housing in those areas: the price of land is ‘fictitious’ in that its cost of production is zero, and its value depends wholly on the money-demand for it. This demand comes mainly from professional middle class individuals and households who do not wish to live in ‘boring’ and remote suburban locations, and express a preference for neighbourhoods close to the city centre and its cultural attractions. Moreover, most of these individuals tend to work in the centre or in inner city locations. In some gentrifying neighbourhoods, the historic nature of the housing with its interesting aura is a further attraction. As the process unrolls, the neighbourhood develops a distinctive cultural atmosphere, not merely middle class but ‘creative’, bohemian and

‘vibrant’; and these areas tend to be socially tolerant of ethnic, gender and sexual differences.

The emergence of this type of middle class housing demand is a product of economic change in big cities in both the Global North and the higher-income countries of the Global South. Since the 1970s there has been a strong growth in finance, business services, media, cultural industries and urban tourism in these cities and these sectors are strongly concentrated in the city centres (Sassen, 2001; Brenner and Theodore, 2002). This has produced, and relied on, an increase in the number of professional middle class workers living in large cities, many of whom therefore choose to live closer to work, in what were previously working-class inner city neighbourhoods. An essential part of the explanation of the gentrification of these neighbourhoods is therefore sectoral change in the economies of large cities.

In the recent years, there has been considerable research into gentrification in the global South, mainly focussing on state-led gentrification (see Islam and Sakizlioglu, 2015; Hasan, 2015; Krijnen and Beukelaer, 2015; Abasa et al., 2012; Shin and Kim, 2015; Shih, 2010). Such studies argue that an ‘overarching and unprecedentedly dominant current capitalist power of urban transformation ... is bringing cities in the South and North into essentially similar paths of redevelopment’ (Lees et al. (2016, p. 216). Processes of state-led gentrification are increasing in the global North as well (for example the dismantling of London Council estates). In addition, ‘state-led or privately-led corporate interests in large scale redevelopment existed in cities of the global South (like Seoul) earlier, or at the same time as, in the global North’ (Lees et al., 2016, p. 217; for Seoul case see Shin, 2006, 2009a). This paper concurs with this argument: gentrification is not a process that is imported to the global South from the North (see Lees et al., 2016 for a more detailed debate). I take gentrification as a useful concept that can help scholars (in the Global South as well as the Global North) understand the underlying reasons for various kinds of urban transformation (i.e. urban regeneration, state-led gentrification). It is not a ‘travelling’ concept from North to South, but neither is it without relevance in explaining what is happening in Southern cities and neighbourhoods. It should be a flexible concept that is a useful tool to understand urban changes and everyday struggles against displacement in an era of growing socio-spatial inequalities not only in the South but also in the North (Lopez-Morales, 2015).

Understanding everyday struggles and resistance requires focus on the input of informality and territorial stigma. Bayat (2012, 2013) labels informality as quiet encroachment of the urban poor, which as a way to get political and cultural autonomy from the state with its modern institutions, is clearly visible on streets of Istanbul. Marginalized people are involved in a more informal life as occupiers of properties, squatters, and street vendors without permits. As it happens in many countries in the global South, and also in Turkey, these informalities were and are overlooked (Bayat, 2013). In contrast to what Wacquant (2008) states about the negative representations of banlieues and internalizing the stigma among macro

structures, Kirkness (2014) argue that stigma in disinvested neighbourhoods generates ‘networks of solidarity and a deepening attachment to place’ among inhabitants. Inhabitants who ‘cope’ with stigma try to adapt themselves to changing conditions and the ones who resist, appropriate the stigmatized identity and turn it into an alternative form of place and community making (Kirkness, 2014). This solidarity generates symbolic power of resistance for everyday survivability against urban processes based on actions aim to displace the urban poor. As Bayat (2013) states that any forms of resistance against this kind of stigma and urban transformation projects such as urban protests and social movements offer invaluable contribution to urban struggles.

The success of gentrification in reinventing old centralities in the urban fabric relies on the level of urban development, the penetration of global forces, the situation of the local economy and real estate market, and how these local economies are linked to international investments. This means neo-liberal policies and practices play a crucial role in intensifying the processes of gentrification (Lees, et al. 2015; 2016).

To show the effects of neoliberal thinking and its spatial representations in Turkey: The Turkish term, ‘kentsel dönüşüm’, is used in a positive sense by the Justice and Development Party (JDP) ‘as a buzzword for a wealth of urban renewal, urban regeneration, urban transformation and urban development projects’ (Çavuşoğlu and Strutz (2014, p. 135); however, urban regeneration and renewal in this context threatens the wellbeing of the urban poor and can be seen as a tool to increase social segregation and displacement in the inner city. This transformation which is usually followed by the total displacement of working class people, illustrates the need to integrate concept of authoritarian state power with the Anglo-American concept of market-led gentrification (see Lees, et al. 2016). The displacement process, usually handled with no social agenda for the working class or compensation for their financial losses, results in stigmatization of the poor, social inequality and spatial exclusion.

My theorisation of state-led gentrification, then, combines structure and agency. The structural underpinnings of gentrification are economic and social change in cities’ economies and the consequent opening up of a rent gap in some working class neighbourhoods. But these structures work in ways specific to particular cities and neighbourhoods, with their specific social and built-environment histories and their specific property and legal structures. Moreover, the transformation of a neighbourhood does not always take place through market mechanisms, because the existing inhabitants may resist or the area may become too ‘undesirable’ (as it is the case of Tarlabasi) for the higher income social classes. For this reason, the state may need to accelerate the transformation, overcome legal obstacles, and resistance of the inhabitants. The process of gentrification is therefore dependent on the strategies of agents and the conflicts between them and has no structurally given outcome.

Before examining the case study, I provide the social and economic context for changes in the urban space of Turkey since the 1950s, and show how state policy shaped these changes.

### Urban Change and State Policy in Turkey

Until the 1950s, Turkey was predominantly an agricultural country. With industrialization and the dramatic increase in the manufacturing sector in the late 1950s and the 1960s, the agricultural sector began to decline, and many people from rural parts of the country started to migrate to urban areas with the hopes of better jobs and higher living standards (Tekeli, 1982). With the industrialization of the country, these people started to make up most of the working class in Istanbul and other big cities in Turkey. However, since the 1970s, most of manufacturing production moved out of the big cities, and employment in manufacturing decreased in the city centres and inner cities, while employment in finance and business services (FBS) increased, contributing to processes of gentrification (Sassen, 2002; Lees, Shin and Lopez-Morales, 2015). Particularly after the 1980s, with the implementation of more neo-liberal policies, and the 1980s coup d'état, the right of the workers were restricted and their financial situation worsened (Sahin, 2010). This rapid transformation in the Turkish economy and the main cities, that started with industrialization and continued with FBS sector, was not complemented with adequate social housing policies or infrastructure systems. As a result, *gecekondu*<sup>1</sup> started to appear. The Mass Housing Development Agency (MHDA) was founded in 1984 to solve the housing problems of low-income people and people living in *gecekondu* by encouraging the establishment of housing cooperatives supported by cheap credit (Türkün, 2011). The MHDA took over all urban development powers when former Prime Minister of Turkey (Recep Tayyip Erdogan – now the President of Turkey) was elected as an M.P. in 2003, and immediately became the Prime Minister.

Just before the 2007 elections, Erdogan attended all the events of the MHDA and supported every investment that the MHDA participated in. By these means, he used the MHDA in his election propaganda, and on Erdogan's election, new laws granted the MHDA almost complete authority over every form of housing in the country. In addition, and with a much more construction industry oriented national economic policy, the MHDA became an essential tool for economic development. Even though the MHDA started as a solution for the low-cost and social housing problem, after 2003, it became a for-profit organization equipped with great authority (Sonmez, 2012, [www.reflectionsturkey.com](http://www.reflectionsturkey.com)), and became the driving institution for urban regeneration and renewal projects not only in *gecekondu* but also in historical areas that are mostly inhabited by the urban poor (Türkün, 2011).

<sup>1</sup> Gecekondu is how informal settlements are called in Turkey. They are squatter housing built on state land.

Since 2002, JDP has been the government party in power and are now in their fourth term. The JDP began by supporting the tradition of Islam; however, it has now publicly abandoned this ideology and embraced ‘conservative democracy’. ‘Conservative democracy’ refers to an ideology formulated by the Party’s elites which is a synthesis that ‘aims at creating a harmonious fusion between conservatism and democracy’ (Cagliyan and İcener, 2009, p.06). As Alpan (2012) argues, this concept of ‘conservative democracy’ was presented as a fusion of concepts such as cosmopolitanism, tolerance, European integration and had an inclusionary tone in the beginning of 2000s. However, this term has been used as an ‘empty signifier’ which has no coherent content or meaning, but is used to get maximum support through political forces.

Erdogan presented ‘conservative democracy’ as: “I want to see Turkey making a meaningful contribution to the mosaic of cultures that one observes in Europe. My motto is a local-oriented stance in a globalising world” (Erdogan, 29 January 2004; cited in Topçuoglu, 2006, p. 88). One example for this was the complete support for Turkish EU membership during the first term of the JDP. After 2007 and with the beginning of the second term of the JDP, ‘conservative democracy’ became more of an exclusionary term with a clear distinction between ‘them’ and ‘us’, predominantly pointing to pro- and anti- JDP lines.

All of these structural changes in Turkey have a significant effect on the housing market and the processes of gentrification (especially state-led) in Istanbul. I now turn to examine the effects of said structures and the new structures they create in the specificity of Istanbul.

### **Gentrification in Istanbul**

Gentrification in Istanbul started as a classical gentrification process. However, in the last 10-15 years, state-led gentrification has become much more common. This section introduces a timeline of gentrification in Istanbul, tracing the transformation from classical to state-led gentrification.

Neighbourhoods started experiencing gentrification from the 1980s which then, accelerated in the 1990s. The attraction of these neighbourhoods for gentrifiers was, and is not, entirely locational. The motivation was also about what the place meant: history that belongs to this particular place is an important element of gentrification. The appropriate word to describe this aspect of the process is ‘nostalgia’. The neighbourhoods that are gentrified or being gentrified used to be multicultural places developed by Greek and Armenian merchants (Islam, 2006; Can, 2013; Sakizlioglu and Uitermark, 2014). As happened in other gentrifying neighbourhoods after the 1980s, this multicultural character of the neighbourhoods fulfilled the desire of the professional class to create a new cultural identity with their imaginaries of these places (Aksoy, 2001).

Since 2000, Istanbul has entered a new era of urban transformation and regeneration projects that are accompanied by gentrification. The regeneration and

renewal projects have had negative outcomes for working class residents including job losses, financial difficulties, difficulties in adjusting to the new neighbourhood they have been forced to move to, and in some cases, after being displaced, returning to the city, but with less money because of the losses they experienced (Şen, 2011, pp. 1-21).

All these projects influenced by the local or the national state serve the purpose of encouraging gentrification of the inner city, with the ambition of attracting further waves of gentrification to the surrounding areas once these projects are completed. This situation leads to high levels of social segregation in the city (Can, 2013).

Up until now, I have described the structural context for the Tarlabasi case. Starting from the abstractions of changes in global economy and state-led gentrification to urban and economic change in the specificity of Turkey, and how these structures affected Istanbul spatially. Now I move on to the case where I investigate the agency and conflict involved in the process of state-led gentrification in a particular Global South neighbourhood.

## **Methods and Methodology**

This paper uses a critical realist approach and draws on the work of Bhaskar (1986, 1989), commonly referred as the founder of critical realism in social theory (Kaidesoja, 2009). A critical realist approach makes it possible to understand the abstractions and the historical backgrounds of concrete cases and allows the researcher to develop analyses that are suitable not only for one particular instance, but also for other cities and neighbourhoods experiencing the effects of similar abstractions and processes. Bhaskar thinks of society as a compilation of social structures which embody causal powers. Complex combinations of abstract social structures combine to produce observable empirical outcomes. For Bhaskar, agents affect and transform structures through their actions, and structures do not exist independently from agents (Bhaskar, 1989).

The focus of this paper is on the role of state in the processes of gentrification through the perspective of Bhaskar's approach to structure and agency. There are two levels of structure involved: (i) international (world-wide) processes and (ii) the Turkish context for the case. Explaining wider structural processes of gentrification is not enough to fully grasp the situation in Tarlabasi (or in any specific location) because of the agency involved plays out differently in different contexts, times and places. This paper aims to re-theorize the role of the Turkish state in state-led gentrification in Istanbul through structure and agency where both effect and transform each other while paying particular attention to emerging conflicts, increasing authoritarianism and resistance enacted on the ground.

Taking a critical realist perspective, I argue that what happens in the historic neighbourhoods of Istanbul cannot be understood without a broader context that includes economic power and various spatial scales, and the time-dependent

economic, social, political processes that influence the operations of the housing market. In order to understand the picture of Istanbul, a combination of abstractions (for example, gentrification, changing global economy) has been analysed.

I start my analysis with the abstractions and go on to concrete case study, and in this sense, the analysis of this research starts with, and is not separate from, theory and continues throughout to the Conclusion. From this perspective, it is necessary to have a deeper understanding of the changes that Turkey and Istanbul have been, and are going through to understand the gentrification processes in specific neighbourhoods.

I examined middle-range processes such as the historical and economic development of Turkey and Istanbul, in order to link a deep understanding of abstract processes with the changing social, economic and political situation in Turkey and Istanbul over time. All of these abstract processes and changing situations collectively create concrete cases, and in this paper, the case of Tarlabasi is examined in depth; and the conclusion about Tarlabasi is derived from this analysis. The results of empirical studies and policies derived from them cannot be simplistically generalized, but a critical realist framework provides tools for the analysis of particular cases (in other localities) in relation to general overarching processes.

In the analysis, data was divided into smaller units to identify similar or different patterns, themes and concepts. Drawing on interviews that were conducted in the district, I examine five important aspects of the process. These aspects are: Criminalization of the inhabitants of Tarlabasi; interventions of the state; resistance of the inhabitants; destruction of the area's heritage; and the operation of the rent gap in Tarlabasi. The focus for deciding on these aspects was the conflicts in the area and the actions of different agents involved in the process of state-led gentrification. To investigate these, I conducted 30 in-depth interviews (see Table 1.). These interviews took place mostly in the first half of 2013 and, in addition to that, in terms of following up, a few more interviews and informal talks were conducted in the second half of 2017 and first half of 2018.

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Number of Interviews</b>	<b>Reasoning for the interviews</b>
Inhabitants around the project area	15	Around, but not in the project area because the area was and is closed off and mostly demolished.
NGOs	5	Who worked in, or were interested in the area to understand their influence on the process and the tools they used to oppose the Project. These NGOs are: the Tarlabasi Platform; the Chamber of Architects (CoA from here on); and Tarlabasi Association of Owner-Occupiers and Tenants (Tarlabasi Association).
Government officials, people from construction company	5	To hear the story from the authorities' point of view and understand their rationales.
Academics	5	People interested in, and had conducted research in the area, and to get their interpretations.

**Table 1:** Interviews conducted (prepared by the author).

A final point is that the neighbourhood and Tarlabasi Association interviews were conducted with tenants and owner-occupiers. It is already established that the tenants are low-income people, but the owner-occupiers are also low-income people with slightly more income than their tenants, and most people who sold their properties to the municipality failed to make any profit from the huge 'rent gap' in Tarlabasi.

## The Case of Tarlabasi

### The Overview for Tarlabasi as a Case Study



**Figure 1:** Location of Tarlabasi in Beyoğlu District in Istanbul (work of Maximilian Dörrbecker).

Tarlabasi is a historical neighbourhood located in Beyoğlu district, Istanbul (see Figure 1). It is five minutes' walk away from İstiklal Street (one of the most important entertainment and cultural centres of Istanbul) with a significant historical heritage. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Tarlabasi was a middle class neighbourhood populated by Ottoman citizens of Armenian and Greek origins. Its population was affected by the political events such as the Capital Law<sup>2</sup> and the Istanbul pogrom<sup>3</sup>, and because of these events they started to leave the area in the 1950s. In the 1960s, immigrants

<sup>2</sup> In 1942, a bill enacting wealth levy was passed by Turkish Grand National Assembly. This law was presented as fund raising countermeasures for Turkey's possible entry into the Second World War. However, it also intended to ruin the economic position of non-Muslim minorities as part of the economic 'Turkification' of the Turkish Republic. This Bill was concerned with fixed assets, such as industrial enterprises, businesses, building owners and estates of all citizens, but the most affected were Jewish, Armenian, and Greek Turkish citizens and Levantines (Latin-Christians who lived under the rule of the Ottoman Empire). In the end, this law led the financial ruin of many non-Muslim families.

<sup>3</sup> The 'Istanbul pogrom' was organized mob attacks directed primarily at Istanbul's Greek minority. A Turkish mob that gathered into the city in advance attacked Istanbul's Greek community for nine hours. Even though this mob did not openly call for Greeks to be killed, as a result of beatings, arson and attacks, more than a dozen people died. Armenians were also harmed.

from Anatolia bought these architecturally-significant properties for very cheap prices, and at the same time, municipal services started to deteriorate. However, Tarlabasi did not experience gentrification through the private housing market in the 1980s and 1990s, even though it is equally close to entertainment and cultural centres and has similar historical heritage to other neighbourhoods that have experienced market-led gentrification such as Galata or Cihangir.

There are several reasons for this. Firstly, Tarlabasi Boulevard (see Figures 2 and 3) was widened during the pedestrianization of Istiklal Street, isolating Tarlabasi from the rest of the neighbourhood and cutting off its connection to the entertainment and cultural centre of the city (Islam, 2006). After pedestrianization, Istiklal Street became the entertainment and cultural centre and had a strong influence on the classical gentrification process in Istanbul. Cutting Tarlabasi off from this important street not only delayed gentrification but also increased the speed of its deterioration (Islam, 2006; Dincer, 2008; Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010).



**Figures 2 and 3:** Before the opening of Tarlabasi Boulevard (Left); after the opening of Tarlabasi Boulevard (right) (yapi.com.tr).

Secondly, in the 1990s Tarlabasi experienced a different kind of rural to urban migration. Kurdish people affected by military activity in the east of Turkey were forced to leave their home lands and were without any means of financial support. These people started to move to Tarlabasi, because the rent was very cheap and area was very central for accessing jobs (Islam, 2010; Unsal, 2015).

By the 2000s, Tarlabasi became a neighbourhood populated by the most disadvantaged segments of the population, including Kurdish people from the

southeast of Turkey, Roma, foreign immigrants as well as a sex workers and transsexual community. In this district, people either work in the service sector in the tourist areas nearby for very low wages, or as street vendors selling food produced in small workshops in the district (Türkün and Şen, 2009).

Under the provisions of Law 5366 enacted on 5 July, 2005, which enables “regeneration” in historic areas, nine blocks (see Figures 4 and 5) in Tarlabasi were declared as “urban renewal” areas on 20 February, 2006. It was intended to convert the buildings into hotels, shopping spaces and residences. This initial stimulus was expected to trigger a complete physical change and gentrification of the whole area (Türkün and Şen 2009; Türkün, 2011; Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010). On 16 March, 2007, Beyoglu Municipality put the preliminary Project for Tarlabasi renewal area up for tender, and on 17 April, 2007, the construction company, Gap Insaat, won the tender. (This company’s CEO is a relative of Erdogan’s and has been at the centre of corruption discussions because of this connection.) The preliminary Project prepared by Gap Insaat proposed the demolition and reconstruction of all historical buildings in the renewal area (The Chamber of Architects 40<sup>th</sup> Report, 2008-2010).



**Figure 4:** Tarlabasi neighbourhood (Google Earth).



**Figure 5:** Tarlabasi Renewal Project (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, [www.ibb.gov.tr](http://www.ibb.gov.tr), 2015).

This Project was heavily criticized by the CoA, academics and NGOs. Nevertheless, on 30 September, 2007, the Project was accepted by the Urban Renewal Commission working under the authority of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism - in other words, the national state (The Chamber of Architects 40<sup>th</sup> report, 2008-2010). The CoA filed a lawsuit against the Project and against Law 5366 on 22 April, 2008 on the grounds that the law and the project do not oversee public interest and in conflict with other urban planning and conservation laws of Turkey, but the law court decided the case in favour of Gap Insaat (Chamber of Architects, 2010).

The demolition process started in August, 2010 before all of the lawsuits (other CoA and individual lawsuits) against the Project were concluded. Not even the next door neighbours were informed that demolition was about to begin, and this sudden start scared the already fearful inhabitants of Tarlabasi even more. The tenants and owner-occupiers started panicking that their property would one day be just demolished without their knowledge and they would be homeless. This panic resulted in more owner-occupiers selling their houses for whatever they could get and leaving the neighbourhood as soon as possible. The ones who did not sell their property or the tenants who could not move away soon enough, because they could not find another flat, experienced harassment by the construction company such as rent increases and cutting off electricity (Sakizlioglu, 2018). Not all the inhabitants gave in to this fearful environment.

Instead of panicking and accepting Municipality's offer, some of the people living in the area, faced with pressures from the local Municipality and the construction company to sell their property at very low prices under the threat of expropriation, set up a neighbourhood association of owner-occupiers and tenants to defend their rights (Tarlabasi Association). Tarlabasi Association was established in 2008, following the announcement of the Municipality that Gap Insaat won the tender. In the district, owners in particular, were aware of the high rent potential of their properties, while the prices offered by the construction company were very low.

They would have preferred to improve their places, and received the rent increases themselves. Even though in the law 5366, it was stated clearly that the inhabitants first should be given the right to renovate their own building, inhabitants of Tarlabasi were denied that right. The Project aimed to convert the area completely to attract the richest segments of the population and tourists in order to achieve the highest returns, so the construction company was not prepared to compromise or negotiate. The association first started as an only owner-occupier club. That is one of the reasons why the association could not get that much dynamic going at first, since 70% of the area consists of tenants. Following the foundation of the association, around 2009 and 2010, they joined the lawsuit filed by the CoA to increase their chances of winning.

Under these conditions, the inhabitants of the district, having been exposed to unjust treatment and pressure, developed oppositional tactics against the urban regeneration Project (Chamber of Architects, 2008; Dincer, 2008; Sakizlioglu, 2018). In addition to attempts by the CoA to oppose the redevelopment, there have been many individual lawsuits filed against the Project and the acquisition process by the owner-occupiers in Tarlabasi. These lawsuits were mostly decided in favour of Gap Insaat. However, in 2014, the Council of State decided the acquisition process has not been in the best interests of the public and cancelled one acquisition (because of an individual lawsuit) made by the Municipality throughout the Project. As reported by the CoA, also on April, 2015, the Council of State ruled against a previous legal decision and decided that the renewal Project's compliance with urban planning and conservation laws, design regulations, and its effects on public welfare should be re-examined. However, the Mayor of Beyoglu did not stop the construction until the legal process was over and instead decided to continue with it. He treated the decision of the law court almost as 'fake news', famously giving a statement that: 'We won all the lawsuits filed against us and the last decision of the Council of State is just for reviewing the Project. We will continue the construction at full speed' (Interview, July, 2015 in the Project area). Finally, in October, 2017, the Project was cancelled by the law court, but as of August, 2018 the construction process was still continuing. Figures 6 and 7 show the situation in Tarlabasi at November, 2017. The gray fences surround the construction area: most of the old buildings have been demolished and new buildings are starting to take shape.

I now move on to the analysis of the qualitative data with regard to the conflicts and their effects on different agents in Tarlabasi.



**Figures 6 and 7:** Photos from and around the Tarlabasi Renewal Project area, Author's personal archive, 2017.

### ***Criminalization of the Inhabitants of Tarlabasi***

In the interviews with the authorities, one common point was expressed by all the respondents: the criminality of the inhabitants of Tarlabasi. This was usually brought up in reference to the fact that some of the residents of the neighbourhood were there without paying rent. These inhabitants were often portrayed as ‘invaders’ and this was used to justify the Project since, it was claimed, these residents did not have the right to live there in the first place. These kinds of statements ignored the fact that most of them were Kurdish people who had been forced to migrate to Tarlabasi because of the military conflict in the east of Turkey. The sense of racism against Kurdish people was strong in all of the interviews. One of the respondents stated:

I mean people who are living there are different from people who would like to live there, because most of the current inhabitants are invaders. People were not able to live in that neighbourhood because of the crime and social deterioration and other people came to these flats and invaded them illegally. They broke down the doors of the

houses and broke into the apartments and just started living there.  
(Interview with Government official)

Criminalization continued with the use of media to manipulate public opinion. Some of this news included statements such as: “Tarlabasi will be a rose garden in three years.” “Tarlabasi is a poisoned princess and we are healing her.” “Tarlabasi will be a safe place.” (see *Sabah*, 11 May 2012; *Haberturk*, 16 June, 2012; *Sabah*, 3 July 2012; *Star* 17 August 2012; *Vatan*, 26 August, 2012). Denigrating people as drug dealers, thieves and as generally undesirable, conditions the public reaction to the Project. Thus, public opinion is formed in such a way that the injustices experienced by the inhabitants during the Project have been ignored.

One of the founders of the Tarlabasi Association perfectly explained how Tarlabasi was represented in the press:

... We observed how the whole of the press played the three monkeys [he means the three wise monkeys: hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil]. We realized all the news about us and Tarlabasi was just lies and did not represent reality at all. Let me tell you an interesting story. In the Project area, out of the 269 buildings, 6 of them were derelict and ruined. Star TV, Sabah and ATV [mainstream Turkish media channels] showed those six houses for months to show Tarlabasi ... The press just showed those 6 houses to whole of Istanbul and the whole of the country as if those 6 derelict buildings were Tarlabasi as a whole (Aybek, 2018: 177).

This attitude of stigmatization was evident in meetings with government officials as well. According to the documents collected from the CoA, such as legal papers and meeting reports, there were many meetings in Urban Renewal Councils about the Tarlabasi Urban Renewal area. These Councils are a part of the Tourism and Culture Ministry and are connected to the national state. One interviewee from the NGOs who attended one of the meetings described it as:

I was an observer member of the Urban Renewal Council at the time, so I was able to follow the process. ...the thing that surprised me the most was the reaction from some academics, because they legitimized the whole Project by demonizing the people who were living there. They kept saying that there is an important architectural heritage in the area but the people who were living there such as transvestites, Kurds, Roma citizens and their social status were deteriorating the area. I felt like if they [were saying that if they] were able kill all the inhabitants only then they would be able to renovate the area.  
(Interview with NGO).

The aim of the state is to create a profitable neighbourhood for upper class people and evict the people they do not want to the periphery of the city, and thereby create a middle or upper class social and physical environment in the city centre. One of the respondents from the state stated: “It is even in [the] name, right?”

Gentrification. So, we are gentrifying the area, we are making it more noble. How this can be a bad thing?” (Interview with the authorities). The criminalization of the inhabitants helped the state and the construction firm to fully realize the ‘rent gap’ with least public resistance while delaying a possible process of market-led gentrification.

### *State Interventions*

The state interventions investigated in this section are: the negotiation process with landlords and owner-occupiers; eviction of the tenants; and intimidation of the inhabitants. During this process the state has been using its power to clear the way for private interests (construction, property investment... etc) while claiming to act in the public interest.

Briefing meetings were held in the neighbourhood, during which the residents (landlords, owner-occupiers and some tenants) were provided with information about the Project. Subsequent negotiations took place about the prices that the Municipality and the construction firm were prepared to pay the landlords and owner-occupiers for their houses. According to the state respondents interviewed for this research, these meetings were arranged in a peaceful environment and they (state officials) did everything they could to make the conditions better for the inhabitants. Officials from the Municipality claimed that they provided some options for tenants such as rental assistance for a year and two years’ free rent for working class tenants so that they could save enough money to move out of the neighbourhood.

In return, the Municipality and the construction firm wanted tenants to evacuate the flats without causing problems. However, interviews with residents of the neighbourhood did not confirm this information, and it was also denied in interviews with people from NGOs and with academics. There is no proof that all of the tenants in the Project area received this kind of help from the Municipality or from the construction firm. The company did not provide me with any records and none of the inhabitants I interviewed confirmed this. In addition, in one of his statements, the mayor of Beyoglu, A. Misbah Demircan, showed how much he relied on gentrification:

“Local and international investors are very much interested in several locations in Beyoglu. Tarlabasi and Karaköy areas are 50 times more valuable than they were before. If an area is getting more valuable, that means there are new investments coming into that area.” (<http://www.yeniakit.com.tr/haber/Tarlabasi-360-projesinden-son-durum-74239.html>).

Some of the inhabitants whose relatives had been evicted from the Project area stated that the Municipality had paid less than market value for the houses and the amount people received was not enough to start another life anywhere in Istanbul:

My sister was living in the Project area which is empty now. She had a flat, and a shop under the flat. They gave her only 70.000 TL (Turkish Liras) (\$25000) for both of them. Considering how much they are going to sell those apartments for, it is really unfair. (Interview with inhabitant)

In addition, no provisions were made for the tenants living in the area. One of the former tenants stated that:

We were living in the Project area. One day we received news saying that they are going to demolish all these buildings and we have to leave in a week. We barely found another flat close to the neighbourhood, but I do not know what we could have done if we have not found this place. (Interview with inhabitant)

When asked if they received any kind of help from the Municipality, the reply was: “We received 500 TL (\$200) from the Municipality but nothing else” (Interview with inhabitants).

According to the Tarlabasi Association, the Urgent Acquisition verdict<sup>4</sup>, issued by the state in the early stages of the Project, was used as a threat to force the residents to participate in the Project:

The relevant firm and the Municipality used Urgent Acquisition as a threat during all the negotiation meetings. For that reason, it was not actually a negotiation process to begin with. They told us: ‘We already have the Urgent Acquisition verdict, if you do not sell your property to us, we can just use it [the legal ruling]. (Interview with NGO)

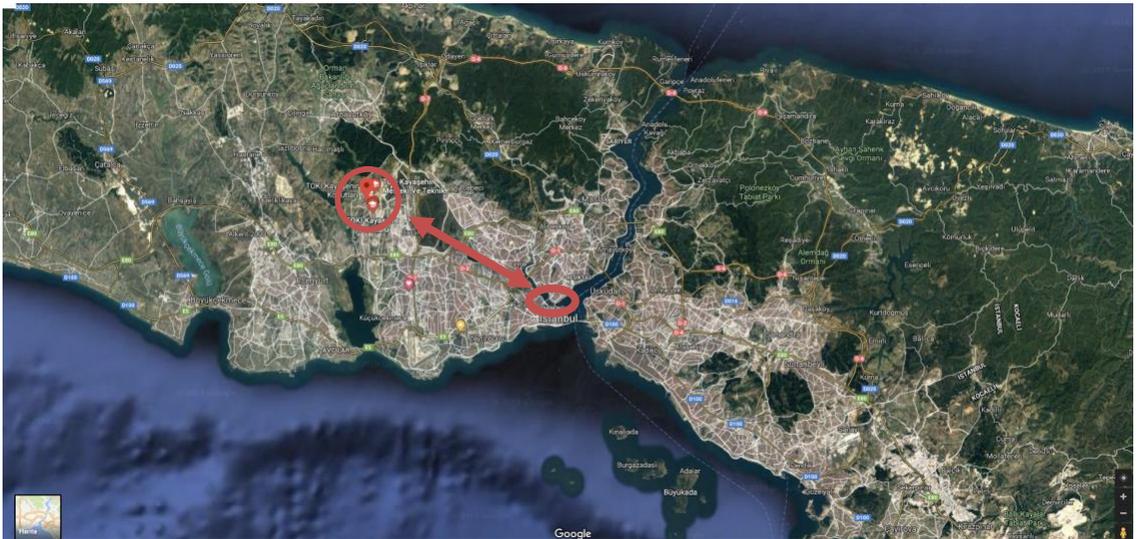
On the other hand, the Urgent Acquisition verdict was never used, because by law (at the time), it is forbidden for a municipality to sell properties acquired under the verdict to a private firm. There is no official document provided by the state or any other respondents to show that the state compensated the displaced tenants. Only one person said they received the paltry sum of 500 liras from the state; every other respondent I interviewed, including the academics interested in the area and the people from NGOs stated that no compensation had been paid to the tenants. Rather, there is evidence to the contrary: the state talked about compensation such as not taking rent for two years, but never actually went through with it.

To sum up, there is not enough evidence for me to say that the state compensated the losses of displaced tenants and overwhelming evidence for the

<sup>4</sup> Under normal circumstances it is possible for the state to expropriate a piece of land for the ‘public good’. This is a legal process that takes quite some time while the experts decide on the value of the property, pay the private owner, and pass the property title to the relevant government agency. In some exceptional cases (e.g. any situation that the court decides the length of time needed for the acquisition process is harmful to the public), this expropriation process can be carried out urgently without the full legal process, with experts deciding the value of the property.

opposite. Finally, every owner-occupier I interviewed stated that they had to sell their houses below the market value. According to the interviews I conducted, the integrity of the state has been low if not non-existent. One owner-occupier stated that:

The Beyoglu Municipality first invited us to a meeting to brief us about the future of Tarlabasi. They said they were going to rehabilitate this area as soon as they got a loan from the World Bank, and naturally they collected signatures from people who attended this meeting. Later they presented these signatures like the signatures of people who attended negotiation meetings during the purchasing process of our properties. Incredible... (Interview with inhabitant)



**Figure 8:** Location of Kayasehir (big circle) and its distance from Tarlabasi (small circle) (taken from google maps).

I was not able to interview any of the people displaced from Tarlabasi. The MHDA gave priorities to the people who were evicted from Tarlabasi for the purchase of flats in a low-cost housing development constructed by MHDA on the periphery of Istanbul (Kayasehir) (see Figure 8), and 156 families agreed to buy flats in the development. This is a small fraction of the residents displaced. I visited the development and tried to reach an agreement with the local government officials of that district to help locate some of the families because it was impossible for me to find any of the 156 families independently in a development of 60,000 flats. At first, the local government officials seemed helpful; however, in the end, the decision of the families was not to talk to me. They did not want to be involved anything related to Tarlabasi Renewal Project as they did not want to say anything that might be ‘wrong’ in the eyes of the local or national government. What happened to other displaced tenants and owner-occupiers is not recorded in any official document.

Following this, I turn to investigating the agency (read: resistance) of the inhabitants of Tarlabasi and how they organized themselves against the global and state structures and managed the conflicts created by these structures and the agency of the construction firm.

### ***Resistance by the Inhabitants***

One of the pivotal results of the conflicts Tarlabasi experienced was the resistance against the Project. Even though it did not stop the Project, it was a very important turning point, not only for Tarlabasi but also for urban resistance more generally in Istanbul. According to the academics interviewed, there were too few NGOs involved in the Project, and not enough was done to raise public awareness. However, unlike other renewal projects, Tarlabasi organized its own association (Tarlabasi Association of Owner-Occupiers and Tenants), which tried to organize the whole neighbourhood to defend their rights. Even though it was successful to some extent, in that people reacted to the Project, the Association was not able to stop the evictions from the Project area. It was hard for any NGO to stand against a project that is so strongly supported by the state. When asked about the actions of the NGOs during the Project process, one of the respondents stated that the NGOs

... did point out some very important issues in the area. At least they exposed the unjust, sometimes illegal practices during the process. They tried to expose the forced evictions as much as possible. However, the NGOs are so naïve compared to the state and that is also what happened in Tarlabasi. On the other hand, by nature [at least in Turkey] it is very hard for an NGO to stop such a project by itself' (Interviews with NGO)

The Tarlabasi Association tried to involve not only the owner-occupiers but also the tenants in organizing more effective resistance against the unjust treatment they were facing. However, there were some inadequacies. As one of the respondents stated:

...We talked to the Association for a really long time. The first problem was that it took them a while to involve the tenants. We said it would be impossible for them to resist without the tenants and that they had to organize the tenants as well. Just because they have a property title does not mean they have more of a right to be in that neighbourhood than the tenants. Second thing was that when tenants were intimidated and started leaving, it became impossible to resist the eviction process (Interview with NGO).

Nevertheless, one of the most important achievements of the Tarlabasi Association was that it became one of the first examples of organizing resistance against these large urban renewal projects (for another example, see Sulukule Platform which is an NGO for another historic neighbourhood experiencing a

massive urban regeneration project). As a senior officer of Tarlabasi Association put it:

We have been in contact with other neighbourhood associations and discussed what we can do to stop this frenzy of urban renewal projects. Fener-Balat Association [another historic neighbourhood of Istanbul that was declared an urban renewal area] especially contacted us because the same construction company that was constructing the Tarlabasi Project won the tender for Fener-Balat. We were able to help them a lot, thanks to the experience we gained during the Tarlabasi process. As you know, that project is cancelled now and not much is happening in that area (Interview with NGO).

There were several reasons why the resistance did not succeed in Tarlabasi. The NGOs failed to offer options for the inhabitants that would empower them against the state such as giving sufficient free legal assistance. As a result, most of the landlords and owner-occupiers agreed to the Project, and the tenants had no choice but to leave their houses without compensation. Another reason, as mentioned before, Tarlabasi Association failed to include tenants when they first established the association. Final reason was the increasing oppression in Turkey and the effects of changing structure in the political arena (see conservative democracy). One of the results of this was the Gezi protests in 2013. The Gezi protests started because of an urban planning decision about Gezi Park in the inner city of Istanbul, and the government reacted to this small protest with excessive police force, which produced the spread of the protests across the country (Kuymulu, 2013).

When Gezi protests started on May, 2013, Tarlabasi Project area was mostly evicted and partly demolished. There were some lawsuits going on, but there was not any active resistance. Even though Gezi protests started as a reaction from the public to the massive state-induced urban projects and Tarlabasi is 5 minutes' walk away from the Gezi Park, there is no clear and direct connection between the two. Even though CoA was actively interested in the Gezi Park protests, they did not mention or use Tarlabasi Project. There were no demands from the protesters that was directly referring to the project. However, by default, Gezi Park Protests were against Tarlabasi Project or any massive urban project that results in forced eviction, displacement and social segregation. Aforementioned level of oppression was visible in every stage of the resistance against Tarlabasi Renewal Project and it is this oppression that the NGOs were unable to effectively oppose.

### ***Destruction of the Heritage***

The Project team claimed that they would preserve the historical heritage of Tarlabasi. A leaflet for the Project states that:

Working with a project team that specializes in physical renovation, we launched a project aimed at conservation and preservation of

historical heritage as its main objective. (Gap Insaat, Tarlabasi Urban Renewal Project leaflet, 2013:32)

But even though there were 210 listed buildings, the expert report about the Project area clearly states that all the buildings in the area should be demolished and there is no building that is sound or worthy enough to preserve. The plans for the Project show that the proposed buildings have little in common with the current buildings. In addition, the plan proposes several storeys of car parking under every building, and nine apartment-blocks that have nothing in common with the original architectural fabric of the neighbourhood. In the end, even though the Project offers preservation of the neighbourhood, in practice there is no evidence of this. Figure 9 below show Tarlabasi as it is currently and is proposed once the Project is finished.

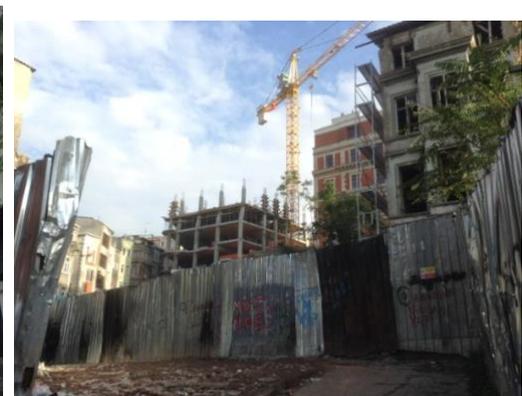


**Figure 9:** Comparison between current and Project Tarlabasi, SakizAgaci Street, Tarlabasi Urban Renewal Project Leaflet, Gap Insaat, 2013.

As can be seen from these images, the proposals for new Tarlabasi are not only historically unsympathetic or not in keeping, but also depict a life style where there are only luxurious apartment buildings with cafes and bistros and young professionals walking on its streets.



**Figures 10 and 11:** Photos from and around the Tarlabasi Renewal Project area, Author's personal archive, 2013.



**Figures 12, 13, 14, and 15:** Photos from and around the Tarlabasi Renewal Project area, Author's personal archive, 2017.

Figures 10–15 from 2013 and 2017 show the change over four years. The new buildings are starting to take shape and bear no resemblance to the original buildings. The models prepared by the construction company give an idea of what the neighbourhood would look like once the Project is finished. Inside the neighbourhood, almost all the buildings are demolished. This process is increasing the deterioration of the rest of the neighbourhood, isolating it even further, and making a historically significant neighbourhood resemble a post-apocalyptic place. As one can see from the ‘improvement’ over the four years 2013-2017, preserving historical heritage has not been a priority of the state.

Now I move on to analyzing the ‘rent gap’ in Tarlabasi caused by structures, the agency of the professional workers (the desire to live in the city centre and close to the amenities), and how this affected the urban regeneration project that was implemented in the neighbourhood.

### ***The Rent Gap in Tarlabasi***

The concept of the ‘rent gap’ proved to be useful for studying urban regeneration projects in Istanbul. In the case of Tarlabasi, realizing the rent gap initially involved the state, other social actors such as landowners and private companies. How the rent gap was created and became visible in Tarlabasi explains why Tarlabasi was gentrified through state action. The conditions that led other neighbourhoods to become gentrified (being in the centre, having a multicultural history, historic houses) were also present in Tarlabasi, but the state needed to speed up the process in order to increase finance and business services in Istanbul. The size of the rent gap in Tarlabasi (compared with similar areas) in relation to its location near the centre made it a prime target for state induced regeneration project. In a neo-liberal system, local governments and the national state see the advantages of gentrification and instead of waiting for ten or twenty years for a neighbourhood to become gentrified through ‘market-forces’, they step in to make it happen. In Tarlabasi the ‘rent gap’ had reached a tremendous amount. This might mean that it is the bad publicity about how unsafe, poor, dirty, undesirable Tarlabasi is that has led middle class people to stay away from this neighbourhood. This played a significant role for stopping gentrification but also provided the state with ammunition for this renewal project, and increased the rent gap.

According to the responses during interviews in the neighbourhood, it was revealed that the inhabitants were paying between 300-600 Turkish liras in 2013-2014 (approx. \$60 – \$120) and records show that a studio flat (around 50 m<sup>2</sup>) in the Tarlabasi Renewal Project has been sold for approx. \$450,000 ([www.zingatgayrimenkulbilgisistemleri.com.tr](http://www.zingatgayrimenkulbilgisistemleri.com.tr), 2018). As discussed earlier, the owner-occupiers received around 70,000 and 110,000 Turkish liras (approx. \$17,000 and \$27,000) for the same size flats during the purchasing process.

The criminalization process and the everyday racism of the inhabitants of Tarlabasi has a direct impact on the increase of the ‘rent gap’. In addition, all of the state interventions (read: structures) analyzed in the previous section have helped to

further this criminalization and resulted in inhabitants leaving the neighbourhood with little to none compensation. The increased oppression made it harder for the inhabitants to resist the project successfully (read: agency) and revealed the conflicts during a process of state-led gentrification. Now I turn to conclusion.

## Conclusion

Turkish politics entered a new period in 2002 with the JDP forming the first majority government since 1987. The main ideology of the Party, ‘conservative democracy’, does not have a fixed or coherent meaning and has been used differently in different times. Even though ‘conservative democracy’ discourse started as a more inclusive term aiming to build a bridge between tradition and modernity and respect different voices, it took a different turn after 2007 and has taken an increasingly oppressive and exclusionary turn that draws a clear boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’. This tone has been exercised almost every time there was a reaction against the government or government-backed projects and actions. Tarlabasi Renewal Project and people who were against this Project were no exception. This attitude made it harder to resist the Project, and influenced the formation of the discourse of stigmatization of the neighbourhood. This authoritarian change in the structure of Turkish politics helps one understand the state interventions analysed in the previous section. This change allowed the state to silence the resistance much faster and in a more brutal fashion while fuelling the stigmatization of the neighbourhood. This in return also affected the resistance of the neighbourhood as the inhabitants felt they were so unfairly treated, it allowed them to organize and try to find ways to defend their right to shelter and city, while the resistance urged state to increase the pressure and criminalization of the neighbourhood to silence them even further. The analysis of the processes of state-led gentrification in Tarlabasi clearly reveals how agents affect and transform structures through their actions, and structures do not exist independently from agents.

The most visible outcome of how these strategies and conflicts played out in Tarlabasi was in the active criminalization of the inhabitants which exemplifies the everyday struggles and resistance of gentrification-led displacement, capital-led destruction, and transformation of social space. Criminalizing the inhabitants of Tarlabasi led to the neighbourhood becoming more rundown, making it easy for local government to step in and prepare a state-led urban renovation project ‘for the sake’ of the inhabitants. In fact, the local and national state intentionally increased social polarization and exclusion to implement the project smoothly. A depressing and criminalized image of Tarlabasi has been deployed to get consent from the high and middle income social classes for this brutal treatment of the inhabitants. The kind of segregation brought about by these projects will cause problems in the future, because the local state not only deepened the differences between social classes by displacing the poor inhabitants, but also created feelings of resentment among working class residents in reaction to exaggerated accusations of criminality and degradation.

This was not the only way for Tarlabasi. The national government has enough resources and is able to influence public opinion to create a rehabilitation project that serves the inhabitants of the area, enables them to stay in their homes, and addresses social and physical problems of the neighbourhood in the long-term. A more sensitive rehabilitation project could have been economically and physically feasible, but the political will was not there.

Cancellation of the Project by the law court opens up an opportunity for the consideration of alternatives. I have two main aims for an alternative: historical preservation; and giving housing rights to the working class inhabitants of the neighbourhood. First, developing a historical preservation programme in accordance with the planning decisions and urban conservation laws with regard to population densities is a main target. The second is to keep the poor inhabitants in their homes and meet their housing needs. My suggestion is to create mainly social rented housing because owner-occupied housing schemes with low rate mortgages and monthly instalments are not feasible for the poor population of Tarlabasi, or indeed other poor neighbourhoods of Istanbul.

However, the photos of Tarlabasi from late 2017 clearly show a neighbourhood in transformation regardless of the social and legal consequences. Dismissing the poor while relying on the urban policies that result in gentrification-led displacement is a faster way of achieving change than a well-thought alternative rehabilitation plan which may seem like a quick spatial fix, but, as mentioned earlier, may come with severe consequences of social segregation and inequality. This also means that thinking about gentrification only around the ‘middle class gentrifier’ will not help to explain and understand Tarlabasi and cases similar to Tarlabasi. Analysing gentrification processes through the conflicts between various agents such as state, inhabitants, and land developers in each locality will tell us more about the evolution of the process of gentrification.

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