

**Recommendations for the Post-earthquake
Multi-Layered Antakya (Antioch)
Conservation and Planning**

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1. Introduction

Antakya (Antioch) stands out as a city of great historical significance with its rich cultural heritage and multi-layered past. However, the devastating earthquake disaster that struck 11 provinces on February 6, 2023, has severely impacted the city, causing significant damage to its historical urban fabric. In the aftermath of this catastrophe, it becomes imperative to address the conservation and restoration of Antakya.

This study aims to provide recommendations for the post-earthquake conservation and planning of Antakya. Additionally, it will focus on the efforts made to preserve the ancient civilization and culture of Antakya, exploring possibilities to draw inspiration from similar experiences and help the city recapture its historical spirit. After the great earthquake disaster that hit 11 provinces on 6 February 2023, it is necessary to reconsider the "Historical Urban Texture" in Antakya (Antioch), where unfortunately the heaviest destruction took place, and where and with which "Special Package Projects" the repair/restoration works should be carried out.

The Chapter examines what is needed and offers suggestions on these issues. Our research method based on evaluations and examinations over the existing literature have been included. At the same time, various conferences and presentations with non-governmental organizations and academicians were used. Practices that need to be done as a requirement of national legal regulations and foreign examples are emphasized, and the concrete steps about what should be done are included in the city of Antakya.

In this study, which will also summarize the work being done for the preservation of the ancient civilization and culture of Antakya, which is an indicator of a multi-layered and multi-cultural civilization, it will be foreseen that decisions will be made considering the "Conservation-Purpose Development Plan in effect in Antakya", especially in the renovation of the places destroyed in the earthquake. Inventory studies and urgent handling of destroyed and damaged monumental buildings (Mosques, inns, baths, churches and residences) in line with the principles of the Venice Charter and the principles of restoration and repair for the protection of cultural assets will be addressed.

As an example, in this study, Warsaw and Dresden, which was almost completely destroyed after World War II, will be discussed. In Warsaw, what to do with the ruins of the building, how to restore the city to its originality and deal with it was a serious problem for the architects and city planners of the period. In order to create a continuity with the traumatic past of Warsaw, it was decided to use the excavation clusters, which reached incredible sizes, especially in the ghetto area, in the construction of new buildings. As a result, inspired by the Warsaw event, which has been recorded in the black pages of history, suggestions will be made on how the ancient city of Antakya can regain its spirit.

The February 6 earthquake and aftershocks wiped out monuments of world heritage and religion in the city, an early cradle of Christianity and significant in the Roman Empire. Historical sites of Ottoman times throughout the region suffered (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Areas destroyed in the Antakya earthquake

Along with the earthquake, the historical city texture of Antakya destroyed and almost turned into a depression area. "Earthquakes have damaged structures spanning centuries and cultures, from Roman forts to historic mosques to holy churches of a number of Christian denominations," said Bénédicte de Montlaur, president and CEO of the World Monuments Fund, to National Public Radio (NPR).

"We have no doubt that it will take years to repair the heritage lost in these tragic events and that a broad international mobilization will be needed to support local efforts" (NPR, 2023).

The European countries that were destroyed in the World War II restored and improved all their cities in accordance with their original form and re-established them as an example to the world. For example, despite the fact that Dresden is the city of sadness left behind by besieged, wiped out, and plundered European cities, it still exists today, though in fairy tale form. After the destruction of the great earthquakes in California, Chile and Japan, the cities were rebuilt in a modern way, in the light of reason and science.

Conservation Plan / Recioration / New Construction: "Conservation Plan in Antakya" should be taken into consideration.

- Infrastructure and texture/structure inventory studies should be done urgently and
- Demolished and damaged monumental works (Mosque, inn, bath, church and residences) in line with the principles of restoration and repair must be addressed immediately.

During the earthquakes that occurred in Kahramanmaraş and Hatay on February 6, 2023, and February 20, 2023, Turkey once again bore witness to the insufficiency and incompleteness of preparations and actions taken before, during, and after such calamities. It became evident that severely flawed structures, illegally constructed buildings, unauthorized additional floors, haphazard renovations, and constructions lacking scientific grounding, driven by considerations of "rent," "bribery," and private interests, resulted in the tragic loss of life and property. These actions disregarded our constitutionally enshrined rights to secure housing and life.

In order to avert future disasters, it is imperative that we hold accountable those responsible, learn from our experiences, retain awareness of the mistakes made, and avoid repeating them. Rebuilding Antakya requires a contemporary vision that embodies environmental sensitivity, safety, human-centeredness, identity, and smart urban planning, all of which are resilient against disasters and contribute to the enhancement of the quality of life in Antakya.

To achieve this, it is of utmost importance that before embarking on construction endeavors, the completion of groundwork, site assessments, and comprehensive city planning be followed by the creation, sharing, and promotion of a 3D (Three-Dimensional) Model of the NEW ANTAKYA.

2. Current Challenges, Future Challenges, Planning, and Recommendations

The seismic events that struck the regions centered around Kahramanmaraş and Hatay on February 6, 2023, and February 20, 2023, revealed significant challenges in disaster response, urban planning, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the protection of constitutional rights. This section aims to delve more comprehensively into the intricate array of issues that emerged in the aftermath of these devastating occurrences. These challenges encompass critical concerns related to immediate post-disaster relief efforts, the fundamental causes of the destruction, and the necessity for a comprehensive approach prioritizing responsible actions, scientific knowledge, and the safeguarding of invaluable cultural assets. These challenges emphasize the urgency of adopting a holistic and well-informed approach in the reconstruction and protection of the affected regions, guided by expertise, collaborative efforts, and a commitment to both present and future well-being.

To avert future disasters, it is imperative that we hold those responsible accountable, extract lessons from our experiences, remain mindful of the errors committed, and prevent their recurrence. This imperative extends to the protection of life and property, upholding our constitutionally enshrined rights, and the overall enhancement of societal well-being.

"If we are to discuss the identified issues, it is crucial to focus on the array of challenges that have become apparent in the aftermath of the earthquakes centered around Kahramanmaraş and Hatay on February 6, 2023, and February 20, 2023. These challenges span various critical domains, including disaster response, urban planning, cultural heritage preservation, and the protection of constitutional rights."

Problem 1: In the region, debris has not yet been cleared, and issues such as temporary shelter, climate control, hygiene, food, infectious diseases, education, debris management, public health, vaccination campaigns, clean drinking water, and efficient public services remain unresolved. There is a lack of serious efforts and implementation aimed at identifying those responsible for the devastation, including evidence collection.

Problem 2: The primary causes of destruction in the region include 'soil-structure incompatibility,' 'high-rise development,' 'adjacent construction,' 'failure to adhere to setback distances,' 'use of inappropriate building materials,' 'construction technique errors,' 'column-beam faults,' 'aging building stock,' and similar factors. Given these circumstances, deploying construction companies immediately after the destruction for the construction of permanent reinforced concrete housing poses significant challenges.

Problem 3: Appointing a political figure to excavate underground historical artifacts, burials, and treasures without addressing surface issues, taking significant measures for the preservation of historical artifacts, and preventing illicit activities is not rational. The underground cultural assets, historical artifacts, burials, and treasures in Antakya have

attracted the attention of certain individuals. Separation and severe damage are observed in areas with post-addition construction parts to cultural assets and portions that underwent restoration due to earthquakes. Thousands of cultural assets are in dire need of significant restoration and reinforcement. Entrusting this task to universities, architects' associations, and experts in the field is imperative (KADOP, 2023a, Tuncer, Tezer & Parlar, 2023).

2.1. Principles, Assessments, and Recommendations for Disaster-Resilient Settlement Planning and Urban Conservation in Antakya

In the context of disaster-resilient settlement planning, design considerations that encompass factors such as soil geology, soil values, climate, wind, solar exposure, water resources, local materials, regional architecture, urban fabric, transportation, pedestrian networks and zones, streets, city planning, and urban conservation should prioritize "Conservation-Purpose Plans" over zoning plans and their implementation.

During restoration and strengthening efforts for cultural assets, it is essential to consider Antakya's existing Conservation-Purpose Zoning Plan, updating it as necessary while adhering to the 2863 Law on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets. Urgent inventory work should be initiated to commence restoration and strengthening projects for registered or unregistered cultural assets, including mosques, inns, bazaars, public baths, churches, synagogues, historic houses, neighborhoods, and other historical and monumental structures that have been destroyed or damaged (Tuncer, 2023b)

Policies aimed at safeguarding and enhancing the historical and cultural uniqueness and identity of Antakya's spaces, assets, and values should be formulated and implemented at every planning stage. The positive outcomes of these policies should be observable in relevant areas. In this regard, collaboration between professional teams experienced in Antakya, universities, and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is of utmost importance.

Urban design serves as a crucial tool to achieve the objectives of city planning and urban conservation. Special project areas (urban design zones) should be identified in Antakya, and designs for preservation and renewal purposes should be developed and effectively implemented. Existing plans should be reviewed in line with conservation principles. Ministries, municipalities, and the provincial special administration should jointly develop an "action plan" focused on conservation-driven plans and projects in Antakya, free from any concerns that may hinder preservation efforts.

Conservation-Purpose Framework Plans (at 1/5000 and 1/1000 scale) and Urban Design Projects (at 1/500-1/200 scale) should be prepared for urban conservation areas.

An "Archaeological Master Plan" for Antakya should be prepared, identifying significant archaeological data and ensuring its protection. The Archaeological Master Plan should be seamlessly integrated with the city's macro plan.

An efficient and continuous unit, established with the participation of Hatay Metropolitan Municipality and Antakya Municipality, supported

by relevant ministries, capable of planning and implementing preservation efforts, should be created. This unit should engage in organizational work for planning, project development, and implementation across the entire city and its conservation areas. Encouragement for collaboration among all public institutions, private sector entities, and civil society organizations is essential to create an "exemplary" city within this comprehensive framework.

2.1.2. General recommendations and situation assessment

In light of the current situation, several general recommendations and a comprehensive assessment are crucial. These recommendations aim to address the challenges faced and promote the preservation and revitalization of historical Antakya.

Collaborative Efforts: It is imperative to initiate collaborative efforts involving reputable national and international organizations, such as UNESCO, the United Nations, and various media outlets, to garner support for the restoration and revitalization of the historical environment. Establishing contacts, preparing necessary infrastructure, and conducting various initiatives will encourage and accelerate these efforts.

Inclusivity and Expertise: The design and planning of Antakya should involve representatives from various disciplines, including sociologists, archaeologists, economists, architects, geologists, and legal experts. A holistic approach, driven by their expertise, ensures a well-informed and comprehensive restoration process.

City Zoning and Heritage Presentation: A master plan should divide the city into zones, with a designated "Downtown" (city center) where an open-air museum can showcase the historical richness, along with bazaars to present the culture and crafts of old Antakya.

Tourism Master Plan: A tourism master plan should be developed, creating distinct zones to position Antakya as a significant global tourism center with its rich historical past, cultural diversity, and unique interfaith harmony.

Unified Professional Cooperation: Establish a strong cooperation platform among NGOs, social platforms, professional chambers, and academic institutions. This unity ensures constant communication and collaborative efforts to address the significant challenges faced by Hatay.

Economic Recovery and Development: Given the recent earthquake disaster, economic recovery and development should prioritize investments in agriculture, industry, transportation, education, health, energy, and rural and urban infrastructure. Providing incentive loans, facilitating financing, and inviting domestic and foreign investors should be top priorities.

Return of Local Residents: Encourage the return of old and settled families (those residing in Antakya for at least 15-20 years) by implementing policies that increase their income, create employment opportunities, and provide social income support for a defined period.

Local Dynamics and Investment Incentives: Focus on local dynamics and internal potential in development policies. Provide attractive SME incentives, long-term, low-interest or interest-free loans for new

investments, and establish special tax-free economic and export zones in Antakya.

Effective Coordination: Foster coordination and cooperation between central and local administrations, professional chambers, civil and social platforms, ensuring a harmonious approach during planning, programming, and implementation stages.

Differentiated Priorities: Prioritize areas with high development potential and added value, adhering to urban development principles that focus on attraction centers and implement the smart city concept, while ensuring compliance with relevant zoning laws.

These general recommendations, supported by a comprehensive situation assessment, lay the foundation for the preservation and revitalization of historical Antakya, involving multidisciplinary expertise, community engagement, and strategic development policies.

Recommendation 1: In order to garner support for the revitalization of the historical environment, it is essential to reach out to respected individuals and organizations both locally and internationally. This should include UNESCO, the United Nations, the European Union, ICOMOS, prominent media outlets such as BBC, New York Times, and Wall Street Journal, universities, media platforms, ancient communities, and relevant funding sources. Collaborative efforts and awareness-building initiatives should be initiated with the goal of securing support for the restoration of the historical environment.

The most important document adopted by the Council of Europe on the protection of cultural heritage is undoubtedly the Framework Convention

on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention), signed on October 27, 2005. This convention is also the first to approach cultural heritage from a holistic perspective. In Article 2 of the Convention, cultural heritage is defined as “a set of resources inherited from the past, which people distinguish as an anonymous expression and reflection of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions”. It also “consists of people who value certain aspects of the cultural heritage that they wish to be sustained and passed on to future generations, within the framework of public action.” (Türkbay, 2021).

Recommendation 2: Recognizing the desire of local residents to have a say in the future of their cities, it is imperative to involve the opinions of the local community, universities, NGOs, civic organizations, chambers, bar associations, and experts. These stakeholders should be consulted on matters related to site selection, urban design and planning, preservation of cultural values, and protection of property rights, sustainable construction methods, public health, and environmental concerns. Expert commissions and project implementation units should consist of genuine specialists who are actively engaged in the problem-solving process.

Recommendation 3: Global experts emphasize that the Antakya-Hatay region remains at risk of future earthquakes; therefore, haste in construction must be avoided. Ensuring meticulous adherence to all construction procedures and stages, including compliance with construction laws, is crucial to creating earthquake-resistant settlements. Authentic experts and practitioners with a proven track record should be involved in addressing various urban needs such as transportation,

infrastructure, logistics, local services, urban economy, and disaster planning. If necessary, international support should be sought to ensure the highest level of seriousness in all endeavors aimed at ensuring public safety.

Recommendation 4: Given the existing and considerable seismic risk in the region, it is essential to prepare comprehensive and reliable projects that preserve the original demographic, cultural, and architectural structure. This includes a complete prohibition on constructing buildings on the city's two-thousand-year-old historical sites, avoiding concrete pouring, and restoring suitable areas, even partially, as open-air museums.

Recommendation 5: We are actively involved in various initiatives aimed at establishing Antakya as a sister city to other global cities, capitalizing on the opportunities for international solidarity. These efforts encompass establishing essential contacts, preparing the necessary infrastructure, and executing diverse initiatives.

2.1.3. Principles and assessments for the conservation of cultural assets

We possess a significant spatial and cultural heritage. The earthquake demolished our spaces. Some elements of memories and cultural heritage have been lost, and some have migrated from life and the city. The city's cultural heritage and common property rights have been shaken, losing numerous custodians. Antakya is on the verge of losing its essence, its spirit- its culture. The treatment of the remains of cultural assets as rubble weighs heavily on the hearts of the people of Antakya.

What, why, and how should we preserve? There is hardly any study or statement left unexplored in the international arena on these matters. Therefore, we must focus on adapting them to the devastation we are witnessing today without delay. Conservation can be succinctly defined as the "process of transferring without destruction." The act of preservation affects both the preserver and the preserved entities, shaping each other. In the conservation process, tradition and contemporaneity coexist. The crucial aspect is where the individual stands in the conservation process. Conservation involves creating historical environmental awareness, safeguarding cultural heritage, and carrying this concern. After all, cultural assets possess historical value, aesthetic value, impression and picturesque value, antiquity value, and utilitarian value.

Monumental structures may include religious, military, civilian, folkloric, written, industrial monuments, as well as public works and natural conservation areas. Antakya has both monumental and symbolic structures. These collectively form the city's memory. Historical accumulation, together with the corresponding physical structures, exists in Antakya. They all reside within the ancient culture of Antakya, both influencing and being influenced by daily life. Antakya's ancient culture is deeply intertwined with everyday life, and daily life is within the realm of the ancient Antakya culture. The people of Antakya draw nourishment from the ancient Antakya culture.

Recommendations: Therefore, Antakya must exist in Antakya, remain in its actual place. It should not be uprooted. For instance, the long bazaar is

not just a simple market. Since its construction, the culture of Antakya thrives there. Various cultures, like the Ahilik culture, synthesize, and flourish there.

2.1.4. Inventory studies

One of the most vital components of the conservation process is inventory studies. These studies encompass identifying, registering, determining, and documenting cultural assets. Through these studies, a registry file is created for each structure. In our country, a national inventory of cultural assets has not been established, so most of these are not even registered with the Conservation Boards, meaning they are unrecorded. In the earthquake, they suffered significant damage. It is challenging to claim they are preserved in this situation. The first task is to conduct inventory studies and damage assessments. Protection based solely on registered structures is insufficient. Unregistered structures and remnants that harmonize with the context must also be safeguarded.

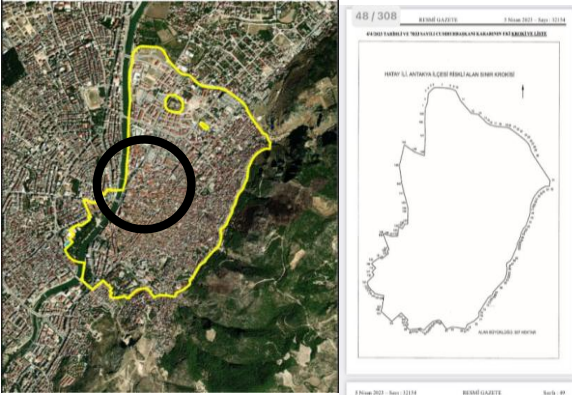


Figure 2. Risky-Urban Transformation Area According to Article 2 of the Presidential Decree Regarding Some Measures Taken in the Field of Disaster and Emergency Management within the Scope of in State of Emergency No:7033

Inventory studies should be conducted urgently, and the restoration and repair of destroyed and damaged monumental works (mosques, inns, public baths, churches, and residences) should be immediately addressed in line with the principles of the Venice Charter and restoration principles for the preservation of cultural assets (Tunçer, 2023).

2.2. Legal Examination and Potential Legislative Proposals: A Critical Analysis

Principles and Assessment According to Article 63 of the Constitution; the state ensures the preservation of historical, cultural, and natural assets and values and takes supportive and incentive measures for this purpose. The Law No. 2863 assigns this duty to the Ministry of Culture and

Tourism (General Directorate of Cultural Assets and Museums) and, if applicable, to the General Directorate of Foundations.

2.2.1 Evaluation of the Declaration of Antakya's Historical City Center as a Urban Transformation Zone

The area encompassing Antakya's historical city center, along with its 307-hectare territory, has been designated as a hazardous-urban transformation area in accordance with the Article 2 of Law No. 6306 on the Transformation of Areas at Risk, as stipulated in the Presidential Decree published in the Official Gazette dated April 5. This decision, contradicting both legal frameworks and the cultural fabric, tends to depreciate Antakya, aiming at a form of "gentrification," and must be revoked before implementation – legal actions have been initiated accordingly.

2.2.2. Presidential Decree No. 7033 and Law No. 6306 on the Transformation of Areas at Risk

What does this law and presidential decree imply? In brief terms: The state, regardless of whether an area is under the threat of disasters (involving loss of life and property) or not, can ensure the transformation, improvement, liquidation, demolition, and renewal of plots and lands containing risky structures to create healthy and secure living conditions and designate new settlement (reserve) areas. In the application of this law, the authorized entities are the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change (MEUCC), metropolitan municipality presidencies, and the municipalities granted authority by the Ministry or the Housing Development Administration of Turkey (TOKİ).

In the case of immovable properties that have been transformed into land through the demolition of risk-bearing buildings, previously established condominium rights or property ownership shares are, without requiring consent from owners, removed by the relevant land registry office upon the request of the MEUCC Ministry and registered as land in the name of the owners in proportion to their shares. If necessary, urgent expropriation may also be pursued by the MEUCC Ministry, TOKİ, or the Authority.

The MEUCC Ministry holds the authority to carry out all types of map, plan, project, land and plot arrangement procedures, as well as land acquisitions concerning these areas and properties, to transfer the property ownership or zoning rights to another area, to construct or have constructions built, including the methods of construction for compensation or revenue sharing, to determine land shares, to partition, separate, or consolidate shares, and is also authorized, without being subject to the State Tender Law, to lease and sell its proportionate immovable properties for the purpose of generating revenue under special accounts for transformation projects (Tunçer, 2023).

Actions against administrative decisions established under the Law No. 6306 may be pursued by filing a lawsuit within thirty days from the date of notification, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Law No. 2577 dated 6/1/1982. Although it may be considered that this period will commence after the lifting of the state of force majeure (OHAL), it is advisable to initiate legal proceedings without delay.

In areas containing structures at a level of risk that requires demolition or areas with significant damage or the risk of significant damage, transformation applications can be made or commissioned by the MEUCC Ministry without the consent of property owners or interested parties (KADOP, 2023a, KADOP, 2023b).

2.2.3. Status of Conservation Areas

The declaration of the historical city center as a hazardous area and its subsequent inclusion in urban transformation, along with several concerning practices in this context, suggest that the urban planning process is being conducted with a commercial-oriented approach open to profit, often influenced by political will at various stages.

During the implementation of Law No. 6306, when actions are taken in areas falling within the scope of the Law on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets, and the Law on the Renovation and Conservation of Dilapidated Historical and Cultural Immovable Assets, the protected status of the area is taken into consideration, and the opinion of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is obtained for the implementation. However, the preservation of historical and cultural assets is fundamentally mandated by Law No. 2863, international agreements, and relevant regulations.

The boundary of the risky area is determined with consideration for implementation integrity. Legal actions can be initiated against the decision on the hazardous area within thirty days from the publication date in the Official Gazette. Failure to do so renders it impossible to file a

lawsuit against the hazardous area decision based on the implementation procedures of Presidential Decree No. 7033 and Law No. 6306.

All kinds of goods and services procurement and construction work carried out in designated risky areas using public resources are considered to be subject to the provisions stipulated in Article 21/1-b of the Public Procurement Law (negotiated tender for urgent and simple procurement). Ministries have solicited and acquired scientific studies from faculty members of state-owned universities regarding earthquake zones, and assigned architectural firms (DB Architecture), chosen through the expedited procurement method (KADOP, 2023b).

This, to say the least, represents an unjust treatment towards faculty members who conducted scientific research on the region, and an undue privilege and gain granted to the selected architectural firm.

Presidential Decree No. 7033 must be cancelled before implementation: Because; before post-earthquake geological studies, micro-zoning studies, and updates have been conducted, the idea of relocating Antakya to mountainous areas with stable ground, constructing multi-story buildings there, and presenting appealing proposals to the residents of Antakya, while acquiring lands in the old city center, particularly the historical core of Antakya, suggests a potential for substantial speculative gains (KADOP, 2023b). The boundaries of the urban transformation area have been proposed from a historical perspective. It has been emphasized that there are 1st, 2nd, and 3rd-degree protected zones in this area, highlighting the need to safeguard cultural heritage, the presence of

liquefaction-prone grounds unsuitable for settlement, and the risks posed by unauthorized repairs initiated by property owners.

Attention has been drawn to the poor planning practices before the earthquake, accompanied by post-earthquake unplanned interventions. It was stressed that the preservation of cultural heritage should be carried out through architectural restoration projects, guided by the law on the protection of cultural heritage and the conservation board.

In the meetings, it was stated that sufficient and positive efforts could not be observed regarding the updating of regional plans and the implementation of conservation plans, the necessary explanations were not made by the authorities and the public was not informed. It has been stated that a disaster-resistant, holistic city model should be applied in accordance with the traditional-historical texture (Tunçer, Tezer & Parlar, 2023).

Insufficient and positive efforts towards updating regional plans and implementing conservation plans have been observed, with authorities failing to provide necessary explanations and information to the public. It was emphasized that a comprehensive urban model, combining earthquake resilience and adherence to the traditional-historical fabric, should be implemented.

Concerns have been raised about the necessary legislation accompanying urban transformation, including demolition decisions for risky structures, valuation procedures, the reorganization of plots and parcels, the process of rebuilding, and the possibility of demolishing immovable properties

where there is no actual risk. The potential for grievances and hardships was highlighted.

Evaluations on the Effects of Decree No. 26 on the Regions Affected by the Earthquakes and Some Principled Assessments in terms of Civil Engineering

The Presidential Decree No. 126 dated February 23, 2023, and published to be applied in the regions affected by the earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş and Hatay on February 06, 2023, and February 20, 2023, allows actions to be taken without the requirement of timely planning and adherence to zoning regulations, facilitating rapid land allocation and construction in both rural and urban settlements. However, urban design cannot exist without planning, and earthquake wounds cannot be healed without planning. Preparation for new disasters cannot be made without planning. The absence of planning means deviating from scientific and ethical structuring, neglecting the public interest. Without comprehensive, multidimensional, and holistic planning, a disaster-resistant city cannot be built. The protection of natural, cultural, and economic heritage of urban and rural areas, as well as the revitalization of agriculture and industrial production, form the foundation of planning efforts. A successful planning approach should ensure that the local population remains in place, preserve the societal and spatial memory, protect cultural heritage, promote environmentally compatible, climate-resistant, production-focused structures for both urban and rural areas, and lay the foundation for economic revitalization.

According to the same decree, construction works can be tendered without acquiring land, completing ownership, expropriation, and necessary zoning procedures, and without implementing construction projects. The elimination of the urban planning process during the public announcement period implies the suspension of the legal and administrative objection rights of property owners in the region. This, in the mildest terms, restricts the constitutional right of private property.

Reducing urban design and construction after earthquakes to mere timing and building construction is an invitation to new disasters. Instead, for the urgent needs in Antakya-Hatay, temporary housing areas should be established to facilitate the return of temporary migrants and restore normal life, while simultaneously establishing the spatial, social, and legal infrastructure for long-term planning.


According to Presidential Decree No. 126, areas without cadastral surveys, without zoning plans, areas subject to the Forest Law, and areas subject to the Pasture Law are opened for construction in both temporary and permanent settlement areas under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change. The Cadastral Law, Zoning Law, Forest Law, Pasture Law, and the Civil Code (property rights) are suspended, and the authority to make administrative decisions is transferred to the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change. The Ministry will have the power to transfer the ownership and zoning rights of earthquake victims to other areas and change the type and shares of their properties. Urgent expropriation can also be carried

out in earthquake zones in conjunction with the Housing Development Administration (TOKI).

The authority to dispose of debris and waste materials in the earthquake zone is given to the governor, and waste disposal sites are exempted from any documentation requirements. This situation, which ignores the participation and objection rights of professional chambers and the local population, confuses the issues of emergency housing needs and healthy and disaster-resistant urbanization policies, opening the door to unplanned and illegal construction through administrative decisions. This situation is in violation of our Constitution. New problems are being created without solving the problems caused by the earthquake. The genuine and sincere resolution of these problems requires mobilizing all social dynamics, implementing scientifically and legally sound planning, and multidisciplinary approaches to create synergy together.

Some Fundamental Assessments in terms of Civil Engineering :

Civil Engineering, a fundamental engineering discipline that encompasses a wide range of structures, began its origins in ancient civilizations such as Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, possibly between 4000 BC and 2000 BC, addressing the needs for shelter construction by integrating materials and techniques. Civil Engineering is the essential engineering field dealing with the planning, design, construction, and supervision of structures. Given its broad scope, it covers the planning, design, construction, and supervision of various structures such as buildings, dams, airports, bridges, roads, water bridges, harbors, sewers, water networks, tunnels, conventional and high-speed railways, subways,



etc., requiring specialized knowledge and research in various areas. Some of the major subfields include environmental engineering, geotechnical engineering, municipal or urban engineering, coastal engineering, surveying, structural engineering, foundation engineering, water resources engineering, materials science, transportation engineering, etc. Due to its comprehensive nature, it incorporates various fields such as history, materials science, geography, geology, soil science, hydrology, environment, mechanics, making it a multifaceted profession. We are responsible for understanding and fulfilling the essential duties and responsibilities of Civil Engineering, which forms the basis for all these areas, as well as being responsible for what we do. At the heart of all these disasters and the resulting pain lies the inadequate understanding of the definition and significance of Civil Engineering, the prioritization of distorted systems driven by money and political will over this valuable concept, and irresponsibility. Indeed, in this earthquake that has caused deep and enduring pain that will never be erased from our memories, Civil Engineering has been buried under the rubble due to the irresponsible and erroneous practices of individuals with insufficient knowledge, experience, and qualifications. The result is that the earthquake has led to the destruction of hundreds of thousands of buildings, causing the death of hundreds of thousands of people, injuries to hundreds of thousands of people, leaving millions of people homeless, without a city, without jobs, leading to broken families, shattered homes, causing trauma to millions of people for many years, and resulting in an economic loss of 150 billion USD. All these pains will cease when

engineering rules and laws are correctly applied by competent individuals. The reconstruction of Antakya, as envisaged by KADOP (Antakya Archaeological Heritage Protection Board), will hopefully come to fruition in the renewed Turkey that will be reborn on May 15. In this regard, the following issues should be addressed and implemented in the name of responsible and principled civil engineering:

The existing system, which has destroyed engineering and science rules to facilitate unjustified gains, should be reevaluated and reorganized. The regulations, laws, and authorities that should never be compromised should be reinvigorated, and the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB) should be strengthened (Tuncer & Alpagut, 2023).

1) The Municipal Zoning Laws, which have violated all engineering rules due to the greed for money and have politicized everything, need to be reorganized. Incompetent individuals should not be appointed to critical positions such as the Directorate of Zoning, and positions should be selected with great care.

2) The authority to construct buildings should be exclusively reserved for civil engineers. Engineers with construction licenses should never rent out their licenses if they are not personally involved in the construction. A blacklist should be created for engineers who are determined to endanger their structures by disregarding engineering and science rules. Their licenses should be revoked, and they should be prohibited from practicing their profession, and legal action should be taken against them.

3) Construction supervision companies should be able to provide a

performance bond that is sufficient to cover the potential financial damage of the buildings they inspect, similar to the practice in countries that have best resolved this issue.

4) The master plan should divide the city into zones, creating a "Downtown" with open-air museums displaying historical treasures, traditional Antakya culture, and handicraft bazaars.

5) In the master plan to be developed, a "Downtown" (city center) should be created, where the city is divided into zones, including an open-air museum where history is showcased, bazaars presenting the ancient Antakya culture and traditional crafts.

6) Adhering to the architecture of the old Antakya houses, two-story projects should be built on the slopes of the mountain, outside the high-risk alluvial areas where proper ground surveys have been conducted. These houses should be built with sturdy lightweight building materials, utilizing structural systems similar to California/USA houses, combining steel and wood as load-bearing elements (Tuncer & Alpagut, 2023).

For areas designated as commercial zones, buildings designed in a common architectural style, limited to a maximum of 4 floors (exact floor heights determined through geotechnical and structural project studies), should be constructed in a dispersed layout, avoiding contiguous structures, and forming separate zoning islands.

Unplanned urbanization, which forms the basis of chaotic development, should never be allowed for the sake of politics.

To transform Antakya into one of the world's most significant tourism destinations, a tourism master plan composed of zones should be created,


incorporating its magnificent historical background, the convergence of three Abrahamic religions, and the presentation of cultural and artistic values, along with its unique lifestyle. An organization called "*Antioch/Antakya Tourism Investors Association*" should be established to handle relationships with investors interested in tourism investments, resolve infrastructure and operational issues, and coordinate collaborative activities, with its structure and principles determined by our side.

To combat disease-carrying mosquitoes, integrated vector control efforts should be conducted in collaboration with a university, forming teams specialized in vector control.

Special emphasis should be given to preserving the natural state of Antakya. Within this context, a green infrastructure network and treatment facilities should be established to manage water rationally, create healthy urban environments, and address climate change challenges, utilizing vegetation, soil, and natural cycles to fulfill urban needs. Waste water from Antakya's lifeline, the Asi River, and all residential zones should be treated to a high standard, making it suitable for irrigation in parks, gardens, and landscaping of tourist and social facilities. This approach will help preserve underground water sources and the environment while generating economic benefits.

If a sustainable "nature and environment-friendly" project is prepared in all aspects, credit can be obtained from organizations such as the World Bank and the World Tourism Organization (WTO).

3. Rebuilding and Preservation of Dresden and Warsaw After World War II: A Tale of Dual Urban Transformation




The World War II inflicted devastating consequences on numerous European cities. Dresden, renowned as one of Germany's most exquisite cities, faced extensive ruin by the war's end in 1945. This article delves into the post-war recovery of Dresden, focusing on its sustainable reconstruction. Additionally, it examines how the city successfully preserved its cultural heritage and seamlessly integrated this effort with urban transformation initiatives.

Dresden bore the brunt of multiple air raids during World War II, resulting in the near-complete obliteration of its historical core. Thousands of structures were razed, invaluable artworks vanished, and the number of death was staggering. The city emerged from the war in a state of rubble and desolation.

In the post-war era, the citizens of Dresden, in conjunction with authorities, rallied to rebuild the city. Swift measures were taken to address immediate housing needs, and fundamental infrastructure was painstakingly restored. This initial phase played a pivotal role in the overall development of the city.

However, restoring physical structures alone proved inadequate. Dresden needed to reassert its cultural identity. Consequently, the preservation of historical and cultural heritage assumed paramount significance. The partial survival of select historical buildings and museums presented an opportunity to rejuvenate this heritage. Additionally, the efforts to recover lost artworks significantly contributed to rebuilding Dresden's cultural richness.




During Dresden's post-war reconstruction, significant emphasis was placed on urban transformation and heritage preservation strategies. The city center was transformed into a harmonious space where contemporary architecture coexisted with meticulously preserved historical structures. Restoration projects and the protection of these iconic buildings demonstrated the city's unwavering commitment to its past, further enhancing its allure to tourists.

Nevertheless, the urban transformation process was not without its challenges. Reconstructed buildings had to blend seamlessly with the historical fabric while catering to modern needs, occasionally leading to conflicts. Additionally, a careful consideration of the social impact was essential during the urban transformation process. The revitalization of old neighborhoods served to strengthen community ties.

Dresden's remarkable journey from the ravages of war to a modern city that fiercely safeguards its cultural heritage stands as an inspiring example. Urban transformation and heritage preservation strategies have been pivotal in shaping the city's identity during the post-war reconstruction period. This process enabled Dresden to not only physically rejuvenate but also to revitalize itself culturally and historically. This experience can offer invaluable inspiration for other cities, highlighting the successful realization of sustainable urban transformation projects.

3.1. Rebirth from the Ashes: Warsaw

Warsaw, a city with a significant urban transformation story closely tied to its post-war reconstruction, experienced one of the most devastating



impacts of World War II. During the war, the destructive attacks brought by the Nazis left Warsaw in ruins, causing extensive damage to historical buildings, artworks, and infrastructure. However, in the post-war period, Warsaw's reconstruction was not limited to merely restoring physical structures but also involved rebuilding the city's history, cultural identity, and social fabric.

The post-war recovery process of Warsaw was challenging and lengthy. The city's state near the end of the war resembled a complete wasteland. Yet, the people of Warsaw demonstrated remarkable solidarity and determination to preserve the city's uniqueness and cultural heritage. Temporary housing was constructed, essential infrastructure was rebuilt, and steps were taken to revitalize the city.

Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect was the meticulous reconstruction of Warsaw's historical center. The Polish people made significant efforts to revive the historical fabric and protect their cultural heritage. Historical buildings and monuments were meticulously restored, lost artworks and archives were reclaimed. Significant landmarks that evoked Warsaw's history came back to life, and the city became a symbol of Poland's national identity.

This reconstruction process extended beyond physical structures. While erasing the scars of war, Warsaw simultaneously focused on social and economic transformation. Rebuilt with modern urban planning, Warsaw became an international hub and continues to hold a prominent place on Europe's cultural map.


Warsaw's post-war reconstruction is a story not just of physical restoration but also of cultural and societal transformation. This example narrates Warsaw's journey, overcoming challenges to preserve its historical identity while moving forward towards a modern future.

According to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Warsaw's historic centre was deliberately annihilated in 1944 by the Nazi troops as a repression of the Polish resistance. More than 85% of the city was destroyed, with the intention of obliterating the centuries-old tradition of Polish statehood.

After the war, a five-year reconstruction campaign by its citizens resulted in today's meticulous restoration of the Old Town, with its churches, palaces and market-place. It is an outstanding example of a near-total reconstruction of a span of history covering the 13th to the 20th century (UNESCO, 2023). (Figure 3)



Figure 3. Historic Centre of Warsaw
(Photo : Adrian Grycuk, 2019)



The reconstruction project utilised any extant, undamaged structures built between the 14th and 18th centuries, together with the late-medieval network of streets, squares, and the main market square, as well as the circuit of city walls.

Two guiding principles were followed: firstly, to use reliable archival documents where available, and secondly, to aim at recreating the historic city's late 18th-century appearance.

The reconstruction of Warsaw's historic centre was a major contribution to the changes in the doctrines related to urbanisation and conservation of cities in most of the European countries after the destructions of World War II. To this day there is a heated discussion about the decisions made by the Warsaw Reconstruction Organization Office (WRO) about the scopes of reconstruction, demolition and reorganization of the urban tissue within the city (RTF, 2023).

The time to rebuild Warsaw after the World War II varied depending on the area and the extent of the damage. The most iconic part of the reconstruction was the Old Town, which was completely leveled by the Nazi troops in 1944 as a retaliation for the Warsaw Uprising (History News Network, 2023).

The reconstruction of the Old Town began in 1945 and lasted until 1952, with the help of archival documents, paintings by Bernardo Bellotto, and bricks from the rubble (Figure 4). It was a remarkable feat of collective effort and historical preservation, as the Old Town was restored to its late 18th-century appearance (The Guardian, 2023).



Figure 4. Bernardo Bellotto's 18th century paintings of Warsaw were used to rebuild the city following its destruction in the Second World War (Photo: Andrzej Ring, Lech Sandzewicz (The Guardian, 2023)).

Other parts of Warsaw, such as the Royal Route, the New Town, and the city center, were also rebuilt in the following years, but with more modern elements and styles. Some areas, such as the former Jewish district, were left in ruins for decades. The reconstruction of Warsaw was not only a physical process, but also a social and cultural one, as the city had to cope with the loss of its population, heritage, and identity (Quora, 2023).



Figure 5. Stare Miasto Square, Warsaw (Photo: Mehmet Tunçer, 2017)

The most beautiful corner of the city of Warsaw is the Stare Miasto Square, which they call the Old Town (Figure 5). This square, which was destroyed in the Second World War, was rebuilt in accordance with the original paintings of an Italian painter whose paintings were used in the reconstruction of Warsaw, Marcello Bacciarelli (Figure 6). It was built so successfully that it even managed to enter the UNESCO World Heritage List.



Figure 6. An Italian painter whose paintings were used in the reconstruction of Warsaw, Marcello Bacciarelli (1731-1818).

4. Findings and Discussion

The studies carried out in Warsaw and Dresden after the Second World War are like a laboratory for Antakya. These works are in the nature of reconsidering the destroyed or completely destroyed city areas with their street texture and structures, and using the existing plans, photographs and paintings, surveys and restoration projects, memories and family photographs to handle the important historical monuments and textures of the city as "reconstruction".

For renewal of the historical texture of Antakya:

Re-establishment of Protection, Implementation, and Control Offices (KUDEB) in Hatay: KUDEB should be empowered to inspect, approve, and supervise repair and modification works for cultural and natural assets, ensure the use of suitable and original materials, and enforce conservation plans. They should work alongside local administrations to identify and report illegal constructions in protected areas while providing financial support to cultural property owners who need assistance.

Compliance with Conservation Regulations: Urban and architectural designs for urban and archaeological sites should adhere to the Conservation Development Plans specified in Law No. 2863 for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets.

Support for Cultural Preservation: Considering the risks to Hatay's culinary heritage due to earthquakes, it is recommended to offer gastronomy courses to earthquake victims, encourage the creation of recipe books under proper literary guidance, and protect and revive Hatay's unique cuisine, especially given its inclusion in UNESCO's Creative Cities Network.

Preservation of Specific Areas: Priority should be given to iconic buildings and significant monuments, focusing on their protection and revitalization to maintain the spirit of Antakya's culture.

Restoration and Focus on Key Structures: Essential structures such as Hatay Old Parliament Building, Habib-i Neccar Mosque, St. Peter and Paul Eastern Orthodox Church, and other monumental buildings should undergo maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation projects. The surroundings of these structures, including Hans, Bedesten, and Bathhouses, should also be considered for restoration.

Urban Design and Development: Urban design projects should be based on faith tourism, religion, and the unity of religions. Key areas, such as Government Mansion surroundings, Ulucami surroundings, Uzun Çarşı and Square Bazaar, and Kurtuluş Avenue, require focused rehabilitation and urban design efforts. These projects should align with the historical and cultural significance of Antakya.

Preservation of Traditional Housing Areas: Focus on residential areas within Antakya's historical texture. Identify elements requiring protection, buildings for rehabilitation, infrastructure improvements, and create policies to ensure the preservation, renewal, and staging of these areas.

Coordination and Communication: Establish close coordination and cooperation between various entities, such as NGOs, social platforms, professional chambers, local municipalities, and central administration. Promote communication and harmonious work to ensure effective urban planning and preservation efforts.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

"At the end of the day, awareness and public opinion must be raised to counter problems, risks, and threats with a unified and participatory approach, advocating for rights. Priority should be given to the essential needs and agendas of disaster victims, particularly temporary housing and hygiene. The fact that elections are at the forefront of the country's agenda should not be neglected, and strategic actions should be taken in line with the election results.

Over time, within the framework of the law, in collaboration with professional chambers and NGOs throughout Turkey, activities such as large-scale demonstrations, panels, and conferences should be organized and conducted, after building the necessary infrastructure, to ensure broad participation. This should not only represent the voice of the people of Antakya-Hatay but also amplify the voice of all those affected in earthquake-prone regions. Allowing Antakya to fade from Turkey's

agenda serves the interests of those with intentions of profiteering from it and those seeking to change its demographic structure.

It was emphasized that immediate legal action should be taken by individuals and professional chambers with properties within the urban transformation areas against the unjust and inequitable administrative practices that will lead to irreparable damages, seeking the cancellation of Cabinet Decision No. 7033 (urban transformation). It was specifically emphasized that earthquake victims have the right to receive legal aid (they will not have to pay a fee for lawyers and court costs) and they should contact the Hatay Bar Association (lawyers) for this purpose.

Final Words:

Cabinet Decision No. 7033 should be revoked, and the ancient Antakya, which is a protected site, should not be subject to urban transformation. In fact, a sample petition that synthesizes the views of KADOP is published based on the points included in the lawsuit petitions prepared by the lawyers of the Hatay Bar Association (especially Mr. İbrahim Göçmen) to achieve this. Hundreds of separate lawsuits have been filed for the cancellation of Cabinet Decision No. 7033. The filed lawsuits and petition content also hold a legacy for the future."

RECOMMENDATION 1: The historical environment can be resurrected by raising awareness and cooperating by sending it to reputable real and legal persons, including UNESCO, United Nations, European Union, ICOMOS, BBC, NY Times, The Wall Street Journal, national and international organizations, funds, universities, media outlets and ancient communities (KADOP, 2023a).

The "Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape", prepared in cooperation with a large group of experts from various parts of the world, at the 2005 meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage General Assembly, was presented non-binding law (soft law) at the UNESCO General Conference in November 2011. In this context, the main goal of the Historical Urban Landscape approach is; to define the principles of application for urban preservation models that respect values and different cultural contexts, and to place the urban heritage at the center of the spatial development process, in other words, to see the historical city as the source of the future. The Historic Urban Landscape approach draws attention to the role of historic cities as centers for the arts and creative industries, recognizing the link between natural and cultural factors in the preservation of the built environment, and the new problems brought on by rapid social and economic changes (Dinçer, 2016).

RECOMMENDATION 2: It is natural for people to want to have a say in the future of their cities. For this, it takes the opinions of local people, universities, NGOs, civil society, chambers, bar associations, experts on a number of issues such as site selection, city design and planning, protection and preservation of cultural values, property rights, construction techniques, public health, and the environment. It includes the real experts of the subject in the commissions, project implementation units and studies, and actively participates in the solution process (KADOP, 2023; Tunçer, Tezer & Parlar, 2023).

RECOMMENDATION 3: Experts around the world are warning. Antakya-Hatay and its surroundings are under the risk of earthquakes for a while. Therefore, the construction in the region should not be rushed. It is imperative that every procedure and stage of construction works, including construction law, be implemented in a way that will not cause any more destruction, and all necessary measures must be taken to create earthquake-resistant settlements. Real experts and real practitioners should be employed in matters such as transportation, roads, infrastructure, logistics, local services, urban economy, disaster planning, and all kinds of urbanism requirements. All studies with international support when necessary; It should be carried out with the seriousness that will guarantee the safety of life and property of the people. On the 100th anniversary of our Republic, we need holistic projects, discourse and practices based on contemporary urbanism, science and technology, merit, knowledge, culture, common mind and expertise (KADOP, 2023a; Tunçer, Tezer & Parlar, 2023).

RECOMMENDATION 4: It is imperative that the original, holistic-reliable projects, which preserve the original demographic-cultural-architectural structure, are prepared completely and completely, and then implemented, taking into account the risk of new and major earthquakes existing in the region. Two thousand-year-old historical places of the city should not be built, concrete should not be poured, and suitable places should be restored as open museums, even partially.

RECOMMENDATION 5: In order for Antakya to benefit from the opportunities of international solidarity, various studies should be carried

out, including making the necessary contacts and preparing the infrastructure, in order to declare Antakya as a sister city with other world cities.

RECOMMENDATION 6: For the preservation of Ancient Antakya Culture, the re-establishment of Antakya as a modern world city, and all sub-processes, a main working committee should be formed with practicing scientists, including foreigners, by mobilizing universities, including foreigners, and practicing scientists, who know the region. Also, city planning, urban design and park-landscape group, architectural design group, smart city design group, environmental management group, working groups should be established. The work of the working groups should be shared with the public. The work of these boards and groups should be linked to a 'time-action plan'. First of all, coordination should be ensured by separating the duties and responsibilities between the authorized and authorized institutions in the field. Then, field and ground surveys, all kinds of planning and updates should be meticulously emphasized (KADOP, 2023a)

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Açıklama [WK1]: CV ler