On Housing and City-making

Özgür Bingöl, BBMD, Turkey

Gustave Caillebotte, Jeune homme à la fenêtre (Young man at his window), 1876
The Superblock

If one looks at any modern city, one cannot help being struck by the fact that much of it consists of large pieces of real estate, each of which is financed and organized as a single entity. The size of each unit - or superblock, as I choose to call it - ....

..... The financing of a piece of land by a single agency usually results in the buildings on this piece of land being consciously designed as a single entity. The larger the area of land, the larger the volume of building that is subject to a single architectural concept.

There are two important problems connected with this fact ......
The first problem is, what is the relation of the individual dwelling to the superblock of which it may be a part?
The second is, what are the implications of the superblock as a representational element in the city?
These two problems are in turn related to the concepts of the private and the public realm.

The Mega-plot
Also in studies on Asian urbanism of 2000s and developmental state policies, the mega-plot as an apparatus for urbanization comes forward. Of course mega-plots with minimum planning strategies, parameters and restrictions.
Housing production in Turkey of 2000s (2002-2021) (under the developmental state policies of the ruling party)

- Housing units: ~ 10,000,000
- Housing units/year: ~ 525,000

Housing production of TOKI (Housing Development Administration of Turkey) in 2000s (2002-2021)

- Housing units: ~ 900,000
- Housing units/year: ~ 47,500
- Public housing units: ~ 775,000 (86%)
- Public housing units/year: ~ 41,000

Ref.: TUIK (Turkish Statistical Institute) and TOKI Corporate Profile Document
Gated settlements produced by private sector or PPP, 2000s
Public housing settlements, TOKI (prototype blocks), 2000s
Mega-plots as an apparatus of Developmental State Policy

Mega-plot area: ~50,000 m²

Dominant development/zoning plan logic of 2000s
Scale comparison of an area produced via dominant development/zoning plan logic with an area of urban blocks.

Mega-plot area: ~70,000 m²
Public housing production based on proto-type blocks

Kayabaşı, İstanbul
Main street with retail units and public transportation route
Small squares on main street
Courtyards with block entrances
Settlement as a fragment of open city, active at day and night
We believe in the idea of the city.
We try to design living environments in favour of urbanity.

To create simple humane open urban environments where urban culture can grow.
Urban forms that are already affordable, dense and low maintenance environments.
Constructing a position based on the idea of the city regarding the vital dimension of public life, urbanity, city as an oeuvre 

Reconstituting the planning action not as a technical device only but as an art of city-making